

# Rhode Island Natural History Survey

2022 Annual Meeting  
April 7, 2022

BioBlitz 2021

ENGAGING—  
KNOWLEDGEABLE—  
PEOPLE—







# FINANCIAL REPORT

## *Fiscal Year 2021 (Jan-Dec)*

**By the Numbers (unaudited)**

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015
Net assets a/o 12/31 prev. year:	\$ 381,294	\$ 395,709	\$ 354,344	\$ 302,475	\$ 329,860	\$ 241,885	\$ 203,879
Total revenue:	\$ 717,604	\$ 632,201	\$ 670,072	\$ 689,418	\$ 480,254	\$ 471,866	\$ 411,610
Total expenses:	\$ 673,532	\$ 646,616	\$ 638,856	\$ 637,549	\$ 507,641	\$ 383,892	\$ 373,604
Net revenue (operations):	\$ 44,072	\$ (14,415)	\$ 31,216	\$ 51,869	\$ (27,387)	\$ 87,975	\$ 38,006
Unrestricted cash (adj for AR/AP):	\$ 311,629	\$ 267,302	\$ 263,386	\$ 222,130	\$ 187,718	\$ 115,233	\$ 98,899
Temporarily restricted:	\$ 105,898	\$ 104,908	\$ 113,089	\$ 122,143	\$ 126,757	\$ 219,009	\$ 137,835
Permanently restricted:	\$ 9,084	\$ 9,084	\$ 9,543	\$ 8,545	\$ 8,545	\$ 8,545	\$ 8,545
Total Equity as of 12/31:	\$ 426,611	\$ 381,294	\$ 395,709	\$ 354,344	\$ 302,475	\$ 329,861	\$ 243,609

Thank you, Stan Tragar, Treasurer, for your time and passion.



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PPP Loan: \$83,000



R H O D E I S L A N D

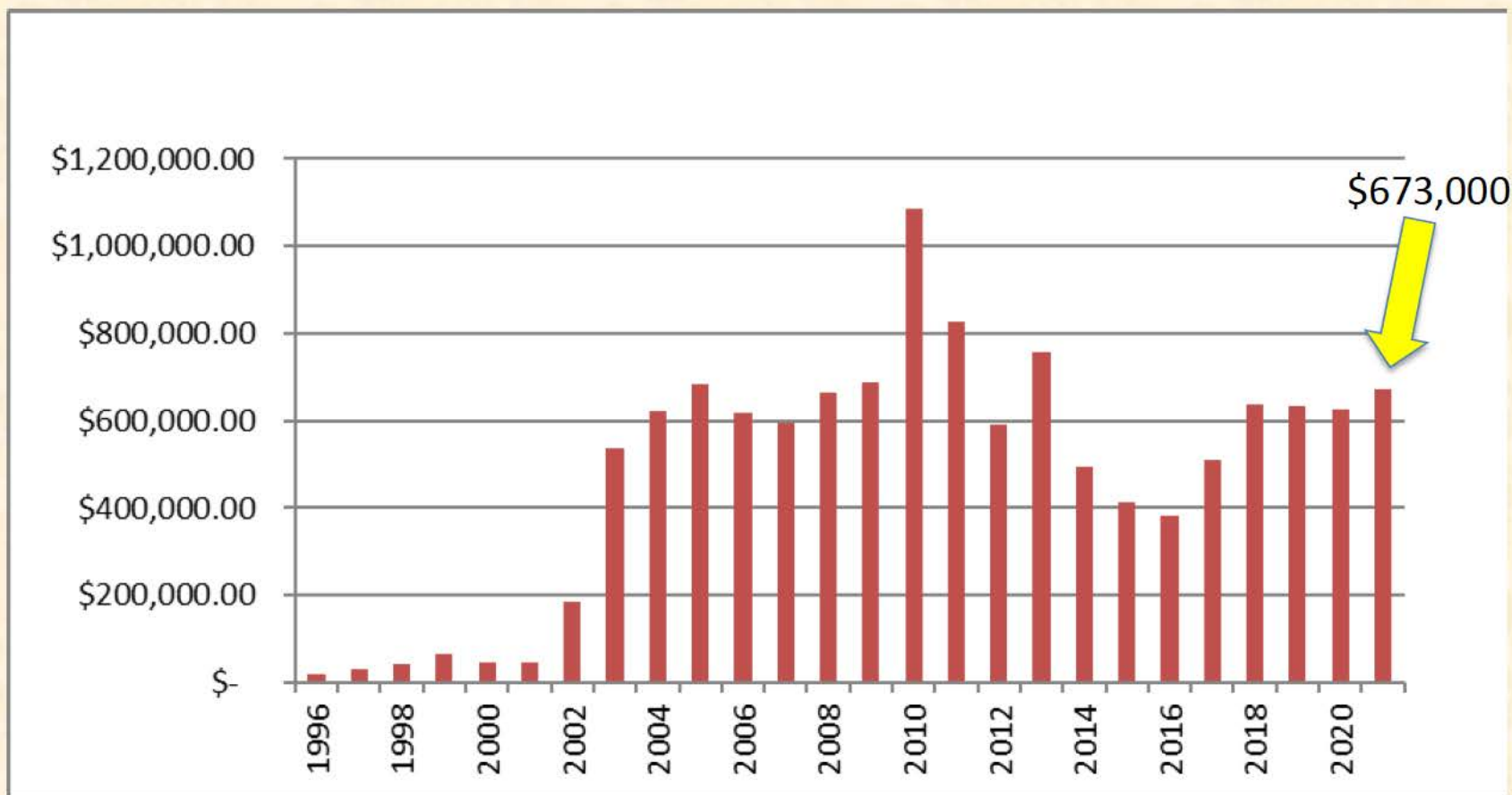


NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

*Providing Ecosystem Science and Information*

# FINANCIAL REPORT

*Fiscal Year 2021*



Expenses (IRS 990 line 18)



R H O D E I S L A N D

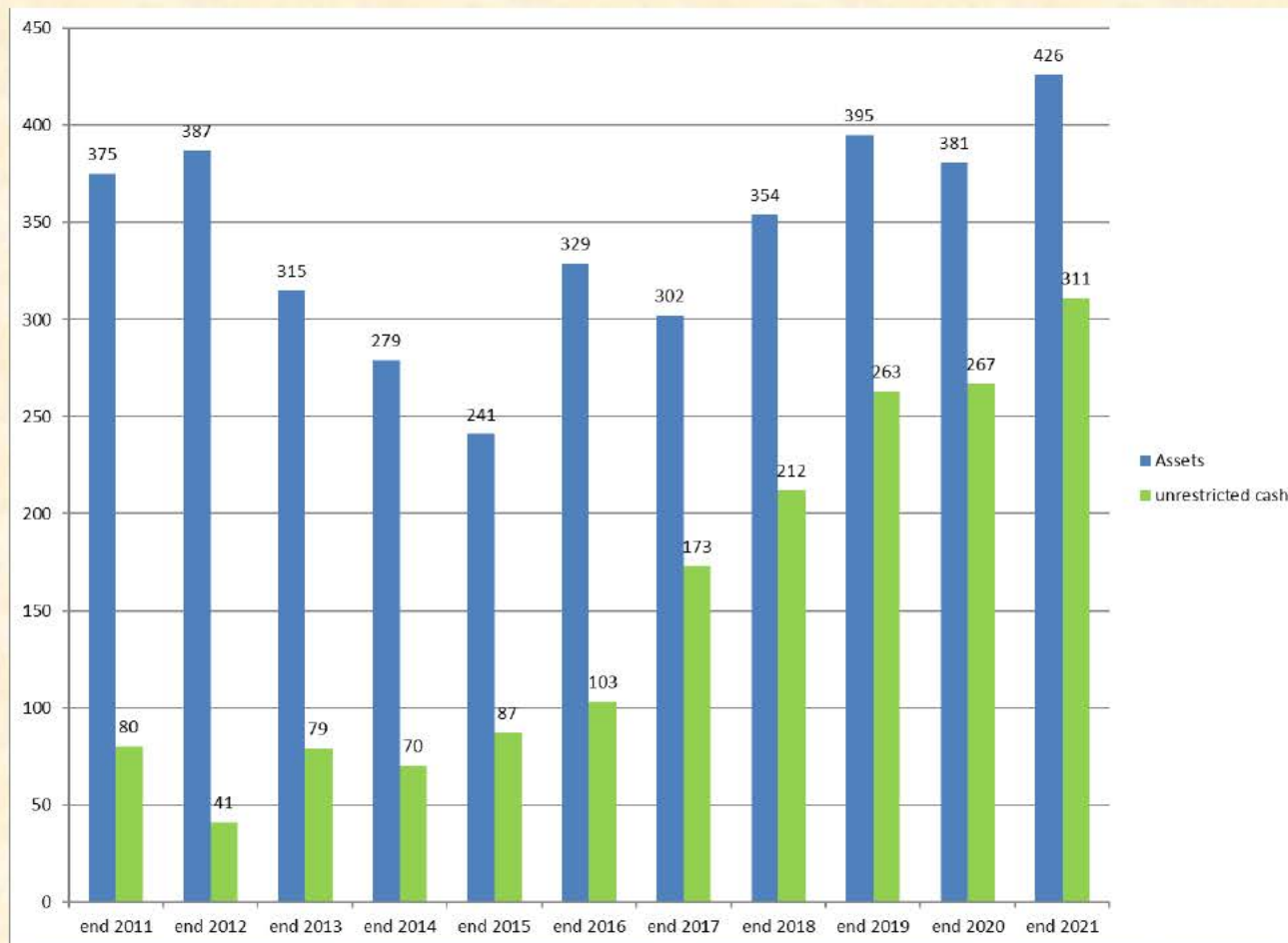


NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

*Providing Ecosystem Science and Information*

# FINANCIAL REPORT

*Fiscal Year 2021*

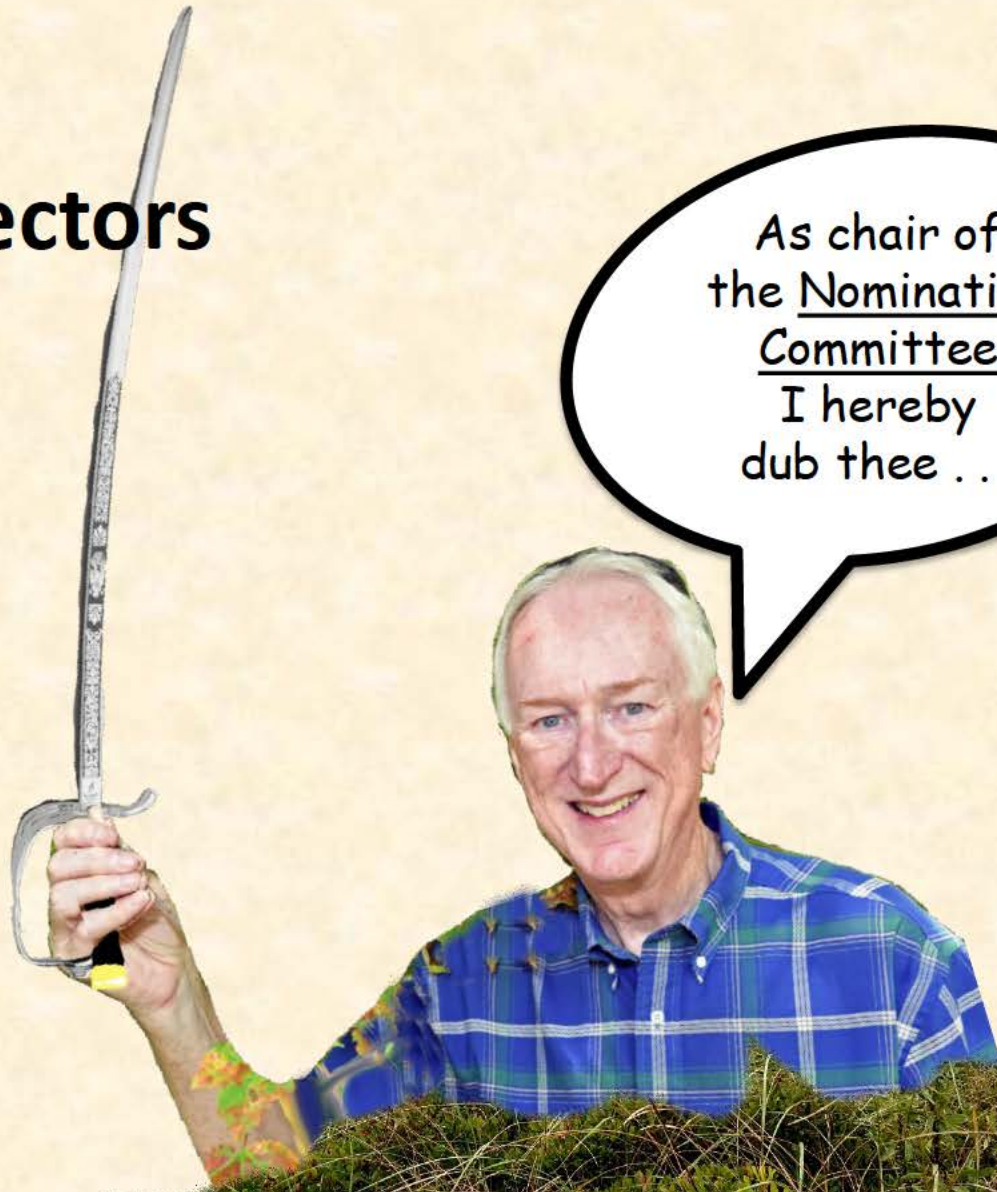




# Board of Directors 2022

As chair of  
the Nominating  
Committee  
I hereby  
dub thee . . .

*Thank you, Keith  
Killingbeck for your  
diligence and  
good spirits as chair  
of the Nominating  
Committee*







**CURRENT MEMBERS OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND, IN  
RED, THOSE STEPPING DOWN  
THIS YEAR**

**THE SURVEY BOARD OFFERS ITS  
SINCERE THANKS TO **KIM**,  
**STEPHEN**, AND **JON**. WE  
APPRECIATE YOUR MANY  
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE  
SUCCESS OF THE SURVEY.**

**PETER AUGUST  
SCOTT BUCHANAN**

****KIM GAFFETT****

**SARAH GAINES**

**HOWIE GINSBERG**

****STEPHEN HALE****

**EMILIE HOLLAND**

**NANCY KARRAKER**

**ROBERT KENNEY**

**KEITH KILLINGBECK**

**HUGH MARKEY**

**BRYAN OAKLEY**

**LOU PERROTTI**

****JONATHAN SCOONES****

**DENNIS SKIDDS**

**STAN TRAGAR**

**MARTY WENCEK**

**JAMES WATERS**



**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR  
NOMINATION TO THE 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**APRIL ALIX,**

**PROVIDENCE PARKS  
URBAN WILDLIFE  
REFUGE PARTNERSHIP**





**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR  
NOMINATION TO THE 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**CAITLIN CHAFFEE,**

**NARRAGANSETT BAY  
NATIONAL ESTUARINE  
RESEARCH RESERVE**

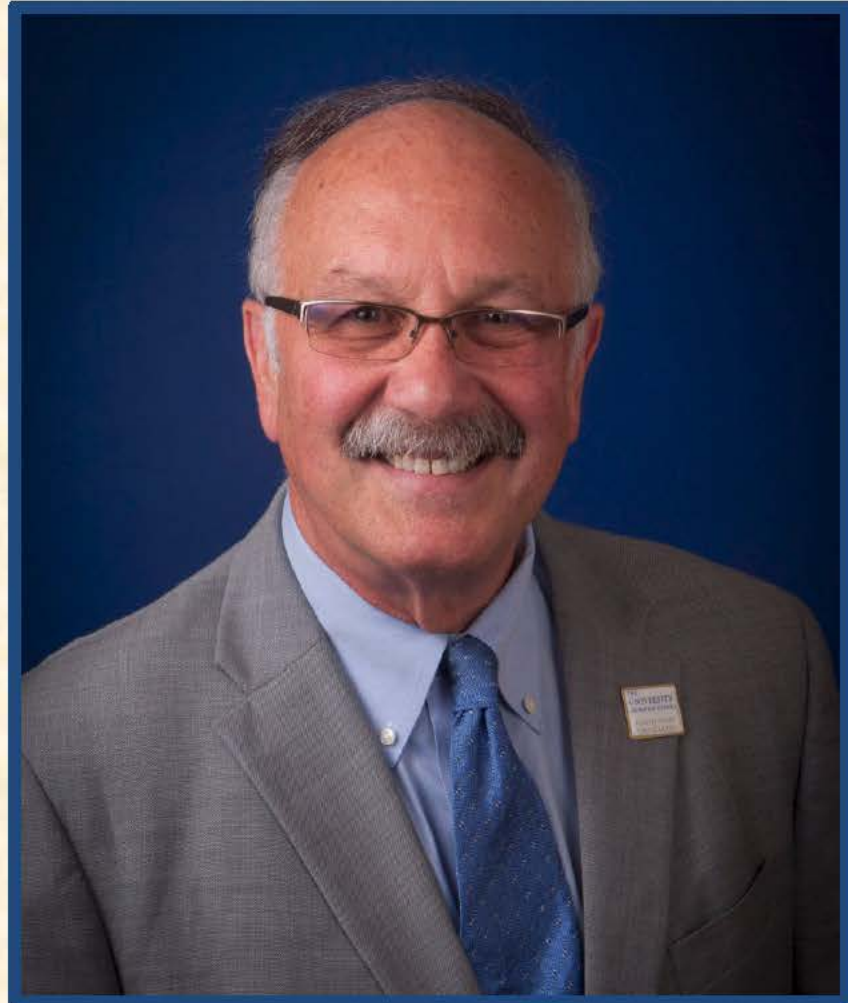




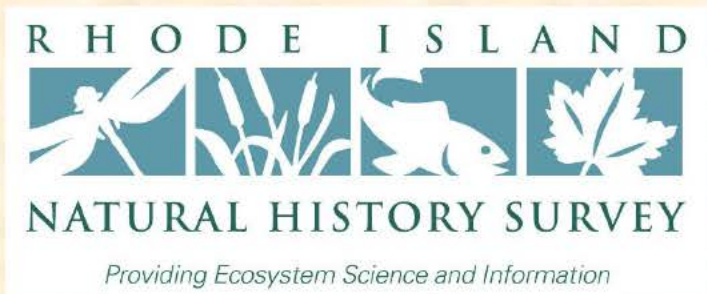
**APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR  
NOMINATION TO THE 2022-2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**DONALD DEHAYES,**

**UNIVERSITY OF  
RHODE ISLAND**







**SLATE OF NOMINEES  
FOR ELECTION TO THE  
2022-2023 BOARD OF  
DIRECTORS OF THE  
RHODE ISLAND  
NATURAL HISTORY  
SURVEY**

**APRIL ALIX  
PETER AUGUST  
SCOTT BUCHANAN  
CAITLIN CHAFFEE  
DONALD DEHAYES  
SARAH GAINES  
HOWIE GINSBERG  
EMILIE HOLLAND  
NANCY KARRAKER  
ROBERT KENNEY  
KEITH KILLINGBECK  
HUGH MARKEY  
BRYAN OAKLEY  
LOU PERROTTI  
DENNIS SKIDDS  
STAN TRAGAR  
JAMES WATERS  
MARTY WENCEK**





**NOMINATED TO BECOME THE 2022-2023 EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**LOU PERROTTI, PRESIDENT  
SARAH GAINES, PRESIDENT-ELECT  
MARTY WENSEK, VICE PRESIDENT  
ROBERT KENNEY, SECRETARY  
STAN TRAGAR, TREASURER**



# REPORT ON LAST YEAR'S ACTIVITIES

## BioBlitz 2021 CUMBERLAND

**Oct 1 & 2, 2021**

**117 participants  
786 species**





# BioBlitz 2021 CUMBERLAND

Oct 1 & 2, 2021





Dr. Numi Mitchell, wildlife biologist  
 Kyle Hess, wildlife biologist assistant

ENGAGING  
 KNOWLEDGEABLE  
 PEOPLE





# Wildlife Action Plan Liaison

## 2005 — 2015 — 2025(!)



Amanda Freitas, WAP Liaison,  
RINHS staff

### Community Wildlife Conservation Guide: Implementing Rhode Island's Wildlife Action Plan in Your Community



*A Guide for Rhode Island Communities, Conservation Groups, and Citizens  
Working to Protect Wildlife for the Health of Our Communities and Future Generations*

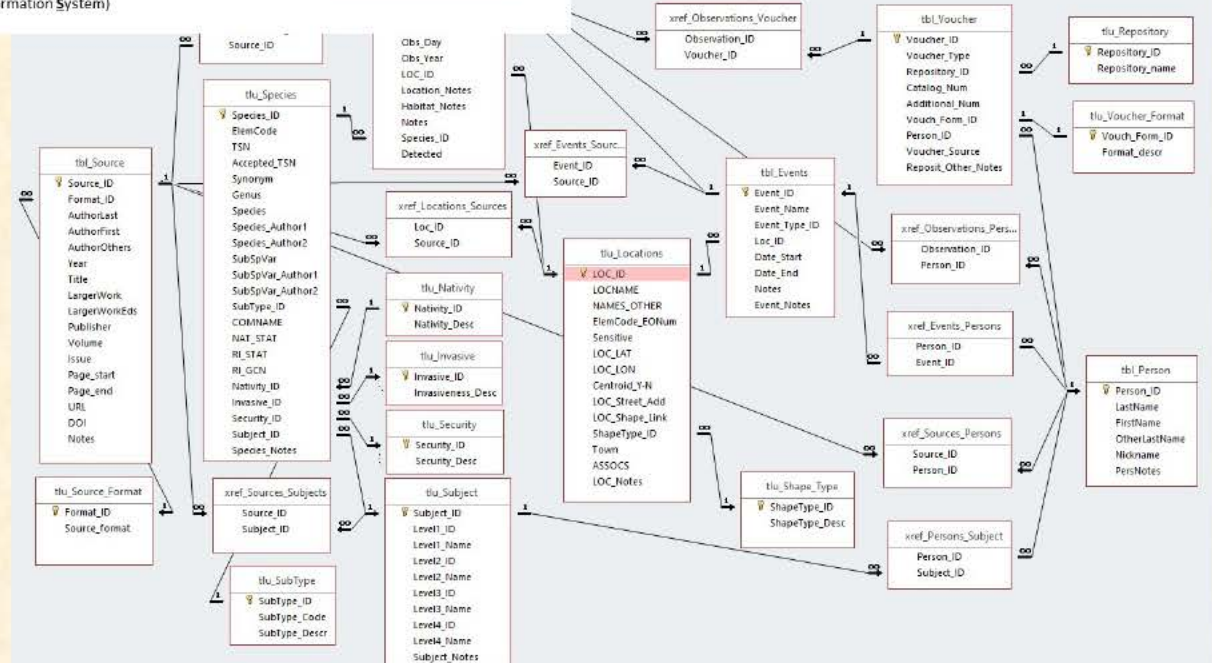
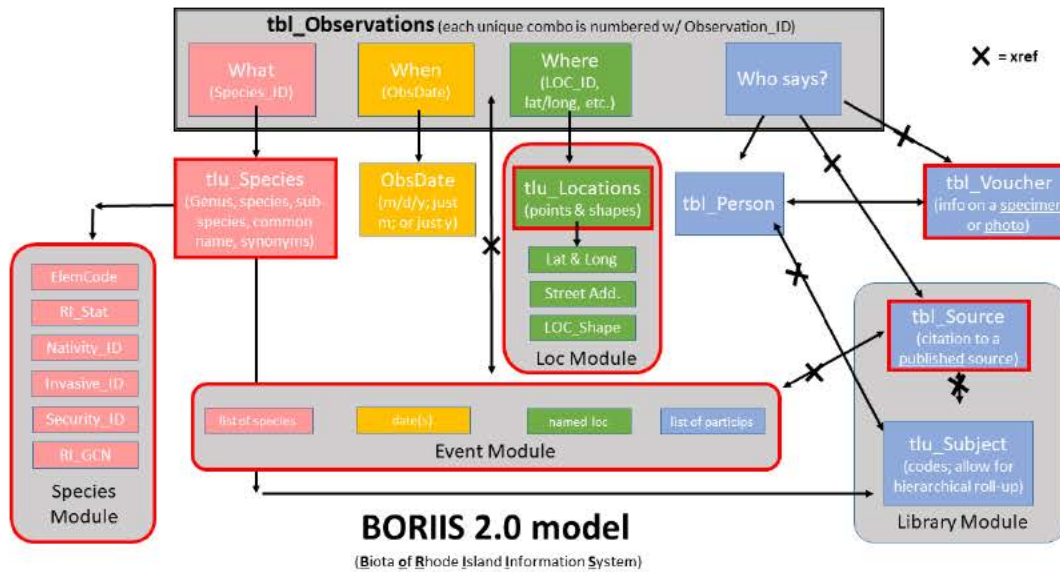
*"Nature is not a place to visit. It is home."  
— Gary Snyder*



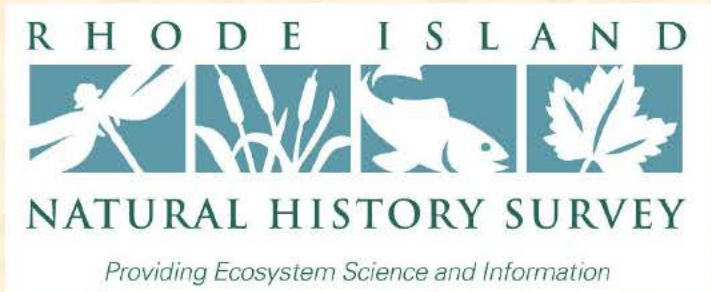


# BORIIS 2.0

**George Christie**  
Data Clerk







## ENGAGING KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE

### Wetlands Program Development (RAMP)



VERNAL POOLS







ENGAGING  
KNOWLEDGEABLE  
PEOPLE

A screenshot of the Rhode Island Department of State website. The header features a photo of Nellie M. Gorbea, Secretary of State, and navigation links for Business Services, Elections, Civics and Education, and Open Government. A breadcrumb trail shows the path: HOME &gt; OPEN GOVERNMENT &gt; RULES AND REGULATIONS &gt; TABLE OF CONTENTS. The main heading is "Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Enforcement of the Freshwater Wetlands Act". Below this, a tabbed interface shows "250-RICR-150-15-3" as an "ACTIVE RULE". The tabs include Regulation Text, Overview, Regulation (selected), History, and Rulemaking Documents. A "Download Regulation" button is visible. The content area displays the title "250-RICR-150-15-3" and the text "TITLE 250 – DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT", "CHAPTER 150 – WATER RESOURCES", "SUBCHAPTER 15 – WETLANDS", and "PART 3 – Rules and Regulations Governing the Administration and Enforcement of the Freshwater Wetlands Act".

Wetlands Program  
Development (RAMP)

CULMINATION OF  
YEARS OF WORK





# R H O D E I S L A N D



## NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Providing Ecosystem Science and Information

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Ecological Indicators 138 (2022) 108841



ELSEVIER

Contents lists available at ScienceDirect

Ecological Indicators

journal homepage: [www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolind](http://www.elsevier.com/locate/ecolind)



### A rapid method to assess salt marsh condition and guide management decisions

Thomas E. Kutcher<sup>a,\*</sup>, Kenneth B. Raposa<sup>b</sup>, Charles T. Roman<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Rhode Island Natural History Survey, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI, USA

<sup>b</sup> Narragansett Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Prudence Island, RI, USA

<sup>c</sup> University of Rhode Island, Department of Natural Resources Science, Kingston, RI, USA

#### ARTICLE INFO

##### Keywords:

Salt marsh  
Rapid assessment  
Ecological restoration  
Marsh migration  
Inundation stress  
Sea-level rise

#### ABSTRACT

Salt marshes are increasingly vulnerable to degradation and loss from accelerating sea-level rise and other pervasive disturbances, spurring a need for broad, science-based information to guide management. The Salt Marsh Rapid Assessment Method, MarshRAM, was designed to address this need by documenting information characterizing salt marsh type, setting, ecological value, disturbance, integrity, and opportunity for landward migration at the site scale. We used the method to collect information from onsite and remote observations of thirty-one (31) salt marshes in Rhode Island, USA. MarshRAM's *Wetland Disturbance Index* is a checklist that ranks the intensity of individual and cumulative human disturbances, while the *Index of Marsh Integrity* (IMI) is generated using a novel walking-transect approach to rapidly characterize site-wide vegetation-community composition. The IMI was designed to reflect ecological response to direct disturbances and inundation stress, and our finding that IMI strongly correlates with cumulative disturbance + marsh platform elevation indicates it works as intended. A strong correlation between IMI components and historic marsh loss suggests that salt marsh

Published April 7



Wetlands Program  
Development (RAMP)



R H O D E I S L A N D



NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

Providing Ecosystem Science and Information

3 SPECIAL ISSUES

2 REGULAR ISSUES

Science & News from the Rhode Island Natural History Survey

Rhode Island Naturalist

Science & News from the Rhode Island Natural History Survey

Rhode Island Naturalist

Number 1 • Spring 2022

Identification

congener *P. chinense* Asia. A revision of the encountered species names (906). Of the two species, *P.* and a loose inflorescence. st China, the Russian Far Japan. *P. chinense*, with rescence, is native to central cold-tolerant, but the be an adaptation to its bark, which contains separation of traditional g Bo (Gao and Dai 1990).

o North America as land-being successful in the eing wide use on the East Var (Grier and Grier 1928). rich, moist forest soils in g Island before 1950 (Lehr

pposite, compound leaves, low in autumn, which could sh (*Fraxinus* sp.). Male and plants. The fruit is a drupe,

Volume 16 • Number 2 • Fall 2021

Demonstration Site, one of three in Rhode Island. The demonstration sites showcase creative, effective land management to enhance resilience to climate change impacts.

Stewardship of Napatree is challenging. It is heavily used by visitors. On a hot summer day, 500 people can have the USE

The Rhode Island Survey  
hip of the

Science & News from the Rhode Island Natural History Survey

Rhode Island

Science & News from the Rhode Island Natural History Survey

Rhode Island

Relationships of Nest-Site Selection and Nest Success of Saltmarsh Sparrows (*Ammospiza caudacuta*) in Upper Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island

By STEVEN E. REINERT, DEIRDRE E. ROBINSON, JAMES M. O'NEILL, MIRANDA B. ZAIMARELLI, & JOEL ECKERSON

Abstract

This report summarizes results after 4 years (2017–2020) of a 5-year, comparative field study of Saltmarsh Sparrow nesting ecology and reproductive success in a 16-ha salt marsh in upper Narragansett Bay. We found 153 active nests and documented outcomes for 152: 55 (36%) failed due to flooding, and 42 (28%) failed due to predation. Nest success (as defined by at least one chick fledging from a nest) averaged 28% over four years, with a range of 24% (2020) to 38% (2017). We banded 516 Saltmarsh Sparrows, 48% of which were adults. As is typical for this species, most Saltmarsh Sparrows nested in marsh habitats dominated by grasses; 99% of nests were placed in sites dominated by stands or mixtures of the “salt meadow” grasses (*Spartina patens*, *Distichlis spicata*, *Jaumea carnosa*), and 18% of nests were placed in salt meadow grasses mixed with *Spartina alterniflora*. Sparrows selected nest sites in *S. patens* more frequently than would be expected based on that species' abundance on the marsh. Unlike findings from other published studies, Saltmarsh Sparrows at our study site nested regularly (24%) at the base of, or within 15 cm of, the erect, woody stems of *J. carnosa*, and nest success in that microhabitat (38%) was significantly greater than at sites lacking *J. carnosa* plants (22%). Based on

2017) —the only species with complete nesting success in its historical range, the number of individuals within the breeding range has significantly declined. More than four out of every five Saltmarsh Sparrows have disappeared since 1998—an estimated population decline of 87 percent. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is reviewing the Saltmarsh Sparrow's status and, by the end of September 2023, will make a determination of whether or not the Saltmarsh Sparrow warrants protection under the Endangered Species Act.



Adult Saltmarsh Sparrow at the Jacob's Pond study site (photo by Deirdre Robinson).

USFWS and Rhode Island's Ocean State Land Management Commission. Linking bird ecology to habitat would have illuminated our understanding of the intersection of habitat, human behavior, and survival—before it was too late?

The Saltmarsh Sparrow Research Initiative (NSRI—https://www.snsri.org) has documented the breeding ecology of SALS at Jacob's Pond in Waukegan, Rhode Island, from 2017 through 2021 (Reinert et al. 2021). Over those five years, we located a total of 243 SALS nests clustered over 14 hectares of salt marsh, and have monitored more than 750 nestlings. Nests are usually found early in the breeding cycle by locating females who are incubating eggs; however, we sometimes find nests with chicks already present, and need to determine their age to document the timing in the nesting cycle with regard to flooding and deposition events. Aging chicks correctly also allows us to band them—ideally on Hatch Day 6 or 7, before the risk of free-flooding them out of the nest. For these reasons, it is helpful to have both physical and behavioral descriptions for each day in the life cycle of SALS nestlings. Our starting points were generic descriptions of songbird development (Jongman et al. 2007) and a preliminary description of SALS nestling development (SHARP 2011), augmented by our own observations and experience. Our objective with this report is to create a resource that will be useful to all researchers working on the species along the East Coast—thereby enhancing conservation efforts as much as possible.

available on-line as PDFs at:

<https://rinhs.org/resource-library/>

about 100,000 (USEF 2019).

*of pelagica (Galeata and Sandy Point in Little la). The National ree a Globally Important- appearance to shorebirds Napatree is included in olum II. Chalfee Coastal le Island Coastal (MCC) has designated est of Napatree an Area e of its importance as of rare and endangered g and includes the (Hobart), least tern (caucaucher (*Haematepus neter*). The URI Coastal Climate Response*

In This Issue:

- \* Napatree Point Stewardship
- \* President's Corner
- \* Ghost Beetles
- \* Right Whales: Part 2
- \* Executive Director's Journal: Bioblitzing Orlando
- \* Newport Natural History Society
- \* Swan Point Warblers
- \* Blue Frogs
- \* Book review: *Underbug*

about 100,000 (USEF 2019).

al: Seeing Differences in Land Trust

& Nature Writing

SLAND  
RY SURVEY  
and information

RHODE ISLAND  
NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY  
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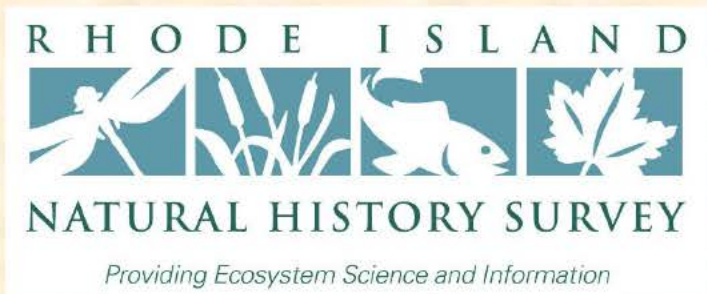
## Recognition for Contributions to the Natural History of Rhode Island

**Golden Eye Award — a BLUE green frog**



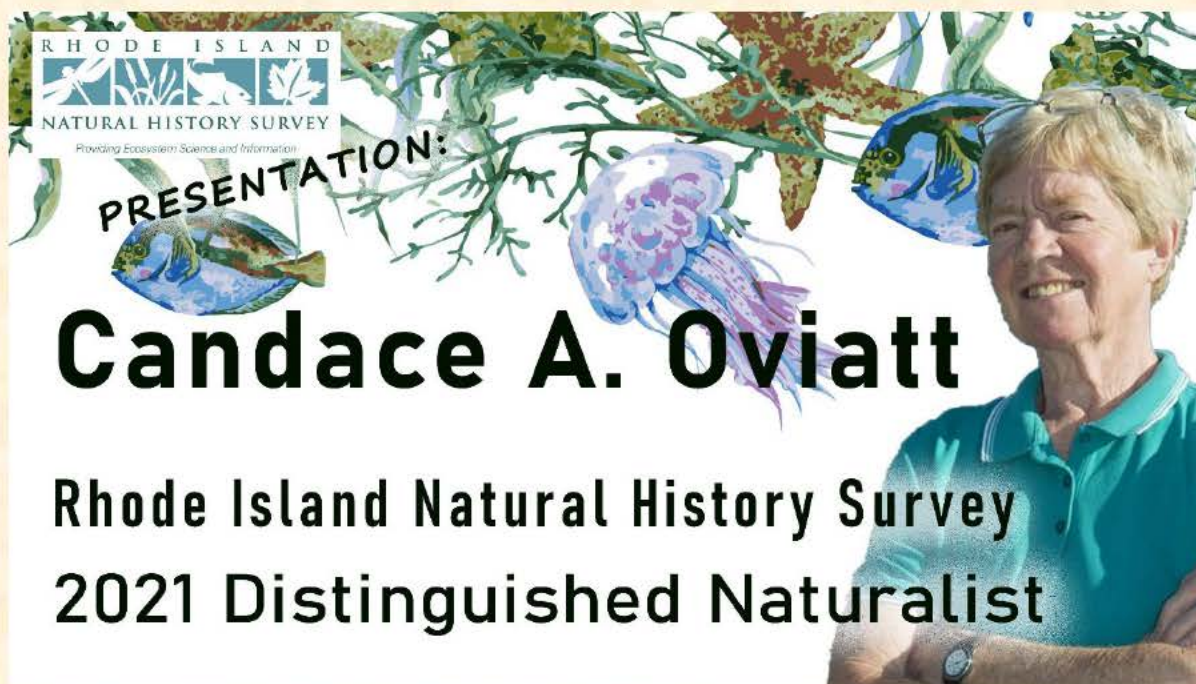
Allyson Braz and the Braz family



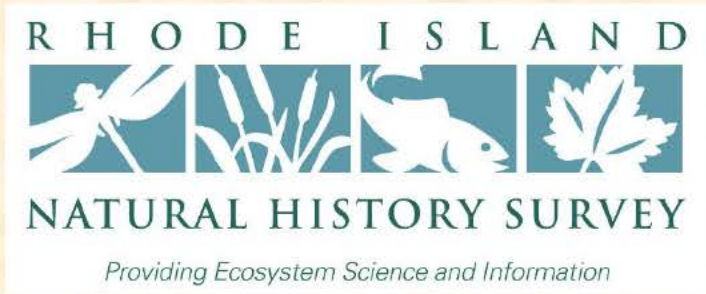


## Recognition for Contributions to the Natural History of Rhode Island

### Distinguished Naturalist Award





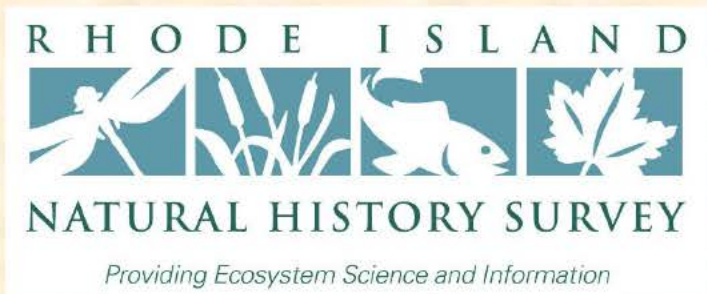


## Recognition for Contributions to the Natural History of Rhode Island

### ***Posthumous Distinguished Naturalist Award***







## Recognition for Contributions to the Natural History of Rhode Island

Founders' Service Award to the late, great . . .





R H O D E I S L A N D



NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

*Providing Ecosystem Science and Information*

# 2022 Rhode Island Nature Video Festival

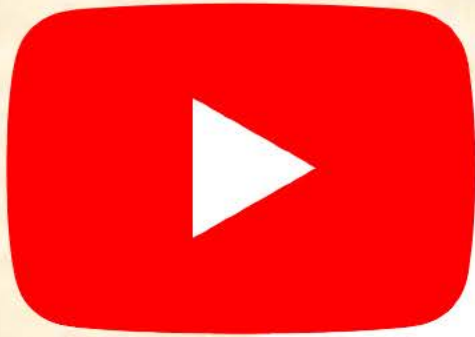


Environment Council  
of Rhode Island



STREAMING February 13, 3 p.m.





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- Tips from a Shipwr...
- Bennet Yacht Club

88 video uploads

26,843 views

2,200 hours

315 subscribers

CHANNELS

ABOUT

Welcome to the Rhode Island Natural History Survey

744 views • 1 year ago

The Rhode Island Natural History Survey is a non-profit organization dedicated to providing knowledgeable about the natural history of the state. We work with each other to share knowledge for research and education.

The Rhode Island Natural History Survey was founded in 1994, is embodied in the state's natural history. [READ MORE](#)

RHODE ISLAND  
NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY  
Providing Education, Science and Information

0:03 / 1:36

<https://youtube.com/user/rinaturalhistory>



## ARTISTS ON EXPEDITIONS

Natural history has involved artists since its earliest days, in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. An expedition's company often included writers, illustrators, and painters as well as biologists, geologists, astronomers, and ethnographers. Each contributed to the understanding of places, peoples, and wildlife encountered on the expedition.

Art remains important to natural history today. Every year the Rhode Island Natural History Survey asks friends for works that embody their own perspectives on the Rhode Island's animals, plants, and natural communities. They are exhibited here, along with actual specimens, to help visitors appreciate this multi-pronged approach to discovery!





## 2022 Artists on Expeditions



*3-Dimensional Shark* by David Chetowsky



R H O D E I S L A N D



NATURAL HISTORY SURVEY

*Providing Ecosystem Science and Information*

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KNOWLEDGEABLE  
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## Operation Spadefoot RI

Two new breeding pools for RI's rarest amphibian.

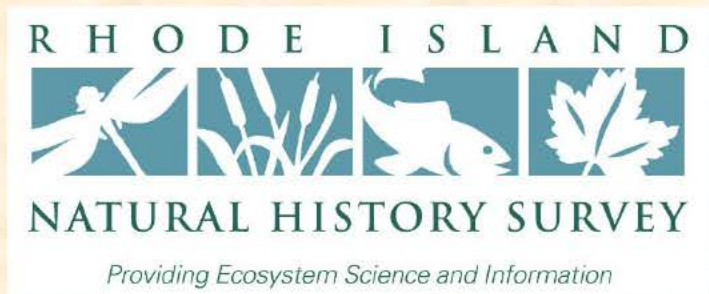




# Operation Spadefoot RI







**ENGAGING  
KNOWLEDGEABLE  
PEOPLE**

## Henry & Theresa Godzala Research Fund

- 2 successful projects from 2021
- raised enough new funding to add a year of grants to the program
- 3 new recipients in 2022

Thank you to everyone who included a gift to the  
Godzala Fund in their giving in 2021



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PEOPLE

118 DONORS  
31<sup>st</sup> out of 507

\$9,875  
68<sup>th</sup> out of 507

0.32% of  
every dollar raised



**BARRIE SAYS THANK YOU !!**



# BioBlitz 2022

## EAST BAY BIKE PATH

Bristol, Warren, Barrington

**JUNE 10 - 11**



Audubon Society  
of Rhode Island



cardio  
low carbon  
low freeboard





# TONIGHT'S FEATURED SPEAKER

**Alicia Lehrer**, Executive Director  
Woonasquatucket River Watershed Council



**"New Voices/Nuevas Voces:  
Deep Frontline Community Engagement for Climate Resilience and Leadership"**

