

## AUDUBON CONNECTICUT ANNOUNCES HONOREES FOR 2018 ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP AWARDS BENEFIT

**Greenwich, Conn.** – *Tuesday, January 30, 2018* – The date has been set, and plans are underway for Audubon Connecticut’s annual Environmental Leadership Awards Benefit, *Experience Nature!* This year’s event will take place Thursday, April 26, 2018, from 6:00 to 10:00 p.m. at The Belle Haven Club in Greenwich, Connecticut.

Audubon Connecticut is fortunate to be able to honor the following champions of conservation and the environment:

- **B. Holt Thrasher** – will receive Audubon Connecticut’s Environmental Leadership Award. Holt has been an active conservationist and nature enthusiast for more than 25 years. He is Chairman Emeritus of the National Audubon Society. In 2001, he was a founding member and Chair of the Board of Audubon Connecticut. He joined Audubon’s National Board five years later and was named Chair in 2008. His leadership played a critical role in advancing Audubon’s legislative, educational, and conservation operations; guiding it to re-establish its science-based mission to conserve birds and their habitats; and strengthening Audubon’s place as one of the nation’s foremost environmental organizations. He currently serves as Trustee and Treasurer of the National Marine Sanctuaries Foundation and is a Director of Mongabay, an environmental media organization.
- **Ted Gilman** – will receive the Katie O’Brien Lifetime Achievement Award. Ted is Senior Naturalist and Education Specialist at the Audubon Center in Greenwich, where he has inspired, educated, and mentored thousands of people over four decades. He first worked for Audubon at the Audubon Camp in Maine in 1974 and has returned nearly every summer since to share his expertise with teachers from across the country. Ted’s work at Audubon Greenwich has enabled him to share his vast knowledge of the natural world with people of all ages. He has received numerous awards for his outstanding work in the field of Environmental Education, including the 2014 Tamar Chotzen Educator of the Year Award from National Audubon Society.

This year’s honorees will join the incredible ranks of previous environmental leaders including former Administrator for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Gina McCarthy, the Gregory Family, former New York Governor George E. Pataki, former U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, Dan W. Lufkin, David Ogilvy, Jayni Chase, Eaddo Kiernan, Joni Kimberlin, Katie O’Brien, Donal O’Brien, JP Morgan Chase, and many more.

This benefit is held each spring to honor individuals who have demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to our environment. “It is a privilege for us to honor Holt Thrasher and Ted Gilman at our 2018 Environmental Leadership Awards Benefit. In their own way, each of them are conservation heroes, supporting the work we do at Audubon Connecticut to preserve the beauty of our local environment and encourage the next generation to get outdoors, to protect habitat for birds and other wildlife, and to inspire a conservation ethic for years to come,” stated Connan Ashforth, Audubon Connecticut Board Chair.

In tribute to the work of these honorees, proceeds from the Awards Benefit will support the four pillars of work at Audubon – nature education, science, on-the-ground conservation, and advocacy. Guests will experience the four pillars on display during the evening’s cocktail reception while taking in the spectacular sunset views of Captain Harbor. Once the dinner has begun, guests will enjoy an entertaining evening hosted by producer, director, and writer Rob Burnett, and will be treated to one-of-a-kind experiences, auctioned off by auctioneer extraordinaire, Lydia Fenet of Christie’s Auction House.

This year’s Co-Chairs are Eunice Burnett & Angela Piscitello. Committee Members include Board Chair Connan Ashforth, Melissa Gibbons, Morgan Gregory, Jeanne Mininall, Katie O’Brien, Caroline Paradiso, and Suni Unger.

Tickets on sale now. For more information, please visit [AudubonCT.org](http://AudubonCT.org) or contact Event Manager, Beth Bobek, 203-524-4889, [beth@eventsbybeth.com](mailto:beth@eventsbybeth.com).

***Audubon Connecticut**, the state office of the National Audubon Society with more than 9,000 members in the state, works to protect birds, other wildlife, and their habitats through education, research, conservation, and legislative advocacy for the benefit of humanity and the earth’s biological diversity. Through our network of nature centers, protected wildlife sanctuaries, and local, volunteer Chapters, we seek to connect people with nature and inspire the next generation of conservationists. Learn more at [AudubonCT.org](http://AudubonCT.org).*