



TUCSON  
AUDUBON  
SOCIETY

CELEBRATING OUR  
75 YEAR  
ANNIVERSARY!

# ANNUAL REPORT

- 2023 -



# HERE'S TO ANOTHER 75 YEARS

## Dear Members and Supporters,

This has been an eventful and exciting year for Tucson Audubon Society, and I am proud to be leading the Board of Directors as we celebrate our 75th Anniversary! We are so fortunate to be led by our terrific new Executive Director, Melissa Fratello. Melissa jumped in with both feet last summer and her strong leadership and years of non-profit experience have served us well and inspired both staff and board. Two additions to our Board of Directors, Karen Howe and Milly Lierman, bring with them extensive experience in the non-profit and management arenas which we are grateful for as we move into another year of change and evolution.

A significant accomplishment of 2023 is progress on the renovations at the Paton Center for Hummingbirds. We are moving forward with upgrades to the Paton home including installation of accessible restrooms and expanded parking. These renovations will improve accessibility and allow for more guests to visit and enjoy the 250+ species of birds that have been spotted there. Please come visit, but bear with us as the construction may require occasional limitations on guests' access to the property.

This summer and fall, the Board and staff will begin developing a Strategic Plan, to evaluate and hone the focus of the organization in a way that furthers our mission to inspire people to enjoy and protect birds. You will also hear more about our decision to change the organization's name to better reflect our values and work. We believe this is a vital way to demonstrate our commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming organization.

Colleen Cacy  
Board President

## Greetings, Fellow Bird Lovers and Sonoran Desert Enthusiasts!

One of my mentors once encouraged me to take time every January to pause, reflect upon, and celebrate the victories and challenges overcome in the previous year. Her advice stuck with me, thankfully, and when I went through the exercise this past January, I was astonished at what I had the privilege to look back on. While I did face and overcome a few challenges and transitions, the victories were remarkable in scope and in number.

Most of those victories were not my own, but the accomplishments of our incredible and resilient staff. Luke Safford and his team ran our most successful Southeast Arizona Birding Festival yet, and kept smiles on their faces, despite months of effort, long days, and hot, hot weather. Aya Pickett, Jennie MacFarland, and their colleagues stepped into leadership roles on our Saguaro project and Desert Purple Martin research, and Olya Weekley boosted a campaign to cap death pipes throughout the region, saving thousands of birds from entrapment and death. Tony Figueroa and Kari Hackney worked in complementary roles to eradicate invasive plants and restore riparian corridors, urban stormwater basins, and backyard habitats with native plants. Kim Matsushino saw her dream of a Habitat on Wheels trailer come to fruition, under the leadership of our Director of Urban Conservation, Stephanie Kopplin.

I can think of notable accomplishments for every single person on this team but you can read more about that in the pages to come!

As we enter our 75th year, we're proud of how far we've come as a leading chapter within the Audubon network and a known and trusted partner in bird conservation, restoring habitat for birds and sparking joy in birders old and new.

Melissa Fratello  
Executive Director



# PROTECTING CRITICAL HABITAT IN SOUTHEAST ARIZONA



**800+**

saguaro seedlings planted

**6,500 lbs**

of fire-prone Arundo removed  
from riparian areas around  
Tucson to create fire breaks

**1,600**

infestation points  
recorded to monitor  
and treat stinknet

Thousands of acres surveyed &

**150+ acres**

actively treated for invasive  
plants throughout  
Southeast Arizona

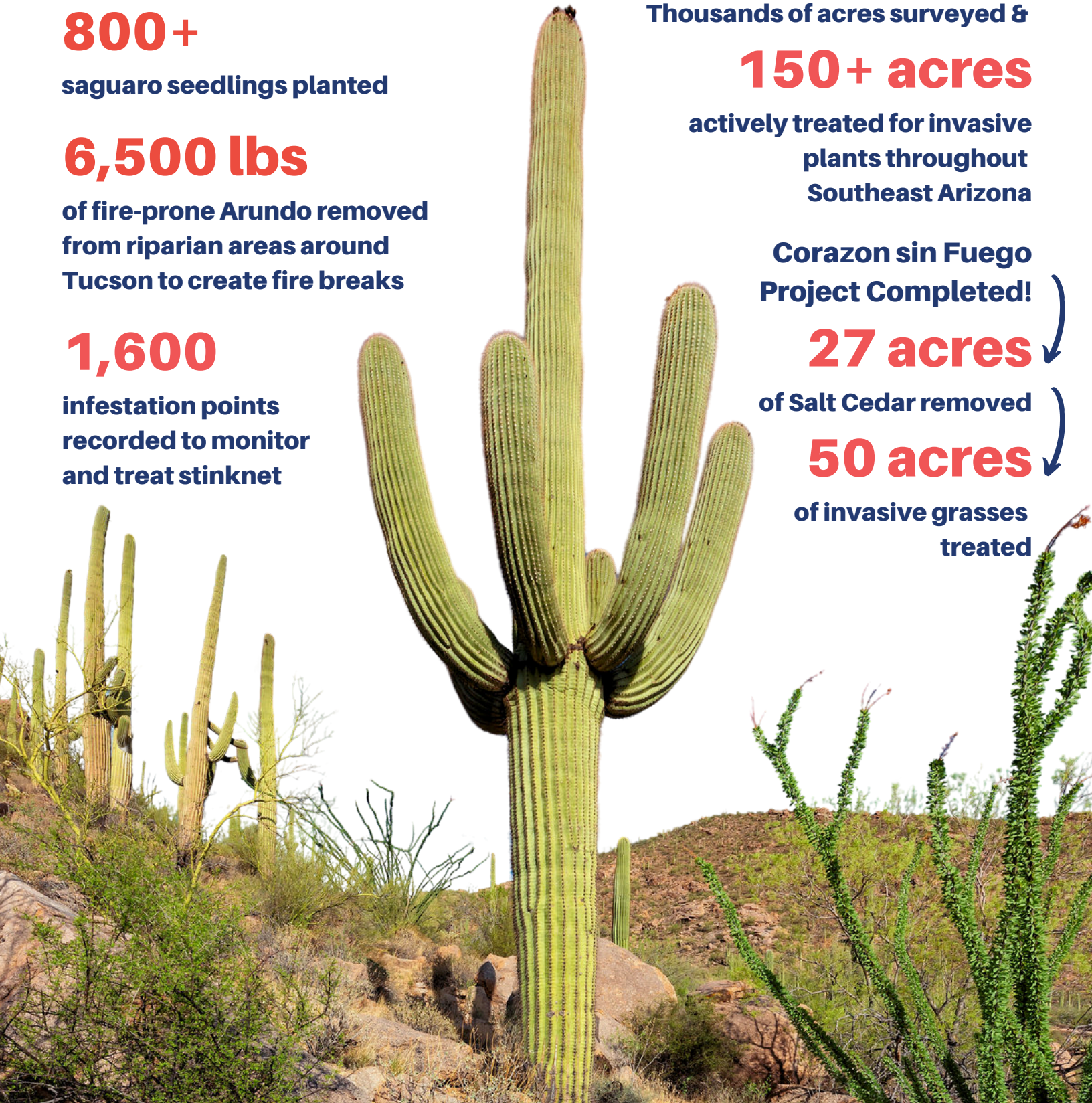
Corazon sin Fuego  
Project Completed!

**27 acres**

of Salt Cedar removed

**50 acres**

of invasive grasses  
treated





Habitat on  
Wheels

Education,  
advocacy, and  
outreach

Urban habitat  
consults and  
installs

**Urban  
Habitat  
Restoration**

Plant sales  
and free  
distribution

Green-  
Stormwater  
Infrastructure  
maintenance

Resources  
such as *Habitat  
at Home  
Manual*

**95**

**newly registered Lucy's  
Warbler nestbox owners**



# COMMUNITY CONSERVATION

Through a multitude of ways we are encouraging and showing people how they can protect and conserve birds and other native species. One of the most accessible and rewarding ways is through creating and enhancing habitat in urban areas.

**208**

**open vertical pipes capped, increasing  
awareness + saving innumerable  
wildlife lives**

**379**

**window strike prevention kits  
distributed to the public free of charge**



## DESERT PURPLE MARTIN NESTBOX DESIGN CHALLENGE

- 22 designs submitted
- Replicated **25** sets of the top 3 performing nestboxes
- Now it's up to the birds to tell us which one they like!



# PATON CENTER FOR HUMMINGBIRDS

**25**

native trees planted

**3**

meadows created where invasive Siberian elm was removed

**500**

Fremont cottonwood seedlings collected and growing at Paton nursery

**30+ acres**

of invasive plants treated

Haikubox installed (bird call ID device)

**160**

birds recorded

**7**

new garden plots for Montezuma Quail food

Established renovation plans for the Paton House and new accessible restrooms

**20,000+**

visitors from all over the world!





# COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

**50** virtual and in-person events → **3,575** attendees

**321** field trips → **3,900+** attendees



## Advocacy

**4 BIRDING & CANVASSING EVENTS TO GET OUT THE VOTE**

**Highlight:** Played key role in organizing opposition in Rio Rico to proposed rezoning along the Santa Cruz River. Resulted in the withdrawal of the proposal and protection of 3,550 acres of biodiverse land.

## Southeast Arizona Birding Festival

- 770 registrants from 36 states and 7 countries
- 136 field trips
- 26 workshops & presentations
- 15 scholarships awarded

**267** volunteers

**9,000+** hours logged

**\$286,693** worth of work

**Thank you, volunteers!**



**Total individual giving: \$885,319**

**3,153 Tucson Audubon members**

**24,617**

**Nature Shop visitors engaged online and in-person**

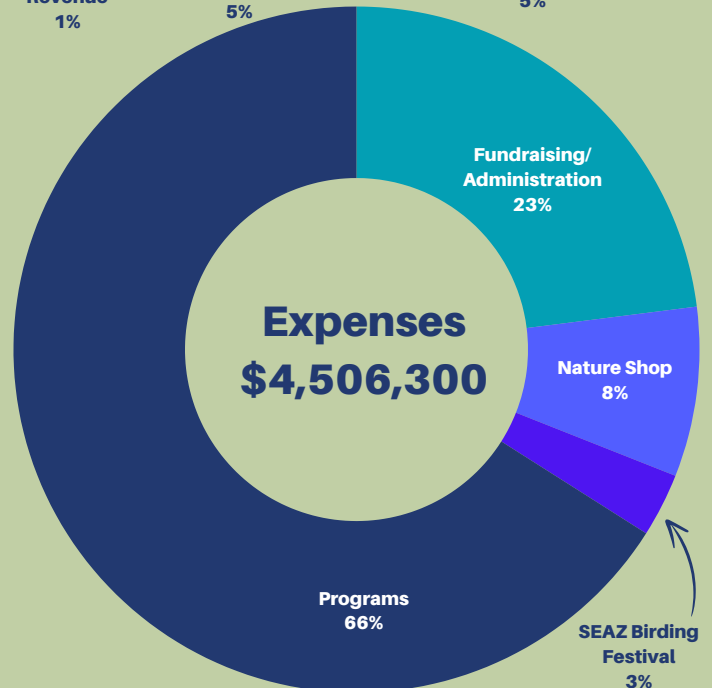
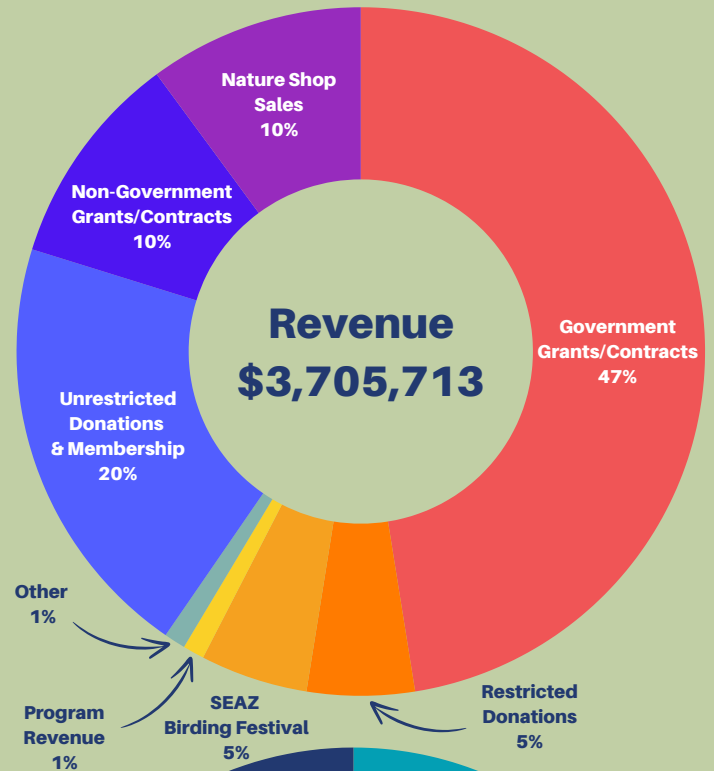


## Youth Education

**2,801 YOUTH + 1,574 ADULTS ENGAGED**

**Highlight:** Solidified a meaningful partnership with the Arizona Trail Association's Youth Ambassador Program, which aims to empower youth and promote environmental stewardship, outdoor education, and the preservation of the Sonoran Desert.

## Revenue & Expenses Summary



# MAKE AN IMPACT

**Donate today to sustain this vital work!**

To donate and learn about all the ways you can support Tucson Audubon, please visit:

[tucsonaudubon.org/donate](https://tucsonaudubon.org/donate)

or

**scan the QR code!**



Make a qualifying annual gift of \$40 or more to become a member of Tucson Audubon.



## Membership Benefits

- ✓ Support Tucson Audubon's mission to enjoy & protect birds and their habitats
- ✓ Subscription to quarterly *Vermilion Flycatcher* magazine
- ✓ 10% discount at our Nature Shop and 20% off birdseed
- ✓ Early access to field trips and member-only events

[tucsonaudubon.org/membership](https://tucsonaudubon.org/membership)

**Thank you for  
your support!**



[tucsonaudubon.org](https://tucsonaudubon.org)

