



VOLUME XLVI, ISSUE 1, ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

# Save the Date: Fifth Annual Atlanta Bird Fest April 18 to May 17, 2020



Golden-crowned Kinglet, by Dan Vickers.

Atlanta Bird Fest is back for its fifth anniversary! Each weekend between April 18 and May 17, 2020, join fellow nature and bird enthusiasts for exciting field trips, workshops, and other events to celebrate and enjoy Georgia's exciting migration period.

We are excited to welcome two special guests for Atlanta Bird Fest 2020. Ornithologist and author Scott Weidensaul will join us during our opening weekend on April 18 and 19. He will guest co-lead two field trips at local birding hotspots during the weekend and present the Opening Weekend keynote address on April 19 at the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center. Joining us for our Closing Celebration on May 17 at SweetWater Brewing will be the University of Vermont's Dr. Trish O'Kane, a former social justice investigative journalist and creator of the "Birding to Change the World" program. This program harnesses the power of passionate, knowledgeable, and energetic students to help solve community and global problems, all through the lens of birds. Look for more information soon on both of these keynote Atlanta Bird Fest events.

Other event highlights for Atlanta Bird Fest 2020 include past favorites such as a behind-the-scenes tour of Zoo Atlanta's bird collection, a guided tour of the avian-inspired artwork at the Michael C. Carlos Museum, nature photography workshops, and a Shorebird Weekend on the Georgia coast. We are also introducing new events, such as a guided trip to view rare shoals spider lilies at Flat Shoals Creek, the "3 billion" art show opening reception to draw attention to the precipitous decline in bird populations, and a watercolors course taught by our Atlanta Bird Fest 2020 featured artist.

This year's Atlanta Bird Fest artwork features the Barred Owl, one of the most prevalent owl species in Georgia. This year's artwork was designed by Atlanta-based artist Laura Bell. A limited number of Atlanta Bird Fest T-shirts will be for sale beginning at our February monthly meeting at Manuel's Tavern and through the Atlanta Audubon online store thereafter, with proceeds supporting Atlanta Audubon's conservation and education efforts.

Registration for Atlanta Bird Fest events will open to Atlanta Audubon members on Tuesday, March 3, and to the public on Monday, March 9. Please visit [www.atlantaaudubon.org/atlanta-bird-fest](http://www.atlantaaudubon.org/atlanta-bird-fest) for more information and to preview the full schedule of events.



Ornithologist and author Scott Weidensaul will join us during our opening weekend on April 18 and 19. Photo by Chris DeSorbo.



Dr. Trish O'Kane, a former social justice investigative journalist and creator of the "Birding to Change the World" program, will join us for the Closing Celebration on May 17.

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*Wingbars* is the official newsletter of Atlanta Audubon Society and is published 10 times a year. We feature news, upcoming events, meetings, field trips, and projects. We hope you will join us. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect policies of Atlanta Audubon Society.



# From the Executive Director

By Jared Teutsch

## Tackling Climate Change Through Habitat Restoration And Ecosystem Stewardship

Step outside on any given day, and you can feel the difference. Fall feels like summer, winter feels like spring, and spring often has a winter chill. One day it's too hot, and the next day it's unseasonably cold. Today, the overarching challenge affecting people and communities all over the world is climate change. The recent National Audubon Study reveals climate change threatens 64% of North American birds. Throughout history, birds have been the harbinger of our quality of life. Farmers often relied on returning spring bird migrations to prepare for spring planting. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* described the harm DDT was having on our environment. And of course, canaries for generations warned miners of impending dangers. Birds are warning us again it's time to act.

Climate change is already beginning to transform life on Earth. In Georgia, 23 percent (or 58 species) of Georgia's 254 bird species are vulnerable to climate change across seasons. A rapidly changing climate could lead to population declines and local extinctions if species are not able to adapt. In our state, highly and moderately vulnerable birds may lose more than half of their current range—the geographic area where they live—as they are forced to search for suitable habitat and climate conditions elsewhere.

Without action, the impacts of climate change threaten to catastrophically damage our world. The good news is that the science also shows that if we take action now, we can improve the chances for the majority of species at risk from climate change. One key strategy Atlanta Audubon is undertaking is habitat restoration and ecosystem stewardship. Once viewed as an ancillary benefit, ecological restoration is now a critical tool to mitigate the effects of climate change. Research indicates that the carbon storage and sequestration services native plants and forests provide can significantly reduce the impacts of climate change.

From the mountains to the coast and the places in between, Atlanta Audubon is committed to habitat restoration. Our flagship Wildlife Sanctuary Program is helping create a resilient network of certified wildlife sanctuaries throughout the metro area to counter the loss of wildlife habitat to urbanization and to provide additional habitat for the hundreds of birds and other species threatened by climate change. Through planting and providing native plants, removing or controlling exotic species, and providing food, water, and shelter for wildlife, local property owners can provide critical wildlife habitat while mitigating the effects of climate change. With more than 550 properties in the sanctuary program, and more expected in the coming year, we look forward to building on the program in 2020 and beyond.

In April, Atlanta Bird Fest will showcase bird and wildlife habitat across Georgia, including crucial restoration efforts in the Cherokee National Forest. And during Georgia Grows Natives for Birds Month in September, Atlanta Audubon will highlight significant bird habitat along the wildlife Sanctuary Tour, as well as important migratory habitat along the coast.

## Atlanta Audubon Receives Grant to Construct Chimney Swift Towers on the Atlanta BeltLine

Atlanta Audubon is excited to announce that it has received a grant from Patagonia Atlanta to construct two Chimney Swift towers along the Atlanta BeltLine in 2020. One tower will be located on the westside trail next to the Monday Night Brewing Garage, and the second tower will be located on the eastside trail near Ponce City Market. In addition to providing valuable nesting and roosting locations for the Chimney Swift, these towers will help Atlanta Audubon educate millions of Atlanta BeltLine visitors on the importance of birds and habitat conservation. The Chimney Swift is Atlanta Audubon's 2019-2020 conservation priority species, and these towers will bring the total number of towers we have installed to six. Listed on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species as Vulnerable, Chimney Swift populations have plummeted in the past several decades due to increased pesticide use that harms their food source and due to loss of nesting and roosting habitat. Patagonia Atlanta has supported Atlanta Audubon's bird-friendly habitat restoration program at several sites, including Big Creek Greenway, Emma Wetlands, the Confluence of the North and South Forks of Peachtree Creek, Deepdene Park, and Friendship Forest.



Atlanta Audubon will be constructing two 12-foot-tall Chimney Swift Towers along the Atlanta BeltLine, like this one at Henderson Park, thanks to a generous grant from Patagonia Atlanta. Photo by Tim Lynn.

# Join Us for the Audubon Photography Exhibit Public Opening on February 9

Join us this February as Atlanta Audubon hosts the Audubon Photography Awards Exhibit at Brickworks Gallery in Atlanta. We will hold a public opening “drop-in” style event on Sunday, February 9, from 3:00 to 6:00 PM, where members and guests are invited to view the exhibit. Following the public opening, the exhibit may be viewed through February 24 at Brickworks Gallery during their regular business hours. Brickworks Gallery is located at 686-A Greenwood Avenue NE in Atlanta.

Selected from more than 8,000 entries, the winning photos were published in the Summer 2019 issue of *Audubon Magazine* and show birdlife at its most vivid, vulnerable, formidable, and elegant. This year's exquisite photographs celebrate the splendor of many bird species protected under the 100-year-old Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), one of Audubon's founding conservation victories and one of the most important bird conservation laws, which has protected countless birds since 1918.

The event is free to attend, but registration is requested at [www.atlantaudubon.org/audubon-photography-exhibit](http://www.atlantaudubon.org/audubon-photography-exhibit).

Thank you to Atlanta Audubon member and Brickworks Gallery owner Laura Adams for hosting the exhibit on behalf of Atlanta Audubon.



*Horned Puffin, by Sebastian Velasquez, 2019 Youth Winner, Audubon Photography Awards*

## Viewing and Parking Details

Sunday, February 9, Public Opening: Drop in between 3:00 to 6:00 PM  
February 10 through February 24: Viewing available during the gallery's open hours on Wednesday through Saturday from 12:00 to 6:00 PM, and Sundays by appointment from 12:00 to 5:00 PM. Contact Laura Adams at Brickworks Gallery at 912.596.3147 to set up Sunday viewing appointments.

**Please note:** Parking at Brickworks Gallery is extremely limited. Guests are encouraged to utilize a rideshare service such as Uber or Lyft, or parking may be found throughout the neighborhood on Greenwood Avenue on the east side of Ponce de Leon Place. Brickworks Gallery is located just off the Atlanta Beltline, so walking or biking is also a good option.



*Great Blue Herons, by Melissa Rowell, 2019 Amateur Honorable Mention, Audubon Photography Awards*

## ASK CHIPPY



**Q:** *We live in an apartment with a balcony, and after feeding dozens of species for many, many years, all of my birds have disappeared. The culprit, it turns out, is a mockingbird that is scaring them away. We can only use suet, as it is less messy. Is there any hope to turn this around?*

**A:** Sorry to hear about your mockingbird issues. Northern Mockingbirds are very territorial and can be quite the bullies at feeders. It's been a great evolutionary strategy for them. All animals compete for resources, and the best competitors get to pass on their genes. Mockingbirds are wonderfully intelligent and interesting native birds. However, if you feel like you need to send them packing to increase diversity at your feeder, here are a few ideas:

1. Place your suet feeder within a large cage that is big enough for your wrens and nuthatches but too small for a mockingbird.
2. Mockingbirds will often dive bomb in order to guard their territory, so hanging your suet feeder underneath something like a plant or a baffle could help deter that behavior since they will not be able to attack from above.
3. If you take your suet feeder inside for a week or two, your mockingbird may just move on.

Territorial mockingbirds can certainly be a nuisance when they keep other birds from your feeders, but if all else fails, these birds are native residents, and there is a great deal of value in keeping our common birds common. Just sit back and enjoy the defensive displays!



*Northern Mockingbird, by Marlin Greene.*

*-Chippy*

# STAFF SPOTLIGHT On Victor Fioresi

By Steve Phenicie

*(This is the 42nd in a series on Atlanta Audubon volunteers, board members and staff.)*

Remember the nursery rhyme about the king who was in his counting house counting out his money? Kings are hard to come by these days, and Atlanta Audubon doesn't have one, so Victor Fioresi counts the money.

Victor is Atlanta Audubon's administration and finance director. Some of his duties would have been familiar to His Royal Majesty, but others would have left the old monarch scratching his crown: Victor makes bank deposits, develops the budget, gets ready for the annual audit, monitors bank accounts, pays bills and sales taxes, and takes care of paperwork and technology access for new hires. He also provides reports to the finance and investment committees of Atlanta Audubon's board and communicates with the Blue Heron Nature Preserve.

Victor is the first person to hold this job. Prior to his hiring in February 2017, duties were split among a number of people: The former executive director, Nikki Belmonte, paid the bills, and Dottie Head, director of membership and communications, made bank deposits. Basic accounting was handled by an outsider. But as Atlanta Audubon has enjoyed huge

increases in income, membership, and staff in recent years, it was necessary to streamline the organization with someone to handle the administrative duties.

Prior to coming to work for Audubon, Victor was not a birder, but being around people who ooh and aah about every ball of feathers has



*Victor Fioresi, by Stephen Ramsden.*

rubbed off. "It makes you want to do more," he says. Victor has taken the Master Birder class, participated in the Christmas Bird Count, and gone on bird walks.

Victor, a native of New Jersey who now lives in northeast Atlanta, has resided in the metro area since 1994. Most of his professional career has been spent in various finance roles at software and technology consulting companies. He holds a B.S. in finance from Penn State University and an M.B.A. from Georgia State University. While at Penn State he was a campus tour guide for prospective students, developing the intriguing skill of talking while walking backward. This talent, of course, has limited applications for later in life. Victor and his wife, Christa, have two sons, Leo, 17, and Gabriel, 14, and Victor has been heavily involved with their Boy Scout troop in Decatur, schools and sports teams.

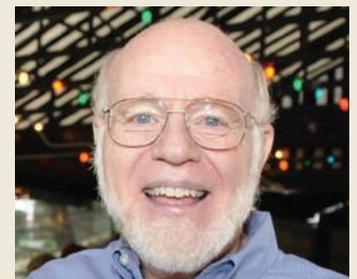
# THANK YOU!

## A Million Thanks...

... to the dozens and dozens of people who participated in the various Christmas Bird Counts held in the area ... to our bird walk leaders for December and January: **Jason Ward, Charlie Muise, Mary Kimberly, Anne McCallum, Gus Kaufman, Jamie Vidich, Jay Davis, and Roseanne Guerra** ... to **Jack and Martha Fasse, Les Cane, and Robyn and Steve Newman** for their help with the Holiday Party and Silent Auction ... to **Gina Charles, Stella Wissner, Larry Stephens, Martha Fasse, and Jack Fasse** for their help with Peel & Stick ... to **Sandy Miller and Mary Nevil** for their help assembling the holiday gift bags ... to **Stella Wissner, Melinda Langston, Little St. Simons Island, Grace Trimble, Kathy Hannah, the Dunwoody Woman's Club, Mary Kimberly, Malcolm Hodges, Stephen Ramsden, Patagonia Atlanta, Jack and Martha Fasse, Henning Von Schmeling, Luke Green, Jim and Esther Stokes, Les Cane, Harriette Hoyt, Woody Hickox,** and the **Hike Inn** for their generous donations to the Atlanta Audubon Silent Auction ... to **Megan Wyatt, Georgia LaMar, Stephanie Madson, and Lorie Bonham** for tabling.

## Member Notes

Atlanta Audubon member and Master Birder Les Cane has completed the Forest Stewardship class presented by Trees Atlanta. The three-month-long class series introduced practical concepts for identifying native versus invasive plants, the science of their environmental impact, methods of invasive control and finally planting native varieties. Field work was included in each area. Congratulations, Les!



*Master Birder Les Cane*

# Atlanta Audubon Receives Grant to Restore Habitat at Cascade Springs Nature Preserve

Atlanta Audubon has received a \$25,800 grant to restore bird-friendly habitat at the Cascade Springs Nature Preserve in southwest Atlanta. The project is funded through a 2019 Five Star and Urban Waters grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF).

Atlanta Audubon will work with seven partners to restore urban bird habitat by removing exotic, invasive plants and installing native, bird-friendly plants and conducting bird surveys in Cascade Springs Nature Preserve located in the Utoy Creek watershed, in southwest Atlanta, Georgia. The results will be 12 acres of restored bottomland forest—a priority habitat in the Piedmont region—accompanied by a year's worth of bird population data, interpretive signage, and a series of educational programming with the local community. Partners include the Friends of Cascade Springs Nature Preserve, the City of Atlanta, Georgia Native Plant Society, Rock Spring Restorations, West Atlanta Watershed Alliance, Greening Youth Foundation, and National Audubon Society.

“Atlanta Audubon will work with partners to help restore the native forest while also contributing to National Audubon Society’s “Plants for Birds” initiative,” says Adam Betuel, Atlanta Audubon director of conservation. “Restoration efforts will focus on providing improved habitat conditions for resident and migratory songbirds, including many species which have been identified on the State of the Birds Watch List in 2016 and/or the Georgia State Wildlife Action Plan, such as Wood Thrush, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Prothonotary Warbler, Canada Warbler, and Cape May Warbler.”

Atlanta Audubon’s restoration goals will focus on freeing the intact native tree canopy and repressed native seed bed by removing invasive, exotic plants such as Chinese privet, English ivy, and Japanese chaff flower and installing bird-friendly native plants as appropriate to supplement the native seed bed and provide more immediate benefits to birds and wildlife. In addition, Atlanta Audubon will conduct educational outreach and volunteer work days, including bird and plant walks and a local school program.

Major funding is provided by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s U.S Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and

Wildlife Service, FedEx, Southern Company, Shell Oil Company, and BNSF Railway. The goal of this grant program is to develop community capacity to sustain local natural resources by providing modest financial assistance to diverse local partnerships for wetland, forest, riparian, and coastal habitat restoration, as well as stormwater management, outreach, and stewardship with a focus on water quality, watersheds, and the habitats they support. Forty-six projects totaling \$1.7 million were awarded, leveraging \$4.4 million in matching contributions from grantees, and generating a total impact of more than \$6.1 million.



*Atlanta Audubon will restore bird-friendly habitat at Cascade Springs Nature Preserve through a grant from the NFWF Five Star and Urban Waters program. Photo by Adam Betuel.*

## Camp TALON Registration Now Open

Do you have a teen who is interested in birds and birding? You might consider signing him/her up for this year’s Camp TALON (Teen Adventures Learning Ornithology and Nature), at Epworth by the Sea on St. Simons Island. The camp is for teens, ages 14 to 19, and will take place June 6 through 11, 2020.

The group will be birding many of Georgia’s coastal “greatest hits,” including Altamaha WMA, Harris Neck NWR, Little St. Simons Island, Ft. Stewart, Cannon’s Point Preserve, Sapelo Island, Cumberland Island National Seashore, and St. Simons Island. Teachers for the camp all have 20+ years of experience as professional biologists, ornithologists, and teachers working for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, GOS, The Nature Conservancy, Ft. Stewart, and Little St. Simons Island.

Besides becoming a better birder, camp participants will learn about bird migration, conservation, census techniques, habitat needs, flight, journaling, song identification, and more. Students do not need to be experienced birders; they just need to be serious about birds and the outdoors. Transportation to the coast is available from Macon.

Camp TALON is sponsored by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, TERN, the Georgia Ornithological Society, and Atlanta Audubon. Early Bird registration is available through April 3. For more information or to register, visit <https://georgiawildlife.com/CampTALON>.



*Camp TALON is for teens ages 14 to 19 who are interested in birds and birding. Photo by Patrick Maurice.*

# LIVE and LEARN

## Now Accepting Scholarship Applications for Hog Island 2020

For more than two decades, Atlanta Audubon has awarded two annual scholarships to attend National Audubon's renowned summer ecology camps. Camp fees and up to \$300 travel expenses are provided by the scholarships.

### Louisa Echols Scholarship for Educators

The Louisa Echols Scholarship will enable the recipient to attend Audubon Camp at Hog Island in Maine to enhance his/her knowledge of the environment and incorporate that knowledge on the job. The scholarship recipient will attend "Sharing Nature: An Educator's Week" from July 12 to 17, 2020. The recipient will participate in a host of Audubon Camp field trips, including a boat trip to the restored Atlantic Puffin and tern colony on Eastern Egg Rock, intertidal explorations, and hiking through Hog Island's unspoiled spruce-fir forest. The camp's inspiring and experienced instructors will discuss the latest trends in environmental education and share their favorite approaches, methods, and activities for engaging children with nature and community science.

More information about the camp is available at <http://hogisland.audubon.org/sharing-nature-educator-s-week>.

#### Eligibility:

- Be a teacher or environmental educator in the metro Atlanta area currently teaching science, natural history, or environmental education.
- Be available for an interview with the Atlanta Audubon Scholarship Committee.
- Be willing to participate in three Atlanta Audubon Society activities within a year of camp, including writing an article about the experience for *Wingbars*.
- Be 18 years or older.

### Edward Barnsley Scholarship for Youth

The goal of the Edward Barnsley Scholarship is to instill in the recipient a love, respect, and sense of stewardship for the natural world by attending Audubon's "Coastal Bird Studies for Teens" at Hog Island in Maine from June 21 to 26, 2020. During this intensive camp session, the scholarship recipient will work with some of the country's best-known birders and ornithologists on field identification, bird ecology, and conservation. The program provides participants with the opportunity to observe Audubon's seabird conservation field research in action, and it is the only Hog Island program that lands participants on Eastern Egg Rock during the puffin breeding season.

More information about the camp is available at <http://hogisland.audubon.org/bird-studies-teens>.

#### Eligibility:

- Be a student in the metro Atlanta area with an avid interest in birds.
- Be willing to participate in three Atlanta Audubon Society activities within a year of camp, including writing an article about the experience for *Wingbars*.
- Be 14 to 17 years old. Note: For campers who are 14 years old, you CANNOT fly independently to camp, due to airline restrictions.

#### How to Apply

The Atlanta Audubon scholarship application is available on our website at <http://www.atlantaaudubon.org/scholarships>. The completed application should be submitted via e-mail to [melanie@atlantaaudubon.org](mailto:melanie@atlantaaudubon.org). The application must be submitted no later than 5:00 PM on Friday, February 14, 2020. Winners will be notified by March 1. For additional information, contact Melanie Furr at [melanie@atlantaaudubon.org](mailto:melanie@atlantaaudubon.org) or call 678.973.2437.



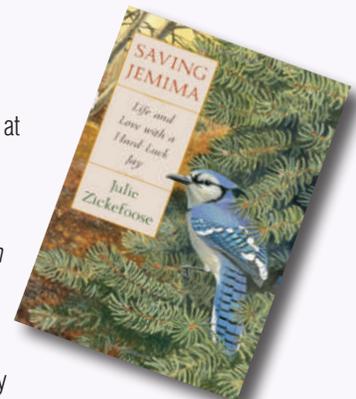
One lucky student and one educator will have the opportunity to attend the Hog Island Audubon Camp in Maine during summer 2020. Photo by Melanie Furr.

## Early Birds Book Club

The Early Birds Book Club will meet on February 23 and March 29 at 2:00 PM prior to the Atlanta Audubon Monthly Meetings at Manuel's Tavern. For February, we will be reading *Saving Jemima: Life and Love with a Hard-Luck Jay*, by Julie Zickefoose.

For the last two years, our March selection has been a book written by the Atlanta Bird Fest keynote speaker. This year Scott Weidensaul will kick off Atlanta Bird Fest. Since the Early Birds have read two books by Scott, we decided to go in a different direction. Scott is known for his dedication to owls and is also the author of the 2015 *Peterson Reference Guide to Owls of North America and the Caribbean*. Our March meeting will be an Owl Fest. Read a book about owls—fiction, nonfiction, memoir, children's—to share with the group.

For more information about Scott's owl research: <http://scottweidensaul.squarespace.com/northern-saw-whet-owls/> and <http://scottweidensaul.squarespace.com/snowy-owls/>. The Early Birds is a no commitment book group for people who enjoy reading about birds, birding, and birders. We welcome all, even those who haven't read the book!



# FIELD TRIPS

are open to the public and free (unless otherwise noted). We welcome everyone from beginners to advanced birders. No registration is necessary except where indicated below. The only fees that apply are parking fees at some venues such as state and national parks. Any applicable fees will be listed in the field trip description on the website.

## **Sunday, February 2, 2020** **Piedmont Park (Fulton County)** **8:00 AM**

Leader: Jason Ward  
Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.759.7770  
GPS: 33.783750, -84.379111

## **Saturday, February 8, 2020** **Constitution Lakes (DeKalb County)** **8:00 AM**

Leader: Jay Davis  
Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.644.6798  
GPS: 33.68306, -84.34740

## **Wednesday, February 12, 2020** **Reynolds Nature Preserve (Clayton County)** **8:00 AM**

Leader: Anne McCallum  
Cell contact morning of the walk: 678.642.7148  
GPS: 33.601464, -84.346874

## **Saturday, February 22, 2020** **Mason Mill Park (DeKalb County)** **8:00 AM**

Leader: Gus Kaufman, Jamie Vidich, and Ranger Jonah McDonald.  
Cell contacts morning of the walk: 404.483.7457

(Gus); 843.605.2959 (Jamie); 404-491-3670  
(Ranger Jonah)  
GPS: 33.807703, -84.307156

## **Sunday, February 23, 2020** **Glenlake Park/Decatur Cemetery** **(DeKalb County)** **8:00 AM**

Leader: Jay Davis  
Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.644.6798  
GPS: 33.783434, -84.292354

*If you would like to lead a field trip, contribute ideas for places to go, or give feedback about leaders, trips, or the field trip directions, please e-mail Jason Ward, field trips director, at [jward@audubon.org](mailto:jward@audubon.org).*

*Details about trips, including driving directions, can be found on our website: [www.atlantaudubon.org/field-trips](http://www.atlantaudubon.org/field-trips). As always, we encourage field trip participants to check the Atlanta Audubon Field Trips web page before any of these trips to check for updates, changes, typo corrections, etc., and for the most up-to-date information. Also, frequently trips are added after the newsletter deadline has passed.*

# UPCOMING EVENTS:

## Master Birder Course Winter 2020

Atlanta Audubon is excited to offer our popular Master Birder course again in winter 2020. An orientation session and the first class will be held on Saturday, February 22, from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM at the Atlanta Audubon office at the Blue Heron Nature Preserve. Subsequent sessions will be held at various locations in the metro Atlanta area on three Saturdays (February 29, March 7, and March 21) and one Sunday (March 15) from 10:30 AM until 3:30 PM. These sessions will be preceded by a guided bird walk from 8:00 to 10:00 AM at a nearby hotspot and will include a break for lunch. A final exam and graduation luncheon will occur on Saturday, March 28 at the Atlanta Audubon office at 10:30 AM. See below for the complete course schedule.

The Master Birder course is an introduction to ornithology, designed to provide participants with bird identification skills and general knowledge of birds, their life histories, and habitat requirements. Course content includes classification and identification of birds, birding equipment, bird songs and calls, attracting birds and backyard wildlife habitat, anatomy and physiology, bird ecology, bird behavior, flight and migration, and bird conservation. Weekend class sessions are complemented with bird walks and a graduation celebration. Upon graduation, Master Birders are encouraged to complete annual volunteer service for Atlanta Audubon and receive added membership benefits.

You must be a current Atlanta Audubon member to register for the Master Birder Course. In addition, a course fee of \$450 includes lectures and guided walks, a field guide, a comprehensive binder of information, and a graduation luncheon. Throughout the year, Master Birders may be offered early bird or discounted registration for workshops. You will be added to the Master Birder ListServe and Facebook group, which act as a means of communication and of sharing knowledge.

Online registration for the 2020 winter course is now open at [www.atlantaudubon.org/master-birder-program](http://www.atlantaudubon.org/master-birder-program). Spaces will fill quickly, so don't delay! Please e-mail Melanie Furr, director of education, at [melanie@atlantaudubon.org](mailto:melanie@atlantaudubon.org) if you have questions.

### Winter 2020 Master Birder Schedule

Saturday, February 22: 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM – Orientation and first class at Atlanta Audubon  
Saturday, February 29: 8:00 AM until 3:30 PM – Field trip at Cochran Shoals (CRNRA), class at Atlanta Audubon  
Saturday, March 7: 8:00 AM until 3:30 PM – Field trip to Dawson Forest, class at Dawson County Chamber of Commerce (Dawsonville, GA)  
Sunday, March 15: 8:00 AM until 3:30 PM – Field trip and class at Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve (DeKalb County)  
Saturday, March 21: 8:00 AM until 3:30 PM – Field trip at Murphey-Candler Park, class at Atlanta Audubon  
Saturday, March 28: 10:30 AM until 1:00 PM – Final exam and graduation lunch at Atlanta Audubon



*Master Birder class of 2015. Photo by Melanie Furr.*



## ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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# February Monthly Meeting

Costa Rica Trip Report

Sunday, February 23, 3:30 to 5:30 PM • Manuel's Tavern

In January 2020, Director of Conservation Adam Betuel led a group of Atlanta Audubon members on an international birdwatching adventure to Costa Rica. For many Americans, there is no place more synonymous with tropical birds and luxuriant landscapes than Costa Rica. Long known as a safe, diverse, and biologically rich country, Costa Rica is a true birdwatchers heaven. The group saw hundreds of bird species, including regional specialties, colorful gems, and some of our overwintering visitors. Along with stellar birding and breathtaking landscapes, the group visited a shade-grown coffee farm and had the opportunity to join bird banders from the Costa Rica Bird Observatories. Adam will share slides and stories from the trip and announce the location of our 2021 international trip.



*Broad-billed Hummingbird at agave flower, by Melanie Furr.*

Manuel's Tavern is located at 602 N. Highland Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, GA 30307. Our monthly meetings are free and open to the public. Free parking is readily available to the south of the building. Food and drink are available for purchase.