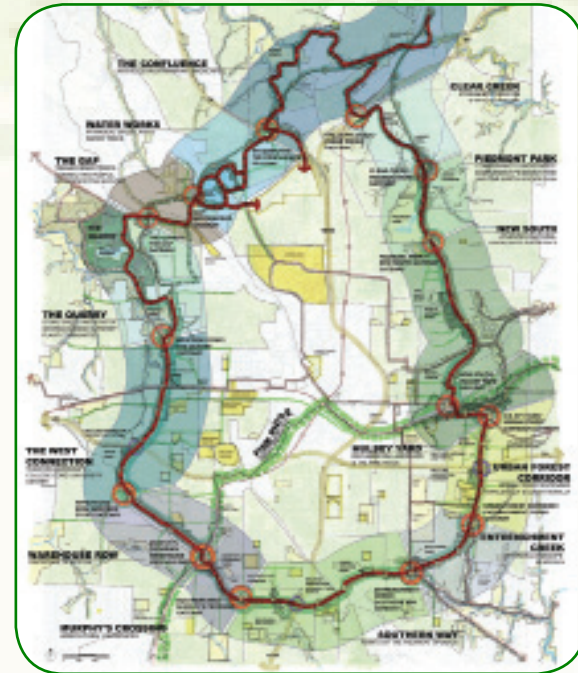


What is the Atlanta BeltLine and Arboretum?



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



Exploring **YOUR** Natural Neighborhood



What is Unique About the Murphy's Crossing Natural Neighborhood?

The Murphy's Crossing natural neighborhood plantings build on Atlanta's regional identity and agriculture heritage. The tree collections are focused on the redevelopment of the farmer's market heritage site and existing buildings and include representations of orchards, field edges, windbreaks and plantations. Neighborhoods in the Murphy's Crossing area include Capitol Hill, Capitol View Manor and Adair Park. Because it sits on the Subcontinental Divide, depending on your exact location in Murphy's Crossing, the water will either flow to the Gulf of Mexico or the Atlantic Ocean.

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 Murphy's Crossing natural neighborhood. You will find many common birds here including the American Robin, Pine Warbler, Cedar Waxwing and Northern Mockingbird. Other wildlife include deer, foxes, beavers, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, opossums, along with various types of reptiles and amphibians. Take a walk in Adair Park at different times of the day and observe wildlife foraging for food, sharing your natural neighborhood.

Murphy's Crossing Symbolic Bird



Carolina Wren

If you have ever seen a small "branchy" nest in your rain gutters, empty pots, old shoes or hanging plants, chances are it belongs to a Carolina Wren, *Thryothorus ludovicianus*. This spirited bird is often found near human establishments such as parks and gardens, as well as in natural forests with dense cover from shrubs.



Carolina Wren by Dan Vickers

The Carolina Wren is a small bird with a rusty back, wings and tail. It is distinguished from other wrens by its upright tail posture and white stripe above the eye. Some say it sounds as if it is singing *tea-kettle, tea-kettle, tea-kettle*, while others liken it to *cheeseburger, cheeseburger, cheeseburger*. With over 125 songs in its repertoire, the Carolina Wren will always brighten a quiet day. If you listen closely, you can even tell the difference between the young wren's hesitant song and the adult's powerful blast of musical notes.

Both the male and the female build the nest, as early as the beginning of March. Once the four to six young have hatched, the male will feed them while the female is busy producing a second brood. Contrary to many other bird species, this species breeds in high density areas such as major urban areas of Atlanta and Macon.



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

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

About the Photos

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

Inside Left Panel: Pecan Tree and Peach Tree 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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Murphy's Crossing Symbolic Trees



Pecan

Pecan Trees, *Carya illinoensis*, are the largest of the hickory trees and are a major crop in the Southeastern United States. They are known for producing more nuts in the South than the Midwest, but are typically not planted for their ornamental value since they can be quite messy. This slow growing tree can live up to 250 years and is a favorite of the Wood Duck, Eastern Gray Squirrel and Red Fox.



Peach

While the Peach Tree, *Prunus persica*, is primarily known for its juicy summer fruit, it is less known for its lovely pink flowers. It does not have a high ornamental value and can be very susceptible to disease and insects. They are good for wildlife that can take advantage of eating either the bugs and/or the fruit. Unfortunately, in order to produce peaches for human consumption, many chemicals are needed that are, of course, not good for wildlife.

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) or certifying your own backyard, as a wildlife sanctuary (visit 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.



Did You Know?

In the past, chestnut trees were vital for feeding both wildlife and human beings. After the chestnut blight nearly wiped out this important food source, oak trees filled in the space in the forest left by the chestnut trees. Oaks are considered by many to have the highest wildlife value of all trees. They produce acorns that are eaten by every animal from birds to bears. Their foliage is also eaten by mammals as well as insects, which are often eaten by birds. There are 32 varieties of oak trees native to Georgia.