



# Celebrating International Migratory Bird Day

*International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD), held annually on the second Saturday in May, is an invitation to celebrate and support migratory bird conservation.*

## **Why Is IMBD Celebrated?**

Public awareness and concern are crucial components of migratory bird conservation. Citizens who are enthusiastic about birds, informed about threats, and empowered to become involved in addressing those threats, can make a tremendous contribution to maintaining healthy bird populations. One of the most successful vehicles for public education on migratory birds is International Migratory Bird Day (IMBD).

Of course, IMBD celebrations are a perfect fit at places that exist to preserve and promote the natural world to students and visitors:

- Museums
- Schoolyards
- Zoos and aquaria
- Arboreta and botanical gardens
- Wild bird stores and shops

## **Where Is IMBD Celebrated?**

Agencies and organizations with direct contact with visitors take the lead in hosting IMBD celebrations. Most IMBD celebrations are held in places set aside for wildlife, such as parks, refuges, and other places where wild birds can be seen firsthand:

- National Wildlife Refuges
- National Forest Ranger Districts
- National Conservation Areas
- National Parks, Seashores, and Monuments
- Military bases and reservations
- Corps of Engineers lakes and projects
- State parks and wildlife management areas
- County and city parks and nature centers
- Audubon centers and sanctuaries
- Preserves of The Nature Conservancy and local land trusts



## **IMBD Information**

web - <http://birds.fws.gov/imbd>  
phone - 703/358-2318

## **IMBD Materials**

web - <http://www.BirdDay.org>  
phone - 1-866/334-3330

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**How Many People Celebrate IMBD?** An Events Registry exists to capture information on public IMBD celebrations. Past and future activities can be browsed by visiting <http://www.birdday.org> and navigating to Events & Festivals. This registry is voluntary, thus the true number of public events is unknown. However, based on personal correspondence, professional judgment and materials sales, public events number at least 500, and two to three hundred thousand people engage in IMBD activities or are reached through media.

## How is IMBD Celebrated?

Over its ten-plus years, IMBD has inspired celebrants to develop a wide variety of activities to raise appreciation and concern. These activities are generally created for the local public, especially families, but also target local birders and other advocates who can serve as citizen scientists, and local decision-makers who can be instrumental to site protection.

- Bird walks
- Bird Counts
- Talks and presentations
- Workshops on bird ID, photography, natural history
- Poster, poetry, photo contests
- Live musical and theatrical performances
- Arts and crafts
- Kids games
- Displays and booths
- Tastings of shade-coffee
- Fun runs and fund-raisers
- Cleanups and other habitat projects
- Sales of native plants or shade-coffee

IMBD is also an ideal date for dedicating a new sanctuary or visitor center, culminating a habitat restoration project, or announcing a new program, because it puts these events into the context of an international celebration.

Conservation-minded individuals and organizations also reach out with IMBD messages to audiences in their homes, classrooms, and neighborhoods, by:

- Creating radio and TV public service announcements
- Writing articles for newspapers and magazines
- Offering displays and exhibits in shopping malls and libraries
- Presenting talks and slide shows to municipal and citizen groups
- Underwriting special mailings to members
- Sharing their interests and knowledge with Scout groups, students, congregation members, friends and family.

IMBD belongs to all who celebrate it, from the Chamber of Commerce organizing a huge festival to the individuals that take their grandchildren out birding.

## Party Supplies

IIMBD comes with a suite of products developed for its celebration. The Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center produced the first IMBD materials in 1993; IMBD materials and coordination is now the responsibility of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The program has progressed to a point where an expanding catalog of products is offered each year. Celebrants can obtain promotional and educational products include posters and t-shirts (portraying artwork from a well-known wildlife artist), a press kit, conservation-related activity guides and booklets, music, banners, and more.

Each year, the IMBD program focuses on a particular conservation theme, and associated materials are designed not only to raise awareness about conservation issues, but to empower people to contribute to their resolutions.

Significantly, the materials and messages created for IMBD are useful year-round. And indeed, IMBD posters are distributed at bird walks and talks all summer long. IMBD-related educational materials, including the new Junior Birder packets have been integrated by scouting programs. Wild bird shops and garden centers rely on IMBD items to host special events or displays. Prompting annual festivals and activities will always be the core purpose of IMBD, but encouraging year-round awareness and education is the sought-after outcome.



The 2004 IMBD theme is Conserving Colonial Birds. Materials focus on colonial-nesting birds and the challenges they face from introduced species, human disturbance, and habitat loss. IMBD celebrants are urged to become involved in their conservation.