



Conservation Leader

Name:

Patricia Salas Pineda

Habitat: New York City

Achievements: Group Vice President, National Philanthropy and the Toyota USA Foundation, Toyota Motor North America, Inc. Driving force behind TogetherGreen.

Conservation Outlook:

“When we were looking for a partner with which to launch a signature environmental initiative, we knew Audubon would be a great fit because of their vast network around the country and their history of success connecting conservation to people of all backgrounds. We’re pleased to have found an organization that shares our mission to spread conservation efforts all across the U.S., and we’re very proud of the outstanding results our partnership with Audubon has brought about over the past four years.”

TogetherGreen

TOYOTA AND AUDUBON: BUILDING A FORCE FOR CONSERVATION

What do a car company and a conservation organization have in common? Plenty. Innovation. Commitment to community and reaching under-represented audiences. Leadership. And a focus on meeting the needs of the present while investing in the future.

When Audubon and Toyota joined forces in TogetherGreen, we set out to create a conservation program that modeled those qualities. The result is a nationwide initiative that has become a force for conservation, with leaders and projects in more than 200 cities and in all 50 states.

TogetherGreen empowers people across the country to take action in their homes, communities, and beyond to improve the health of our planet. Innovation Grants, Conservation Fellowships, Volunteer Days, and Pennies for the Planet programs all support community-based conservation, foster environmental leaders, and engage more people in volunteerism. TogetherGreen has trained more than 400 conservation leaders who, in turn, have mobilized more than 240,000 people to reduce energy use, protect wildlife habitat, and improve water quality in their communities.

TOGETHERGREEN ACHIEVEMENTS

9 MILLION Pennies collected by Pennies for the Planet

5 MILLION Dollars saved through volunteer labor and support

2 MILLION Pounds of recyclables collected

115,000 Native trees and other plants planted

CONNECT: Fellow Dr. Robin Hadlock Seeley is preserving intertidal habitat in Maine by protecting rockweed beds from industrial-scale removal. The program benefits birds, fish, lobsters, and more. Learn more at www.rockweedcoalition.org.



CONNECT: Thanks to a Toyota-funded Innovation Grant, nearly 30 “Bird Cities” in Wisconsin are improving their local habitat for birds and people alike. Learn more at www.birdcitywisconsin.org.

Field Notes

Name: Diane Wood,
President, National
Environment Education
Foundation

Range: National

“We were thrilled to collaborate again with Audubon to connect the TogetherGreen Volunteer Days in September with National Public Lands Day. It was a win-win for both of our organizations—and for all the volunteers who took part.”



TUCSON'S EDIBLE LANDSCAPES

Species: Heirloom fruit trees, including pomegranate, peach, apricot, quince, fig, citrus, and olive; Sonoran Desert native species, such as mesquite, palo verde, agaves, and various cacti

Habitat: The Sonoran Desert, one of the most biodiverse desert ecosystems in the world

Our Work: A food crisis is reshaping society and the environment. Bringing back centuries-old agricultural traditions does more than preserve our history, identity, and sense of place; it also provides food, shade, and habitat for native species. With a TogetherGreen Fellowship, funded by Toyota, the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum's Jesús García (above) is teaching Arizonans how to grow and prepare native and heirloom foods, whetting their appetites to act—and eat—locally.

Conservation Impact: Jesús has increased community awareness of heirloom fruits and edible native landscapes in both their backyards and local farmers' markets.

Conservation Outlook: More Tucsonians are planting historic fruit trees in their backyards as a result of this project. Jesús acts as the key historic/cultural adviser, horticulturalist, and designer in the reconstruction of a historic orchard (Mission Gardens) in downtown Tucson. His work is in partnership with the City of Tucson, Pima County, and Friends of Tucson Birth Place, a local community organization.

A BOOST FOR CHIMNEY SWIFTS

Species: Chimney Swift

Habitat: Prairie-hardwood transition habitat or urban habitat

Our Work: The Chimney Swift population has declined by more than 50 percent in the past four decades. The birds need to be able to roost on vertical surfaces; historically, they roosted in hollow trees. As old-growth forests declined, the swifts roosted in chimneys instead. Now most chimneys have been capped or are constructed of metal, providing no grip points for the swifts. Audubon Minnesota is mobilizing volunteers to build Chimney Swift towers to help boost their populations.

Conservation Impact: With a TogetherGreen Innovation Grant from Toyota, Audubon Minnesota inspired a thousand people to protect rapidly declining Chimney Swift populations. Along with the Mille Lacs Band of the Ojibwe, a Hmong Eagle Scout troop (including member Jesse Yang, below, with his parents), and dozens of other groups, they erected more than 55 Chimney Swift towers around the Twin Cities and on native lands. The towers provide the swifts with a place to roost.

Conservation Outlook: With a second Innovation Grant for 2011–12, Audubon Minnesota and its partners will construct new demonstration sites (five Chimney Swift towers, six Nighthawk nesting platforms, and 10 Purple Martin complexes) throughout the Twin Cities to help their community better understand these important birds and their needs, and to foster appreciation and action on their behalf.



Field Notes

Name: Chris Canfield, Vice President, Gulf Coast Conservation/Mississippi Flyway, National Audubon Society

Range: Gulf Coast

“One of the most gratifying elements of the TogetherGreen program has been the way it has brought together Audubon’s professionals with eager conservationists from so many other organizations. I’ve seen first-hand the way those encounters have reenergized career conservationists and brought new approaches to conservation back to the workplace.”

Field Notes

Name: Drew Lanham,
Wildlife Biology Profes-
sor, Clemson University
Range: South Carolina

“The TogetherGreen project reset my career trajectory. The Color of the Land project [capturing stories of how black landowners feel about their land and connecting them to conservation resources] essentially legitimized work that I had dreamed of undertaking for years but had no support, financially or philosophically, to pursue. Audubon and Toyota gave me the opportunity to do so. I have grown by leaps and bounds professionally. This has been a life-changing experience and without a doubt rejuvenated my career.”

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PENNIES FOR THE PLANET

Species: Sandhill Cranes, Whooping Cranes, Least Terns, Piping Plovers, Black Skimmers, otters, beavers, turtles, and Monarch butterflies

Habitat: Nebraska’s Platte River; riverside forest and mesquite woodland in Arizona; and Mississippi’s Gulf Coast

Our Work: By teaching young people about threatened ecosystems and wildlife, TogetherGreen’s Pennies for the Planet program connects them and their families to the environment and how they can help protect it.

Conservation Impact: Nine million pennies from kids across the country are helping support an array of Audubon projects. Funds in the past year helped clear and maintain five miles of Platte River channels to benefit Sandhill Cranes and Whooping Cranes; created a winter safe haven for Monarch butterflies at the Rio Salado Restoration Habitat Area; and paid for educational kiosks about beach-nesting birds affected by the Gulf Oil spill. Hermitage School in Pennsylvania received an Audubon “BioBash” party in recognition of raising the most funds in 2011.

Conservation Outlook: Pennies for the Planet will continue to support a variety of critical Audubon conservation projects.

THE NETWORK: *With support from TogetherGreen, Audubon New York, the Department of Transportation, 14 Chapters, and two Centers led a conservation effort for American Kestrels, installing 150 nesting boxes in the state in two years.*