



CASE STUDY

American Bird Conservancy's Save a Place for Birds



American Bird Conservancy grows GivingTuesday donors by 51% with Bonterra Donor Engagement's Giving Days solution (formerly GiveGab).

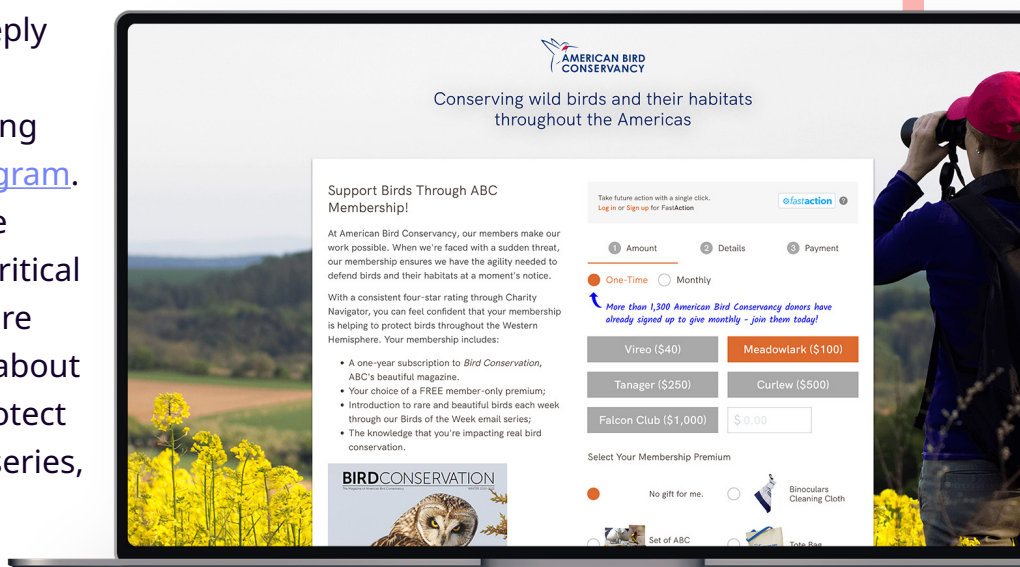
Alex Vanderweele Ortman, director of marketing and analytics, and Kelly Wood, membership director at American Bird Conservancy share how working with Bonterra Giving Days allowed them to take their GivingTuesday efforts beyond a single form with a comprehensive Giving Day campaign, resulting in a 20% increase in dollars raised, and 51% increase of donors from their 2020 campaign.



Background

[American Bird Conservancy](#) (ABC), founded in 1994, is a national organization whose mission is to conserve wild birds and their habitats throughout the Americas. Their strategic framework takes a comprehensive approach to conservation which includes capacity building, working with policymakers to protect habitats, and putting a halt to extinctions through leading advancements in science.

ABC's initiatives resonate deeply with many individuals who show their support by donating through its [membership program](#). These contributions allow the conservancy to continue its critical work and in turn, members are given opportunities to learn about the birds they are helping protect through ABC's weekly email series, magazine, and more.



To collect and manage incoming donations and memberships, The American Bird Conservancy utilizes Bonterra Donor Engagement's Digital (formerly Everyaction) CRM and digital marketing solution. With Bonterra Digital solutions, ABC can collect contributions directly on the site allowing members to easily give one-time or set up monthly gifts alongside messaging that clearly defines the impact of each donor. Since adopting the Bonterra Digital solution in January 2021, the conservancy has raised over \$24.6 million to help protect wild birds and their habitats.

With support from Bonterra Digital solutions, ABC started to engage its community of supporters more through digital fundraising and email marketing campaigns.

“ Over the past few years, we have really expanded our digital online fundraising efforts and through that, it's been very effective for the financial health of the organization. We've been trying to really grow our number of members and supporters and our general membership program.”

— Kelly Wood | Membership director at American Bird Conservancy





“ Our past few GivingTuesday campaigns were pretty significant fundraising events for the organization, and we began adopting best practices.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman |
Director of marketing and analytics
at American Bird Conservancy

Growing GivingTuesday efforts

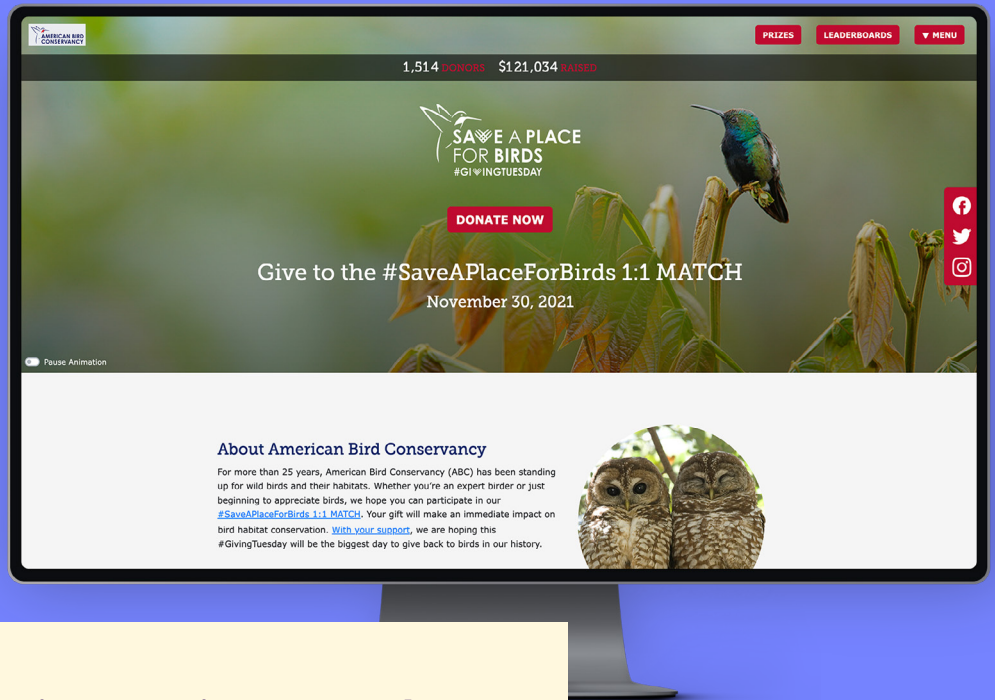
As part of its fundraising strategy, American Bird Conservancy launched an annual [GivingTuesday](#) campaign to raise awareness and support for its mission. By leveraging this globally recognized day of giving, ABC had the opportunity to reach new donors and showcase its efforts to a wider audience.

In previous GivingTuesday campaigns, large outreach efforts were centered around bringing donors and members to give through a single form on their site. During their 2020 GivingTuesday campaign, prior to hosting a formal Giving Day, the American

Bird Conservancy raised \$101,000 in support of its cause from 1,000 donors.

After seeing notable growth within its GivingTuesday campaigns, ABC was eager to accelerate this trajectory with a creative and engaging solution that amplified its mission.

By tapping into Bonterra’s expertise, American Bird Conservancy’s team found the tools needed to go beyond a single form by creating a comprehensive GivingTuesday campaign that would accelerate growth and drive engagement.



“ GivingTuesday is becoming more important than any other day for digital fundraising and I think we hadn’t been able to really meet that moment, until last year with Bonterra Giving Days.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman | Director of marketing and analytics at American Bird Conservancy

Save a Place for Birds

American Bird Conservancy signed on to host its inaugural Giving Day, Save A Place for Birds, with the Bonterra Giving Days solution for GivingTuesday 2021.

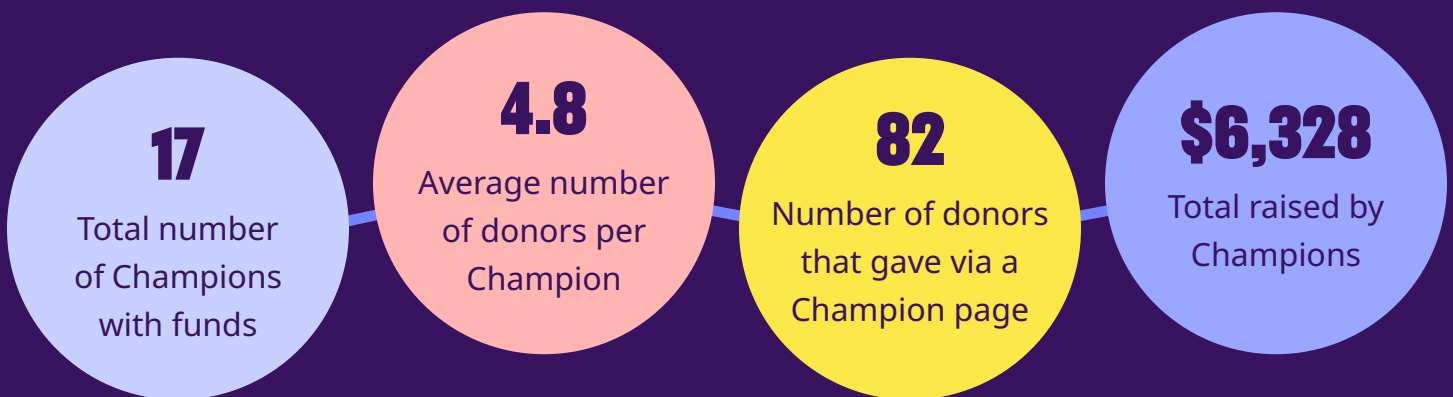
The team was excited to explore this new digital fundraising initiative, recognizing all the potential that came with running a robust campaign dedicated to their GivingTuesday efforts.

Alex and Kelly walked us through some components of their Giving Day that helped drive engagement, reach new members, and break fundraising records!

PEER-TO-PEER FUNDRAISING

Peer-to-Peer (P2P) fundraising was one of the key drivers for the launch of Save a Place for Birds, with Kelly sharing “We always wanted to implement P2P but never knew what the right tool was.” The ABC team understood that P2P was a powerful tool to not only reach new donors, but to create deeper relationships with their current members and supporters.

Impact of offering PayPal as a payment option during Save a Place for Birds



“ We have an existing ambassador’s volunteer network, but it is more high-level fundraising and high-level donors and volunteers. We wanted to see how our passionate online community of supporters might respond to being able to set up their own fundraising page.”

**— Alex Vanderweele Ortman |
Director of marketing and analytics at
American Bird Conservancy**

And they responded well! ABC’s Peer-to-Peer Fundraisers, called Champions for Birds, were encouraged to create personalized pages on the Save a Place for Birds site, allowing them to share their personal connection to ABC, add photos and videos, and collect donations for the Giving Day directly. In addition to their P2P page, Champions could also leverage their Champions for Birds Toolkit built into the Bonterra Giving Days solution. This toolkit provided them with helpful guides, templated messaging, and graphics that could be used in their outreach efforts.

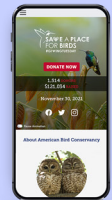
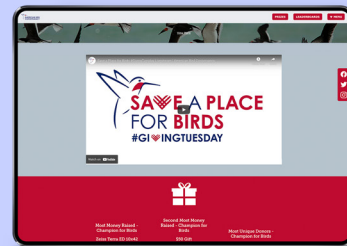
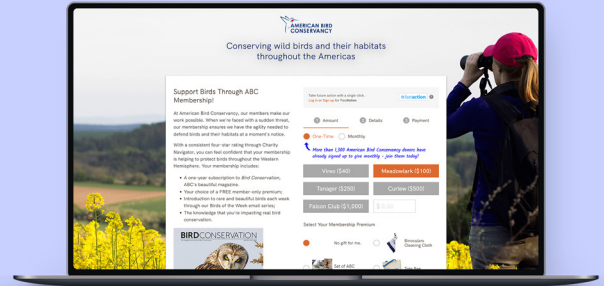
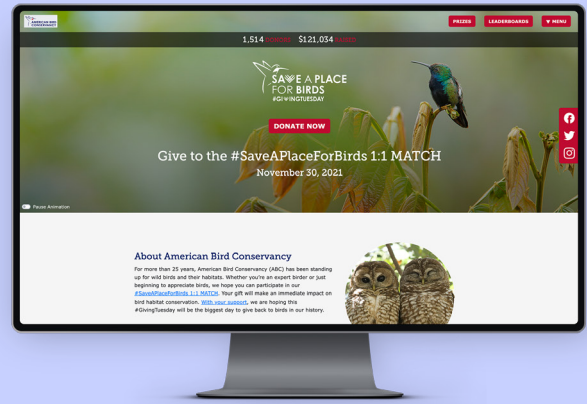
During Save a Place for Birds, 17 Champions raised a total of \$6,328 and brought in a total of 82 new donors on GivingTuesday. **With nearly 5 new donors per Champion, implementing P2P during their Giving Day allowed American Bird Conservancy to tap into their currently existing members to reach new supporters of their mission.**

MICROSITE

Hosting a Giving Day allowed American Bird Conservancy to create a dedicated microsite to drive donations during their GivingTuesday initiative. In previous years donors gave through a form housed on their website. While this tactic is very effective for year-round fundraising initiatives, ABC was excited to direct their efforts towards a dynamic site branded for their Save a Place for Birds campaign on GivingTuesday.

When donors entered the Giving Day site, they could immediately take action and see the impact of the event with a:

- **Stat ticker** updating in real time whenever a gift was made.
- **Clear call to action** to give.
- **Welcome section** with a message from Save the Birds.
- **Leaderboard** that tracked the performance of the Champions for Birds.
- **Links** to relevant information around the Giving Day, including FAQs and prizes.



“ We loved having a microsite, we were proud to have it and to have worked with Bonterra Giving Days on it.”

— Kelly Wood | Membership director at American Bird Conservancy



Having a microsite also allowed ABC to adopt several engagement opportunities that added an extra layer of excitement to their digital event!

American Bird Conservancy ran a **seven-hour livestream** program throughout the day in which industry experts spoke about conservation efforts, the passion and impact behind their work, and areas of need that gifts made through Save a Place for Birds support. This allowed site visitors to feel connected to the cause and understand the impact of their contributions.

Another way that ABC made their day more interactive for their donors was by creating a custom #SparkBird

“It really was this great interactive day for birds. With videos and webinars, our donors got an experience they never received from us before on a digital platform.”

— Kelly Wood | Membership director at American Bird Conservancy

“Leadership at ABC loved our Giving Day microsite. When leadership and the board of directors are really excited to see all this stuff, it really became a success story internally as well.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman | Director of marketing and analytics at American Bird Conservancy

Flocks leaderboard. Each time a donor made a gift on the platform, they were asked to select their favorite group of birds, ranging from a Charm of Hummingbirds to a Pandemonium of Parrots. The leaderboard then displayed the amount raised as it pertained to the group of birds that donor belonged to!

While Giving Days are digital events, it is important to find ways to keep your donors engaged and feel like they are part of the excitement! Through Bonterra Giving Days, ABC was able to ensure that donors had a reason to connect with Save a Place for Birds beyond making a gift.



PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

When joining Bonterra, the ABC team was set up with a dedicated Project Manager to support them through their GivingTuesday campaign on our platform. The Project Manager was available to help Kelly, Alex, and their team with goal setting, discuss best practices, and launch their Save a Place for Birds microsite.

Kelly echoed these sentiments by sharing,

“ Even with a small time window to pull off our GivingTuesday campaign, with support from our Project Manager, we were able to meet our goal and then some. The support GiveGab provided was excellent, very professional, and always available when we needed them. We definitely couldn't have done it without the project management support.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman |
Director of marketing and analytics at
American Bird Conservancy

“ It was really great working with GiveGab, I felt that everyone wanted us to have a successful GivingTuesday. That effort was definitely there, and the follow-up and follow-through are there. I have worked with project management teams where a reoccurring scheduled check-in was not available, so I know it may seem small, but those reoccurring check-ins on Zoom were really beneficial to me. We could just jump on a call for 15 minutes and talk it out, instead of sending tons of emails.”

— Kelly Wood | Membership director at American Bird Conservancy

In addition to reoccurring check-ins, the ABC team had a direct line to their Project Manager on the day of the event, and their donors and Champions were able to utilize GG Chat, GiveGab's automated help center and educational database, for live support.

PAYPAL

Having an option for donors to give through PayPal was essential for American Bird Conservancy, as this was the preferred method of giving for a majority of their current donor base.

American Bird Conservancy wanted to give familiarity to their donors who were already used to giving in this capacity, ensuring that they felt confident making their gift.

By offering flexible payment options including mobile pay, ACH transfers, and Venmo and PayPal, Bonterra Giving Days allows donors to give in the way that is most convenient and efficient for them, leaving them with a lasting positive impression of the Giving Day.

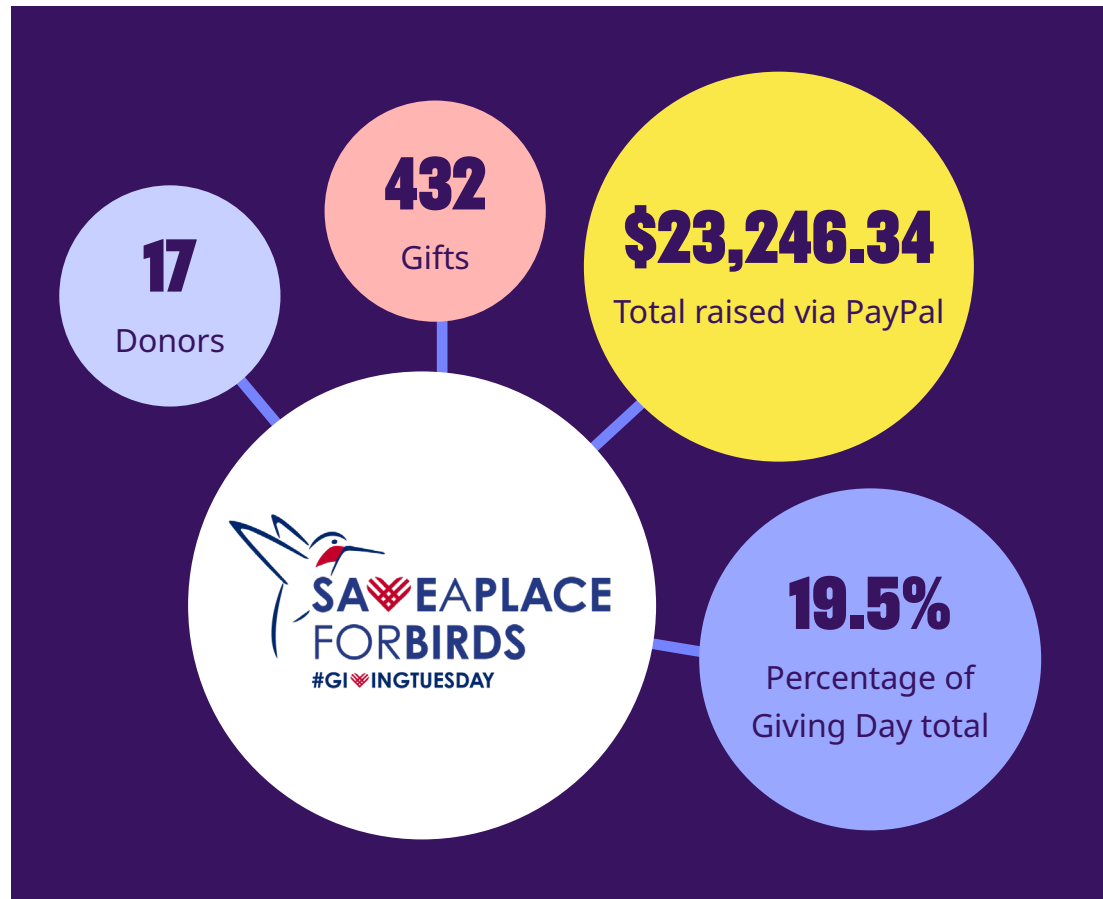
Gifts made through PayPal attributed to \$23,246.34 raised during Save a Place for Birds, 19.5% of the total brought in throughout the Giving Day.

“ Having a PayPal integration was a big pillar for us to be able to do this Giving Day with Bonterra. We have a very large number of donors who give through PayPal, approximately 60%.”

— Kelly Wood | Membership director at American Bird Conservancy



Impact of offering PayPal as a payment option during Save a Place for Birds

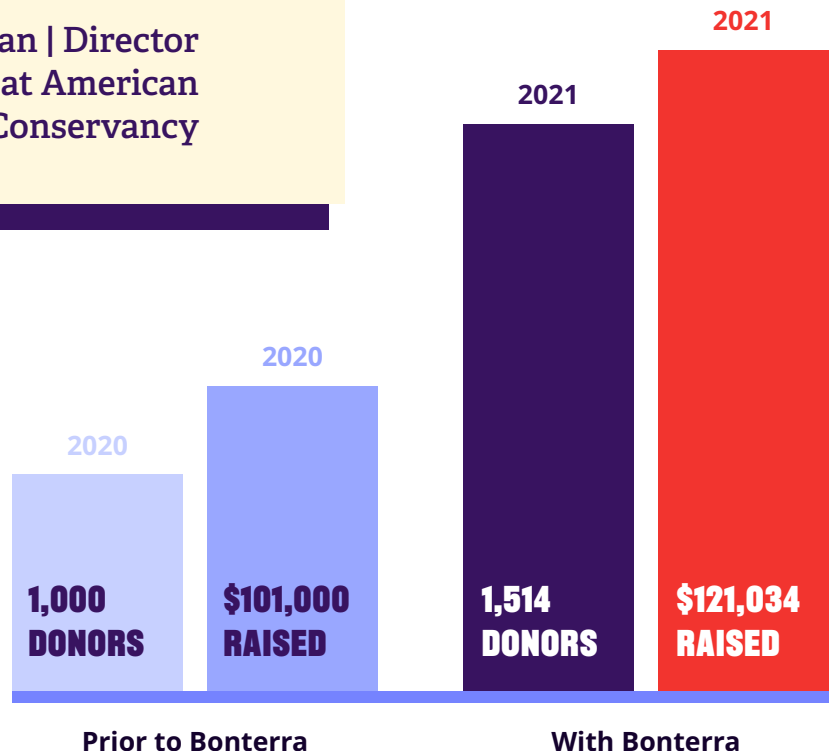


Save a Place for Birds

The Giving Day was successful in reaching both longtime supporters and new donors! In just 24 hours, Save a Place for Birds raised \$121,034 through the generosity of 1,514 donors. This was a 20% increase in dollars raised and a 51% increase in the number of donors compared to the results of their in-house 2020 GivingTuesday campaign.

“2021 was our most successful fundraising year by far, especially at the types of donor levels who give online. The messaging and marketing of Save a Place for Birds contributed to 1,000 new Members.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman | Director of marketing and analytics at American Bird Conservancy



The influx of new members to ABC is critical to their continued work in protecting wild birds and their habitats. Through integration between Bonterra Giving Days and Digital solutions, ABC can continue fostering relationships with these donors across channels and convert them into longtime supporters, based on the data that rolls up reliably and conveniently into their CRM.



When asked if the American Bird Conservancy's team had any final advice to similar-sized organizations considering hosting a Giving Day with the Bonterra Giving Days solution, Alex shared:

“ Take into consideration the time that it takes to run a campaign. Give yourself time to launch and manage an effective campaign and reach out to other fundraisers who have run Giving Days that can offer best practices.”

— Alex Vanderweele Ortman |
Director of marketing and analytics
at American Bird Conservancy

At Bonterra, we recommend [planning your Giving Day six to nine months in advance](#) to ensure you have time to set yourself and your fundraisers up for success. It is important to give yourself enough lead time to develop a marketing strategy that will bring new and returning supporters to your branded microsite.

We also agree with Alex that it is beneficial to reach out to fellow Giving Day leaders for advice and support. Through the Bonterra Giving Days' expansive [Giving Day Leaders Network](#), you'll be able to connect and learn from organizations like yours running these high-impact digital events!

Save a Place for Birds 2021 Results



1,514

Donors

4.8

Donors per P2P champion



\$121,034

Raised

\$23,246

Total raised via PayPal



\$77

Average online donation

86.7%

Fees covered by donors

