

2021 Annual Report

It's been nearly four years since a handful of volunteers convened to begin work on forming the Back Bay National Wildlife Society. The Society became an official Friends group in 2019 and began prioritizing and completing projects. Then the COVID outbreak resulted in precautions that necessitated most projects be deferred. The Society has been meeting virtually since the outbreak but anticipates meeting in person this spring. Detailed planning continued and outdoor projects recommenced in 2021. Among them and with the aid of supporters and the Refuge, the Society added additional osprey nest platforms, a new Visitors Service Center pollinator garden, and Chronolog photo stitching sites. Additionally, the Society acted as partner agents for the Refuge and Kyle Phillip's Eagle Scouts team to coordinate the integration of new and replacement benches.

2021 brought former coastal Virginia resident Megan Reed as the new BBNWR, Refuge Manager. Megan, who replaced the recently retired Doug Brewer, has a wealth of work experience throughout the Fish and Wildlife Service and has helped identify numerous volunteer opportunities for Society members. As one of six full time employees, Megan will be busy with numerous projects including assessing existing programs, maintenance, conservation, and community outreach. The lifting of COVID restrictions will enable the Refuge and Society to expand services and projects.

Dan Ford, also a founding Board of Director, is the Society newly elected President. Dan, like myself, is a lifelong resident of Virginia Beach with interest in environmental sustainability and stewardship. The rotation of Presidents helps maintain a zeal to lead the group through administration, project planning, and volunteerism. The success of the Society depends on its enthusiastic Officers and Board of Directors but it particularly relies on its partners, supporters, and members. For your help, I am especially thankful in navigating my term as President of the BBNWR Society.

With sincere appreciation,
Richard Dyer, Past President BBNWR Society



Sunset Point Overlook Viewing Platform

Society Accomplishments

As a relatively new official "Friends" group of the FWS, and despite many Covid related challenges and restrictions over the course of the last two years, the following Society milestones have been accomplished:

- Identification, creation, and installation of plant identification placards along the 0.4 mile Reese F. Lukei, Jr. Raptor Trail, that extends behind the Visitor Center to the Bay.
- Chronolog project: Installed four citizen-science photo stations for creation of time lapsed imagery
- Pollinator garden project: installed a pollinator garden in the beds surrounding The Visitor Center
- Coordinated an Eagle Scout project which built and installed 12 standalone benches, as well as new integrated benches on the Kuralt, Sunset Point and Dune Trail overlooks. The standalone benches replaced old benches which were nearing or at the end of their life
- Osprey nesting platforms project: reconstruction of one nesting platform in North Bay that had been destroyed by hurricane Dorian in September 2019, repair of two existing platforms in the southern part of the Bay, and the installation of nine new platforms throughout the refuge. The program uses nesting "boxes" or platforms built and donated as part of an Eagle Scout project by Troop 442. Mounting poles and related materials were purchased by the Society.
- Refurbished the Visitor Center kiosk
- Published annual reports and biannual newsletters



Osprey nesting platform



Chronolog user



Featured Project: Pollinator Garden

The Pollinator Garden project was completed in the fall of 2021 along the north and west perimeters of the Refuge Visitor Center. Volunteers worked in multiple phases to remove and prune old vegetation, cultivate and amend soil, and fill beds with pollinator plants. The garden provides an aesthetic benefit to the Visitor Center while including beneficial, native plants that support pollinators and other wildlife. Signage and visitor outreach are also planned to enlighten patrons of the benefits of the specific native plants clustered in the garden.

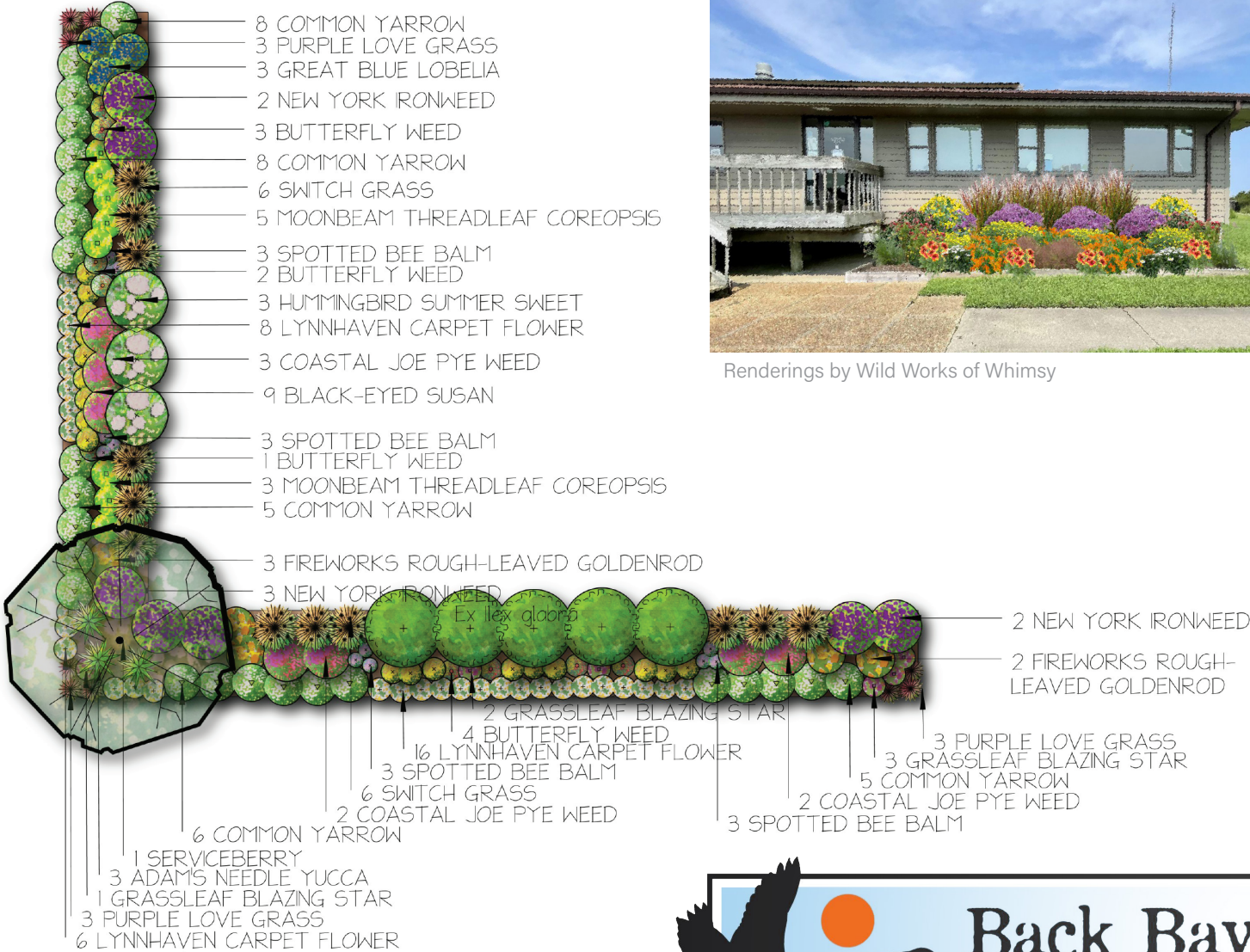
This project will require ongoing care and could be an opportunity for future contributions of time, materials or funding as well as a potential venue for educational programs.



Phase 1 volunteer work day



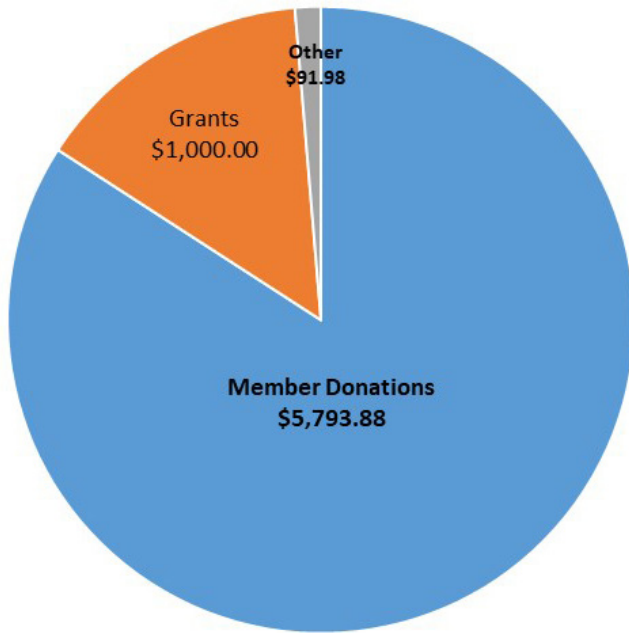
Renderings by Wild Works of Whimsy



Financial reports

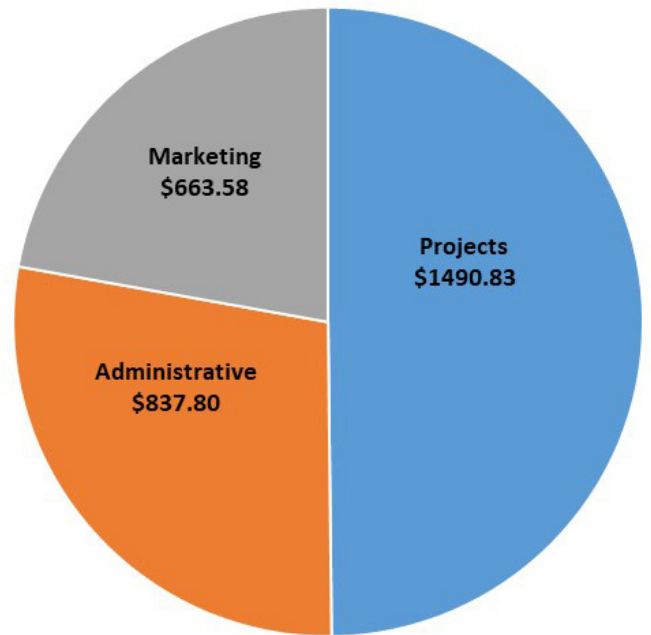
The Society received monetary contributions totaling \$6,885.86 in 2021. Disbursements in 2021 totaled \$2,992.21. Expenses consisted of: general and administrative costs \$837.80, projects expenses totaling \$1,490.83, and marketing expenses totaling \$663.58. As of December 31, 2021, the Society had assets of \$7,084.67 with no outstanding liabilities.

BBNWR Society 2021 Receipts \$6,885.86



■ Member Donations \$5,793.88 ■ Grants \$1,000.00 ■ other \$91.98

BBNWR Society 2021 Disbursements \$2,992.21



■ Projects \$1490.83 ■ Administrative \$837.80 ■ Marketing \$663.58



Board Members

Daniel Ford, President
Former merchant mariner, environmental conservationist

Laura McMahon, Vice President
Teacher, VBCPS

Barry L Kurzer DDS, Treasurer
Retired general dentist

Catherine Miller, Secretary
Former life science teacher

Charlie Ellin
Board member Back Bay Restoration Foundation

Richard F. Dyer, III
Former broadcast engineer, City of Virginia Beach, former president/board member Back Bay Restoration Foundation

Reese Lukej, Jr.
Retired CPA, licensed bird banding/raptor specialist, research associate: Center for Conservation Biology; trails advocate

Chris Freeman
Teacher: Environmental Science VBCPS

Chris Elam
Architect

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge Society

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Our Vision:

A sustainable Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge that is responsive to diverse native wildlife and habitat maintained in a healthy ecosystem as a contributing link in the migration chain of the Atlantic Flyway.

