Program Purpose
To train a corps of volunteers to support our mission, facilities as well as providing stewards for Central Connecticut

Meeting Time: Wednesdays, September 5 - October 24, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Meeting Place: 1361 Main Street, Glastonbury, CT 06033
Training Cost: $205 members, $260 nonmembers (includes membership)
Post Training Expectation: In exchange for a heavily discounted training cost, trained volunteers are expected to contribute a minimum of 40 volunteer hours to the organization.

What to bring to class: Bring your enthusiasm for the great outdoors, snacks, a bagged lunch, a water bottle and wear comfortable walking shoes and clothes appropriate for the day’s weather. Most days we will spend at least a portion of the class outside.

Course schedule

Wednesday, September 5: Orientation: History and Mission of the CT Audubon Society and the Center at Glastonbury
After we meet one another and an introduction to the organization - our mission and our facility - we will then head out on the trails of Earle Park.
Instructor: Michelle Eckman, CAS Director of Education

Wednesday, September 12: Geology
Geologist Anna Gault Galjan will provide a narrative of the past 440 millions of years of Connecticut geologic history. We will travel offsite to see some of our local geologic features.

Wednesday September 19: Climate Change; Nature Interpretation, Part 1
The first half of the program will focus on the science of climate change, as well as how to effectively communicate about climate change with the general public. This will flow right into how operating a center and conducting regular programming for the public requires an understanding as to how to best handle the public to assure a quality experience for all. Session will include volunteers working in teams in putting together their own nature program.
Instructor: Michelle Eckman
**Wednesday, September 26: Birds**

Our mission is all about conserving birds and their habitats. Short indoor presentation on bird identification, native birds and their habitats followed by bird walk in Earle Park. Will learn to identify common species based on field marks, songs, and habitat. Instructor: Lea Kessler Shaw, birder and CAS Program Coordinator

**Wednesday, October 3: Nature Interpretation, Part 2; Citizen Science**

During the first half of the program, volunteers will present abbreviated versions of their nature program and provide feedback to their peers. The second half of this program will train volunteers to collect local conservation data using various Citizen Science programs including BudBurst, eBird, Creek Critters, and more. Instructor: Michelle (again)

**Wednesday, October 10: Insect Basics**

The importance of insects in our ecosystems as well as their distinctive anatomical characteristics will be discussed. Discussion on insect behaviors and the different “techniques” which insects employ in order to survive as well as an overview of the characteristics of the major insect orders. Instructor: Grace Kenney, apiarist, classroom teacher and former CAS teacher-naturalist

**Wednesday, October 17: Herpetology: Amphibians and Reptiles**

Hank Gruner will join us to share his vast knowledge about herps, including evolutionary and physiological differences between amphibians and reptiles. Live specimens may be available for discussion followed by a field excursion to find as many species as possible.

**Wednesday, October 24: Plant I.D. Basics! And Graduation!**

In this class, you will work with our guest instructor, CAS Lead Educator Catie Resor, to learn how to identify local plants using plant keys. You’ll practice your identification skills out in Earle Park. Catie will also discuss various plant adaptations and ecosystem assemblages in this program.