

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

TUCSON AUDUBON 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

Stunningly beautiful winter residents of Southeast Arizona, Yellow-headed Blackbirds gather in large flocks in order to find food, safety, and warmth. Just like them, Tucson Audubon survives and thrives according to the shared strength of its members, donors, volunteers, and partners. Together we protect each other and Southeast Arizona's birds from the threats of a quickly changing world. You help us find the resources we need to fulfill our mission. And just as the flock of blackbirds provides warmth for each of its members, even in the midst of a global pandemic, our flock has managed to remain as close and connected as ever. **Thank you for the many achievements you made possible for Tucson Audubon in 2020.**



Flock, R.C. Clark: Dancing Snake Nature Photography; BELOW: Martin Molina

TOTAL REVENUE = \$2,701,697

PHILANTHROPIC GIVING = 39%

EARNED INCOME = 13%

GRANTS & CONTRACTS = 48%

DEAR FRIENDS OF TUCSON AUDUBON,

Last October at Sweetwater Wetlands, I saw a flock of Lazuli Buntings dot the stubble of a former settling pond like iridescent sapphires. As I stood at a pond-overlook in winter, a sudden wave of black and gold descended into the tall reeds next to me: dozens of Yellow-headed Blackbirds whose shining black bodies and torch-yellow heads contrasted against a subdued winter sky. The massed birds unlocked a sense of awe in my solitude. They seemed to revel in their sense of safety and strength in numbers, with dozens of eyes searching for food and watching for dangers. **Their shared purpose and collective will was palpable.**

In our isolation of the past year, many of us have grown closer to birds. We appreciate our backyard species and seasonal migrants more than ever. To walk freely without a mask, we visit our favorite birding spots. The pandemic often forced us to slow down. Many of us have looked more closely and learned more lessons from bird behavior. A flock of birds is an apt metaphor for our organization's collective commitment to our mission and purpose. Birds do it by instinct, for us it's a conscious strategy. We come together as individuals, we stay in touch by whatever means possible, and we partner with like-minded flocks to increase the impact of our work.

Your support and encouragement go far beyond sustaining us. You have fostered our growth during an unprecedented time, empowering us to inspire more people to enjoy and protect birds. You have supported us in deepening our relationships with partner non-profits, agencies, and foundations. With your help—and the hard work of our staff members—we are collaborating more meaningfully than ever with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, Pima County, and the City of Tucson to protect vulnerable wildlife, control invasive species, and reduce the ferocity of wildfires. Thank you for flying together with us!



Mary Walker

Mary Walker
Board President



RESTORATION

We view invasive plants as a primary threat to the ecology of the Desert Southwest and our opportunity for greatest conservation impact



LAUNCHED BRAND NEW INVASIVE PLANT PROGRAM

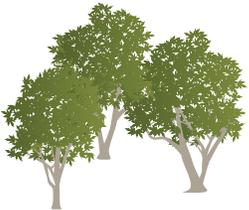
- Hired **3-MEMBER FEDERAL-LANDS STRIKE TEAM**
- Hired **4-MEMBER IN-HOUSE STRIKE TEAM**
- Secured **2 CONTRACTS (\$67,000)** from National Forest Foundation for mapping invasives within **2,387 ACRES** of Sabino and Bear Canyons
- Secured 3-year contract for mapping & treatment of Saddlebrooke2 HOA



FOUNDED EL CORAZON SIN FUEGO* PROJECT

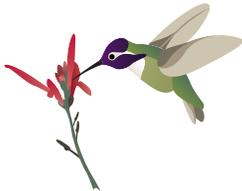
- Awarded **\$200,000** grant
- Partnership with Northwest Fire District & Pima County Flood Control
- Will remove fire-prone invasive plants from **7.2 MILES** of the Santa Cruz
- Will create **13 FIREBREAKS** to protect birds and people

**Heart Without Fire—this project focuses on the heart of Tucson's rivers at the confluence of the Santa Cruz River, the Rillito River, and the Cañada del Oro Wash.*



TURNED FLOOD PROBLEMS INTO HABITAT FOR HACIENDA DEL RIO HOA

- Created habitat and increased infiltration of failing stormwater detention basins
- Planted **311** native grasses, shrubs, flowers, cacti, and trees



COMPLETED 10 HABITAT AT HOME INSTALLATIONS

- Brought **624 NATIVE PLANTS** into neighborhood yards
- Installed **6,370 GALLONS** of active rainwater harvesting
- Planted **215 POLLINATOR PLANTS** with Community Gardens of Tucson, Marshall Elementary, and the Green Valley Community Food Bank

Emelie Chen

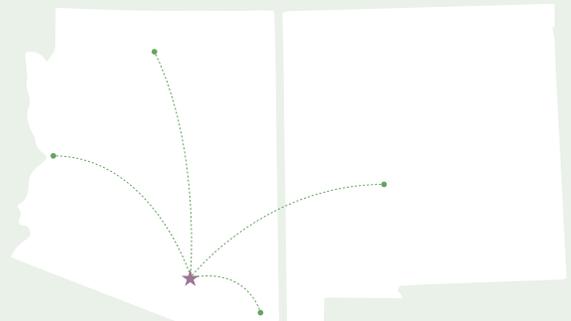


TRAVELED FAR AND WIDE TO PROTECT CRITICAL HABITAT FOR BIRDS

- Farthest **NORTH**: Grand Canyon National Park
- Farthest **WEST**: Bill Williams River National Wildlife Refuge
- Farthest **SOUTH**: San Bernardino National Wildlife Refuge
- Farthest **EAST**: Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge

A total of:

- 8** National Wildlife Refuges
- 2** National Parks
- 2** National Monuments
- 1** National Memorial



COMMUNITY SCIENCE

Our conservation impact is magnified by joint efforts with the public and academic researchers



NESTBOX PROJECT

- Built **142 NESTBOXES** in workshops pre-COVID at Wings Over Willcox Birding Festival, Centennial Elementary School, and Del Webb HOA workshops
- American Kestrel nestbox conservation plan expanded through partnership with HawkWatch International
- Delighted **110+ CHILDREN** with hands-on projects using Lucy's nestboxes

DESERT PURPLE MARTIN STUDY

- Founded the international Desert Purple Martin Working Group
- Published an article in the Purple Martin Conservation Association magazine
- Engaged **47 VOLUNTEERS TO STUDY 50 NESTS** in pilot year (and during a pandemic!)



BIRD-SAFE BUILDINGS PROGRAM

- Received **TWO GRANTS**, from National Audubon Society and Tracy Aviary, to launch program efforts
- Partnerships developed across SEAZ to tackle bird window strikes

CONSERVATION

Protecting birds and their habitats throughout Southeast Arizona has been a hallmark of Tucson Audubon's work for many years



TUCSON BIRD COUNT (TBC)

- Engaged **93 VOLUNTEERS IN 123 ROUTES**
- Supported **THREE SCIENTIFIC STUDIES** with TBC data
- Celebrated **FOURTEENTH YEAR** of **LONGEST-RUNNING** spring urban bird count in the world

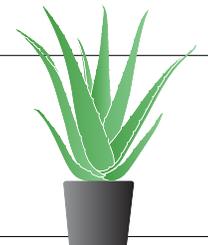


MASKED BOBWHITE RE-INTRODUCTION AT BUENOS AIRES NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

- **THREE STAFF** quail technicians involved in the reintroduction
- Cared for **700 CHICKS** and tracked released birds to determine site usage
- Hired **ONE INTERN** with Friends of BANWR to manage supplemental feeding
- Performed invasive species control to improve vegetation composition

HABITAT AT HOME SPRING AND FALL PLANT SALES

- **1,282 NATIVE PLANTS OF 37 SPECIES** provided for at-home habitats
- Raised **\$6,000** to support Tucson Audubon's mission



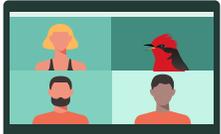
LUCY'S WARBLERS NESTBOX PROJECT

- Estimated **680-850 LUCY'S WARBLERS** fledged from **170 NESTS** documented on our nestbox trails
- Increased total number of nestboxes on the landscape to **3,000+**
- **FOURTH YEAR** of data gathering solidified preference for triangle nestbox
- Expanded Lucy's Warbler Nestbox project into New Mexico and Colorado



BIRDS & COMMUNITY

Where shared purpose and collective will meet good times, laughing, learning, and birding (live and virtually!)



BROUGHT BRAND NEW VIRTUAL EVENTS AND A VIRTUAL BIRDING FESTIVAL TO A QUARANTINED PLANET

- **107 EVENTS** entertained, educated, inspired, and connected **8,417 ATTENDEES**
- Held first ever Virtual Southeast Arizona Birding Festival for **541 PARTICIPANTS** from **4 COUNTRIES** and **41 STATES**
- Raised **\$9,000+** for the Sonoita Creek Watershed

I NCLUSION
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FORMALLY INITIATED AN INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY & ACCESS (IDEA) PROGRAM FOR TUCSON AUDUBON

- Contracted with local IDEA consultants Ragland & Wilhite to support our initiative
- Raised **\$7,500** to support a Tucson Audubon Birdability program
- Partnered with Southern Arizona Adaptive Sports for **4 FIELD TRIPS** including **48 PARTICIPANTS**
- Continued our **8-YEAR RELATIONSHIP** with Changemaker High School by supporting the Tucson Climate Project



WELCOMED THE SUPPORT OF 215 VOLUNTEERS LOGGING 8,005 HOURS FOR A VALUE OF \$217,736 (based on Independent Sector's national rate of \$27.20/hour)

- **11** Mason Center Green Gardeners
- **15** newly-trained Event volunteers
- **22** Paton Center Birding Ambassadors
- **20** Nature Shop volunteers
- **17** Santa Cruz River Bed Survey volunteers



Corey Hayes



CONTINUED OUR FAMOUS FIELD TRIPS PROGRAM

- Pre-COVID 2020: **1,596 PARTICIPANTS, 27 LEADERS, 148 TOURS**
- Post-COVID 2020: **490 MASKED PARTICIPANTS, 13 COVID PROTOCOL-TRAINED LEADERS, 81 COVID-SAFE TOURS**



TUCSON AUDUBON'S NATURE SHOP

- The Online Nature Shop came to the rescue in 2020, raising sales from \$9,374 in 2019 to **\$63,615** in 2020—a **578% INCREASE**.
- More than **16,000 VISITORS** to the Online Nature Shop placed **1,000+ ORDERS**. **Thank you for this phenomenal support.**



GREW OUR MEMBERSHIP, DONOR BASE, AND SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS

- Increased memberships by **15%** over 2019, representing around **3,200 INDIVIDUALS**
- Received contributions from **1,623 DONORS**, an increase of **29%** over 2019
- Increased our social media following to **21,500**, an increase of **26%** over 2019

THE PATON CENTER for HUMMINGBIRDS

The Paton Center for Hummingbirds, Richard Grand Memorial Meadow, and the Cuckoo Corridor continue to thrive along Sonoita Creek

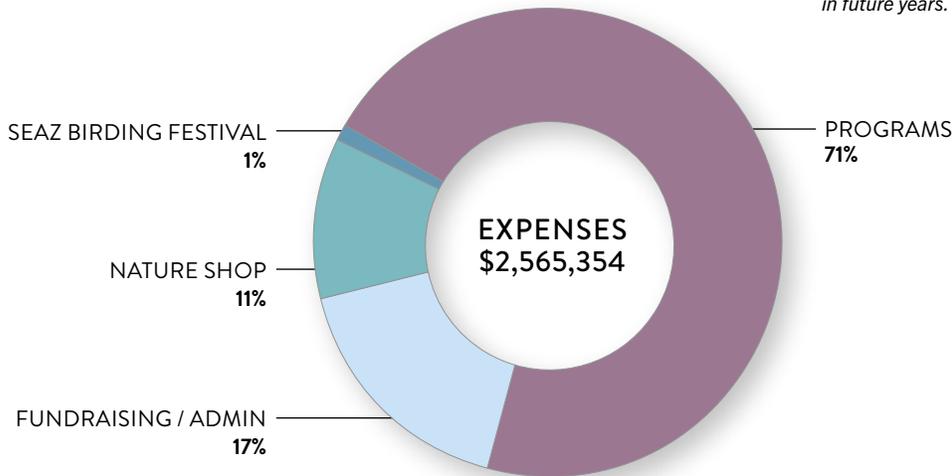
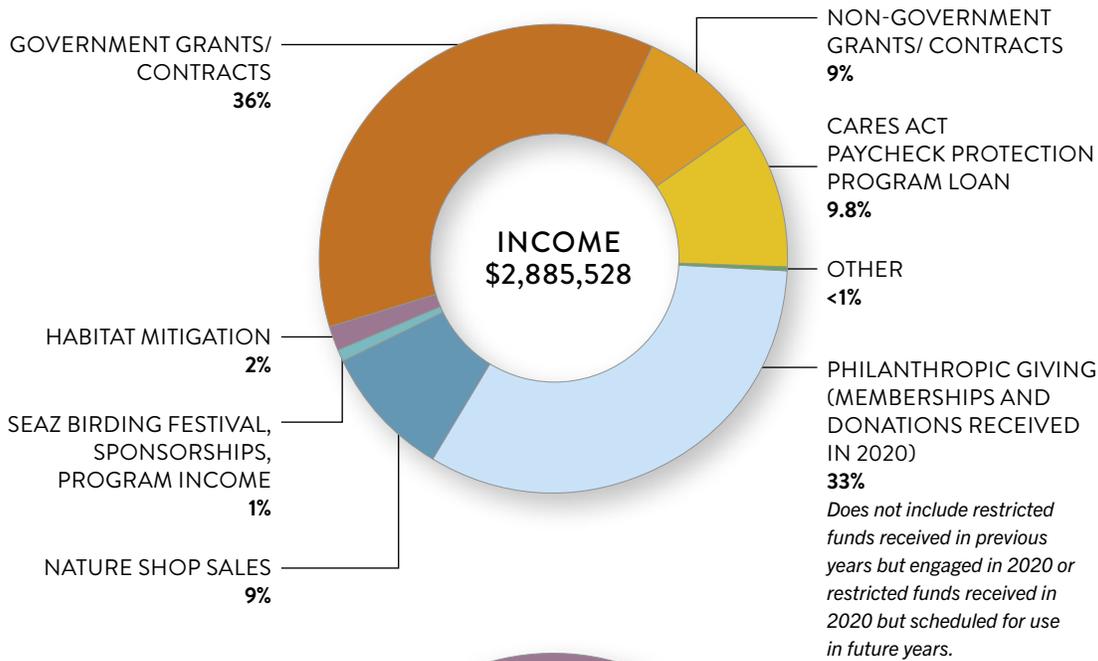


Paton Center building renderings

Tucson Audubon remained highly committed to fulfilling a new vision for the Paton Center for Hummingbirds in 2020. Despite the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic, our team of board and staff members met regularly with our contractors, Jesus Robles and Cade Hayes, of the firm, DUST. Together we accomplished a comprehensive analysis of the Paton Center property, which exists entirely in the floodway of Sonoita Creek. We achieved a Change of Use permit from the Town of Patagonia to formally transition from residential to multiple use. Finally, we initiated the Architecture and Engineering phase of the project and, as of this writing, we are nearing the half-way mark of finalizing our project design. Constructing in the floodway remains our biggest challenge, but we're also working with strong intentions to make sure our new structure, redesigned parking area, decks and walking paths, and landscaping have the lightest touch on the land as possible. We're optimistic for a formal ground-breaking early in 2022.

PATON PROJECT TEAM: Mary Walker, Laurens Halsey, Bob Hernbrode, Keith Kamper, Jonathan Horst, Jonathan Lutz

2020 FINANCIALS



NET INCOME
\$320,174

THANK YOU TO OUR LEADING CONSERVATION PARTNERS:

- National Park Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Arizona Game and Fish Department
- Saguaro National Park
- Pima County Regional Flood Control District
- The Nature Conservancy
- Pima County: Office of Sustainability and Conservation; Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation
- Friends of Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge
- Arizona Department of Forestry and Fire Management
- Borderlands Restoration Network
- University of Arizona (EEB/SNRE/Geography/WRRC)
- Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum
- Tohono Chul Park
- Arizona Native Plant Society
- Tucson Water

THANK YOU TO OUR LEADING COMMUNITY PARTNERS:

- Splendido at Rancho Vistoso
- Carl Zeiss Sports Optics
- Changemaker High School & Tucson Climate Project
- Southern Arizona Adaptive Sports
- Ragland & Wilhite IDEA Consultants



John Matthews

TUCSON
AUDUBON
SOCIETY