

## Benefits and Resources for NY and CT Audubon Chapters

*Updated June 2023*

There are 32 separate Audubon affiliated chapters in NY and CT, most of which operate with their own 501c3s (27 in NY and 5 in CT). The majority of these chapters are all-volunteer run, though several employ staff and operate centers. Many chapters own or manage sanctuaries as well.

Laura McCarthy ([laura.mccarthy@audubon.org](mailto:laura.mccarthy@audubon.org), she/her) is the chapter relationship manager in both states who helps connect chapter leaders more closely with one another, with our conservation work, and who can help chapter leaders find appropriate Audubon staff and resources as needed.

The following list of resources is meant to help chapter leaders connect with a variety of helpful links and offerings, and can be shared with any chapter board members who might find it useful.

### CONNECTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

- **Bi-Annual Audubon Convention:** The Audubon Convention brings together Audubon's vast network of dedicated chapter, state, center, national, and international leaders from across all four flyways. Conventions traditionally feature an array of inspiring speakers, in-depth workshops and discussions, field trips, and camaraderie and networking opportunities. The next gathering will be a leadership conference to be held in Colorado, November 2-5 2023, with more details and registration set to open in July 2023.
- **Regional Chapter Gatherings:** In person chapter gatherings and Council meetings bring together chapter leaders and Audubon staff members from the across the organization to network, learn from one another, and to discuss shared goals around conservation, advocacy, chapter governance and more. NY council meetings have traditionally been weekend long events held twice a year in the spring (in Saratoga, NY) and fall (various locations). CT meetings have traditionally been one day events. More recently, we've been combining these meetings where we can. Smaller regional meetings, for example, the Long Island Council or Lower Hudson Valley chapter meetings, take place periodically at the discretion of chapter leaders.
- **Monthly Birds of a Feather Calls:** Council board leaders Shelly Cihan (NNYAS) and Joy Cirigliano (FHAS) initiated Birds of a Feather discussions in partnership with state office staff during the pandemic as an informal way for chapter leaders from NY and CT to gather around particular topics of interest to those running a chapter. Past topics have included governance, plants for birds, COVID guidelines for chapters, youth engagement, effective annual appeals, library backpacks, and more. These calls are currently taking place on the third Thursday of the month from 7:30-8:30 pm, which may change do to chapter leader availability. Laura will send out reminders and zoom details for these calls.

- **Policy Calls:** Audubon NY's policy Sr. Manager, Erin McGrath, and Audubon CT's policy director, Robert LaFrance, periodically hold chapter update calls during each state's legislative session. If you have questions about what's going on, or our priorities for the year, please connect with Laura, Erin, or Robert.
- **Weekly Chapter Updates:** National Audubon sends weekly Friday afternoon updates about opportunities, resources, and successful projects from across the network to chapter leaders. To receive these e-mails if you don't already, please follow [this link](#).
- **Audubon Works** is a tool for staying connected with National Audubon. Follow the Chapter groups for most relevant updates. As a resource platform, Audubon Works gives you access to policy facts sheets, program handouts, webinar recordings, event registration, and grant applications. To create an Audubon Works account, visit <https://works.audubon.org>, click the green "Register" button, fill out the form and use the registration code "kingfisher". You will receive a confirmation email that will prompt you to set up your password as the final step.
- **BoardSource Organizational Membership:** Transform your chapter with your personal (and complimentary - a \$500 value) BoardSource membership to help you achieve excellence in nonprofit governance and leadership. National Audubon is continuing the contract with BoardSource for another year. Please take advantage of this valuable resource! Register at <http://www.boardsource.org/NationalAudubonSociety>.

## FUNDING

- **Base-Line Funding:** Chapters receive one baseline funding payment each year in the month after their Chapter Annual Report has been received and the Chapter has been recertified by the State Office or Chapter Services Office. Learn more here: <https://works.audubon.org/resources/baseline-funding>.
- **Audubon Grants:** National Audubon seeks to support chapter network by providing grant opportunities for affiliated chapters. Currently, these grants come in the form of Audubon in Action Grants and Collaborative Grants which open for proposals in the fall. These grant programs are one of many ways that National Audubon invests in the work of chapters and we're working to expand grants offered in the future.

## DIGITAL TOOLS

- **Branded Website Templates for Chapters:** Audubon developed a website template for chapters in collaboration with SquareSpace. The SquareSpace website template is easy to use with email sign-up forms, donation pages, and event calendars are included and much more. Your chapter is not obligated to use these templates or service, but if you are interested please take a look at the [SquareSpace details here](#).
- **Free John James Audubon Artwork Images:** John James Audubon's Birds of America is a portal into the natural world. Printed between 1827 and 1838, it

contains 435 life-size watercolors of North American birds (Havell edition), all reproduced from hand-engraved plates, and is considered to be the archetype of wildlife illustration. Each print is also available as a free high-resolution download that you may use for social media, flyers, newsletters, etc. [Access the artwork database here](#).

- **Free Bird Photography:** Audubon provides chapters, campus chapters, centers and state offices with a FREE Digital Asset Management (DAM) tool. This online archive contains high-resolution and web-quality photographs for your chapter to use in print and online to help connect your members to birds and help to promote your chapter's Audubon-related projects. Search and choose from nearly 20,000 images for email blasts, PowerPoint decks, blog posts, public presentations and research write-ups. To request access to AudubonDAM, you can reach out to [damadmin@AUDSOC.onmicrosoft.com](mailto:damadmin@AUDSOC.onmicrosoft.com) or [agottlieb@audubon.org](mailto:agottlieb@audubon.org). In addition, Audubon member and award winning wildlife photographer Mick Thompson has generously offered Audubon chapters royalty-free use of his large collection of bird photographs. [Learn more here](#).
- **Geographic Information Systems:** Audubon partnered with Esri, the world's leading provider of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, to make mapping tools available to all in the Audubon network. ArcGIS Online is Esri's 4 collaborative, cloud-based platform that lets members of an organization create, share, and access maps, applications, and data. Learn more at [this link](#).

#### WEBINARS (selected)

- Strategic Plan overview. Gain a better understanding of Audubon's mission, vision, and conservation priorities that may inform how your chapter participates with Audubon with the Strategic Plan, *Flight Plan* overview: [watch the Strategic Plan Overview webinar recording here](#) and [watch the Habitat Conservation webinar recording here](#). These strategic planning webinars are being rolled out now, over the summer 2023. Stay tuned to chapter leader updates to sign up for the next ones!
- [Strategic Thinking Part 1](#): Create a mission and vision for your chapter that takes flight in your community. This webinar is designed for Audubon chapter boards, leaders, and volunteers, participants will discover techniques to clarify chapters' long-term direction and improve chapters' ability to capitalize on key opportunities.
- [Strategic Thinking Part 2](#): Find out how you can align programs with your mission. This webinar support chapter leaders in developing short- and long-term chapter goals for a bigger impact in your community.
- [Strategic Thinking Part 3](#): Build an action plan for your chapter. Does your chapter have a road map for your local work on behalf of the birds? Learn how you can formulate a plan and execute it through this webinar.
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. Our EDI How-to Guide for Chapters is a valuable resource for your chapter to utilize and can be found [here](#). Webinars amplifying

individual sections of the guide can be found on Audubon Works.

- [College Campus Chapters](#): A program at Audubon is designed to engage students in your local community. Serve as a mentor to a college student and contribute to growing the next generation of Audubon conservationists.
- [Recruit and Cultivate Volunteers](#): Stella Miller, former President of Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society talks about how to recruit and cultivate volunteers. Stella used to run very successful volunteering program with activities supported by her volunteers year-round.
- [Building the Audubon Network - Volunteer Recruitment, Engagement, and Retention](#): This webinar series is designed to assist Audubon chapters to increase community engagement, recruit volunteers from diverse backgrounds, cultivate leadership, and sustain a strong base of individuals committed to the Audubon mission – to protect birds and the places they need, today and tomorrow.
- [Plants for Birds Webinar for Chapters](#): This webinar presents a hands-on overview of the Plants for Birds program, designed to support native plant programming at local Audubon chapters across the country. It includes a deep dive into the nuts and bolts of the native plants database and the Plants for Birds Toolkit on Audubon Works
- [Climate Watch](#): Contribute to climate science by participating as a coordinator or volunteer. Climate Watch is a data collection program that partners with volunteers across Audubon to survey bird species designated by scientists as indicators of habitat resilience.
- [Chapter Boundary Mapping](#): Learn how to visualize your chapter's territory and demographics. In addition, watch a demonstration on how to embed a webmap of your chapter territory into your website.
- [Audubon Works training](#): Learn how to use the Audubon Works platform, the "google" of Audubon. This webinar covers logging in, updating your profile, starting or joining discussions, finding and sharing resources and events, and creating petitions.
- [Social Media Series](#): Social media is a key component of any successful engagement strategy and can be an effective vehicle for expanding and diversifying your supporter base. Find out how to leverage social media to your advantage with these how-to webinars from the national social media team.