



Mass Audubon

bird·a·thon

1983

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2023

YEARS



Fundraising Toolkit





Table of Contents

1. Welcome
2. Key Dates & Resources
3. Fundraising Awards & Incentives
4. Best Practices for Fundraising
5. Goal Setting Worksheet
6. Fundraising Tips
7. Email Templates
8. Social Media Samples
9. TeamRaiser for Team Members





Welcome!

Dear Fundraisers,

Welcome! Thank you for registering as a Bird-a-thon team member and helping us lead the way in protecting the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife. Whether this is your first year or you are an experienced fundraiser returning for another year, we are so excited you are a part of the #MABirdathon family.

As a fundraiser, you have a valuable role in making Mass Audubon's vital work possible. In this toolkit you'll find tools and resources to help you stay on track, and reach your fundraising goals.

Thank you for your dedication and commitment to protecting the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife.

Sincerely,

The Bird-a-thon Team





Key Dates & Resources

In addition to Bird-a-thon Weekend, here are some key dates to keep in mind for this year:

- | | |
|------------------------|---|
| March 30: | Registration opens to public |
| April 27, 7 pm: | Complimentary “There’s an App for That!”
Virtual Program |
| May 12-13: | Bird-a-thon weekend |
| May 31: | Fundraising closes |

Resources

Don’t forget to check out the Bird-a-thon TeamRaiser Resources page for these resources and more:

- Bird-a-thon 2023 Poster
- Bird-a-thon 2023 Logos
- Why I Bird-a-thon Sign
- Social media images and content samples

Need help?

If you’re stuck or have questions, we are here for you! Reach out to the Bird-a-thon Coordinator via email at birdathon@massasudubon.org



Individual Fundraising Awards



YOUNG BIRDER

Any participant under 18 who raises \$200 or more.

- Incentive: Mass Audubon swag from the Mass Audubon Shop.
- Young Birder Icon on your Bird-a-thon profile page.



FEATHERED FRIEND

Any individual participant who raises \$125+

- Includes: A keepsake Bird-a-thon t-shirt.
- Feathered Friend Icon on your Bird-a-thon profile page.



HIGH FLYER

Any individual participant who raises \$500+

Incentives include all of the above benefits, plus:

- Complimentary registration to an online Mass Audubon educational program.
- High Flyer Icon on your Bird-a-thon profile page.



MIGHTY MIGRANT

Any individual participant who raises \$1,000+

Incentives include all of the above benefits, plus:

- Recognition on the Bird-a-thon results page.
- An invitation to join one of two special group birding outings, led by a member of the Bird Conservation Leadership Team.
- Mighty Migrant Icon on your Bird-a-thon profile page.



EAGLE EYE

Any individual participant who raises \$2,500+

Incentives include all of the above benefits, plus:

- The choice of one print from a selection of drawings by Massachusetts-based illustrator Avery Whitlock.
- Eagle Eye Icon on your Bird-a-thon profile page.



WINGED WARRIOR

Any individual participant who raises \$5,000+

Incentives include all of the above benefits, plus:

- An invitation for you and one guest to join a VIP Birding Experience with Mass Audubon's President David O'Neill.

Fundraising Awards & Incentives



STATEWIDE TOP INDIVIDUAL FUNDRAISER

The individual participant who raises the most money across the state.

- Incentive: a curated gift from the Mass Audubon Gift Shop.

Team Awards

HATHEWAY CUP

Trophy awarded to the team that raises the most money.

TAKING FLIGHT CUP

Trophy awarded to the 2nd place team for the most money raised.

TEAM SPIRIT AWARD

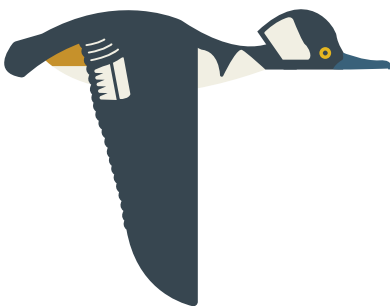
Given to the team with the greatest ratio of fundraisers to team members.

DEVOTED DOVE AWARD

Certificate awarded to the team with the most Nature Activity Points.

FAITHFUL FLYCATCHER AWARD

Certificate awarded to the team with the second most Nature Activity Points.



Birding Awards

BREWSTER CUP

Trophy awarded to the team that records the greatest number of species during Bird-a-thon according to the Official Bird-a-thon Rules.

FORBUSH AWARD

Plaque awarded to the team with the second highest number of species recorded during Bird-a-thon.

COUNTY CUP

Trophy awarded to the team with the highest percentage of the Birding Par Value Number for a chosen county in Massachusetts.

SITTING DUCK AWARD

Trophy awarded to the team who records the greatest number of species while staying within a 25-foot diameter circle.

CARBON-FREE CHICKADEE

Any team member who remains carbon-free while participating in Bird-a-thon will receive special recognition on the Bird-a-thon results page.

Best Practices for Fundraising

- The most successful Bird-a-thon fundraisers are those that are motivated and rely on personal solicitations—try personally asking for donations rather than mailing requests, as this strategy is more successful and less paper-intensive.
 - Create a targeted donor list. We all have a network of potential donors available to us—start by making a list!
- Consider including:**
- Anyone who donated to you in the past
 - Your friends and family
 - Your contacts through your church or religious institution
 - Classmates or former classmates and teachers
 - Current and former colleagues
 - Classmates or former classmates and teachers
 - Neighbors
 - Local businesses you frequent
 - Anyone who considers you their client who you believe is in a position to contribute:
 - Your real estate agent
 - Your lawyer
 - Your barber/hair stylist
 - Your trainer or fitness instructor
 - Your doctor, chiropractor, or massage therapist
 - Contacts within your birding or outdoor community
- Set a specific fundraising goal for yourself and make it public. Don't be afraid to use your social media!
 - Specifically ask previous donors to give more money this year than they did last year.
 - Solicit your vendors and the people you deal with on a regular basis. Look at your friends, family, neighbors and community members and create a list of those who you could ask to support your fundraising goal.
 - Offer special incentives to your highest donors—can you take them on a nature walk in your neighborhood and show them special plants or animals you've learned? Can you invite them to a post-event pizza party for all your donors?





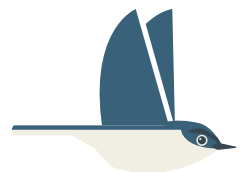
Goal Setting Worksheet

Setting fundraising goals inspires others to join your team and fundraise to the best of their abilities. Once your goals are set, share them with your team and others.

Team Name _____

Captain _____

	List of my friends, neighbors, family members, coworkers, community members, etc.
Who can I ask to sponsor my team?	
Who can I ask for a larger amount?	
Who can I ask for \$100	
Who can I ask for \$50	
Who can I ask for \$25	
Team Fundraising Goal	
My Fundraising Goal	



Online fundraising is a great way for people to support you from anywhere and Mass Audubon has made it easy for you, by automatically creating a personalized fundraising page at the time you registered for Bird-a-thon. FUNDRAISING TIP: The #1 reason people donate is because they are asked!

Step 1: Personalize your fundraising page

- Personalize your TeamRaiser profile—tell your audience why Bird-a-thon is important to you.
- Add a photo (this could be your favorite bird, or a team logo if you don't want to make it personal).
- Get Social! Share your personalized fundraising page on your social media!

Step 2: Update/Create your personal fundraising goal

Bird-a-thon has set a minimum fundraising goal of \$125 for each participant—this goal must be reached by May 31, 2022. But don't stop there, set your goals high - \$250? \$500? \$1,000? Choose a goal that will motivate you and your donors, birders often surpass their goal.

Step 3: Make a Donation!

Donate to your own personal/team page. This shows your donors that you mean business and YOU are invested in the cause as well.

Step 4: Send Email to Family, Friends, and Coworkers

Don't be shy! Generally, a donor needs to be asked seven or more times to donate before a donation is actually made.

(See the next page for email templates.)





Email Templates

Subject: Please Support me for Bird-a-thon

Dear (NAME),

From May 12-13, nature heroes from all over Massachusetts will celebrate nature by participating in Bird-a-thon, Mass Audubon's largest annual fundraiser. Teams representing different Mass Audubon wildlife sanctuaries and programs compete to raise money, complete family-friendly nature activities, and see which of them can identify the greatest number of bird species in a single 24-hour period.

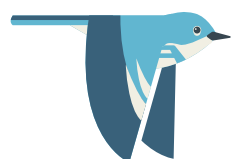
Bird-a-thon takes place at the height of spring migration, the perfect time to spot a stunning variety of Massachusetts wildlife in habitats ranging from forests to rocky coastlines to our own neighborhoods. It's a vivid reminder of the wonders—and fragility—of the natural world that surrounds us.

I'm participating in Bird-a-thon this year and raising money for my team because I believe that nature needs us now more than ever.

Will you consider supporting me and my team by making a donation? Gifts of all sizes make an impact! The easiest way to make a gift is to donate online through my secure fundraising page (insert your fundraising page link).

Thank you for your support!

Sincerely,
(Your Name)





Email Templates

Subject: Join my Bird-a-thon team!

Dear (NAME),

From May 12-13, nature heroes from all over Massachusetts will celebrate nature by participating in Bird-a-thon, Mass Audubon's largest annual fundraiser. The event takes place at the height of spring migration and serves as a vivid reminder of the wonders—and fragility—of the natural world that surrounds us.

During Bird-a-thon, teams representing different Mass Audubon wildlife sanctuaries or statewide programs participate in family-friendly activities and a competitive birding contest, all while raising money to support Mass Audubon's conservation, nature education, and advocacy work.

That's why I'm inviting you to join my Bird-a-thon team! Whether you want to participate for the fun of it or for the thrill of competition, you can help my team raise money that will support Mass Audubon's efforts to protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and wildlife.

If you can't participate this year, you can still show your support by visiting my fundraising page (insert your fundraising page link) to make a secure online donation.

Thank you!
(Your Name)

Subject: Thank you for donating to me for Bird-a-thon!

Dear (NAME),

Thank you for donating to Bird-a-thon 2023 in honor of me and my team! Your support means a great deal, and your gift will help Mass Audubon and its wildlife sanctuaries and programs protect wildlife and wild places in Massachusetts.

Please consider sharing my fundraising page (link below) with others who would be interested in supporting this mission.

Once again, thank you!

Sincerely,
(Your Name)
(insert your fundraising page link)





Social Media Samples

Let's Get Social

Reach a broad audience by posting a link to your profile page on social media to ask your friends to donate.

You can do this several times throughout the fundraising season.

Social media tips:

- **Make it personal.** Create a short video telling your story and why Bird-a-thon is important to you. Include the video link in your profile story and share it to your social media feeds with a link to your fundraising page. Tell your community why you need their support.
- **Tag us.** Make sure to tag @massaudubon on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram so we know you have posted about us, and can share and comment.
- **Hashtags:** Are a great way to make your posts searchable and relevant in a sea of tweets and posts! Include our hashtags on your social media efforts: #mabirdathon and #massaudubon.
- **Update your Facebook cover photo.** Use the Bird-a-thon templates (located on the Resources page when you log in to your TeamRaiser account) to show your social circles that you are serious about supporting bird conservation and the nature of Massachusetts.
- **Keep us updated.** As you fundraise and prepare for Bird-a-thon weekend keep your community up to date on your progress.





TeamRaiser for Team Members

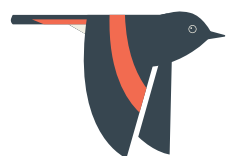
Creating and Personalizing a Fundraising Page
Sending Emails in Your Participant Center

Creating a Fundraising Page

1. Visit massaudubon.org/birdathon
2. Click Join a Team under the main photo
3. Find the team you want to join and click Join. The majority of Bird-a-thon teams this year are divided by region. If you need help finding a team or have any questions, please email the BAT Coordinator at birdathon@massaudubon.org.
4. Registration – Part 1
 - a. Select your fundraising goal. (You can also edit this later.)
 - b. If you would like to make a donation at this time, enter a donation amount (this is a great way to kickstart your fundraising and earn your first fundraising badge!). If you would like for this gift to be anonymous, click the check box next to "Yes, make this an anonymous gift."
 - c. Click the Next Step button.
5. Creating or logging into your Mass Audubon account.
 - a. Enter the email you would like to use to create your fundraising page and click the Submit button.
 - b. If you do not already have a Mass Audubon account, text will say: "We didn't find an account for you. Create an account with this email address or try another email address." Click the "create an account with this email address" link.
 - c. If you already have a Mass Audubon account, text will say: "Great, we found your account. Log in, or set or reset your password."
 - i. If you know your password, click the Login link, enter your password, and click the Login button.
 - ii. If you do not know your password, click the "set or reset your password" link. Submit your email address to receive an email with instructions on setting/resetting a password. Check your email and follow the instructions to reset your password. You may need to repeat the first few steps of registration.
6. Registration – Part 2
 - a. If you already had a Mass Audubon account, the biographical information will auto populate. If you did not already have a Mass Audubon account, you will need to enter the biographical information requested and create a username and password. *We recommend using your email address as your username.*
 - b. Answer the additional information questions and click the Next Step button.
 - c. You will be brought to a Registration Summary page. If all of the information listed is correct, click the Complete Registration button.
 - d. If you chose to make a donation, you will be brought to a payment page where you will enter your credit card information. Enter your information and click Process Payment.
 - e. Your registration is complete! To edit your personal fundraising page, track offline donations, see and send sample emails, or edit your fundraising goal, click Participant Center.

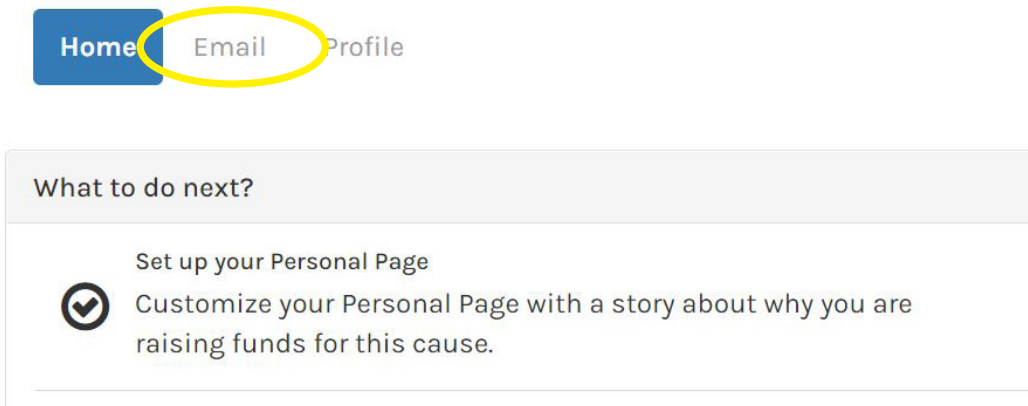
Personalizing Your Fundraising Page

1. After your initial registration, you can log into your Participant Center by navigating to **massaudubon.org/birdathon**. Enter your username and password in the orange boxes at the top right of the screen and click Log In. After logging in, the top right will now say Welcome [Your Name]. You will also see a Log Out button and a Participant Center button. Click Participant Center. The Participant Center is the online portal where you can check your fundraising progress, send email solicitations, and update your personal fundraising page.
2. For those of you who have registered for Bird-a-thon before, you may notice that the Participant Center interface has been updated! You can navigate to different sections of the Participant Center by clicking through the "What to do next?" section or scrolling down to find the section you're looking for.
3. You can edit the URL for your personal fundraising page by clicking the Customize URL link. You can find this link by scrolling down. When you click this link, a text box will appear allowing you to change the last section of your personal page's URL. When finished, click Save. You can copy and paste the resulting URL into any emails you send to link people to your team's page. (Note: if you are using the email tool within TeamRaiser, links to your personal fundraising page and your team's fundraising page are automatically included.)
4. Edit the title of your personal fundraising page by clicking Edit Content under Title. We highly recommend that you use your name in the page title.
5. Under Body, you can edit the existing text or write something entirely new. If you participated last year and customized your page, your text from last year will show in the box. If you did not participate last year, you will see default text. Use the toolbox directly above the body text box to change font style, justification, and add bullet points. We suggest that you use this space to communicate why supporting your team is important to YOU. Be sure to SAVE your changes!
6. You can replace the default picture by clicking Update Photo under the Photo section. Select a picture from your computer files. You can enter a caption for the picture by clicking in the editable caption field. When finished, click the Save/Upload button.
7. Preview your page by clicking the URL link in the Team Page URL section.



Sending Emails in Your Participant Center

1. Log into your Participant Center, and click the Email tab.



2. Click All Contacts in the left-side menu. From this screen, you can select the contacts you want to email (if you already have contacts uploaded), add a contact, or import a group of contacts. Once you select who you want to email, click Email Selected.
3. You can either use an email template or start a blank email. There are email templates for recruiting team members, asking people for gifts, and thanking a donor for their gift.
4. Include a Personal Greeting! If you are sending an email in bulk to all or a specific contact group, click the Include Personalized Greeting. This includes a default salutation and the first name of each recipient listed in the To line of an email message (ex: Dear Pat). If the recipient is not already a contact within your address book, the word "Friend" will display with the salutation instead. Note: If you include the personalized greeting in your message, do not manually type in a greeting as well. (That is, you do not want the message to start with two lines that say "Dear Sue" or a "Dear Sue" line followed immediately by a "Hey Sue" line.)
5. Be sure to put your name in the closing. You don't have to worry about pasting the URL to your fundraising page as that populates automatically upon sending the email. Click Preview & Send.

If you have any questions, please reach out to your Team Captain or email the Bird-a-thon Coordinator at birdathon@massaudubon.org

