



A Word from Riedel
By Darla Theisen

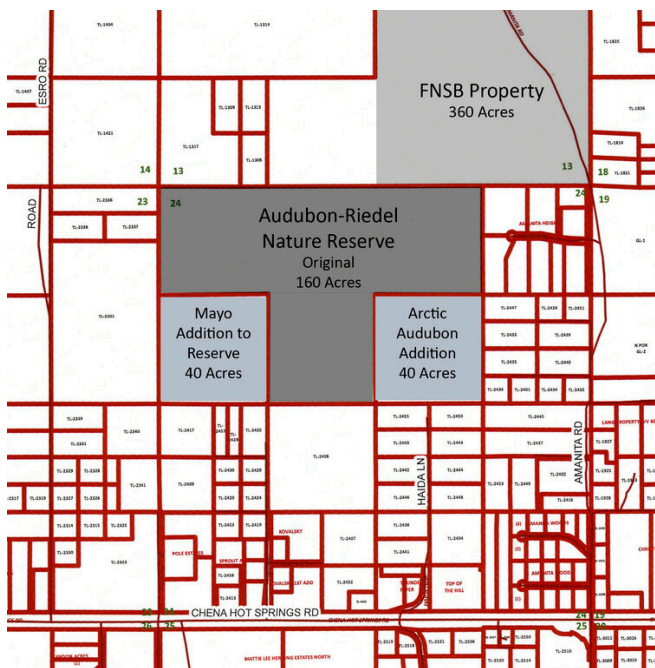
The Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve was created in 1984 with a gift by Elonore and Charles Riedel to the Arctic Audubon Society of 160 acres of forested land located near 5 Mile Chena Hot Springs Road (see map). This gift stipulates that the undeveloped land is to remain in its natural state for the enjoyment by all people forever. We grew the Reserve to 240 acres with purchases from the UA Lands Office in 2019 by Arctic Audubon, and Gail Mayo who donated it to us in memory of Larry Mayo. ([see website for more information](#))

various aspects of the land. Most of the well-drained slopes are covered with aspen, birch, and occasional white spruce. Wildlife in the area includes most species representative of boreal forest systems.

What a busy Spring and Summer at the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve!

Early this year, Arctic Audubon, the residents of Amanita and Esro Roads, and the surrounding lands, joined together to successfully stop the proposed exploration drilling by a Canadian company, Avidian, on land adjacent to the Riedel Nature Reserve. The Amanita Project planned to mine gold material out of Amanita in an open pit and haul it to Ft Knox for processing. The Mental Health Trust (MHT) voted no on the proposed Negotiated Mineral Lease for the project after everyone’s input and diligence to protect our communities, our water, our roads, and our Riedel Nature Reserve. This all happened between Christmas 2020 and February 2021. We all need to remain diligent, for example, there is a new Hardrock Exploration Permit Application for the Amanita project which includes mining claims near the Reserve. ADNR approved this on September 9th without any public review; the agency is now taking comments after the fact until October 13, 2021.

<https://aws.state.ak.us/OnlinePublicNotices/Notices/View.aspx?id=203918>.



A tributary to Steele Creek begins on the property. This area is permafrost-influenced, poorly drained, and vegetated with plants adapted to cold soil conditions. Surrounding this swamp are relatively steep slopes that form ridges and low hills. Several boreal forest cover types are associated with the

Nature Trails

There is no hunting or trapping at the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve and the trails are non-motorized. The trails are currently being updated at the FNSB Trails database for the Borough.

We are currently working with the FNSB to apply for a lease of FNSB land for access to create more parking for visitors. We are hoping this will be

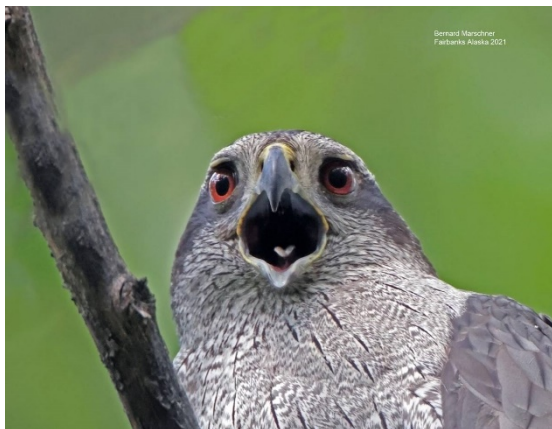
approved this year. We may need everyone's support when we propose this before the FNSB Assembly. This is the part of the same area MHT wanted to lease out to the mining company. It also has an MCO (Mineral Closing Order) on it.

Wildlife and Guided Nature Walks

The first guided walk of the season happened on Sunday, May 23. The group of sixteen birders explored the trails of the reserve to view incoming spring migrants. (Photo by Pam Miller)



A pair of Northern Goshawks built a nest and that hatched two eggs near the nature trail. Any visitors or photographers had to be mindful of the pair defending their nesting territory. Bud Marschner, a local photographer, and nature walk leader, took a series of photos of the adult goshawks on their nest. (Photos by Bud Marschner)



He had to be very careful as the female goshawk did not like the large, reflective camera lens and would swoop and screech at Marschner. The goshawk fledglings soon left the nest on July 15 and were spotted a few times nearby.



The Reserve also saw a sow grizzly and three cubs roaming back and forth through the property between Esro, Amanita, and Risse Roads. (Photo by Dave Kistler)



Their presence made it unsafe for visitors to walk in the reserve and this in turn created peace for the young goshawks in their nest. The bears were all killed on June 24th or 25th near the Nordale Boat Launch and were then moved and dumped in a ditch.

The case is under investigation by the Fish and Game troopers. About a mile away, another grizzly sow and cub were roaming about at the top of Smallwood. On July 19, she charged a man and his son, and the father shot her, injuring her as she ran off. If you are walking in the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve outside of the winter months, you need to be bear aware.

The Hairy and Downy woodpeckers were right on time at Father's Day, bringing a baby to teach them how to eat suet and sunflower chips. Squirrels and voles have been all over and I'm sure they provided many meals for the fox families.

The moose have been out, and visitors need to be cautious as well. One big cow has a yearling calf, and she is very protective; known to charge to protect their young.

We are looking forward to hosting small group guided walks as we head into the change of seasons. Soon the trails will be snowshoe-packed for beautiful winter walking. As of the end of September, most migratory species have left and winter residents including Chickadees, Canada Jays, Ravens, grouse, and woodpeckers are abundant at the reserve!

Thank you all for your support of the Audubon Riedel Nature Reserve and the Arctic Audubon Society!