DONOR ADVISED FUNDS (DAFs)

A DAF is a private fund created expressly for charitable giving. Establishing a DAF is like creating your own personal charitable foundation, without all the administrative work or annual payout requirements. It’s a simple process of depositing the amount you would like to donate into your DAF and then transferring those funds at any time to the nonprofit of your choice.

DAFs are ideal for anyone seeking an instant charitable deduction, and the convenience of making one gift that can benefit multiple charities. DAFs are the most rapidly growing form of philanthropy today.

Benefits for Donors

- **Flexible payouts.** You receive a charitable deduction when you donate to your DAF, but you can distribute funds to a charity any time you want.*

- **Your giving can grow for good causes.** DAF contributions can be invested in mutual funds or exchange-traded funds, as well as cash accounts.

- **Simple record keeping.** Your DAF manager handles the administration of your donations, including your receipts and paperwork.

How does a DAF work?

1. You deposit cash or other assets into your DAF account, which is managed by a sponsoring organization.

2. You receive a one-time charitable deduction when you make your deposit; money remains in the DAF until you decide to distribute it to a specific charity or charities.

3. When you’re ready to give to Audubon or another charity,* you simply alert your DAF manager, who will send the gift and handle your tax receipt.

Most DAFs are managed by local community foundations or large financial institutions, including Fidelity, Schwab, J.P. Morgan, and Vanguard. Community foundations sometimes limit DAF distributions to organizations within their service area.

To open a DAF, ask your financial advisor if this option is available. For assistance locating a DAF sponsor near you, contact Audubon’s Gift Planning specialists at 212-979-3033 or plannedgifts@audubon.org. We can recommend options based on your philanthropic goals.

*While DAFs offer flexibility regarding the timing of gifts, Audubon encourages donors to make annual distributions, honoring the spirit of DAFs that incentivizes philanthropy for charities that rely on annual support. Please contact us at 212-979-3033 or plannedgifts@audubon.org for more details.
Frequently Asked Questions:

Is there a minimum requirement for opening a DAF?
It varies depending on the DAF manager; many start at $5,000. Fees are typically less than one percent annually.

Can I access funds in my DAF account?
No. Once the assets are deposited, they must eventually go to a nonprofit.

Can I use DAF funds to purchase event tickets or memberships from charities?
No. All donations from a DAF must be considered 100 percent philanthropic, with no associated benefits to the donor.

Can my gifts go to any organization?
DAF distributions may only go to public charities with a 501(c)(3) designation, such as Audubon. You should ask your DAF manager if they have any other restrictions.

Why didn’t I get a receipt from the charity for my gift?
You receive a charitable deduction when you deposit funds into your DAF, and your account manager issues the official tax receipt. Audubon sends additional thanks for these gifts whenever possible.

How much of my gift is deductible?
DAF holders get the same federal income tax deduction as direct gifts to charities—up to 60 percent of adjusted gross income for cash contributions and up to 30 percent of adjusted gross income for appreciated securities.

How do I give to Audubon from my DAF?

Instruct your DAF manager to make a distribution to:
National Audubon Society—Tax ID 13-1624102
225 Varick St., 7th floor, New York, NY 10014

Ask your DAF manager to include your name with your gift. We will honor all requests for anonymity. Please let Audubon know when your gift is coming, so we can keep records accurately and in accordance with IRS requirements.

CONTACT

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Pacific Loon.
Photo: William Wingfield Jr./Audubon Photography Awards