

YES! I want to help establish and strengthen our community's connection to nature through birds. Enclosed is my tax-deductible gift to St. Louis Audubon in the amount of

\$250  \$100  \$50  \$30 \$ \_\_\_\_\_



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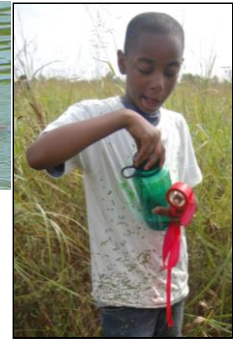
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\* If you would like to be added to our e-newsletter distribution.

If you would like to donate online, please visit [www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org).

Please return this completed form with your gift in the envelope provided for your convenience. Thank you!



November 2010

Dear Supporter,

### Our children want to experience Nature

On a warm spring day at Tower Grove Park, Audubon volunteers attempted to lead a noisy rabble of middle school students on a field trip. Near the Gaddy Bird Garden, one of the leaders spotted a robin's nest with three young in a nearby tree. As the students found the nest in their binoculars, the group turned quiet, focused. They were rewarded after just moments when an adult returned to the nest and fed the young, mouths gaping and heads bobbing. At walk's end, many students were hoping to find robins, and other birds, in their own yards.

"Is this the woods?" and, "Why are there so many bugs?" were questions from Loyola Academy students at the start of the hot and dry September day. They were at Creve Coeur Park to assist in protecting recently planted trees from deer activity. Later, two of those same students (and their chaperone) were reluctant to stop their efforts in the field. They arrived for lunch after all the adults had returned and nearly covered in beggarsweed—seeds of a common open field plant. They were proud of their work and not bothered by nature's hitchhikers.

These are just two of the many anecdotes from this year's projects that your support has helped make possible. However, in many ways our work has just begun and we hope to count on your support again. The St. Louis Audubon mission is to *connect our community to nature through education and conservation*, and we are constantly seeking ways to improve our efforts toward that. We describe below just some of our recent developments and plans.

### Early education can ignite a life-long relationship with the Outdoors

Not satisfied with past successes, our Education Team continues to expand their programming and their outreach. This year, the Team reintroduced programs on ponds and food chains and is presently developing three more programs, including one on soils. This summer, for the first time, they offered programming to schools in St. Louis City and the inner suburbs. At this writing, one St. Louis City school has begun receiving programming, and a second has been scheduled. The Team has plans to send another solicitation to City schools over the Holidays. All the more impressive considering they delivered programs to 1,050 students in just the first six weeks of the school year!

Also in the education arena, we began offering Audubon Nature Walks for Kids, especially designed for children, ages six and over. Audubon has long provided bird walks for beginners, but those walks were often not suitable for young people. Further, other groups provide outdoor experiences designed for children, but often without a connection to birds. So, we launched our effort in August, hoping to fill the gap by exposing kids to birds, their habitat and related wildlife on short walks at natural areas around St. Louis. We hope the children will carry that experience back to their homes and, with their families, discover the nature in their own backyard. Your gift today will help us continue to expand our nature education for kids.

St. Louis Audubon Society, P.O. Box 220227, St. Louis, MO 63122-0227

or visit [www.stlouisaudubon.org](http://www.stlouisaudubon.org) to make your gift online

To view our complete Annual Report, visit About Us on our website

### 2009-2010 Highlights

**Field Trips:** 15 volunteers led 43 free field trips to observe and identify birds, serving over 500 people.

**Outreach:** Provided an educational experience and/or materials to ~6,400 people at community events.

**Education Team:** The all-volunteer Team presented 127 classroom programs on birds and other nature subjects to 2,400 children and another 19 adult-oriented programs to 1,200 people. All at no charge.

**Restoration:** Volunteers at Creve Coeur Park removed 7,600 pounds of trash, planted 900 native Missouri trees and restored six acres of wetland.

**Conservation Policy:** Participated in 15 meetings with agency staff and submitted 10 official policy comments to various government departments.

**Scholarships:** Three scholarships at \$2,500 each were awarded to graduate students at UMSL.

### Our stewardship of Nature encourages healthy communities

Our advocacy program, on behalf of birds and their habitat, took a very local turn this past year with efforts to block the construction of a casino and resort complex just downstream from the Columbia Bottom Conservation Area. The project would have threatened the birds and wildlife of the Great Rivers Confluence Important Bird Area with noise and light pollution, water pollution and habitat loss. Throughout the year, Audubon volunteers worked with the Save the Confluence coalition to educate the public and generate opposition to the proposal at that location, including the submission of thousands of postcards to the Missouri Gaming Commission. On October 21<sup>st</sup>, your voices were heard when the development firm behind the proposal pulled out of the process, claiming financial difficulty.

Involving our community directly in the stewardship of our conservation lands is a key element of maintaining their connection with those same areas. We began a habitat restoration program at Creve Coeur Park, in partnership with St. Louis County Parks, in September 2009 hoping it would engage the community. After just eight workdays, over 300 different volunteers had participated, contributing nearly 1,100 hours. Especially exciting were the students from Lafayette and Parkway North High Schools, the New Day School in Hillsboro and middle-schoolers from Herbert Hoover Boys & Girls Club and Loyola Academy. A number of other groups were also represented including AmeriCorps, JM Family Enterprises, Missouri Stream Teams and the St. Louis Rowing Club.

Creve Coeur Park is just a beginning for this approach. Our goal is community participation in the stewardship of all Important Bird Areas in the St. Louis Area. Discussions are already under way with the naturalist at Cuivre River State Park and a project was recently completed with the Greenway Network at the Portage des Sioux Nature Area in the Great Rivers Confluence IBA. The former would be a new partnership and the latter builds upon years of work with the U.S. Army Corps and the Missouri Department of Conservation.

### Your support is critical to our children and our community

We feel very strongly that the Audubon approach to education and conservation is essential to our community and needed now more than ever. We have expanded our efforts, but maintain a "no charge" policy for our services. Nearly all our programs are staffed by volunteers, and we constantly review our budget to reduce expenses and maximize our efficiency.

Your past support has made much of our success possible, and we need your support again. From the baby robins in Tower Grove to the "woods" of Creve Coeur Park, help us continue to teach our children about Nature. If you share our passion for birds, and connecting kids and our communities to Nature through them, please send in your gift today with the enclosed envelope.

Thank you so much for your interest and support!



David Rogles, President



Mitch Leachman, Executive Director

Note: Be assured that your cash gift is fully tax-deductible. St. Louis Audubon is recognized by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charity.