



Annual

REPORT



2020-2021

“ASWP is a trusted resource. A place for all of your bird feeding and bird watching needs. **And an engaging place for people of all ages to learn.**”

ASWP, Audubon (and the occasional variants of Audobon and Autobaun), Beechwood, Succop, Todd—we seem to go by many names. We often joke that we don’t care what you call us, as long as you keep calling us—and attending programs or visiting our reserves or parks! Regardless of what we are called, we strive every day to be an organization that helps to connect people to birds and nature.

When we started to work on this year’s Annual Report, we decided to ask some of our members and partners what “Audubon” means to them. And while I was expecting to receive some nice comments, I have been overwhelmed by the breadth of replies we received. Audubon’s important position within our community was reinforced to us: ASWP is a trusted resource. A place for all of your bird feeding and bird watching needs. And an engaging place for people of all ages to learn.

Over the past year, we’ve grown to become even more. We’re a driver of bringing environmental experiences to underserved communities. We’re rallying communities around clean water and healthy habitats.

And we’re a safe and welcoming venue for outdoor gatherings, big and small. How do we know this? Because we’ve heard it from friends, members, and the community. ASWP is the locally respected, go-to organization when it comes to supporting birds and nature. We are pleased to share these comments with you in our 2020-21 annual report.

As you explore our programs, projects, and places, you’ll discover the reasons that Audubon means so much to so many. Our reserves are a free place to escape. Our programs bring like-minded people together. Our educators engage in a friendly, welcoming way that makes learning easy and fun. And our mission looks to the future, with a focus on sustaining these connections for generations to come.

As a valued friend of our organization, you have your own definition of what Audubon means to you. We invite you to share your connection with a friend or family member to bring them into the Audubon family.



Jim Bonner
Executive Director

On the Cover: Cooper’s Hawk, Patrick Coughlin, Audubon Photography Awards 2020

The Legacy Behind Our Name

As an organization, ASWP has spent over 100 years making a positive impact in the natural world. Our work connects people to nature and makes learning accessible to people across generations and cultures. We are forward-thinking and committed to engaging the wider community in facing the challenges of inclusivity, climate change, and man-made issues impacting wildlife. We believe that by acting as a responsible steward of the nature world, we set an example to make our region a better place for birds and for people.

Part of this responsibility comes with looking back. Our organization's name, Audubon, is connected to the legacy of John James Audubon's artwork which depicted birds and helped to popularize bird watching. Over time in the 1800s and early 1900s, Audubon's art became such a physical representation of people's deep love of birds that towns, streets, and organizations took on the Audubon name.



But there's more to the story...

John James Audubon was also a slaveowner and a racist. He invented birds he'd claimed to have discovered and falsified scientific data to meet his own needs. ASWP firmly believes that these ignoble actions require further investigation and conversation—and as such, held free public programs this past year to talk about John James Audubon's misdeeds and how to properly address them. Gaining the community's thoughts on this matter was, and continues to be, paramount to us. What we've learned so far is that people are quick to separate our organization's name from John James Audubon's personal history—and that the community understands that ASWP has established itself as an organization that does not hold his troublesome belief system.

While we appreciate the value of John James Audubon's artwork, our organization's name represents an engaged Audubon Society of Western Pennsylvania that's meeting the needs of today's birdwatchers and nature lovers. Our Audubon is welcoming, diverse, and committed to growth. Whatever you call us, that's our legacy.

Our Projects

Creating Environmental Justice through Backyard Habitats


Part of our commitment to community outreach includes ensuring that diverse populations have access to our programs and the benefits of connecting to nature. One of the ways that we accomplished this in 2021 was through Certified Backyard Habitats—native plant gardens, specifically planned for individual backyards, that provide food and shelter for native species of birds and animals.

“The Backyard Habitat program had a transformational impact on my yard and my personal well-being. My house this summer was surrounded by birds and butterflies. Even a hummingbird came to visit. It’s great to know I can make a difference, in my own backyard.”

—Maya Haber, Certified Backyard Habitat Program Participant

Thanks to a \$19,997 grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Education, we were able to work with four community partners to facilitate community conservation and environmental education in Environmental Justice communities across Allegheny County. The project provides for the creation of Certified Backyard Habitats and pollinator gardens, as well as local programming for all ages.

These habitats add to the growing number of Certified Backyard Habitats that we have worked on across our region. The program is so popular, we have consultations already booked in to 2022. Project partners include the Bloomfield-Garfield Corporation, Wilkinsburg Pollinator Garden Group, Steel Rivers Council of Governments, and the Tri-COG Land Bank.



“Through our partnership with ASWP, the Steel Rivers COG was able to offer Certified Backyard Habitats to 35 families in Glassport and McKeesport. Not only do these programs promote investment and beautification of our neighborhood homes, but it also enable our residents to learn more about sustainable gardening and addresses other aspects of a post-industrial legacy. I look forward to more collaborations like these in the future.”

—An Lewis, Executive Director, Steel Rivers Council of Governments

Improving Habitat to Support Monarch Butterflies and Bees

Two grants totaling nearly \$191,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife were received to restore and enhance habitats utilized by Imperiled pollinators, including Monarch Butterflies, Rusty-Patched Bumblebees, and Yellow Banded Bumblebees. Native seeds and milkweed were planted on Rights of Ways, agricultural land, and our nature reserves.

Project partners include Chatham University, Penn State Extension-Butler County, Pennsylvania Women's Agricultural Network, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation, United States Army Corps of Engineers - Pittsburgh District, Allegheny County, Friends of the Riverfront, Rachel Carson Trail Conservancy, and agricultural landowners.

“Through a grant offered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, PennDOT is partnering with ASWP to develop roughly 50 acres of pollinator habitat in our roadside right-of way corridors. ASWP has provided a broad range of technical expertise and secured dedicated utility industry partnerships which will offer site maintenance during the early stages of site development and provide PennDOT Maintenance staff training to help ensure long term site sustainability. PennDOT looks forward to future partnership opportunities with ASWP.”

—Jesse Sabitsky, Threatened & Endangered Species Coordinator, Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

Making an Impact in the Buffalo Creek Watershed

Over the past two years, ASWP has secured over \$1.5 million dollars for conservation, research, and community education and outreach in the Buffalo Creek Valley Important Bird Area (IBA)—and area vital to birds and biodiversity. In 2021, we added the position of Buffalo Creek Watershed Coordinator to our staff and launched the Buffalo Creek Watershed Coalition, in partnership with local universities, conservation districts, municipalities, community partners, non-profit organizations, and watershed residents.

Our impact has been significant. Over 1 mile of streams have been restored through forested riparian buffer plantings. We've engaged 3,000 people via landowner workshops, library and scout programs, in-school programming, and field trips with the Freeport Area School District.

We held the first ever Buffalo Creek Water Festival, as well as hazardous waste collection and e-waste recycling events. And we began a comprehensive monitoring program that includes water chemistry sampling and surveys of species including Louisiana Waterthrush, macroinvertebrate, and fish.

“Our collaboration with ASWP to monitor the water chemistry and fish communities has provided opportunities for Duquesne University students to become involved with an active conservation project. These surveys are supporting several M.S. thesis research projects and multiple undergraduate students through community engaged research and learning experiences. The ability to apply knowledge from the classroom to real-life conservation projects enhances the training of our future aquatic scientists.”

—Dr. Brady A. Porter, Associate Professor of Biological Sciences, Duquesne University

Our Places

Buffalo Creek Nature Park Opens

2021 marked a new chapter in ASWP's presence within Buffalo Township, Butler County. It also signaled the completion of a decades-long goal to open a nature center in Sarver, to support our work at Todd Nature Reserve.

Buffalo Creek Nature Park and the Babcock Nature Center opened in June 2021, and features an Audubon Nature Store, a classroom, indoor and outdoor event spaces, concessions, a nature play area, and restrooms.

“I would like to thank ASWP for its investment in the new Buffalo Creek Nature Park. The park is a first class facility and has been a priceless addition to our community. It has so many positive effects on all who visit, including, education, enjoying nature, and spending time with friends and family. We could never express our appreciation of ASWP's dedication and commitment to Buffalo Township and western Pennsylvania. We look forward to many enjoyable years at the park.”

—Ron Zampogna, Board of Supervisors, Buffalo Township

Buffalo Creek Nature Park is a joint venture between ASWP and Buffalo Township, with major funding provided by Babcock Charitable Trust, Richard King Mellon Foundation, PA Department of Community & Economic Development, PA Department of Nature Resources, Grable Foundation, Butler Freeport Community Trail Council and ASWP members and friends from across the region.

We look forward to Buffalo Creek Nature Park becoming a community meeting place, stop-off for the trail, and center for environmental education in the Sarver area and beyond.

“Buffalo Creek Nature Park has quickly become a part of our neighborhood along the Butler Freeport Community Trail. Trail users are utilizing the many amenities at the park, programming offered at the park is also of interest to trail users, and the timing for the facility opening couldn't have been better—with people wanting to 'get outside.' We are very happy to welcome Buffalo Creek Nature Park to the neighborhood.”

—Chris Ziegler, President, Butler Freeport Community Trail Council

A Natural Backdrop for Life's Big and Small Events

Succop Nature Park, known for its picturesque ponds and landscaping, continues to attract people of all ages looking to learn and celebrate nature. From weddings outside under the stars to homeschool programs individualized to each group's needs, Succop Nature Park's beauty allows for immersion into the natural world. During the pandemic, the ability to gather outdoors allowed events to continue in a safe manner. Families and friends came together for life celebrations, while students and families stayed in their "pods" while engaging in learning and having fun outside.

“I knew immediately that Succop Nature Park was the perfect place for our wedding. The property is beautiful and dreamy. We received so many comments from wedding guests about how beautiful the venue was, too! I would highly recommend this venue to anyone looking for the perfect spot for their wedding.”

—Jessica Wells, September 2021 Bride

Conservation for All Ages

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve, Audubon's headquarters, has a storied history of being one of the first places that parents take their kids to explore nature. We're such a beloved location that those kids are now bringing their own children back to explore and engage at Beechwood. This multigenerational connection has allowed us to grow a group of engaged volunteers that includes people of all ages—from students at the Discovery School preschool to returning corporate volunteer groups to our very own Beechwood Conservation Corps adult volunteers. These individuals, groups, and families are some of our most important natural resources. And we love watching them grow in their connection to nature, to us, and to each other.



“I first visited Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve as a parent of young children looking for a great place to hike and explore with the kids. My youngest was still in a baby carrier at that time. When the Discovery School preschool at Beechwood opened, we enrolled our children—and over the years, I organized student fundraisers within Fairview Elementary School to plant native trees and native wildflowers. My husband also organized a workplace day of volunteerism and service event at Beechwood. Now that my children are older, I volunteer with the ASWP Volunteer Corps. My eldest daughter has even volunteered as a summer camp counselor at Beechwood!”

—Melinda Guinn, ASWP Active Volunteer


Our Programs

The Outdoor Classroom Experience

Getting children active in the outdoors is a continuing challenge for parents and educators. To overcome this, the Butler School District and ASWP built an outdoor component into students' school experience. Suddenly, heading outside became something to look forward to—something to soak in and build upon.

The outdoor classroom program made students active participants in creating gardens of native plants, right in their own schoolyard. Students learned about the importance of the plants and their impacts on birds, butterflies, and beneficial bees.

Participating in these experiences, especially during their formative years, will make environmentalism and stewardship an integral part of who the students are—and who they'll become. The success of the program will be seen not just through the students, but through the beautiful habitat they've created to support native species.



“The Butler Area School District is partnering with many local community organizations to provide additional opportunities for our students and families. A major partner of our elementary schools, ASWP has provided integral support and programming for students and staff. ASWP is assisting with development of outdoor learning spaces at each of the buildings and working with staff to redesign environmental education curriculum across the district. These resources will prove to be invaluable as the BASD integrates more outdoor learning experiences throughout the district.”

—David Andrews, Science Teacher, Butler Area School District

Mastering the Art of Birding Connections

Our Master Birder program, now in its fourth year, has been one of our most successful educational offerings—and not just because we are teaching people about birds. These Master Birders take on a volunteering requirement that gets them actively involved in advocating for ASWP and the natural world. Master Birders grow within our program by gaining knowledge and experience, which they then share with others. Many have become so interwoven into the ASWP community that they go steps beyond their volunteering requirement to support us by leading birding walks or even hosting community birding events—sometimes in their own backyards!

“The Master Birder Program opened a whole new ‘birding world’ for me, plus I learned and am still learning both bird identification and bird songs. The real fit for me is the opportunity to share and pass on my passion for the great outdoors. Through weekly Audubon birds and more walks, Eco-Tours, and the bird club I started, ‘flying Solo,’ so many friendships have formed for which I am truly grateful. ASWP is a blessing in my life.”

—Linda Croskey, Master Birder, Founder of ‘Flying Solo’ and Frequent Audubon Volunteer

Birding Across Generations

Education, hands-on classes, and engagement with our environmental educators isn’t just for school kids! Through our programs for senior citizens, ASWP reaches older individuals and engages them in learning that stimulates their mind and reinvigorates their love of the natural world.

“I don’t know if words can properly express how much we value the Audubon classes here on campus! It’s one of our most popular series and for some residents it may be the only reason to leave their apartment that day! Seniors who stay socially active and engaged experience a variety of benefits including increased longevity. In a nutshell, we love [the educators] and Audubon!”

—Lynn Turner, Event Coordinator & Manager, Lifelong Learning, Concordia Haven Apartments

ASWP brings these programs to senior centers, reaching people where they live. Residents receive the same fun, engaging programming as those who take our programs on-site. We take great pride in the follow-up questions and emails we get from residents after the program is over—a sure sign that our connection has made a positive impact.

“Brookline Teen Outreach develops programming and works with teens from around the Pittsburgh area. Many of the teens we work with do not, or have not, had the opportunity to explore the outdoors and connect with nature. Many have never been outside of a city park. I have seen our teens grow and develop with each program. ASWP’s educators foster an environment of education and fun that helps our teens to grow relationally, in self confidence, and in their knowledge of the natural world. Our programs with ASWP are a highlight of our programming every month!”

—Robert Burns, Adventure-based Programming Leader, Brookline Teen Outreach

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Pucketos Garden Club	Greg Short	Halina Zyceynski and Geoff Tolge	Susan Zeff and Ray McGunigle
Charles Quillin	Edmund Shott	Roberta and Timothy Tritch	Dan Zimmerman
Melissa and Matt Rabassi	Amy Shreckengost	Tusca Ridge Garden Club	Laura and Ron Zinski
Norman Radcliffe	Marilyn and Charles Siefert	Karel Ulizio	
Lisa and Nick Radio	Karon and Daniel Siewiorek	Janet and James Ummer	
Robert Ralston		Lynne Updegraff	

Our Financials

2020–2021 Operating Income (July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021)

Contributed Income	\$1,359,686
Earned Income	\$584,108
Interest Income	\$33,729

Total Operating Income **\$1,977,523**

Money Spent from Multi-year Support	\$205,911
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2020–2021 Expenses

Programs, Projects, & Places	\$1,537,649
Management & General Administration	\$93,042
Fundraising	\$57,369

Total Operating Expenses **\$1,688,060**

Money Reserved for Multi-year Projects	\$585,807
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Statement of Financial Position (As of June 30, 2021)

Assets

Cash and Cash Equivalents	\$79,349
Accounts/Pledges Receivable	\$805,099
Inventories	\$111,749
Investments	\$1,055,214
Fixed Assets (net of accumulated depreciation)	\$8,257,383

Total Assets **\$10,308,794**

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$167,417
Paycheck Protection Plan Loan	\$220,165
Accrued Expenses	\$3,514
Deferred Revenue	\$70,504

Total Liabilities **\$461,600**

Net Assets (without Donor Restrictions)

Unrestricted - Undesignated (Land & Buildings)	\$7,932,694
Board Designated Land Acquisition and Projects	\$30,211
Endowment	\$420,675

Total Net Assets (without Donor Restrictions) **\$8,383,580**

Net Assets (with donor restrictions)

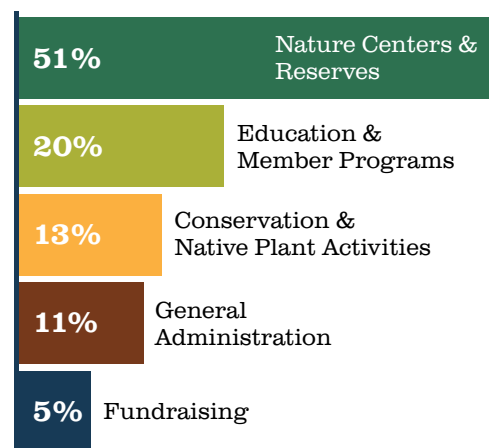
Projects	\$794,198
Endowment	\$669,416

Total Net Assets (with Donor Restrictions) **\$1,463,614**

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$10,308,794**

Our audited financial statements and IRS 990 are available online or by request.

Expenses



Revenue



Our Numbers



Reserves, Parks, & Sanctuaries

Public Properties: 4
Non-public Properties: 4
Acreage Owned: 467.5
Acreage Managed for Others: 132
Acres Protected by Easement: 137
Miles of Trails Maintained: 12.5
Estimated Number of Visitors: 60,000



Engagement

In-Person Programs: 424
Total Attendance: 9,535
Digital Presentations: 118
Total Participation: 4,307
Videos on YouTube: 21
Views of New Videos (Created in 2020-21): 1,195
New Views in 2020-21: 32,365
Total Programs: 542
Total Participation: 13,842



Volunteers

554 Volunteers Invested
4,510 Hours with ASWP

Administration: 244
Education: 1,175
Field Conservation & Science: 1,636
Nature Store: 761
Native Plant Center: 694



Native Plants

13,000 Native Plants sold through ASWP in 2021

Seed Collected: 40 Pounds
Trees/Plants Given Away: 1,300
Trees Planted by ASWP: 1,275



Special Projects & Programs

Chimney Swift Towers Monitored: 145
Bald Eagle Nest Camera Views: 150,000+
Free Nature Hikes: 138
Pounds of Bird Seed Sold: 236,395
Pounds of e-Waste and Household Hazardous Waste collected in Buffalo Creek Watershed: 52,000



Certified Backyard Habitats

ASWP has certified **346** Backyard Habitats

New Enrollees: 248
Total Enrolled: 564
Acres Certified: 800



614 Dorseyville Rd.
Pittsburgh, PA 15238

Our People

Staff

Jim Bonner, *Executive Director*
Brian Shema, *Operations Director*
Rachel Handel, *Communications Director*
Sarah Koenig, *Conservation Director*
Chris Kubiak, *Education Director*
Betsy Monroe,
Finance & Administration Director

Beechwood Farms Nature Reserve

Tim Byan, *Whetzel Land Steward*
Scott Detwiler, *Environmental Educator*
Samantha Ditch, *Retail Manager*
Gabrielle Hughes, *Environmental Educator*
Dan Mendenhall, *Facility Steward*
Roxanne Swan, *Plant Center Coordinator*

Succop Nature Park

Davlin Smith, *Center Coordinator*
Ryan Stauffer, *Environmental Educator*

Buffalo Creek Nature Park & Todd Nature Reserve

Jenna Gehenio, *Center Coordinator*
Danielle Rihel, *Watershed Coordinator*
Karen Stein, *Center Manager*

Board of Directors

Robin Zacherl, *President*
Virginia Lindsay, *Vice President*
Hiller Hardie, *Treasurer*
Natalie Boydston, *Secretary*

Joy Borelli-Edwards*

Joy Dress+

Richard Ejzak*

Dr. Rohan Ganguli+

James M. Gockley

Dr. Burhan Gharaibeh+

Dr. Stanley Herman

Laura Karet+

Peggy King*

Grace Lim-Clark+

Nancy Magee

Jim Pashek+

Fred Peterson

Dr. Brady Porter*

Dr. Laurel Roberts*

Doug Roth

Director Emeriti

Tingle Barnes
Dotty Beckwith
Dan Fales
Nancy Fales
Betsey Owens
Paul g Wiegman

+Joined the Board in 2021

**Term ended in 2021*

