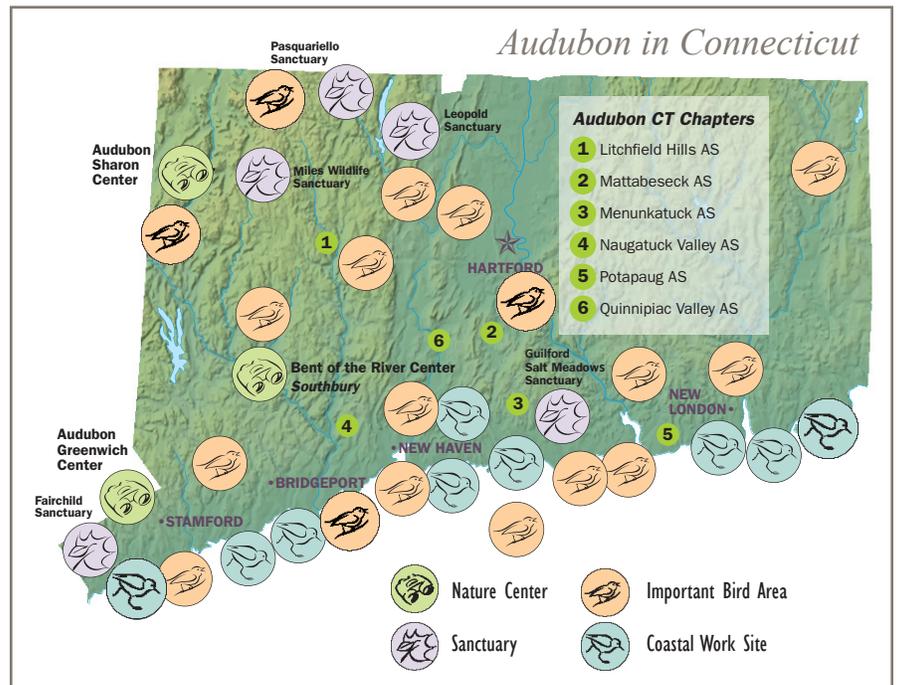


Audubon SHARON 2016 ANNUAL REPORT

Audubon Sharon was founded in 1961 and consists of four nature sanctuaries and 3,000 acres in Northwestern Connecticut with an education center, nature store, [Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic](#), and active bird banding research projects. We are part of Audubon Connecticut's state office of the National Audubon Society and the Atlantic Flyway. [Our local network](#) expands statewide—with sister centers in Greenwich and Southbury, active chapters, and numerous conservation focus areas.

As a leader in nature-based education and wildlife rehabilitation, we offer school programs & summer camps and curate a raptor aviary with 20 live birds of prey. We also coordinate Audubon's Forests conservation work in Connecticut. As a trusted force for conservation, Audubon Sharon made great strides in 2016 with vital support from volunteers and donors. To learn more, visit sharon.audubon.org.



This map is a general overview of Audubon Connecticut, not a representation of the network in its entirety.

Environmental Education

In 2016, we broadened our community through engaging adult, school, and summer camp programs. We had great success with our education programs and special events, and increased participation in our newly enriched summer camp.

- We led 165 education programs, reaching approximately 5,100 children and 2,100 adults
- We sold out our summer camp and increased attendance by 60%
- We hosted more than 600 people at Audubon Kids' Day—our annual family-friendly celebration, featuring fun, nature-based learning activities

Habitat Conservation

Land conservation and stewardship is also at the heart of our work. This year we continued to provide forest guidance to private landowners through workshops and property assessments. We sustainably manage our sanctuaries by following best practices that include invasive plant

removal and species monitoring.

- Through our “Forest for the Birds” project, we have physically walked and assessed more than 25,000 acres of forestland and influenced management on 125,000 acres
- We monitored 20 American Kestrel nest boxes and banded 68 fledglings
- With the help of two Audubon-trained technicians and 15 volunteers, we completed a large census that targeted 14 priority forest bird species

Wildlife Rehabilitation

This year we rebuilt our wildlife rehabilitation facilities, thanks to a grant from the John T. and Jane A. Wielderhold Foundation. Our new facilities eliminated bottlenecks in our operation due to a lack of space for patients and volunteers. As a result, we have exceeded our 2016 rehabilitation goals and increased our community reach.

- As of November 2016, we have admitted 750 patients to our clinic—more



A baby Barred Owl being cared for at our Wildlife Rehabilitation Clinic. Photo: Camilla Cerea

than a 230% increase in the number of patients served, saved, and set free in prior years

- We doubled the number of volunteers associated with our program and established three paid internships through local community organizations for local youth
- We increased our social media fan base on Facebook from 1,100 to more than 3,500 people



As the Connecticut Office of the [National Audubon Society](#), our mission is to conserve and restore 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; Environmental Education at our Centers in Southbury, Greenwich, and Sharon; and state and federal Policy Initiatives. These efforts play a vital role in supporting conservation in the [Atlantic Flyway](#) and building upon Audubon's far-reaching network.

To learn more, please visit [audubonct.org](#) and follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).

American Kestrel. Photo: Robert Palmer/Audubon Photography Awards

Working Together to Build a Bright Future

BIRD-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES—In 2016, the BFC program experienced excellent growth, creating 4 new Schoolyard Habitats (SYHs)—bringing the total to 16 Audubon SYHs in Connecticut. We established 6 new Urban Oases (healthy, restored habitats for birds and city-dwellers) and led the effort to designate New Haven as a National Urban Bird Treaty City. We worked with 113 teachers at workshops and our annual SYH Leadership Summit, and through these programs provided thousands of students with nature-based curricula and environmental awareness.

COASTS—The 2016 shorebird season was a great success. We had an all-time record high of 63 breeding Piping Plovers, which produced 87 fledged chicks for a productivity rate of 1.38 chicks per pair. We also had a record high of 63 pairs of American Oystercatchers, which produced 53 fledglings for a productivity rate of .84 chicks per pair—the second highest ever for both the total of chicks fledged and productivity rate in the state. Through our participation in the Audubon Alliance for Coastal Waterbirds, we also helped generate more than 4,000 volunteer hours devoted to priority species and conservation.

FORESTS & SHRUBLANDS—Our work to protect and sustainably manage forests, shrublands, and other working lands continued to be a priority in 2016. We completed 34 field assessments and provided best management recommendations through our “Forest for the Birds” project—bringing our total to 114 assessments with 125,000 acres under influence. Our participation in the American Kestrel nest box program for more than 25 years led to the species being taken off the Connecticut Threatened Species List

this year. We also banded 49 bird species and 394 individuals who rely on shrubland habitats, and recognized 12 new [Important Bird Areas \(IBA\)](#) in Connecticut—including 5 landscape-scale forest blocks comprised of private, land trust, and state lands.



As we work to broaden our impact as the most influential bird conservation organization in the state, Audubon Connecticut will continue to concentrate on key issues that matter to birds, other wildlife, and people in 2017.

- » We will further implement Audubon's 2016-2020 Conservation Strategic Plan by engaging diverse communities, measuring our results, and strengthening our network through increased use of social media.
- » We will protect more habitats and educate more people through our Bird-Friendly Communities, IBA, Coasts, Forests, and Center programs and initiatives.
- » We will deepen our scientific work through expanded bird banding and species & habitat monitoring with our volunteer army and key organizational partners.
- » And, we will work even harder to protect key state programs that face unprecedented budget cuts, while pursuing new avenues for open space funding and seeking permanent protection of Plum Island—a key habitat for birds in Long Island Sound.