



Georgia Urban Ecologists 2022-23 Cohort 2

Cohort 2 is for youth in grades 9 through 12 who have participated in cohort 1 and are ready for more exploration! As in the previous program, students will learn alongside environmental and conservation professionals, participating in various outdoor activities while having fun in nature with their peers. **Sessions occur one Saturday a month from 10 AM-1 PM** unless otherwise noted.

Calendar:

Sunday, September 11, 5:00-6:30 PM -- Orientation with Georgia Audubon

October 15 (rain date October 16)

Aquatic Ecology with Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Join GA DNR Wildlife Resources staff to explore life underwater! From the edge of a pond, we will conduct a biological survey using dip nets to search for hidden creatures. The macroinvertebrates (larval insects) and other animals we find will provide an indication of the pond's health. We will also learn how these critters play important roles in aquatic food chains, supporting the fish and wildlife that live in and around the pond. To experience how humans are part of the ecosystem, we will then go fishing! Rods/reels and bait will be provided, courtesy of GA DNR's Gateway to Fishing program.

November 12 (rain date November 13)

Urban Waterways with American Rivers and Finding the Flint

During this session, students have the opportunity to tour the hidden headwaters of Georgia's second longest river, learn how to find and "read" urban creeks and discuss the environmental and cultural impacts of urban development on our creeks and waterways. We'll also learn how green infrastructure can help restore natural flows and improve water quality.

December 10, 4:00-7:00 PM (rain date December 11)

Sunset Birding at Clayton County Water Authority

Clayton County Water Authority is recognized as a leader in the water industry for its environmentally sound approach to wastewater treatment, and the county's constructed treatment wetlands are one of metro Atlanta's best birding hotspots. At this session, we'll visit a restricted-access site where numerous waterfowl and wading birds spend the winter. The highlight of our field trip will be watching thousands of wintering blackbirds, starlings, and grackles flying in to roost in the wetlands at dusk.

January 14 (rain date January 15)

A Day in the Life of a Herp Keeper with The Amphibian Foundation

In this session with our friends at The Amphibian Foundation, we'll learn about the importance of captive collections and what's involved in the care of reptiles and amphibians. Students will get an up-close look at several animals in their collection and get some hands-on experience maintaining an enclosure.

February 18 (rain date February 19)

Prescribed Fire: Georgia's Managed Lands with Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center

During this session, students will learn how land is actively managed for conservation to support biodiversity and ecological processes. Then, state biologists will guide us in one of Georgia's most vital land management practices—prescribed burning!

March 11 (rain date March 12)

Creating a Sanctuary for Wildlife with Georgia Audubon

In this session, students will explore a Georgia Audubon certified wildlife sanctuary in DeKalb County and learn what elements are needed to create healthy habitats and support biodiversity. We'll pay special attention to the importance of native plants and how they support the food chain. We'll learn about insects from a trained entomologist and of course, submit a bird checklist!

April 15 (rain date April 16)

Exploring Granite Outcrops at Arabia Mountain

Get ready for an adventurous morning of hiking and exploring the massive exposed granite fields of Arabia Mountain. We'll discover endemic plant species and their unique adaptations, as well as examine the ecological relationships between plants and animals in this unique landscape.

May 13 (rain date May 14)

Boat Tour and Final Picnic at Cubihatcha Outdoor Center

At this final session, we'll take a boat tour of one of the five reservoirs managed by Henry County Water Authority (HCWA), observing a diversity of birds and other wildlife that make their homes here while learning about the multi-faceted work HCWA staff is doing to improve the landscape for both people and wildlife. We'll wrap up with a picnic lunch and a celebration of our time together this year.

Thank you to our partners who make this program possible:

Georgia Department of Natural Resources, American Rivers, Finding the Flint, Clayton County Water Authority, The Amphibian Foundation, Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, and Cubihatcha Outdoor Center (Henry County Water Authority).