

# THE HARLEQUIN

## York County Audubon

### *A Chapter of Maine Audubon*

#### *Autumn 2022*

[www.yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://www.yorkcountyaudubon.org)

### **York County Young Artists Excel in 2022 Maine Junior Duck Stamp Art Contest**

*by Melissa Kim*



For the second year in a row, a talented young artist from Biddeford has edged out other young artists from across the state to win the Maine Junior Duck Stamp art contest. Ariaah Lowell, 13, impressed the judges in a field of extremely talented artists with her oil painting (above) of a Wood Duck in flight titled “Iridescence.”

Five judges gathered at Maine Audubon’s Gilsland Farm center in Falmouth on March 10 to choose winners from more than 450 paintings, sketches, drawings, and other artworks from K-12 students ranging in age from 6 to 18. All the artwork depicted live portrayals of a native North American duck, swan, or goose. There were entries in ink, pastel, crayon, acrylic, watercolor, and pencil. Many of the categories ended in tie-breakers and the voting for the prestigious Best in Show award was very tight.

Lowell won last year’s Maine Junior Duck Stamp contest and came in third overall in the national event

with her painting of a Harlequin Duck. Last year was her first ever oil painting, and she repeated the technique this year to great success, capturing tremendous details from every feather on down to the glistening drops of water trailing behind the flying duck. Art runs in the Lowell family; her sister Elektra, 15, was a second-place finisher in her age group, and her mother, Rebekah Lowell, an artist and writer, is a four-time Maine Duck Stamp winner.



*Mergansers painted by Catherine Lynch*

A few trends were visible in this year’s Junior Duck Stamp entries: Wood Ducks were popular subjects given their colorful markings, and homeschoolers dominated the winners’ lists, including the six Lynch siblings from Eliot (Evan, Michael, Theodore, Margaret, Catherine, and William), ranging in age from 7 to 17, who were all either first or second place winners in their age groups.

The federal program, run by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, encourages students to explore their natural world, invites them to investigate biology and wildlife management principles, and challenges them to express and share what they have learned with

others through an art contest. This “conservation through the arts” program uses the winning artwork as the basis for the \$5 Junior Duck Stamp. The program is coordinated in Maine by Maine Audubon and the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Lowell’s Best in Show painting will go on to represent Maine in the national competition against all other Best in Show pieces from 50 states, Washington, D.C. and two U.S. Territories.

The panel of judges included Maine Audubon Staff Naturalist Doug Hitchcox, artists Michael Boardman and Bevin Holmberg, Peggy Page, and USFWS biologist Kirstin Underwood. For each of the four age group categories (grades K-3, 4-6, 7-9, and 10-12), they chose three First Place winners, three Second Place winners, three Third Place winners, and Honorable Mentions. Along with the Best in Show winner, they also selected a Best in Show Conservation Message. Mia Hornschild-Bear, 16, from Freeport, was the winner with this statement: “By conserving habitat for wildlife, we are leaving a lasting impression on nature by allowing current and future generations of species to flourish.”

To see all the winners, please go to:  
<https://maineaudubon.org/education/juniorduck/junior-duck-stamp-winners-2021-22/>

It’s not early to start thinking about the contest for 2023! The deadline for entries for Maine is March 1<sup>st</sup>. The complete information has not yet been posted, but should be very similar to the info for the 2022 contest that you can see here:  
<https://maineaudubon.org/education/juniorduck/>

*Melissa Kim is the Communications Director at Maine Audubon who can wield a pen, not a paintbrush, and, as such, greatly admires and envies these talented young artists.*

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***Remember, the best way to protect birds is to keep cats indoors!***



## Our 23rd Annual Bird Seed Sale is coming! *Early Bird Pricing through 10/28*

Keep your feathered friends happy this winter by treating them to tasty and fresh premium-quality bird food and help support two of your favorite environmental organizations.



Proceeds from our annual sale support programs of both York County Audubon and the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve. A wide variety of types of seed and suet is available, with great pricing, especially if you order early. **New items this year include feeders, mealworm suet and Feather Friendly window markers to keep your birds safe.** Early bird pricing is available if you place your order by 4 p.m. on October 28<sup>th</sup>. Order pick-up will be at the Wells Reserve November 4<sup>th</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>, with easy access and volunteers on hand to help load your car. ***Please refer to the enclosed blue order form for more information.***

### YCAS OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

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For all upcoming events and general please visit our website: **[www.yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://www.yorkcountyaudubon.org)**

And for the latest news, photos and updates, please visit us on Facebook at:

**[www.facebook.com/yorkcountyaudubon](https://www.facebook.com/yorkcountyaudubon)**



## YCA Welcomes its New Members!

*March - August*

|                                 |                   |
|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| Michelle Glen                   | Limington         |
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| Catherine Murray Houle          | Kittery Point     |
| Emily Nathan and Ryan White     | Biddeford         |
| Beverly Thorpe                  | Biddeford         |
| Laura Williams                  | Shapleigh         |
| Christine Baker                 | Kennebunkport     |
| Amrita Cottrell                 | Berwick           |
| Denise M Cutler                 | Lyman             |
| Erin Dillon and Brook Detterman | Arundel           |
| Jane and Den Downey             | East Parsonfield  |
| Meg Lewis                       | Kennebunk         |
| Jane Martell                    | Old Orchard Beach |
| Dotty McBride                   | Saco              |
| Kerry Peiser                    | Saco              |
| Joanne Toone                    | Hollis Center     |
| Joy Eon                         | Saco              |
| Timothy Kingsbury               | Eliot             |
| Gail Lima and Mike Ferris       | Kennebunkport     |
| Mary K. Smith                   | Kennebunk         |
| Carrie Weeman and Brandon White | Kennebunk         |
| Arthur Martineau                | Sanford           |
| Angela Maxwell                  | Old Orchard Beach |
| Julie Pitt                      | Arundel           |
| Eric Swanzey                    | Kittery Point     |
| Susan Curtis                    | Old Orchard Beach |
| Michael and Linda Cyr           | Saco              |

## The 2023 Maine Birds Desk Calendar is now available!

For many years, our former Board member, Marie Jordan, an avid birder and photographer, has produced a calendar and offered it for sale, graciously donating the calendars to YCA to support our educational programs.



It's a desk calendar in a 4" by 6" plastic case that opens into a stand to display each month. Each page features a great photo she took this year of a Maine bird. The cost is \$10 plus mailing costs. They're wonderful anywhere in the house, and also make great gifts! YCA tremendously appreciates your support for our programs, and Marie's continuing generosity. Please check our website for full details and how to place an order.



Visit us on  
**Facebook**

**For many years, YCA has offered scholarships to Educators and Teens for week-long National Audubon Society programs on famed Hog Island. Here are the accounts from our three 2022 Scholarship Winners.**

**An Amazing Hog Island Experience**  
by *Lindsay Strout*

I haven't been to an overnight camp since I was... oh... 13, maybe 14 years old. I truly felt like a kid again - and even better, I was surrounded by like-minded, inquisitive, passionate adults, on an island off Maine's coast. I was able to attend "Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week" out on Hog Island, thanks to York County Audubon. When I received the call that I was the chosen candidate, tears welled up in my eyes. As an educator, I love spending my summers learning new things for not only myself, but to bring back to my students. I was thrilled to be able to attend the Educator's Week!

Before I knew it I was driving myself to a little coastal town called Bremen, where I pulled in and was greeted by a spectacular human, Colleen, one of the instructors for the week. We hit it off immediately, and I knew from that moment it was going to be amazing. I contemplated swimming to the island, as it wasn't far out, but decided the boat ride would be enjoyable! Interestingly enough, Hog Island is so close to the mainland yet, you feel so removed (in a good way) from the crazy, busy life we live.

Growing up in Maine, spending summers on the coast - I knew what it was like to wake up to diesel lobster boats rumbling in the bay before the sun was up. However, sitting outside the Queen Mary Lab on a starry evening, I heard something I'd never heard before. At first, I thought it was a whale exhaling through its blowhole, in actuality it was a seal blowing out its nostrils, so basically the same thing, but much smaller than the whale I was imagining. Knowing the seals were out there at night, diving in the dark waters just off Hog Island was magical.

Imagine 40 adults being led to a beach with wet seaweed, tidepools and mudflats. We were instructed to take the first 10 minutes to take some time for ourselves, relax, take some deep breaths, and become

present before heading to the tidepools to explore. Well - just like any good plan, sometimes there are those who listen, and those who are just too excited & can't wait to get their hands dirty and poke around. So imagine those 40 adults being good listeners now scrambling over rocks, slipping and sliding on the seaweed, wading



*One of Lindsay's nature journal pages*

through the salty water - quite literally, being kids. I was one of three Mainers; there were folks from California, Washington, from Georgia all the way to Maine, and even a naturalist from Nova Scotia, so I was one of the few who didn't rush to explore, instead I found my "sit spot" and started nature journaling.

I don't give myself nearly enough time to nature journal, but being out on Hog Island, I filled pages upon pages. I surprised myself with how much information I was not only taking in and journaling about, but also sharing with the new friends I was connecting with. I was even asked by one of the instructors to teach a workshop later in the week on how I do nature journaling and how I do so with my students as well. That might have been the highlight

of the week - actually sharing how I explore, observe and record.

One of my other highlights from the week was heading out to Eastern Egg Rock - which I had never been to before. I was on a zoom call back in February where I learned about summer researchers and their work on Eastern Egg Rock, collecting data & tagging birds. Little did I know back in February that I'd be on a boat this summer circling the island, seeing not only the researchers but PUFFINS too!!

Each day on the island, we started with an amazing breakfast (I haven't mentioned that the food was amazing, as were the beds - super comfy!), we'd get a run-down of the day and all the activities and workshops that would be offered. Some of my favorites were the hike around the island, pressing seaweed, storytelling, and then the daily challenges. In the Queen Mary Lab - there was a daily challenge, where we had to identify things, such as different parts of a bird skull & their functions, what types of seaweed and moss, along with my personal favourite - "what did natives use the following three things for - birch bark, spruce gum and spruce roots?" - a canoe!

All in all, it was a wonderful week, well spent and refreshing. I left the island with new knowledge, pages of nature journals and two new life-long friends. I could go on and on about the week, but in truth, you need to experience it yourself. My hope is to go back to Hog Island in some way, shape or form in the years to come.

*Lindsay Strout is a life science teacher at Sanford High School, currently teaching biology and wildlife biology*

## **An Absolute Blast!**

*by Serenity Namiotka*

I am very happy to be able to share my experience this summer at the Mountain to Sea Birding for Teens camp with you. It was an absolute blast and I am so grateful to you for offering me such a wonderful opportunity that I will always treasure!

My favorite part of the sea half of the camp week was when we went tide pooling. I also really enjoyed when we went by boat to Eastern Egg Rock and were able to see the Atlantic Puffins. My

favorite part of the mountain half of the camp week was Borestone. It was so beautiful. Though the hike was admittedly a little tough for me at times, it was so worth the effort. I also loved how there was a pond right in the middle of the mountain. Seeing all the different wildlife that was there such as: voles, mink, and salamanders was incredible. Over the week at camp I also saw so many different cool birds, as well as many bird nests. There were some that I have never seen before so I think it is a great place for birders to go.

Everyone was so caring at the camp and full of knowledge that they gladly shared. I learned so much about birding and many skills for birdwatching to use in the future. It's also great being away at the camp because I met new people and made a lot of new friends. The food was delicious and the counselors were all so nice and fun to hang around with.

I am so glad that this habitat for birds, land animals and sea creatures is being preserved for both the wildlife and for those like me lucky enough to witness its beauty and wonder. I would recommend the Mountain to Sea Birding for Teens camp to anyone and would jump at the chance to attend again. That is how much I enjoyed it.

Thank you very much for giving me this experience.

*Serenity Namiotka is a student at Kennebunk High School*

## **Hog Island camps are not just for Educators and Teens!!!**

For 80 years, the National Audubon Society has been managing Hog Island and providing a wide variety of incredible educational opportunities each summer. They currently offer about 20 different multi-day programs from May through September. The programs for 2023 have not yet been posted, but you can take a look at those that were offered this year at

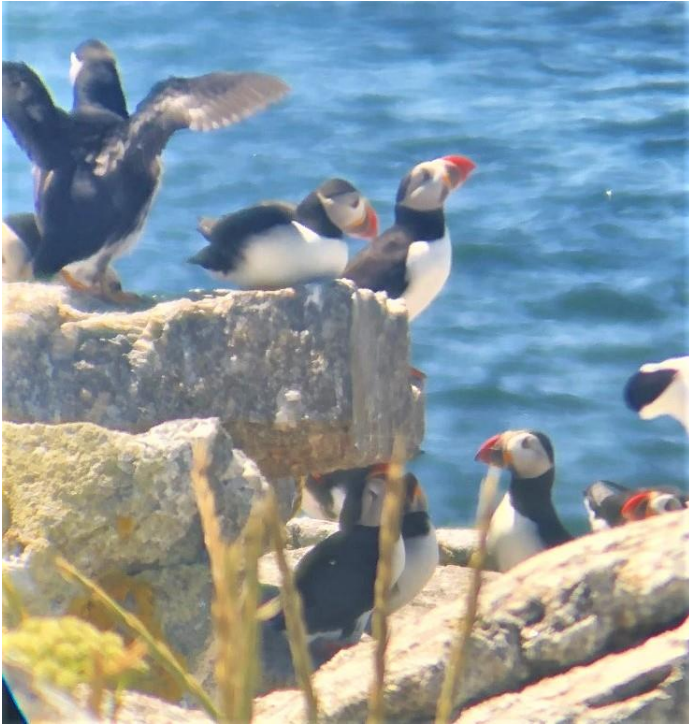
<https://hogisland.audubon.org/programs>. If you might be interested at all, we encourage you to take a look. The Hog Island experience is unforgettable and highly recommended.



## The Highlight of My Summer!

by Leo Cole

I'm happy to write a bit about of my experience at the Hog Island camp. It was the highlight of my summer, even though it was in the first week!



I loved seeing all kinds of different new birds I've never seen before, and I learned a lot about them. My favorite birds to see were the ospreys and the puffins -I didn't know we'd have the chance to see puffins so that was really special. Every day we did fun things, like hiking the island with my friends. The food was really good, complete meals that way exceeded my expectations for food at a camp. I also made friends with a lot of people my age who have the same interests as me, and we still talk a lot in our group chat. Thanks again for the opportunity to attend this camp, it was an experience I won't forget.

The photo above is a picture I took of puffins on Eastern Egg Rock through my binoculars . We were very lucky to go onto the island, which I learned is hard to get the opportunity to do.

*Leo Cole is a student at Cape Elizabeth High School. He attended the Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens program at Hog Island.*

## The Christmas Bird Counts are Coming!

Beginning on Christmas Day in 1900, the Audubon Society has been sponsoring Christmas Bird Counts (CBC's) to help monitor the health and status of bird populations throughout North America. In that first year, there were 25 count circles with a total of 27 birders. Now, there are over 2,300 count circles each year with over 70,000 birders participating in locations stretching from Alaska to South America.

Each year, York County Audubon sponsors two counts. The Southern York County circle extends from Kittery to Ogunquit, while the Biddeford - Kennebunkport count circle reaches from Kennebunk to Saco. Each circle is carved into six or more territories. Each territory has a team that scours it during "count day" looking for all bird species, and recording the numbers seen of each. It can, at times, be a bit more art than science, as we attempt to count - but not double count - the birds we find. We also have supporters who monitor their home feeders during the day and contribute their totals. To avoid double counting, we ask them only to report the greatest number of each species that they see at any one time during the day.

This year, we'll still be following CDC guidelines to ensure everyone's safety, and may not be able to accommodate as many participants. We'll be posting updated information on our website.

The Southern York County CBC will be held on Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, while the Biddeford/Kennebunkport CBC will be on Saturday, December 31st. If you might like to find out about participating, please contact Monica Grabin at 985-3342 or [grabinmonica@gmail.com](mailto:grabinmonica@gmail.com) for the Southern York County CBC, or Kathy Donahue at 967-4102 or [kadona11@roadrunner.com](mailto:kadona11@roadrunner.com) for the Biddeford/Kennebunkport CBC.

### \*\*\* YCA Zoom Programs \*\*\*

**Our upcoming programs are a mix of in-person at the Wells Reserve and online via Zoom, all starting at 7 p.m. To register for Zoom programs, please go to our website: [www.yorkcountyaudubon.org](http://www.yorkcountyaudubon.org)**



***All the Best Birds of Maine* with Nick Lund, Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at the Wells Reserve and via Zoom** Maine is a top destination for birders, both for the wonderful species that are regularly found here as well as the rarities that frequently drop by. One of those most familiar with this world is Nick Lund, who will take us on a whirlwind tour of as many of Maine's "best" birds as he can squeeze into an hour of entertaining facts and anecdotes. Nick is the author of the newly released [ABA Field Guide to the Birds of Maine](#), and has been well-known for years as the man beyond the popular birding blog known as "The Birdist." A Maine native, he worked in Washington, D.C. on protecting our national parks, before (wisely) electing to return to join Maine Audubon as its Advocacy and Outreach Manager.

#### ***A World on the Wing* with Scott Weidensaul, Tuesday, November 15<sup>th</sup> via Zoom**

In the past two decades, our understanding of the navigational and physiological feats that enable birds to cross immense oceans, fly above the highest mountains, or remain in unbroken flight for months at a stretch has exploded. What we've learned of these key migrations—how billions of birds circumnavigate the globe, flying tens of thousands of miles between hemispheres on an annual basis—is nothing short of extraordinary. Scott Weidensaul is the author of nearly 30 books on natural history, including the Pulitzer Prize finalist *Living on the Wind* and his latest, the *New York Times* bestseller *A World on the Wing*. In this program, Scott Weidensaul will take us around the globe to learn how people are fighting to understand and save the world's great bird migrations.



**And in case you missed it, a recording of our September program, *11 Days in the Galapagos* with Laurie Pocher, is now available via our website.** Charles Darwin spent five weeks in the Galapagos Islands in 1835, and this visit helped inspire his theories of evolution and natural selection. In 1959, 97% of the Galapagos was declared a National Park. Thanks to the archipelago's remote location, absence of predators, and conservation efforts, many Galapagos animals remain curious and unafraid of humans to this day. Laurie Pocher – a York County Audubon Board member and nature photographer – recently returned from the Galapagos, where she spent 11 days on a photography tour of the major islands.

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York County Chapter

**YES!** I would like to protect wildlife and habitat in Maine as a ☐ **new** ☐ **renewing** member *Your membership renewal date is found on the mailing label.*

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[maineaudubon.org/join](http://maineaudubon.org/join)

Our community of members is integral to our success on behalf of Maine's wildlife and habitat. Your Maine Audubon membership ensures our work can continue.

**Thank you!**

**Checks payable to** Maine Audubon, 20 Gilsland Farm Rd, Falmouth, ME 04105. **FMI:** 207.781.2330, ext. 230