

List of Volunteer Positions

Community Science

Climate Watch

Schedule: Winter and Summer – dates and times of surveys are flexible

Skills required: Bird ID (both sight and call) for target species, eBird

Prerequisite: Attend training by Austin area Climate Watch coordinator

Description: Since 2016, [Climate Watch](#) volunteers have collected data which Audubon scientists are able to use to document in peer reviewed research that birds are responding to climate change and shifting their ranges. You can join us in this fight by observing birds in your area, using our specific protocol, and helping us learn about how birds are responding to the changing climate.

Blair Woods Bird Surveys

Schedule: Once per month, date varies, 2-3-hours in the morning

Location: Blair Woods Nature Preserve

Skills required: Intermediate Bird ID

Prerequisite: None

Description: Join us in documenting the birdlife at our Blair Woods Nature Preserve in east Austin. These surveys are Christmas Bird Count-style, meaning that you'll identify the birds that you see and/or hear, as well as the number of individuals per species.

Waterloo Park Surveys

Schedule: Once per quarter, date varies, 2-3-hours in the morning

Location: Waterloo Park

Skills required: Intermediate Bird ID, eBird

Prerequisite: None

Description: Join us in documenting the birdlife at Waterloo Park in downtown Austin. These surveys are Christmas Bird Count-style, meaning that you'll identify the birds that you see and/or hear, as well as the number of individuals per species.

Sunset Valley Surveys

Schedule: Anytime – dates and times of surveys are flexible

Location: Sunset Valley in southwest Austin

Skills required: Intermediate Bird ID, eBird

Prerequisites: None

Description: The city of Sunset Valley (located in southwest Austin) is undergoing several prairie restoration projects and would like help gathering baseline bird diversity data on the prairie tracts.

Swift Night Out

Schedule: Second weekend in August and September annually, one hour in the evening

Location: Active Chimney Swift roosts around Austin

Skills required: eBird

Prerequisites: None

Description: Assist with monitoring our beloved Chimney Swifts by participating in Swift Night Out! Find a place where Chimney Swifts gather to roost in the evening, count them and report your sightings on eBird. Locate a Chimney Swift roost in your area by checking out [this list of local towers](#). On the second weekends of August and September, observe the roost starting about 30 minutes before dusk and estimate the number of swifts that enter. After the last swift has gone to roost, please enter your data in eBird and be sure to share your checklist with us (@TravisAudubonSociety). You can participate in as many of those nights as you'd like.

Purple Martin Roost Monitoring

Schedule: Late June through mid August, dates flexible, 1-2 hours at sunrise

Location: Purple Martin Roost (location varies but most recently was La Frontera in Round Rock)

Skills required: comfort with collecting dead and/or injured birds

Prerequisites: Short training with Roost Monitoring Coordinator

Description: These huge roosts provide safety in numbers, but also pose risks for the birds: collisions with vehicles, buildings, and each other can cause injuries and sometimes death. Volunteers are needed to check the roost site every morning to remove deceased birds and transport injured birds to a wildlife rescue facility.

Purple Martin Nest Monitoring

Schedule: March through July, dates and times are flexible

Location: Active Purple Martin colonies around Austin

Skills required: comfort with holding baby birds and eggs and addressing mite-infested nests

Prerequisites: 2-3 hours of training with experienced volunteer, attendance of Purple Martin Workshop in February

Description: Help our Purple Martin Committee maintain and monitor active Purple Martin colonies around Austin, which involves lowering gourds (Purple Martin houses), opening gourds and counting eggs/nestlings, and recording data to be input on a Google spreadsheet. Volunteers should be able to reach overhead to lower and raise gourd racks on a pulley and maintain balance on a short stool.

Hornsby Bend Bird Surveys

Schedule: Second Saturday of every month, 7 AM – 11:30 AM

Location: Hornsby Bend

Skills required: Intermediate Bird ID

Prerequisite: None

Description: Join us in documenting the birdlife at Hornsby Bend, Austin's premier birding site. These surveys are Christmas Bird Count-style, meaning that you'll identify the birds that you see and/or hear, as well as the number of individuals per species.

Christmas Bird Counts

Schedule: December 14 – January 5

Location: All around Texas

Skills required: Beginner Bird ID

Prerequisite: None

Description: The Christmas Bird Count is the longest running citizen science wildlife census in the world. Administered by the National Audubon Society, the data collected by CBC participants for over a century is among the largest resources informing ornithologists and conservation biologists about how the birds of the Americas are faring over time.

Whether you are a relatively new birder or an expert, you can participate in Christmas Bird Counts and contribute important data – all you have to do is join a CBC circle near you!

Participants follow specified routes through a designated 15-mile diameter circle, counting every bird they see or hear all day. See the full list of CBCs [here](#).

Blog Contributions

Schedule: Anytime

Location: Remote

Skills required: Excellent writing skills

Prerequisites: None

Description: Write for Travis Audubon's Murmurations Blog! Posts should be about 500 words or fewer, and should cover a topic related to birds or Texas wildlife conservation. Posts are subject to editing by staff.

Events/Outreach

Tabling

Schedule: Opportunities throughout the year, but most in April/May and October/November

Location: Varied

Skills required: None

Prerequisites: Events/Outreach Volunteer Module or Master Birder Program Graduation

Description: Represent Travis Audubon at community events throughout Austin. Examples of events include Nature Nights at the Wildflower Center, Roots & Wings Festival, and Families in Nature Day. Volunteers are expected to coordinate with Travis Audubon staff on pickup and dropoff times of tabling materials. Volunteers should enjoy communicating with people of all ages.

Purple Martin Parties

Schedule: Select Saturday and Sunday evenings in July and August

Location: Purple Martin Roost (location varies but most recently was La Frontera in Round Rock)

Skills required: None

Prerequisites: Events/Outreach Volunteer Module AND Purple Martin Party Training (virtual session that happens several weeks prior to the start of the parties)

Description: Teach the public about Purple Martins at our biggest outreach events of the year! Volunteers will mingle with the crowd and/or stand with our informational displays to answer questions about Purple Martins. Volunteers should enjoy communicating with people of all ages.

Victor Emanuel Conservation Award Celebration (VECAL)

Schedule: Event occurs one evening in October

Location: Austin Country Club

Skills required: None

Prerequisites: Events/Outreach Volunteer Module AND VECAL Training (one evening in-person training at our office in late Sep. or early Oct.)

Description: Lend a hand at our biggest fundraising event of the year! We need volunteers to assist with guest check-in, which includes swiping their credit card into our payment system and locating their name tag and program. VECAL Training will thoroughly review how to use payment system.

Blair Woods and Baker Nature Days

Schedule: Blair Woods Nature Day falls on a Saturday in October or November, Baker Nature Day falls on a Saturday in May or June

Location: Blair Woods Nature Preserve and Baker Sanctuary

Skills required: None

Prerequisites: Events/Outreach Volunteer Module

Description: Spread the joy of nature by facilitating our family nature days! These events, which are free and open to the public, include guided walks, craft tables, presentations, and more. Volunteers should enjoy communicating with people of all ages.

Sanctuary Work

Schedule: Every Wednesday morning and one Saturday morning per month at Blair Woods, one Saturday every other month at Baker Sanctuary, as needed on Saturday mornings at Chaetura Canyon

Location: Blair Woods Nature Preserve, Baker Sanctuary, and Chaetura Canyon

Skills required: None

Prerequisites: None

Description: Help us restore and maintain the habitat at our sanctuaries. Our restoration efforts make a tremendous difference in creating biodiverse habitat. Work includes trail maintenance, invasive species removal, and caring for plants. After a quick orientation, volunteers work autonomously. Please check our web calendar for upcoming events and register to let us know you'll be coming. Please note that this volunteer position isn't ideal for folks with movement and/or mobility issues.

Youth Programming

Young Birders Club

Schedule: Various Saturdays and/or Sunday mornings, usually once per month

Location: Various parks and greenspaces around Austin

Skills required: Intermediate Bird ID, experience working with kids

Prerequisites: Youth Programming Module and Leading Field Trips – Youth and Family Module

Description: Inspire the next generation of birders by leading or assisting with Young Birders Club field trips. YBC trips are approximately two hours long and registration is limited to 20. All kids are accompanied by a parent/guardian. Volunteers should be comfortable leading and/or assisting with bird walks, have good patience with kids, and have great enthusiasm for birds.

Youth Birding Camp

Schedule: Day-long event occurs on two weekdays in May and/or June

Location: Richard Moya Park

Skills required: Beginner Bird ID, experience working with kids

Prerequisites: Youth Programming Module AND virtual one-hour Youth Birding Camp training that occurs approx. one week before the start of camp

Description: Inspire a love of birds and nature to local kids by helping facilitate our Youth Birding Camp. This one-day (approx. 7 hour) camp reaches around 20 kids ages 8-12 and includes bird walks, games, and a live birds of prey presentation. Volunteers help facilitate learning and guide small groups of kids on bird walks. Volunteers should be comfortable leading and/or assisting with bird walks and have good patience with kids.

Youth Field Trips

Schedule: Varied

Location: Varied

Skills required: Experience working with kids

Prerequisites: Youth Programming Module

Description: Assist staff with youth field trips! Trips may occur at our sanctuaries or other locales around Austin, and may be in conjunction with our program partners, including Girl Scouts, Austin Sunshine Camps, Families in Nature. Age ranges and topics vary depending on trip. Volunteers should be comfortable leading and/or assisting with guided walks and have good patience with kids.

Committees

Travis Audubon has various committees that keep our important work moving forward. While some committee appointments are by invitation only, the following committees are accepting new members:

Advocacy: The committee strives to improve our Central Texas environment to ensure bird survival, which is now in serious decline. Members have a variety of issues they pursue individually or with the support of other members. Initiatives the committee works on include Lights Out Texas, local bird-friendly building code, and other legislation and litigation impacting birds. Some members draft entries on the Murmurations Blog related to conserving birds and their habitat. There's no limit to what advocates can do! All that is needed is a passion for the effort.

Education: The Education Committee plans and evaluates our adult classes program. Meetings occur once every other month over Zoom. Good candidates for Education Committee membership are educators (formal or informal), are passionate for birds and conservation education, and/or have extensive experience taking TAS classes.

Field Trip: The Field Trip Committee (FTC) is made up of TAS members who are passionate about the diversity of nature and believe that getting out and birding with others is the best way to "inspire conservation through birding." We offer birding walks of varying lengths, locations, and level of experience throughout the year. The FTC welcomes new committee members that would like to lead or co-lead walks (or work towards learning how to lead). You do not have to have prior experience leading to join the committee-- the main qualification is enthusiasm!

IDEA (Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access): The IDEA Committee works on initiatives that aim to make birding more accessible to people of all backgrounds and abilities.

Purple Martin: The goals of the Purple Martin Committee are two-fold: developing, educating and supporting Purple Martin landlords or landlord teams to provide the best situations for nesting success in this species that is totally dependent on human-provided housing; and monitoring and highlighting the migratory Purple Martin roost in the Austin metroplex area. No previous knowledge of Purple Martins is necessary. The required physical abilities vary depending on the volunteer duties that one participates in. Knowledge and skills of nest management or roost monitoring will be taught. All that is really required to be a contributing member of the committee is to be excited about making a difference for Purple Martins!

Youth Activities: The Youth Activities Committee plans and evaluates our youth programming, including our Youth Birding Camp and our Young Birders Club. Good candidates for Youth Activities Committee membership are youth educators (formal or informal) or have experience working with kids and enjoy nature and the outdoors.