

Golden Gate Audubon Society

Tips for Getting Birdathon Sponsors

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 preschool....
2. **Cast a wide net.** Not everyone will give. But the more people you ask, the more "yesses" you'll get.
3. **Think of people whose causes you've supported.** Did you sponsor them in a breast cancer 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!** Use the "share" buttons on your Personal Birdathon Page to contact people by Facebook, email etc. Write them an individual note or email. 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 Golden Gate Audubon is important to you. Did you fall in love with the Burrowing Owls at the Berkeley Marina, thanks to a GGAS docent? Do you want your grandchildren to be able to see egrets and warblers when they grow up? Etc.
7. **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 forgotten. Third time's a charm!
8. **TALK ABOUT Birdathon.** During your coffee break at work, or in the locker room at the health club, or on your Facebook page, or over lunch with a friend. Tell people how much you're looking forward to the cool Birdathon Field Trip you're going on. Or tell them how nervous you are about trying to raise \$500!
9. **Be open and serious.** If you let people know you have this ambitious \$ 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?

10. 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 Golden Gate Audubon. Tell the world. Who knows... you might inspire them not just to donate to Birdathon, but to try birding or come on a GGAS field trip themselves.

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 a host of dedicated volunteers, GGA leads field trips, offers adult birding classes and monthly programs, provides environmental education classes and trips for underserved students in Oakland, Richmond, and San Francisco, and tackles major conservation projects, such as reducing bird kills by wind turbines at Altamont Pass, rebuilding wetlands at Pier 94 in San Francisco, and creating a wildlife refuge on the former Alameda Naval Base.
- Golden Gate Audubon has been protecting birds, preserving natural habitats and open space, and educating people of all ages about birds and other wildlife for nearly 100 years. It is the oldest continuously functioning wildlife organization in California.
- Climate change and ongoing loss of habitat are taking a toll on birds everywhere, no less in the Bay Area. We need Golden Gate Audubon 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 Golden Gate Audubon. The money stays right here in the Bay Area 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.