

TAKING FLIGHT AS GEORGIA AUDUBON



GEORGIA
AUDUBON



Birds are telling us it's time to act.

Just like the proverbial canary in the coal mine, today's birds are once again sounding the alarm that our shared ecosystems are facing serious threats in the 21st Century. In a groundbreaking study published in the leading scientific journal *Science* in late 2019, we learned that in less than one lifetime, North America has lost 3 billion birds – more than one in four – from every habitat type. Additionally, a new report from National Audubon describes the profound impact the climate crisis will have on North American bird species. If we take no action, the report indicates that nearly two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction.

Here in Georgia, we face a significant loss of our favorite bird species due to climate change, habitat loss and fragmentation, building collisions, increased pesticide use, and other factors. Statewide, 23 percent – or 58 of Georgia's 254 bird species – are vulnerable. Without mitigation of these threats, many common Georgia species like the Brown Thrasher, Brown-headed Nuthatch, and Eastern Towhee could become uncommon or even disappear from Georgia.

Birds are an important indicator species; if an ecosystem is broken for birds, it is or soon will be broken for people, too. Our ecosystems depend on our birds. Where birds thrive, people thrive. Healthy habitats that support birds and other wildlife create healthy communities that we all can not only enjoy, but that we need for our own healthy survival.

CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

A BIRD'S EYE VIEW: GEORGIA AUDUBON OVER THE NEXT THREE YEARS

Since the 1970s, we have been a conservation leader in metro Atlanta through our mission to protect Georgia's birds and their habitats, for the benefits of birds and people alike.

Today, as Georgia Audubon, we answer the call to action to build a conservation-minded Georgia where **birds prosper, habitats flourish, and communities across the state are fully engaged.**

Building off our pillars of Conservation, Education, and Community Engagement, we will use **science-based, bird-focused programs** to **build a conservation ethic** in individuals, landowners, businesses, partner organizations, policy makers, and communities throughout the state.

Our recently adopted Strategic Plan lays out ambitious goals to guide our work as Georgia Audubon over the next three years and beyond. Our work throughout metro Atlanta over the past several decades has produced science-based and community-supported programming with **proven solutions for birds, habitats, and communities.** During the next three years, we will focus on scaling out our existing programming across the state, as well as increasing capacity and resources for **conservation and environmental education work that is critically needed in our state.**

The **mass decline of birds** is a warning about the health of our ecosystems. Using birds as our connection, Georgia Audubon will **lead statewide conservation, education, and community engagement programs** by collaborating with individuals and organizations.

With the support and guidance of several key partners, including the Georgia chapter network, National Audubon, state agencies, and significant donors, we move into this new chapter – the transition to Georgia Audubon and its associated work – with the ability to **amplify our ability to create bird-friendly communities** and to undertake much-needed conservation projects throughout the state.

Our health is intertwined, and in Georgia we have the opportunity to **set an example for bird-friendly communities everywhere.** We are committed to using our strong conservation, education, and community engagement programs to achieve **so much more for our environment** and for the state of Georgia. We will use our elevated platform to bring more people into the Georgia Audubon flock to multiply the opportunities to **protect local wildlife, preserve Georgia's unique habitats, and protect the vibrant landscapes** which have endured for centuries throughout the state.

**A New Era of Building
Places Where Birds and
People Thrive**







PHOTO BY JIM VERHAGEN

CONSERVATION

Increase and protect bird populations and healthy habitats in Georgia.

Partner with a broad range of individuals, communities and organizations to preserve, restore and connect bird habitat

- Identify and prioritize key bird habitat through revisions to existing wildlife management plans
- Expand habitat restoration through land management
- Expand and scale the Wildlife Sanctuary model
- Increase native plants across Georgia

Research and monitor bird populations throughout Georgia

- Monitor key bird species and/or critical habitat throughout Georgia
- Advance bird research by partnering with research and academic organizations
- Update *The Breeding Bird Atlas of Georgia*

Address causes of bird loss

- Monitor and address threats in urban landscapes
- Develop a model for bird-safe building ordinances
- Monitor and address threats on working lands
- Monitor local bird population responses to climate change

EDUCATION

Create a diverse group of environmental stewards and professional educators in Georgia.

Collaborate with, educate, and equip diverse communities to protect birds and connect with nature.

- Provide outreach and education to diverse communities
- Build and broaden new partnerships
- Provide resources, including scholarships and tools, to connect with nature

Train educators and support schools to build the next generation of conservationists.

- Train more educators by expanding professional development
- Provide resources, training and programming to schools
- Revise nature-based curriculum



PHOTOS BY MELANIE FURR









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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Engage and collaborate with communities throughout Georgia to connect people with birds.

Share the wonder and joy of birds and nature with individuals and communities.

- Expand statewide membership of Georgia Audubon
- Expand online engagement across Georgia
- Expand field trip program across Georgia
- Expand participation in Georgia Audubon Travel Program
- Diversify membership and program participants
- Expand Georgia Grows Natives for Birds Month and Georgia Bird Fest statewide
- Expand Monthly Meetings and speakers circuit statewide

Convene and collaborate with partners to amplify our impact.

- Leverage our collective voice to advocate on behalf of birds
- Partner with other local Audubon chapters to expand our community reach
- Partner with other organizations (businesses, municipalities, and other nonprofits) to expand our community reach
- Support statewide scaling of programs (Conservation, Education and Community Engagement)
- Increase statewide events

PHOTO BY DOTTIE HEAD



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