



# Audubon CONNECTICUT

## 2012 State Legislative Priorities

**Our Mission** Imagine a spring without robins, a summer without hummingbirds, or a fall without a river of hawks streaming overhead on their long journey south. Birds are not only winged harbingers of the changing season, but give us important information about our changing environment. Audubon Connecticut knows that the health of our bird populations is a key indicator of the overall health of our environment. For this reason, we are dedicated to protecting birds, other wildlife and their habitats using science and conservation, education, and legislative advocacy. We carry out this work for the benefit of people and the earth's biological diversity. Through our network of nature centers, protected wildlife sanctuaries, and local, volunteer chapters, we seek to connect people with nature and inspire the next generation of conservationists. Please join us in this effort!

**For Birds and People** In this time of fiscal austerity, our public policy efforts are focusing even more diligently on ensuring a sustainable environment for birds and people by protecting, restoring and enhancing habitat. A rich variety of available natural spaces is the key to survival for birds and people. And these natural amenities are significant part of Connecticut's economy – providing jobs and supporting a vibrant outdoor recreation and tourism. If we don't act now, our pristine tidal marshes, unbroken swaths of woodlands, and swells of whispering grasslands will continue to vanish, taking with them the diversity of birds and wildlife that make Connecticut the place where we all want to live and raise our families. For 2012, our legislative priorities are:

### **Protecting Long Island Sound & Ensuring Clean Water**

- Establish Long Island Sound Bi-State Caucus
- Maintain clean water bond funding levels
- Secure allocation of authorized Clean Water funds
- Secure adequate funding for Clean Water Fund in FY13 and beyond

### **Conserving Open Space & Habitat**

- Defend CIA and bond funding from raids
- Secure allocation of available Community Investment Act funds
- Seek release of authorized open space bond funds - \$5M already released!!!!
- Create Community Green Fund to help municipalities assemble matching funds
- Protected lands registry – working w DEEP
- Ensuring protections for state-owned open space

### **Promoting Wildlife Diversity**

- Reduce unnecessary use of pesticides
  - Implement existing school pesticide law
  - Clarify definitions and expand organic pesticides allowed
  - Lift municipal preemption
- Defend CT Endangered Species Act
  - In DEEP Stormwater General Permit revision process
  - As target in other legislation
- Reduce light pollution
  - Work w DEEP and Governor's Office on policy for state-buildings
- Falconry – monitor proposals to take birds from the wild

### **Funding for DEEP Programs & Operations**

- Advocate for DEEP budget
- Support CEQ budget and independence
- Work to ensure adequate staffing in DEEP Wildlife and other programs

### **Rollbacks**

- Oppose rollbacks of key environmental laws, regulations and protections
- Support efforts to streamline DEEP regulatory processes that also protect environmental integrity

### **Here's how you can help:**

- Join Audubon's Advocacy Network – sign up and take action on key issues!
- Volunteer to help Audubon's Public Policy program
- Become a member of Audubon Greenwich - if you aren't already
- Volunteer to help protect beach-nesting birds this summer
- Create habitat oases in your yard, school grounds and church property with Audubon at Home: [http://greenwich.audubon.org/Programs\\_AA.html](http://greenwich.audubon.org/Programs_AA.html)

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