

# How Can Audubon Chapters Participate/Contribute to Hemispheric Bird Conservation, such as with the Wood Thrush Project

Ideas from five break-out groups at the Audubon Council of NY/CT Meeting at Heritage Hotel in Southbury, Connecticut

April 25, 2026

The ideas from the five group were summarized under the following topics:

1. Motus Stations, ARU's (autonomous recording units, GPS Trackers
2. Education/Outreach/Raise Awareness
3. Engaging/Collaboration with Groups in Central and South America
4. Engaging School Children/College Students/College and Universities
5. Encourage Bird Habitat Conservation and Data Collection
6. Chapters/Campus Chapters
7. Media/ Story Telling/ Social Media

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## Motus Stations, ARU's (autonomous recording units), GPS Trackers

- National Audubon buys hardware in bulk and distribute to chapters or store data.
- Chapters buy/fund nanotags, ARU's, GPS trackers
- Pooling money across chapters to help fund Central/South America motus towers
- Sponsor nanotags, motus stations, ARU's for partners in Central/South America
- Find gaps in motus stations in Connecticut and New York.
- Need list of motus station maintenance resource people for chapter assistance to repair a motus station, and list of chapters with motus stations to connect with chapters for assistance to install motus station.
- Install motus stations and ARU's, including on college/university campuses.

## Education/ Outreach/ Raise Awareness

- Send people down to the Americas to teach about birding, conservation, etc.
- Teaching why bird conservation/habitat matters.
- Connect with Audubon NY-CT forest staff on existing program outreach.
- Yale Bird Initiative- need to reduce thrush mortality from window collision.
- Educate the public/homeowners on many topics including bird migration.
- Educate landscapers in bird friendly landscapes.
- Postcard campaign about reducing use of pesticides on lawns.
- Put up lawn signs giving recognition for not using lawn chemicals.

- Partner with other conservation/ sustainability groups.
- Strengthen bird friendly glass regulations.
- Collaborate with other Conservation organizations, gardening groups i.e. Homegrown National Parks and use as ally.
- Make the forest conservation – migration connection.
- Common thread--- educate and engaging others.
- Lights Out for migrating birds and expanding education on migrations in general.
- Involve non-birders in live motus in classrooms “This is my wood thrush”
- Video promotions to educate the public on the wood thrush project.
- Shade coffee and palm oil discussions and outreach to educate the public.

### **Engaging/Collaborating with groups in Central and South America**

- Send funds to support efforts with bird conservation works.
- Chapters partner with those who do university research.
- Co-lead partnerships to meet actual needs.... not always birds first, may need to address habitat and ecotourism.
- What do our southern partners need.
- Sponsor partners in Central and South America to support their programs.
- Fund raising campaign to support wood thrush project efforts.
- Sister centers/groups in the Americas.
- Mascot species (wood thrush or Baltimore orioles)
- Travel to help set up and meet partners in person.
- Collaborate on tagging birds.
- Build relationships with other location.
- Translators

### **Engaging School Children / College Students / Colleges and Universities**

- Open lines of communications between school children.
- High school students need volunteer hours.... Could support chapter projects.
- How to get under-represented students into the field, maybe using buses.
- Collaborate with chapters and student groups on data collection, education and conservation.
- Find banders and connect with university research efforts
- Support student interns. Mentor connections for student interns
- Connect with university research programs and identify projects one can do.
- Chapter support or sponsor student interns.
- Study abroad opportunities in Central and South America.
- Campus chapters/chapter partners with avian ecology labs on college campuses.
- New graduate volunteer trips or short-term projects.
- Sponsor scholarships in the Americas and know who to contact.
- Overcome barriers to birding, student could include the whole campus, not just birders.
- Student outreach with cultural connections (ex. Cranes and Japan).
- Connecting schools across migration paths.

- Partnering with Central and South America clubs include people in campus chapters.
- Campus chapter intern exchange with partners in the Americas.
- Audubon facilitates structure for internships at colleges with built-in study abroad... half year abroad and half year back at the local college.

### **Encourage Bird Habitat Conservation and Data Collection**

- Support protection of biodiversity.
- Encourage use of green roofs, investing in hotspots.
- Have Lights Out/ bird collision programs (especially in hotspots).
- Expand wood thrush plan to more than forestry I.E. shores, grasslands, cities.
- Audubon provide resources for chapters on banding, data collection, and database of banders and other projects.
- Need bird banding database.
- Invasive species management and mitigation.
- Forest management encouraging age and class diversity, encourage forest demonstrations.
- Gather data on birds via community science. Can record impact of changed practices.
- Work with land trusts and college forest managers for bird friendly forest management.

### **Chapters/Campus Chapters**

- Be inclusive and welcoming to non-birders, interest in birds is enough to start birding.
- Campus chapters encourage managed college forest for bird habitat.
- Open lines of communications between colleges in US and between US colleges and colleges in the Americas.
- Be clear with objectives, goals, working points to increase accessibility.
- Alumni opportunities for continued engagement post graduation for employment, volunteer opportunities, board engagement, chapters, etc.

### **Media / Storytelling / Social Media**

- Use 'pings' from motus towers to tell a story.
- Media coverage to highlight bird migration, maybe by adding Birdcast to daily routine weather forecast (weather forecasters informing public how many birds migrated over their county last night). This could be linked to Lights Out.
- Use social media to post/repost relevant materials, e.g. reels, webcams on nests, bird of the week.
- Student outreach utilizing storytelling as a way to make connections.
- Storytelling in multiple languages to raise awareness that can increase engagement.

All ideas are from Chapter representatives for NY and CT and students from Yale University and Skidmore College. Assembled by Martin van der Grinten, Chemung Valley Audubon Society.