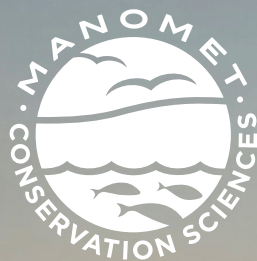


MANOMET



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SPRING 2026

Uncharted Currents: Shorebird Conservation in the Amazon Surveying Hundreds of Lagoons

ALSO INSIDE

Manomet Alumni Reunion 2025: Getting the Band(ers) Back Together

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Building a Community of Care for Georgia's Coast

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

We are delighted to provide a print newsletter highlighting some of our recent work.

In addition to the stories that follow, I wanted to share that in early February, we held a senior management retreat at our Plymouth, Massachusetts Headquarters. Roughly 25 staff traveled from Alaska, Argentina, Brazil, California, Colombia, Georgia, Maine, Paraguay and Texas to participate in sessions as far-reaching as Artificial Intelligence, safeguards and safety protocols in the field, and work we are doing to endure conservation in the places we work. These gatherings are critical to the success of our organization, enabling new scientists in Alaska and California to meet their colleagues, and others to connect formally and informally across the organization. For some from Latin America, it was their first time ex-



periencing snow, and we were able to find some sleds for a fun romp in the snow!

As I reflected on our team after the retreat, I am filled with nothing but pride as I witnessed tremendous passion and commitment to continuous improvement across the organization. Everybody is in, and everyone is pitching in, giving a little extra effort and time to improve what makes Manomet great — a commitment to equitable and profound partnerships across all our work in science, conservation and education to endure our work for generations.

In these stories, you will see that spirit in action. You'll read about community gathering amidst the glow of lighted candles at Illuminate Manomet — an evening that reminded us how deeply people

want to connect with nature and with each other. You will see the power of volunteers and partners through the Massachusetts Shorebird Blitz, where hundreds of coastal sites become a living map of shorebird migration. You will meet Manomet alumni who returned to the banding lab and net lanes, a reminder that Manomet has long been a place where learning is hands-on, mentorship is impactful, and conservation becomes a calling.

You'll also see how our education work is reaching students and teachers through the Wade Institute's STEM Challenge and you will read a hopeful update about our fisheries work.

And you will travel with us to Georgia and South Carolina, Argentina, Brazil, and the Amazon - where Manomet's work is strengthening local leadership, building enduring partnerships, and following migratory shorebirds across borders and seasons. These stories differ in their settings, but they share a common thread: conservation works best when it is rooted in strong science and sustained by local community.

Looking ahead, we will continue to deepen the work in 2026.

We will continue to follow shorebirds across the hemisphere, because understanding where they go, what

habitats they depend on, and what threats they face is essential to reversing declines. We will continue to unravel the mysteries of climate winners and losers along the coast of New England, where people have depended on coastal resources for decades for their livelihoods. We will continue our investments in long-term monitoring, because the trends that matter most only reveal themselves over decades of consistent data. And we will remain focused on community partnerships, because lasting impact happens when local knowledge, pride, and leadership are supported and celebrated.

None of this happens without you.

Your support makes it possible to collect the data, train the next generation of stewards, convene partners, and translate science into action. Thank you for being a part of Manomet's community. I'm grateful for your partnership and excited for what we can do together in 2026.



Lizzie Schueler
President

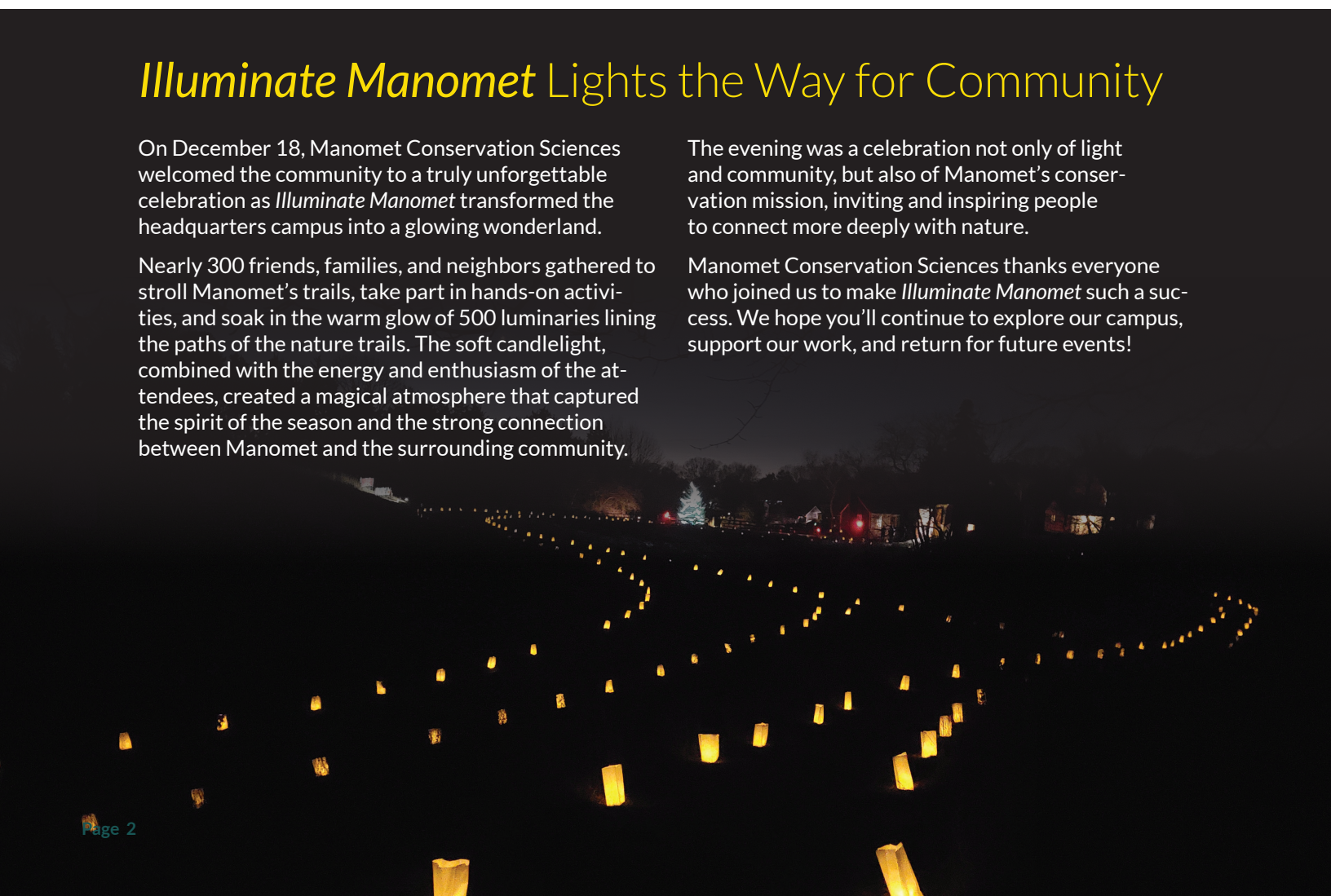
Illuminate Manomet Lights the Way for Community

On December 18, Manomet Conservation Sciences welcomed the community to a truly unforgettable celebration as *Illuminate Manomet* transformed the headquarters campus into a glowing wonderland.

Nearly 300 friends, families, and neighbors gathered to stroll Manomet's trails, take part in hands-on activities, and soak in the warm glow of 500 luminaries lining the paths of the nature trails. The soft candlelight, combined with the energy and enthusiasm of the attendees, created a magical atmosphere that captured the spirit of the season and the strong connection between Manomet and the surrounding community.

The evening was a celebration not only of light and community, but also of Manomet's conservation mission, inviting and inspiring people to connect more deeply with nature.

Manomet Conservation Sciences thanks everyone who joined us to make *Illuminate Manomet* such a success. We hope you'll continue to explore our campus, support our work, and return for future events!



Massachusetts Shorebird Blitz

From August 2–10, 2025, 123 surveyors counted shorebirds at 232 Massachusetts’ sites, documenting 85,038 birds across 25 species. The Massachusetts Shorebird Blitz, a coordinated survey across the eastern part of the state during peak southbound migration, was launched in 2023. Each summer, shorebirds pause along our coastline to rest and refuel on journeys that connect Arctic and subarctic breeding grounds with southern non-breeding areas. The Blitz creates a snapshot of where shorebirds concentrate during migration and helps identify the most important stopover sites in Massachusetts. The data are already informing site comparisons and conservation planning, including analyses led by the University of Rhode Island, and will, over time, help track how fall shorebird migration in Massachusetts is changing.

You can find the Blitz sites below and the detailed Story Map Report at <https://arcg.is/1Le4G5> to enjoy additional highlights of the 2025 survey.

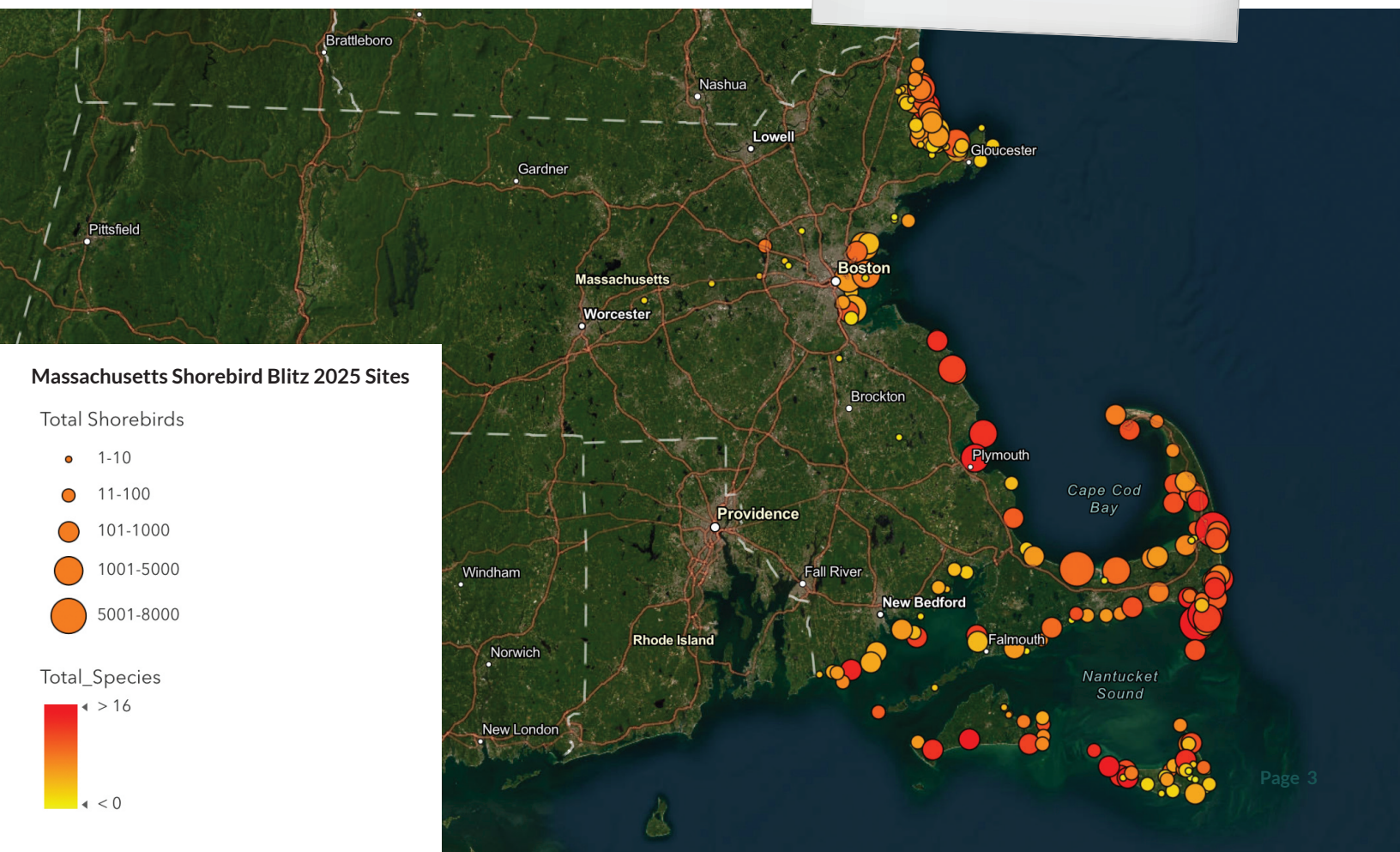


Shorebirds feeding on the Monomoy mudflats | Photo: Manomet/Alan Kneidel



Juvenile Piping Plover at Duxbury Beach | Photo: Liam Norton

Scan for the detailed Story Map Report





ABOVE: Alan Kneidel and Liana DiNunzio fitting a tag on a Hudsonian Whimbrel.
 TOP RIGHT: Alan Kneidel retrieving a Hudsonian Whimbrel from traps.
 BOTTOM RIGHT: Tagging a juvenile in Cape Cod.
Photos: Manomet/Andrea Ferreira
 BOTTOM LEFT: Hudsonian Whimbrel tagged in Texas in 2022 and resighted in Brazil this January. | *Photo: Manomet/Brad Winn*



Following the Flight Path of a Hudsonian Whimbrel

2026 started with a remarkable encounter on the north coast of Brazil. While surveying mangrove habitat, our team spotted a familiar traveler resting on exposed roots — a Hudsonian Whimbrel first tagged in Texas in 2022 through a collaboration between Manomet Conservation Sciences and the University of Oklahoma.

That single bird is helping tell a much bigger story. Its tracking data reveals an extraordinary hemispheric journey: each year it nests in the western Canadian Arctic, migrates south through coastal Massachusetts, and spends much of the non-breeding season near São Luís, Brazil, returning to the same mangrove and mudflat habitat year

after year. When April arrives, it begins the return trip, with a non-stop flight crossing the north coast of South America, then flying over the entire Caribbean, continuing over the Gulf of Mexico, and eventually reaching the Texas coast - about 4,000 miles from where it was originally tagged.

By following individual birds across borders and seasons, researchers can pinpoint the critical migration points used throughout the year, including tundra, wetlands, saltmarshes, beaches, and mangrove systems Whimbrels depend on. This growing body of knowledge helps us direct conservation action and research where it will matter most.



Youth Forum and Ansenusa Migratory Festival | Photo: Manomet/Andrea Ferreira

Five Years of Youth Leadership with Experiencia Ambientalía

Since launching in May 2021, Experiencia Ambientalía has remained anchored to a clear long-term goal: building lasting, locally led stewardship for the saline lake ecosystems across the Americas on which shorebirds depend across the Americas.

Originating in Córdoba, Argentina, the program centers around Laguna Mar Chiquita, the largest saline lake in Latin America. This vast wetland supports an estimated more than half of the global wintering population of Wilson’s Phalarope, a species that has declined by approximately 75% in its North American range since 1980, making the region a critical stronghold for hemispheric shorebird conservation.

Experiencia Ambientalía was designed as a leadership training program rooted in a specific landscape and a simple premise: when young people have

knowledge, practical tools, strong mentorship, and space to lead, they can take meaningful action to reduce local threats and strengthen stewardship within their own communities.

Throughout the year, students follow a structured program that blends virtual learning with in-person field visits, bird monitoring, community engagement, and collaborative problem-solving. Participants work in teams to identify environmental challenges affecting the lake and develop practical, locally relevant solutions. The program culminates in an intensive in-person workshop, which now includes a science track where scientists collaborate to understand the threats to the lake and identify opportunities to address them.

In 2025, the program broadened its impact by linking the annual workshop with the Ansenusa

Migratory Bird Festival, engaging local families, educators, and residents. By giving youth a public platform to share their work, the event strengthened community ties and highlighted the role informed, empowered communities play in long-term conservation.

Over five years, the program has contributed to a growing sense of community ownership, regional pride, and international visibility for Mar Chiquita and its shorebird populations. Participants and volunteers now come from communities across the over 1,500,000-hectare wetland system, as well as from other saline lake regions in the Americas, including Mono, Great Salt and Walker Lakes. The program has fostered a shared framework for learning and action across landscapes linked by the same migratory birds.

Uncharted Currents: Shorebird Conservation in the Amazon

In September 2025, partners from across the Americas joined Brazilian colleagues for a journey along the central Amazon, traveling between Manaus and Codajás. This marked the third year of the Amazon Shorebird Workshop—an immersive expedition designed to share knowledge, build partnerships, and celebrate the habitats that sustain shorebirds in the Amazon Basin. Organized in collaboration with the Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazônia (INPA), the Arctic Migratory Birds Initiative (AMBI), the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN), and Manomet Conservation Sciences, the workshop brought together 15 participants from seven countries and 11 organizations.

The Amazon and the Midcontinent Flyway

The Amazon River basin is a vital link in the Midcontinent Flyway, a migratory route spanning 135 degrees of latitude and connecting Arctic Canada to Patagonia. While much of the basin is forested, its wetlands, islands, and sandbars provide critical resting and feeding areas for shorebirds traveling thousands of kilometers each year. An estimated 64% of species using this flyway spend the northern winter in South America's interior, making the Amazon an essential hub for both migratory and resident birds.

Rediscovering the River's Role

For decades, the Amazon was thought to be a region migrating birds simply crossed. New satellite tracking tells a different story, revealing that river beaches, floodplains, and mudflats are indispensable stopover sites where shorebirds rest and refuel for days or weeks.

Each year, the Amazon Shorebird Workshop brings participants together for a 10-day journey aboard a guided vessel along the Solimões River. Along the way, they strengthen identification skills, exchange ideas about dynamic river habitats, and observe shorebirds firsthand.

Looking Ahead

Following the 2025 expedition, Manomet and INPA outlined initial steps toward a long-term Amazon Shorebird Program focused on local leadership and international collaboration. The goal is to strengthen observation networks, support emerging conservationists, and ensure that the Amazon's rivers continue to sustain the birds that connect our hemispheres.

Support for this initiative is provided by the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) biodiversity working group of the Arctic Council through the Arctic Migratory Bird Initiative.



TOP: White-rumped Sandpiper | Photo: Victoria Souza/Acervo Aquasis

BOTTOM: 2025 Expedition Group | Photo: Courtesy



2023 Expedition | Photo: Manomet/
Juliana Bosi de Almeida

From Failure to 400,000 Quahogs: A Break-through Season for Maine Fishers

At the end of the 2024 field season, our Fisheries Team faced a tough setback: we tested a method for growing quahog seed (hard clams), and the experiment failed. All 200,000 seeds died - likely due to environmental conditions outside our control. But the loss gave us the information we needed to improve.

Quahogs are an important fishery along the East Coast and are becoming more common in Maine as warming waters create better habitat. For coastal communities, quahogs can support both healthy mudflat ecosystems and working-waterfront livelihoods. The challenge is that quahog seed is often hard to source and expensive to grow to planting size - making it difficult for municipalities and fishers to scale up "stock enhancement" efforts.

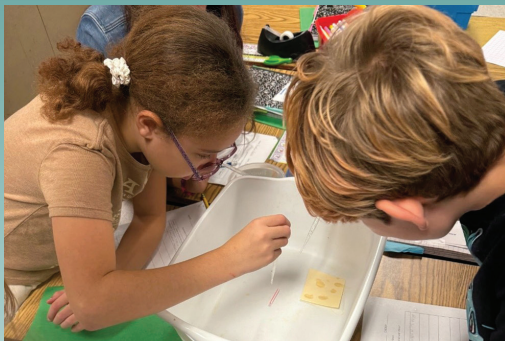
In 2025, we returned with a refined approach and a new site with less freshwater influence (quahogs are

sensitive to changing salinity). With project partner Dan Devereaux, Town of Brunswick, and the support of Gurnet Village property owners Blake Civiello and Lili Liu, we ran the experiment again under better conditions—and it worked.

We placed 400,000 tiny, 2 mm quahog seeds into a floating upweller system, a nursery that pumps seawater up through trays of seed to deliver a steady supply of oxygen and natural food. With careful monitoring, rinsing, sorting, and measuring, we grew strong 15 mm quahogs - ready for planting on Brunswick's mudflats in September and October.

By learning from failure and fine-tuning the method, we demonstrated a practical, repeatable approach that could help more communities and fishers grow local seed, strengthen shellfish resources, and expand livelihood opportunities along Maine's coast.

Checking on the quahogs in the upweller | Photo: Holly Clark



Wade Institute STEM program | Photo: Manomet

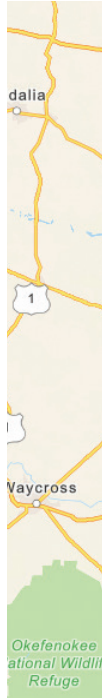
The Wade Institute's STEM Challenge 2025

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts' Executive Office of Education awarded a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, & Mathematics) Challenge Grant to Manomet's Wade Institute to design and deliver free curriculum and training for Massachusetts teachers, helping them bring hands-on, engaging STEM learning into their classrooms. This year's theme, "STEM Starts Now," challenged our team to develop a complete curriculum and teacher training experience in a short timeframe.

Working with our partner, the Hitchcock Center for the Environment, we created a curriculum that introduces students to real-world environmental problem-solving through lessons on the water cycle, watersheds and pollution, water filtration systems, and materials testing.

The materials supported teachers in guiding students to answer a simple but powerful question: How would you collect and clean water when it's scarce or polluted? Students responded by designing and building their own systems to capture rainwater or snowmelt and filter it to improve water quality.

To date, curriculum packets and kits have reached 86 teachers, engaging nearly 3,000 students this year alone, with the potential to reach thousands more in the years ahead. Teachers praised the workshop and materials, with one participant sharing, "The training was so well organized. I loved the student activities and appreciated the STEM materials."



CARE Program | Photo: Manomet/Allie Hayser

Building a Community of Care for Georgia’s Coast

Over the past five years, the Coastal Awareness and Responsible Ecotourism (CARE) Certification Program has grown into a strong community of guides, captains, business owners, and naturalists committed to protecting Georgia’s coast and the wildlife that depends on it.

Launched through a collaboration among Manomet Conservation Sciences, University of Georgia (UGA) Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, CARE connects ecotourism with conservation, helping those who lead trips on the water share accurate science, recognize signs of wildlife disturbance, and guide visitors in ways that protect shorebirds and sensitive coastal habitats.

CARE is a core part of Manomet’s Shorebird Conservation work focused in the critical shorebird region of the Georgia Bight. By engaging coastal communities alongside state and federal partners, we work to build a local, holistic culture of shorebird conservation,



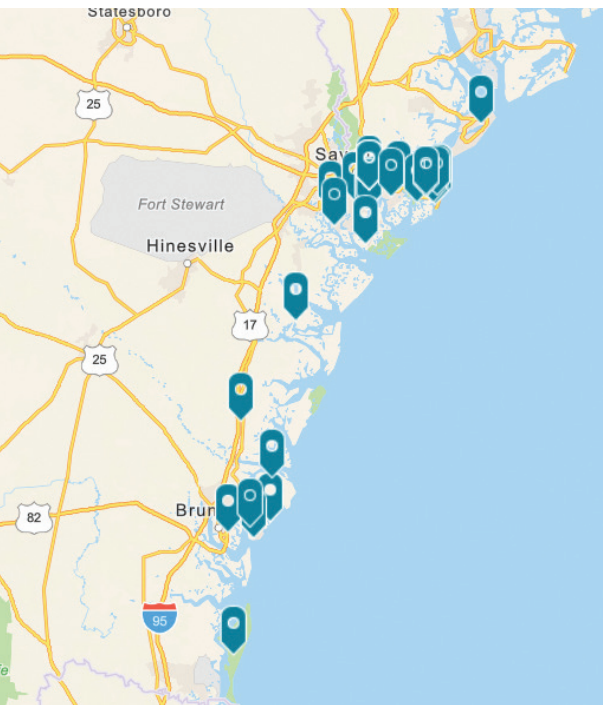
CARE Program | Photo: Courtesy

ensuring the Georgia Bight continues to provide the habitats shorebirds need throughout the year.

CARE brings together coastal experts, educators, and local partners to strengthen stewardship across the region. By fostering relationships among tourism operators, scientists, and land managers, the program

strengthens local leadership and long-term conservation outcomes.

The CARE Certification is a four-week blended learning course offered annually from February through March, combining online learning, live discussions, and an in-person field day.



LEFT: Map showing the location of guides that have completed the CARE certification program. RIGHT: CARE Program | Photo: Manomet/ Allie Hayser

Manomet Alumni Reunion 2025: Getting the Band(ers) Back Together

In October 2025, Manomet Conservation Sciences welcomed alumni back to campus for a reunion that felt like a homecoming. More than fifty years after the founding of the Manomet Bird Observatory, familiar faces returned to the net lanes, banding lab, and bluff, reconnecting with each other and with the place that helped shape their lives and careers.

Across generations, the same thread kept surfacing: Manomet builds skill, confidence, and community. For many, Manomet wasn't just a job or internship; it was the moment science, ornithology, or conservation became a calling.

Although the Banding Lab may have appeared relatively unchanged to visiting alumni, Evan Dalton, Manomet's Director of Landbird Conservation, shared how the internship program has changed over time. The banding lab's cutting-edge banding data entry app (fully implemented in 2024) further improves our ability to collect the highest quality data for our research. In addition to contributing to local landbird research, Manomet's banding data has recently been included in flyway-scale studies on the effects of climate change on migration timing and landbird physiology.

Several moments invited reflection, including a memorial bench dedication honoring Jennie Robbins, the office accountant who loyally served Manomet for



Group Photo at the 2025 Alumni Reunion | Photo: Manomet/Andrea Ferreira

more than 40 years, and a memorabilia display filled with faded field shirts, old photos, and well-worn keepsakes that sparked laughter. David Allen Sibley, a 1982 intern, was our keynote speaker and reflected on how Manomet helped shape the way he came to see birds.

From live bird banding and bird walks to time on the bluff for The Big Sit overlooking Cape Cod Bay, the weekend ended with the same shared feeling: let's not wait too long to bring the banders together again.

Sixty Years of Banding: Fall 2025 Report

Another banding season is in the books! This was our 60th year of banding and the 57th official fall of consistent migration monitoring at the Trevor Lloyd-Evans Banding Lab.

Throughout the fall, our team monitored the resident and migratory birds that depend on the Manomet property, while welcoming a record number of visitors eager to see conservation science in action. This long-term work provides critical insight into how bird populations respond to changing environmental conditions.

As in recent years, the season began with warm weather before shifting to periods of strong north winds. While favorable winds help birds move south, excessive wind requires us to close mist nets.

Despite weather challenges, the team recorded 2,025 banding records from 1,379 individual birds, with more than 1,300 receiving new U.S. Geological Survey bands. In total, 63 species were documented, including above-average numbers of Gray Catbirds and White-throated Sparrows—important indicators of changing migration patterns.

The season also brought memorable highlights, including a rare juvenile Black-billed Cuckoo—the first fall capture at the lab since 2011—and a young Seaside Sparrow, one of only a handful ever banded here. Recaptures, including a Winter Wren first banded in 2023 and two Black-capped Chickadees that are at least five years old, underscore the power of long-term monitoring.



Seaside Sparrow | Photo: Amy Hogan

Decades of consistent data make the Trevor Lloyd-Evans Banding Lab an invaluable resource for conservation science. With continued donor support, this work will continue to guide research, inform conservation decisions, and deepen our understanding of birds and migration for generations to come.

Working in the banding lab | Photo: Manomet/Andrea Ferreira



Widewater Society



Antonie (Toni) Chute is a former Biological Sciences Technician with NOAA Fisheries at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center, where she specialized in stock assessments for regional fish and invertebrates. She holds a B.A. in Field Biology from Connecticut College and an M.S. in Marine Biology from the University of Massachusetts. Below Toni shares why she joined the Widewater Society in 2024.

A GIFT THAT LASTS

Manomet's bird and habitat conservation work is important to me, and I want to do what I can to help ensure it continues well into the future. From the banding lab here at home to the incredible international shorebird conservation networks around the world, Manomet's programs consistently produce high-quality data that guide real conservation decisions today.

Just as importantly, I believe this work will inform solutions we haven't even imagined yet. Science evolves, challenges change, and new opportunities emerge—and Manomet is always at the forefront, ready to respond with rigor and creativity. That's why I chose to include Manomet in my estate plans. My planned gift is an investment in the future of conservation and in the next generation of scientists, educators, and advocates who will carry this work forward. Joining the Widewater Society allows me to ensure that Manomet's impact will continue for years to come.

I hope you'll consider joining me in supporting this vital mission.

Those who thoughtfully include Manomet Conservation Sciences in their will or estate plans are welcomed as members of our Widewater Society. Benefits include recognition as a Widewater Society member, exclusive updates on Manomet's programs, and invitations to special webinars and events.

For more information, call Ashley Baker at (508) 290-1290.



Widewater, 1896

2026 Marks the 130th Anniversary of Widewater

Before there was Manomet Conservation Sciences, there was *Widewater*—a beloved summer home owned by the Ernst family. In 1969, Ruth Ernst generously donated the property to establish a bird observatory, laying the foundation for what would become Manomet. Today, *Widewater* remains a powerful symbol of vision, generosity, and lasting impact—values carried forward through the Widewater Society, a group of individuals who have pledged to give Manomet Conservation Sciences future support through bequests or other deferred gifts.



WIDEWATER
SOCIETY



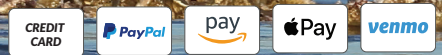
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