



Lahontan

Audubon  
Society

**ANNUAL REPORT  
FY 2021-22**

Dear Friend,

The last year has been an exciting time of renewal and growth at Lahontan Audubon Society (LAS) and I want to take a moment to thank you, our supporter, for making it possible. Thanks to your generous contributions we were able to develop new programs, reinvigorate past programs, and engage volunteers in community science, education, and conservation. You helped us grow our community by attending events, volunteering for our programs, and contributing to our fundraising efforts, and for that I am eternally grateful.

We wrapped up our fiscal year and are so thrilled to report all the great work we were able to accomplish together. This was our first full year with full-time staff dedicated to improving our programs and inviting new audiences to join our community. We hosted two AmeriCorps VISTA members. These volunteers have been vital to helping us build our organization's capacity by developing new and innovative programs, increasing our outreach through a variety of channels, and providing support to our volunteer projects. In the fall, I finished a year of service with LAS as an AmeriCorps VISTA volunteer and was hired on as the part-time Executive Director to oversee our growing organization. It was such a rewarding year to see increased engagement and exciting new opportunities. I can't wait to see where we go next!

This year, we were happy to get back into the community with lots of fun events. This spring we renewed our youth programs at Washoe Lake and engaged students at a number of other outreach events. We also grew our field trip programs by offering an orientation for new leaders and began a wildly successful international field trip program. With the help of USFWS and other partners, we brought back the Spring Wings Bird Festival to the Lahontan Valley Wetlands. We also continued our adult education programs, including monthly meetings, Birds of Truckee Meadows, and new drawing workshops, virtually, and found that we were able to engage members who would not have normally been able to join due to health limitations, scheduling conflicts, or distance. Looking forward, we are excited to begin offering these programs using a hybrid approach that will allow us the social aspect of an in-person meeting and the reach of a virtual meeting. This will be a new process for us and we are looking forward to working out all the kinks!

With this annual report, I want to share some of the successes that were made possible by your support. The projects highlighted here reflect the fiscal year from July 2021 - June 2022. In the next fiscal year, we will continue to build our community and I invite you to see your investment first hand. Join us for a birding walk, volunteer for a community science project, or attend a monthly meeting. Thank you for being a part of our flock.

For birds, for all!  
Jennie Jones Scherbinski  
Executive Director

# Our Mission

To preserve and improve the remaining habitat of birds and other wildlife, restore historical habitat, and educate the public, with emphasis on children, providing vision to all about our unique Nevada environments.



*July 2021 photo contest winner Rick Mosher - Western Kingbird and Red-tailed Hawk Chase*

# Table of Contents

Our Mission .....	1
Our Team.....	2
Our Achievements .....	6
Our Community .....	7
Our Financial Records .....	13
Our Partners.....	14
Thank You!.....	15

*Cover photo by Judy Duffy, American White Pelican at Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge*

# Our Team

## Lahontan Audubon Board Members

David Jickling – President  
Suzie Reynolds – Secretary  
William Fletcher – Treasurer  
Valerie Andersen  
Brendan Bucy  
Mike Goddard  
Jacque Lowery  
Olivia Sembach  
Rose Strickland  
Bri Usdrowski



## Committee Chairs

Audits, Fundraising and Investments – William Fletcher  
Conservation – Rose Strickland  
Education – Alan Gubanich  
Field Trips – Jasmine Kleiber



August 2021 photo contest winner Rick Mosher – Cooper's Hawks

## Our Staff and VISTA Volunteers

Volunteers continued to be the lifeblood of Lahontan Audubon Society (LAS), and this fiscal year, we brought on staff to build on our volunteers' work, increase our capacity, and manage administration functions. In 2021, we hired our first Executive Director to oversee daily operations, which includes coordinating with our Board, supervising two AmeriCorps VISTA volunteers, budgeting, and implementing actions to achieve our mission. The VISTA positions were temporary assignments that helped build capacity and sustainability for LAS. Together, the Executive Director and VISTA volunteers provided the support needed to fund, market, and create new events to spread the joy of birding to our community.

### Executive Director



Jennie Jones Scherbinski worked closely with our Board to advance our mission and to ensure our future success, which includes fostering an active birding community to benefit habitat, bird, and other wildlife conservation. "The magic of LAS is bringing diverse people together with the shared interest of birds. I love seeing the spark ignite in birders through our bird walks, education programs, or volunteer opportunities. I am constantly inspired by the passion and openness of our community and excited to see it continue to grow."

### VISTA Community Engagement and Marketing Coordinator



Parker Flickinger developed and strengthened our outreach program, through in person and online interactions. He created our Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube pages, created our eBird community account, and managed our monthly photo contest. During his tenure, Parker designed a free interactive map of birding hotspots served by the bus system, and created adaptive birding field trips for the blind and deaf communities. "I am passionate about this, as birding is for everyone!"

### VISTA Development Coordinator



Diane Wong-Kone acquired funds to support LAS programs. In 2022, she received grant awards to support the Spring Wings Bird Festival, Bird Drawing Workshops, and American Sign Language Bird Walks. "I have always been inspired by Lahontan Audubon Society's members. This group remains active in bird conservation, bird education, and birdwatching, plus they are a great group of people. I am honored to have LAS friends and proudly support their mission."





*September and October 2021 photo contest winner Janet Busi - White-faced Ibis and Red-winged Blackbird*

## Our Volunteers

We owe all our success to our volunteers, who manage or run our varied programs:

- Monthly meetings and presentations of current research or explorations of our natural world
- The Pelican quarterly newsletter
- Social media posts
- Website updates
- Email news announcements
- Community science projects
- Conservation advocacy
- Habitat restoration
- School youth programs and field trips
- Adult bird classes and workshops
- Field outings to local birding hotspots
- Membership accounts management
- Finance management
- Fundraising
- Board of Trustees

Our volunteer Board of Trustees provides guidance to our teams, shown in the figure below, who manage the organization and run the programs that build our community and further our mission. We are grateful for the continued support of our dedicated members, whose contributions support our community activities.



## Our Achievements



**456**

Lahontan  
Audubon  
Society  
Members



**9,095**

Views of our  
You Tube  
channel



**9**

Monthly  
meetings



**1,901**

People  
attending  
online  
workshops



**60**

Birding field  
trips



**759**

People  
attending LAS  
field trips



**101**

Bird species at  
Spring Wings  
Bird Festival



**1,475**

Youth  
attending LAS  
programs



**2**

New bilingual  
interpretive  
signs at Sparks  
Marina and  
Virginia Lake



**>1,180**

Volunteer  
shorebird  
survey hours



## Our Community

What does it mean to be a member of Lahontan Audubon Society? Our members spoke out last year when we posted an online survey. Larger words represent words that came up in the comments more often. Our community loves birds and learning about them, is concerned about avian conservation, frequently participates in birding trips, and enjoys getting together with a great group of friends. Membership registration or renewal is easy. Just click on [this link](#).



## Programs and Activities

### Spring Wings Bird Festival

We partnered with a diverse group of government agencies and non-profit organizations to bring the Spring Wings Bird Festival back to Fallon. We teamed up with AmeriCorps to create the new [Spring Wings Bird Festival website](#) and 14 LAS volunteers greeted visitors and assisted with finding over 100 species of birds throughout the Lahontan Valley Wetlands to celebrate spring migration.

### Historical Document Archive

In an effort to preserve our history, we archived older documents with the University of Nevada, Reno - Special Collections Library. This collection includes records on administration, outreach, and publicity, including previously published *Pelican* newsletters.



November and December 2021 photo contest winner Emma Wynn – Gadwall, and Hooded Merganser

## Communications

### Sunday Email Announcements and Calendar

This year, we updated our database and email server to provide better communications on upcoming events, volunteer opportunities, and news at LAS. We began sending out email notifications every other week to all of our constituents.

## The Pelican Newsletter

We were so happy to welcome Kentia Kalanaki as our new Pelican Newsletter Editor. She represents the new generation of birders and has done an amazing job writing or collecting interesting articles, editing, and formatting submitted stories to publish on our website. If you have an interesting story to share about Nevada birds, places to bird, conservation, bird art, or ways we can help birds in our backyard, please send an email to [kentia.kalanaki@nevadaaudubon.org](mailto:kentia.kalanaki@nevadaaudubon.org) with your idea.



*January 2022 photo contest winner Alison Hardenburgh – Tundra Swan, and February 2022 photo contest winner Clayton Peoples – Short-eared Owl*

## Online Community

Thanks to the efforts of our VISTA volunteer, Parker Flickinger, we now have multiple online community accounts, where everyone can share bird lists, photos, or learn about birds or birding activities around town. Please check out our links:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [YouTube](#)
- eBird – Share your lists with [lasbirdinggroup](#)



## Conservation

### Shorebird Surveys

This fiscal year, we coordinated with National Audubon Society, Stillwater National Wildlife Refuge, and Nevada Department of Wildlife to conduct volunteer shorebird counts in the Lahontan Valley Wetlands near Fallon, NV. These wetlands are part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, which identifies key sites important for shorebirds and shorebird conservation. Our volunteers helped agency biologists collect count data used to better understand shorebird habitat use and to inform wetland management for bird conservation. To read more about this effort, check this link on the [National Audubon Society page](#).



*Spring 2022 photos: American Avocets at Stillwater NWR by Judy Duffy and Pinyon Jay fledglings in Reno by Diane Wong-Kone.*

### Pinyon Jay Surveys

In collaboration with Great Basin Bird Observatory, we began a pilot program training volunteers to contribute to the Pinyon Jay Community Science Project. These dedicated volunteers are collecting data that will help to answer why this charismatic species has experienced an 80% decline in the last 60 years. Check out the [Pinyon Jay Community Hub Site](#) to learn more.



March 2021 photo contest winner Emma Wynn – Bufflehead reflection, and April 2022 photo contest winner Brian Meltzer – Spotted Towhee

## Conservation Advocacy

Along with ongoing community science projects, our Conservation Committee writes letters and advocates for policies that can benefit avian conservation. In the past fiscal year, our team sent comments and letters on many topics including:

- Prioritizing shorebird habitat in the Comprehensive Management Plan for the Carson Lake Wildlife Management Area
- Emphasizing the importance of habitat connectivity and integrity for the 2021 Greater Sage-Grouse Land Use Plan Amendments and EIS
- Supporting the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and the Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancement Act of 2022

## Education

### Youth Programs

This past spring, volunteers visited 6 schools and guided students on birding and aquatic macroinvertebrate investigations at Washoe Lake. Our volunteers also led environmental education camp workshops for the Great Basin Outdoor School, Walker River Paiute Tribe, and Skiing is Believing youth. Our taxidermy bird mounts were used in a special art project led by Vivian Olds, who published student bird drawings in the *Birds of Nevada: An Alphabet Book*, available now in local bookstores.



## Adult Programs

We continued our Birds of Truckee Meadows series online in May 2022, and this year, we included two new classes, Birding by Ear and Woodpecker identification workshops. These classes are available to watch on our [YouTube channel](#). We also continued the bird identification and ecology talks at the Galena Creek Visitor Center. Including the field sketching studios and outings described below, LAS hosted 22 in-person adult education events. Membership and donations helped fund materials needed so that we could provide these classes free to the public.



*May 2022 photo contest winner  
Emma Wynn – Yellow-rumped  
Warbler*

### Online Bird Drawing Workshops

Thanks to a grant from the Nevada Arts Council, we hosted [five online bird drawing workshops](#) with artist educators, Christine Elder and John Muir Laws. This was the first time that we hosted a program like this, and it was a big hit, with over 1,600 people in attendance! Each of the workshops highlighted a different drawing technique featuring Nevada birds and an ongoing LAS project. VISTA volunteer Diane Wong-Kone organized multiple studio and field outings after the workshops, where our nature journaling community continued to learn, share, and make new friends.

## Field Trips

### Local Birdwatching

With a growing community interest in birdwatching, we hosted local field trips around the Reno, Tahoe, and Carson City area. These trips included special outings with the Nevada Federation for the Blind and walks with an American Sign Language interpreter, to invite new communities to the world of birding. This past year, we held orientation sessions to recruit new field trip leaders for bird walks, so that we may continue to offer more walks to the community in the future. On occasion, special tours were offered to our members, but most walks were open to everyone. Members received advance notice of upcoming field trips. Our walks continue to be popular and are posted on the calendar on the [LAS website](#).

## International Birdwatching - Costa Rica

In February 2022, in partnership with Crescentia Expeditions, we hosted two fabulous trips to Costa Rica. Participants visited national parks, private reserves, and supported local conservation groups. Our volunteer, Kath Giel, organized these amazing birding trips, where people had a chance to view beautiful tropical birds like the Three-wattled Bellbird, Resplendent Quetzal, and White-throated Jacobin. Check out these [video](#) highlights of birds seen on these trips.



*Resplendent Quetzal by Mario Cordoba*

## Our Financial Records

As required by law, our [recent tax forms](#) are published online. The Form 990 for the past fiscal year will be published later this year.

## Our Partners

LAS thanks the following groups for providing funding and support to our organization and the projects that carry our mission forward.



TRUCKEE MEADOWS  
PARKS FOUNDATION

AWARENESS • APPRECIATION • STEWARDSHIP



AmeriCorps



Audubon



NFWF



VISIT  
FALLON

THE OASIS OF NEVADA

NEVADA  
ARTS COUNCIL



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT for the ARTS

arts.gov

## Thank You!

Most of all, LAS thanks you, our members, supporters, and volunteers. You are the key to our success and you are the heart of our organization. Thank you for all you do and your continued support for the love of birds!



*June 2022 photo contest winner Tim Ng – Bullock's Oriole*

Please visit us at [www.nevadaaudubon.org](http://www.nevadaaudubon.org).