Mass Audubon

bird•a•thon

40 YEARS

1983   2023

**Bird-a-thon 2023
Team Captain Toolkit**

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Dear Team Captains,

Welcome! Thank you for registering as a Bird-a-thon Team Captain 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 captain returning for another year, we are so excited you are a part of the #MABirdathon family.

As a Team Captain, 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 lead your team, 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
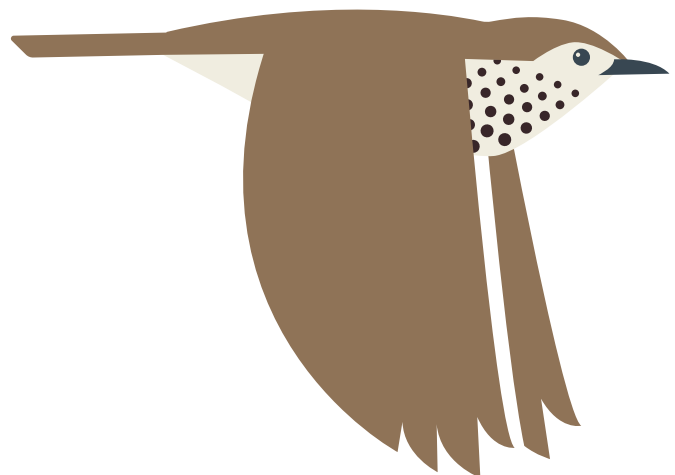
Key Dates & Resources

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 10:	Team rosters for Competitive Birding Sub-Groups due
May 12-13:	Bird-a-thon weekend
May 19:	Species reports and team activity points due
May 31:	Fundraising closes

Resources:

Team Roster Form

Species Report Forms

Bird-a-thon 2023 Poster

Bird-a-thon 2023 Logos

Fundraising Toolkit

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

1. Recruit team members
   Recruit members, co-captains, program participants, volunteers, donors, staff, and other community members to join the team.

2. Support team member fundraising
   - Communicate the importance of the money raised from Bird-a-thon for your region/program.
   - Provide examples of what your region/program uses Bird-a-thon money for.
   - Provide helpful tips and sample ask language.
   - Engage with your team and make the experience fun from start to finish, with simple touches like email updates, virtual or distanced social events before, during, and after Bird-a-thon weekend, and more.

3. Track team and team member fundraising totals.
   - We need this information at the end of Bird-a-thon to distribute individual and team awards and incentives.
   - You will be responsible for ensuring any fundraiser who raises $125+ and wants a Bird-a-thon t-shirt receives their awards.
   - Monitor your team's fundraising levels and motivate them to meet individual and team fundraising goals.
   - You will be responsible for ensuring any fundraiser who meets incentive levels receives their incentives in conjunction with Bird-a-thon HQ.

4. Act as Bird-a-thon HQ's main contact and liaison for your team
   - You will receive regular team captain bulletins with important information.
   - It is recommended that you review the recorded webinar demonstrating how to use TeamRaiser (our peer-to-peer online fundraising platform) and be included in a discussion about Bird-a-thon fundraising and birding strategy.

5. Submit team roster(s), team species report(s), and team activity points to Bird-a-thon Coordinator on time (see deadlines above).

6. Oversee team compliance with the Official Bird-a-thon Rules and instructions from Wayne regarding responsible birding.

7. Have fun while helping to raise funds protect the nature of Massachusetts for people and for wildlife!

March - April: Register and Recruit

☐ Identify co-captains

☐ Update your team & personal profiles (profile, story & team goal)

☐ Schedule internal BAT planning meeting(s) with your colleagues

☐ Start recruiting! Review your BAT team members from previous years, and ask friends, family and co-workers to join your team!

☐ Share your team profile on social media

☐ Check out recruiting tools in this Team Captain Guide

☐ Add key dates to your calendar & share them with your team

☐ Host a kick off meeting/walk, or lunch & learn recruiting event

April - May: Fundraising & Team Cultivation

☐ Get your team together for a Bird-a-thon walk, paddle, or other fun event

☐ Spotlight a team member in your team communications - the most donations this week, highest fundraising so far, etc.

☐ Encourage your team members to attend an upcoming birding program or class hosted by their local sanctuary

☐ Host a Team Pep Rally! Engage your team members by having them share their fundraising tips and why they Bird-a-thon!

June: Celebrate & Recognize

☐ Rally your team as we reveal the 2023 fundraising total, recognize top fundraisers, and award winners! (virtual program date TBD)

☐ Send thank you notes to your donors and teammates

Create incentives & prizes for your team

- Promote the t-shirt incentive! Team Members who raise $125 or more are eligible for a t-shirt.
- Set a fundraising goal and, if it is met, reward the team with a special dinner, ice cream party, or other fun recognition event (incentives must be funded by the team, not Mass Audubon).
- Develop a model where if Team Members reach certain goals (e.g. 10 specific $ amounts) they are eligible to win a prize or be entered into a drawing. (Be careful you do not establish a raffle/drawing where anyone who donates gets to enter a drawing - this should be for your fundraisers!).
- Set specific team fundraising and recruitment goals and share these with your team to help your team members understand how it will be achieved.

  > Example: "We have a goal of $20,000 and 40 Team Members; this means we hope each member will help us raise $500 each. If each Team Member asks 10 people for $50 we will achieve our goals!!"

  > Adapt the following formula to meet the needs/expectations of your site—"If our 25 Team Members ask 25 people for $25, our site will raise $15,625.

Publicity to promote fundraising

- Include Bird-a-thon information in your email newsletters and your Mass Audubon sanctuary websites.
- Communicate how the Bird-a-thon funds will be used:

  > It is often easier to make your fundraising case if you can illustrate the impact of a donor's support. You can do this by painting a visual picture of the impact of various levels of a gift; e.g., $100 could help us maintain our bird houses for a month or $50 could provide scholarship support for one child to attend a week of nature camp.

  > Alternatively, you might paint some kind of picture using the overall goal you have set for your team; e.g., $1,000 could support our bird counting program. Have fun creating your impact story!
  >
  > *(For management purposes, your impact story cannot be equipment or a capital project. Thank you for helping us adhere to this guideline.)*

Solicitation Techniques

- The most successful Bird-a-thon Teams are those that rely on personal solicitations and a motivated Bird-a-thon Team—try personal solicitations rather than mailings, as this strategy is more successful and less paper-intensive.
- Set a specific fundraising goal and make it public.
- 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. Solicit non-traditional givers such as natural history travelers, day camp parents, etc.
- Tie your requested gift level to something specific – an anniversary for example, a $ per bird figure, or a random number that ties in some way to your sanctuary, program, or region.
- Take time to train all Bird-a-thon Team members in solicitation—tell them why it is important, establish a key goal, and give them tools to help them fundraise.
- Invite your sanctuary, council, and other leadership committee members in your region to actively engage in Bird-a-thon.

Team/Constituency Building

While team/constituency building might not influence the current year's fundraising, it is very useful in developing the spirit for the following year.
- Add co-captains (we recommend a total of three captains) or add a leadership committee to help guide your team.
- Host a post-event call or virtual meeting where results are tallied, pats on the back are given, and the stage gets set for next year's Bird-a-thon.
- List and thank Bird-a-thon Team Members publicly in local newsletters or bulletin boards.
- Provide all Team Members with a small gift or certificate thanking them for being on the Team.

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 a join a VIP Birding Experience with Mass Audubon's President David O'Neill.

Fundraising Awards & Incentives

bird·a·thon 40 1983 2023 YEARS

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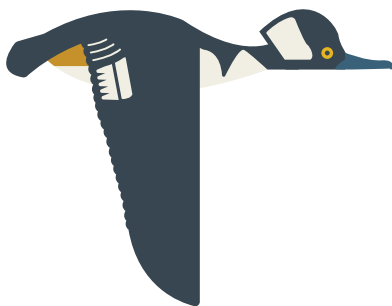Trophy awarded to the 2nd place team for the most money raised.

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.

Setting fundraising and recruitment 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 _____

Co-Captain(s) _____

	Previous Year	Current Year
# Young Birders		
# Feathered Friends		
# High Flyers		
# Mighty Migrants		
# Eagle Eyes		
# Winged Warriors		
Total Team Members		
Team Fundraising Goal		
Average raised per participant		
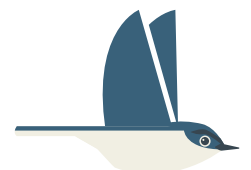
TeamRaiser for Team Captains
*Username and password
*Logging into your participant center
*Editing your team's fundraising goal
*Editing your team's fundraising page
*Sending emails

Username and Password

*If you have already successfully logged into TeamRaiser (*massaudubon.org/birdathon*), skip this section.*

Bird-a-thon fundraising pages have been created for all team captains. Employee team captains were registered on the fundraising website with their personal email accounts (with a few exceptions.)

If you participated last year, your password is the same for this year (it is also the same as your OPR login information, if you use OPR).

If you do not use OPR and you did not participate last year, you will need to set/reset a password. Visit massaudubon.org/birdathon. On the top right of the screen, click "forgot your username/ password".

Forgot your username/password?

You will be brought to the Mass Audubon account log in page. Click the Forgot Password link on the right.

Login Assistance

Forgot User Name?

Forgot Password?

Enter your username (which, in most cases IS your email address) and your email address and click Submit. You will receive an email with directions on setting/resetting a password.

Account Information

* = Required Fields

* User Name: [_____]

* Email: [_____]

Logging In

To log in, visit massaudubon.org/birdathon. Enter your username and password in the orange boxes in the top right and click Login.

In the top right of the screen, text should now read Welcome [your name]. To visit your Participant Center, click the Participant Center button.

Welcome   LOG OUT   PARTICIPANT CENTER

# Editing Your Team's Fundraising Goal

1. 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.

2. Scroll down until you see the Me and My Team tabs on the left, and click My Team.
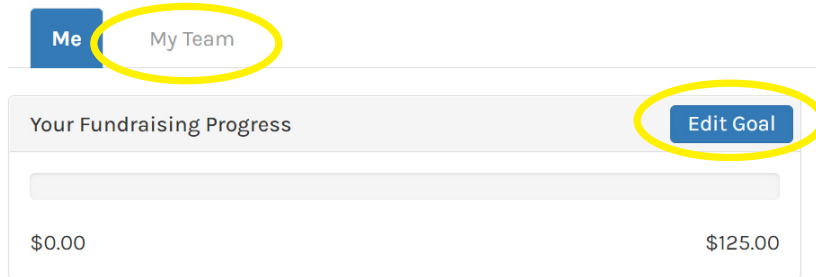
3. Click Edit Goal, type in the desired goal amount, and click Save. Your team goal is now changed.

Personalizing Your Team's Fundraising Page

1. In the Participant Center, scroll down to the Me and My Team tabs. Click My Team. The text on the right-side of the screen should now include a section for your team page url, body copy, and photo.

2. You can edit your team page's URL, which can be used by supporters to navigate to your team's fundraising page. To do so, click the Customize URL link. When you click this link, an editable field will appear allowing you to change the last section of your team 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.)
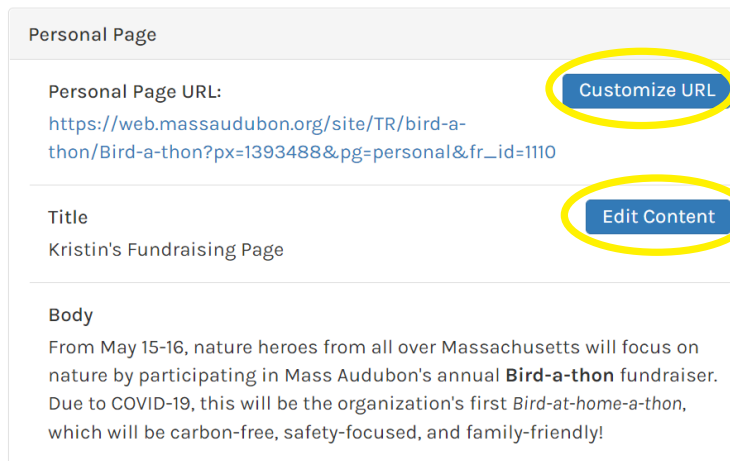

3. Under Body, click Edit Content to edit the existing text or write something entirely new. Use the toolbox directly above the editable body field to change font style, justification, and add bullet points. We suggest you use this space to communicate why supporting YOUR team is important.

4. Be sure to SAVE your changes when you make edits to your body text. TeamRaiser does not automatically save edits.

5. You can replace the default team page picture by clicking Update Photo under the Photo section. Select a picture from your computer files– we recommend a picture of your team or any picture you feel represents your region or program. You can enter a caption for the picture by clicking in the editable caption field. When finished, click the Save/Upload button.
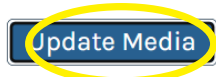
6. Preview your page by clicking the URL link in the Team Page URL section.

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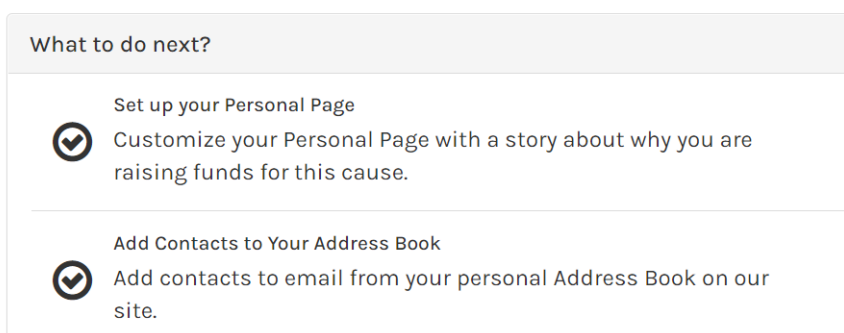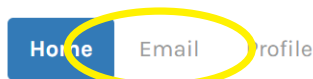
1. Log into your Participant Center, and click the Email tab.

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 as you work through the instruction sheet, please email birdathon@massaudubon.org!