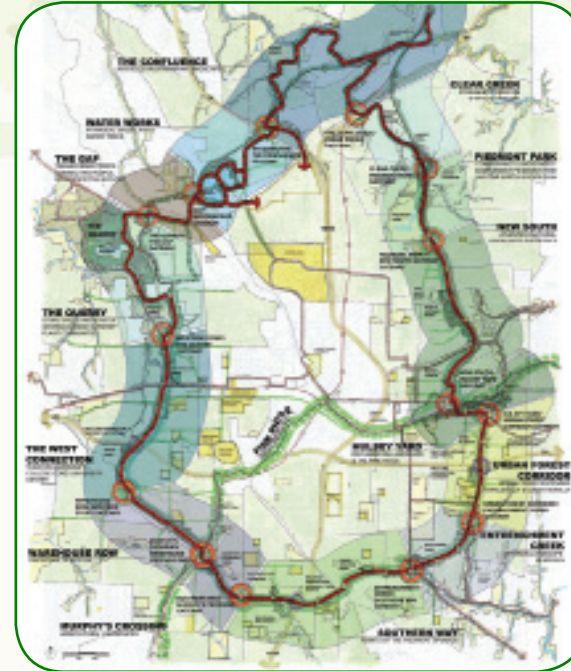


What is the Atlanta BeltLine and Arboretum?



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 Water Works Natural Neighborhood?

The Water Works natural neighborhood includes the areas of Underwood Hills, Loring Heights, Home Park and Bland Town. Trees in this natural neighborhood feature plants of exotic shapes and textures that revolve around the theme of "water play." Many of the plant names suggest a whimsical association with water: Water Oak, Umbrella Magnolia, Golden Raintree, Corkscrew Willow, Devils Walking Stick and Monkey Puzzle Tree.

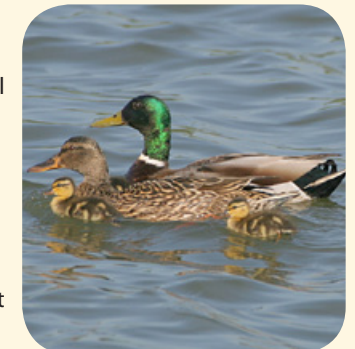
This special natural neighborhood not only provides trails and an important tree canopy (see "What are the Benefits of the Trees in My Neighborhood?" inside), but also gives birds and wildlife suitable green space to thrive and flourish. Spring and fall migrant species of birds rest and refuel here before traveling on. Birds and other wildlife that make this area their home year-round will also benefit from the Water Works natural neighborhood. You will find many common birds here including the Eastern Towhee, Carolina Wren, Great Blue Heron and a variety of warblers. Other wildlife include deer, foxes, beavers, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons, opossums, along with various types of reptiles and amphibians. The people in these communities are as diverse as the birds and wildlife you will find here. Take a walk at different times of the day and observe wildlife and how they share your natural neighborhood.

Water Works Symbolic Bird



Mallard Duck

The Mallard, *Anas platyrhynchos*, is a common and widespread "dabbling" duck and a familiar face in Georgia ponds and lakes. In fact, this bird's popularity with hunters has led to not only a vast increase in its range, but also the awareness of the crucial role that wetlands play in waterfowl conservation.



Mallard Duck by Dan Vickers

Mallards can be found in almost any shallow water habitat and are widespread throughout North America. The male is easily recognized by his iridescent green head, white neck ring, bright yellow bill and black recurved tail. The female is brown with an orange bill and a blue wing patch, called a speculum. It is important for the hen to be less colorful since she is the parent who will sit on the eggs for up to a month, protecting the 6-11 chicks from harm.

Mallards form monogamous, or exclusive, pairs in the winter, before breeding season begins. They can be seen foraging for insects and aquatic plants, with their heads completely under water and hindends skyward.

Like all ducks, Mallards require freshwater habitats for survival. The Mallard, a versatile bird, is an example of a species that has adapted well to human establishments successfully. As the most popular duck hunted, this species presence has called much needed attention to the plights of other lesser known birds.



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)

The Atlanta BeltLine Arboretum Natural Neighborhood Series was written and produced by Atlanta Audubon Society, 2010. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA.

TREES ATLANTA

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: River Birch and Winged Elm by Steve Sanchez; Squirrel, Eastern Chipmunk, and Raccoon by Dan Vickers; Green Tree Frog by Darlene Moore

Design by Laura Woods

This publication is made possible through the generous support of:



Water Works Symbolic Trees



River Birch

River Birch, *Betula nigra*, is known for its attractive peeling bark and ability to withstand wet soils. This fast grower is the most widely dispersed birch species in America and one of the few birches to grow in the south. It is not known for its wildlife value, but the catkins are used by Redpolls and Pine Siskins, and the foliage is eaten by deer.



Winged Elm

The Winged Elm, *Ulmus alata*, has corky wings on its branches and can grow over 70 feet tall. It has a twisted gangly, yet graceful, appearance with age. Birds often nest in the thick foliage and its buds and seed are popular with game birds, song birds and squirrels.

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?

One in every five Americans watch birds according to a report from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services. While 88 percent bird in their own backyards, almost half (42 percent) of all bird watchers travel to indulge in their hobby. By region, the report found that birding was most popular in the south where one-third of the population takes part in this activity.