



As the Connecticut Office of the [National Audubon Society](#), our mission is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife, and their habitats for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity. We accomplish this through Science and Conservation initiatives; Environmental Education at our Centers in Southbury, Greenwich, and Sharon; and Policy and Advocacy work in Washington, D.C., the Statehouse in Hartford, and in local communities across the state. These efforts play a vital role in the larger [Atlantic Flyway](#) conservation work of the National Audubon Society. To learn more, please visit [ct.audubon.org](http://ct.audubon.org).



Savannah Sparrow/Patrick M. Comins



As we continue to broaden our presence as the most influential bird conservation organization in the state, in 2016 Audubon Connecticut will focus on key issues that matter to birds, other wildlife, and people.

- » We will begin implementing the new National Audubon Society 2016-2020 Conservation Strategic Plan, with a focus on conservation results and the engagement of a growing, more diverse constituency here and across the Americas.
- » Our work on Urban Oases will protect and preserve vital habitat in our cities and suburban areas, with an emphasis on the creation of Schoolyard Habitats and green spaces within communities.
- » We will expand and deepen our engagement with private forest landowners, by performing more assessments and promoting sustainable practices undertaken as a follow-up to these assessments.
- » We will continue our record-breaking success with shorebird conservation programs.
- » We will strengthen our Policy and Advocacy work with a new legislative initiative, which will promote funding for open space acquisition and stewardship—to benefit birds, other wildlife, and people.

## CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

**URBAN OASES**—In 2015, great progress was made in our Bird-Friendly Communities program. Four new Schoolyard Habitats (SYHs) were created, while 12 continuing SYHs were enhanced. Follow-up data revealed that teachers increased their outdoor teaching by 57 percent and students increased science content knowledge by 66 percent. Three new and seven existing Urban Oases park sites were also developed. Test plots showed that insect diversity tripled over two years as a result of our habitat restoration work.

**FORESTS**—Work continued in earnest on the “Forest for the Birds” project with an additional 40 field assessments completed in 2015, bringing our total assessments to 80 with 34 remaining for the 2016 season. The team is well ahead of the acreage goals for the project. Currently, the management of over 100,000 acres has been influenced by the program and we have physically walked and accessed over 15,000 acres.

**SEAS & SHORES**—The 2015 shorebird season was a great success, shattering the record for breeding Piping Plovers with 62 nesting pairs fledging approximately 116 chicks—the highest number of pairs since recording began in the 1980s and tying the record for the most chicks fledged in the state. American Oystercatchers also experienced strong growth, with preliminary estimates of 49 breeding pairs producing 62 fledged chicks for a productivity of 1.27 chicks per pair.

At Audubon Connecticut, our goal is to bring people closer to nature to become stewards of their community and to have fulfilling experiences with the environment in which they live. Our three nature education centers and five major sanctuaries are our epicenters for public engagement and include over 4,600 acres of land that Audubon owns and manages. Local chapters are also active and enrich the Audubon community throughout the state. To learn more about Audubon Connecticut's centers, sanctuaries, and chapters, please visit [ct.audubon.org](http://ct.audubon.org).



## *Audubon Bent of the River* — [bentoftheriver.audubon.org](http://bentoftheriver.audubon.org)

Located in Southbury, Bent of the River features 700 acres of land with frontage on the Pomperaug River as well as wetlands, early successional habitats, and mixed forest types. The land hosts a fascinating mix of plants and animals, unique geology, and a rich cultural history that dates back to 1673. The center and staff coordinate Audubon's [Grasslands and Shrublands](#) conservation work in Connecticut. While the center offers public programs throughout the year, the majority of visitors come to enjoy the quiet beauty of the sanctuary landscape, its trails, and popular covered viewing deck off the historic barn.



## *Audubon Greenwich* — [greenwich.audubon.org](http://greenwich.audubon.org)

Audubon Greenwich encompasses 686 acres on seven sanctuaries in Greenwich, including the Main Sanctuary located at 613 Riversville Road. The center opened its doors in 1942, as the National Audubon Society's first environmental education center, and has been welcoming visitors ever since. Hardwood forests, open fields, a lake, streams, and vernal pools as well as remnants of early homestead settlement can be found at the center. In addition to its rich education programs, the center and staff coordinate Audubon's [Bird-Friendly Communities](#) work in Connecticut. Audubon Connecticut's offices are also located at this center.



## *Audubon Sharon* — [sharon.audubon.org](http://sharon.audubon.org)

Founded in 1961, Audubon Sharon consists of the Audubon Sharon Center and Emily Winthrop Miles Wildlife Sanctuary, which totals 1,147 primarily forested acres with 11 miles of trails and two ponds in Sharon. The center hosts programs throughout the year and houses a small natural history museum, the Audubon Nature Store, and the children's Adventure Center. Its adjacent grounds include a raptor aviary with live birds of prey, gardens, and a working sugarcane field. This location is home to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic for injured and orphaned wildlife. The center and staff also coordinate Audubon's [Forests](#) conservation work in Connecticut.