



NJ Audubon's Lorrimer Sanctuary Celebrates Completed Renovation

Donors and staff gather to admire the updated education center and grounds

Bernardsville, NJ (July 9, 2026)– New Jersey Audubon is excited to announce that after a year and a half of construction the final stages of the restoration of the Lorrimer Sanctuary are complete – fitting timing as Lorrimer Sanctuary celebrates its 70th anniversary this year. In the early stages of restoration updates included modern electrics and lighting, refreshed staff office space and break area, renovated bathrooms and a new HVAC system. Later stages saw a completely updated and expanded education wing that is fully accessible with accessible bathrooms, an outside deck, second story observation platform and modernized paved driveway with permeable parking for school buses and integrated rain garden.

Guests came from across New Jersey to be a part of the Lorrimer re-opening celebration held June 25th at the sanctuary in Franklin Lakes, NJ. Donors, and their families, were able to see first-hand the results of their generous support. NJ Audubon staff, past and present, as well as NJ Audubon current and former board members were present to experience the center's transformation.

The renovations at Lorrimer Sanctuary were made possible from individual gifts, an anonymous key donor and the Winifred M. and George P. Pitkin Foundation, totaling \$2.1 million to date. This amazing generosity supported the important updates and new expanded classroom "In Honor of Tom Gilmore" as well as other enhancements designed to enrich the visitor experience at the sanctuary.

"These investments are consistent with our broader strategies. As an organization, we exist to inspire people to care for nature, creating a brighter future for all. We are thrilled to provide more opportunities for connections in Bergen County." stated Alex Ireland, President and CEO of New Jersey Audubon.

Lorrimer Sanctuary consists of fourteen wooded acres of trails with quiet spaces, native plant gardens and a visitor center consisting of a gift shop and discovery room. The grounds consist mostly of second-growth woods made up of oak, maple, ash, and beech trees with small stands of planted evergreens. Trails are open daily dawn to dusk.

"This renovation isn't just about new facilities, it's about expanding on our 70-year legacy and ensuring Lorrimer Sanctuary can welcome visitors, educate students, and connect our community with nature, regardless of age or ability, for decades to come." said Alexa Fantacone, Lorrimer Sanctuary Director.

Support for Lorrimer Sanctuary is still needed. For more information, visit www.njaudubon.org/lorrimer-donate.

About New Jersey Audubon:

New Jersey Audubon is a privately supported, not-for profit, statewide membership organization. Founded in 1897, and one of the oldest independent conservation organizations, New Jersey Audubon Inspires and empowers people to care for nature throughout New Jersey and beyond. We protect New Jersey's wildlife and plants, especially those species at risk by promoting the preservation of New Jersey's valuable natural habitats.

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