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AUDUBON



Strategic Plan
2019-2024



Cover photo: Carolyn Byers

Arlene Koziol

INTRODUCTION

Madison Audubon Society is more than just a bird conservation organization. Our membership is made up of more than 3,000 people who are passionate about conservation of wildlife, restoration of beautiful native habitats, environmental education for community members of all ages, and community activism around research and advocacy for natural resources. What started as a birding club in 1935 has blossomed into a respected conservation leader and a unique, determined, progressive organization that represents the diverse values of our membership.

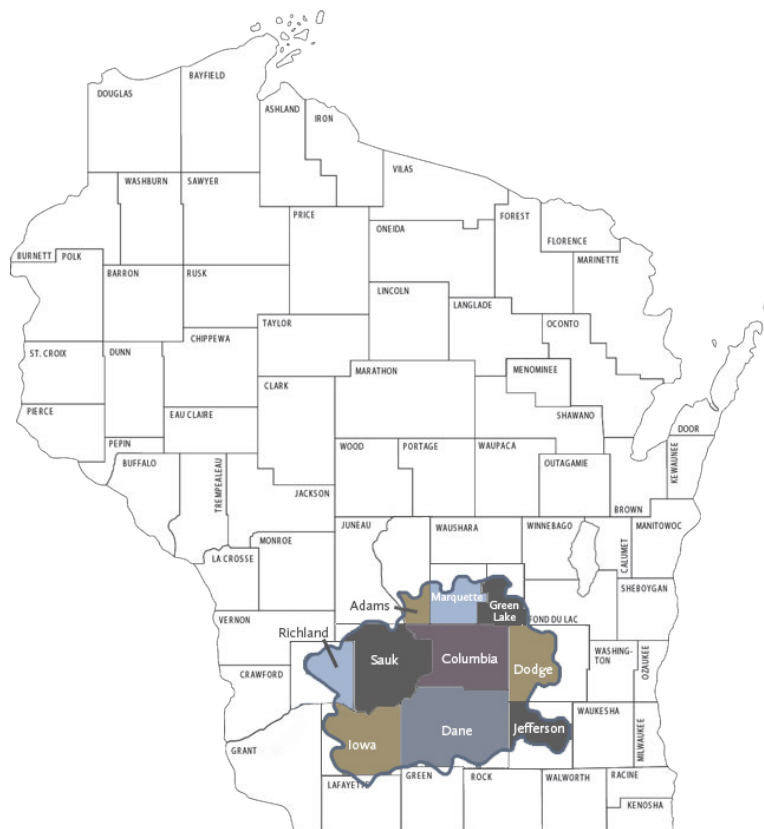
Madison Audubon prides itself on a long history of advocacy, land management, and conservation. At the very heart of that history are the people that have made it possible. We are an organization of community members of all ages and all walks of life who share in the joys and challenges of bird and habitat conservation. We are proud to share some insight into our newest strategic plan, which is presented in a condensed version here. We encourage you to explore our full 2019-2024 strategic plan at madisonaudubon.org/strategic-plan.

We look forward to working with you not only to meet this plan’s ambitious goals, but to create the next great chapter in our shared story.

Vision: A world in which there is respect for human well-being with a focus on the environment, birds, and other wildlife.

Mission: To protect and improve habitat for birds and other wildlife through land acquisition and management, education, and advocacy in southern Wisconsin.

Geographic Area: Serving the communities within 10 south-central Wisconsin counties. That's roughly 3.4 million acres!





“Nature is not a place to visit. It is home.”
-Gary Snyder

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STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS & FRAMEWORK

The 2019-2024 Strategic Plan in its full format is designed to help lead the organization toward a sustainable, productive, and meaningful future. Madison Audubon’s previous strategic plan (2013-2018) influenced decision-making and priority actions designed to create meaningful and impactful change. The new strategic plan builds on the scope and direction of that plan and sets a course for the next five years of organizational growth.

In January 2018, a strategic planning committee made up of Madison Audubon board members, staff, and volunteers was appointed to guide the planning process.

Members of the committee brought significant experience and diverse viewpoints to help contribute to a broad, comprehensive, inclusive, and collaborative planning process. The planning committee met monthly during 2018 to meticulously draft a plan that was approved by the full board of directors in February 2018. The planning committee and board are dedicated to annual adaptive monitoring of the plan's objectives and goals.

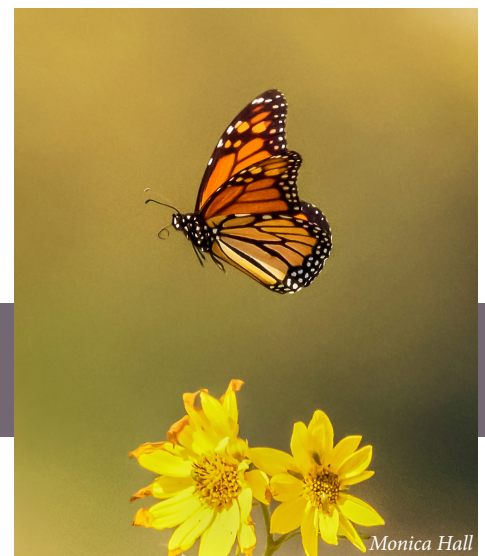
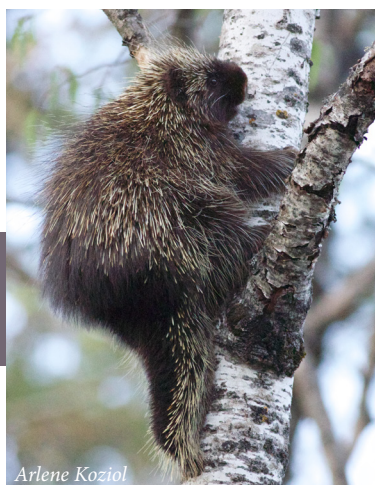
Four main strategies were established that set the framework for this plan and our work together. Each strategy is made up of groups of activities and tasks that contribute toward anticipated measurable outcomes that will result in increased benefits to birds and their habitats.

PRIMARY STRATEGIES

- Organizational Excellence and Sustainability
- Environmental Education
- Environmental Advocacy and Collaboration
- Habitat and Land Protection and Management

The challenges of conservation are ever-present and serious. With the new plan, Madison Audubon has identified a course for securing a bright future for Wisconsin's amazing birds, habitats, and citizens. As we work together to achieve the goals in this plan, we will simultaneously be addressing some of the most important challenges in conservation by connecting people and nature in an urbanizing world, reducing our vulnerability to the effects of climate change, sharing the joys and benefits of nature with all people, and ensuring effective and permanent land protection and management. With you on our side, we're confident we will be able to meet these challenges head on.

Thank you!





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ORGANIZATIONAL SUSTAINABILITY AND EXCELLENCE

Our new strategic plan includes multiple new and improved activities and goals within each of the three main programs that align with Madison Audubon’s mission. As a foundation to all of this work, Madison Audubon must continue to achieve organizational excellence and long-term sustainability—going above and beyond what is simply required and ensuring we are meeting our obligation to conservation that lasts forever. We work to achieve professional and ethical business practices, responsible governance, public transparency, sound financial management, adaptive decision-making, and community inclusiveness.

Committed to Financial Sustainability

Meeting our mission and implementing the work in our strategic plan requires diverse and sustainable resources. Madison Audubon is committed to expanding its financial capacity in partnership with our dedicated donors, foundations, and granting agencies by managing its assets with impeccable, transparent accounting and decision-making.

“If you take care of birds, you take care of most of the environmental problems in the world.”

-Thomas Lovejoy

Invested in People

Our staff, board, volunteers, and members make Madison Audubon tick. We are dedicated to a business environment that provides professional development, satisfaction, and inspiration and committed to delivering meaningful and rewarding volunteerism and citizen science experiences.

Broad and Effective Communication

Birds are a wonderful way to engage people in nature. Madison Audubon recognizes it must continue to engage strategically, widely, and creatively to share the joy and benefits of our natural resources with diverse audience and stakeholder groups.

Conservation for All

Nature is for everyone. Madison Audubon is dedicated to becoming a more inclusive and equitable organization that serves and benefits from the full spectrum of our community. By creating pathways and removing cultural, accessibility, financial or other barriers, our organization will enjoy a membership, staff, board, volunteers, and program participants that reflect the wonderfully diverse nature of our community.





**“Let Nature be
your teacher.”**
-William Wordsworth

ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Your passion and concern for nature is the heart of our work. We realize that the future of conservation depends on nurturing that passion, fostering knowledge, and igniting a love of the outdoors in future generations. A major strategy to achieving our mission during 2019-2024 is making rigorous, exciting, and scientifically-sound environmental education available for people of all ages.

We will undertake this strategy using a variety of approaches. Madison Audubon will offer self-guided and instructional learning opportunities, public presentations, citizen science programs, sanctuary work parties, special events, and sharing of information through social media—and lots more. We hope that increased involvement and knowledge by our members and the public will bolster a passionate and informed citizenry that is critical to meeting the conservation challenges we face.

Madison Audubon will also cultivate and expand our partnerships with classrooms and community centers to share fun, effective science and nature education with



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school-aged children. Kids need nature and nature needs kids. We will continue to provide free, hands-on, classroom-based education programs, particularly to underserved communities, and offer numerous additional public education programs. In doing so, kids will be able to take advantage of the many benefits spending time outdoor offers and we will inspire the next generations of conservationists who will continue our important work into the future. After all, as the old saying goes, education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire!

ACTIVITIES

- Provide members and the public with outreach-based education
- Provide internships and promote volunteerism
- Provide curriculum-based environmental education

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

If the activities within this strategy are successfully implemented, we expect increased awareness, understanding and engagement by a diverse community that will lead to increased land ethic, public support for conservation program, and environmental engagement.

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“Those who contemplate the beauty of earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts.”

-Rachel Carson

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY AND COLLABORATION

Madison Audubon values the importance of community and collaboration, and embraces the reality that our work cannot be done in a vacuum. This strategy is focused on harnessing the power of our platform, members, and service audience to foster an informed constituency who feels empowered to advocate for conservation in Wisconsin and locally to benefit birds, wildlife and habitat.

To accomplish this, we will promote an active Advocacy Committee who will help identify, prioritize, and guide the communications around important conservation concerns, and build partnerships to strengthen those efforts. Madison Audubon will also leverage its expertise, resources, and membership to influence important issues at the local, state, regional and federal levels that will result in protection of birds and their habitats.



ACTIVITIES

- Identify key issues to focus advocacy efforts
- Provide the public with information on key conservation issues
- Provide the public with advocacy tools and activities

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

If activities within this strategy are effectively implemented, we expect that Madison Audubon's constituents will be aware and empowered, which will lead to increased public advocacy for conservation issues with beneficial policies being implemented and harmful policies being defeated.





**“When we see land
as a community to which
we belong, we may
begin to use it with love
and respect.”**

-Aldo Leopold

Jack Dougherty

HABITAT AND LAND PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Ample, diverse, and secure habitat is one of the greatest resources we can provide birds and other wildlife to find food, shelter, and places to raise young. It is also a treasure for humans to reconnect with and study the land, find respite from hectic lives, and pluck the strings of curiosity.

Madison Audubon members have always seen land preservation as a vital part of bird conservation. Over the years, Madison Audubon and its volunteers have been integral in conserving more than 3,000 acres in southern Wisconsin. Currently, our two wildlife sanctuaries, Faville Grove and Goose Pond, together constitute nearly 1,600 acres abounding with restored native habitats and teeming with life.

We're proud to be among the leaders in land protection. Madison Audubon is one of the top three chapters in the nation (out of nearly 500) in the amount of land we protect and manage for birds and only the second to earn national land trust



Dave Huth

accreditation. Our strategic plan charts a course for Madison Audubon to increase the overall acreage of protected land and collaborate with a community of partners protecting habitat. Together we will improve the diversity and health of our spectacular native biological communities in southern Wisconsin and beyond.

ACTIVITIES

- Adaptively restore and manage Madison Audubon sanctuaries
- Pursue strategic land protection opportunities
- Partner with and encourage others to protect and manage habitat and wildlife

MEASURABLE OUTCOMES

If the activities within this strategy are successfully implemented, we expect continuation of our national land trust accreditation, identification and implementation of best management practices, an increase in the acreage of protected habitat, expansion of a sustainable community of partners protecting habitat, and an overall improvement in the diversity and health of native plant and animal communities on managed lands.



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