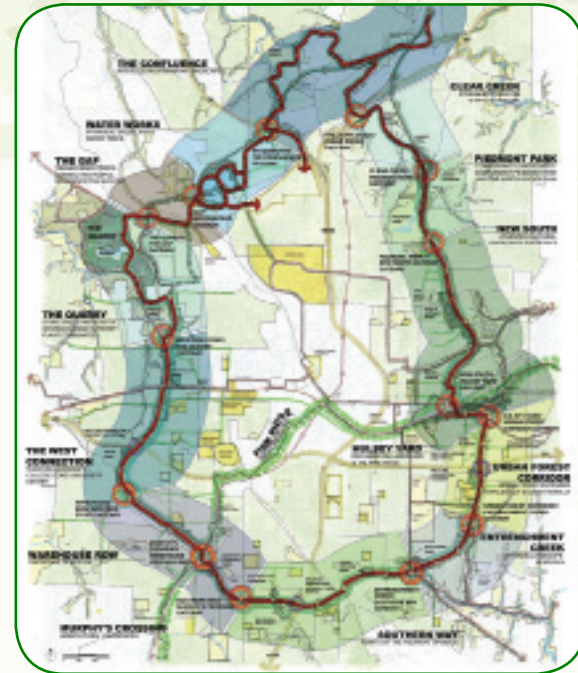


**What is the Atlanta BeltLine and Arboretum?**



The Atlanta BeltLine is being implemented to connect 45 Atlanta neighborhoods and 40 city parks with transit,

trails, greenspace, and new development along 22 miles of historic rail segments that encircle the city's urban core. The Atlanta BeltLine is attracting and organizing some of the region's future growth around transit, trails, and parks, helping to change the pattern of regional sprawl and leading to a vibrant and livable Atlanta with an enhanced quality of life. The Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum is an outdoor, living tree museum following the path of the Atlanta BeltLine around Atlanta's city center. The Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum will include planting and care of fourteen unique tree collections; provide educational programming to all neighborhoods and constituents; and serve as a corridor of scientific research and education. Multiple sections of the Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum have opened with more to come as new parks and trails are constructed. The Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum will be a success when everyone in Atlanta can identify their neighborhood by the trees that surround them, and therefore understand the value of trees in an urban environment. [www.beltline.org](http://www.beltline.org)



# Exploring YOUR Natural Neighborhood



## What is Unique About the Urban Forest Corridor Natural Neighborhood?

The Urban Forest Corridor natural neighborhood is a celebration of the role that urban trees play in revitalizing neighborhoods and is the home of the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center. The Urban Forest Corridor highlights urban street trees, the BeltLine Arboretum Nursery and the importance of selecting the "right tree for the right place." Neighborhoods in this area include Ormewood Park, Grant Park, Glenwood Park, Cabbagetown and Reynoldstown.

This special natural neighborhood not only provides trails and an important tree canopy (see "What are the Benefits of the Trees in My Neighborhood?" inside), but also gives birds and wildlife suitable green space to thrive and flourish. Spring and fall migrant species of birds rest and refuel here before traveling on. Birds and other wildlife that make this area their home year-round will also benefit from the Urban Forest Corridor natural neighborhood. You will find many common birds here including the Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Cardinal, Brown Thrasher (the state bird of Georgia) and several species of woodpeckers. Other wildlife include deer, foxes, beavers, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, and opossums, along with various types of reptiles and amphibians. To learn more visit the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center that features innovative technologies, designs, and demonstrations that showcase sustainable urban forestry practices. Take a walk at different times of the day and find wildlife scurrying along, sharing your natural neighborhood.



**Atlanta Audubon Society**

Atlanta Audubon Society is the region's primary education and conservation group dedicated to birds. Educational programs, conservation initiatives and community outreach are at the heart of the organization. Atlanta Audubon provides the community with important educational opportunities including field trips, workshops, the exclusive

Master Birder Program, birding camps for young people and scholarship programs. Individuals and communities are engaged in unique ways to directly impact the conservation of birds. Atlanta Audubon's conservation work focuses on "Creating, Promoting and Preserving Bird-Friendly Habitat," and includes overseeing the Georgia Important Bird Areas program, monitoring eastern hemlock trees to combat the hemlock woolly adelgid in the North Georgia Mountains, managing the Backyard Wildlife Sanctuary Certification program, and serving as the steward for a 183-acre wildlife sanctuary. Protecting the birds that we love is the most important thing we do. [www.atlantaaudubon.org](http://www.atlantaaudubon.org)

Answers: Wildlife in Your Neighborhood

1. Eastern Gray Squirrel (often raids the nests of many types of birds)
2. Virginia Opossum (nocturnal and North America's only marsupial—mammals of which the females have a pouch)
3. Green Tree Frog (females can lay up to 400 eggs in shallow water)
4. Eastern Chipmunk (its diet consists of grains, nuts, birds' eggs, small frogs, fungi, worms and insects)
5. Raccoon (walking on all four feet with an arch in its back and non-retractable claws, it uses the whole sole of the foot "heel to toe" as it walks, like humans)

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**Trees Atlanta**

Trees Atlanta is a nationally recognized citizens group dedicated to protecting and improving Atlanta's urban forest by planting, conserving and educating. Trees in urban areas provide a number of economic, health and social benefits and are essential for clean air, storm water management, erosion control, noise absorption, bird and wildlife habitat, and more. Since 1985, Trees Atlanta has planted and distributed 75,000 trees. Trees Atlanta programs include *NeighborWoods*, volunteer-based planting and care of trees 6-10 feet tall; *Large Trees*, planting and care of trees 10-15 feet tall; *Forest Restoration*, a program that teaches citizens about the problems of invasive species and how to evaluate, manage and improve community green spaces; *Neighborhood Arboreta*, a program that places identifying markers next to neighborhood trees along with a self-guided walking tour map of the area; and *Education*, offering programming year round to teach citizens about the importance of trees. Trees Atlanta does not just plant trees...we plant communities.

[www.treesatlanta.org](http://www.treesatlanta.org)

**About the Photos**

**Cover:**  
*Luna Moth, Monarch Caterpillar, Monarch Butterfly and Blue Grosbeak* by Dan Vickers; *Bald Cypress* by Steve Sanchez

**Inside Left Panel:**  
*Crape Myrtle and Elm* by Steve Sanchez;  
*Squirrel, Eastern Chipmunk, and Raccoon* by Dan Vickers;  
*Green Tree Frog* by Darlene Moore  
Design by Laura Woods

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**Urban Forest Corridor Symbolic Bird**



**Tufted Titmouse**

Chances are you have heard the boisterous Tufted Titmouse, *Baeolophus bicolor*. It is a common visitor to bird feeders and a familiar face in deciduous forests and urban parks alike.

Titmice are a true joy to watch, whether they are hanging from branches and picking off insects, rummaging through the leaf litter for a tasty meal, or taking one seed at a time to hide in bark crevices for the coming winter.



Tufted Titmouse by Trevor Hodgson

The Tufted Titmouse is easily identified by a crest of feathers on its head, a conspicuous black eye, and orange side patches under gray wings. Both males and females look alike, and males sing a surprisingly loud song that sounds like *peter peter peter*. Tufted Titmice find mates and remain on a territory, separate from the flock. The male feeds the female while she incubates the eggs during the spring breeding season. Oftentimes, one juvenile will stay with its parents until the next season.

These birds nest in cavities of dead trees and depend on woodpeckers that create these shelters. The Tufted Titmouse is inquisitive and will always investigate a commotion made by other birds, often joining in to mob a predator. In this way, it serves as a sentinel in the bird community by loudly announcing danger nearby.

## Urban Forest Corridor Symbolic Trees



### Crape Myrtle

Lagerstroemia species are known for abundant colorful flowers. This exotic tree is also very tough, tolerating the roughest urban environments, but it is often mistreated by well-meaning citizens. The practice of topping (pruning the upper branches) Crape Myrtles negatively impacts the overall health of the tree, no matter how often it takes place. Its value to wildlife is limited, but it does attract many insects which, in turn, attract birds.



### Elm

The Elm, *Ulmus Americana*, was the most popular street tree in the early 1900's. Then, Dutch elm disease nearly wiped the species out, reminding us all that planting diverse tree species is as important for our urban forest as it is for wildlife. New varieties of the American elm, such as Valley Forge, Princeton and New Harmony, are being selected for their resistance to the disease. American elm is the favorite nesting site of the Baltimore Oriole and provides the Purple Finch with up to 25 percent of its dietary requirements.

## Get Educated! Get Involved!

Making a difference for Georgia's environment, including its birds and wildlife, means becoming educated about what is happening in your special neighborhood, in your state, across the country and around the world.

**Making a difference in the world begins with just one person...YOU!**

## Wildlife in Your Neighborhood

Here are just a few of the many amazing creatures you can find in your neighborhood.

Can you name them? Have you seen them in your natural neighborhood and do you know where they live?



## What are the Benefits of the Trees in My Neighborhood?

**Trees perform environmental, social, and economic services that directly benefit people and wildlife living in urban areas. They include:**

- Improving air quality
- Removing chemical pollutants in the ground, water and air
- Reducing the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere
- Cooling urban areas by providing shade and retaining moisture
- Assisting in energy conservation as trees intercept radiant heat and block the wind
- Securing or increasing water supplies by recharging our watersheds
- Increasing biodiversity by providing habitats for a diverse population of birds, mammals and insects
- Helping with noise reduction by acting as an effective buffer to screen-out urban noises
- Reducing erosion and soil loss
- Providing a valuable source of both human food and animal feed for urban households
- Calming and slowing traffic
- Reducing the extremes of flooding and drought
- Increasing property values and promoting community pride

## The Importance of Green Space: What Can YOU Do to Make a Difference?

Birds and wildlife need suitable green space to thrive and flourish. In the last 20 years, much of metro-Atlanta's natural tree cover (important habitat for bird and wildlife species) has been replaced with concrete and asphalt. Habitat loss and sprawl have devastated what was once Atlanta's rich heritage of urban green spaces and is the biggest culprit for the decline of bird and wildlife species. Birds like the Brown Thrasher, Common Grackle and Northern Flicker are impacted by the loss of green space. They lose important nesting sites and areas to feed. This also greatly affects migrating birds that no longer have important sites to rest and eat.



You can make a difference for birds and wildlife in your own backyard. Finding ways to provide **food, water, shelter, and nesting sites** for breeding and raising young are critical. You may think that your yard will not make a difference in the larger scheme of things, but you can help provide important individual corridors of vital green space for birds and wildlife. Consider, for instance, planting trees with Trees Atlanta ([www.treesatlanta.org](http://www.treesatlanta.org)) or certifying your own backyard, as a wildlife sanctuary (visit [www.atlantaaudubon.org](http://www.atlantaaudubon.org) for more details). When requirements are met, homeowners receive a sign stating that their property is registered as a "wildlife sanctuary" with Atlanta Audubon Society. Creating a wildlife sanctuary in your backyard is an important way to conserve and protect our environment.

## What Do the Birds and Wildlife in Your Neighborhood Need to Thrive?



### Food

*Feeders and plantings that offer seeds, flowers, and berries for wildlife*

- Feeders placed near your home will give you many hours of enjoyment. Feeders also provide relief to birds during winter weather. Food can also come from trees and plants that produce fruit and seeds.



### Water

*Birdbaths, water gardens, or natural features with flowing water*

- Water is essential. Water sources can be natural (like a stream) or man-made (birdbaths).
- Always provide clean water, replacing it in your birdbaths regularly to avoid disease.



### Shelter

*Active nesting areas or shelters that attract and protect birds and other wildlife*

- Shelter is needed to protect birds and wildlife from inclement weather and from predators. Always try to keep your cat indoors, if possible. Four million birds are killed each day by cats (both domestic and feral).



### Nesting Sites

*Bird boxes, natural cavities, or wood piles and vine tangles*

- You can provide many types of nesting sites, from piles of sticks to dense shrubs. Also, if you have a dead tree and it isn't a safety hazard for people or property, consider letting it stand. It can provide important nesting sites for many types of wildlife.



Native plants have a greater impact on wildlife than most exotic, non-native plants. Their flowers attract more bugs for birds to eat and their fruit has developed for thousands of years to feed wildlife. Native plants oftentimes provide twenty times more food than non-native species do. It is not uncommon for a large majority of land mass in yards to be covered in exotic species, so try to replace these with native species of shrubs, grass and ornamental trees.