

# Spring 2023

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*Green-Rock Audubon Society*

# G-RAS



*Protecting Wildlife for Tomorrow*

Serving Lafayette, Green,  
& Rock Counties

**American Robin**

Photo by Joni Denker

# THE NATURALIST

## President's Article

Dear GRAS members,

As winter is giving way to a very eventful spring, we at GRAS are looking forward to several land management projects taking place on our properties this spring and summer. This will include contracted work to treat reed canary grass and willow at Cleophas Reserve, Gabower-Reilly, and Spring Creek. Treating these species will allow for greater species diversity and an overall healthier ecosystem. We have secured a contractor for this and will cost around \$16,000!



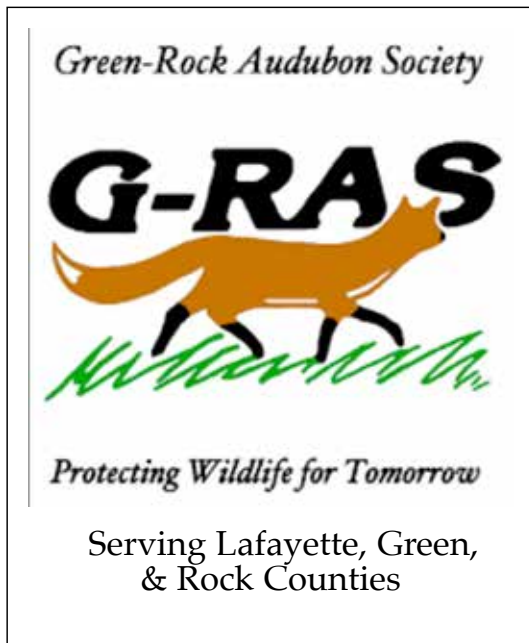
Some of our land management activities are covered fully or partially by various grants we can apply for through state and federal agencies such as the DNR, USDA, and USFWS. Using volunteer hours as a cost share or match helps us to cover the costs of our land management activities. However, some costs aren't covered under these programs, and we must rely on the generosity of our supporters in order to continue with our projects.

Would you consider helping us by donating today?

Your support is crucial to our mission: *to restore, preserve, and protect the environment for us and future generations through education, activism, and conservancy.*

If you would like to donate towards our land management activities you can do so by mailing your contribution to Green-Rock Audubon, P.O. Box 1986, Janesville, WI 53547, or through our online portal at [greenrockaudubon.org](http://greenrockaudubon.org).

Sincerely,  
Joni Denker  
GRAS President





# G-RAS Lands Spring 2023

**Prepared by Victor Illichmann**  
*Land Manager*

Androne Woods – We have been cutting and burning brush and fallen trees. We have been struggling with weather conditions and a small crew. We have purchased a grapple mounted on our tractor. This is a significant improvement in our capability. If you do a drive by on Cleophas Rd., our woods are obviously more open than our neighbor’s woods. This is a significant sign of progress, an oak woods is more open than other woodlands and more dense than an oak savanna. We will have Workenders helping torch garlic mustard April 14, 21, and 28 and May 5, 12, and 19, and June 9th.



We will have an additional year to get \$6,600 of volunteer time. There is oak wilt within a half mile of this woods and gypsy moths a few miles away. This is a great cause of alarm. The south end of this woods is mostly mature red oak. Oak wilt would decimate or eradicate these trees. This is also where we have the yellow orchid populations. We would like to establish a nature trail here. All we need is someone to take this task on for us.



Cleophas Reserve – We will do a spring burn here. We plan on spraying canary grass. We will need to get any parsnip that appears before it can seed out. We should have a lot of good color in parts of this parcel.

Gabower-Reilly Reserve – We need to get the scattered willow remaining west of the creek and spray for canary grass. About 13 acres along the south end of this parcel will be planted to pollinator mix the fall of 2024. East of the creek, in addition to spraying canary grass we have some strands of willow that we need to wick with Garlon. East of

the creek, most of this will be burned this spring. We will need to get any parsnip that appears so it can’t seed out. Oak wilt is present in the oak savanna. There should be lot of color present. A lot of this should be visible from the road. In late spring, you will see a yellow band of Golden Alexander. Look for this where the 2 small oaks are east of the creek.

Gabower-Reilly East – We have the buildings and fences removed. We still have concrete slabs to bury. We have made good progress removing trees. Most of this will be burned this spring. We have willow and buckthorn to wick with Garlon and canary grass to spray.

Spring Creek Reserve - We need to spray for canary grass. We have a lot to wick with Garlon. We need to get the parsnip before it seeds out. Along the creek and east will be burned this fall. We will plant pollinator mix along the creek this fall. There should be areas of good color, some can be seen for the road.



# Drop the Audubon Name?

By **Susan Amber Johnson**  
*Advocacy Chair*

On July 31, 2020 the National Audubon Society published an article in its monthly magazine entitled, "The Myth of John James Audubon." It was the first in a series about the organization's namesake. The author, Gregory Nobles, had already published an entire book about him, entitled John James Audubon: The Nature of the American Woodsman. Nobles, a member of the Atlanta and Michigan Audubon Societies, offered a well-researched and balanced portrayal of Audubon, whom he depicted as a real figure, a flesh-and-blood person, and not merely as a "great man."

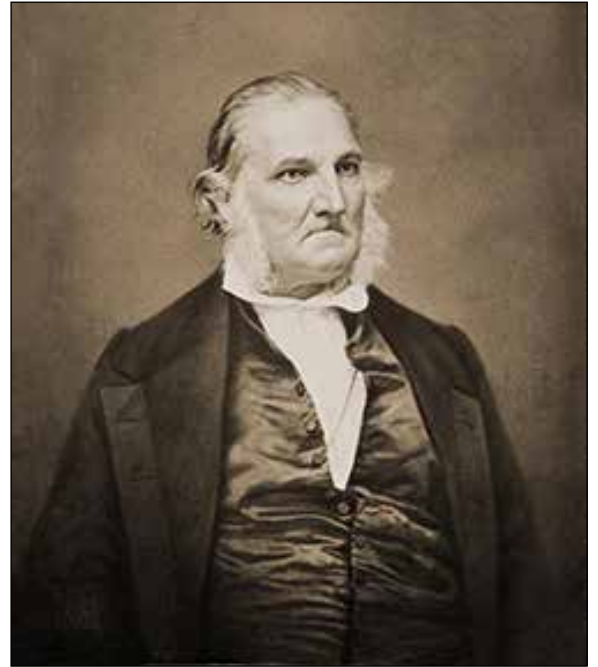
John James Audubon was a quintessential 19<sup>th</sup> century woodsman and adventurer. Early in that century, he undertook an epic journey to document every specie of bird he saw while traveling the North American continent. Audubon drew and hand-painted 490 bird species in exquisite detail; each one life-sized within its natural habitat. The four-volume book he published with 435 of these plates was entitled, The Birds of America. It was a monumental achievement, and remains an essential work of art, and scientific evidence of 19<sup>th</sup> century American birds.

As Audubon moved about the continent, ultimately crossing the ocean to England in search of investors for his book project, he bought and sold several sets of African human beings to work as his slaves. Some might look at his ownership of slaves as just being "a man of his times." However, there were many men and women living during the antebellum era who did take a strong stand against slavery. Instead, Audubon was an outspoken opponent of abolition. In 1834, he wrote to his wife in the states from England, saying that the English government had "acted imprudently and too precipitously" in freeing their slaves in the West Indies.

Audubon had been born on an island in the West Indies, which is the country of Haiti today. His father was a French Naval Officer who had fought in the American Revolutionary War, and owned a sugar plantation on the island. His mother was his father's Creole mistress who was most likely one of his slaves. Some sources called her a "servant," but his father did own slaves to work the sugar plantation. His mother died soon after he was born, and John James, and his sister were sent home to Nantes, France to be raised by his father's wife.

Audubon's racism did not end in his ownership of slaves. He not only expressed a belief that African-Americans and Native-Americans were inferior to Whites, but also attempted to scientifically prove it. Audubon robbed the graves of Native Americans and Mexicans to obtain skulls for examination and analysis. He sent them to Dr. Samuel Morton, who practiced phrenology "science," or the belief that the size and shape of a skull supposedly determines the inferiority, or superiority of the people with that skull. This pseudoscience was used to justify racial inequality throughout the nineteenth century and well into the twentieth century.

Noble's magazine article appeared two months after two significant racist events happened in the United States in May, 2020. On the same day that George Floyd was arrested, pinned to the ground, and died from a Minneapolis police officer kneeling on his neck, and cutting off all of his oxygen, a Black Audubon member and local naturalist, Christian Cooper, was bird watching in Central Park. As Cooper walked along, he approached another hiker, a White woman, who was walking her dog. The dog was not on a leash, and Cooper told her about an ordinance requiring any dogs in Central Park to be leashed. She took out her phone, and called 9-1-1, claiming that a Black man was threatening her.



**John James Audubon**

\*See AUDUBON, Page 5

# Audubon

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Continued from page 4

Four days later, birder and biology graduate student at Georgia Southern University, Corina Newsome tweeted, “For far too long, Black people in the United States have been shown that outdoor exploration activities are not for us. Whether it be the way the media chooses to present who is the ‘outdoorsy’ type, or the racism Black people experience when we do explore the outdoors, as we saw recently in Central Park. Well, we’ve decided to change that narrative.”

Ever since May of 2020, the National Audubon Society, and its many local chapters, have engaged in a national debate about whether, or not, to drop the name “Audubon” from its organization. Actually, the Audubon Naturalist Society was the first organization to remove the Audubon name. It is not affiliated with the National Audubon Society, but is a Washington D.C.-based environmental organization focused on bird conservation. In October 2022, the Audubon Naturalist Society became Nature Forward.

Seattle was the first local chapter of the National Audubon Society to verbalize its desire to remove the Audubon name. Since September 2022, they’ve been engaged in holding focus groups with their internal and external stakeholders. By the end of March 2023, they will consider the new names recommended by the focus groups. In June of 2023, they will present their new name to all their chapters’ members.

On February 13, 2023, the Chicago Audubon Society, serving much of Cook County, IL, sent out a press release announcing that the organization sent a letter to Dr. Elizabeth Gray, the CEO of the National Audubon Society, encouraging the organization to find another name. If the National Audubon Society does not announce a new name, the Chicago Audubon Society will determine a new name for itself within the year.

On February 28, 2023, the Portland (OR) Audubon Society announced that its Board had voted in favor of removing the Audubon name from its organization. Saying, “No matter what our name, our mission remains the same: to inspire people to love and protect birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which life depends. While a name change is never easy, we believe that it’s vital to our work if we want to make sure that our Portland group is a place of belonging for everyone” and every community feels welcomed, safe, and supported.

It is time for our own Green-Rock Audubon Society chapter to join this discussion. We can no longer sit idly by while our National Audubon Society, and significant chapters across the country reckon with a realization they cannot accomplish their missions while touting the name “Audubon.” The name does not have the same meaning it may have once held. Today, it brings pain to all people of color!

According to our mission as stated on our website, we want to “restore, preserve, and protect the environment for us and future generations through education, activism, and conservancy.” Therefore, our first order of business will be to define what we mean by the word “us.” Are we referring to our current members only? Our current chapter membership has little diversity, especially ethnic diversity. Therefore, what do we mean by the word “us?” Are we being exclusive? If we are, how do we think we can really protect the environment without involving all groups of people with all kinds of diversity? If we’re not being exclusive, how do we think we will attract new members, especially members of diversity, if we keep the Audubon name, which brings pain to so many? It sounds like we have a lot of work to do this year. Let’s get started!





# Poems

Continued from page 6

"Perfect" love?  
Where in the world can we find "perfect" love?  
Can we find "mature" love? Love that is ready to bear fruit.  
Can we see the saints around us?  
Can we hear Jesus:  
    "Love your enemies.  
    Do good to those who hate you.  
    Bless those who curse you." Luke 6:27  
Can we follow Jesus?  
  
THEN It will happen.  
    "Mature love – drives away fear."  
        Because there's no space left.  
        There is no space in our hearts or minds for fear.  
        There is no space for anger which seeks to hurt some-  
one.        There is no space for division.  
                There is no space for mistrust.  
All those emotions have been transformed -  
        metamorphosed in our minds and hearts  
        into the energy to heal and to bless.  
Jesus said it: "Don't let your hearts be afraid.  
        Believe in God.  
        Trust in me." John 14:1

Neil Deupree  
February 16, 2023

## Seek the Truth

*You shall know the truth.* – Jesus (John 8:32)  
But what is truth?  
    Is it a religious doctrine?  
        Is it a factual analysis?  
            Is it what feels right?  
                Is it what makes me happy?  
The opposite of the truth is a lie.  
    The opposite of true is false.  
        The opposite of fact is fiction.  
            The opposite of myth is reality.  
But there are times when  
    fiction has more truth than fact.  
There are times when  
    myth has more truth than reality.  
There are times when  
    the false answer on the test  
        is really true.  
There are times when  
    a lie has some truth

\*See POEMS, Page 8

# Poems

Continued from page 7

in it.

In that case –

what do we count on?

what do we believe?

how do we live?

Don't we need to find

solid ground to stand on?

Don't we need to trust

the bridge before we walk on it?

Don't we need to have

something real to act on?

Don't we need to have

someone to believe in?

How do we know the truth?

If we are scientists,

we verify it through experiments.

If we are historians,

we look at the original sources

and judge which have more credibility – less bias.

If we are reporters,

we check and recheck our sources.

If we are voters,

we look at the candidates' personal histories and past actions.

If we are parents,

we have to determine

whose story is most believable.

(And sometimes we get it wrong. 😞)

Can we put on a pair of magic spectacles that will show us the truth?

It would be nice! (Sigh!)

Can we find the truth

by connecting with people who think like us  
and look like us?

Can we find the truth

by believing someone who says the right things?

What did Jesus mean,

*You will know the truth?*

Can we connect with the new commandment he gave?

*Love one another as I have loved you.*

Can we take the measure of truth by asking:

How much love for others is reflected here?

How much care is shown for the least

the lost

the lonely?

If we can find that truth in love,

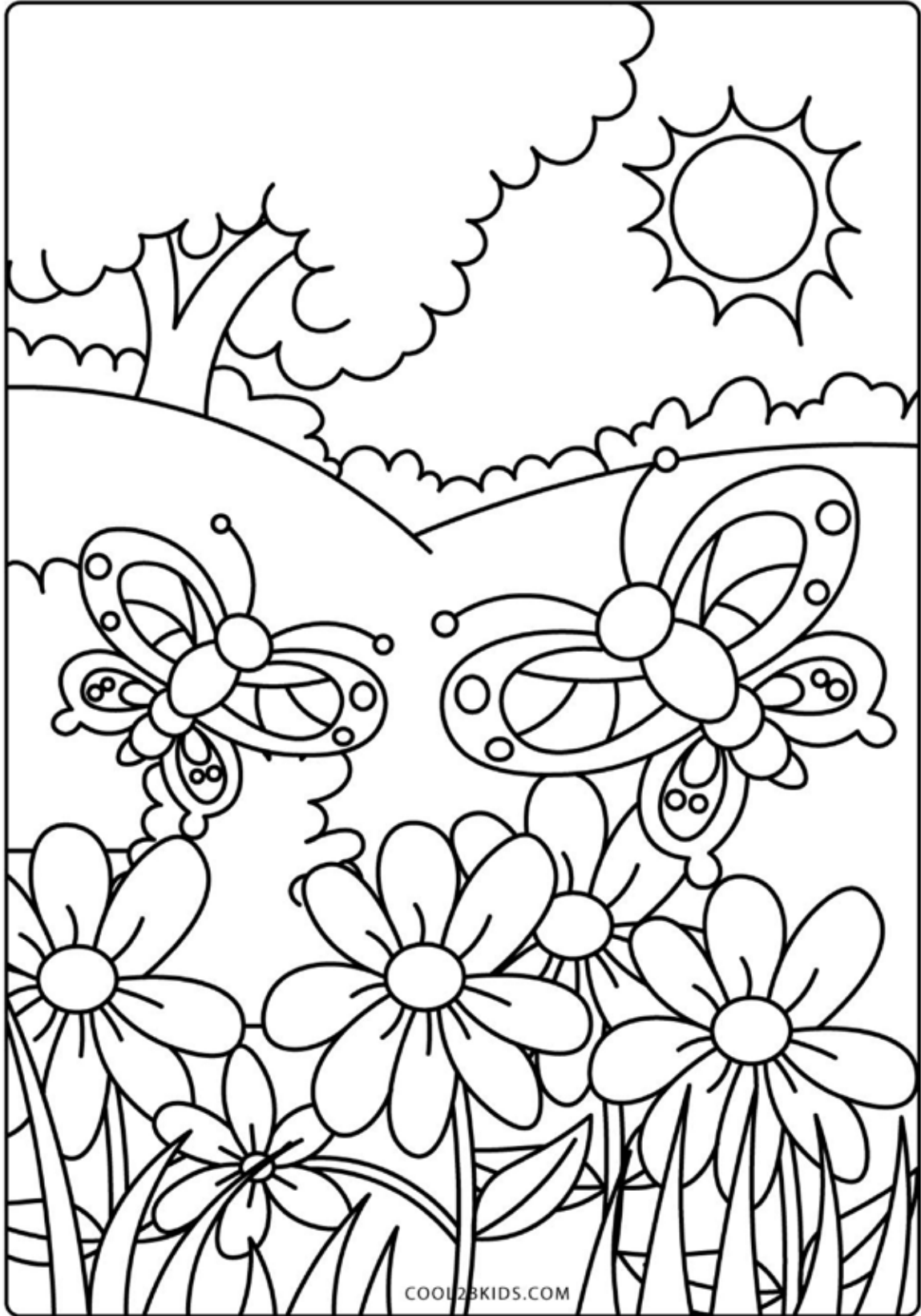
then Jesus' promise can come true:

*The truth will set you free!*

Neil Deupree  
July 2022



**Spring is here!**





# Join Green-Rock Audubon Society

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Would you prefer to receive the newsletter electronically? \_\_\_\_

## Two Ways to Join

\_\_\_ I wish to join Green-Rock Audubon Society, I understand that I will not receive the Audubon Magazine, but all dues will go to G-RAS.

Dues:  \$10 Senior or Student,  \$15 Single Membership,  \$20 Couple

• To pay by mail, make checks payable to G-RAS, and mail this form along with the check to this address:

Green-Rock Audubon  
 Attn: Treasurer  
 P.O. Box 1986  
 Janesville, WI 53547-1986

• To pay online visit <https://www.greenrockaudubon.org/donate>

\_\_\_ I wish to join the National Audubon Society's normal membership of \$35 per year which includes the Audubon Magazine. (Please visit <http://audubon.org/> to complete this membership.)

\_\_\_ I wish to donate an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to support GRAS's conservation efforts.

## Volunteering Interests I would like to volunteer for...

- Whatever is Needed
- Burning
- Brushing
- Spraying
- Seed Collecting
- Planting

## I can volunteer at:

- Whenever is Needed
- Androne Woods
- Cleophas Reserve
- Spring Creek Reserve
- Gabower-Reilly Reserve
- The Pond (Janesville)

## Donate Beyond Membership I would like to donate to...

- Whatever is Needed
- Purchasing Herbicides
- Purchasing Spray Equipment

## I want my donation to support G-RAS's efforts to manage or maintain...

- Androne Woods
- Cleophas Reserve
- Spring Creek Reserve
- Gabower-Reilly Reserve

## Times I can usually volunteer:

- Monday
- Tuesday
- Wednesday
- Thursday
- Friday
- Saturday
- Sunday

## Volunteer Coordinator:

Victor Illichmann  
 viccarol@sbcglobal.net  
 608.752.8342

(Please mail checks according to the directions above or visit our website.)

# Membership Form Inside

Green-Rock Audubon Society (G-RAS) membership for one year with quarterly newsletter Green-Rock Naturalist from Green-Rock Audubon Society (all dues go to G-RAS).

- Senior or Student membership \$10
- Single person membership \$15
- Couples membership \$20



@GRAudubon, #GreenRockAudubon  
www.facebook.com/greenrockaudubon  
www.greenrockaudubon.org

## Board of Directors

To contact the directors e-mail  
greenrockaudubon@gmail.com  
President, Joni Denker  
Vice President, Sharon Bishop  
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Director, John Patterson  
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Membership Chair, Steve Reischel  
Advocacy Chair, Susan Johnson

## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We appreciate your financial contributions and your encouragement for our efforts to protect birds and the places they live.

### Memberships and Donations October 2022 through February 2023

Joanne Anderson	Hosler	Lou Williams-Schroeder
Norman & Carol Aulabaugh	Phillip Moore &	Nathan and Shana Sies
Elizabeth Babler	Jane Anderson	John Sorce
Marge & Bob Blakely	Timothy Krause	William & Sara Stark
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Barb Gelbach	Kathryn Robinson	C. Topf Wells
Charles Goldstein	Robert & Nancy Rudd	Mark Woodard
Mary Margaret O'Connell	Stephen Schroeder & Mary	

## Your Articles are needed!

Your articles for the Summer issue will be needed soon. If you could, please, get them to me as soon as possible, I would appreciate it.

Thank you very much. Carol Herzig, Editor