

Volunteers Needed for Shorebird Monitoring 2020

Nearly 100 volunteers helped make 2019 a record-breaking year for shorebird conservation. The Audubon Alliance invites new and returning volunteers to make a big impact in 2020.

The Audubon Alliance for Coastal Waterbirds and the CT Department of Environmental Protection, Wildlife Division invite you to make a difference for threatened bird species at the beach as an official summer volunteer. Volunteers will help monitor Piping Plovers, American Oystercatchers and Least Terns at beaches statewide from early April through August. This includes The Nature Conservancy's Griswold Point Preserve in Old Lyme.

Atlantic Coast populations of beach-nesting birds return to the Connecticut coast in March from their wintering grounds, as far as the Caribbean. The cryptic nests of these birds are extremely susceptible to human disturbance, predation, and tidal wash outs. To enhance the survival and productivity of Connecticut's beach-nesting birds, volunteers work at locations from Pleasure Beach in Bridgeport to Bluff Point in Groton to observe the shorebirds, record and report nesting data, and educate the beach-going public about actions they can take to help these birds raise their young.

Volunteers work from April until the end of the breeding season (usually in August) and must donate a minimum of 4 hours per month. The work can be very rewarding, as volunteers will have the opportunity to positively affect the nesting success of threatened shorebirds across the state. With the help of volunteers, 2019 was a record-breaking year with 98 Piping Plover chicks and 64 American Oystercatchers chicks fledged!

Training and orientation sessions for new and returning volunteers will review the following: biology of the Piping Plover, Least Tern, and American Oystercatcher, how to monitor breeding pairs and chicks, volunteer organization and logistics, and law enforcement information. While there are only a few changes to the process this year, attendance by everyone planning to join us for the 2020 season is important.

Volunteer Training Session Held At: Audubon Connecticut Office at Stratford Point
1207 Prospect Drive, Stratford, CT 06615

Returning Volunteer Monitor Training Session – March 14th 2020, 9:00 – 10:00am
New Volunteer Monitor Training Session – March 14th 2020, 10:30 – 12:00pm

Volunteer Training Session Held At: Roger Tory Peterson Estuary Center
90 Halls Road, Old Lyme, CT 06371
(in the shopping plaza)

Returning Volunteer Monitor Training Session – March 11th 2020, 5:30 – 6:30am
New Volunteer Monitor Training Session – March 11th 2020, 7:00 – 8:30pm

For more information on the training session or for directions, please email the Audubon Alliance for Coastal Waterbirds at ctwaterbirds@gmail.com. Reservations are not required; but an e-mail letting us know you will be attending (please include a training session location and time) is appreciated.

Don't think you can commit to being a volunteer shorebird monitor? Don't worry; there are many other ways you can help the birds have a successful season! Visit ctwaterbirds.blogspot.com for

a list of all volunteer opportunities. *“Every little bit adds up to big benefits for the birds”*

This training session is co-sponsored by the Audubon Alliance for Coastal Waterbirds (Audubon Connecticut, the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History and the Connecticut Audubon Society) and the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection, Wildlife Division.