




2024

ANNUAL REPORT



A photograph of several children and an adult on a sandy beach, leaning over and examining seaweed and small objects on the sand. The scene is captured in a soft, slightly desaturated style. The text is overlaid in a white, italicized serif font.

*Our mission is to spark
people's curiosity to
explore, steward, and find
peace and joy in nature.*

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Donors



“The Norman Bird Sanctuary is one of the most beautiful spots in New England, run by lovely people who really care about the land.”

- Norman Bird Sanctuary visitor

Board of Directors

Liz Drayton, *Chair*

Deborah Linnell, *Vice Chair*

John Trifero, *Treasurer*

Elizabeth Gibbs, *Secretary*

Karen Barbera

Lisa Bender

Jono Bixby

Ben Ducas

Lynne Mallonee

Robert Manice

Chyleene O'Connor

Krista Sturtevant



Watercolors painted by Rhode Island School of Design student, Anna Fischler.

Staff

Kaity Ryan, *Executive Director*

Carolyn Moy, *Director of Finance and Operations*

Joye Whitney, *Director of Horticulture and Conservation*

Travis Carter, *Director of Education*

Ireland Boyden, *Welcome Center Receptionist*

Malia Cafasso, *TerraCorps Community Engagement Coordinator*

Bayley Forshee, *Development Manager*

John Gendron, *Welcome Center Ambassador*

Jay Manning, *Assistant Director of Conservation*

Kathleen Matthews, *TerraCorps Land Stewardship Coordinator*

Sara Poirier, *Science Coordinator*

John Richmond, *Properties Manager*

Julie Safford, *Lead Teacher Naturalist*

Sophie Silverio, *Welcome Center Receptionist*

Anna Turner, *Research and Collections Coordinator*

Madison Williams, *Marketing and Communications Manager*



Letter from the Executive Director

Last year I had the privilege of sharing a new, three-year Strategic Plan with our members and supporters.

The hope – with any plan – is that it doesn't get shelved and that it actually becomes a living, breathing document that gets used and dogeared and reconsidered and refined.



Now, forgive the cell phone photo (left). This is not one of our beautiful marketing shots; this is just a picture I took recently from my office window.

I could have shown you sweeping vistas of Hanging Rock or scenic shots of restored dune habitat at our Third Beach property or sweet little kids exploring in the Curiosity Lab. But what I see when I look at this photo is our Strategic Plan at work.

At first glance, it's two teenagers filling some bird feeders. This is Ian and Jeremy, two of our student interns from the East Bay Met School.

They come to the Sanctuary two days a week and work with our Properties team and our Conservation Crew. The Conservation Crew was introduced two years ago thanks to an incredible investment by the van Beuren Charitable Foundation. The purpose of the Con Crew, as we affectionately call them, is to involve volunteers in our land management work so that they experience and learn techniques, methods, and philosophies that guide our conservation efforts, on the premise that they will learn life skills, appreciation for the natural environment, and perhaps even be inspired to influence conservation efforts elsewhere – at home, school, or in other communities.

We've always envisioned being able to make the Conservation Crew multigenerational so that high school and college-aged youth work closely with our trained staff and adult volunteers. This is – as we describe in our Strategic Plan – building the “ladder of engagement.”

You may be wondering about the blue bird house next to Jeremy and Ian. This “Bird Buddy” is a feeder with an integrated camera that captures photos and videos of birds in action. One of the challenges in delivering our mission of sparking people's curiosity to find peace and joy in nature in a digital world is meeting our audience where they are. This presents an opportunity to create digital, accessible content that connects audiences to our work – behind the scenes – in the hope that it may inspire them to come here and begin their own journey with nature.

Ian, Jeremy, and the Bird Buddy are in the Food Forest, a space designed by a Terracorps member and planted with the help of our Properties team and the Conservation Crew, who pitched in to remove a mess of invasive plants behind our Welcome Center. The Food Forest is a diverse mix of edible, multistoried plants that mimic the ecosystems and patterns found in nature; including the beneficial complements they provide each other.

All of this is set to the backdrop of our Good Gardens, one of eight gardens on campus. The Good Gardens are our teaching and vegetable gardens that provide produce for donation to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center's Food Pantry. These gardens signify a unique, award-winning partnership between the Norman Bird Sanctuary, University of Rhode Island Master Gardener Program, and the MLK Center. Together with Master Gardener volunteers, this year we generated over 1,400 pounds of produce, 48 dozen eggs, 30 pounds of honey, and 72 bouquets of flowers here at the Sanctuary to help offset food insecurity in our community.

So, yes, the photo may look like stick season but it's also a snapshot of the Sanctuary in action. This is an organization on the move, advancing our Strategic Plan goals in small and large ways every day. We are grateful to you – our incredible members, volunteers, friends, and supporters – for helping to make all of our work happen.



“This is an organization on the move, advancing our Strategic Plan goals in small and large ways every day.”

-Kaity Ryan

A handwritten signature of Kaity Ryan in dark ink. The signature is stylized, with a large 'K' and a cursive 'm'.

Kaity Ryan

Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

The goals that will guide us as we work to create a thriving, sustainable, and inclusive future for the Norman Bird Sanctuary.

01

Norman Bird Sanctuary's campus demonstrates comprehensive and effective conservation stewardship and showcases adaptive use of historic structures and spaces.



02

An inclusive, accessible hub for community partnerships, Norman Bird Sanctuary offers expansive, diverse, mission-based programming.



03

Norman Bird Sanctuary is a living laboratory for active conservation research on our property, educating the community about local ecology and the impacts of climate change.



04

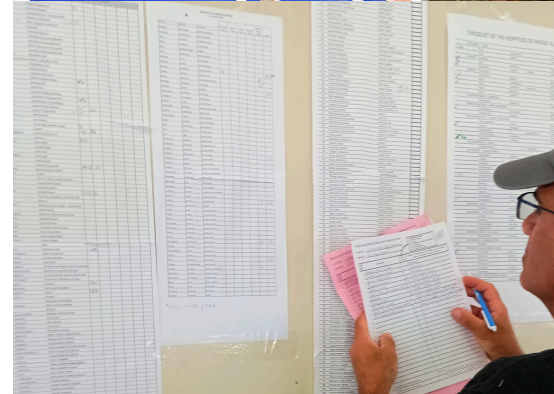
Norman Bird Sanctuary has the team, support, and infrastructure needed to implement its strategic plan.



Strategic Plan 2023 - 2026

Along with celebrating the 75th anniversary of the organization's founding, we made significant progress in implementing our Strategic Plan goals. This year we:

- Received numerous awards including:
 - The 2024 Excellence in Business Award from the Newport Chamber of Commerce
 - Garden Club of America Award for Excellence In Conservation and the
 - Rhode Island Wild Plant Society Award of Horticulture at the Newport Flower Show,
- Achieved 1% for the Planet certification and a 96% Charity Navigator rating,
- Celebrated our 75th Anniversary with a special Sightlines series of 7 additional lectures featuring national speakers from institutions like the Smithsonian,
- Hosted the 25th Anniversary Rhode Island Bioblitz, which broke records for the number of species recorded, number of youth involved, and number of participants,
- Resurfaced the Universal Trail and parking lot,
- Promoted new leadership with Joye Whitney leading our Properties Department,
- Welcomed new talent with Carolyn Moy as Director of Finance and Operations and Travis Carter as our Director of Education,
- Commemorated the 50th Anniversary Harvest Fair and installed an exhibition highlighting photographs by Salvatore Lopes,
- Were selected as a TerraCorps Service Site again with two new fellows who bring expertise in water quality monitoring and volunteer engagement,
- Invested in our staff's professional development through coursework, conferences, and opportunities like Beekeeping certification,
- Restored 180 feet of historic stonewall in collaboration with Preserve RI and the Preservation Society of Newport County,
- Continued collaborations with over 40 partner organizations ranging from newportFILM to StarKids, the Fall River Deaconness Home, and more,
- Upgraded our Curiosity Lab with mission-driven literature, resources, and programming,
- Unveiled a new High Tunnel in our Good Gardens,
- Introduced a website blog,
- Installed new interpretive signage, accessible in multiple languages,
- Streamlined data collection for our partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Nestbox Project.





Paradise Valley Society

The Paradise Valley Society recognizes those donors who have made arrangements for deferred gifts in their estate: a bequest in a will, a charitable remainder trust, a life insurance policy with the Norman Bird Sanctuary named as the beneficiary, appreciated stock, and more. Members of the Paradise Valley Society are a unique group of people who share the same vision as NBS founder, Mabel Norman Cerio, who created the Sanctuary through a bequest in 1949. Paradise Valley Society members understand the need to provide for the sustainable future of the Norman Bird Sanctuary.

To learn more, get in touch via Giving@NormanBirdSanctuary.org.

“When I started making will and estate plans, Norman Bird Sanctuary immediately came to mind. I couldn’t be happier about helping to build a legacy to protect this special place.”

Michele Foster

Members

*Dr. Lewis Arnow**

Karen Augeri Benson

David Beaver

*Mabel Norman Cerio**

Carol Chabot

Maureen A. Coleman

*Marguerite T. Davey**

*Beth & Walter Everett**

Michele Foster

Patricia Galuska

Thomas L. Harris

*Vernon A. Harvey**

*Sandra & Roger King**

*Ruth E. Lelacheure**

Christine & Pierre L. Lorillard

Robert C. Menson

*Frances C. Meroney**

*William R. Mershon**

*Sharon Mooney**

*Harriet Jackson Phelps**

*Benjamin C. Reed**

*Doris R. Richardson**

*Frederick G. Roberts**

Janet Beull Rogers

*Charles Anthony Ryerson III**

Paul Simone

Harry Trines

Margo Waite

**deceased*



CONSERVATION & HORTICULTURE

Protecting Essential Habitats

Playing a vital role in providing critical habitat for hundreds of species of birds, the Norman Bird Sanctuary’s diverse ecosystems offer essential resources such as food, shelter, and safe nesting grounds for resident and migratory birds.

Located along the Atlantic Flyway, the open space that we protect bolsters biodiversity and a healthy ecosystem on Aquidneck Island and beyond. As we combat habitat loss and increasing climate challenges, this space will continue to grow more vital to the species we observe and protect here.



Led by Science Coordinator, Sara Poirier (right), the Nesting Box program reached new heights this year. An increased regularity of data collections and nest checks allowed us to gather a greater amount of statistically significant data than ever.

In May 2024, we hosted Cornell Lab of Ornithology Nestwatch Project Leader, Robyn Bailey. Together with NBS staff, Bailey reviewed our Nesting Box program. She is pictured touring the South fields below.

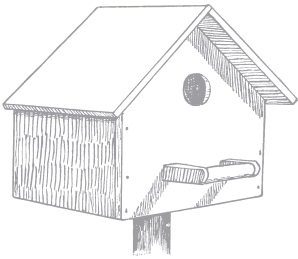
617
Eggs



In collaboration with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s “Project NestWatch,” our nest box monitoring project allows us to not only provide additional safe habitat to migrating birds each spring, but also to collect data that will inform our future conservation practices. This year, volunteers, staff, and interns installed, monitored, and cared for 318 bird boxes.

By tracking nesting success, we were able to gather data that provided insight into the overall well-being of our local avian populations, as well as the impacts of environmental changes and regional habitat loss.

215
Fledglings



This year, 66 more Tree Swallows (below) fledged than in 2023. This is a positive outcome given that the primary goal of the project is to support Tree Swallow and Eastern Bluebird populations. The number of House Sparrow fledglings declined by 30%, signaling that our efforts to mitigate the presence of this invasive species are working.

318
Nest Boxes





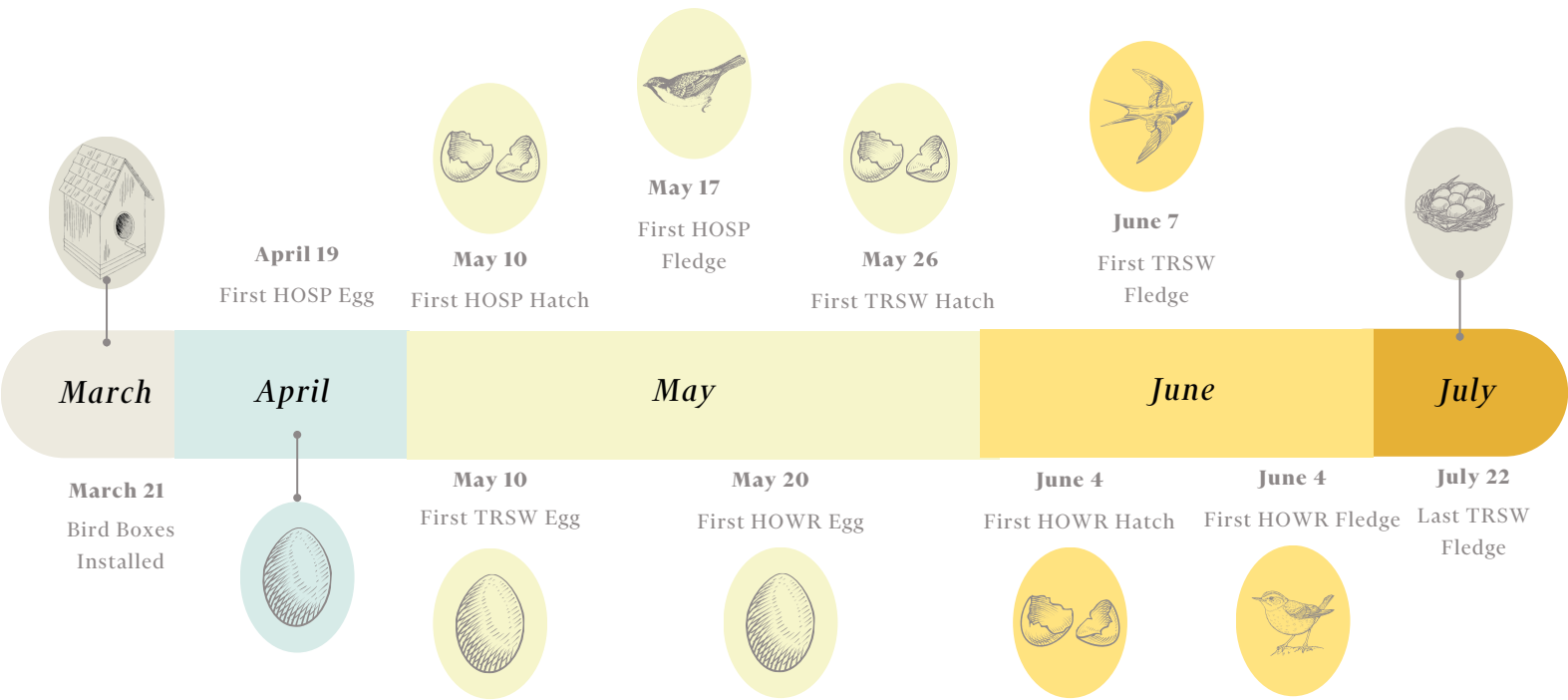
Thank you to our Milkweed Level sponsors of the Bird Nesting Box Program: We could not do this work without our supporters!

John Arnold, Daniel Conway, Charles Edenbach, Michele Foster, Wendy Lotz, Patrick Quigley, Scott and Kimberly Smith, David Souza, John Sullivan, Diana Szápáry, Susan Valenstein, Simon Williams, Richard Zienowicz.

Citizen Science in Action

In addition to being the most successful year for Tree Swallows at the Sanctuary, all 318 nesting boxes were registered on the Cornell Lab of Ornithology’s online database. This allowed us to improve data analysis, including adopting a more accurate and efficient protocol, and allowing volunteers to participate in monitoring.

Staff, volunteers, Conservation Crew members, and interns joined us this spring and summer to learn first-hand about the Nest Monitoring project, its importance, and how the collected data will inform changes in our practices in the next year.



TRSW= Tree Swallow, HOSP= House Sparrow, HOWR= House Wren.



CONSERVATION & HORTICULTURE

Generations of Land Stewards

Stewarding 300+ acres of open space and wildlife habitat is no small task. It requires hundreds of hands and thousands of hours of work from the volunteers, staff, and supporters of the Sanctuary that make up our community.

This work can include pulling up yards of Japanese Knotweed, removing fallen trees from the trails, or even returning a wayward turtle to Red Maple Pond. This dedication displays not just a passion for place but serves as an investment in the future of the Sanctuary.

With funding from the van Beuren Charitable Foundation, the third year of our volunteer Conservation Crew kicked off. Led by skilled staff, the Conservation Crew tackled numerous projects that increased our capacity to preserve and protect, while stewarding this land for generations to come.



NBS staff and Conservation Crew members install a new staircase up to Hanging Rock Ridge (above).

Pictured: Assistant Director of Conservation, Jay Manning, with volunteers from the East Bay Met School and Salve Regina University install a new signpost using reclaimed cedar from a downed tree (top left).

Properties Manager, John Richmond, and TerraCorps Land Stewardship Coordinator, Kathleen Matthews, install a trail camera adjacent to our medicinal garden (bottom left).

Together with our trained staff, high school students, adult volunteers, grandparents and their grandchildren, our multi-generational Conservation Crew conquered numerous projects that included:

- The removal of invasive plants from our trails,
- Planting and maintaining our Coastal Education Center garden,
- Building a new “bee hotel,”
- Building two new “Grow Mobiles” in support of Summer Camp,
- Transplanting Bayberry shrubs from our South field to our Woodland forests,
- Setting up for our biggest event of the year, Harvest Fair, which included moving 300+ hay bales,
- And so much more!



“The Sanctuary is a very special place on Aquidneck Island. A real treasure, showcasing the strength and possibilities of preservation.”

-Norman Bird Sanctuary visitor

1 Acre

Of invasive Privet removed from the Woodland and Valley Trails.

300 Native Plants

Planted, watered, weeded, and maintained in our new Coastal Education Center garden.

60+

Varieties of colonial and common species of plants cared for in the herb gardens.



CONSERVATION & HORTICULTURE

Plants and Pollinators

In 2023, members of the Norman Bird Sanctuary team enrolled in a beekeeping course with the Rhode Island Beekeepers Association. Since then, our staff have cared for two active beehives and thousands of Italian honeybees. We harvested over **200 pounds of honey this year alone!**

This fall, NBS staff and Conservation Crew volunteers created and installed our first “Bee Hotel.” Designed to provide native, solitary bees with housing to successfully survive over the winter seasons, this hotel was installed in one of our south fields.

Both of these bee projects are directly supported by the work of volunteers from the University of Rhode Island (URI) Master Gardener program, who care for the eight pollinator garden spaces on our campus. Through their stewardship of our vegetable and herb gardens, the Good Gardens, we were able to harvest **1,400 pounds of produce, 48 dozen eggs, 30 pounds of honey, and 72 bouquets of flowers** for donation to the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center food pantry in Newport.

Additional garden programs led by our URI Master Gardener volunteers included the expansion of our Good Gardens and medicinal plant garden, the addition of a new high tunnel to extend the growing season with funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the installation of composting bins in our gardens, and the maintenance of Mabel’s Garden.



Board Member, Karen Barbera, with Director of Horticulture and Conservation, Joye Whitney (pictured right), at The Preservation Society of Newport County’s 2024 Newport Flower Show where our curated entry received two prestigious awards:

- The Garden Club of America Award for Excellence in Conservation
- The Rhode Island Wild Plant Society Award for Horticulture



Throughout the winter months the Bee Hotel (above) will serve as a sheltered, dedicated space for solitary bees. This reduces interference from weather and predators.



A local honeybee (above) resting on an Oregano plant found in our Herb and Pollinator garden, one of our eight gardens on campus.

EDUCATION



Board Member, Lynne Mallonee, reads a book about Ospreys to curious campers in the Curiosity Lab (above).

Campers (below) look at what they have caught in Red Maple Pond during a pond exploration day.



Nature for All

Thanks to the generosity of our supporters, the Norman Bird Sanctuary is able to provide Summer Camp scholarships each year, offering young naturalists the opportunity to connect with nature regardless of financial barriers. We thank the individuals and organizations that make this possible:

- BankRI
- Mr. David Beaver and Mr. Harry Trines
- The Bubba Fund
- Dr. and Mrs. Brian Hogan
- John Clarke Trust
- Middletown Garden Club
- The NewportFed Charitable Foundation
- Newport Garden Club
- Mr. and Mrs. George Petrovas
- Salve Regina University
- STAR Kids

Learning through Adventure

Discovering the Norman Bird Sanctuary as a child is one of the most impactful experiences that members and supporters share with us. The magic of seeing the “Fairy Forest” for the first time, wading into Red Maple Pond to catch frogs, the exhausted bliss of returning home after a long day at camp. These are experiences that connect many to the Sanctuary and introduce the passions that will inform their jobs, hobbies, and free time in the years to come. This year, over 2,000 children joined us for field trips, camps, Boy Scout trips, and more.

150+
Education
Programs

Together with our dedicated staff and volunteers, children learned about local ecosystems, watershed health, animals, and habitats through first-hand experiences that included:

- Hawk presentations,
- Garden crafts and composting demonstrations,
- Seining on Third Beach,
- Chicken enrichment activities,
- Guided hikes on our seven miles of trails,
- And so much more!

Now in its second year of operation, our Curiosity Lab has become one of the most popular stops for visitors of all ages. The special exhibition “Hydro Hideout” in 2024 focused on local water systems. Throughout 2025, the Lab will offer new exploration stations and enhanced hours.



Campers during our February “Winter Wildlife” week (left) learning about wildlife with hands-on, place-based experiences.

Attendees at this year’s Beach Bash took part in “seining,” a method of catching fish in a long net.

667
Summer Camp
Spots Filled

Vacation campers exploring the trails (below). Throughout the week, hiking explorations are a favorite activity.



EDUCATION

25th Anniversary BioBlitz

Since 2000, the Rhode Island Natural History Survey (the Survey) has selected a location to host their annual “BioBlitz” - an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many plant and animal species as possible in 24-hour window.

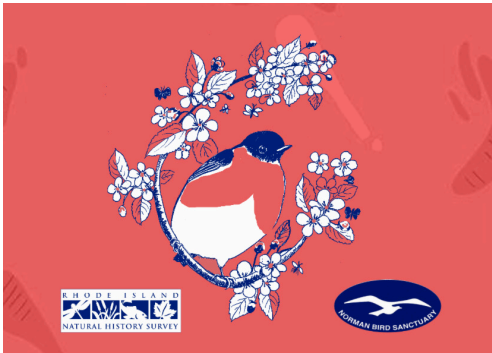


Naturalists, scientists, students, and community members joined forces to survey and document the plant and animal species found throughout the Sanctuary.

This year, in honor of the event’s 25th anniversary, the Norman Bird Sanctuary was selected as the site for the 2024 BioBlitz, attracting nearly 400 participants of all ages.

BioBlitz highlights the role that community involvement plays in environmental stewardship and encourages people of all ages to be curious about the environment.

30
College-Level
Participants



Norman Bird Sanctuary Executive Director, Kaity Ryan, and Rhode Island Natural History Survey Executive Director, David Gregg (left), prepare for the BioBlitz starting horn.

59
K-12
Participants

Local students were asked to draw their “Rhode Island Wild” for the BioBlitz T-Shirt Contest. The winning illustration (above) was selected for the official 2024 BioBlitz T-Shirt.

The 2024 BioBlitz had the highest number of youth participants in the history of the event. Participants combed the 300 acres protected by the Sanctuary in search of animals and plants, including those found along the Sanctuary’s Third Beach property (below).

Staff and Board members of the Norman Bird Sanctuary supporting the the 24-hour citizen science event (below).

389
Total
Participants





1,430

Total species identified, a record high in the history of the Rhode Island BioBlitz.

The impressive diversity of ecosystems and habitats found at the Norman Bird Sanctuary, paired with a record-breaking showing of BioBlitz participants, resulted in a record-setting number of identified species in the history of the Rhode Island BioBlitz. These results and metrics provide a baseline that will inform conservation and restoration projects at the Sanctuary.

Through guided hikes, hands-on workshops, and expert-led demonstrations, attendees gained a deeper understanding of our local ecosystems while playing an integral role in the collection of data that will provide metrics for our future projects.

Teams determined by specialty and interest-areas explored every corner of the Norman Bird Sanctuary, including forest, freshwater, grassland, marsh, and aquatic habitats, in the daylight and throughout the night.

The Rhode Island Natural History Survey will share details of the final 2024 BioBlitz results at a special public presentation at the Norman Bird Sanctuary in early 2025.

436

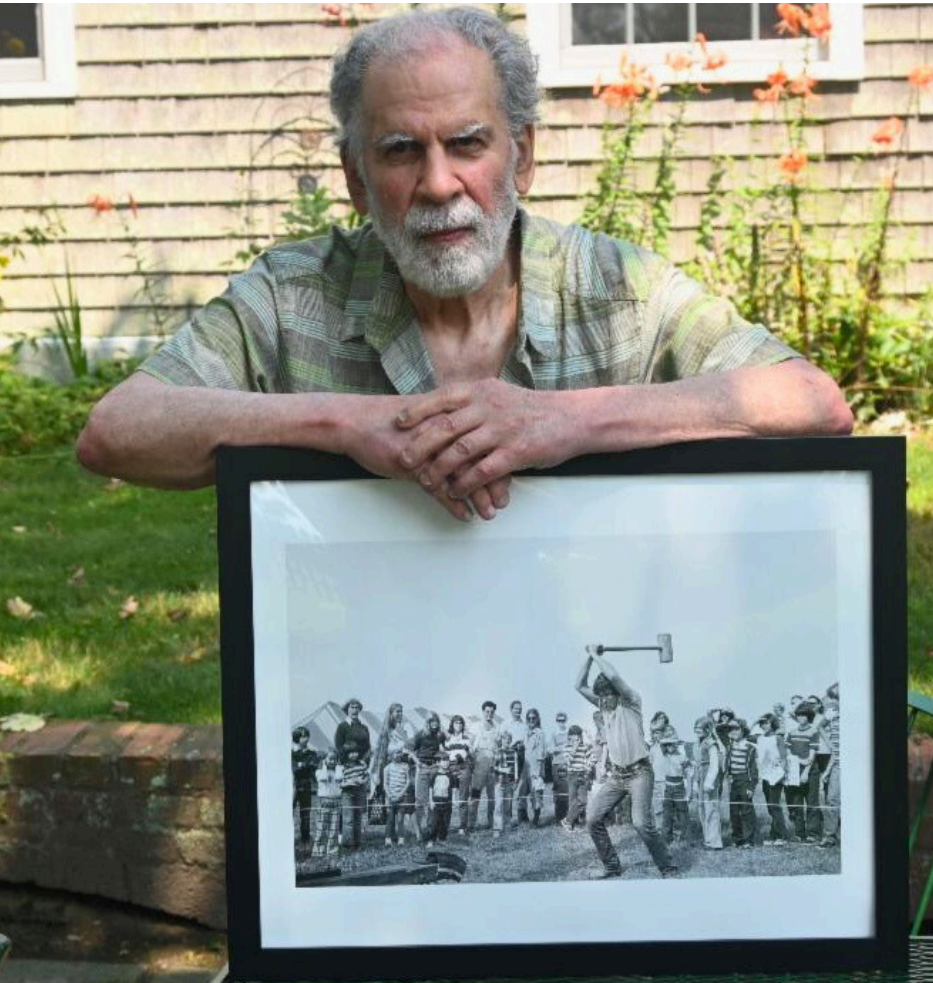
Plant species identified. This number was lower than expected, likely due to invasive species.



BioBlitz teams worked day and night over the 24-hour period to identify local species.

583

Insect species identified. This high number reflects the numerous micro-habitats that support a diversity of species.



Creative Legacy Takes Flight

Nestled in Paradise Valley, the Norman Bird Sanctuary protects not only critical habitat for local and migratory wildlife, but also a culturally rich landscape within one of the most notable settings in American art history. Nearly a century before the Sanctuary's inception, the distinct landscape of what is now the Norman Bird Sanctuary was a source of inspiration for dozens of American artists, including George Bellows, John Frederick Kensett, William Trost Richards, and of course, Mabel Norman Cerio.

Throughout 2024, we honored the cultural and artistic legacy of the region and our founder through a variety of lectures, programs, workshops, and more.

Salvatore Lopes (left) with one of his photographs featured in the "50 Years of Harvest Fair" photo exhibition.



The "50 Years of Harvest Fair" photo exhibition in the Barn at NBS.

In celebration of Harvest Fair's 50th anniversary, the Norman Bird Sanctuary unveiled a special exhibition, *50 Years of Harvest Fair*, featuring curated photographs taken by Salvatore Lopes during the 1976 and 1977 Harvest Fairs.

A nostalgic, visual journey through the rich history of Harvest Fair, this exhibition honors the community connections, autumnal charm, and joy that have made Harvest Fair a beloved tradition for generations of local families.

We are grateful to Barbara Benson, BankNewport, Frosty Freez, and the NBS Exhibition Committee for their generous support of 50 Years of Harvest Fair. This exhibition was made possible in part by a grant from the Rhode Island State Council on the Arts through an appropriation by the Rhode Island General Assembly and a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts.



Norman Bird Sanctuary Research & Collections Coordinator, Anna Turner (above), hangs pieces on the 50 Years of Harvest Fair community submission wall.





Visiting Artist, Emily Clare, presents her prints of invasive and native plants found at the Sanctuary during her three-week Studio intensive.



Artist-in-Residence, Nina Elder, creating a small piece with ink and watercolor. During her residency Nina completed her interdisciplinary project, "Sedimental," exploring coastal sand formations on Third Beach.

“The lovely meadows of Paradise, where in the most primeval solitude it is possible to get far-reaching views of the sea....It is like a grand landscape in miniature.”

-Henry James, writer

Paint Paradise: Plein Air Day

Celebrating Norman Bird Sanctuary’s 75th Anniversary and the artistic legacy of our founder, Mabel Norman Cerio, over 50 artists joined us for an inaugural Paint Paradise Plein Air Day. Bringing together artists and nature enthusiasts for a day of outdoor creativity, the Plein Air Day welcomed artists of all levels, each finding unique perspectives in nature.

Climbing to the peak of Hanging Rock Ridge, setting easels up beneath spring foliage along the Woodcock Trail, or taking in the view of bird boxes in our fields, artists took full advantage of the Sanctuary’s acclaimed viewscapes.

Artists were led by Amy Bartlett Wright in a demonstration held inside Mabel’s Studio, an historic artistic space that has welcomed artists and visionaries for decades.

Plein Air Day concluded with a juried benefit show, during which artwork completed throughout the day was sold to supporters. The Norman Bird Sanctuary is grateful to the artists who participated in this event and the supporters who displayed their passion for the artistic legacy of Paradise Valley.



Plein Air Day sponsors John Grosvenor and Cheryl Hackett present the first place award to acclaimed local painter, Amy Bartlett Wright (left).

Artwork created throughout Plein Air Day was sold at an evening reception and juried benefit show, with 75% of the proceeds supporting the artists.



Rain or shine, artists of all disciplines and experience levels found inspiration from the same landscape that inspired NBS founder, Mabel Norman Cerio. Stone walls, bird boxes, and wildlife appeared in the paintings created by the Plein Air Day artists (left).





Visiting Sightlines speaker Robyn Bailey, leads a guided walk with Norman Bird Sanctuary staff before her lecture.

Sightlines: A 75th Anniversary Lecture Series

Honoring the 75th Anniversary of the Norman Bird Sanctuary across seven evening lectures throughout 2024, *Sightlines* explored the disciplines celebrated by Norman Bird Sanctuary founder, Mabel Norman Cerio: art, culture, ornithology, and conservation. This interdisciplinary speaker series brought together leading artists, art historians, Indigenous educators, ornithologists, and conservationists.



Paradise Valley Then and Now

Kaity Ryan, Executive Director of Norman Bird Sanctuary

Middletown's Paradise Valley is one of the most culturally significant landscapes in Rhode Island. In addition to its ties to the Hudson River School painters, Transcendentalist writers, and noted philosopher Bishop George Berkeley, Paradise is also important in the context of modern conservation efforts on Aquidneck Island. Kaity shared an historical overview of the cultural influences connected to the present-day Norman Bird Sanctuary along with a look into Mabel Norman Cerio's legacy.



Biodesign: What Combining Science, Art, Design, and an Eco-Centric Approach Can Offer the World

Jennifer Bissonnette, Director of RISD Nature Lab

Jennifer Bissonnette, whose work merges natural sciences knowledge and methods with art and design thinking, explored the design philosophies of biomimicry (the design and production of materials, structures, and systems that are modeled on biological entities and processes) and discussed the critical role that art and design can play in ensuring a future of sustainable coexistence.



Sedimental: What Moves Us?

Nina Elder, Norman Bird Sanctuary Artist-in-Residence

*Nina Elder's lecture detailed her scientific and artistic methods, as well as her site-specific project, **Sedimental**: an experimental, multi-media exploration of coastal sand formation and erosion processes as they relate to human resilience. Closing her residency with a free, participatory art installation, Nina was joined by community members for a kite-making workshop inspired by the Sanctuary's coastal conservation efforts at Third Beach.*



If These Artworks Could Talk: Glimpses into the History of Bird Art

Amy Montague, Director of Museum of American Bird Art

Amy Montague shared some of the treasured artworks from Mass Audubon's collection at the Museum of American Bird Art, explored bird art spanning several centuries, and shared the stories of people connected with its creation and preservation.



Hidden Heroes: The Role of Citizen Scientists in Studies of Avian Reproduction

Robyn Bailey, NestWatch Project Leader at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology

Citizen scientists worldwide contribute invaluable bird observations to institutions like the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, aiding scientists in understanding the impact of environmental changes on avian populations. Robyn's lecture explored the crucial role of citizen scientists in the study of North America's nesting birds, with a look back at the past 60 years.



Bringing Back Biodiversity: Stories of Conservation Farming

Dr. Amy Johnson, Conservation Biologist and Program Director at the Smithsonian National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute

Dr. Johnson integrates citizen science to help conduct ecological research on more than 80,000 acres of private lands in Northern Virginia through Smithsonian's Virginia Working Landscapes program. Dr. Johnson shared details about establishing and managing native grasslands, tracking the migratory connectivity of declining grassland birds, and understanding motivations behind conservation behaviors on private lands.



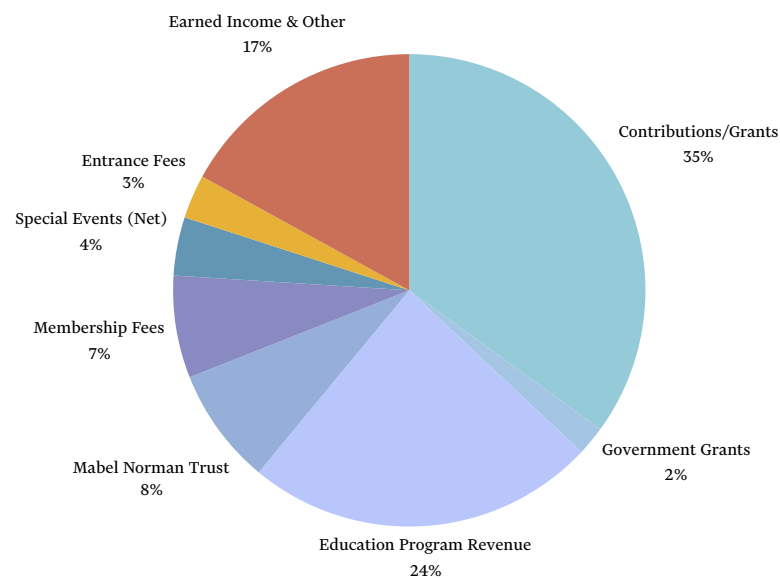
Ohkehteau Unnehtongquatash, Plant Stories

Silvermoon LaRose, Assistant Director of Tomaquag Museum

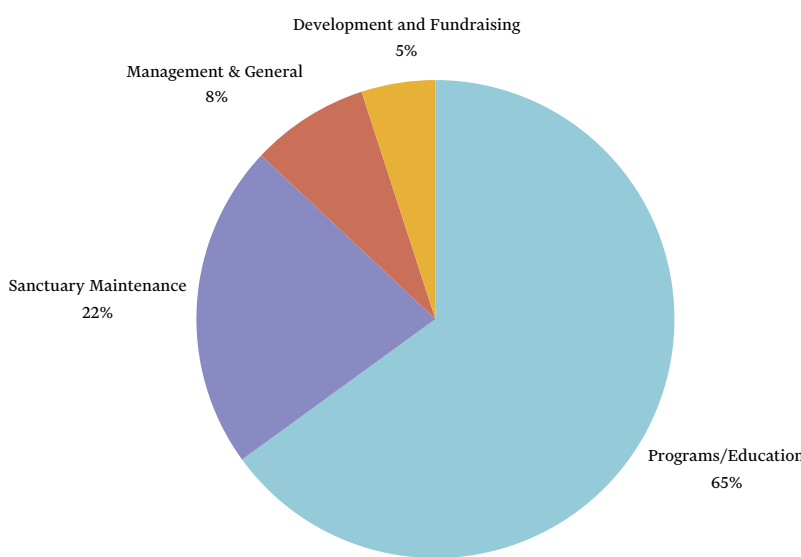
A member of the Narragansett Tribe, as well as an artist, educator, and conservation advocate who has worked in tribal communities for over 20 years, Silvermoon LaRose works at the intersection of artistic and natural ecosystems, fostering Indigenous empowerment through education, community building and the sharing of cultural knowledge and traditional arts. Her talk explored the enduring connections between these ecosystems, the value of traditional ecological knowledge, and the stories that connect us to the gifts of our ecology.

Condensed Statement of Operating Activities

Revenue



Expenses



REVENUES AND OTHER SUPPORT:

Public Support	\$455,746
Contributions/Grants	455,746
Total Public Support	\$455,746
Grants and Contracts	
Federal, State, and Local Government Grants	23,397
Total Grants and Contracts	\$23,397
Other Revenue	
Education Programs	307,835
Mabel Norman Trust	103,473
Membership Fees	97,126
Special Event Income (Net)	52,667
Entrance Fees	45,093
Earned Income & Other	219,111
Total Other Revenue	825,305
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	\$1,304,448

EXPENSES

Education Programs	\$1,066,743
Sanctuary Maintenance	352,275
Management & General	127,203
Development & Fundraising	89,990
TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSE	\$1,636,211

TREASURER’S REPORT

Please accept the following analysis of the draft Financial Statements prepared by our auditor, Allan Smith & Company, CPA.

The operating revenues in our fiscal year ending March 31, 2024, totaled \$1,304,448 and the expenses totaled \$1,636,211. The resulting change in net assets from our operations (or net revenue) was (\$331,763). At the beginning of the 2024 fiscal year, we adopted a budget projecting operating income of \$1,812,975 and \$1,810,096 in operating expenses. Expenses and revenue came in under expectations.

In the last fiscal year, 37% of all revenues came from contributions and grants. Other key revenue sources include educational programs, memberships, the Mabel Norman Trust, entrance fees, and earned income from the Paradise Farmhouse and other rental income.

Community Partners

Through our expansive, mission-based programming, the Norman Bird Sanctuary works to be an inclusive hub for community partnerships. Across our campus, we are actively engaging local partners to advance our work.

Community Partner

Aquidneck Land Trust
BikeNewport
Castle Hill Inn
Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Center
East Bay Community Action Program
Eastern RI Conservation District
FabNewport
Fall River Deaconess Home
Launchpad
Looking Upwards
Metropolitan Regional Career and Technical Center, East Bay
Music Together
Newport Art Museum
Newport Garden Club
Newport Classical
Newport Live
Newport Transitions Academy
newportFILM
The Preservation Society of Newport County
Preserve Rhode Island
ReNewport
Rhode Island Bird Atlas
Rhode Island Coastal Resources Management Council
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management
Rhode Island Environmental Education Association, Inc.
Rhode Island Natural History Survey
Sacred Center
Salve Regina University
Save the Bay
Star Kids
St. Columba's Chapel
Town of Middletown, Rhode Island
United States Fish and Wildlife Service
URI Master Gardeners
YMCA – Newport County

Program

Management of shared easement properties
Environmental transportation awareness
Guided Nature Walks for guests
Nestbox monitoring and corresponding research
After school and summer learning programs; garden produce collaboration
Summer youth employment opportunities
Garden upgrades and programs
Summer immersion program and ongoing educational collaboration
Experiential Education
Volunteer opportunities
Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities programming
Science education and internships
Music and movement classes
Arts programming and Wetpaint 2024
Camp scholarships
Newport Music Festival
Summer Concert Series and Harvest Fair weekend music.
Volunteer opportunities
Hosting annual newportFILM Lab
Stonewall restoration
Stonewall restoration
Community collaborative focused on enhancing quality of life
Bird breeding atlas
Dune restoration and habitat restoration
Trail Stewardship
Science education
Rhody Native plantings; BioBlitz 2024
Yoga and wellness programming
Volunteer Services; Co-Teaching and guest lecturing
Habitat restoration, resiliency planning, and implementation
Camp Scholarships
Spirituality programming
Third Beach Habitat Restoration
Environmental education for underserved youth
Good Gardens management
Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities programming

2025 Special Events and Programs

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Norman Bird Sanctuary's special events and programs build community and inspire people of all ages. Join us for lively, educational, and memorable events and programs throughout the year.



MAY 17
8:00 - 11:00 AM

Birds & Breakfast: Celebrate spring and join the Norman Bird Sanctuary for a beloved community event. Gather your flock for a buffet breakfast, guided bird walks, Hawk Talks, crafts for kids, live music, and more!

MAY 23 - MAY 30

Paint Paradise Plein Air Week: Plein Air Week will honor the artistic legacy of our founder, Mabel Norman Cerio, and the cultural significance of the Sanctuary's landscape. This will be a free, week-long event for artists of all disciplines to be inspired by and create work across our 300-acre campus.

**PAINT
PARADISE**

MAY 30
5:30 - 8:00 PM

Paint Paradise Reception and Juried Benefit Show: Plein Air Week's culminating cocktail reception featuring a juried benefit show and sale.

**SUMMER
CONCERT SERIES**

**JUNE
THROUGH
AUGUST**

Summer Concert Series: Join the Norman Bird Sanctuary and Newport Live for the fifth installment of the Summer Concert Series! Enjoy music from critically acclaimed musicians on the Sanctuary's serene Studio Lawn at sunset.

**BEACH
BASH**

JULY 30
5:30 - 7:30 PM

Beach Bash: Family and friends of all ages will gather on Third Beach for a summer celebration featuring games, live music, s'mores, bonfires, and more.



OCTOBER 4 & 5
10:00 - 5:00 PM

Harvest Fair: This award-winning event is a fall favorite on Aquidneck Island. Challenge friends to a sack race, compete in the Home & Garden Competition, peruse the Crafter's Tent, enjoy live music, and so much more during this weekend of festivities for the whole family!

OCTOBER 25
1:00 - 4:00 PM

Treats Along the Trails: Wear your best costume for a Halloween exploration of the Sanctuary's trails, featuring yummy treats!



NOVEMBER 6
5:30 - 7:00 PM

Annual Meeting: Gather with staff, Board, volunteers, and supporters of the Sanctuary to review highlights of the year, applaud volunteer contributions, and learn about goals and plans for the year ahead.

DECEMBER 12
4:30 - 6:30 PM

Holly Days: 'Tis the season to join the Norman Bird Sanctuary for a festive winter celebration.



SCAN QR CODE TO SEE YEAR-LONG EVENTS CALENDAR

Donors

The Norman Bird Sanctuary gratefully acknowledges its dedicated individual, corporate, foundation, and government supporters. Gifts received April 1, 2023 through March 31, 2024.

\$20,000+

The Bubba Fund
The Champlin Foundation
The EJMP Fund for Philanthropy
The Gruben Charitable Foundation
Mrs. John A. van Beuren

\$10,000 - \$19,999

Anonymous (1)
The Benzak Foundation
The William H. Donner Foundation
Mr. Daniel W. Jones, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Levin
Prince Charitable Trusts
Mr. Robert M. Sabel and Ms. Lynne Mallonee
Mr. and Mrs. Albert K. Sherman, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Dwight D. Sippelle
Mr. and Mrs. Archbold D. van Beuren

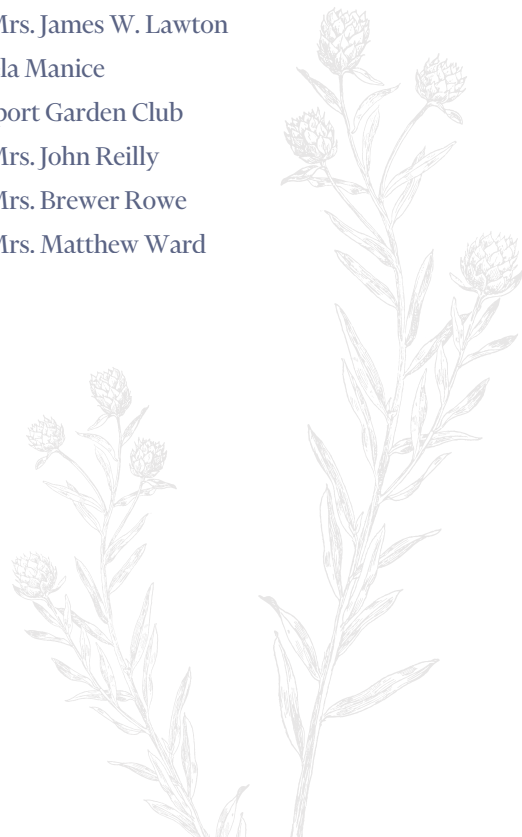
\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Mr. and Mrs. Brian Arnold
Dr. Holly M. Bannister and Mr. Douglas L. Newhouse
Mr. and Mrs. Alexander L. Berk
The Betty Byrne de Zahara 1997 Charitable Trust
Mr. and Mrs. Philip M. Bilden
Mr. and Mrs. John Brooks, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. William E. Burgess III
Mr. and Mrs. Duncan A. Chapman
The Charles Sumner Bird Charitable Foundation
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Mr. and Mrs. Ben Ducas
Fogarty Foundation
The Bernard & Sarah Gewirz Foundation
Ms. Kim Hapgood
Koppelman Family Foundation
Ms. Emily Manice and Mr. Jared Casey

The NewportFed Charitable Foundation
The Perkins Family Fund
Mr. and Mrs. George Petrovas
Mr. Eliot Raymond and Ms. Elizabeth Gibbs
Mr. and Mrs. John T. Reid
Rhode Island Foundation
George M. and Barbara G. Sage Fund
Mr. and Mrs. Jerry Shafir
Mr. and Mrs. Donald Steiner
Town of Middletown
Wapping Road Foundation

\$2,500 - \$4,999

The Aurora Trust
Bank of America
BankRI
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Bender
Mr. and Mrs. Emlen Drayton
Mr. and Mrs. William P. Egan
Frederick Henry Prince Memorial Fund at Newport Hospital
Ms. Katrina Hamilton Gewirz and Mr. Steven B. Gewirz
Mr. John K. Grosvenor and Ms. Cheryl Hackett
Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Jarczyk
The John Clarke Trust
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Lawton
Ms. Pamela Manice
The Newport Garden Club
Mr. and Mrs. John Reilly
Mr. and Mrs. Brewer Rowe
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Ward



\$1,000 - \$2,499

The Aquidneck Land Trust
Mr. David Beaver and Mr. Harry Trines
Dr. and Mrs. Cliff Berger
Mr. and Mrs. Walter Bopp
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Borden
Mr. and Mrs. Henry W. Breyer IV
Mr. and Mrs. James Martin Burress
Mr. and Mrs. Samuel G. Chase
Mr. and Mrs. Grenville Craig
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Foster Associates
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Mr. Peter O'Neill and Ms. Lindsay French
Oomph, Inc.
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Perrault
Mr. and Mrs. Timothy Porter
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Mr. David Warren Ray
Rhode Island Council for the Humanities
In memory of Horatio R. Rogers given by his friends
and family

Mr. and Mrs. James H. Ross
Ms. Kaity Ryan and Mr. Thomas Hodgkins
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Sayer
Ms. Jennifer M. Shotwell
Star Kids Scholarship Program
The Newport Garden Club
Ms. Julia Rush Toland
Mr. James Turner and Ms. Dede Delaney
Mr. and Mrs. Philip P. Virgadamo
Mr. Richard Wallace
Ms. Melissa Welch and Mr. George Krol
Mr. and Mrs. George Whitmore
Ms. Nancy Brent Wingo
Dr. Mark Zeller

Supporters Attend Donor Appreciation Evening



(Left to right) Michele Foster, Dick Lynn, Elizabeth and Larry Allen, Elizabeth Lynn.



JoAnn Morency, Jocelyn Sherman, Paul Morency.

\$500 - \$999

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Mr. and Mrs. Dickson G. Boenning
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Ms. Eileen Douglas
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Chris Electric
Corrigan Financial
Discover Newport
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Neighborhood Health Plan of Rhode Island
Newport Animal Hospital
Newport National Golf Club
Newport Restaurant Group
The Pennfield School
Ragged Island Brewing Co.
Renewal by Andersen
St. Michael's Country Day School



Katie and Matt Gray, CJ Sturtevant, Abby Rowe.



Michael Gewirz, Dennis and Madeleine Durkin.



Emily and Jeremy Pochman, Daniela Burton.



We apologize for any misspellings or omissions.

We thank the many donors whose gifts of less than \$500 generously support the Norman Bird Sanctuary each year.

HELP US PROTECT PARADISE.

Every day, year after year, the Norman Bird Sanctuary defends 300 acres of Aquidneck Island's most vulnerable and valuable coastal habitat from a multitude of threats ranging from development, impaired watershed, invasive plants and animals, and more. We protect the Sanctuary so that our community - including the animals and plants that make a home here - has a safe and healthy natural place to explore, learn, and flourish.

The Norman Bird Sanctuary is one of very few preserved historic coastal New England farms that embody our region's cultural significance and scenic character. It is recognized on the National Register of Historic Places and in the state-designated Paradise Loop Scenic Byway. As we tackle the challenges ahead, we need your help protecting this special place.

**Help us protect paradise by contributing to the
Protecting Paradise Capital Campaign today.**

Contact Kaity Ryan, Executive Director

(401) 846-2577

OR

Scan QR code to donate today.



Protecting Paradise Capital Campaign

Gifts and commitments made through November 2024.

Campaign Committee

Barbara Benson, <i>Co-Chair</i>	John Grosvenor
Katie Hamilton Gewirz, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Cheryl Hackett
Robert Manice, <i>Co-Chair</i>	Deborah Linnell
Brian Arnold	Abigail Rowe
John Arnold	Krista Sturtevant
Dan Benson	
Liz Drayton	
Ben Ducas	

\$1,000,000 and Above

The Alletta Morris McBean Charitable Trust

\$500,000 - \$999,999

Anonymous (1)

\$250,000 - \$499,999

van Beuren Charitable Foundation

The Estate of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Everett

\$100,000 - \$249,999

Mr. and Mrs. David Canepari

The Gewirz Family

Ms. Katrina Hamilton Gewirz and Mr. Steven B. Gewirz

Mr. Bernard S. Gewirz

Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan K. Gewirz

The Estate of Mr. William Mershon

Mr. Dana Schmaltz and Ms. Kate Enroth

\$50,000 - \$99,999

Anonymous (1)

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The Loeb's Family Foundation

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The Estate of Mr. Vernon A. Harvey

Ms. Terry Morgenthaler and Mr. Patrick Kerins

The Estate of Mr. Charles Anthony Ryerson III

Mr. and Mrs. Donald Steiner

\$25,000 - \$49,999

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Mr. and Mrs. George Petrovas

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Anonymous (1)

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The Benzak Foundation

Mr. and Mrs. Paul Marshall

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Van Liew Trust Company

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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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Ms. Elizabeth Gibbs and Mr. Eliot Raymond

Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Howell

Ms. Emily Manice and Mr. Jared Casey

Mr. and Mrs. John Reid

Mr. and Mrs. Brewer Rowe

\$2,500 - \$4,999

Ms. Mary Alice Smith

\$1,000 - \$2,499

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Mr. Allan Chasanoff

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Up to \$1,000

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The Nerones



Birds of a Feather

HANG OUT IN PARADISE

Together!

Become a member and show your support for environmental education and conservation. Your membership directly funds our mission to spark people's curiosity to explore, steward, and find peace and joy in nature.

All Members Enjoy

- Free trail access every time you visit
- Member Monday trail access extended by one hour twice per month
- Discounted trail fee for additional guests
- Discounts on NBS programs and events, including Summer Camp and Harvest Fair
- 10% discount in the Barn Owl Shop, with additional seasonal discounts
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- Special members-only communications
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or visit www.NormanBirdSanctuary.org



Discover. Preserve. Teach. Inspire.

Help us protect this special place for generations to come.

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TAX ID: 22-2746733
www.NormanBirdSanctuary/join-and-give

