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Maine's Project Puffin Part of National Fundraising Campaign

"Pennies for the Planet" Campaign Taps Youth to Make a Big Conservation Difference with Small Change

New York, NY, January 13, 2009 – Maine's puffin population and the scientists who study them will soon be receiving help from concerned young conservationists across the country, thanks to the National Audubon Society's *Pennies for the Planet* (www.penniesfortheplanet.org) education and action campaign.

Pennies for the Planet is a powerful tool for motivating young people to learn about and become engaged in protecting biodiversity. Protecting Puffins and helping to support the scientists who study these amazing seabirds is one of three conservation programs that will benefit from the *Pennies for the Planet* initiative. The other important programs to receive funding and enhanced awareness through *Pennies for the Planet* this year are the Sagebrush Ecosystem in Wyoming and the Four Holes Swamp in South Carolina. All three will receive equal funding from the monies that kids raise across the country.

Funding for Project Puffin and the Seabird Restoration Program will support the hard-working scientists and volunteers who live and work on Eastern Egg Rock and two other islands each summer to protect and study the birds. What's more, scientists from around the world will now have the opportunity to visit the islands and learn from Dr. Stephen Kress's efforts – taking what they learn with them to protect seabirds worldwide.

"We need today's communities to help nurture tomorrow's environmental leaders, so it is vital that we help connect young people and families with the environment and provide ideas about how they can help protect it," said Audubon President John Flicker. "*Pennies for the Planet* links environmental education with environmental action, giving people everywhere the chance to discover what it means to give back and to care for wild places in need of conservation attention."

This year's *Pennies for the Planet* campaign is made possible by support from *TogetherGreen*, an Audubon initiative – in alliance with Toyota - created to promote conservation action and support current and future environmental leaders. Over the last decade, in conjunction with several other environmental organizations, *Pennies for the Planet* has helped tens of thousands of young people nationwide raise thousands of dollars to support species and habitat conservation and reduce the threat from global warming.

Pennies for the Planet aims to reach more than 600,000 young people and their families through a partnership with Weekly Reader and distribution through Audubon Adventures. Young people will be encouraged to take part in local activities to help the environment.

Materials including a full color poster and educator's guide, a newsletter for kids, and a participation form with incentives and awards are available for download from www.penniesfortheplanet.org for classroom or at-home use.

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About *TogetherGreen*

Audubon and Toyota launched the five-year *TogetherGreen* initiative in 2008 to fund conservation projects, train environmental leaders, and offer volunteer and individual action opportunities that significantly benefit the environment. To date, *TogetherGreen* volunteers in 40 communities have donated more than 20,000 volunteer hours to community conservation efforts. Funding totaling \$1.4 million was awarded for the first year of innovative conservation projects nationwide. Forty of the nation's most promising conservationists will advance their environmental vision and conservation leadership skills as recipients of the first *TogetherGreen* Fellowships. While <http://www.TogetherGreen.org> helps users take individual conservation action and share and celebrate success stories. The *TogetherGreen* initiative and grants programs are funded by a \$20 million Toyota gift to Audubon, the largest in the conservation group's long history.

About Audubon

Now in its second century, Audubon connects people with birds, nature and the environment that supports us all. Our national network of community-based nature centers, chapters, scientific, education, and advocacy programs engages millions of people from all walks of life in conservation action to protect and restore the natural world. Visit Audubon online at <http://www.audubon.org>

About Toyota

Toyota (NYSE: TM) established operations in the United States in 1957 and currently operates 10 manufacturing plants, with another under construction in Mississippi. Toyota is committed to being a good corporate citizen in the communities where it does business and believes in supporting programs with long-term sustainable results. Through its corporate initiatives, manufacturing operations and philanthropy, Toyota supports numerous organizations across the country, focusing on education, the environment and safety. In 2007, Toyota contributed more than \$57 million to philanthropic programs in the U.S. For more information on Toyota's commitment to improving communities nationwide, visit <http://www.toyota.com/community>