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Atlanta Audubon Makes Steady Progress on Reducing Bird-Building Collisions

By Dottie Head, Director of Membership and Communications



Prothonotary Warbler, by Michelle Hamner.

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Atlanta Audubon has been making steady progress on reducing the number of bird-building collisions in the metro area and in educating the public, commercial building owners, architects, builders, and others about the problem of bird-building collisions. Thanks to the leadership of Adam Betuel, director of conservation, multiple success stories are making Atlanta a safer place for migrating and resident birds.

The Problem

Each year, an estimated 365 million to one billion birds perish in the U.S. after colliding with buildings. A recent study by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology listed Atlanta as a high-risk city for the potential for bird-building related collisions. The Cornell study ranked metropolitan areas where, due to a combination of light pollution and geography, birds are at the greatest risk of becoming attracted to and disoriented by lights and crashing into buildings. Published in the journal *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment*, the study combined satellite data showing light pollution levels with weather radar measuring bird migration density. Chicago, Houston, and Dallas ranked one through three during both fall and spring migrations. Because many birds alter their migration routes between spring and fall, rankings of the most-dangerous cities change slightly with the season, according to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. During spring migration, birds pass through the central U.S., so cities primarily in the middle of the country top the most-dangerous list for that season. Fall bird migration tends to be intense along the heavily light-polluted Atlantic seaboard, which is why four eastern cities make the list in autumn. Atlanta ranks fourth most dangerous in the fall and ninth during spring migration.

The Solution

The first step toward solving the bird-building collision problem in Atlanta is understanding it. With that in mind, Atlanta Audubon launched Project Safe Flight Atlanta in fall 2015. Since then, volunteers with the project have been patrolling the streets during both spring and fall migrations, looking for birds that have been killed or injured after colliding with buildings. More than 1,400 birds, representing 106 different species, have been collected since monitoring began, and Adam is always seeking additional volunteers to help monitor routes during migration.

In 2017, Atlanta Audubon introduced the Lights Out Atlanta program to help mitigate bird-building collisions by encouraging commercial property owners and homeowners to turn off or reduce outdoor lighting during peak migration periods of March 15 through May 31 in spring and August 15 to November 15 in fall. Since then, more than 300 homeowners and 15 commercial properties have pledged to turn the lights out for



Adam Betuel poses with Atlanta Audubon Volunteers Robyn and Steve Newman and Sean McGregor at the Trees Atlanta film install. Photo by Dottie Head.

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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.



Esther Stokes

Challenge from the Chair

By Esther Stokes, Board Chair

I have two things to share with you this month:

First, an update on our executive director search to replace our long-time ED, Nikki Belmonte, whose last day was September 14. Things are going along normally at Atlanta Audubon, with Michelle Hamner, our valued director of development, standing in for Nikki as interim executive director. Everything seems normal, except the staff is working a bit harder.

A Board committee is handling this search, made up of board members Linda DiSantis, Angelou Ezeilo, Shannon Fair, Charles Loeb, Ellen Miller, Rusty Pritchard, Amanda Woomer, and me. I serve as chair of the committee. Our first task was to put together a job description, which you can read at www.atlantaudubon.org/job-opportunities.

As you can see from the job description, this is a big job, requiring a multi-talented individual. We are talking with people, we are going through the résumés we have received, conducting interviews, and doing the work necessary to get the right person for the job. It is unclear at this point exactly how long the process will take, but we hope to have a new ED by January 1, 2020.

Stay tuned. We need an excellent ED because Atlanta Audubon has such high ambitions for its work. This is important work, particularly in this time when birds are threatened by so many things, including habitat loss, climate change and environmental challenges, and we are determined to find the right person for the job.

Second, a topic I have been thinking about this week: fall is such a frustrating time for a birder/gardener because you want to be out in the field seeing the birds, and at the same time you want to be in the garden planting more native plants to provide for their well-being. But we all have limited free time in our busy schedules. Fall is such an excellent time to be planting, as it gives plants the whole winter to get their roots settled in and established, without threat of heat or drought (most of the time, anyway).

So this year I am going to be trying to do both. I have made my lists of the plants I want, and I am going to all the native plant sales I can find to obtain my plants. I'm sure I won't get everything, but I'm working on it. And I have my sights on spending more time in the field, both in the metro area and also including attending the GOS trip to Jekyll Island. Definitely, the plate is full! But the birds are calling!

—Esther

The 2018 Annual Report Is Now Available

The 2018 Annual Report, covering the period of January 1 to December 31, 2018, is now available for viewing online. Members and friends, THANK YOU! We are building places where birds and people thrive because of your support and involvement. You may view the 2018 Annual Report at www.atlantaudubon.org/annualreport.

Support Georgia's Birds with a Gift Through Your IRA

If you are at least 70½ years of age and you're looking for a tax-wise way to support Georgia's birds and habitats, you can make a tax-free distribution from your IRA directly to Atlanta Audubon. Distributions of any size help us achieve our mission to build places where birds and people thrive, but the maximum total amount of qualified charitable distributions is \$100,000 per person each year without incurring income tax on the withdrawal.

Please reach out to your personal tax or legal adviser for more information and advice about your situation and how to properly execute a qualified charitable distribution to Atlanta Audubon. Gifts should be initiated well in advance of the end of the calendar year to ensure that they fall in the intended tax year.

If you would like to notify us of a gift you have planned, please contact Michelle Hamner, director of development, at michelle@atlantaudubon.org or 678.973.2437. More information about qualified charitable distributions and other gift vehicles may be found at www.atlantaudubon.org/donate.

My Journey to Birds and Birding

By Ryan Schultz, Education Program Coordinator

It was a clear, brisk early morning as I traversed my way across a beautiful, unique section of the Appalachian Trail called the Roan Highlands. There is nowhere else like it in North America. The Roan is a six-mile exposed grassy ridgeline that crosses a series of “balds” that leaves hikers with incredible 360 views, a rare treat in Appalachia. I was about halfway through a 250-mile section hike when I began my climb up Big Hump Mountain. I stopped to catch my breath when an electric blue flash caught my eye. I glanced over to a small group of stunted trees to the left of the trail. Perched on top was the most brilliantly colored blue bird. It seemed to be soaking up the early morning sunshine, just as I had been, gleaming like a jewel. I watched in awe as it called and sang. What was this bird? I like to think of this as my “spark” bird.

I had never considered myself a “hardcore” birder. My interest in birds had been elevated when I had taken ornithology (and its lab) at Georgia College and State University. I even focused my senior thesis project on a breeding pair of Osprey on Lake Sinclair. Clear memories of field work and long hot summer days observing the Osprey remain present as I sat across the table from Nikki [Belmonte] and Melanie [Edwards Furr] interviewing for the education program coordinator position. It had been a few years since I was involved in the bird world, but I was excited at the opportunity to rekindle my interest in birds.

Since joining the flock at Atlanta Audubon, my passion for our avian friends has been reignited. I have had the opportunity to learn and engage the birding community in ways I never expected. One thing that I have come to really appreciate are the many different professional development opportunities Atlanta Audubon has given me. For starters, I got to take the Master Birder course. Not only was I able to learn a lot in the classroom, but my field identification skills got much stronger. I now feel confident that my “spark bird” was indeed the Indigo Bunting! I was also able to get to know the instructors and my classmates, some of whom have become great volunteers.

I also had the privilege of attending Melanie’s teacher workshop, Taking Wing, at Amicalola Falls State Park. We had the opportunity to see the state’s largest (Bald Eagle) and smallest (Ruby throated Hummingbird) bird species



Ryan Schultz on a recent Atlanta Audubon birding trip.
Photo by Dottie Head.

in their natural habitats. We marveled at our own private birds of prey show and joined Dr. Jim Ferrari for a nighttime owl hike. Sharing meals, learning, and experiencing nature in the mountains as a group created an unforgettable weekend.

Working for Atlanta Audubon has been more than I could have expected. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to have these experiences that have created the more confident, more knowledgeable, well rounded educator that I am today. I look forward to helping Atlanta Audubon grow, and I know I too will do the same.

ASK CHIPPY

Q: I have a pet bird that I am no longer able to care for. Do you know of any organizations that can help?

A: We’re sorry to hear that you can no longer take care of your pet bird. Some commonly kept pet birds can be very long lived, as many as 20-50 years depending on the species, and sometimes people don’t take this into consideration. Even then, life circumstances can change, making it necessary to find a new home for the bird. Whatever you do, please do not release the bird into the wild, as this would be a death sentence. Atlanta Audubon is focused on wild birds, not captive birds, but we were able to find these recommendations for organizations/resources that might be able to help:



- A Bird’s Nest, 770.445.9366
- Carol Fuller, 770.319.1838
- Feathered Friends Forever, 706.541.9316
- PJ’s Avian Rescue, 770.869.0004



—Chippy

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

On Leslie Edwards

By Steve Phenicie

(This is the 39th in a series on Atlanta Audubon volunteers, board members and staff.)

Atlanta Audubon board member Leslie Edwards says she has never been chased by a bear or anything else during her professional life, but it isn't because the bears have never had opportunities.

Leslie holds a Ph.D. in geography from the University of Georgia and is retired from the faculty of the Department of Geosciences at Georgia State University. She is the lead author of *The Natural Communities of Georgia* and author of "The Land, Climate, and Vegetation" chapter of *The Georgia Breeding Bird Atlas*. Such projects involved rubbing elbows with some of the state's best ecologists and botanists as well as visiting many remote places where the bears, alligators, snakes, and other critters make their presence felt.

"I did my master's thesis in Tallulah Gorge—back in the days before there was a visitor center and paved trails. It was a much wilder, woolier place there, and we did walk along a few very narrow ledges (in the days when people still lost their lives in the gorge), and camped out by the river one night, hoping to find some rare green salamanders. (Later, I wrote the exhibits downstairs in the Visitor Center). I did my dissertation in Providence Canyon. For eight weeks, my field assistant and I collected data in the spectacularly colorful eroded ravines, and also in the lush,

uneroded valleys downstream, where rare plants still grow, unknown to most people," she says. "I'm just blown away by the diversity of the state," Leslie says, noting the great contrast between such places as Brasstown Bald and the Okefenokee Swamp.

Leslie, a native of northern Virginia who came to Atlanta in the late 1970s, has been interested in birds for many years but took somewhat of a hiatus from active involvement as other things took priority. Recently she got involved again and joined the board in January. She also participates in the Early Birds Book Club, which meets before the monthly meetings at Manuel's and enjoys being a certifier in the Wildlife Sanctuary Program under the direction of Melinda Langston. "You meet up with people who really seek to improve habitat for birds. It's very inspiring," she says. Leslie also teaches classes for the University of Georgia Extension Service and the Georgia Botanical Garden and is often invited to talk to various groups.

Leslie says she hasn't been on any overseas birding trips per se, but birds remain iconic memories of places where she's traveled, whether it's Blue-footed Boobies on the Pearl Islands off the coast of Panama, Atlantic Puffins peering from their caves in Nova Scotia, or a Common Cuckoo calling in the summer English countryside.

She and her partner, Jay Pakchar, who were Patron Supporters for Atlanta Bird Fest 2019, live in Virginia-Highland and plan a trip to New Zealand this fall in which birds will be a main focus. Jay likes nature, hiking, camping, and photography, and Leslie has pulled him into the bird orbit, too.



Leslie Edwards on a recent trip to the Adirondacks. Photo by Jay Pakchar.

THANK YOU!

A Million Thanks...

... to our bird walk leaders for September: **Angie Jenkins, Jason Ward, Mary Kimberly, Anne McCallum, Adam Betuel, Gus Kaufman, Jamie Vidich, Rob McDonough, Nathan Farnau, and Yve Morrell** ... to **Pam Higginbotham** for volunteering at the Master Naturalist program at Smithgall Woods ... to **Sandy Murray** for working at the Dunwoody Nature Center's Butterfly Festival ... to **Michele Buchanan** for doing a program from the Henry County Master Gardeners ... to **Les Cane** for helping Melanie Furr at the Hummingbird Festival at Smith-Gilbert Gardens ... to **Paul Campbell, Jennifer Weil, and Lorie Bonham** for volunteering at International Vulture Awareness Day at Zoo Atlanta ... to Georgia Grows Native for Birds Month sponsors **Convivial Landscapes, LLC, Brickworks Gallery, and Mount Vernon Printing** as well as to event patrons **Linda DiSantis and Bob Kerr, Ron and Elizabeth Hall, and Ellen Miller**... to **Martha and Jack Fasse, Anita Chilcutt, Larry Stephens, Gina Charles, Stella Wissner, Gwen Barnett, Susan Loeb, and Max Brown** for their help with September Peel & Stick ... to **Jason Ward** for presenting at the August Monthly Meeting ... to **Robyn Newman, Steve Newman, Gloria Seymour, Sean McGregor, Anne McCallum, Jim McCallum, Dave Butler, Phoebe Janflone, and Eric Haley** for their help installing bird-friendly film at Trees Atlanta ... to **Julie Lowring, Lou Clymore, the Tapestry Community, Kimberly Estep, Sally Sears, Southfork Conservancy, Friends of Zonolite Park, Laura Henninghouse, Pandra Williams, the Freedom Park Conservancy, Sandy and Simon Miller, Laura and John Markson, Dawn Peterson and Javier Garcia, Joy Carter and Ken Boff** for allowing us to feature their properties on the 2019 Wildlife Sanctuary Tour ... to **Laura Adams, Andrew Feiler, and Brickworks Gallery** for hosting the Swift Night Out ... to Sanctuary Tour volunteers **Theresa May, Lillie Kline, Esther Stokes, Margaret Stephen, Robyn Newman, Steve Newman, Sandy Murray, Nannette Dooley, Dave Butlers, Susanne King, Carolyn Brown, Susan Jones, Michael Clifford, Sally Davis, Mary Nevil, Steve Phenicie, Lisa Slotznik, Liz Pusch, Michele Buchanan, Mike Weaver, Ellen Miller, Rachel Maher, Meris Lutz, Danielle Arellano, and Mary Kimberly.**

Atlanta Audubon Makes Steady Progress On Reducing Bird-Building Collisions

(Continued from Page 1)

migrating birds. You can help by signing the pledge and encouraging your friends, neighbors, and places of employment to join this effort. Learn more at www.atlantaaudubon.org/loa.

Adam has also been working with Atlanta area green building experts to introduce them to bird-friendly design concepts. This November, Adam will be co-presenting a session on “Bird-friendly Design in the City in the Forest” at the GreenBuild International Conference and Expo at the World Congress Center, along with Christine Sheppard of the American Bird Conservancy and Matt Kikosicki of Miller Hull, an architectural firm focused on green design. They will be presenting on bird collisions, Project Safe Flight Atlanta’s work, the new Kendeda Building at Georgia Tech, and how to design and retrofit bird-friendly buildings in urban areas. This is a great opportunity to share Atlanta Audubon’s successes on an international scale.

Finally, Atlanta Audubon has been fortunate in recent years to make five buildings more bird-friendly thanks to generous grants from the Disney Conservation Fund. The Visitor’s Center at Sawnee Mountain Preserve in Forsyth County and the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center in Atlanta are the latest two buildings to be treated with CollidEscape film to reduce bird-building collisions. This brings the total list of treated buildings to five as the latest buildings join Melvin L. Newman Wetlands Center, Chattahoochee Nature Center, and the Blue Heron Nature Preserve. In 2020 Atlanta Audubon will install CollidEscape film at Southface and one other Atlanta location.

“Thanks to the collective efforts and cooperation of groups like Atlanta Audubon, the American Bird Conservancy, Southface, the Disney Conservation Fund, and many other partners, we are working to make Atlanta a more bird-friendly city for both migratory and resident birds,” says Adam Betuel. “There are hundreds of other light awareness programs and initiatives taking place across the United States and Canada, and collectively we are working to educate citizens, building owners, architects, builders, and others about innovative solutions and sustainable building design. We have a way to go, but I’m hopeful that one day bird-friendly buildings will be the norm, not the exception.”

For more information on the Project Safe Flight Atlanta or Lights Out Atlanta programs, please visit www.atlantaaudubon.org/project-safe-flight-atlanta.



*CollidEscape Window Treatment at Sawnee Mountain Preserve.
Photo by Adam Betuel.*

Photo of the Month Winner

The Photo of the Month Winner for September is David Cree, an Atlanta Audubon member from Peachtree City. This excellent photo of a Swallow-tailed Kite was taken at Skeens Farm, in Glennville, GA. The photo was taken from below on a hot summer day with a Nikon D300 camera set at ISO400, 1/2000, f5.6 using a Nikon 500mm f4.0 w/ Nikon 1.4X teleconverter. The image was cropped slightly.

The Photo of the Month competition is open to anyone, and all winning submissions will be published in *Wingbars*. Ashkan Ojaghi, the volunteer coordinator of the photo contest, encourages people to resubmit photos if they do not win in a particular month. For more information or to enter the monthly competition, visit www.atlantaaudubon.org/photo-of-the-month.

Editor’s Note: Our apologies to the August Photo of the Month winner Marlene Koslowsky. We accidentally misspelled her name with her beautiful photo of a Red-tailed Hawk.



Swallow-tailed Kite in flight, by David Cree.

LIVE and LEARN



White-throated Sparrow, by Adam Betuel.

Sparrow Identification Workshop

Classroom Session at Atlanta Audubon:

Thursday, November 21, 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Field Trip: Saturday, November 23, 8:00 to 11:00 AM

Ready to sharpen your skills identifying those “little brown jobs”? Often skulking, elusive, and confusingly similar, sparrows can make fall warblers seem easy. Adam Betuel, Atlanta Audubon’s director of conservation, will help participants learn more about the many sparrow species that winter in the Atlanta area. A class session held at the Atlanta Audubon office will teach participants about distinguishing field marks, foraging behaviors, flight characteristics, and vocalizations that are useful to identification and appreciation of Georgia’s sparrows. Participants will then have the chance to practice their identification skills in the field with a guided trip to find and observe sparrows in their preferred habitat at a local hot spot. (Location to be determined based on eBird sightings.) Potential species include Field, Swamp, Fox, Savannah, and Vesper Sparrows, in addition to more common resident and wintering species. To register, visit our website at www.atlantaudubon.org/adult-workshops. Atlanta Audubon members: \$50; non-members: \$60 Master Birder in good volunteer standing: \$45



*The Winter 2019 Master Birder class following the final exam and luncheon.
Photo by Melanie Furr.*

Master Birder Fall 2019

Atlanta Audubon Society is pleased to offer our popular Master Birder course again this fall. This fall’s class will take place at the Newman Wetlands Center in Hampton, GA. An orientation and the first class will be held on **Saturday, October 5, from 10:00 AM until 3:00 PM**. Subsequent sessions will be held on three **Saturdays, October 19, October 26, and November 9**, and on one Sunday, November 17. 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, November 23, at the Atlanta Audubon office at 10:30 AM**.

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, bird behavior, anatomy and physiology, bird ecology, 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 they receive added membership benefits such as exclusive workshops or field trips, as well as early bird or discounted registration for workshops.

A course fee of \$425 includes classes and guided walks, course materials, and the graduation luncheon. Registration is now open at www.atlantaudubon.org/master-birder-program.



*Roseate Spoonbill,
by Tom Wilson.*

Florida Birding at St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge and Wakulla Springs State Park

January 18-20, 2020

Join Melanie Furr, Atlanta Audubon’s director of education, for a fun three-day tour exploring St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge and Wakulla Springs State Park in the Florida Panhandle. Established in 1931 to provide wintering habitat for migratory birds, St. Marks is one of the oldest refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System. This Globally Important Bird Area encompasses more than 70,000 acres of coastal marshes, islands, tidal creeks and estuaries of seven north Florida rivers, supporting a diverse community of plant and animal life, including more than 300 species of birds. In addition to large numbers of wintering waterfowl and shorebirds, we expect to see beautiful wading birds, such as Roseate Spoonbills, nesting Bald Eagles, and possibly even Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. In recent years, the refuge has also provided a winter home for rarities like Vermillion Flycatchers, Red-throated Loons, and an American Flamingo. We’ll also explore Wakulla Springs State Park, including a short riverboat tour of the world’s largest and deepest freshwater springs. This wildlife viewing trip among majestic bald cypress trees offers great looks at waterfowl and wading birds, as well alligators, turtles, and possibly otters and manatees.

The trip fee includes full-day guided field trips on Saturday and Sunday and a half-day of guided birding on Monday, as well as entry fees to birding sites and the boat tour. A pre-trip orientation meeting and short workshop will be held on January 9 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM at the Atlanta Audubon office on Roswell Road. Guests are responsible for their own food, travel, and lodging. Atlanta Audubon will reserve a block of rooms at a nearby hotel for those who are interested in reserving a room at a group rate. Spaces are limited. Reserve your spot at www.atlantaudubon.org/travel.

Atlanta Audubon Members: \$250 Master Birders in good membership and volunteer standing: \$225 Non-members: \$285 (includes a one-year membership)

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.

Saturday, October 5, 2019 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, October 5, 2019 Blue Heron Nature Preserve (Fulton County) 8:00 AM

Leader: Rob McDonough
Cell contact morning of walk: 404.754.8159
GPS: 33.865682, -84.380775

Wednesday, October 9, 2019 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

Friday, October 18, 2019 Murphey Candler Park 8:00 AM

Leader: Mary Kimberly
Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.308.6279
GPS: 33.909397, -84.322476

Saturday, October 19 2019 Lullwater Park at Emory (DeKalb County) 8:00 AM

Leaders: Gus Kaufman and Jamie Vidich
Cell contacts morning of the walk:
404.483.7457 (Gus); 843.605.2959 (Jamie)
GPS: 33.79541, -84.31011

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.

Details about trips, including driving directions, can be found on our website: 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.

At Home Outdoors: Monthly Adventures for Homeschoolers

**Second Friday of Each Month
10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
Blue Heron Nature Preserve**

The Amphibian Foundation, Atlanta Audubon Society, and Blue Heron Nature Preserve are excited to team up to offer monthly homeschool days on the second Friday of each month from 10:00 AM until 12:00 PM. Each month we'll explore a new topic, with hands-on outdoor learning activities.

Friday, October 11 - Frog Fun
Friday, November 8 - Blue Heron Beavers
Friday, December 13 - Fascinating Feathers

Open to children ages 5 to 12. This is a drop-off program, but parents may stay if they wish. For information on 2019 programs or to register, visit <https://bhnp.org/homeschool/#at-home-outdoors>



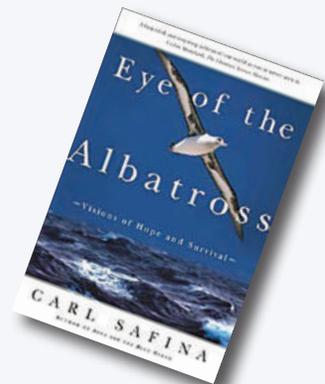
Eco-Adventures for Homeschoolers meets on the second Friday of each month. Photo by Melanie Furr.

Early Birds Book Club

The Early Birds Book Club will meet at 2:00 PM on Sunday, September 22, at Manuel's Tavern. For October, the Early Birds will read *Eye of the Albatross: Visions of Hope and Survival*, by Carl Safina. As Carl Safina's story explores the health of our oceans, his guide and inspiration is an albatross he calls Amelia, whose life and far-flung flights he describes in fascinating detail. Intertwined with recollections of whalers and famous explorers, *Eye of the Albatross* probes the unmistakable environmental impact of the encounters between man and marine life.

The group will not meet in November or December as there is not a November meeting and December 8 is the Holiday Party. Looking ahead to January, the Early Birds will read *The Narrow Edge: A Tiny bird, an Ancient Crab and an Epic Journey*, by Deborah Cramer.

The Early Birds is a drop-in book club that meets before the Atlanta Audubon Monthly Meeting at Manuel's Tavern, from 2:00 to 3:30 PM. There is no commitment other than to enjoy reading and sharing books about birds and birding. The group will not meet on months when there is not an Atlanta Audubon Monthly Meeting. If you wish to join the Early Bird's e-mail list for announcements and reminder notices, please e-mail Mary Nevil at mbnevil@gmail.com.





ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

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October Monthly Meeting

**Craft Chocolate in a Seed Shell: How Xocolati Small Batch Chocolates Is Changing
the World, One Chocolate Bar at a Time**

Sunday, October 27, 2019 • 3:30 to 5:30 PM • Manuel's Tavern

In 2013, Elaine Read and Matt Weyandt took their toddler and newborn to the jungles of Costa Rica for an unplugged life and a little adventure. While there, they met local chocolate makers using cacao growing in those very jungles to make dark chocolate. The chocolate was intense, unadulterated, and pure—nothing like the sweet flatness they thought of as chocolate. Deciding to return to Atlanta, they first trained with the local chocolate makers and came home to create Xocolatl Small Batch Chocolate (“chock-oh-LAH-tul”), a chocolate micro-factory in Atlanta, where they could make dark chocolate free of fillers and unnecessary ingredients but full of flavor.

In 2018, Xocolatl Small Batch Chocolates and Atlanta Audubon crossed paths thanks to Joy Carter, a long-time member and former board member, and entered into a cooperative agreement to produce a collaboration chocolate bar that's good for people and birds. Come hear about the chocolate production process and learn how the chocolate you choose to eat can help slow deforestation, help birds, and bring better wages to cacao farmers worldwide. You might also get to sample some of the delicious offerings from this unique chocolate factory with a storefront in Krogg Street Market.



*Turning cocoa beans at chocolate farm in
Costa Rica. Photo by Elaine Read.*

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.