



# BirdNote<sup>®</sup>

Annual Report 2014



# A Powerful Catalyst for Conservation

*Thank you for partnering with BirdNote to inspire more people to notice, appreciate, and protect birds.*

With your help in 2014, BirdNote had a big year. More than 200 stations now broadcast BirdNote, reaching an estimated 1.3 million public radio listeners every day. And thousands more—around the world—connect with BirdNote stories, photos, and videos online. Thank you for bringing the wonder and joy of birds to so many people through your gifts to BirdNote.

Under the leadership of Chris Peterson, Founder and Executive Producer, BirdNote has achieved success beyond anyone's early expectations. Chris retired in 2014, but the BirdNote leadership team remains deeply committed to the organization's conservation mission. In fact, **the board of directors has set a bold new goal: to diversify and double the BirdNote audience by 2018.** Here's what you can expect from BirdNote in the months and years ahead, in the words of the leadership team:



**Thomas Luhman, Board President**

"We've accomplished so much during the past year with new staff, new board members, and an ambitious, action-centered strategic plan. BirdNote stories are powerful, and they are making a difference for birds and people alike. Your continued investment in BirdNote will make it possible to reach new audiences and encourage *an unprecedented number of listeners* to join us in protecting the environment."



**Dominic Black, Director of National Programs**

"Even if we don't always notice them, birds are intrinsic to our lives. I'm looking to capture the magic of everyday interactions between people and nature, and to reach the broadest audience possible through radio *and* digital distribution. Digital is exciting because it enables BirdNote to have a two-way relationship with listeners. It's easy for people to send stories to us, and we have the freedom to produce stories in a variety of formats, from audio postcards and videos to longer podcasts and photo essays."



**Sallie Bodie, Managing Director**

"BirdNote has the potential to reach *millions* of people with messages of hope and inspiration. With support from loyal donors, BirdNote has expanded our programming to include longer-form features and videos that appeal to a broader audience. Moving forward, we will invite people of diverse ages and backgrounds, urban listeners, parents of young children, educators, and more—to notice birds, appreciate birds, and protect birds. Together, we are building a larger and more inclusive constituency for conservation."

# BirdNote: A Commuter's Drive-mate

By Tatsuro Nakajima, BirdNote Intern

I listen to BirdNote during my morning commute to school. The program starts on my favorite radio station, KPLU, just as I arrive at Seattle Pacific University. BirdNote refreshes my mind by giving me a reprieve from mentally taxing news stories.

I first discovered BirdNote by accident. As I listened one day to KPLU, the news ended and music like birdsong started. I thought, *Wow, what cheerful, stress-free music!* Though I enjoyed BirdNote, I did not actively seek to listen again. But the program soon became an integral part of my commute.

My favorite part of BirdNote is listening to clips of bird sounds. I'm a nature lover but not an outdoorsman. BirdNote gives me the opportunity to hear birds from around the world without having to trek into the wilderness or board an airplane. The powerful combination of sound bites and stories makes this experience possible. So, for me, BirdNote is about offering an *experience* of birds, not merely informing an audience of facts.



Downy Woodpecker © Gerrit Vyn

# Joy, Respite, Inspiration, and Hope

*BirdNote* asked fans to share what they value most about our programming. These thoughts from listeners reflect several themes.

**“BirdNote has enriched my life in ways I never would have imagined.** It has helped me to develop as a birder and increased my knowledge and appreciation of the delicate balance between the natural world and all living creatures.”

**“I really enjoy the visual exposure to different birds on social media** with no silly comments or drama. Just raw beauty.”

**“BirdNote broadens my knowledge so that I may share it with my grandchildren.** This is the best way to continue the conservation of our environment through the generations.”

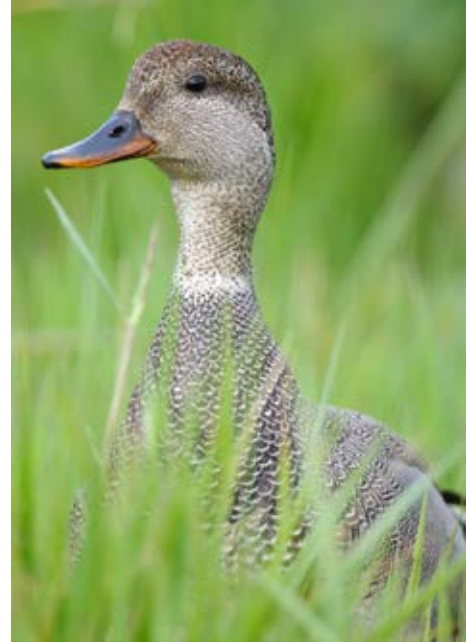
“I started listening to BirdNote during my work commute. I don’t get outside in nature often enough, so **BirdNote makes me feel connected to our avian friends.**”

**“BirdNote is helping to make birds and the environment an interesting subject** for those of us who are not scientists.”

“I love listening to BirdNote because **it brings me a few moments of joy in this turbulent world.**”

*“I want you to know how much I appreciate your podcast. I listen to it every day. Since I’m totally blind, I won’t have the opportunity to see these wonderful birds. But when I listen to BirdNote, I feel as though I’m right there with the birds.”*

— Carmen Santiago, Pittsburgh, PA





Chisos Mountains © Dale Beckett (Flickr CC)

## Alex Chadwick Goes to Big Bend

More species of birds are found within Big Bend National Park than any other national park in the US. Located in far West Texas, Big Bend is rugged, diverse, and remote. With generous support from Deedie and Rusty Rose, BirdNote sent a veteran team of NPR professionals to Big Bend. Alex Chadwick, Katie Davis, and Flawn Williams investigated the birds, habitats, and people that make the park special. The result was BirdNote’s first series of feature-length stories, distributed in conjunction with National Public Lands Day on September 27, 2014.

“Listeners have been asking BirdNote for longer stories, and we’re delighted that Alex Chadwick and his team took on our assignment,” says Sallie Bodie, BirdNote Managing Director. “We wanted to transport our fans to an extraordinary place for birds that most people have never visited—and are unlikely to visit. The six features that emerged raised awareness of our public lands while celebrating the people working to protect the birds and habitats of Big Bend.”

You can listen to the series, which features unique stories about hummingbirds, vultures, cowbirds, and roadrunners, at <http://birdnote.org/big-bend>.

*“The Big Bend feature series was superbly produced. Congratulations to BirdNote, Alex Chadwick, and everyone who believes that a better understanding of the world of birds can have a big impact on the world of people.”*

*— Deedie and Rusty Rose, Dallas, TX*

# BirdNote Travel Program Commences in Cuba

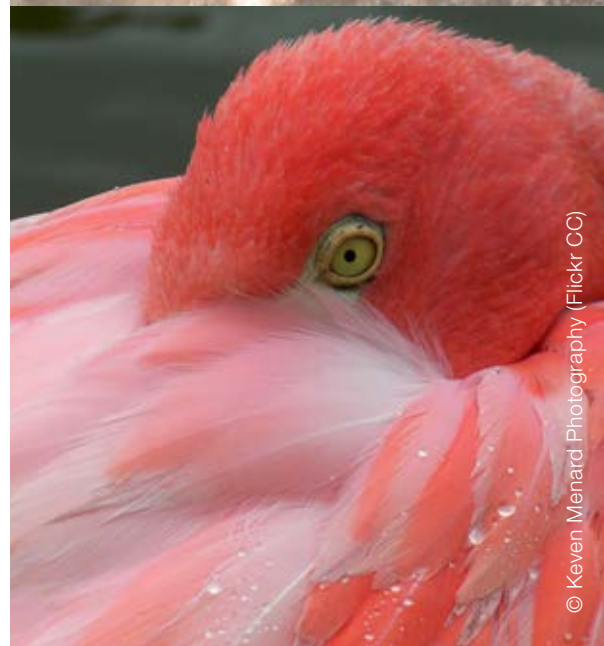
By Sallie Bodie, Managing Director and Cuba Traveler

As part of BirdNote's mission to inspire people to care about birds and the natural world, we have launched a unique travel program that promises to delight birders and non-birders alike.

On October 18, 2014, a group of BirdNote fans embarked on a nine-day exploration of Cuba's culture, birds, history, and politics. The itinerary included visits to gardens, from an organic cooperative to the National Botanic Garden to small family farms where we savored home-cooked meals. We also visited Ernest Hemingway's home and the nearby village of Cojimar.

Of course, we also saw *lots* of birds. In fact, the group tallied 83 species, with 22 of those found only in the Caribbean. And of those, 12 species are found only in Cuba. Meeting Orlando H. Garrido, author of *Field Guide to the Birds of Cuba*, was a special treat. At his family home in Havana, Orlando regaled us with stories of birding in Cuba and showed us carefully preserved specimens of endemic species.

What the BirdNote group didn't know until returning home was that the trip coincided with top-secret negotiations that led to the normalization of relations between Cuba and the US. With that announcement, BirdNote's journey to Cuba became an epic experience that we'll always treasure!



© Keven Menard Photography (Flickr CC)



© Thomas Luhnman

## Travel with BirdNote

### CHILE, ARGENTINA, AND URUGUAY

In partnership with Earthbound Expeditions

**November 1 – 12, 2015**

(with optional two-night extension to Iguazu Falls)

### BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

In partnership with Victor Emanuel Nature Tours

**April 23 – May 1, 2016**

(with optional excursion to Marfa, Texas)

*“Cuba with BirdNote was more than Liz and I ever hoped for!”*

— Adeline Gildow, pictured right with daughter Elizabeth Olson

*“While Googling for bluebird information, I found birdnote.org. And now your Facebook page. Already two serendipitous gifts in one day . . . both before 8 o’clock! Lovely sites to linger in . . . happy I’ve found you. Now I’m going to my own yard and woods to tune in! 🎵🎵🎵•\*\*\*•.~”*

— Marby R. via Facebook

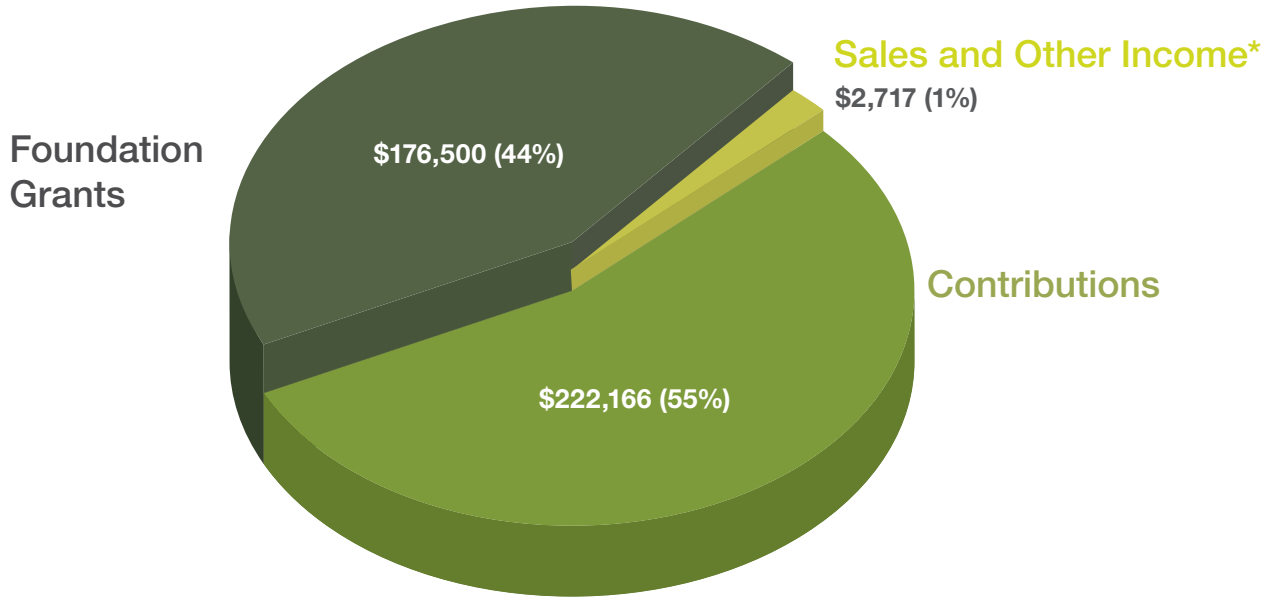




# Financial Report 2014

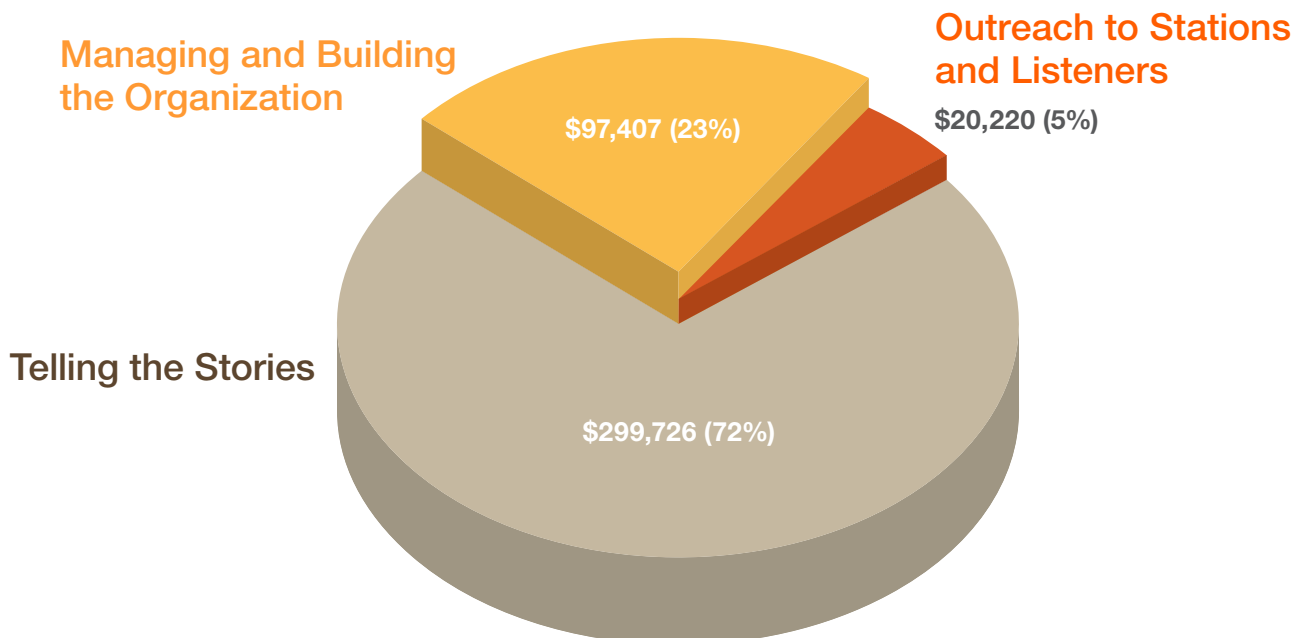
Did you know that BirdNote is independently funded and produced? Radio stations don't pay for BirdNote but instead provide valuable airtime. Your giving is vital as we work in partnership to build a larger and more inclusive constituency for conservation.

REVENUE \$401,383



\* Includes cost of goods sold

EXPENSES \$417,353



# Thank You, Donors!

Your gifts support the production and distribution of inspiring BirdNote stories—every day—on the air, online, and via podcast. This list represents the *cumulative* giving of new and long-time donors, from 2004 through December 2014.

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Common Yellowthroat © Gerrit Vyn

## Special Recognition

*BirdNote is grateful to the following philanthropic leaders for their transformational giving in 2014.*

**The Bobolink Foundation** for supporting ongoing production of “Sounds and Stewards of the North American Landscape.” This series educates listeners about the amazing abilities of birds, promotes aural literacy, and celebrates people involved in bird conservation.

**The Lufkin Family Foundation** and **The Peter Jay Sharp Foundation** for investing in the BirdNote leadership team. Support from these foundations helped ensure a smooth transition following the retirement of Chris Peterson, BirdNote Founder and Executive Producer.

**Deedie and Rusty Rose** for underwriting the BirdNote feature series on the birds, habitats, and people of Big Bend National Park—hosted by Alex Chadwick, veteran NPR reporter.

BirdNote’s **“Anonymous Champion”** for nurturing the development of the 2015 – 2018 strategic plan.

**The Satterberg Foundation, Horizons Foundation, and Lucky Seven Foundation** for funding vital digital expansion and capacity-building initiatives.

**Donors to The Chris Peterson Fund for Creative Storytelling** for honoring Chris’s vision, tenacity, creativity, and leadership during her 10 years of service to BirdNote.

**Forterra** ([www.forterra.org](http://www.forterra.org)) for providing office space and meeting space for BirdNote.



American Dipper © Gerrit Vyn

## Honoring Chris Peterson

Chris Peterson, BirdNote Founder and Executive Producer, retired in June 2014 after 10 years of tireless service and leadership. During her tenure, Chris launched the program, produced more than 1,200 stories, and raised over \$2 million from individuals and foundations.

BirdNote is grateful to Chris for creating a program that gives birds a voice on public media — with global reach.

“We’ve built something amazing, and I’m deeply honored by the enthusiasm of BirdNote fans, the loyalty of our supporters and stations, and the commitment of the whole team,” says Chris. “BirdNote has many stories yet to tell!”

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Birds connect us with the joy and wonder of nature. By telling vivid, sound-rich stories about birds and the challenges they face, BirdNote inspires listeners to care about the natural world—and take steps to protect it.





Pigeon Guillemots © Gerrit Vyn

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