



September 30, 2011

Director of Education

Connecticut Audubon Society
Fairfield, Connecticut

The Connecticut Audubon Society (CAS), one of the nation's and the state's oldest conservation organizations, seeks an individual to serve as Director of Education who can demonstrate experience and passion for science-based non-formal education and proven success in developing school partnerships.

The Connecticut Audubon Society and Education

Founded in 1898 by Mabel Osgood Wright, a pioneer in the American conservation movement, Connecticut Audubon Society's mission, since its beginning, has been to apply science-based education and advocacy to the conservation of Connecticut birds and their habitats. Today the Connecticut Audubon Society with its nature centers and nineteen sanctuaries reaches more children and partners with more schools than perhaps any other environmental nonprofit in Connecticut. At the same time CAS provides teachers, legislators, travelers, and lifelong learners with interactive science and travel programs that use birds and their habitats as the foundation for learning about conservation for Connecticut and beyond.

CAS's nature centers at Fairfield, Glastonbury, Milford Point, and Pomfret provide a variety of summer and vacation camps for children; one-day, multi-week, or semester-long programs for schools or school districts; and professional development for teachers and other educators. In addition to adult citizen scientist programs at the centers, CAS's Eco Travel group serves adults interested in learning about conservation issues through excursions across Connecticut and the world. Together, the efforts of CAS's nature centers, teacher naturalists, and conservation science professionals contribute to the advancement of nature-based education for Connecticut's citizens, young and old, and for the conservation of Connecticut, its birds, and their habitat.

Connecticut Audubon Society Education Program Goals

In a climate where public schools have fewer resources and children must demonstrate proficiency in meeting state and federally mandated standards for science education, CAS is seeking to become a valued partner and the premier

provider of nature-based science education programs in Connecticut. In order to do so, the Director of Education must:

- Maximize opportunities to develop resources for these programs and Connecticut Audubon Society as a whole through effective, revenue-generating strategies for partnering with schools; fee-for-service agreements; private philanthropy; and innovative use of technology.
- Review the current CAS educational offerings now developed and led by the nature centers independently.
- Identify opportunities to share best practices, create efficiencies, and unify programs wherever possible.
- Advance the CAS educational offerings into a unified yet flexible curriculum that supports a lifelong learning continuum, suitable for all ages.
- Develop and articulate a vision for the CAS education program that responds to the needs of educators, communities, families, and funders, while incorporating measurable objectives that allow for course correction and evolving trends.

Director of Education Position

[The Director of Education position will offer engaging and challenging opportunities](#) for a formal educator eager for the challenge of contributing to a statewide program; an informal educator ready to apply entrepreneurial energy to growing an initiative; a business development professional with proven success with schools; or an entrepreneurial nonprofit staff person whose passion is environmental education. The Director of Education will assume the following short and long-term responsibilities:

Short term:

Partner with schools and school systems to provide the programs and support school systems need so that the [schools](#) will invest either system or philanthropic funds in CAS programs. In order to do so, CAS anticipates the successful candidate must (a) understand the current educational programs, (b) significantly expand the number of schools that subscribe to CAS offerings, and (c) identify opportunities to improve the CAS offerings to better serve federal, state, or school system requirements.

Long-term:

Develop a consensus among CAS leadership, members, teacher naturalists, staff, and other stakeholders around a long-term vision for CAS educational programming [that provides](#) a roadmap for CAS to become the state leader in conservation science education [and](#) the critical partner of the State Department of Education, [resulting in](#) the development of a CAS program for lifelong learning.

Additional responsibilities will include the following:

- Partnering with CAS development staff to develop long-term resources for funding the educational program and CAS as a whole. Seeking major gifts and grants from public and private sources to support the work, and identifying opportunities to maximize fee-for-service programs and launch innovative new resource approaches.
- Ensuring that CAS education programs and practices are communicated and shared with staff, partners, the general public and other stakeholders to build commitment for conservation science education. Working with community officials, volunteers, and the media to interpret and promote CAS programs, policies, and actions.
- Providing advice, assistance and training to CAS educators in areas of program development, content and instruction that insures best practices are delivered throughout the entire organization and to meet customer needs.
- Working closely with the Senior Director of Science and Conservation and the Conservation Biologist to incorporate the organization's conservation initiatives into Education programs.
- Providing staff support for the Board's Education Committee and other CAS committees as requested by the President.
- [Planning and executing a roadmap for the use of education technology to increase the effectiveness of CAS education programs.](#)

Qualifications and Qualities

CAS programs welcome children and adults, from a child exploring his or her first camp experience to an adult taking up birding in retirement. The ability to enjoy, collaborate with, and learn from a variety of individuals is essential for this position.

Ideally candidates will demonstrate most, if not all, of the qualities and qualifications below.

- Proven success in establishing partnerships with schools and school districts that result in direct revenue or philanthropic support for a business, initiative, or program.

- Three or more years as an informal educator, preferably in a nature center or outdoors setting.
- A B.S. or B.A. in a relevant discipline, with a background in education preferred.
- A working knowledge of current trends in educational theory and practice, curriculum development, and digital content [and delivery](#) resources.
- Familiarity with, preferably a facility with, Connecticut as well as national standards for public education, particularly those addressed to science or nature.
- Flexibility and a willingness to learn from CAS's expert teacher naturalists, classroom teacher partners, board members, and others, while developing consensus around an organization-wide approach to education.
- Oral and written communication skills that attract both the public's enthusiasm and interest in CAS's work, as well as the community of stakeholders with whom CAS seeks to partner.
- Entrepreneurial energy and creativity to continually seek new opportunities for CAS while evaluating and either refining or jettisoning approaches that do not succeed.
- Ability and willingness to travel frequently across Connecticut to CAS nature centers, sanctuaries, and the offices and schools of current and potential CAS partners, sometimes including hiking trails or other uneven terrain. Carrying materials such as a laptop, projector, or other heavy boxes of educational materials. Working a schedule that includes some weekends and evenings.

Salary and Benefits

CAS offers a competitive salary; an extensive benefits plan, and a rewarding work environment with access to some of the most beautiful places in Connecticut.

To Apply

Send your resume titled your last name resume (e.g. SMITH J RESUME) and a detailed cover letter titled your last name cover (e.g. SMITH J COVER) to resumes@ctaudubon.org. While applications will be accepted until the position is filled, applications received by October 21 will receive first priority. For more information, contact search consultant Carolyn O'Brien, Carolyn.G.O'Brien@gmail.com. No phone calls please.