

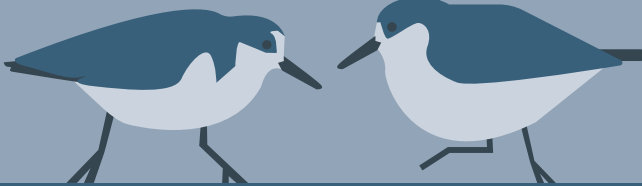
2025 Birders Meeting

Birds



&

the
Human
Connection



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Birders Meeting 2025

Schedule of Events

- 8:15 - 9:00am **Registration and Continental Breakfast**
- 9:00 - 9:15am **Welcome**
Jocelyn Forbush, Mass Audubon Chief
Conservation Officer
- 9:15 - 10:00am **Slow Birding: How to take a closer look at the
common birds**
Dr. Joan Strassmann
- 10:00 - 10:45am **Slow Wood: Birds, Forests, Houses, and Farms**
Dr. Brian Donahue
- 10:45 - 11:00am **Break & Vendor Shopping**
- 11:00 - 11:45am **Women in the Bird World: Conservation,
Education, Science**
Susan Fox Rogers
- 11:45am - 12:00pm **Hemenway + Hall Award Presentation**
Honoring Wayne R. Petersen
- 12:00 - 1:30pm **Lunch and Vendor Shopping**
Book signing opportunity
- 1:30 - 2:15pm **The Citizen Science Experience: Understanding
Motivation, Behavior, and Accuracy in
Crowd-sourced Data Collection**
Sebastian Moreno
- 2:15 - 3:00pm **Exploring the impacts of bird feeding on birds
and the people who feed them through
participatory science**
Dr. Kelley Langhans
- 3:00 - 3:30pm **Last chance to visit vendors & have books
autographed**

Birds and the Human Connection

Birds have long inspired humans with their beauty, symbolism and vocalizations, fostering emotional connections that remind us of the delicate balance between nature and civilization with their vital ecological roles.

This year's speakers will highlight the many and varied ways people employ birds to further their appreciation and understanding of the natural world through science, recreation and observation.



Slow Birding: How to take a closer look at the common birds

Dr. Joan Strassmann (she/her)
*Charles Rebstock Professor of Biology
Washington University in St. Louis*

What if we borrowed the concept of slowness from the slow food movement and paid more attention to what birds do instead of motoring around and adding sightings to a list? Begin by watching a bird. How does it use time and space? How does one bird differ from another? What are some of the stories researchers have discovered about our commonest birds? Here are the stories of Blue Jays, American Robins, American Coots, Snow Geese, and White-throated Sparrows. Who knew Blue Jays plant entire forests, American Robins listen for their prey, American Coot parents pick favorites, Snow Geese are matrilineal, or that a genetic variation makes some White-throated Sparrow males aggressive and promiscuous?

Joan Strassmann, author of *Slow Birding*, *Slow Birding Journal*, and forthcoming *Social Lives of Birds*, is an evolutionary biologist at Washington University who studies social behavior mostly of microbes and paper wasps. She is a member of the National Academy of Sciences, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and has held a Guggenheim Fellowship. She is passionate about science education and has taught courses on behavioral ecology that focus on birds.



Slow Wood: Birds, Forests, Houses, and Farms

Dr. Brian Donahue (he/him)
*Professor Emeritus American
Environmental Studies
Brandeis University*

This talk is about the connection between birds, birding, and diverse, sustainable use of the land that provides our food and wood. It is drawn from my book *Slow Wood* about building a house from the woods on our farm and managing our pastures and hayfields to also support Bobolinks and other grassland birds.

Brian Donahue is Professor Emeritus of American Environmental Studies at Brandeis University, and a farm and forest policy consultant. He holds a PhD from the Brandeis program in History. He co-founded and for 12 years directed Land's Sake, a non-profit community farm and forest organization in Weston, Massachusetts, and now co-owns and manages Bascom Hollow Farm in western Massachusetts. He sits on the Gill Conservation Commission and Town Forest Committee, and on the boards of The Massachusetts Woodland Institute, The Friends of Spannocchia, and The Franklin Land Trust. Donahue is author of *Reclaiming the Commons: Community Farms and Forests in a New England Town* (1999), *The Great Meadow: Farmers and the Land in Colonial Concord* (2004), and *Slow Wood: Greener Building from Local Forests* (2024). He is co-author of *American Georgics: Writings on Farming, Culture, and the Land* (2011), and of the booklets *Wildlands and Woodlands*, *A New England Food Vision*, and *Beyond the Illusion of Preservation*.



***Women in the Bird World:
Conservation, Education,
Science***

Susan Fox Rogers (she/her)
Author

Women in the bird world are not as visible. But there are many remarkable, brilliant, sometimes quirky women who came before us who shaped how we see the natural world, spearheaded conservation efforts, and led lives that are inspiring. Beginning with Genevieve Estelle Jones (born in 1847), often referred to as “the other Audubon,” we will look at the work and lives of ten women from the mid-1800s to the late-1900s who have shaped our thinking about birds and the natural world, and whose lives have captured the imagination of many birders.

Susan Fox Rogers is the author of *Learning the Birds: A Mid-Life Adventure*, which chronicles her first three years of birding from Florida to Alaska but mostly at home in the Hudson Valley. Her first book was *My Reach: A Hudson River Memoir*, which explores the natural and built history of the river from the perspective of her kayak. She is the editor of twelve anthologies including *When Birds Are Near: Dispatches from Contemporary Writers* and *Antarctica: Life on the Ice*, which was created with the support of a grant from the National Science Foundation. She taught the creative essay, nature and place-based writing at Bard College for twenty-two years. Susan serves as a trustee of the John Burroughs Natural History Society in New York’s Ulster County.



**2025 Hemenway + Hall
Conservation Award
Honoree**

Wayne R. Petersen (he/him)
President, Nuttall
Ornithological Club
Former Director of Important
Bird Areas, Mass Audubon

Wayne joined Mass Audubon in July 1988 as a Field Ornithologist. Having studied Massachusetts birds since he was a child, Wayne has garnered an international reputation as both an interpreter of avian ecology and as a field ornithologist. Wayne, once remarked that “these eyes have seen Bachman’s Warbler” – one of the few sightings of a species now believed to be extinct.

Wayne began his professional life as a science teacher in the Hanover public school system where he developed his renowned teaching skills. He began his relationship with Mass Audubon well before he became a full-time member of the staff. In 1966 he spent three summers as an interpretive naturalist and wildlife tour leader at Wellfleet Bay under the direction of Wallace Bailey. Wayne was also a teacher Naturalist at Drumlin Farm and led one of Mass Audubon’s first Natural History Tours to Churchill in 1970.

Wayne loves to teach about birds whether it’s bird identification, bird behavior, or bird conservation. Through workshops, Mass Audubon’s Birders Certificate Program at Joppa Flats, Wellfleet Bay’s Field School, to donors, board members, school children – to anyone interested – Wayne’s willingness to contribute his time to anyone anywhere in the service of promoting birds, birding, and bird conservation is legendary. He gives a plethora of presentations every year, produces newsletters, and columns in a variety of

publications - if you need someone to speak authoritatively and entertainingly about birds, Wayne is the one!

Wayne has served as the Massachusetts State Coordinator of the Breeding Bird Survey, a member of the Massachusetts Avian Records Committee, the American Birding Association Board of Directors, Bird Observer Board of Directors, the Massachusetts Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Advisory Committee, New England Christmas Bird Count Regional Editor, and the list goes on.

His writing projects include authoring the American Birding Association's *Field Guide to Birds of Massachusetts* (2017), the National Audubon Society's *Pocket Guide to Songbirds and Familiar Backyard Birds - East* (1994) and coauthoring *Birds of Massachusetts* (1993), and *Birds of New England* (2004). He also co-edited the *Massachusetts Breeding Bird Atlas 1* (2003) and *2* (2013), along with contributing to *The Audubon Society Master Guide to Birding* (1983), *The Sibley Guide to Bird Life & Behavior* (2001), and *Arctic Wings* (2006).

He was awarded Mass Audubon's Honor Award for Conservation teaching in 1986 and received the Ludlow Griscom Award from the American Birding Association in 2005.

It is impossible to fully recognize Wayne's contributions to Mass Audubon and birds. He has dramatically advanced the state of ornithological knowledge within Massachusetts, provided numerous contributions in the monitoring of avian status and distribution, facilitated the publication of state bird books, breeding bird atlases and written significant papers on the regional natural history of birds. Just as significantly, and perhaps most importantly, Wayne's personality, knowledge, and teaching prowess have inspired all those fortunate enough to know him. Thank you, Wayne, for your many contributions to bird conservation, your infectious enthusiasm, and your friendship!



**The Citizen Science
Experience: Understanding
Motivation, Behavior, and
Accuracy in Crowd-sourced
Data Collection**

Sebastian Moreno (he/him)
*Environmental Conservation PhD
Candidate
University of Massachusetts, Amherst*

Sebastian will share the lived experiences that led to his research, focusing on how individuals' motivations and behaviors influence their participation in citizen science, particularly in bird conservation. He will explore how factors such as personal attitudes, social influence, and perceived control affect data quality. Additionally, Sebastian will discuss how fostering inclusive and welcoming spaces in citizen science programs can lead to more meaningful participation and improved conservation outcomes.

Sebastian is a PhD candidate at the University of Massachusetts, where his research focuses on citizen science, bird conservation, and community engagement. His work aims to understand participant motivations, behaviors, and data accuracy in citizen science programs, focusing on avian conservation efforts. Sebastian is also passionate about promoting inclusivity in environmental sciences and creating accessible opportunities for diverse communities to engage in wildlife conservation.



Exploring the impacts of bird feeding on birds and the people who feed them through participatory science

Dr. Kelley Langhans (she/her)
Postdoctoral Scholar
Dayer Lab Assistant Director
Virginia Tech
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Conservation

Millions of people feed birds every day, engaging in what has been described as a large-scale "unplanned experiment". However, there is still much we do not understand about the impacts of this hobby on birds and the people who feed them. How do we balance the benefits to birds, such as bolstering declining populations and allowing for success in rapidly urbanizing areas, against the drawbacks, like increased disease and predation risk? How do we take into account the feelings of wellbeing and benefits of connecting with nature that people experience when making recommendations about when, where, and how people should feed birds? And finally, what influences people to make decisions about how they feed birds, and how might we craft recommendations that people are likely to follow? We'll discuss all of these questions as we dive into a research partnership between Project FeederWatch, Virginia Tech, the Ohio State University, and University of Georgia that explores both the human and avian sides of bird feeding. In addition, we'll discuss the role of participatory scientist members of Project FeederWatch in this research.

Kelley is an interdisciplinary conservation scientist, with a focus on urban ecology, ornithology, access to nature, justice, and human dimensions. She obtained her PhD from Stanford's Department of Biology, where she studied conservation in human-impacted landscapes and how preserving ecosystems can benefit both people and biodiversity. Kelley is currently a postdoc in the Dayer Human Dimensions lab at Virginia Tech. There, she works in a cross-university interdisciplinary team using a participatory science project, Project FeederWatch, to better understand how bird feeding affects both bird health and human wellbeing. As part of that project, Kelley focuses on diversifying participation in Project FeederWatch and understanding links between bird feeding and human emotions and wellbeing.

Vendors

Audubon Shop
shop@massaudubon.org

Avery Whitlock
averywhitlockart@gmail.com

Avian Obsession
evanlipton@gmail.com

Barry Van Dusen
barryvandusen4@gmail.com

**Bird Conservation
The Bobolink Project**
bobolinkproject@massaudubon.org

Blisscapes
bill@blisscapes.com

Chatgeo.photos
chuckcarney@gmail.com

Green Briar Nature Center
Christie.Lowrance@gmail.com

Happy Hounds Soap Co.
happyhoundshoney@yahoo.com

Manomet
lschibley@manomet.corg

Mass Audubon Programs
education@massaudubon.org

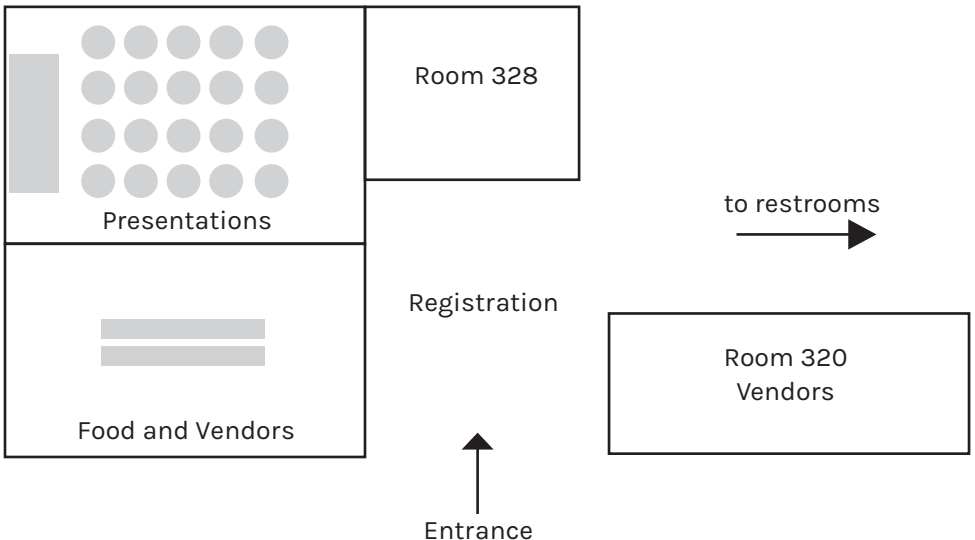
Museum of American Bird Art
jtafe@massaudubon.org

Micaela Klanchesser
mklanchesser@gmail.com

Ray Brown's Talkin' Birds
ray@talkinbirds.com

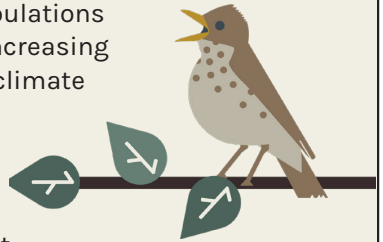
Site Map

(Approximation, not to scale)



The Science of Saving Birds

Mass Audubon's Science and Bird Conservation staff addresses complex issues facing bird populations in Massachusetts, such as habitat loss, increasing predation pressure, toxic chemicals, and climate change.



To learn more about Bird Conservation at Mass Audubon or to make a donation, visit:

www.massaudubon.org/birds



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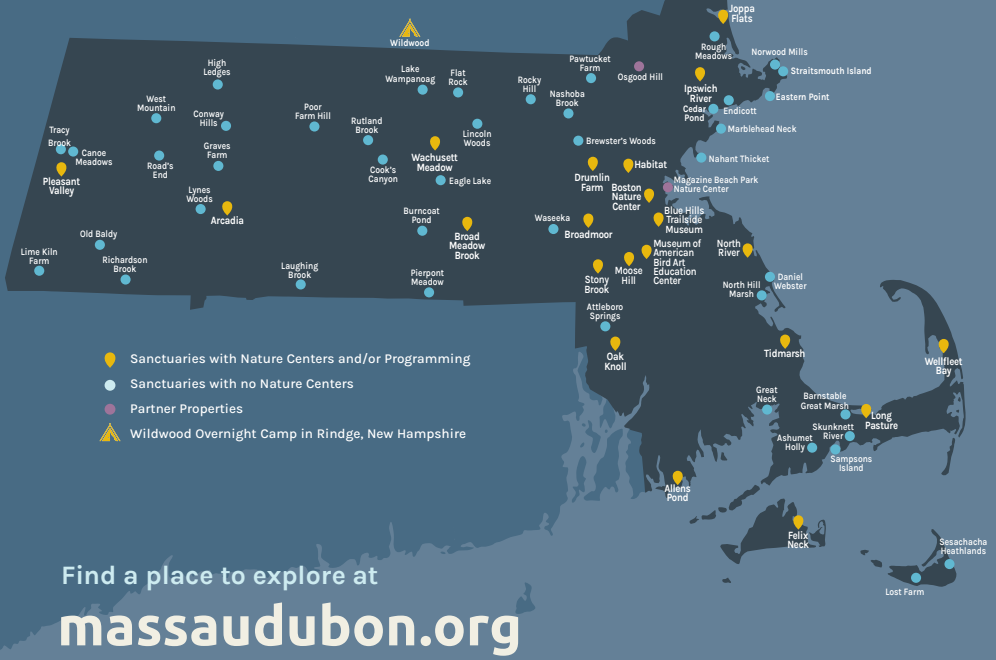
Birders Meeting

Thank you for attending

**The 33rd annual
Mass Audubon Birders
Meeting**

Many thanks to Kristin Foresto, Mass Audubon Graphic Designer, for another fabulous cover design!

Find Your Sanctuary



Find a place to explore at
massaudubon.org

Mass Audubon is the largest nature-based conservation organization in New England.

Founded in 1896 by two women who fought for the protection of birds, Mass Audubon carries on their legacy by focusing on the greatest challenges facing the environment today: the loss of biodiversity, inequitable access to nature, and climate change.

With the help of our 160,000 members and supporters, we protect wildlife, conserve and restore resilient land, advocate for impactful environmental policies, offer nationally recognized education programs for adults and children, and provide endless opportunities to experience the outdoors at our wildlife sanctuaries. Explore, find inspiration, and take action at massaudubon.org.

