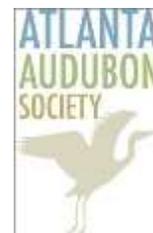


## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **ATLANTA AUDUBON RECEIVES DISNEY CONSERVATION FUND GRANT FOR PROJECT SAFE FLIGHT ATLANTA**

**(Atlanta, Ga.) October 4, 2018** – Atlanta Audubon Society has been awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Disney Conservation Fund (DCF) for Project Safe Flight Atlanta. The grant is part of the Fund's focus on supporting local efforts around the world aimed at saving wildlife, inspiring action, and protecting the planet with more than \$75 million distributed to nonprofit organizations since 1995.

This conservation grant recognizes Atlanta Audubon's efforts to reduce bird-building collisions through Project Safe Flight Atlanta, a program designed to make Atlanta a more bird-friendly city. Project Safe Flight Atlanta is implementing solutions that directly impact conservation of migrating birds and can be modeled by urban centers across the United States.

"Atlanta Audubon Society is thrilled to again receive support from the Disney Conservation Fund for Project Safe Flight Atlanta," says Nikki Belmonte, Atlanta Audubon Society Executive Director. "This is the second time we have received a DCF Grant, and these funds will enable us to expand Project Safe Flight Atlanta and to work with local stakeholders to implement solutions to reduce the number of resident and migratory birds killed by building collisions."

Grant monies will be used to enhance monitoring efforts, data collection, and research. In addition, this funding will allow Atlanta Audubon to retrofit four buildings over the next two years with bird-friendly window film to help prevent collisions. The first building that will receive window treatments is the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center, which the U.S. Green Building Council awarded platinum certification for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) in 2009. Grant funding will also be used to create an educational video that will be used to further advocate for bird-friendly designs in new development projects and to educate the public, architects, building managers, and policy makers on bird-friendly building solutions.

"Trees Atlanta is very excited to be included as a beneficiary of this grant as so much of our mission revolves around the connection of wildlife to Atlanta's urban forest," says Greg Levine, Co-Executive Director and Chief Program Officer at Trees Atlanta. "Birds play such an integral part in our ecosystem and we're committed to providing and protecting their habitat around the city, including our headquarters, the Kendeda Center."

Project Safe Flight Atlanta is a conservation and engagement effort to understand the issue of bird-building collisions in metro-Atlanta. Project Safe Flight Atlanta volunteers patrol selected routes during peak bird migration periods collecting birds that have died or have been injured after colliding with buildings. Since Project Safe Flight Atlanta launched in 2015, more than 1,000 birds of 96 different species have been collected.

Current research estimates that between 365 million and 1 billion birds perish each year from colliding with buildings in the United States. Bright nighttime lights can disorient migrating birds or trap them in upward-facing beams of light where they die of exhaustion or land in dangerous areas. During daylight hours, birds struggle with reflective surfaces when they stop to feed or rest, as they are unable to distinguish between a reflection and an open flyway.

The Disney Conservation Fund Grant will also be used to support a sub-program of Project Safe Flight Atlanta, called Lights Out Atlanta, to help reduce bird deaths caused by building collisions. Lights Out Atlanta is a voluntary program encouraging building owners and residential homeowners to turn off or reduce lighting from midnight to dawn during the peak bird migration periods. Participants pledge to reduce non-essential nocturnal lighting during peak migration periods of March 15 to May 31 (spring) and August 15 to November 15 (fall). More information and the pledge may be found at [www.AtlantaAudubon.org/lightsoutatlanta](http://www.AtlantaAudubon.org/lightsoutatlanta).

Recent DCF grant recipients were selected based on their efforts to implement comprehensive community wildlife conservation programs, stabilize and increase populations of at-risk animals and engage communities in conservation in critical ecosystems around the world.

For information on Disney's commitment to conserve nature and a complete list of grant recipients, visit [www.disney.com/conservation](http://www.disney.com/conservation). For more information on Project Safe Flight Atlanta, visit [www.atlantaaudubon.org/project-safe-flight](http://www.atlantaaudubon.org/project-safe-flight).

*Atlanta Audubon Society is building places where birds and people thrive. We create bird-friendly communities through conservation, education, and advocacy.*

**Media Note:** Photos to accompany these article and a MS Word version of the press releases are available for download at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y3l9s32oktcs94e/AADL4n1VHbxzzwGhN455VJ-fa?dl=0>.

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