

THE JOY OF BIRDING

2020-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN



INDIANA AUDUBON
SOCIETY, INC. FOUNDED 1898



Celebrating our natural heritage

EXPANDING EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION

WWW.INDIANAUDUBON.ORG



MISSION

INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY'S MISSION IS TO:
STIMULATE INTEREST IN BIRDS AND THEIR
PROTECTION; TO SERVE THE NEEDS OF YOUTH,
CIVIC, CHURCH, SCHOOLS AND OTHER GROUPS
BY PROVIDING INFORMATION CONCERNING
BIRDS; AND TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC
CONCERNING THE NECESSITY FOR CONSERVING
AND PRESERVING INDIANA'S NATURAL
HERITAGE, ITS UNIQUE FLORA AND FAUNA.

INTRODUCTION

As we prepared this new Strategic Plan, we sat in a meeting room at Fort Harrison State Park last January. It feels like a long time ago now. One of our veteran Board members was discussing what was most important to him and what stood out as an IAS strength, and he made a simple and profound statement. "We're a volunteer organization. We come together because we want to do these things," he said.

IAS' success through the years has been because of so many people who've come together to share their love of Indiana birds. We would not be here today without the commitment of so many members and volunteers. It's your passion that has propelled us to develop a wealth of wonderful programs that benefit Hoosiers and avifauna alike.

As we look ahead to this next plan, we reflect on our nearly 125 years of history and position as the oldest conservation organization in Indiana. Together, we can educate others and share the joy of birding with everyone in the state. We hope you will join us again along the way.

AMY WILMS
Board Chair

BRAD BUMGARDNER
Executive Director



Black-necked Stilt



Black-and-white Warbler



STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

DATA GATHERING

1:1 stakeholder conversations
Membership survey
In-person working session

ASSETS REVIEW

Adopt-a-Shrike
Amazing Bird Race
Bird banding, research, records
Bird guiding
Bird Town Indiana
Hummingbird Migration Celebration
IAS Share and Connect
Indiana Bird Records Committee
Indiana Birding Trail
Indiana Dunes Birding Festival
Indiana Young Birders Club
Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary – education and events
Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary – recreation and research
Mumford & Keller Grant/Scholarship Program
Northern Saw-whet Owl Education
Publications (The Cardinal, IN Audubon Quarterly)
Stewardship Committee

“Increase awareness of the need to preserve urban and rural habitat for birds and other wildlife.”

—SURVEY COMMENT

CAPABILITIES RANKING

IAS Board Members met in January 2020 and rated organizational capabilities. The following list reflects their ranking:

Shared mindset
Collaboration
Learning
Communication
Member connectivity
Innovation
Technology
Accountability
Capacity
Efficiency
Speed

“We’ve been able to embrace technology and recruit more to the birding community.”

—SURVEY COMMENT



The IAS Board reviewing the organization's assets and capabilities at Fort Harrison State Park.

GOAL 1

SHARE THE JOY OF BIRDING IN INDIANA THROUGH EDUCATION AND CONSERVATION INITIATIVES

Continue popular activities such as bird walks and international tours

Build on the success of the [Indiana Dunes Birding Festival](#) as one of the nation's premier birding festivals

Maintain the array of print publications and an active, engaged social media community

Deploy strategic investments of the [Mumford & Keller Grants](#) and communicate their impact

Highlight the advocacy work of the Stewardship Committee to protect and expand bird populations

Invest in programs such as [Adopt-A-Shrike](#), [Bird Town Indiana](#), the [Indiana Birding Trail](#), the [Indiana Young Birders Club](#) and the DNR grassland partnership



GOAL 2

ENSURE THE PRESERVATION AND FINANCIAL STABILITY OF MARY GRAY BIRD SANCTUARY

Invest in improvements to facilities and upkeep of the property

Seek continued opportunities for partnership with schools and local community

Leverage events as a key revenue source

Maintain research projects including hummingbird banding, saw-whet owl education and the MOTUS tower



Hummingbird banding, photo by Brad Bumgardner



Saw-whet owl education, photo by Frank Oliver



Mary Gray Bird Sanctuary

GOAL 3

RECRUIT VOLUNTEERS TO EXPAND CAPACITY AND ENSURE SUCCESSION

Ensure organization/program growth matches personnel and volunteer resources

Build the pipeline of future Board and Committee Members

Create a structure for volunteer management, including personnel and software

Communicate explicit volunteer opportunities and follow up with people who have given their time

Reach out to fill demographic and geographic gaps in membership



Photo by Brad Bumgardner



Photo by Carl Wilms

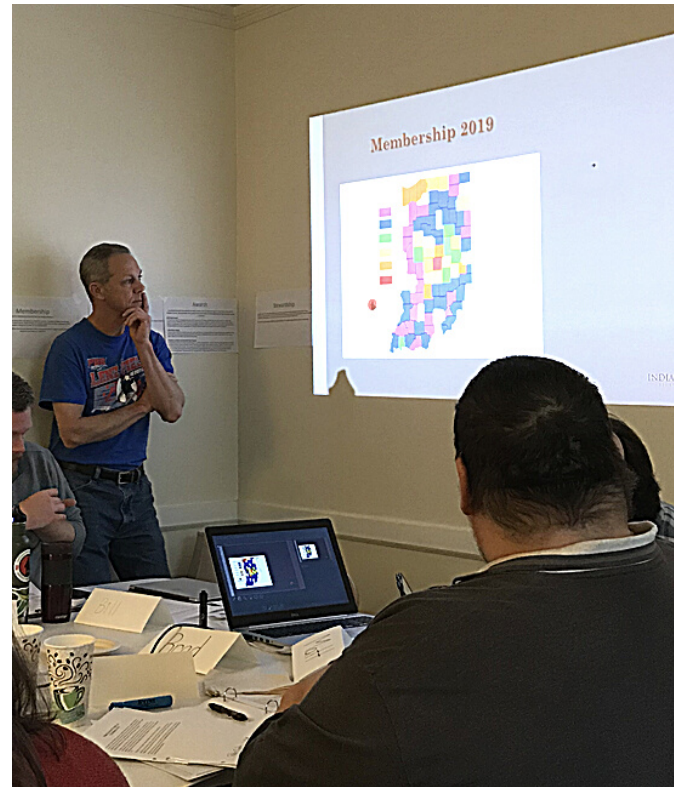
GOAL 4

ENHANCE INTERNAL PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES

Adhere to the highest standards of nonprofit governance

Commit to transparency among Board, membership and the public

Ensure continued careful stewardship of budget, financial investments and other assets



GOAL 5

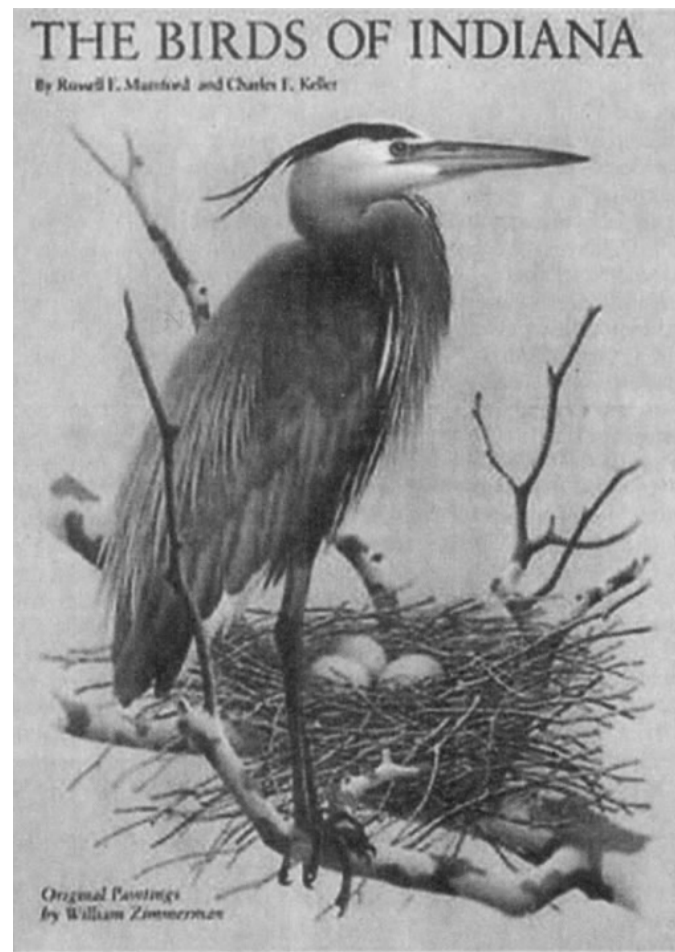
BUILD ON ORGANIZATION'S RICH HISTORY

Increase awareness of birds and programs by celebrating 125th anniversary in 2023

Deepen connections with new, existing and past members

Increase financial contributions and volunteer support

Explore launching or re-launching new initiatives and enhanced organizational vision for coming decades





DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY IS COMMITTED TO PRINCIPLES OF DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN ITS PROGRAMS AND ITS INTERACTIONS WITH MEMBERS AND THE PUBLIC. INDIANA AUDUBON SOCIETY BELIEVES IN CREATING A MORE EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE BIRDING COMMUNITY. WE STRIVE TO REACH OUT TO DIVERSE COMMUNITIES SO THAT ALL PEOPLE MAY EXPERIENCE WHAT BIRDING OFFERS.

A LEGACY OF LEADERSHIP

RUSSELL MUMFORD AND CHARLES KELLER HAD A LONG HISTORY WITH IAS AND TOGETHER WROTE "THE BIRDS OF INDIANA"

Russell Mumford and Charles Keller followed divergent paths in life. Both lifelong birdwatchers, they enjoyed distinct experiences and interests within ornithology and their personal lives that shaped their considerable impacts on Indiana birdwatching. Yet they came together to write an enduring book, "The Birds of Indiana," in 1984.

Mumford, a professor emeritus from Purdue University where he earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees, taught mammalogy and ornithology in the Forestry Department for 30 years before retiring in 1988. Throughout his career he produced countless studies focusing on birds, bats and other mammals, as well as some larger works including "Mammals of Indiana."

Keller took a different path, working his way up from elevator operator to norepinephrine synthesis researcher to Associate Pharmacologist in Cardiovascular Pharmacology at Eli Lilly. He served two years of active duty in Germany as a medic in the U.S. Army from 1951 to 1953 and, at age 46, pursued and completed an Associate's degree at the University of Indiana. Keller grew up birdwatching around his neighborhood, seeking out birds from a young age after becoming fascinated by bird identification in the 4th grade, where he was taught to memorize the species on posters hung on the classroom walls. He quickly developed an enduring passion for shorebirds, in particular, making frequent trips to the local sewage treatment plant in order to observe species that could not be found in other parts of metropolitan Indianapolis. In high school, he even contributed to the Indiana Audubon Yearbook, now the Quarterly, with a piece on Bacon's Swamp, one of his favorite birdwatching spots at the time.

Mumford became fascinated with birds while in college. He was drawn to the competitive nature of tracking birds around the world and found compiling a long list of observed species to be like a game, beginning to record his own sightings in the late 1940s. Later, he spent his sabbaticals traveling to alluring locations around the



IAS named its Grants/Scholarship program after Russell Mumford, left, and Charles Keller, pictured with his wife, Shirley. The two were luminaries in Indiana birding who came from disparate backgrounds.

globe in search of additional species for his already long list. When interviewed in 1989 he had recorded over 1,500 species, 300 of those in Indiana.

Mumford and Keller came to be seen as respected experts in the field of Indiana ornithology, naturally becoming collaborators on "The Birds of Indiana," the first bird guide for Indiana published since 1898. The pair began writing the monumental guide in 1981, cataloging and composing descriptions for 390 species and working 90 miles apart, sending chapters back and forth as the book evolved. The completed version was published in 1984. In their personal lives and professional careers, both Mumford and Keller have been closely connected with the Indiana Audubon Society. Keller became a member in 1945, while Mumford joined two years later and later served as Vice President and President. Both Mumford and Keller received, on separate occasions, the Earl Brooks Conservation Award, one of the Indiana Audubon Society's highest honors. Keller also served as assistant editor and editor of the Indiana Audubon Quarterly from 1961-1975 and 1987-2005.

Undoubtedly, Mumford and Keller have had enormous and long-lasting impacts on Indiana Audubon and the entirety of Indiana birding, having dedicated their lives to improving bird identification, extensive ornithological research, and the conservation of species.

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