



Schoolyard Habitat Summit 2018: *Breaking Down Barriers*  
**Workshop Session Details**

**8:30-9:00am- Registration and Networking**

**9:00am- Welcome**

**9:15- 10:15am- Keynote address by CJ Goulding, *Manager of Community Leadership Development for the Children and Nature Network***

**10:15-10:30am- Break**

**10:30am-12pm- Ecology Workshops** (Introduction for ALL participants; then choose from concurrent sessions)

**Introduction: Overview of Creating Bird-friendly Communities**

*Lead by Katie Blake, Bird-friendly Communities Manager, Audubon Connecticut*

Schoolyards have an incredible opportunity to help birds and other wildlife. Katie will introduce the “birds-eye-view” of why schoolyard habitats are so valuable and needed and point to simple ways of how you can get started.

***Session 1: A Safe Haven for Pollinators: Creating a Schoolyard Oasis***

*Lead by Jim Sirch, Education Coordinator at the Yale Peabody Museum*

Pollinators are in trouble. You can help. Create and improve habitat in your schoolyard for birds, bees and butterflies. This workshop will provide information and resources for both the beginner and experienced wildlife gardener alike. Even if don't have a large area to work with, you can plant it and the pollinators will come.

***Session 2: Pulling a Rabbit out of Your Habitat***

*Lead by Rick Potvin, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Refuge Manager for the Stewart B. McKinney Wildlife Refuge.*

Did you ever think a rabbit would be nominated to be placed on the federal endangered species list? Don't rabbits...well... breed like rabbits? The New England Cottontail, like many species, has adapted to take advantage of specific habitat types. In the case of this rabbit, their preferred habitat is early successional forest. As both the quality and amount of this successional habitat has increased and decreased over the years, so has the New England Cottontail population fluctuated. In this talk we will look at the history of early successional habitat, its current state, and how this affects wildlife species

***Session 3: Investigating and improving the diversity of birds in your schoolyard***

*Lead by Ken Elkins, Education Programs Manager for Audubon Center Bent of the River*

There are many techniques for investigating the diversity of birds without having to identify them by name. We'll use different observation skills, find evidence of food



chains in the garden areas, and use engineering skills to plan how to improve your habitat area for birds throughout the year.

**12:00-1:30pm- Lunch, networking, and time to explore**

**1:30-2:45pm- Education Workshops (choose from concurrent sessions)**

***Session 1: For the Birds! Environmental Education Program***

*Lead by Richard Santangelo, Program Manager for Audubon New York's For the Birds! Program*

Audubon New York's *For the Birds!* (FTB!) is a place-based environmental education program that promotes awareness and appreciation of nature through the study of birds. The mission of *For the Birds!* is to get students and educators excited about local birds and the natural world around them. This workshop will include an overview of Audubon New York's *For the Birds!* program and describe some of the successes and challenges of delivering a multi-session program in NYC's public schools. During the second half of the workshops we will demonstrate a hands-on activity designed to be taught in an outdoor setting.

***Session 2: Invasives in the Schoolyard***

*Lead by Suzannah Holsenbeck, Kendra Dawsey & Melissa Gibbons, Educators at Common Ground's CT Schoolyards Program*

You will roll up your sleeves and become students in the schoolyard, experiencing a hands-on lesson easily implemented in your own schoolyard and focused on finding and removing invasive plants. In addition to the lesson, you will learn to identify the invasive species most common to this region and discuss removal techniques so that you may best steward your schoolyard.

***Session 3: Breaking Down Barriers from the Schoolyard to the Sound***

*Lead by Jillian Bell, Schoolyard Habitat Coordinator for Audubon Connecticut and Francesca Williams, Curriculum and Evaluation Consultant for Audubon Connecticut's Schoolyard Habitat Program*

In this workshop, you will be immersed in engaging, phenomena-based activities from Audubon's newly designed and fully NGSS-aligned unit, *Designing a Healthy Schoolyard Habitat*. These activities will help you break down several barriers, including transitioning to the new science standards and teaching outside with limited ecological knowledge, among others. We will also help you and your students obtain a big picture of outdoor learning, as we demonstrate how to make a direct connection between a healthy schoolyard and a healthy Long Island Sound.



**2:50- 3:50pm- Engagement Workshops** (choose from concurrent sessions)

***Session 1: Long Island Sound: The Estuary in Your Backyard***

*Lead by Judy Preston, Outreach Program Coordinator for the Long Island Sound Study*

If you don't live on the coast, Long Island Sound (LIS) may not be on your radar screen. But if you live in the LIS watershed (and if you live in CT, you live in the watershed), you share a connection to this Estuary of National Significance. That stream in your backyard, or the one you pass on your way to work, is an important artery where nutrients and minerals, invertebrates, fish, even birds are connected to the tides and resources of the Sound. What you do in your backyard, schoolyard, and community matters! We will look at sustainable landscaping, with the Sound in mind.

***Session 2: Leading Field Trips in your Schoolyard***

*Lead by Suzannah Holsenbeck, Kendra Dawsey & Melissa Gibbons, Educators at Common Ground's CT Schoolyards Program*

Did you know a field trip could be as close as your schoolyard? In this session, we will explore ways to engage in onsite "field trips" at your school. We will go outside to experience some of the modified trips you can implement to increase student engagement and improve access for every child to learn outdoors.

***Session 3: Natural Leaders Network: The Power of Narrative***

*Lead by CJ Goulding, Manager of Community Leadership Development for the Children and Nature Network*

In a preview of the Natural Leaders curriculum, and using organizing principles of Marshall Ganz, participants will learn more about the power of narrative and personal story, while practicing and refining their own. Participants in this session should come prepared to reflect, share, and listen. They will hear examples of powerful narratives from the Natural Leaders Network, gain resources and learn how to utilize their story/narrative to develop a greater understanding of self, develop community, solidarity, and call others to action.

**3:50-4:00pm- Good byes & hand in evaluations**

**4:15pm- Meet for shuttle to train**

