

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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GOVERNOR DEAL PROCLAIMS SEPTEMBER AS GEORGIA GROWS NATIVE FOR BIRDS MONTH

(Atlanta, Ga.) July 17, 2018 – Governor Nathan Deal recently signed a proclamation designating the month of September as the inaugural **Georgia Grows Native for Birds Month**. A collaborative effort between Atlanta Audubon Society, other Georgia Audubon chapters, and the Georgia Native Plant Society, Georgia Grows Native for Birds month celebrates Georgia’s native plants and raises awareness about the key role they play for birds and other wildlife.

In partnership with Augusta-Aiken Audubon Society, Coastal Georgia Audubon Society, Columbus Audubon Society, Ocmulgee Audubon Society, Oconee Rivers Audubon Society, Ogeechee Audubon Society, and the Georgia Native Plant Society, Atlanta Audubon Society is working to create a network of habitats filled with native plants across Georgia.

“The biggest threat to birds in Georgia is habitat loss,” says Nikki Belmonte, Atlanta Audubon Executive Director. “As urbanization increases and natural habitats disappear, native plants can go a long way to restoring the habitat birds need. Fortunately, we can provide birds with high quality resources simply through thoughtful landscaping utilizing native plants. It’s something that everyone can contribute to conservation.”

Atlanta Audubon Society will be offering events throughout the month of September to highlight the harmonious relationship between native plants and birds, including:

Bird and Plant Walk, Sunday, September 9, 8:00 to 11:00 AM

Land O Lakes section of Blue Heron Nature Preserve

3931 Land O Lakes Drive, Atlanta, GA 30342

Join Atlanta Audubon and the Georgia Native Plant Society for a Bird and Plant Walk at the Land O Lakes section of the Blue Heron Nature Preserve, where Atlanta Audubon has been restoring bird-friendly habitat to this formerly overgrown property. Guests will view the birds that inhabit this patch of land and learn more about the native plants that have been added to this landscape to benefit birds and other wildlife. This walk is free to attend, but registration is required on our website at

www.atlantaaudubon.org/georgia-grows-native-for-birds-month.

2018 Wildlife Sanctuary Tour, Saturday, September 15, 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

Decatur/DeKalb County

This year's Wildlife Sanctuary Tour will feature six properties, including two public properties and four private homes, in Decatur/DeKalb County. Each property has been certified by Atlanta Audubon as a Wildlife Sanctuary because it provides four essential elements for attracting wildlife and birds: food sources (including at least 50% native plants), nesting sites, shelter, and water sources. Visitors will see a wide variety of native plants in a diversity of settings that attract birds, butterflies, and other wildlife. Guests must provide their own transportation and travel between sites at their leisure. Private property addresses will be provided to those who purchase tickets in advance of the event. Tickets are \$20 for Atlanta Audubon Members and \$25 for non-members and are available at www.atlantaaudubon.org/wildlife-sanctuary-tour.

Piedmont Park "Exhibitat" Public Unveiling and Chalk Art Festival

Tuesday, September 25

Chalking Period, 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM

Exhibitat Unveiling, 6:30 to 9:00 PM

The "Exhibitat" unveiling will celebrate the completion of Atlanta Audubon's native plant garden and Georgia's first Chimney Swift tower in the Piedmont Commons area in the northeast quadrant of Piedmont Park. During the day, participants in our Chalk Art Festival will complete 5' x 5' chalk art paintings in front of the "Exhibitat" in celebration of Georgia's native plants and animals. In the evening, we will officially unveil the project while enjoying food and drink. For more information, to register for the Chalk Festival, or to purchase tickets to the unveiling, please visit www.atlantaaudubon.org/georgia-grows-native-for-birds-month.

Fall Plant Sale with Chattahoochee Nature Center

Friday and Saturday, September 28 and 29

10:00 AM to 5:00 PM both days

This fall, Atlanta Audubon is excited to partner with Chattahoochee Nature Center and Georgia Native Plant Society to host native plant sales to expand habitat for birds. Sales will highlight berry-producing plants that help birds like the Wood Thrush put on enough weight to migrate across the Gulf of Mexico to wintering grounds in Central America. A limited number of berry producing plants that benefit the Wood Thrush and other migrants will be available for pre-sale on the Atlanta Audubon website beginning in August.

To read the full Georgia Grows Native for Birds Month Proclamation or to learn more about Georgia Grows Native for Birds Month events, please visit our website at www.atlantaaudubon.org/georgia-grows-native-for-birds-month.

Atlanta Audubon wishes to thank the following partners and sponsors: Piedmont Park Conservancy and Rock Springs Restoration.

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 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>.

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