



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For information contact:

Dottie Head, Director of Membership & Communications, dottie@atlantaaudubon.org, or 678-973-2437 (office) or 404-388-8538 (cell)

Laura Pate, Marketing and Community Relations Manager, LBPate@forsythco.com, or 770-781-2215

FORSYTH COUNTY PARKS & RECREATION, ATLANTA AUDUBON INSTALL COLLIDESCAPE FILM TO PREVENT BIRD COLLISIONS AT SAWNEE MOUNTAIN PRESERVE

(CUMMING, GA) June 13, 2019 – Visitors to Sawnee Mountain Preserve will notice some new window treatments on the Visitor’s Center windows, including images of Georgia birds and wildlife and tiny dots adorning the glass. The purpose of the treatments is to prevent birds from flying into the windows, an all too common problem. The project is thanks to a partnership between Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department and Atlanta Audubon, with a grant from the Disney Conservation Fund.

The treatments are a special CollidEscape film that reduces the transparency of the glass and breaks up reflection, preventing bird-window strikes. Each spring and fall, millions of birds migrate between wintering grounds in Central and South America, the southern U.S., or the Caribbean to breeding grounds in North America. Using the sun, stars and earth’s magnetism as a guide, birds migrate primarily at night to avoid predators and take advantage of the cooler temperatures. Sadly, many never arrive at their destination due to a man-made problem —building collisions. Blinded by night-time lights or confused by day-time reflections of trees and grass in shiny windows, many birds become disoriented and fly into the buildings, ending their journeys and their lives prematurely. A recent study by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology ranked Atlanta number four during fall migration and number nine during spring migration for the potential for bird-building collisions due high numbers of birds being exposed to nocturnal lighting.

“Since 2015, Atlanta Audubon has been studying bird-building collisions in the metro area through our Project Safe Flight Atlanta Program,” says Adam Betuel, director of conservation for Atlanta Audubon. “Since the program began, we have collected more than 1,300 birds of over 100 different species that have perished due to building collisions.”

The CollideEscape film is applied to a building’s windows and breaks up the reflection, allowing birds to avoid a collision, saving them. Nearly 2,000 square feet of CollidEscape material will be used to cover the windows on the Visitor’s Center.

“We have been working with a number of parks and nature centers, like Sawnee Mountain Preserve to treat problematic buildings to protect birds,” says Betuel. “We also hope to educate the people who pass

through these buildings about the problem of bird-building collisions and show them that there are many easy solutions to this problem.”

In 2018, the Atlanta Audubon Society was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Disney Conservation Fund (DCF) as part of the Fund’s focus on reversing the decline of threatened wildlife around the world. The conservation grant recognizes Atlanta Audubon’s efforts to reduce bird-building collisions through Project Safe Flight Atlanta, a program to monitor birds and collect data on deaths by collisions, and its companion program, Lights Out Atlanta, to encourage residential and commercial buildings to reduce nighttime lighting to prevent bird deaths.

Atlanta Audubon is working with the Forsyth County to install CollidEscape on the Sawnee Mountain Preserve Visitor’s Center with funding received from the DCF. Sawnee Mountain Preserve was chosen as a demonstration building 1) because they were experiencing bird collisions and 2) the park has high visitation presenting a unique opportunity to educate the public on steps they can take to reduce bird-window collisions at home.

“This effort showcases bird conservation practices. Our visitors can see CollideEscape in practice and see how they can help birds in their homes as well,” said Joseph Daugherty, natural resources management supervisor for Forsyth County Parks & Recreation Department.

###

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

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

About Forsyth County Parks: *The mission of Forsyth County Parks and Recreation Department is to enhance the quality of life for all citizens of Forsyth County by providing passive and active recreational, educational and cultural programming services and to provide parks and recreational facilities that are safe, accessible and aesthetically pleasing to the entire community.*