



VOLUME XLIV, ISSUE 3, ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

Atlanta Audubon Welcomes Authors Julie Zickefoose and Janisse Ray This Spring

This spring we are excited to welcome two special guests during Atlanta Bird Fest 2018, which runs from April 14 through May 20. Author, illustrator, and naturalist Julie Zickefoose will join us during Atlanta Bird Fest's Opening Weekend activities on April 14 and 15, and celebrated Georgia author Janisse Ray will join us for our Closing Celebration on May 20.

**Julie Zickefoose—*Baby Birds: An Artist Looks into the Nest*
Saturday, April 14, 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
Chattahoochee Nature Center**

Why and how do baby songbirds develop so quickly, some launching into flight only 11 days after hatching? In 2002 Julie Zickefoose began to draw and paint wild nestlings day by day, bearing witness to their swift growth. Over the next 13 years, Julie would document the daily changes in 17 bird species from hatching to fledging. Her book, *Baby Birds*, is the enchanting result, with more than 500 life studies that hop, crawl, and flutter through its pages. In this program, Julie shares her influences as well as her artistic process, a must-see for the aspiring natural history artist or enthusiast.



Julie Zickefoose

More information and tickets can be found at www.atlantaaudubon.org/juliezickefoose.



Janisse Ray

**Closing Celebration featuring Janisse Ray
Sunday, May 20, 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM
SweetWater Brewing Company**

Join us for the Atlanta Bird Fest Closing Celebration, when we will honor our Atlanta Bird Fest participants and volunteers, as well as award prizes to our Birdathon Challenge participants. Celebrated Georgia author and environmental activist Janisse Ray joins us as our keynote speaker. Her address, "Our Life with Birds," will be a lyrical and heartfelt look at the wild creatures that instill such passion, especially those that inhabit the environs of our home state, why we follow them and name them, and what they teach us about the world. She will highlight a half dozen remarkable natural history events that will help us love the birds of Georgia with even more dedication. Join us to hear this clarion call for

the protection of wild places and a defense of hope.

More information and tickets can be found at www.atlantaaudubon.org/closingcelebration.

Spring Plant Sales are Sprouting

By Lillie Kline

This spring, Atlanta Audubon is again partnering with Beech Hollow Farms and Blue Heron Nature Preserve on native plant sales to help expand habitat for birds. The Blue Heron Nature Preserve sale will be held during our Open House on April 21. We're also partnering with the Chattahoochee Nature Center on their native plant sale, which will take place March 30 and 31 and April 6 and 7. These sales will highlight nectar-producing plants that provide resources for hummingbirds and orioles, along with some hard-to-find piedmont specialties. Limited quantities of plants are available for pre-sale on the Atlanta Audubon website, www.atlantaaudubon.org/ open-house-plant-sale.



Bee Balm,
by Mim Eisenberg.

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Goldfinch on coneflower, by Dan Vickers

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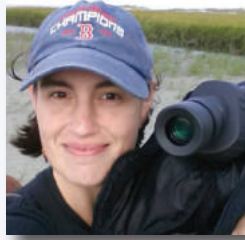
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Wingbars is the official newsletter of Atlanta Audubon Society and is published 10 times a year. We feature news, upcoming events, meetings, field trips, and projects. We hope you will join us. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect policies of Atlanta Audubon Society.



From the Executive Director

By Nikki Belmonte



Nikki and her son, Ellery, have participated in the Big Day Challenge the past two years.

The third annual Atlanta Bird Fest will soon get underway. Have you registered for an activity yet? Atlanta Bird Fest has something for everyone. From the mountains to our urban parks to longleaf forests, we've got a new place for you to explore and, surely, a new Georgia bird for you to discover.

But it's not just about you. This is your chance to get new people involved. Bring them into the flock and show them what they're missing. The idea behind Atlanta Bird Fest is to grow awareness of and affinity for birds by offering a variety of ways for people to experience and enjoy them. Through the lens of birds, we can introduce people to so many aspects of the natural world.

For those of you who can't make any of the events, I encourage you to sign up for our Birdathon Challenge (www.atlantaudubon.org/birdathon) because you can do your bird watching any time during Atlanta Bird Fest. The past two years, I've done a six-hour challenge with my elementary-aged son. The first year we birded local baseball fields. The next year we birded in local parks. This year I'm going to incorporate the whole family, and I'm sure we'll come up with a whacky strategy to

incorporate into our busy spring weekends. There are minimal rules for this Birdathon Challenge to make it easy for anyone to participate. The point is to get outside and notice birds. So be creative and challenge yourself and a new birding buddy, but most importantly, have fun with it.

Atlanta Bird Fest is one of the ways that Atlanta Audubon is building passion and support for birds and their habitats. We have to "think globally and act locally" when it comes to bird conservation. That is the power of the Audubon network: We are local everywhere. So help me spread that passion and support in metro Atlanta this spring and be a part of Atlanta Bird Fest.

Patagonia Atlanta Awards Grant to Atlanta Audubon

We are pleased to announce that Atlanta Audubon has been chosen as the recipient of a \$10,000 grant from Patagonia Atlanta. Grant funds will be used to support bird-friendly habitat restoration at Atlanta Audubon's existing restoration sites at Emma Wetlands, The Confluence, Deepdene Park, and Friendship Forest. Continued work at these sites will expand the removal of invasive and exotic plants and the installation of native, bird-friendly plants. In addition, grant funds will be used to expand avian monitoring and public engagement and education at these sites.

Patagonia's Retail Grants Program supports small grassroots activist organizations with provocative direction-action agendas, working strategically on multipronged campaigns to preserve and protect the environment. Atlanta Audubon's bird-friendly habitat restoration project was chosen to be funded by the local retail staff at Patagonia Atlanta located at 34 E Andrews Drive NW in Atlanta, and we look forward to working with them as we move forward on our project.



The Patagonia Grant will be used to support bird-friendly habitat restoration at Atlanta Audubon's Habitat Restoration locations, including The Confluence. Photo by Adam Betuel.

Atlanta Audubon Ramping Up Advocacy Efforts We need YOU to get involved!

By Dottie Head

As part of our mission to build places where birds and people thrive, Atlanta Audubon watches vigilantly for activities that could affect birds or undermine the integrity of bird habitat. In the current political climate, many of our most important environmental safeguards and conservation policies are being threatened or dismantled—from clean air and water regulations, to the Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act, to our nation's iconic national parks and wildlife refuges, and many more. Many of these issues have long-term implications for people, along with more immediate impacts on birds.

Many birds found in Georgia are migratory and stop in Georgia before continuing their journey to other continents. Our work to inform decision makers about legislation and policies that benefit or threaten birds and their habitat therefore involves local, state, national, and, occasionally, international concerns.

Atlanta Audubon Society's Advocacy Committee, led by Amanda Woomer, Atlanta Audubon board member, meets regularly to discuss conservation issues and speaks out where appropriate. The Advocacy Committee relies on a growing list of Audubon Ambassadors to identify and monitor topics of interest and to write letters, make phone calls, and add their voices to the conservation chorus. If you are interested in joining our list of Audubon Ambassadors, please visit our Advocacy page at <https://www.atlantaaudubon.org/advocacy>.



A group of Atlanta Audubon staff, board members, and volunteers attended the BOEM Public Hearing to speak up for birds and protecting the Georgia coastline from oil and gas drilling. Picture L to R: Amanda Woomer, Nikki Belmonte, Dottie Head, Esther Stokes, Steve Newman, and Robyn Newman.

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Introducing Wood Thrush Watch

By Adam Betuel

April is arguably the most exciting month on the avian calendar. Resident birds are entirely focused on nesting and raising young, and migratory species are pouring northward with each favorable gust of wind. At Atlanta Audubon, we are most excited for the return of the Wood Thrush. From their distant wintering grounds in the tropical jungles and coffee farms of Central and South America, these spotted vocalists are now descending on parks and yards in Georgia. This spring, Atlanta Audubon challenges you to help us learn more about this charismatic species and how it utilizes our habitat.

In 2017, Atlanta Audubon named the Wood Thrush our focal species of conservation concern. Since then, we have highlighted its connection to shade-grown coffee with our new label and messaging. We've developed partnerships with local nurseries and gardens that have allowed us to distribute thrush-friendly native plants in yards, schools, public greenspaces, and at our habitat restoration sites. The growth of Project Safe Flight Atlanta and the launch of Lights Out Atlanta during this time has allowed us to document thrushes and other species that have collided with structures, and, hopefully, we've saved the lives of a few transient individuals. The recently launched Wood Thrush story map provides visitors with an engaging tool highlighting the treacherous journey and life history of our eastern songster. This spring, we are excited to announce the next Wood Thrush inspired program: Wood Thrush Watch.

Wood Thrush Watch is a citizen science activity that we hope will shed more light on where these birds occur throughout the metro area and their breeding success. Additionally, we hope to encourage the local birding community to explore new locations and historically under-surveyed parks. For many people, finding and identifying a Wood Thrush can be difficult. In addition to the survey protocol, we have created a bird quiz and helpful tips to teach people how to identify a Wood Thrush among all the other confusing brown thrushes and understory birds. This information will allow us to focus our efforts moving forward on areas that will have the largest impact for the local Wood Thrush population.

So how does one participate? Wood Thrush Watch is loosely based off eBird projects like the Rusty Blackbird Blitz or the Kirtland's Warbler Blitz, but with a longer survey window. From April 1 through October 31, we simply ask that you head out into the woods, specifically looking for the Wood Thrush. These dates cover the entire time that Wood Thrushes are found in our area, including both spring and fall migration as well as the breeding season. When you are out birdwatching, make sure you record your observations via eBird, with either the mobile app or via your computer once you return home. If you can, please share your observations with the eBird username, atlantaaudubonsociety.

To help us learn more about our local thrushes, we would like you to take a few extra steps when out birding. First, we strongly encourage you to explore a new birding patch or a park in a different part of town. So much of the birdwatching done in the Atlanta area is at the well-known birdwatching locations, like Piedmont Park or Kennesaw Mountain, or in the North Atlanta neighborhoods. Atlanta has many parks and greenspaces that go unvisited by birders, and we miss the vital

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Wood Thrush captured at banding station. Photo by Mary Kimberly.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT on Susan and Charles Loeb

(This is the 29th in a series on Atlanta Audubon volunteers.)

By Steve Phenicie

Susan and Charles Loeb have something in common with birds that get caught in a storm and end up in a place they didn't expect to: The same thing happened to them. Longtime residents of New Orleans, they came 12 years ago to flee Hurricane Katrina and be near a son. Atlanta has become home, Susan says, because they enjoy the climate, the people, and being near the mountains.

The Loeb's, both retired, reside in North Buckhead just a short distance from the Audubon office. They do not have children together, but each has three children from previous marriages, and each has six grandchildren. Susan's children are Scott Hightower of Atlanta, Dolly DeNyse of Hingham, Mass., and Ben Hightower of Austin, Texas. Charles's children are David Loeb of Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla., Teri Hunter of New Orleans, and Suzy Miller, also of New Orleans. All are married, as are some of the grandchildren.

Susan says that although she always had bird feeders, she didn't get serious about birding until coming to Atlanta. Charles decided to take the Master Naturalist class at Chattahoochee Nature Center, where he met Melanie Furr, the Atlanta Audubon education director, and learned of the Master Birder class. Both eventually enrolled and then got active in the

organization. Charles has been on the board for three years and has signed up for another three-year hitch.

Susan has been involved in a variety of activities, including being the co-chair with Phyllis Hawkins of the Atlanta Bird Fest student art show project both last year and this year. Susan thinks the project did much to boost the event's attendance as parents brought their participating children to see the display. Art is something Susan knows well, having taught it for 30 years; she still does watercolor and oil paintings and loves to draw. She did undergraduate work at Louisiana State University, Newcomb College at Tulane University, and the New Orleans Academy of Fine Arts and holds a graduate degree from Vermont College in Montpelier, Vt.

Susan has helped Adam Betuel with bird banding at the Emma Wetlands and in the process learned how hard a White-throated Sparrow can bite when it doesn't like to be held. She's participated in Project Climate Watch and sometimes pitches in on the Peel and Stick crew that gets *Wingbars* ready for mailing.

Charles, who earned both undergraduate and graduate degrees at Tulane University, has had a varied work life that included being an engineer for Boeing, having a home inspection business and being chief financial officer at a school.



Susan and Charles Loeb.
Photo by Steve Phenicie.

THANK YOU!

A Million Thanks...

... to **Roarke Donnelly** for his talk on piscicides use at the January meeting
... to our bird walk leaders for March: **Jason Ward, Roseanne Guerra, Angie Jenkins, Anne McCallum, Joy Carter, Gus Kaufmann, and Mary Kimberly** ... to **Daniel Zdonczyk** for his presentation on bird photography at the February meeting ... to **Robyn and Steve Newman, Amanda Woomer, Esther Stokes, Nikki Belmonte, and Dottie Head** for attending the BOEM public hearing on oil and gas exploration off the Georgia Coast to speak up for birds ... to **Marcia Jenkins, Kit Robey, Phyllis Hawkins, Gwen Barnett, Linda Frederick, and Anita Chilcutt** for their help with March Peel & Stick ... to **Stephen Ramsden** for coordinating the donation of a Meade Instruments spotting scope and tripod for our Atlanta Bird Fest raffle ... to **Sandy and Simon Miller** for stuffing sanctuary packets ... to **Cindy Wolfe and Vin Gleespen** for helping Joy Carter on short notice to lead a walk at Constitution Lakes for an international group of water security experts attending a meeting in Atlanta.



ASK CHIPPY

Q: I want desperately to see a starling murmuration in person. It's at the top of my bucket list. Do you know of any places in Georgia, near Atlanta, where you think maybe it'd be more likely to encounter one?

— Brent

A: Thanks for asking this interesting question. Did you know that European Starlings are not native to Georgia or the U.S. and that many people consider them pests? According to the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, all the European Starlings in North America descended from 100 birds set loose in New York's Central Park in the early 1890s. The birds were intentionally released by a group who wanted America to have all the birds that Shakespeare ever mentioned. It took several tries, but eventually the population took off. Today, more than 200 million European Starlings range from Alaska to Mexico

Starling murmurations are a fascinating natural phenomenon where hundreds, or even thousands, of starlings seem to move together as one unit, twisting, turning, swooping, and changing direction simultaneously.

Often, people observe this phenomenon when doing something else, like driving, and it's far more common to see starling murmurations in their native Europe. The murmurations happen when starlings are in large feeding flocks during winter months. It may be helpful for you to look in open agricultural areas where the birds are feeding on grains or in cow pastures where there are troughs of food. The murmurations usually happen toward end of day; it is the last thing they do before resting for the night.

If you search the Internet, you will find starling murmuration maps in the UK; one such website is <http://www.starlingsintheuk.co.uk/>. People who witness murmurations submit their observations to keep the map updated; you may enjoy looking at the gallery on this website to see photos and video. Unfortunately, similar murmuration maps are not currently available for Georgia or elsewhere in the United States.

Recently, an award-winning photograph of a mumuration, taken in northeastern Spain, made the rounds of social media and other news outlets. The photographer, Daniel Biber, was unaware of this incredible capture until he looked at it on his computer. The murmuration appears to be in the shape of a giant bird; <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/incredible-image-shows-group-of-starlings-in-shape-of-giant-bird-daniel-biber-a8138216.html>

Happy Birding! — Chippy



Atlanta Audubon Ramping Up Advocacy Efforts

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Considering all the many topics that are of importance today, the Advocacy Committee has identified the following four issues as our areas of specific concern for 2018:

1) **Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act** – The Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act (GOSA) dedicates up to 40% of the state sales and use tax to the protection of lands, waters, and wildlife without raising or creating any new taxes or fees. Georgia has lagged behind Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Alabama in per capita spending for land conservation and has had no dedicated source of funding for preserving our natural resources. According to data released by the Outdoor Industry Association last year, 58% of Georgians participate in outdoor recreation activities such as birdwatching, camping, bicycling, fishing, hunting, and hiking every year. Funds generated by GOSA could be used to protect lands critical to clean drinking water, to ensure access to wildlife management areas, and to expand and improve parks and trails.

The Georgia Constitution requires voter approval for any dedicated tax funding. If the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act and the resolution calling for the required referendum pass this year, the measure would be on the ballot this fall. A recent poll indicated overwhelming, bi-partisan support for GOSA, with eight in 10 voters supporting the constitutional amendment. Please contact your Georgia representatives and ask them to support the GOSA legislation.

Atlanta Audubon supports the Georgia Outdoor Stewardship Act.

2) **Migratory Bird Treaty Act** – One of the nation's strongest bird conservation laws, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, is under attack. The Act is our nation's cornerstone bird conservation law. Passed in 1918, it is on the eve of its 100th anniversary, and it has seen decades of success conserving birds and bringing numerous species back from the brink of extinction. The law makes it illegal to kill most native bird species without a valid permit.

Congress and the Department of the Interior are proposing to severely undermine this important bill. The House Committee on Natural Resources has included an amendment in the Energy Bill, H.R. 4239, and the Department of the Interior has issued a new policy directive that would absolve oil and gas companies from responsibility for bird deaths in oil pits, on power lines, and from other energy-related infrastructure. If passed, this would be a disaster for birds as energy companies would no longer be penalized for unintended bird deaths that result from their activities.

Please take action today and tell Congress and the Administration to fight

for migratory birds and oppose changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. You can learn more about this issue and contact your elected representative at <https://abcbirds.org/action/petition-mbta>.

Atlanta Audubon opposes changes to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

3) **Oil and Gas Exploration Off Georgia Coast** – Atlanta Audubon Society has joined National Audubon Society, 100 Miles Georgia, Sierra Club, the Georgia Conservancy, Environment Georgia, Center for a Sustainable Coast, 141 cities and counties, including Georgia communities Savannah, Brunswick, Hinesville, St. Mary's, Kingsland, Porterdale, and Tybee Island, and a long list of other conservation organizations and coastal communities in opposing a proposal by the Administration to vastly expand oil drilling off of America's beaches and coasts, including Georgia's 100-mile coastline.

The proposed plan includes parts of the outer continental shelf (OCS) along the Arctic, Atlantic, and Pacific coasts. Atlantic seabirds and shorebirds that would be especially at risk from offshore oil and gas development include Red Knots, Piping Plovers, American Oystercatchers, Greater Shearwaters, Sooty Shearwaters, and Roseate Terns.

National Audubon Society and other organizations are encouraging the current Administration to limit offshore drilling to locations where leases are already active. Expanding lease sales to sensitive marine areas off the Arctic, Atlantic and Pacific coasts threatens critical bird habitat as well as the economic viability of hundreds of coastal communities.

Atlanta Audubon staff, board members, and volunteers attended a public hearing on this issue on February 28 to meet with representatives from the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and express our concerns about the plan. In addition, Atlanta Audubon submitted a letter to the BOEM asking that the Georgia coast be excluded from the drilling proposal due to both the lack of oil resources off our coast and because of the risk posed to birds and other wildlife. In addition, an action alert was sent to Atlanta Audubon members and subscribers encouraging them to submit comments to the BOEM prior to the March 9 deadline. We will continue to monitor this issue as it develops.

Atlanta Audubon opposes drilling off the Georgia Coast and encourages the Administration to limit drilling to areas where leases are already active.

4) **Parks as Habitat** – Atlanta Audubon's mission is to build places where birds and people thrive. To this end, we support efforts to create and build parks that provide greenspace for people and native plants for birds and other wildlife. Look for more information on Atlanta Audubon's efforts in this area in future issues of *Wingbars*.

Spring Plant Sales are Sprouting

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The biggest threat to birds here in Georgia is habitat loss. The welfare of birds is intimately linked to the quality of food and shelter found in their habitats. As urbanization increases and natural habitats disappear, native plants can go a long way to restoring the habitats birds need. Atlanta Audubon Society is excited to partner again with Beech Hollow Farm, a 120-acre farm outside of Lexington, Georgia dedicated to propagating and preserving Georgia's native plants.

While Beech Hollow Farm was created in 2009, founders Pandora and Mike Williams began their mission nearly a decade earlier after witnessing the destruction of the natural environment first hand. They worked with developers to rescue native plants, seeds, and bulbs before land disturbances occurred. Today Beech Hollow is one of a small but growing group of native plant nurseries serving the metro Atlanta area. Sourcing plant stock locally helps to preserve Georgia's rich biodiversity and improve habitat across the state. Beech Hollow is able to provide some unique and unusual finds, such as Schwerin's False Indigo (*Amorpha schwerinii*) and Piedmont Barren Strawberry (*Waldsteinia lobata*), both available at our plant sale, along with more well known favorites including Butterfly Weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*), Coreopsis (*Coreopsis auriculata*), Bee Balm (*Monarda didyma*), and Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*).

As our birds face continued habitat destruction, gardens play an increasingly critical role in providing resources and connectivity to wildlife. Fortunately, any homeowner can provide high-quality resources simply through some thoughtful landscaping. Planting native plants provide the added benefit of helping homeowners save water by reducing lawn size, and adding plants can even help control flooding. Native plants are also hardy and well-adapted, so they thrive without synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, which hurt our pollinators and can run off into streams. These wonderful plants and the wildlife they sustain provide color and beauty, right in your own backyard. If your property provides high-quality habitat, please consider having it certified as an Atlanta Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary. It's for the birds!



Columbine by Dan Vickers.

EYES on EDUCATION

Congratulations to Our 2018 Hog Island Scholarship Winners

Atlanta Audubon Society is pleased to announce our scholarship winners for 2018. The recipients will attend National Audubon Society's ornithology camps this summer on Hog Island, Maine.

Jasmine Gaither is the recipient of the Louisa Echols Scholarship, which provides an educator with the opportunity to attend National Audubon Society's Educator's Week. Jasmine is a gifted teacher at Usher-Collier Elementary School in Atlanta. She actually developed an interest in birds last spring while hiking at Kenesaw Mountain, where she encountered a group of birdwatchers. She was "amazed at their ability to identify the birds with their binoculars and listening to the various calls" and remembers thinking that they seemed to be "exhilarated and relaxed." This encounter inspired Jasmine to want to learn all she can about birds and to share this knowledge with her students. In fact, this June, Jasmine will also be attending Atlanta Audubon's Taking Wing professional development workshop, which trains teachers how to use the study of birds to engage students in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) and other subjects. Working at a STEM-focused school, Jasmine is excited to share everything she learns this summer with her students and provide them with opportunities for hands-on outdoor learning. Outside of teaching, Jasmine's interests include reading, traveling, photography, hiking, and mentoring students.



Jasmine Gaither is the recipient of this year's Louisa Echols Scholarship.

Selu Adams will attend Audubon's Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens as the recipient of the Edward Barnsley Scholarship for Youth. Selu developed an interest in birding when she was about eight years old, and she shares that interest with her brother Etowah, who received our youth scholarship two years ago. She has always loved the outdoors and has several outdoor hobbies, including hiking, kayaking, and identifying and learning about native flora and fauna. She recently started documenting the biodiversity of her county with iNaturalist (an online social network and citizen science project for mapping and sharing observations of biodiversity across the globe). Selu's birding mentor, Georgann Schmalz, also plugged her in to Atlanta Audubon's Atlanta Urban Ecologists program for teens (offered with our neighbors and partners, Blue Heron Nature Preserve and The Amphibian Foundation, as well as other conservation nonprofits), and getting to know her during our monthly sessions has been a pleasure. When she's not outdoors (and probably sometimes when she is) Selu enjoys playing old-time and bluegrass music on the fiddle.



Selu Adams is the recipient of this year's Edward Barnsley Scholarship for Youth.

Congratulations to Jasmine and Selu. We can't wait to hear about your adventures!

Birdathon Challenge Kicks Off on April 14

It's time to clean off your bins and brush up on your bird songs: Birdathon Challenge 2018 will run from April 14 through May 13. Like a walk-a-thon, but for all of us bird nerds, the Birdathon Challenge is a fun, competitive event to raise funds from friends and family while birding this spring to support Atlanta Audubon's education and conservation programs. Complete your Birdathon Challenge during one of the Atlanta Bird Fest events with help from one of our guides, or find your own spot to bird. You can choose to build a Birdathon team or go it alone for a fun, different activity. Prizes will be awarded to participants at our May 20 Closing Celebration at SweetWater Brewing in a variety of categories, including Top Fundraiser, Best Bird, and Most Species Observed. Get more information and sign up to compete at www.atlantaudubon.org/birdathon.



Mary Nevil scans the horizon for birds on the 2017 Big Day Challenge. Photo by Dottie Head.

Introducing Wood Thrush Watch (Continued from Page 3)

avian information that lies at these spots. Not only will your visit to a new park shed more light on the birds that utilize these places but maybe you will also find the next rare bird hiding in plain sight. The second step you can take to add more value to this project is by adding details of breeding by the Wood Thrushes you encounter to your checklist. eBird has made it very easy for you to select the behavior you witnessed, whether it be a male singing in a wood lot or a pair actively feeding nestlings.

By participating in Wood Thrush Watch, you are contributing to the collective knowledge of the Wood Thrush locally and nation wide. The information gathered will allow us to better choose new habitat restoration sites, identify future field trip locations, see how the thrushes are faring in our urban environment, and contribute to the large-scale work being tackled by Cornell and other research organizations. So enjoy the warmer weather, listen to the serenade of bird songs that provides the background music to our city, and help us learn more about the Wood Thrushes that also love our metro area.

To learn more about program specifics and to view the reporting protocol, please visit www.atlantaudubon.org/wood-thrush-watch.

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, April 7, 2018

Piedmont Park (Fulton County)

8:00 AM

Leader: Jason Ward

Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.759.7770

GPS: N 33 47.025, W 84 22.746

Tuesday, April 10, 2018

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (Cobb County)

7:30 AM

Co-sponsored by the National Park Service

Leader: Joel McNeal

Cell contact morning of the walk: 617.259.0944

GPS: N 33 59.127 W 84 34.852

Wednesday, April 11, 2018

W.H. 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

Sunday, April 15, 2018

Noonday Creek Trail West Section (Cobb County)

8:00 AM

Leader: Angelia Jenkins

Cell contact morning of the walk: 678.570.4891

GPS: 34.00125, -84.59163

Tuesday, April 17, 2018

Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park (Cobb County)

7:30 AM

Co-sponsored by the National Park Service

Leader: Joel McNeal

Cell contact morning of the walk: 617.259.0944

GPS: N 33 59.127 W 84 34.852

Saturday, April 21, 2018

Morgan Falls Overlook Park (Fulton County)

8:30 AM

Leader: Roseanne Guerra

Cell contact morning of the walk: 678.358.4916

GPS: 33.97004, -84.37996

Tuesday, April 26, 2018

South River Trail (DeKalb County)

7:30 AM

Co-leaders: Jeff Sewell and Stan Chapman

Cell contacts morning of the walk:

678.758.4551(Jeff); 404.775.0650 (Stan)

GPS: 33.6537562, -84.186523

Saturday, April 28, 2018

Stone Mountain Park (DeKalb County)

8:00 AM

Leader: Chris Showalter

Cell contact morning of the walk: 404.625.7004

GPS: 33.7931, -84.1465

Please note: There is a daily \$15 parking fee, or you may obtain an annual parking pass for \$40.

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.

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 Teresa Lyle, field trip director at teresalyle0@gmail.com.

LIVE and LEARN

With This Atlanta Audubon Society Workshop

**Warbler Weekend
Classroom Workshop: TBD**

Weekend Trip: Friday, May 11 to Sunday, May 13

Trip Leader: Theresa Hartz

Limited to 11 participants

Cost: \$150/Atlanta Audubon members or \$175/non-members

Description: Stretch your neck and warm up those ears. It's time to prepare for spring migration. Theresa Hartz will lead participants to various hotspots in the North Georgia mountains, where it's possible to find more than 20 species of warblers, many of which will be singing on their breeding grounds. Participants in recent years have even seen the unusual Brewster's Warbler, a hybrid formed by a Golden-winged Warbler and a Blue-winged Warbler. The group will visit some mountain hotspots as well as some new warbler-rich locations. This guided trip will be preceded by a classroom session in April (date TBD). Registration fee does not include food or lodging. For more information, please contact Director of Education Melanie Furr at melanie@atlantaudubon.org, or call 678.973.2437.



Prothonotary Warbler by Dan Vickers.



ATLANTA AUDUBON SOCIETY

4055 Roswell Road ♦ Atlanta, GA 30342
678.973.2437

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April Monthly Meeting

The Caretta Research Project

Sunday, April 22, 2018, 3:30 to 5:30 PM at Manuel's Tavern

Join us for our monthly meeting at the iconic Manuel's Tavern. Kristina Williams, director of the Caretta Research Project of the Savannah Science Museum, will join us to discuss the different species of sea turtles found along the Georgia coast and reasons for their historic decline. She'll discuss the Caretta Research Project's work on recovery efforts and walk us through a field season on Wassaw Island to show how the group is helping to save Georgia's loggerhead sea turtles. The Caretta Research Project is a hands-on research, conservation, and education project that studies and protects the threatened loggerhead sea turtles that nest on the beaches of Wassaw National Wildlife Refuge on the coast of Georgia. The project began in 1972 and continues today as the longest continuously run turtle tagging program in the U.S. In addition, the Caretta Research Project serves as an "eco-vacation," where the public can join researchers on Wassaw Island for one-week sessions between May and early September, assisting in researching and protecting the loggerhead sea turtles.



*Join us for the April Monthly Meeting and hear about the Caretta Research Project, which documents Loggerhead Sea Turtle nests on Wassaw Island.
Photo by Kristina Williams.*

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.