

American Birding Association

2008 Young Birder Scholarships

Application information



The American Birding Association provides scholarships to help young people who are interested in birds to attend summer camps, workshops, training programs, conventions and other bird-related activities. The funds for our scholarships come from three main sources:

- Donations from ABA members
- Pledges from members and others for ABA Tropicbirds events
- Annual donations from Bushnell, Brunton, Leica, Pentax, Swarovski

In 2007 we helped eleven young birders attend summer camps, and conferences. You'll find some details on the camps and events that we have supported and reports from young birders on their camp experiences on the ABA website at: <http://americanbirding.org/yb/schol/winners>

Applications for scholarships are open as of February 1, 2008.

You need to do several things to apply for a scholarship:

- Determine which camp or program you want to attend
- Create a budget and make sure you can afford to attend. Discuss this with your parents/guardian, and with your teachers
- Finally, you should contact the organizers of your event and register your intent to attend

ABA generally awards scholarships that are a portion (normally half) of the cost of the attendance fee of an event. In exceptional circumstances, ABA may award more if we see a case with special need. However, the best way to increase your chances of winning an ABA scholarship is to show your dedication to birds and creativity in thinking up ways that you can raise the matching half of your scholarship.

Some of the things young birders have done to earn matching funds:

- Approaching a local bird club or garden club for funds or sponsorship, perhaps in return for services to the club
- Offering to lead bird walks for a local birding group or retail store
- Making goods that you can sell (T-shirts, note cards, prints of your drawings, etc.)

We need a letter of recommendation from a teacher or bird club committee member that should cover what they know about your interest and commitment to birds and birding. The letter should be mailed directly to the American Birding Association, Education Department, from the writer and should be received by us no later than **April 30, 2008.**

We also require a short essay written by you, no longer than two sides of letter-size paper, telling us about the importance of birds in your life. Do you try to teach others about birds? Do you draw or photograph the birds you see? Do you do any survey or volunteer work? Is listing the most interesting thing to you? We want to know what it is about birds that really turns you on. Be sure to include information about why you want to attend your chosen event in your essay.

In summary, here's what you need to do:

- Research your event
- Put together your budget
- Pre-register for the event
- Find other ways you can raise money
- Contact a teacher or leader to write you a letter of recommendation
- Complete your application form
- Write your essay
- **Send your form, essay, and letter of recommendation to the ABA by April 30, 2008.**

Scholarships will be awarded after May 1, 2008.

*Send application materials to: American Birding Association, Youth Scholarships
4945 N. 30th Street, Suite #200, Colorado Springs, CO 80919*