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Miami Beach Woman Singled Out for Environmental Leadership *Honoree Receives Audubon/Toyota TogetherGreen Fellowship*

New York, NY, November 19, 2009-A Miami Beach, Florida woman is the recipient of a national fellowship designed to advance the work of individuals with outstanding leadership potential to help shape a brighter environmental future.

Michelle Frankel is one of 40 individuals nationwide selected as a 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellow. The *TogetherGreen* Fellowship offers specialized training in conservation planning and execution, the chance to work and share best practices with gifted conservation professionals, and assistance with project outreach and evaluation. Each Fellow receives \$10,000 towards a community-focused project to engage local residents in conserving land, water and energy, and contributing to greater environmental health.

For her fellowship, Frankel will launch “Urban Oases,” a citizen science program focused on improving the quality of stopover habitats for birds along major migration pathways, initially in Florida and the Bahamas. If successful, this program will achieve greater community involvement through the volunteering of citizen-scientists, provide insights into which species of plants are most beneficial as food sources for migrating birds, and promote native plant restoration and landscaping that improves habitat quality for migrating birds in urban regions all along migratory flyways.

Frankel is the Director of Foundation Relations and Government Grants as well as a biologist for Audubon of Florida. In that capacity, she works to integrate diverse perspectives and help guide the direction of Audubon of Florida’s Bird Conservation Program.

“Michelle is the kind of person who can make a real difference in the health of our environment and the quality of our future,” said Audubon President John Flicker. “Each of our *TogetherGreen* Fellows demonstrates exceptional environmental understanding and commitment, combined with tremendous potential to inspire and lead others. Together, they represent the talented and diverse leadership the environmental community will need to tackle the huge challenges and opportunities confronting us now and in the years to come.”

“Many species of migrating songbirds are declining at an alarming rate, and the reductions in quality and quantity of stop-over habitat during migration, particularly in highly urbanized regions, are contributing to their declines, Frankel said. “Since the protection and enhancement of urban green spaces occurs primarily at local levels, engaging local people in surveying, enhancing and protecting their public green spaces and raising awareness in their own communities is a vital component of the Urban Oases project. The *TogetherGreen* fellowship

will help me enhance my skills in conservation planning, engaging diverse audiences, and building effective partnerships, which will all be critical to the success of this project.”

Frankel joined Audubon of Florida, the state headquarters of the National Audubon Society in 2008. Half of the *TogetherGreen* Fellows come from within Audubon’s far-reaching national network; half channel their environmental efforts through other organizations.

Frankel received her Ph.D. and Masters in biology from Boston University. A dedicated conservationist, Frankel has previously worked for Earthspan Inc. and for the International Center for the Study of Bird Migration in Latrun, Israel.

A distinguished advisory committee—composed of conservation professionals and experts in environmental education, communications, outreach, and conservation planning—s elected the fellowship beneficiaries from a competitive pool of scores of highly qualified individuals. Qualified applicants must have at least six years of experience in conservation, environmental education, policy, or environmental issues, as demonstrated through current and past work experience, academic studies related to conservation, and/or volunteer work. Candidates must have a passion for conservation, the desire to learn and grow, and demonstrate a proven ability in reaching previously unengaged audiences.

"We must engage the best and brightest leaders representing the broadest and most diverse communities in this country to solve our ever more complex conservation challenges," said Diane Wood, President, National Environmental Education Foundation. "*TogetherGreen* is a creative program that uncovers such leaders, nurtures their talents, supports their dedication to conservation and holds them up to inspire others to follow."

A complete list of the 2009 *TogetherGreen* Fellows can be found at www.TogetherGreen.org/fellows.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to build the promise of a greener, healthier future through innovation, leadership and volunteerism. To date, 80 environmental leaders-half from within Audubon and half from outside organizations-have received *TogetherGreen* Fellowships to protect land, water, and energy resources nationwide. For more information, visit www.togethergreen.org.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon of Florida online at www.audubonofflorida.org and National Audubon Society at www.audubon.org.

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. Since 1991, Toyota has contributed more than \$464 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit www.toyota.com/community.