



togethergreen

TOYOTA

## VOLUNTEER DAYS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS 2012

### 1. Who may apply?

Any Center, site, or program of the National Audubon Society and any Chapter certified by the National Audubon Society may apply. All current Volunteer Day participants (those selected in 2011) may apply again. TogetherGreen Fellows from years 1-4 of the program may apply on behalf of their organizations. In order to reach the broadest geographic spread for the 2012-2013 season of Volunteer Days, non-Audubon entities may apply BY INVITATION ONLY.

Once again, for the 2012- 2013 season, we have three funding levels and related requirements for new volunteer recruitment and number of events. The number of sites selected for each category will depend on the number of applications received for each level, as well as the projected total number of volunteers for the entire Volunteer Day program. Funding levels are based on an average cost per new volunteer, not on number of events. In some cases, we may offer a grant to applicants at a funding level less than what they requested.

Funding level	Who may apply	Minimum # events	# new volunteers
\$9,000	ONLY Vol Days sites selected previously	6	200
\$7,000	See first paragraph	6	150
\$2,500	See first paragraph	2	50

### 2. Do Volunteer Days have to take place on Audubon property?

No. Many Audubon Centers are located on property owned by other entities and have partnerships with other organizations. Audubon Chapters often volunteer at sites owned by other non-profits or at city/state/federally owned lands. Most Important Bird Areas are located on public or private lands not owned by the National Audubon Society. City and county parks, National Wildlife Refuges, land trust properties are all examples of sites that are acceptable for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Day activities, as long as the required permissions and permits (if any) are obtained from the property owner(s) prior to the event.

### 3. How will *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days benefit my Center, Chapter, or program?

Past participants of Volunteer Days have cited these benefits:

- More funding to promote and implement your projects; and to recruit new volunteers
- Increased support to achieve your conservation goals
- Increased media exposure in your community
- Stronger connections with current partner organizations; alliances with new partners

- Increased retention of new and current volunteers and higher volunteer satisfaction
- Increased volunteer knowledge of, and interest in, conservation issues related to projects
- Potential to increase membership and donors to your centers and chapters
- Networking with other *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days participants
- Support from Audubon for marketing and training

All participating sites receive free Volunteer Days materials and incentives, including t-shirts, caps, tote-bags, banners and more.

#### **4. What do I need to do to meet the criteria for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days?**

- Ensure that your volunteer events focus on achieving the conservation goals of *TogetherGreen* (<http://togethergreen.org/Grants/grantsGoals.aspx>) and the priorities for your Chapter, Center, or site. Supporting Audubon Flyway projects is encouraged.
- Make every effort to recruit the minimum number of new volunteers according to your funding level between May 2012 and May 2013. Add these new volunteers to your existing core of active volunteers who take part in *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days activities. Strive to recruit volunteers from demographics that are under-represented at your site.
- Develop partnerships or collaborations with organizations that can provide volunteers (churches, corporations, service organizations, local businesses, universities/community colleges).
- Incorporate best practices suggested by the Volunteer Days Advisory Committee to increase volunteer recruitment, engagement and satisfaction. Share your experiences with other participating sites.

#### **5. Where is the funding coming from? How much is available?**

Funding for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days comes from a generous grant from Toyota and is part of the larger *TogetherGreen* initiative. Each approved site will receive funds from Audubon to support Volunteer Days for the year.

#### **6. Are there restrictions on how we can spend our funds for Volunteer Days?**

Yes. The funds must be used to support Volunteer Days, and can include support for:

- Staff or volunteer time to plan, oversee, set up/break down your events and train others involved in the implementation of Volunteer Days.
- Marketing, volunteer day materials (seeds, shovels, citizen science goods, education hand-outs, etc.), social activities for volunteers, incentives, refreshments, and other support.

We know that each Center, Chapter or program will be judicious in how they expend funds. Each applicant will need to submit a simple yearly budget, if selected, prior to the first *TogetherGreen* event, and be able to verify all expenses with original receipts and invoices.

The following categories of volunteer activities are NOT eligible for support from *TogetherGreen* funding:

- ➔ general office or administrative work (excluding data entry from scientific research)

- ➔ building maintenance or regular facility upkeep
- ➔ nature store or gift shop activities, or any other activity that does not have a clear and direct impact on your conservation efforts
- ➔ direct lobbying of elected or appointed government representatives and officials

If you are unsure if activities qualify, please ask.

**7. May I use *TogetherGreen* funds to support existing volunteers and volunteer events that are already planned for this year?**

Yes. We encourage using existing volunteers at all *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Day events, either as general participants, or as supervisors and trainers for the new volunteers that you recruit. We also want to encourage innovative thinking about how to engage new volunteers from diverse backgrounds and how to work with new partners. Many of the events that you have planned, can meet the requirements for *TogetherGreen* with slight adjustments to incorporate conservation impacts and the number of volunteers who participate. It is important to remember that a key goal of this program is to enhance what you're doing with volunteer activities, and to do your best to recruit the required number of NEW volunteers to your site or programs.

**8. What are the requirements we need to fulfill for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days?**

To receive funds and support for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days, you will need to meet the following requirements:

- Demonstrate the capacity to achieve the goals of the program and an enthusiasm for promoting conservation volunteerism.
- Host the required number of Volunteer Days from May 15, 2012 to May 14, 2013. Two of these days will be coordinated nationally—the first in late September 2012, the second in late April 2013. For sites committing to only two events, you MUST hold your events during the two nationally synchronized time periods. The dates of your other Volunteer Days (if any) are at your discretion.
- Keep a record of the number of new and returning volunteers, as well as the number of hours they worked at each event. Keep a record of conservation, science and education results for each event. Report on each event within 2 weeks using our online reporting system. Provide a final report on Volunteer Days events.
- Document all Volunteer Days with digital photos/videos with appropriate photo releases. (With larger events, Audubon may be able to provide a videographer or photographer.)
- Participate in *TogetherGreen* contests and support public relations requests.
- Follow requirements for branding of promotional, marketing and other materials.
- Keep records and/or receipts of all expenditures of grant funds for Volunteer Days.
- Those who are employed by the National Audubon Society must follow Audubon's volunteer policies, including, but not limited to Audubon's criminal background check policy, and secure liability and photo releases as supplied. All others should follow their organization's background check policies and ensure that photo releases allow use by the National Audubon Society and Toyota.

The following are not required, but are strongly recommended:

- Each Volunteer Day event should be between 4-6 hours in length.
- Volunteer Days should host anywhere between 20 to 50 (or more) volunteers at one time, depending on your capacity to oversee and implement the events.
- You are strongly encouraged to leverage the support you receive from Audubon by obtaining local support through matching funds and in-kind contributions.
- Chapters and Centers are encouraged to collaborate with their Audubon state offices to ensure volunteer activities support joint conservation goals. IBA programs are encouraged to support flyway initiatives.

### **9. When does *TogetherGreen* start? How soon can I apply?**

The timeline for this cycle of *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days is as follows:

March 5, 2012	Application process by email begins
April 2, 2012	Deadline for Volunteer Days applications
Early May, 2012	Selected sites will receive notification of funding
May 15, 2012	Volunteer Days begin
June 15, 2012	80% payment of grant made to organizations selected
May 14, 2013	Final Volunteer Day event to be completed by this date
June 15, 2013	Final report due; remaining 20% of grant disbursed to organizations; 100% of grant transferred to Audubon 501 C 3 participants.

### **10. How do we apply?**

Please send the accompanying application to [volunteers@togethergreen.org](mailto:volunteers@togethergreen.org). The subject line for your email should be: VOLUNTEER DAYS APPLICATION. The deadline for applications is April 2, 2012. If you have any questions, please feel free to email [volunteers@togethergreen.org](mailto:volunteers@togethergreen.org)

### **11. Who decides which applicants are selected?**

A committee composed of representatives from Audubon Education & Centers and Science departments, Audubon Chapters and outside organizations that are part of the *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days Advisory Committee assess the applications based on a simple ranking system.

### **12. Are we expected to receive media attention for our event?**

The more attention you receive for the good work you do, the better it is for your program, and the better it is for *TogetherGreen*. While there is no specific requirement on how much coverage you must receive, we strongly encourage you to seek out press outlets, social media venues (including blogs), local e-newsletters, tv, and radio to promote your work. For those of you less experienced with media, we don't expect you to do this alone. We have a terrific communications team who is always willing to lend their expertise in helping to make you successful. If you are selected to receive a Volunteer Days grant, we will connect you with our communications team.

### **13 What kinds of volunteer activities are acceptable for *TogetherGreen* Volunteer Days?**

We encourage you to think about the activities that best fit your program and site. There are dozens and dozens of great volunteer activities that you can promote with this program. Think about activities that will help you accomplish your goals and the goals of this program, as described earlier. Below are samples of volunteer activities that might give you some ideas:

<u>Adults</u>	<u>Families</u>	<u>Teens</u>	<u>Business or Community Groups</u>
aquatic surveys	biodiversity inventory	Audubon At Home gardens	Audubon At Home gardens
Breeding Bird Survey	bird boxes	conservation ambassadors	Breeding Bird Survey
biodiversity inventory	butterfly/insect monitoring	animal care	bird boxes
bird banding	Project Feederwatch/GBBC	Breeding Bird Survey	botanic surveys
bird boxes	Audubon At Home demo gardens	biodiversity inventory	site clean ups
botanic surveys	habitat management	bird banding	sponsored demonstration areas
site clean ups	invasive control	bird boxes	Insect/herp/and other surveys
conservation projects	invasive removal	hawk counting	invasive control
Audubon At Home gardens	fauna/flora/water/soil monitoring	invasive control	fauna/flora/water/soil monitors
make facilities eco-friendly	native seed gathering	invasive removal	field and meadow restoration
habitat restoration	trail work to protect wildlife	non-invasive plantings	make facilities more eco-friendly
invasive control	wildlife banding/tagging	fauna/flora/water/soil monitoring	riparian/erosion work
invasive removal	landscaping for wildlife	native seed gathering	4-H, scout, other youth projects
landscaping for wildlife	community recycling projects	field restoration	riparian/erosion work
education tours	adopt-a-trail	research data entry	neighborhood energy audits
fauna/flora/water/soil monitors	adopt-a-schoolyard	riparian/erosion work	adopt-a-trail
outreach to conservation orgs		site clean ups	
non-invasive plantings		trail work to protect wildlife	
preservation work		walking tours	
research for conservation		community recycling projects	
riparian/erosion work		school energy audits	
trail work to protect wildlife			
wildlife rehabilitation			