

# Autumn 2022

P.O. Box 1986  
Janesville, WI 53547-1986  
Return Service Requested



*Please pass me  
to a friend or  
recycle!*



*Winter's beauty*

Photo by Joni Denker

*Green-Rock Audubon Society*

**G-RAS**



*Protecting Wildlife for Tomorrow*

Serving Lafayette, Green,  
& Rock Counties

# THE NATURALIST

## President's Article

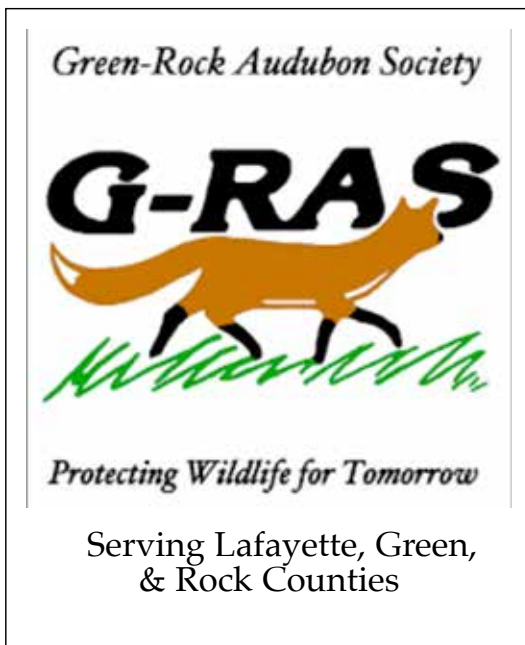
Hello GRAS members and supporters and happy fall!

I hope you've been able to get out and enjoy this beautiful weather we've been having, or to enjoy the autumn colors in your favorite natural areas. As we are getting ready for our annual meeting on November 20th, I wanted to send out a special request to our members. As a non-profit organization run exclusively by volunteers, our success depends on the dedication of those volunteers. We've been blessed with some very dedicated volunteers over the years on our land management team and our board of directors.

At our annual meeting we will be looking to fill several positions on our board including Vice

President, Secretary, and Director at Large. We also welcome all skill levels on our land management crew, even if you're just nature curious and want to see what brings our volunteers back year after year! You're welcome to contact me directly at [jonidenker@gmail.com](mailto:jonidenker@gmail.com) or join us at our annual meeting to learn more.

Joni Denker



## G-RAS Annual Meeting Scheduled for November 20

Bluebirds will be the topic of interest at the annual meeting of Green-Rock Audubon Society.

The venue will once again be Three Waters Reserve, N3941 Golf Course Rd. Brodhead, WI 53520 <https://threewatersreserve.com/>

There will be a complimentary lunch of sandwiches and more. And door prizes!

Our gathering will start with lunch and social time, followed by our business meeting. We will hear reports from our president, treasurer, and land management. The program will follow.

We expect to wrap up before 3 p.m., which will give time for outdoor and indoor tours.

Please let us know that you will be there and give us your sandwich preference (turkey, ham, roast beef, vegetarian) by Monday, November 14, so that we can order the right amount of food. See next page for details.

## Where do chimney swifts hang out? In chimneys, of course.

Every year hundreds of swifts travel through our area on their way to South America. While they're here, they take on nutrition for the journey. They also spend time partying at local chimneys. It is a real spectacle when a couple of thousand of the little birds dive into a chimney within a span of 15 minutes.

Washington Elementary School in Janesville is usually a great place to watch. This year on two successive Sundays (August 28 & September 4) we counted 430 and 2080!

We coordinated volunteers to count at seven sites we knew about – to get an idea of the total number for Janesville. The total number of swifts on September 4th was 2620.

It seems that swifts can check out different chimneys on different nights. Two of the sites that had 50-70 on the first Sunday had none the next week. We also discovered three new chimneys this year: Hilltop International Pub, a private home on E Milwaukee St, and a sizeable chimney at the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired on State Street. There must be good vibes at the School for the Blind, since they were still roosting there until late October. On October 20, I counted over 500 circling and socializing and going in for the night.

The Wisconsin DNR is encouraging people to be aware of swifts and to help count. See <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom/release/62221> for more information. I'm sure this will be happening each year now. This article also mentions the Wisconsin Chimney Swift Working Group: <https://www.wiswifts.org/> There is a lot of information and background on their website. By the way, G-RAS has partnered with the Working Group to further their efforts.

Thanks to the volunteer counters who spent Sunday evenings and more on this effort, and who alerted us to the new chimneys: Josh & Cathy Erdman, Jack & Grace DeVito, Gary & Darcy Hess, Andrea Short, Ann Marie Ames, Coral Swanson & Ken Marsden, Jerry & Linda Samuelson, Nancy Stabb family, Ryan Stahl family, Vicki Martin & Bob Perelman.

If you'd like to volunteer for next fall's count, please get in touch with me at [deupreen@charter.net](mailto:deupreen@charter.net) or 608-752-8342 or 714 Wilson St, Janesville, 53548. I will do my best to post current updates on the Bird City Janesville Facebook page.

## Attracting Eastern Bluebirds & Other Cavity Nesters

This program will cover what you need to do to attract Eastern Bluebirds to your yard, parks or farms etc.

Type of habitat, nest boxes, location of boxes and how to monitor nest boxes and keep records will be covered.

Nest boxes do attract other cavity nesters like chickadees, tree swallows and house wrens and these species will also be covered briefly.

Problems you might have to deal with on the bluebird trail will also be discussed.

Patrick Ready will be our presenter

Patrick got interested in bluebirds when he lived in Stoughton and was asked to take over the bluebird trail at Lake Kegonsa State Park. That was over 20 years ago and he now manages 9 trails in Dane Co. He has fledged over 1000 bluebirds from his trails.

In 2004 he joined the board of directors of the Bluebird Restoration Association of Wis. (BRAW) He has been the editor of their newsletter Wisconsin Bluebird since then as well. From 2014 to 2020 he was president of BRAW and continues as a director today.



# Project Feederwatch begins November 1

## WHAT IS FEEDERWATCH?

Project FeederWatch turns your love of feeding birds into scientific discoveries. FeederWatch is a November-April survey of birds that visit backyards, nature centers, community areas, and other locales in North America. You don't even need a feeder! All you need is an area with plantings, habitat, water or food that attracts birds. The schedule is completely flexible. Count your birds for as long as you like on days of your choosing, then enter your counts online. Your counts allow you to track what is happening to birds around your home and contribute to a continental data-set of bird distribution and abundance.

## WHAT DO FEEDERWATCH DATA TELL US?

When thousands of FeederWatchers in communities across North America count birds and send their tallies to the FeederWatch database, the result is a treasure trove of numbers, which FeederWatch scientists analyze to draw a picture of winter bird abundance and distribution.

FeederWatch data show which bird species visit feeders at thousands of locations across the continent every winter. The data also indicate how many individuals of each species are seen. This information can be used to measure changes in the winter ranges and abundance of bird species over time.

## WHY ARE FEEDERWATCH DATA IMPORTANT?

With each season, FeederWatch increases in importance as a unique monitoring tool for more than 100 bird species that winter in North America.

What sets FeederWatch apart from other monitoring programs is the detailed picture that FeederWatch data provide about weekly changes in bird distribution and abundance across the United States and Canada. Importantly, FeederWatch data tell us where birds **are** as well as where they **are not**. This crucial information enables scientists to piece together the most accurate population maps.

Because FeederWatchers count the number of individuals of each species they see several times throughout the winter, FeederWatch data are extremely powerful for detecting and explaining gradual changes in the wintering ranges of many species. In short, FeederWatch data are important because they provide information about bird population biology that cannot be detected by any other available method.

To learn more and to sign up, go to: <https://feederwatch.org/about/> It's not too late. Register any time this month

## An eagle's nest in Janesville: Now you see it; now you don't

For the last few years, the resident pair of eagles has tended the nest at the east end of Rockport Road, just behind Marling Lumber and across the river. Last year they raised three eaglets. This year there was only one. The youngster was getting close to fledging.

Then, disaster. In the middle of a storm, the tree branch broke under the weight of nest and "down came baby, cradle and all". After a day of searching, the eaglet was found, severely injured. She was taken to Hoo's Woods our local raptor rehab center. Dianne Moller, director, named her "Marling" and nursed her back to health. Unfortunately, she won't be able to fly, since her wing has not healed right. She will go on the road as an "educational ambassador", always assured of a home at Hoo's Woods.

For updates on her condition, go to <https://hooswoods.org/> or to their Facebook page: Hoo's Woods Raptor Center.

Meanwhile, the eagle pair is still on territory. It appears that they are in the process of building a new nest. Good for them!



# G-RASLands – June 8, 2022

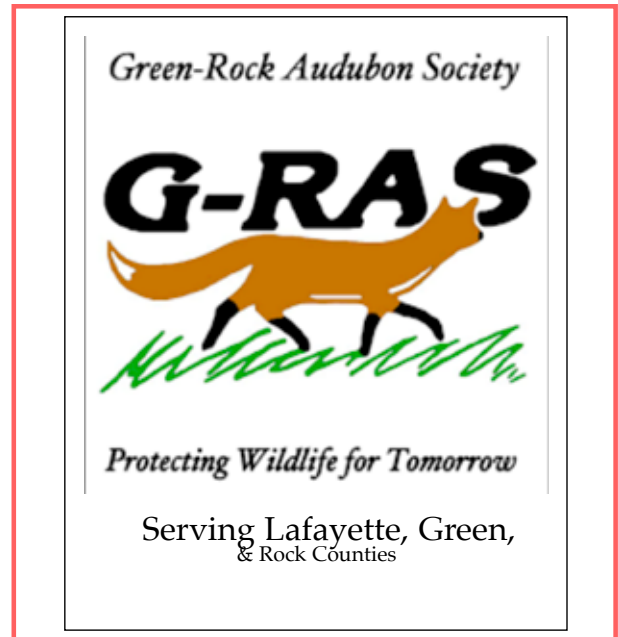
**Victor Illichmann**  
Land Manager

**Androne Woods** – We have been removing brush and fallen trees, so we can get at the garlic mustard. We have done this in 4 acres this year. Unfortunately, that leaves 12 acres we should have torched garlic mustard in. This is enough for us to get payment for our CSP contract. The ground cover is really proliferating due to the work we are doing. Please walk the trails in spring and summer to appreciate the beauty and variety.

**Cleophas Reserve** – We need to keep the newly seeded area mowed to 6 inches. The parsnip is a big problem. In a year or 2 this should be a real show place. We have burns scheduled for 2023 and 2025.

**Gabower-Reilly** – We have banks of yellow visible from the road. This is golden alexander. Watch for the changes throughout the season. We will be seeding the south end of this property in 2024.

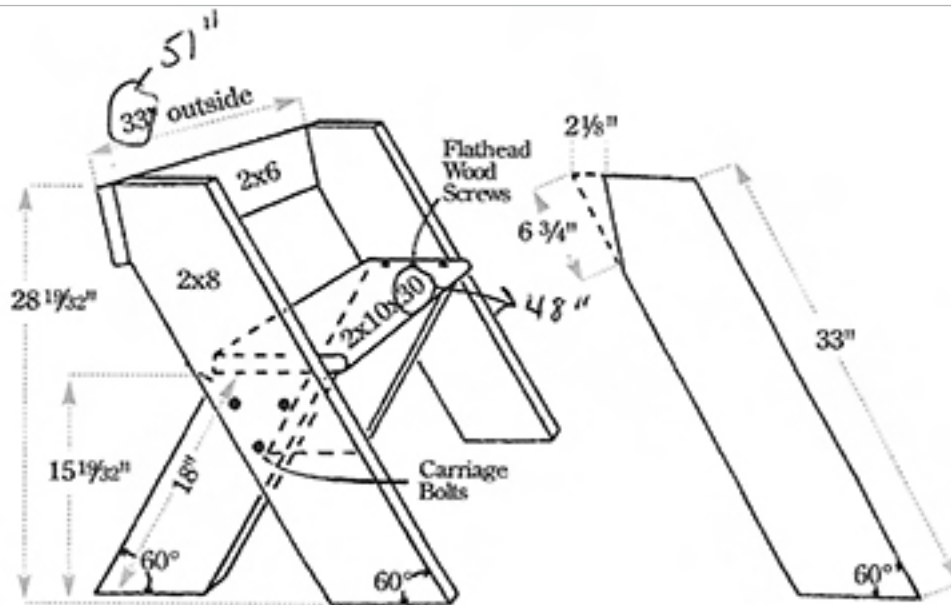
**Spring Creek** – We mowed the west side of the creek regularly this summer. There will be a lot of good color on the east side of the creek. We have sprayed for canary grass and will do it again in 2023 and 2024. In 2023 we will seed pollinator mix along the creek. Perhaps in 2025 we can get our Seasonal Bee Habitat and rental property in CRP. This will cost us tens of thousands of dollars up front, but the CRP payments over a 10-year period will pay us back.



## Leopold Bench

**Victor Illichmann**  
Land Manager

We need more Leopold Benches to place on our properties and a couple of picnic tables. I'm attaching a plan for the benches (see next page). A 48-inch bench works best for our purpose. Aldo Leopold wanted a comfortable bench using the minimum amount of materials. We can supply the materials and you can supply the labor. We have benches at Androne Woods, Gabower-Reilly Reserve, and Spring Creek Reserve, if you wish to see some benches. Contact Victor Illichmann at [viccarol@sbcglobal.net](mailto:viccarol@sbcglobal.net) or 608.302.8113 if you wish to contribute to this project.



**Materials:** One 2x6x33", one 2x10x30", one 2x8x10', six  $\frac{3}{8}$ "x3  $\frac{1}{2}$ " carriage bolts with washer and nut, twelve  $\frac{3}{8}$ "x3  $\frac{1}{2}$ " #12 or #14 flathead wood screws. Use Douglas Fir for your Leopold bench, if you can, and customize its size to suit you. The materials listed will make a 33" bench, but you may choose to build out to 48".

### ALDO LEOPOLD BENCH

To spy a Leopold bench in someone's yard is to know something about the family who there resides. Even if you haven't read Leopold's opening lines, *"There are some who can live without wild things, and some who cannot. These essays are the delights and dilemmas of one who cannot,"* from *A Sand County Almanac*, you will appreciate this easy-to-build bench. If left untreated, this stable bench develops a characteristic gray patina, however, putting some preservative where bench meets ground will prolong its life. Its form, resting alone under a tree or in congregation around a firepit, reminds us of Leopold's thoughtfulness:

*"When some remote ancestor of ours invented the shovel, he became a giver: He could plant a tree. And when the axe was invented, he became a taker: He could chop it down. Whoever owns land has thus assumed, whether he knows it or not, the divine functions of creating and destroying plants."*

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*"The last word in ignorance is the man who says of an animal or plant, 'What good is it?' If the land mechanism as a whole is good, then every part is good, whether we understand it or not. If the biota, in the course of aeons, has built something we like but do not understand, then who but a fool would discard seemingly useless parts? To keep every cog and wheel is the first precaution of intelligent tinkering."*

## In the Face of the Avian Flu; To Feed, or Not to Feed Our Backyard Birds?

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

You may have heard about the avian flu spreading throughout Wisconsin, and the United States this year. There have been many alarming news stories circulating about it. This news has raised many questions among bird lovers, especially whether, or not, our backyard bird feeders are spreading the disease further, and more rapidly. Should we take our feeders down, and stop feeding our birds?

Most of the birds found infected in the United States so far have been domestic poultry. Twenty-eight million chickens and turkeys in twenty-nine states, including Wisconsin have died, either by becoming infected, or through preventative culling. The particular strain of virus this year is H5N1, also called HPAI. It is highly contagious, and deadly! It can cause neurological and respiratory issues. Infected birds appear to be disoriented, or uncoordinated. They often sneeze with nasal discharge.

Wild birds, too, have been found infected in thirty-one states, and in nine provinces of Canada. HPAI virus has been detected in 1006 wild birds, with at least sixteen detections in songbirds. For a map of the distribution of affected birds in the United States, click on the following link: <https://www.usgs.gov/media/images/distribution-highly-pathogenic-avian-influenza-h5-and-h5n1-north-america-20212022>. As of April 29, one person in Colorado has contracted the avian flu, but there is a low health threat to the general public.

HPAI is the same flu strain that spread throughout Europe and Asia in 2021. An epidemiological researcher believes it entered into the United States through migrations from Iceland, Greenland, and Newfoundland. Bryan Richards, a wildlife biologist for the United States Geological Service, noted how the outbreak followed its way up the Mississippi Flyway throughout February. "The movers and shakers of this are migratory waterfowl . . . no doubt whatsoever."

It is widely agreed that waterfowl are big carriers of HPAI, but they generally do not show symptoms, or become seriously ill. Raptors, though, are much more susceptible, and contract HPAI from eating infected birds. Corvids, like Blue Jays, Crows, and Ravens might also catch this virus from eating infected carcasses.

Dr. Juliana Lench, Director of the USDA APHIS, (Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service), compiles data from around the country. She has seen that common backyard song birds are far less likely than raptors, or corvids to contract the virus. And, they are even less likely to spread it to other song birds. As a result, Lench recommends that people continue to feed their backyard birds. However, since HPAI is highly contagious to domestic poultry, we must try to keep song birds, and poultry separated to ensure less spread. When poultry are present, it is better not to feed yard birds.

On March 14, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection announced the detection of HPAI in poultry in Jefferson County. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources has increased its monitoring of any spread to wild birds. Anyone who finds a sick, or dead bird should contact the DNR Wildlife Hotline at 608-267-0866, or email [DNRWildlifeSwitchboard@wi.gov](mailto:DNRWildlifeSwitchboard@wi.gov).

If you have to touch a dead bird, use gloves, and wash your hands with soap and water after handling it.





*The Bald Eagle* is the national bird of the United States. Color: dark brown with white head.

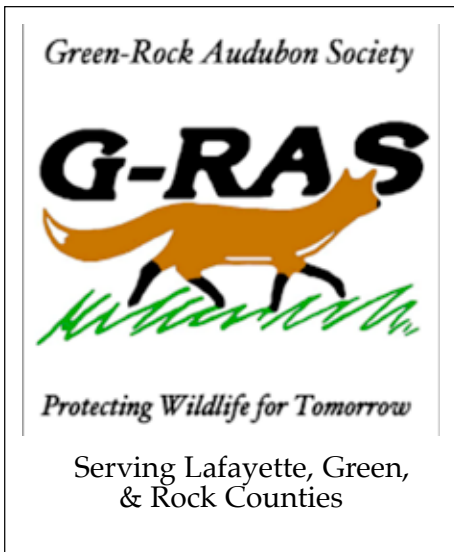




**Bur Oak**

I will plant this tree,  
Though I may never know it.  
I will not bask in its shade  
Nor enjoy its rugged winter form.  
Still I tend it, mow around it,  
Small and steady through the years.  
In time it will grow stately and tall,  
But surely not so fast as I bow low.  
Yet I will plant this tree.

A century from now, maybe more  
It will stand, broad and strong.  
Should this house yet then remain,  
Our children will love this elder friend.



They may delight in shade of its form  
And ponder its planting by man or creature of  
old.  
So I will plant this tree.

Or perhaps no people here remain.  
Some horror brought by man or God  
Has left this place in ruins.  
This tree may then still stand—  
Memory of men passed on.  
Yet weevil will burrow,  
The moth will feed,  
The bird will eat the moth.  
And all the rest will carry on.  
I will plant this tree.

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### **Mowing in September**

Exhilaration's rarely seen  
In this mundane a task,  
Tonight I feel my senses keen  
Treading on this snake-like path.

Feet are bare on soft cold earth.  
The wind blows hard against me—  
Blows the grass upon my face.  
The sky above is shifting gray,  
As diminishing red to West  
Reminds that night draws near.  
Rain threatens from clouds,  
Spitting once, twice, thrice.  
I race the sun and sky  
To finish what must be done.  
Alive and home, I revel  
In glorious dusk.  
Even as the cars slip by,  
Unseeing of the life I love  
Amid the wind and rain.

--  
Dan Gibson  
Green-Rock Audubon Society

Green-Rock Audubon Society



Protecting Wildlife for Tomorrow

# 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.)

## 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.)

# Do your birds need some seeds (or suet)?

This year we are again working with Jack & Dick's Feed and Garden in Janesville to provide food for the birds we watch.

Please choose from the available seeds and sizes on the order form, and send your order in by email or phone or regular mail. Neil Deupree, [deupreen@charter.net](mailto:deupreen@charter.net), 608-752-8342, 714 Wilson Ave, Janesville, 53548

We expect to deliver the seed soon after our annual meeting on November 20. Please make sure we have your correct contact info when you order.



## Green/Rock Audubon Society Fall Bird Seed Sale

	Size	Cost	Sell
<b>Black Oil Sunflower</b>	50	\$ 28.25	\$31.75
	25	\$15.00	\$17.00
<b>Nyjer (Thistle) Seed</b>	25	\$30.50	\$32.50
	10	\$14.10	\$16.60
<b>No Waste Mix</b>	20	\$15.35	\$17.35
<b>Woodpecker Mix</b>	20	\$19.05	\$21.05
<b>Cardinal Mix</b>	36	\$39.40	\$32.90
	18	\$15.75	\$17.75
<b>Safflower</b>	25	\$29.90	\$31.90
<b>Variety Suet 6 pk</b>		\$8.25	\$9.50
<b>Suet Crazy Nutty</b>		\$1.15	\$1.65
<b>Suet High Energy</b>		\$1.15	\$1.65
<b>Suet Orange</b>		\$1.15	\$1.65
<b>Suet Berry</b>		\$1.15	\$1.65

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Neil Deupree 608.752.8342  
[deupree@charter.net](mailto:deupree@charter.net)

# 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](http://www.facebook.com/greenrockaudubon)  
[www.greenrockaudubon.org](http://www.greenrockaudubon.org)

## Board of Directors

To contact the directors e-mail  
[greenrockaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:greenrockaudubon@gmail.com)  
President, Joni Denker  
Vice President, Sharon Bishop  
Secretary, Vacant  
Treasurer, Dan Gibson  
Director, Grace Burns  
Director, Fred Faessler  
Director, Neil Deupree  
Director, John Patterson  
Land Manager, Victor Illichmann  
Membership Chair, Steve Reischel  
Advocacy Chair, Susan Johnson

## THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

### 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 January, February, March, and April 2022

Nathan and Shana Sies  
Charles Goldstein  
David Burwell and Gloria Mathews  
Ken and Nancy Manthei  
Tom Evert  
Bette Lang  
Phil & Olive Holmes  
Steve Eager  
Wendy & Randy Aide  
Mary Margaret O'Connell Hosler

Betty Jo Bussie  
James Foss  
Nancy Ladwig  
Linn Duesterbeck  
Marguerite Lyons  
Kelly McCafferty  
Eva & Bruce Kuzmanich  
Christine Nelson  
Steve McNitt  
Frederick Thinnies

### THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

#### Memberships and Donations May, June, July, August, September 2022

Jon A Loots  
Margaret Zweck  
MerriLee Pickett & Tom Heine  
Sharon Bishop

**Thank  
You!**