



Job Title: Executive Director
Reports to: Board of Directors
Hours: Full-time
Location: Springfield, Illinois

NOW HIRING Executive Director

About Illinois Audubon Society

The mission of the Illinois Audubon Society is to promote the perpetuation and appreciation of native flora and fauna of Illinois and the habitats that support them. An independent nonprofit organization founded in 1897 – predating the National Audubon Society– the Society is Illinois' oldest private conservation organization with 2,000 members, 17 chapters, 19 affiliate groups, 3100 acres of properties managed with the help of volunteer stewards, and a Board of Directors composed of up to 14 at-large members and a representative from each chapter.

VISION: In 2019, the Society adopted a 2020-2024 strategic plan with goals ranging from additional land protection and improved sanctuary management to increased chapter support and attraction of new supporters who will become strong advocates for conservation. At the time, the Society operated on an annual budget of just under \$707,000 and had less than \$15 million in financial assets (including \$4.8 million in investments and \$9.1 million in property and equipment). In June 2021, the Society received a \$32 million bequest representing the largest single gift in the organization's history. Today, the Society has financial assets of \$47 million and an opportunity to significantly advance the Society's mission and the objectives of its current strategic plan.

ADVOCACY: For the first 75 years of its history, the Society's involvement in saving wildlife and habitat was purely as an "advocate for wildlife," sponsoring or supporting legislation to protect birds, acting to educate and change public attitudes about wildlife and the natural environment, helping partner organizations raise money for projects and campaigning to enlarge state parks and nature preserves. The Society remains involved in advocacy, primarily through the Executive Director's participation in various governmental and environmental groups, but the primary focus of the organization in recent years has been conducting land trust activities.

LAND TRUST/SANCTUARIES: In the 1970s, the Society was given several gifts of land and became an active steward of its own sanctuaries. Today, the Society owns and manages 3,100 acres throughout the state. The Society also serves a vital role in preserving Illinois open space by assisting State, Federal, and Municipal agencies with land acquisition. To date, Society has contributed to protecting 5,862 acres with a total investment exceeding \$12.8 million.

About Illinois Audubon Society Cont.

OTHER ACTIVITIES: The Society publishes *Illinois Audubon* magazine on a quarterly basis. It also sponsors multiple field trips throughout the year and holds an annual statewide Spring Gathering that is typically hosted by individual chapters. In 2021 a variety of new projects were launched, including an online nature quiz publicized through email marketing and social media and a Chapter Big Day with teams that compete to find the most species in a single 24-hour period.

CHAPTERS AND AFFILIATES: The Society's 17 chapters operate independently with membership and other administrative support from staff. Chapter activities range from natural resource-based field trips, environmental education and conservation projects, to volunteering at nearby sanctuaries, where relevant, or at other organization's natural areas, The Society's 19 affiliates also operate independently.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: The Society's Bylaws mandate that the Board of Directors is responsible for the control and management of the organization and provides strategic direction. The Executive Director acts as the general agent to the Board of Directors. In addition to the Executive Director, the Society currently has two full-time staff – an Assistant to the Executive Director, a Land Steward and a part-time Accounts Manager. The Society also has a Magazine Editor on contract. The IAS staff is expected to grow in the near future.

Position Summary

The Executive Director of the Illinois Audubon Society is responsible for the overall leadership, operation, planning, and management of all programs and activities of the organization. The successful candidate will have a substantial combination of education and experience, and demonstrable success in the day-to-day administration of the personnel, finances, and programmatic oversight of a non-profit organization. The Executive Director will work with the Board of Directors, engage current and potential stakeholders and partners, prepare an operating budget, oversee grants, coordinate land acquisition and stewardship activities, serve as a conservation advocate, oversee and contribute to the Illinois Audubon magazine and other communication materials.

Open communication must be a priority for the Executive Director. We want an articulate and seasoned leader, with a passion for conservation, the drive to rise to the challenge of making a significant difference at a time of environmental uncertainty; who inspires Illinois Audubon Society staff, its chapters, its members, and affiliates to strengthen their commitment to the organization and conservation; fosters partnerships with other like-purposed organizations and government entities; secure support from philanthropic organizations; and be a compelling advocate for protecting and preserving nature.

Qualifications

- Ideally 10+ years of significant experience in fields relevant to non-profit management, staff leadership, advocacy, and fundraising.
- An advanced degree in a field related to the organization's interests or a bachelor's degree with commensurate experience.
- Conservation experience with a passion for preserving and restoring nature.
- Substantial experience and success leading a not-for-profit operation including:
 - Building an engaged and effective Board of Directors.
 - Building a workplace and organizational culture that is fair and inclusive.
 - Managing, coaching, inspiring, and hiring staff.
 - Fiscal management of a large organization.
 - External relations..
 - Grant application and administration.
 - Conservation advocacy.
 - Private and public fundraising.
 - Strategic planning and plan administration.
 - Real estate transactions.

Qualifications Cont.

- A willingness to listen and learn.
- The ability to effectively articulate messages, information, and ideas to a diversity of people, leading to shared understanding.
- A commitment to promote Illinois Audubon Society and conservation.
- Strong relationships with funding bodies: individual and corporate donors and relationships with philanthropic organizations.
- Prioritize resources between new crucial projects with ongoing efforts.
- Desire to build a workplace and organizational culture that is fair and inclusive, with the expectation that Illinois Audubon will attract, develop, and retain diverse staff, Board members, volunteers, members, and donors.
- Outstanding written and oral communication skills
- Strong computer skills, with experience with MS Office Suite or similar platforms.
- A personality that is welcoming and facilitates engagement with Illinois Audubon Society.

Working Conditions

This is a full-time position. The salary range for this position is \$125,000+ with benefits, commensurate with experience. The position is based in Springfield, Illinois, and because Illinois Audubon Society chapters and sanctuaries are located throughout Illinois, some travel around the state will be required. Some weekend and evening work will be required. Illinois Audubon Society is an equal opportunity is available to all individuals regardless of race, sex, national origin, disability, age, religion or other non-merit factors.

How to Apply

Please send cover letter and resume to: directorsearch@illinoisaudubon.org. No phone calls please. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the successful candidate has been selected.