



Tips for Getting Birdathon Donations

Asking people for money can seem daunting, but once you get started, it's not all that hard. Here are tips on how to make YOUR Birdathon fundraising easy.

1. **Make a list** of everyone you know: Neighbors, friends near and far, co-workers, old college roommates, acquaintances from the gym, other parents in your child's school....
2. **Cast a wide net.** Not everyone will give. But the more people you ask, the more "yeses" you'll get.
3. **Think of people whose causes you've supported.** Did you sponsor them in a fundraising walk last year? They'll be more likely to sponsor you in Birdathon.
4. **Don't feel embarrassed.** Most people will respect you for caring enough about birds and wildlife conservation to put your time and effort into the Birdathon.
5. **Approach people!** Share your team's fundraising page through Facebook, email etc. Write them a personal note. Call them. Or better yet, meet them in person for coffee, lunch, glass of wine, or dinner.
6. **Develop talking points** (see below) and tell them why Audubon Arkansas is important to you. Did you attend an event at the Little Rock Audubon Center? Have you learned something from Audubon staff? Do you want your grandchildren to be able to see swifts and warblers when they grow up?
7. **Offer Bird Bash tickets as an incentive.** "For a donation of \$\$ you can enjoy free food and drink while celebrating birds with me and our fellow birders."
8. **Follow up.** If you don't hear a response, email them a second and third time saying, "I want to make sure you got my note about Birdathon." If you are worried about being too pushy, remember how crowded people's inboxes are – the first time, they may not have seen your note, and the second time they may have intended to make a donation but forgot. Third time's a charm!
9. **TALK ABOUT Birdathon.** During your coffee break at work, or in the locker room at the gym, or on your Facebook page, or over lunch with a friend. Tell people how much you're looking forward to the exciting Birdathon big day you're planning.

10. **Be open and serious.** If you let people know you have a fundraising goal, and that you're nervous about how to reach it, some of them will step up to help. Wouldn't you do the same for a friend?

11. **Thank your donors!** Acknowledge their contribution as soon as you receive it. Tell them you will let them know your success in the Birdathon and will send pictures from your field trip. If they don't decide on the spot to support you, thank them for thinking about it.

Again, TALK ABOUT Birdathon. People will respond to your enthusiasm for birds, nature and Audubon. Tell the world. Who knows... you might inspire them not just to donate, but to learn more about their backyard birds or try birding.

Talking Points

Prepare ahead. Develop a script. Here are some points you can include, but the important thing is to make it your own:

- With a very small staff and dedicated volunteers, Audubon Arkansas leads environmental education field trips at the Little Rock Audubon Center (LRAC) for K-12 students, offers bird-related program and resources, and hosts an after-school and summer program at the LRAC for underserved students from Little Rock's Granite Mountain community.
- Audubon Arkansas has been advocating for birds, restoring vital habitat, and educating people of all ages about birds and other wildlife since 2000. People equate Audubon with birds and birds with Audubon.
- Climate change and ongoing loss of habitat are taking a toll on birds everywhere, no less in Arkansas where 152 of our bird species are threatened by climate change. We need Audubon Arkansas to continue to be a strong voice for protecting birds and natural habitats and to have enough funds to carry out its mission for years to come.
- All funds raised by the Birdathon go directly to Audubon Arkansas. The money stays right here in Arkansas to help our native bird populations survive and thrive, and to inspire and educate current and future generations about the wonders of our natural world. Audubon Arkansas is a 501c3 non-profit so your donations are tax-deductible.
- Birds mean a lot to me because...