



Fostering appreciation and conservation of birds and the environment we share since 1939

EDUCATION | RESEARCH | ACTION

DETROIT AUDUBON INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ABOUT DETROIT AUDUBON

Detroit Audubon, a chapter of National Audubon, is a separate non-profit environmental organization (a 501©3) founded in 1939 and whose service area is 7 counties in southeast Michigan. We have over 5,000 members (the majority are joint with National Audubon, close to 1,000 that are direct paying Detroit Audubon members, and we continue to grow in size and impact. Our mission is to foster appreciation and conservation of birds and the environment we share. Our three mission pillars through which we strive to achieve that mission are: Education, Research, and Action.

Until 2015 we did that almost exclusively with volunteers. In spring 2015 simultaneously moved back to Detroit from the suburbs and hired our first professional staff position—a program coordinator. Our office is in mid-town, or what used to be called the Cass Corridor, in a building called Cass Commons, which is the church house building of First Unitarian Universalist Church, which is now an environmental non-profit hub right next to Wayne State University. The church still operates on Sunday and Wednesday nights, but most of the former Sunday School rooms are now offices. The sanctuary and social hall are rented out or used by the non-profits all through the week. We often can see nesting Peregrine Falcons from our large picture window.

Our major programs at present include school programs for 4-5th graders including a year-long program called B.I.R.D.S. which is an acronym for Building Involved Resourceful Detroit Stewards, including four classroom visits and four field trips per year as well as four field trips and mentoring students in doing stewardship project to benefit birds and nature. We are currently seeking funding to continue that program. We also do ad hoc school programs and offer a Young Birder's Program for teenagers (we would like to also have clubs for middle school, elementary, and pre-school ages as staff time and budget allows). We offer between 26-30 field trips for mixed ages of members and the general public. We have traditionally offered monthly nature programs with speakers on various topics in the evening, but those have been replaced with great success by webinars, which we plan to continue at some level. Until the pandemic we did sponsor a yearly Earth Day Conservation Conference with speakers, performers, artists. Live birds, bats and other animals along with field trips and special activities for children. Our other major educational endeavor is producing a quarterly natural history magazine, *The Flyway*, and a monthly e-newsletter, *The Flyway Express*.

Our primary Research Activities include a 10-year research project on the rare Black Tern in the St. Clair Flats, at the northern extent of our territory, about 53 miles north of our office in the largest freshwater delta marsh in North America. This is THE largest Black Tern colony in the whole Great Lakes Basin. These birds nest on floating mats of vegetation and are extremely vulnerable to high water that comes with climate change because high water tends to break apart those mats. We are hoping to figure out strategies to help the terns

deal with high water at St. Clair Flats and to apply those management strategies to hopefully restore nesting in marshy areas that used to support colonies. Major partners include the Detroit Zoo, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the University of Michigan School of Environment and Sustainability, and Audubon Great Lakes.

We also initiated our Great Lakes Safe Passage Project about 15 years ago to encourage high-rise buildings to turn off lights after 11 p.m. during migration to mitigate casualties caused by birds becoming confused by those lights and often dying of exhaustion. We also promote bird-safe building design to cut down on the billions of birds killed by hitting windows. Volunteers collect carcasses in the early morning during migration which are donated to the Biology Department at Wayne State University to document the carnage. We also maintain an honor roll of bird safe buildings.

Detroit Bird City, is a project we initiated with several partners including the City of Detroit Parks and Recreation Department, neighborhood block clubs and associations, the US. Fish and Wildlife Service, a major donor and large equipment operator, and others to turn 5 under-utilized parks in the city of Detroit into native grasslands (Intentional Meadows), along with amenities desired by the neighborhoods including interpretive exhibits, benches, Little Libraries, and more. Major funding has come from National Geographic Society and the National Institutes of Health, which is funding research by Michigan State University to document the health benefits to human neighbors of these park transformations. We will complete the first 5 parks in 2022, and then will seek additional funding to add more parks. We also are poised to initiate a "1000 acres of Prairie" program in which private land owners can sign up to have all or part of land they own certified as officially part of Detroit Bird City.

We also sponsor two Christmas Bird Counts, participate in an international waterfowl count each year for three days in the winter along the Detroit River, Grassland Breeding Bird Counts in area Metroparks, and bird counts in Detroit Bird City project areas. We are also helping a neighborhood association that came to us for assistance in establishing a bird garden in a park in their neighborhood.

Detroit Audubon also has a long history of successful environmental policy advocacy, including helping to push the ban on DDT that led to the successful comeback of the Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon, a leader in the effort for the popular Michigan Bottle Bill, which pays people to return pop and beer containers to the store for recycling, help lead the fight to save Humbug Marsh and establish the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, successfully stopped a bill in the Michigan legislature that would have prevented any state agency from taking any action to promote biodiversity, got the most cities of any chapter in the nation to sign proclamations celebrating the 100th anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and successfully helped rescind emasulation of the landmark law. We are currently advocating for the passage of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

We currently have two staff, one full-time and the other close to full-time: A Program Coordinator/Office Administrator and a Research Coordinator. We hope within 6 months to a year to have funds to hire a half-time Office Administrator and to make the two coordinators full-time salaried positions. Our strategic plan next calls for hiring an Environmental Policy Coordinator and a Volunteer Coordinator as funding becomes available.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR POSITION DESCRIPTION

This position is a full-time professional salaried position with the Detroit Audubon.

Skills and Qualifications:

- Two to five years of demonstrated successful experience in grant-writing, fund-raising, marketing, and publicity.
- Business administration experience, degree or coursework a plus.
- Degree in natural resources, ecology, ornithology or demonstrated knowledge of those fields.
- Passion for birds and environmental causes required, experience as a birder strongly preferred
- Familiarity and experience with the Audubon system (National Organization and Chapters) and Detroit Audubon in particular a plus.
- Demonstrated ability to work collaboratively with program staff to develop grants and other fund-raising strategies.
- Visionary
- Being well connected to Metro Detroit, Michigan, and maybe national leaders in conservation and to funders and potential funders strongly preferred.
- Good computer skills, competent with MS Office Suite, Internet, and Facebook. Experience with member/donor database systems will be very helpful. Other computer experience a plus.
- Experience with hiring and supervising staff
- Experience in strategic planning and in implementing a strategic plan a plus.
- Knowledge or experience in targeting particular segments of a database for particular fund-raising and conservation action goals (using action alerts).
- Excellent oral and written communication skills.
- Experience in publicity and press relations a plus.
- Must be a self-starter, organized, a networker, and a relationship-builder
- *Experience in developing and implementing strategic plans strongly preferred.*
- *Proven ability to recruit and work with board members, staff, and volunteers.*
- Professional and service oriented

Supervisory Controls.

- Hired and supervised by the Detroit Audubon Board of Directors

Duties and Expected Outcomes:

- Oversees day-to-day operation of the organization to achieve mission, goals, and objectives.
- Leads staff and board in implementing our strategic plan, and in the future helps the board develop a new one. (every 5-7 years)
- Works with staff to develop yearly work-plan based on the strategic plan and other goals set by the board and modify it as necessary
- Hire, supervise, and evaluate all Detroit Audubon staff
- Serve as chief spokesman for the organization along with the president.
- Major job is promoting the organization whenever, however they can with public, government agencies and officials, foundations, major donors, and other environmental and community groups.
- Fosters partnerships to achieve mission
- Ex-officio member of all committees

- Sets overall vision for the organization with board approval and within the parameters of the strategic plan.
- Keeps organization focused on its mission and its strategic plan
- Responsible for maintaining fiscal health of the organization along with Finance Committee, Executive Committee and Board
- Responsible for setting day-to-day policies for organizational operation
- Responsible for overseeing and for engaging in major fund-raising with donors and foundations, and one or more appeals to the membership each year.
- Serves on, represents or ensures that Detroit Audubon is represented on boards or is represented on major coalitions such as Michigan Environmental Council, Metro Detroit Nature Network (SEMI-WILD), planning agencies like Detroit Future City etc. and maintains channels of communication with them.
- Empowers and helps train and equip staff and committee chairs with skills to do their jobs, or makes those opportunities available.
- Recruits new board members and committee chairs, and committee members, and works collaboratively with them.
- Along with staff recruits volunteers, interns, and docents.
- Reports to board about progress in meeting mission at each board meeting involving key staff as he/she deems necessary or appropriate. Communicates and consults with board and executive committee often.
- Makes sure the organization produces required deliverables on grants and nurtures partnerships, and volunteers.
- Chief liaison with National and Michigan Audubon, and other major partners (or delegates that duty to other for particular organizations or entities).
- Hires and oversees work of consultants such as the bookkeeper, fund-raising consultant etc.

Schedule: Monday-Friday, but a fair amount of evening and weekend work will be required.

Conditions: The position is full-time salaried with benefits.

Location: our office is in Detroit near Wayne State University but a fair amount of travel will be involved, locally for the most part. The incumbent will need to use their personal vehicle but mileage will be paid for travel that is part of the job.

Compensation: The starting salary for this position is \$54,000/ year but is expected to grow as the organization grows under the ED's direction.

Preferred Start Date: October, 2021

To apply: Send cover letter, resume, and three letters of reference to edapps@detroitaudubon.org. Please apply by September 30, 2021, but applications will continue to be accepted until the position is filled.

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