

16th Annual
**Youth Birding
Competition**

April 15 - April 23, 2022

In-person & Virtual Ceremony April 23rd



Loggerhead shrike, 2021 T-shirt Art Contest winner by Owen Li



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Event Calendar

March – April	Team prep, birding, training and planning
March 31	Team registration deadline (<i>required</i>). Register at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC
April 15	Deadline to submit photo and liability waivers (<i>required</i>)
April 15-April 23	Teams pick a 24-hour period to bird within the 9-day window
April 22	5 PM – Deadline for virtual teams (those not bringing a checklist to Charlie Elliott Conference Center) to submit their checklist
April 23	5 PM – Deadline for all other teams to submit their checklist in person at Charlie Elliott Conference Center
April 23	5:30 PM – In-person banquet and virtual awards ceremony at Charlie Elliott Center Conference Center in Mansfield (the ceremony will also be livestreamed)

Send questions and waivers to:

Tim Keyes

One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520

(912) 222-0424 | Fax (912) 262-3143 | tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov

Why Go Hybrid?

While we feel better about holding an in-person ceremony in 2022 than we did last year, we want to allow for participation by teams that either are not comfortable coming to a banquet because of health concerns or who are not able to make the April 23 date. This hybrid YBC will allow more flexibility while still hopefully maintaining the excitement provided by a rush to the finish line and the fun of an in-person awards ceremony and banquet.

Teams have 2 options for competing:

- 1) **Virtual:** Select a contiguous 24-hour period to bird as a team between 5 PM April 15 and 5 PM April 22. Turn in the team's checklist via email or eBird (directions on page 29) by no later than 5 PM April 22.
- 2) **In-person:** Select a contiguous 24-hour period to bird as a team between 5 PM April 15 and 5 PM April 23 (this window includes the traditional YBC period ending just before the awards ceremony). Turn in the team's checklist in-person at Charlie Elliott Conference Center by 5 PM April 23.

Additional information:

- All teams are strongly encouraged to follow safety guidelines during their count (please carefully review and follow the recommendations on page 7). While these may hamper the competition in some ways, the safety and health of all is an utmost priority for the event.
- Awards and event T-shirts will be mailed to winning teams who are not at the ceremony.

Event Checklist

Thank you for your interest in the 2022 Youth Birding Competition. This event will be our first hybrid in-person/virtual-option YBC. We hope the changes make everyone comfortable regarding health concerns and allow scheduling flexibility for participants. To make sure you are eligible to compete, please use the following checklist to keep track of what needs to be done and when.

	DEADLINE	ITEM
_____	March 31	Last day to register. Carefully review rules and guidelines; register at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC .
_____	April 15	Mail/e-mail/fax liability waiver (page 24) & photo release form (page 25) - Send to Tim Keyes (address page 2)
_____	April 15	5 PM – Start of 9-day window for teams to select a 24-hour period to bird
_____	April 22	5 PM – Virtual teams (those not bringing a checklist to Charlie Elliott Conference Center) turn in their checklists no later than this date.
_____	April 23	5 PM – YBC birding window ends. All teams other than virtual participants turn in their checklists in person at Charlie Elliott Conference Center in Mansfield.
_____	April 23	5:30 PM – Awards ceremony, in person for teams at Charlie Elliott and livestreamed for virtual participants

What Is the YBC?



The Youth Birding Competition is a 24-hour birding event held during a 9-day period that coincides with peak spring migration where teams of 2-5 kids compete against others by age division to find the most birds in Georgia. A banquet and awards ceremony follows on April 23 at Charlie Elliott Conference Center.

When is it?

Teams select a contiguous 24-hour period between 5 PM April 15 and 5 PM April 23 and spend the day (and night!) finding as many species as possible within Georgia. Checklists are turned in via a shared eBird list or email no later than 5 PM April 22 – for teams competing virtually – or in person by 5 PM April 23 at Charlie Elliott Conference Center.

Where is it?

Visit as much or as little of the state of Georgia as you want. There are no restrictions on where you can bird. Just make sure you have permission or the licenses/permits needed to access each site.

Do you need to be an expert?

No! We can try to pair your team with an experienced birder (mentor) to help you learn about birds before the competition. See page 13 for details. ***During the competition, only the youth participants can identify birds.***

Who does it benefit?

Your team can use the Youth Birding Competition to raise money for the Georgia Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund – the main fund for [DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section](#) – or for the conservation organization of your choice.

Are there prizes?

Of course! For each age group (K-2nd, 3-5th, 6-8th, or 9-12th) teams will compete for most birds seen, most money raised and the top first-year teams. Grand prizes include new binoculars for the team finding the most birds. There will be door prizes for almost all participants who attend the ceremony.

How much does it cost?

Participation is absolutely FREE.

How can you register? Register online by March 31 at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC.

Competition Rules

1. All teams must have an adult chaperone/driver.
2. **Participants must identify birds on their own** – Adults must not help locating or identifying birds.
 - a. *If the team comes to a consensus on the identification of a bird, and the adult knows it is wrong, the adult can strike the species from the list. Teams cannot count that individual bird again, although if they encounter the species again and correctly identify it, it can go on the list. This procedure helps avoid the identification becoming a “guessing game” until they hit upon the correct identification.*
 - b. *Team participants can use field guides in book form and in-phone app form to assist them with identifying birds, but they cannot use automated bird identification tools such as Merlin’s Bird ID Wizard or devices that identify species based on photos or on recordings of songs and calls. The goals of this contest include the development of skills needed to solve a mystery: the identification of a bird species the participants might not have seen before. Those skills involve learning how to read range maps, how to recognize general habitat types, how to categorize a bird as a member of a species group such as sparrows, warblers, woodpeckers or sandpipers, and how to recognize and use field marks to single out a specific species from one of the groups. Using automated identification devices defeats the learning objective.*
3. Teams must have at least two participants and not more than five.
4. Teams must compete within the age division of their oldest participant.
5. Team members must stay within voice contact of each other at all times.
6. All birds counted must be identified by at least two team members.
7. Count only full species (as listed on official GOS State Checklist).
8. Birds must be conclusively identified by sight or sound. A bird only identified to a group (i.e., scaup, either greater or lesser) may be counted as a species if no other bird from that group appears on the list.
9. Birds counted must be alive, wild, unrestrained and within the state of Georgia.
10. Participants must follow the American Birding Association (ABA) code of Birding Ethics (pages 8-9).
Obey all access rules to public lands and acquire permission to access private land.
11. Electronic or recorded birdcalls may be used (within ABA code of birding ethics - i.e., not used with rare or endangered species, or in areas where their use is prohibited such as on national wildlife refuges).
12. Flushing birds from nests or cavities is not allowed.
13. Teams can travel as much of the state as they want.
14. Birds can only be counted during a 24-hour period selected by the team between 5 PM April 15 and 5 PM April 23. Teams can start and finish their count at any time as long as it is a single contiguous 24-hour period (ex., 5 PM to 5 PM, midnight to midnight, noon-noon, 6 AM to 6 AM, etc.).
15. The team can either submit its checklist in person at Charlie Elliott Conference Center by 5 PM April 23 or via eBird or email (sending images of the checklist) by 5 PM April 22. *Please note the different deadlines for checklists submitted in-person at Charlie Elliott and virtually.*
16. Totals are considered final once checklists are submitted.
17. The decision of the judges in all rulings is final.

Safety Guidelines

We strongly encourage all teams to make every effort to participate as safely as possible. Please follow the recommendations below.

1. Participants, including those fully vaccinated, should follow [CDC travel recommendations](#), [CDC recommendations for daily activities](#) and other relevant federal, state and local restrictions and guidelines at the time of their tournament day. All local, state and/or federal restrictions in place on your tournament day supersede any YBC guidelines. For more details, see the [Georgia Department of Public Health's website](#).
2. All rules, terms and conditions are subject to change up to and including during the dates of the event to comply with federal, state and/or local restrictions and [evolving best practices](#). These rules and guidelines are being adopted to ensure that health and safety is the top priority as we have fun, connect with one another (virtually or safely in person) and fundraise for avian conservation work throughout Georgia.
3. For teams with unvaccinated participants, we recommend that youth from separate families travel in separate vehicles. We know this may complicate the count and limit the number of sites a team can visit, but the safety of participants is of paramount importance. For travel in vehicles, even when all occupants are fully vaccinated, wearing masks is recommended.
4. Participants and chaperones should maintain social distancing wherever possible, staying at least 6 feet apart from teammates who are not in their immediate family.
5. When social distancing is not possible, we encourage participants and chaperones to wear masks.
6. Regular hand sanitizing and/or handwashing is highly recommended.



ABA CODE OF BIRDING ETHICS

1. Promote the welfare of birds and their environment.

1(a) Support the protection of important bird habitat.

1(b) To avoid stressing birds or exposing them to danger, exercise restraint and caution during observation, photography, sound recording, or filming.

Limit the use of recordings and other methods of attracting birds, and never use such methods in heavily birded areas, or for attracting any species that is Threatened, Endangered, of Special Concern, or is rare in your local area.

Keep well back from nests and nesting colonies, roosts, display areas, and important feeding sites. In such sensitive areas, if there is a need for extended observation, photography, filming, or recording, try to use a blind or hide, and take advantage of natural cover.

Use artificial light sparingly for filming or photography, especially for close-ups.

1(c) Before advertising the presence of a rare bird, evaluate the potential for disturbance to the bird, its surroundings, and other people in the area, and proceed only if access can be controlled, disturbance minimized, and permission has been obtained from private landowners. The sites of rare nesting birds should be divulged only to the proper conservation authorities.

1(d) Stay on roads, trails, and paths where they exist; otherwise keep habitat disturbance to a minimum.

2. Respect the law, and the rights of others.

2(a) Do not enter private property without the owner's explicit permission.

2(b) Follow all laws, rules, and regulations governing use of roads and public areas, both at home and abroad.

2(c) Practice common courtesy in contacts with other people. Your exemplary behavior will generate goodwill with birders and non-birders alike.

3. Ensure that feeders, nest structures, and other artificial bird environments are safe.

3(a) Keep dispensers, water, and food clean, and free of decay or disease. It is important to feed birds continually during harsh weather.

3(b) Maintain and clean nest structures regularly.

3(c) If you are attracting birds to an area, ensure the birds are not exposed to predation from cats and other domestic animals, or dangers posed by artificial hazards.

4. Group birding, whether organized or impromptu, requires special care.

Each individual in the group, in addition to the obligations spelled out in Items #1 and #2, has responsibilities as a group member.

4(a) Respect the interests, rights, and skills of fellow birders, as well as people participating in other legitimate outdoor activities. Freely share your knowledge and experience, except where code 1(c) applies. Be especially helpful to beginning birders.

4(b) If you witness unethical birding behavior, assess the situation, and intervene if you think it prudent. When interceding, inform the person(s) of the inappropriate action, and attempt, within reason, to have it stopped. If the behavior continues, document it, and notify appropriate individuals or organizations.

Group Leader Responsibilities [amateur and professional trips and tours].

4(c) Be an exemplary ethical role model for the group. Teach through word and example.

4(d) Keep groups to a size that limits impact on the environment and does not interfere with others using the same area.

4(e) Ensure everyone in the group knows of and practices this code.

4(f) Learn and inform the group of any special circumstances applicable to the areas being visited (e.g., no tape recorders allowed).

4(g) Acknowledge that professional tour companies bear a special responsibility to place the welfare of birds and the benefits of public knowledge ahead of the company's commercial interests. Ideally, leaders should keep track of tour sightings, document unusual occurrences, and submit records to appropriate organizations.

**PLEASE FOLLOW THIS CODE AND DISTRIBUTE
AND TEACH IT TO OTHERS**

(code written by American Birding Association - <http://americanbirding.org>)



YBC Birding Strategies

The main point of this competition is to have fun outside while learning about the wonderful birds of Georgia. You can count birds in your yard or traverse the state. A team that successfully identifies 20 species in their yard and has a great time is just as important as a team that drives hundreds of miles and finds 160 species or more. Because different teams will want to take different approaches, I have provided some general advice and several possible routes. None of this information should be seen as the right way to do it, as most of the fun of birding is exploring on your own and finding good places and birds.

General Strategy:

1) Birds are creatures of habitat:

The more habitats you visit, the more bird species you will find. Many species are only found in specific habitats, and if you don't visit these sites, you won't find the birds. Therefore, as you plan where to go, try to include as many different types of habitats as possible such as ponds, lakes, streams, pine forests, hardwood forests, fields, wetlands, etc. By understanding the basic habitat preferences of our birds, you will know what to expect in each habitat you visit. Edges between habitat types can be particularly good places to look for birds.

2) Birds are also creatures of habit:

It is helpful to know what to expect in spring in Georgia. Many songbirds and shorebirds will be in peak migration. A good reference is the bar chart section of Giff Beaton's [Birding Georgia](#) that shows when each species can be found in Georgia (see below).

3) The more you know, the more you will find:

It goes without saying that the more you know about the birds, the more you will find. You will learn to make identifications with just a quick look, or even by the song alone. This type of skill takes time to develop however, so don't get frustrated. Instead, take advantage of your team mentor and training days designed to help you develop these skills. Just as important, get outside on your own with binoculars and a field guide, and practice. Don't stop once you have identified a bird. Studying behavior can be a great way to learn more about a bird and will help you identify it more quickly the next time you see it.

4) Take advantage of easily available birding resources:

If you plan to travel throughout the state, Giff Beaton's book [Birding Georgia](#) is invaluable. It shows more than 100 top birding sites in the state with birding strategies and species to expect. Most of the sites mentioned in this discussion are in this book, with detailed maps and directions. There are many local Audubon chapters in Georgia with expert birders and monthly meetings where you can meet and learn from other birders. www.eBird.org is also an incredible resource for learning about what birds should be around at different locations and times of year. See the Birding Resources section of this booklet (*pages 19-21*).

Specific Strategies:

Since different teams may approach this event with a wide range of intensity, below are three possible routes based on a mellow, intermediate, or hard-core approach.

Teams take very different approaches depending on their age, experience, and goals for the event. Many teams of younger birders may want to spend most of the day around their houses and local parks. More ambitious teams may want to begin in north Georgia at a migrant spot like Kennesaw Mountain, where they could luck into large numbers of migrant songbirds. The most extreme approach may be to start on the coast of Georgia and find as many coastal species as possible before working your way back toward the mountains.

Whichever approach you choose, enjoy the time outside learning about Georgia's amazing and diverse bird communities.



What to Bring on the Count Day

- Bird book
- Binoculars
- Spotting scope (optional)
- Map of Georgia
- Raincoat (check local forecasts)
- Hat
- Sun block
- Mosquito repellent
- Snacks
- Drinks
- Bird Checklist
- Pen
- Any medication required
- Smartphone, iPod, tape player, or CD player to play owl calls (optional)
- Camera/phone – we are always looking for good pictures of kids birding
- Hand sanitizer
- Masks
- Sense of humor

By 5 PM April 23 at Charlie Elliott Conference Center (*or 5 PM April 22 if not providing these items in-person at the conference center*), please submit:

- Checklist of birds counted via eBird or email or brought in person to awards ceremony and banquet.
- Fundraising amount (if your team raised money)
- Mentor score sheet (if competing for the mentor award)



Being a YBC Mentor

What is the Youth Birding Competition (YBC)?

The YBC is a 24-hour competitive bird count where students compete against other teams to find as many birds as they can in a day in Georgia. Teams plan their own routes and kids have to locate and identify all birds on the count, but mentors can help them prepare in the months and weeks prior to the YBC.

What is a birding mentor?

A birding mentor could be a teacher, a parent or an interested birder who knows the birds well enough to help a team of students learn to identify birds. When mentors meet with their teams, a teacher or parent must be present.

What does a mentor have to do?

Mentors must commit to meeting with their teams at least 3 times before the event. This can involve helping using optics for young teams, helping with basic bird ID or habitat associations and route planning.

It is not necessary for the mentors to join the team on the day of the event, though they are welcome to. On the team's day of competition, the students cannot get any help finding or identifying birds from their chaperone/mentor.

What do mentors get?

Mentors will receive a free Youth Birding Competition T-shirt (bound to become a collector's item) and a hearty thanks from the team and YBC coordinators. The mentor who commits the most time and energy to their team will win a fantastic prize!

If these material things don't interest you, rest in the satisfaction that you are helping pass on your love of birds to the next generation.



Mentor Score Sheet

If you are a team mentor and would like to enter the competition for a top-quality prize, please fill out the following chart and return it to Tim Keyes **by 5 PM April 23**, *if you are attending the awards ceremony in person*, or **by 5 PM April 22** *if you will not be at the ceremony* (contact details below).

Final decisions will also take into account the number of birds seen and amount of funds raised by each team.

Mentor Name _____

E-mail Address _____

Mentor Address _____

YBC Team Name(s) _____

Please use the chart below to record all contact you have with your team or teams that you are mentoring.

DATE	TEAM NAME	INSIDE (✓)	OUTSIDE (✓)	HRS. PREP	HRS. WITH TEAM
TOTAL					

If you are mailing, faxing or email the scoresheet, send to:
 Tim Keyes, GA – DNR, Wildlife Section, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520, fax (912) 262-3143
 or tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov.



Fundraising Tips

The thought of asking people for money may make you feel sick, weak in the knees and dizzy. Don't worry! Here are some tips to make the job a bit easier.

- ◆ Keep in mind that most people are happy to donate to a good cause, especially when it is connected with someone they know (you).
- ◆ People will be particularly interested in the event itself, so tell them about your plans to see as many birds as you can, where you plan to go, etc.
- ◆ The first pledge is the easiest! Donate a pledge yourself for your team.
- ◆ The most effective way to raise pledges is to ask people face-to-face. Ask parents, friends, family, teachers, neighbors, doctors, etc.
- ◆ Write a letter describing the Youth Birding Competition and the conservation organization you plan to support, and send it to friends and family asking them to pledge their support.
- ◆ Make sure you thank your sponsors. Write them a letter after the competition and tell them how it went, as well as a reminder of the amount of money they pledged, and the number of birds you saw. The sooner you contact your sponsors after the event, the better chance you will collect the pledges.
- ◆ Make sure that your sponsors send you checks made out to the conservation organization that you chose to support.
- ◆ When your pledges are all in, send them to the organization you chose to support.
- ◆ Contact Tim Keyes (tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov) to let him know how much you collected.

Youth Birding Competition Fundraising



Atkins Anselm

Fundraising is a voluntary component of the Youth Birding Competition (YBC), but it is a great way to support valuable conservation efforts in Georgia and is also another way to win prizes for your team.

How Does YBC Fundraising Work?

1. Register your team with the Youth Birding Competition (register online at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC).
2. Select the conservation organization you would like to support with your fundraising efforts.
 - ♦ The Georgia Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund (Supports work done by the Wildlife Conservation Section of Georgia DNR)
 - ♦ Other _____
3. Collect sponsors who will support your team with a fixed amount, or if they are courageous, with a pledge per bird species you identify during the competition (see Fundraising Tips sheet for ideas on raising money).
4. Spend one 24-hour period finding as many birds as you can in Georgia.
5. When you turn in your total bird checklist after finishing your count, also contact coordinator Tim Keyes about the amount of money pledged to your team.

$$\text{(Amount pledged per bird) X (Total birds seen) + (Fixed donations) = Total money pledged}$$

6. After the competition, contact your sponsors and collect all their pledges. Have them send you checks made out to the conservation organization your team chose to support.
7. Once all your checks are in, send them to the conservation organization.
8. Contact Tim Keyes to let him know how much you collected.



Ooooooh, you said prizes?

Prize categories for each age class:

- Most money collected for conservation
- Most species seen

2022 Sponsor Sign-up Sheet

Team Name: _____ Team Captain: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Conservation Organization you are supporting: _____

SPONSOR NAME	CONTACT INFO	PLEDGE PER SPECIES	FIXED PLEDGE	TOTAL DUE	TOTAL COLLECTED
1.					
2.					
3.					
4.					
5.					
6.					
7.					
8.					
9.					
10.					
11.					
12.					
13.					
14.					
15.					
16.					
17.					
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21.					
22.					
23.					
24.					
25.					
26.					
27.					
28.					
29.					
30.					
31.					
32.					
33.					
34.					
35.					
36.					
37.					
38.					
39.					
40.					
Total		\$	\$	\$	\$

Birding Resources

LOCAL AUDUBON SOCIETIES

Local Audubon chapters and other bird clubs often lead bird walks open to the public of all ages. Some also have monthly meetings with interesting speakers. Several have regular newsletters. Georgia Audubon teaches a Master Birder Class for those interested in delving more deeply into the study of birds.

- Georgia Chapters:
 - Georgia Audubon Society - <https://www.georgiaaudubon.org/>
 - Augusta-Aiken Audubon Society - www.augustaaikenaudubon.org
 - Coastal Georgia Audubon Society (Brunswick) www.coastalgeorgiaaudubon.org
 - Columbus Audubon Society - www.columbus-ga-audubon.org/
 - Ocmulgee Audubon Society (Macon) - <http://ocmulgeeaudubonsociety.blogspot.com>
 - Oconee Rivers Audubon Society (Athens) - <http://www.oconeeriversaudubon.org>
 - Ogeechee Audubon Society (Savannah) - www.ogeecheeaudubon.org
 - Southern Wings Bird Club (Lawrenceville) - <http://www.southernwingsbc.com/>

For information on other birding clubs and birding in Georgia resources, visit the Georgia Ornithological Society website - www.gos.org

CITIZEN SCIENCE PROJECTS

These projects generally require some basic bird identification ability, internet access, and a place to watch birds. These are all great projects to help collect data and learn the birds in your area.

- Project FeederWatch - www.feederwatch.org
- Bird Sleuth - <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/k12/>
- Citizen Science in the Schoolyard - <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/education>
- eBird - <https://ebird.org>
- Great Backyard Bird Count - www.birdcount.org
- Celebrate Urban Birds - <https://celebrateurbanbirds.org>

*Visit <http://birds.cornell.edu> or www.birdsource.com for more details.

Breeding Bird Survey - www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bbs

Requires good bird identification skills by sight and sound. Contact the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division's Wildlife Conservation Section office in Forsyth for more information: (478) 994-1438.

Christmas Bird Count - <http://birds.audubon.org/christmas-bird-count>

The longest running citizen science project in the U.S. Dates can be found at www.gos.org (website for Georgia Ornithological Society)

BIRD CURRICULA

- **Flying WILD** - <https://www.fishwildlife.org/projectwild/flying-wild>

Bird curriculum designed to help middle school students implement school bird festivals and bird conservation projects. Includes many hands-on activities and events.

- **Project WILD Activities** - <https://georgiawildlife.com/projectwild>

Use the Project WILD activities listed below (found in the Project WILD K-12 Activity Guide) for fun and educational bird programs. Each activity contains all the information needed to conduct the activity including objectives, method, background information, a list of materials needed, procedures, evaluation suggestions, recommended grade levels, subject areas, duration, group size, setting, and key terms.

- Changing the Land
- Changing the Land Migration Barriers (deer not birds)
- No Water Off a Duck's Back
- Hazardous Links, Possible Solutions
- Birds of Prey
- Bird Song Survey

Audubon Adventures - www.georgiaaudubon.org Education > For Educators > Learning About Birds curriculum

Learning About Birds activities and materials provide educators with hands-on, interactive learning about birds, habitats and conservation. The curricula consist of English/Spanish color student guides and accompanying lesson plans. All units are aligned with the Georgia Performance Standards in science and other subjects.

Create Bird Habitat at Home or School

Several organizations help schools develop wildlife habitat in schoolyards for education and conservation. These organizations offer guidelines to create water, food, shelter and space for wildlife. For funding ideas, visit Citizen Science in the Schoolyard -

<https://www.birds.cornell.edu/home/education>

National Wildlife Federation (NWF) Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat Planning Guide -

The Georgia Schoolyard Wildlife Habitat Planning Guide provides information and resources to transform barren schoolyards into vital habitat for wildlife, and vibrant places of learning for students. By creating and studying wildlife habitats on their school grounds, students get a first-hand glimpse at the natural world, and the chance to make a difference for conservation in Georgia. <https://issuu.com/deannaharris5/docs/habitatguidefinalrgb>

BIRD CONSERVATION ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER RESOURCES

American Bird Conservancy - www.abcbirds.org

Provides information on a wide range of conservation topics, such as the Cats Indoors Campaign. Cats kill hundreds of millions of birds each year in the U.S. alone, as well as other wildlife species.

National Audubon Society - <https://www.audubon.org/>

Partners in Flight - www.partnersinflight.org

International cooperative group of federal, state and private organizations working to protect migratory landbirds.

Hummingbirds - <http://www.hummingbirds.net>

Provides information on attracting, watching, feeding and studying North American hummingbirds, migration maps and tracking northward and southward movements.

International Migratory Bird Day - www.birdday.org

International Migratory Bird Day celebrates the incredible journeys of migratory birds between their breeding grounds in North America and their wintering grounds in Mexico, Central and South America. The event, which officially takes place on the second Saturday in May each year, encourages bird conservation and increases awareness of birds through hikes, bird watching, information about birds and migration, public events and a variety of other education programs.

Birding Georgia - A Falcon Guide (Giff Beaton, 2000)

More than 100 places in Georgia to look for birds.

Annotated Checklist of Georgia Birds

Available from the Georgia Ornithological Society, www.gos.org

Handbook of Bird Biology, 3rd Edition – (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 2016) Excellent ornithology text.

The 2021 YBC

YOUTH, BIRDS WIN IN DNR'S FIRST VIRTUAL BIRDING COMPETITION

Georgia's first virtual Youth Birding Competition connected children and teens with birds in a 10-day contest capped by an online awards ceremony Tuesday night.

Seventy youth, from kindergarteners to high school seniors, took part in the 15th annual Department of Natural Resources birdathon. From Sept. 24-Oct. 3, teams used as much of any 24-hour period as members wanted to for counting and reporting native bird species statewide.

The popular competition, usually held in spring, had been canceled by the pandemic in 2020 and switched this year to a virtual format and an early fall timeframe because of COVID-19 concerns.

Coordinator Tim Keyes said that going virtual, expanding the competition from a set 24-hour period and not having birders travel to a central site to submit bird checklists opened the door to some teams. More than half of the 21 teams had not participated before.

"The format gave teams much more flexibility in the timing and the route they chose to travel, as there was no fixed date or meeting place," said Keyes, a wildlife biologist with DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section. "The downside was that we missed seeing, feeding and physically handing awards out to the crowd of hungry and tired but enthusiastic birders. We certainly hope this will be the last time we have a virtual awards ceremony, but we also hope to learn from changes this year to improve the event."

Moving the competition to fall added challenges. Unlike in spring, many birds were not singing and their plumage is distinct. But, Keyes said, "We anticipated teams rising to the challenge."

They did. Awesome Osprey!, a team of middle-schoolers, finished as the overall winner. The three siblings from Cornelia totaled 148 species, shy of the 171-species event record set in spring 2019 but a strong count for fall.

Keyes noted, too, that Birding with Baby Yoda in the Elementary School Division raised \$1,209 to help DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section restore and conserve songbirds and other native Georgia wildlife, rare plants and natural habitats. All told, teams raised almost \$1,460 this year. Fundraising for conservation is a voluntary part of the event.

The event also featured a T-shirt art contest that drew 155 entries. Birding participants will be mailed T-shirts featuring a loggerhead shrike drawn by Owen Li, an 11th-grader at SKA Academy of Art and Design in Duluth. As the art contest grand-prize winner, Li received a \$100 Michaels gift card.

Team members will also receive caps featuring 2020's top art entry: a peregrine falcon painted by Alston Li, Owen's brother. Although last year's art winners were announced, T-shirts were not printed because the birding competition was canceled. That led to DNR featuring Owen's peregrine on a cap.

During Tuesday night's online ceremony, organizers also announced the top art entry from a youth who also participated in the birding competition. Abigail Moeller, a homeschooled ninth-grader from

Adairsville and member of the Moeller Myrtle Warblers team, received that honor for her artwork featuring a red-tailed hawk.

Winning entries from this year and 2020 are posted at <https://bit.ly/3D0J9ns>.

The Youth Birding Competition and T-shirt Art Contest are sponsored by DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section, The Environmental Resources Network Inc. or TERN – friends group of the Wildlife Conservation Section – and others including Georgia Ornithological Society and the Georgia and Albany Audubon societies. Visit georgiawildlife.com/YBC for more details.

The Wildlife Conservation Section conserves Georgia wildlife not legally fished for or hunted, as well as rare plants and natural habitats. The agency depends primarily on fundraisers, grants and contributions. Learn more at georgiawildlife.com/licenseplates and georgiawildlife.com/donations.

BIRDING COMPETITION RESULTS

High School Division

- Wood Thrushes (126 species)
- Orioles (95 species)
- The White Hawks (84 species)

Middle School Division

- Awesome Osprey! (148 species), and overall competition winner
- The Awesome Anhingas (72 species)
- Bufford Buffleheads and Double A Falcons (tied at 58 species each)

Elementary School Division

- Birding with Baby Yoda (72 species)
- King of the Rails (38 species)
- The Falcons (25 species)

Primary School Division (only two teams competed)

- Eagle Eyes (39 species)
- Sister Business (11 species)

Fundraising (division leaders)

- Birding with Baby Yoda (Elementary Division) and overall top fundraiser, raising \$1,209
- Kangafox, \$145; Middle Division
- Bufford Buffleheads, \$100; Middle Division

Fundraising for conservation is voluntary.

Top Rookie teams (first-year teams)

- Primary: Eagle Eyes (39 species)
- Elementary: Birding with Baby Yoda (72 species)
- Middle: The Awesome Anhingas (72 species)
- High: The White Hawks (84 species)

Mentor Award - Seema Sheth, mentoring Birding with Baby Yoda (Elementary Division)

Liability Waiver

Covenant not to sue or make claim, indemnification contract and release from liability. All individuals participating in or accompanying a Youth Birding Competition team must complete this form.

Team Name: _____ Mentor: _____
Name: _____ Parent: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State/Zip: _____
E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

I hereby enter into this contract with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in consideration for either I or my child participating in the Youth Birding Competition on April 15-April 23, 2022. I agree to abide by the following terms.

First, I realize that competition birding involves some risk of harm due to, among other factors, local hazards and inattention to driving and personal safety. Accordingly, I covenant not to sue or make any claim against the State of Georgia, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, its officers, employees, agents, volunteers, and sponsors, or the landowners upon whose land I or my child may enter for death, personal injury, physical or mental disability, loss of income, or any other loss or damage whatsoever suffered by me or my child.

Second, I also agree to hold harmless, defend, and indemnify the State of Georgia, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and its officers, employees, agents, volunteers and sponsors, the State Tort Claims Trust Fund, and the landowners upon whose lands I or my child may enter, for any trespass on property, damage to realty or personal property, wrongful death or physical injury to anyone, or any other loss or damage whatsoever caused by me or my child's activities in connection with participating in the Youth Birding Competition.

Third, I further understand that such an activity requires all participants to be in good health and I certify that I as a participant or my participating child, am/is in good health and have/has no physical limitations which would prevent me/my participating child from participating.

Fourth, I agree to abide by the rules of the competition. I agree that the decision of the judges in all rulings is final. I covenant not to sue or make any claim against the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, its officers, employees, agents or volunteers for any ruling decision.

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of parent or guardian if under 18.

Date

Instructions: *This form must be completed and signed by all participants or guardians, including drivers, and be on file with event officials by April 15. Return to Tim Keyes. Georgia DNR, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520, fax to (912) 262-3142 or email to tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov.*

Photo, Video and Audio Consent Form

The Department of Natural Resources request the right to use all photos, videos, and/or audio clips taken of program participants, programs, and activities. These may be used for promotional brochures, promotions or showcase of programs on our web sites, showcase of activities in local newspapers, and other not-for-profit purposes.

By signing this form, I consent to allow the Department of Natural Resources to use photos, videos and/or audio clips they have of me participating in the YBC.

By signing this form, I confirm that I understand and agree to the above request and conditions. I agree to give up my rights with regards to photos, videos, and/or audio clips of me. I sign this form freely and without inducement.

My Contact Information:

Name (print):

County:

Address:

Street

City

State

Zip Code

Phone: _____ Email Address: _____

Signatures:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____ Date: _____

(if under 18)

Return completed form to Tim Keyes, Georgia DNR, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520, fax to (912) 262-3142 or email to tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov by April 15.

Official Youth Birding Competition Checklist

Team name _____, Age Division _____, Contact Number _____

Ducks, Geese and Swans	Status			
_____ Snow Goose			_____ Wood Stork	C/CP
_____ Canada Goose			Vultures	
_____ Wood Duck			_____ Black Vulture	
_____ American Wigeon			_____ Turkey Vulture	
_____ American Black Duck			Raptors	
_____ Mallard			_____ Osprey	
_____ Mottled Duck	C		_____ Swallow-tailed Kite	C/CP
_____ Blue-winged Teal			_____ Mississippi Kite	C/CP
_____ Northern Shoveler			_____ Bald Eagle	
_____ Ring-necked Duck			_____ Northern Harrier	
_____ Greater Scaup			_____ Sharp-shinned Hawk	
_____ Lesser Scaup			_____ Coopers Hawk	
_____ Surf Scoter	C		_____ Red-shouldered Hawk	
_____ Black Scoter	C		_____ Broad-winged Hawk	
_____ White-winged Scoter	C		_____ Red-tailed Hawk	
_____ Bufflehead			_____ American Kestrel	
_____ Hooded Merganser			_____ Merlin	
_____ Red-breasted Merganser			_____ Peregrine Falcon	
_____ Ruddy Duck			Rails, Gallinules, and Coot	
Grouse and Turkeys			_____ Clapper Rail	C
_____ Ruffed Grouse	Mts		_____ King Rail	
_____ Wild Turkey			_____ Virginia Rail	
_____ Northern Bobwhite			_____ Sora	
Loons and Grebes			_____ Purple Gallinule	C/CP
_____ Common Loon			_____ Common Moorhen	
_____ Pied-billed Grebe			_____ American Coot	
_____ Horned Grebe			Cranes	
Gannets and Pelicans			_____ Sandhill Crane	C/CP
_____ Northern Gannet	C		Shorebirds	
_____ Brown Pelican	C		_____ Black-bellied Plover	C
_____ American White Pelican	C		_____ American Golden Plover	Rare
Cormorants and Anhinga			_____ Wilsons Plover	C
_____ Double-crested Cormorant			_____ Semipalmated plover	C
_____ Anhinga			_____ Piping Plover	C
Bitterns and Herons			_____ Killdeer	
_____ American Bittern	Rare		_____ American Oystercatcher	C
_____ Least Bittern	Rare		_____ Black-necked Stilt	C
_____ Great Blue Heron			_____ American Avocet	C
_____ Great Egret			_____ Greater Yellowlegs	
_____ Snowy Egret			_____ Lesser Yellowlegs	
_____ Little Blue Heron			_____ Solitary Sandpiper	
_____ Tricolored Heron	C/CP		_____ Willet	C
_____ Reddish Egret	C		_____ Spotted Sandpiper	
_____ Cattle Egret			_____ Upland Sandpiper	
_____ Green Heron			_____ Whimbrel	C
_____ Black-crowned Night Heron			_____ Marbled Godwit	C
_____ Yellow-crowned Night Heron			_____ Ruddy Turnstone	C
Ibis, Spoonbill and Stork			_____ Red Knot	C
_____ White Ibis	C/CP		_____ Sanderling	C
_____ Glossy Ibis	C		_____ Semipalmated sandpiper	
_____ Roseate Spoonbill	C		_____ Western Sandpiper	C
			_____ Least Sandpiper	

Team name _____

_____ White-rumped Sandpiper	Rare	_____ Hairy Woodpecker	
_____ Pectoral Sandpiper		_____ Red-cockaded Woodpecker	Rare
_____ Purple Sandpiper	C	_____ Northern Flicker	
_____ Dunlin	C	_____ Pileated Woodpecker	
_____ Stilt Sandpiper		_____ Ivory-billed Woodpecker	You Win!
_____ Short-billed Dowitcher		Flycatchers	
_____ Long-billed Dowitcher	C	_____ Eastern Wood-pewee	
_____ Wilson's Snipe		_____ Acadian Flycatcher	
_____ American Woodcock		_____ Least Flycatcher	
_____ Wilson's Phalarope	C	_____ Eastern Phoebe	
Gulls and Terns		_____ Great-crested Flycatcher	
_____ Laughing Gull	C	_____ Eastern Kingbird	
_____ Bonapart's Gull		_____ Gray Kingbird	C
_____ Ring-billed Gull		_____ Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	Rare
_____ Herring Gull	C	Shrike and Vireos	
_____ Lesser Black-backed Gull	C	_____ Loggerhead Shrike	
_____ Great Black-backed Gull	C	_____ White-eyed Vireo	
_____ Gull-billed Tern	C	_____ Yellow-throated Vireo	
_____ Caspian Tern	C	_____ Blue-headed Vireo	
_____ Royal Tern	C	_____ Warbling Vireo	Rare
_____ Sandwich Tern	C	_____ Philadelphia Vireo	Rare
_____ Common Tern	C	_____ Red-eyed Vireo	
_____ Forster's Tern	C	Crows and Jays	
_____ Least Tern	C	_____ Blue Jay	
_____ Black Skimmer	C	_____ American Crow	
Pigeons and Doves		_____ Fish Crow	
_____ Rock Pigeon		_____ Common Raven	Mts
_____ Eurasian Collared-dove		Larks	
_____ Mourning Dove		_____ Horned Lark	
_____ Common Ground-dove	C/CP	Swallows	
Cuckoos		_____ Purple Martin	
_____ Black-billed Cuckoo	Rare	_____ Tree Swallow	
_____ Yellow-billed Cuckoo		_____ N. Rough-winged Swallow	
Owls		_____ Bank Swallow	
_____ Barn Owl		_____ Cliff Swallow	
_____ Great-horned Owl		_____ Barn Swallow	
_____ Eastern Screech-Owl		Chickadees and Titmice	
_____ Barred Owl		_____ Carolina Chickadee	
Goatsuckers		_____ Tufted Titmouse	
_____ Common Nighthawk		Nuthatches	
_____ Chuck-will's-widow		_____ Red-breasted Nuthatch	Rare
_____ Whip-poor-will		_____ White-breasted Nuthatch	
Swifts and Hummingbirds		_____ Brown-headed Nuthatch	
_____ Chimney Swift		Creepers	
_____ Ruby-throated Hummingbird		_____ Brown Creeper	Mts
Kingfisher		Wrens	
_____ Belted Kingfisher		_____ Carolina Wren	
Woodpeckers		_____ House Wren	
_____ Red-headed Woodpecker		_____ Winter Wren	
_____ Red-bellied Woodpecker		_____ Sedge Wren	
_____ Downy Woodpecker		_____ Marsh Wren	

Team name _____

Kinglets and Gnatcatchers

- _____ Golden-crowned Kinglet
- _____ Ruby-crowned Kinglet
- _____ Blue-gray Gnatcatcher

Thrushes

- _____ Eastern Bluebird
- _____ Veery
- _____ Gray-cheeked Thrush
- _____ Swainson's Thrush
- _____ Hermit Thrush
- _____ Wood Thrush
- _____ American Robin

Mimics

- _____ Gray Catbird
- _____ Northern Mockingbird
- _____ Brown Thrasher

Starling, Pipit and Waxwings

- _____ European Starling
- _____ American Pipit
- _____ Cedar Waxwing

Wood-warblers

- _____ Blue-winged Warbler
- _____ Golden-winged Warbler
- _____ Tennessee Warbler
- _____ Orange-crowned Warbler
- _____ Nashville Warbler
- _____ Northern Parula
- _____ Yellow Warbler
- _____ Chestnut-sided Warbler
- _____ Magnolia Warbler
- _____ Cape May Warbler
- _____ Black-throated Blue Warbler
- _____ Yellow-rumped Warbler
- _____ Black-throated Green Warbler
- _____ Blackburnian Warbler
- _____ Yellow-throated Warbler
- _____ Pine Warbler
- _____ Prairie Warbler
- _____ Palm Warbler
- _____ Bay-breasted Warbler
- _____ Blackpoll Warbler
- _____ Cerulean Warbler
- _____ Black and White Warbler
- _____ American Redstart
- _____ Prothonotary Warbler
- _____ Worm-eating Warbler
- _____ Swainson's Warbler
- _____ Ovenbird
- _____ Northern Waterthrush
- _____ Louisiana Waterthrush

- _____ Kentucky Warbler
- _____ Common Yellowthroat
- _____ Hooded Warbler
- _____ Wilson's Warbler
- _____ Canada Warbler
- _____ Yellow-breasted Chat

Rare

Tanagers

- _____ Summer Tanager
- _____ Scarlet Tanager

Sparrows

- _____ Eastern Towhee
- _____ Bachman's Sparrow
- _____ Chipping Sparrow
- _____ Field Sparrow
- _____ Savannah Sparrow
- _____ Grasshopper Sparrow
- _____ Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow
- _____ Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow
- _____ Seaside Sparrow
- _____ Song Sparrow
- _____ Swamp Sparrow
- _____ White-throated Sparrow
- _____ White-crowned Sparrow
- _____ Dark-eyed Junco

C
C
C

Cardinals and allies

- _____ Northern Cardinal
- _____ Rose-breasted Grosbeak
- _____ Blue Grosbeak
- _____ Indigo Bunting
- _____ Painted Bunting
- _____ Dickcissel

C/CP

Blackbirds and Orioles

- _____ Bobolink
- _____ Red-winged Blackbird
- _____ Eastern Meadowlark
- _____ Common Grackle
- _____ Boat-tailed Grackle
- _____ Brown-headed Cowbird
- _____ Orchard Oriole
- _____ Baltimore Oriole

C

Finches

- _____ House Finch
- _____ Purple Finch
- _____ Pine Siskin
- _____ American Goldfinch

Old World Sparrows

- _____ House Sparrow

Others:

PLEASE CIRCLE WHERE YOU BIRDED:
Mountains, Piedmont, Coast

Guidelines for Submitting your Checklist

Teams that will not be submitting a checklist in person by 5 PM April 23 at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center must submit their checklist no later than 5 PM April 22 using one of the following options.

- 1) Scan or take clear photos of the three-page checklist and email them to tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov. Please make sure your team's name is **on every page** and that the list also includes your age division, contact phone number for questions and general areas you visited (Mountains, Coast, Piedmont).

- 2) Submit via a shared eBird checklist (instructions below)
 - a. Go to the [main eBird page](#).
 - b. **Create an eBird account or use an existing personal eBird account.** Teams must include their team name, age division and contact number in the "Comments" section of the "Step 2: Date and Effort" page of their eBird checklist submission. You must submit only one final checklist for your team.
 - c. Use eBird during your scouting trips to practice inputting the data if eBird is new to you. **Submitting scouting lists gives you eBird practice** before your tournament day while also contributing to the eBird international database, which helps other birders, biologists and more! [Visit eBird](#) for more information on how to use the online tool and for information on how this data is used.
 - d. **Submit ONE checklist for your team's competition day(s) that represents your official YBC list for the event.** When submitting your OFFICIAL CHECKLIST, use the "Traveling" or "Stationary" Observation Types listed on the "Data and Effort" screen. Almost all will be doing "Traveling Counts," so do your best to estimate the distance traveled. An estimate is fine. Fill in as much of the other information as you know (acreage is usually not applicable, for example). **Under "Comments," fill in your team name, age division and the general areas birded.**
 - e. Fill in your checklist with the species seen/heard definitively during your 24-hour birding period, based on the YBC rules. Be sure to check "Show Rarities" and "Show Subspecies" on the "What Did You See or Hear?" page so that eBird loads all potential species. Use the following guidelines in your checklist reporting:
 - Reporting the total number of each species seen gives much better data for eBird, so hopefully during scouting days at least you will be able to provide that level of data.
 - During your birding day, you may be moving so fast that a presence/absence survey with "X" shown might be more practical.
 - Any bird observations flagged by eBird will need documentation, and you must provide details about the observation and photos at the time of submission so that YBC reviewers will have the details they need when the time comes to review the checklists.
 - **There will be no back-and-forth with teams requesting details.** It is your responsibility to supply documentation for flagged records. Flagged records

may include rare birds, birds out of season or exceptionally high counts of a species (*tip: X indicates presence, so using X on your official list avoids tripping the high-count filters*). Use the “Add Details” button next to the bird in question to supply this additional information.

f. Once you’ve submitted your official birding checklist, you must **share it with the YBC account** by using the “Share w/Others in Your Party” button on the Checklist page of eBird.

- Please only share your single official birding checklist with “**Tim S Keyes**”.
- This is your final birding day checklist and it **MUST BE** submitted to eBird and shared with the YBC staff account by 5PM on April 22.

g. Once you have shared your checklist with “**Tim S Keyes**” you can hide your official list by clicking on the “Hide from eBird Output” button on the lower right-hand side of the Checklist page if you wish. This will “hide” your checklist from eBird output so that other teams cannot see an earlier participating team’s total.

h. Winners will be announced at the hybrid in-person and virtual awards ceremony scheduled for 5:30 PM April 23.

Directions to Charlie Elliott Conference Center

543 ELLIOTT TRAIL
MANSFIELD, GA 30055

<https://georgiawildlife.com/charlie-elliott-wildlife-center>

From Atlanta, take I-20 East to Exit 98 (GA Hwy. 11, Monroe-Monticello). Turn Right (follow the brown governmental “Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center” signs) travel south on Hwy. 11, crossing Hwy. 278 and Hwy. 142. Go through Mansfield, cross RR track and continue south for 3 miles.

You will see a large sign marking the entrance to “Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center.” Turn left on Marben Farm Road.

About 1 mile down Marben Farm Road you will see a sign pointing right for “Visitors Center;” turn right here. This is Elliott Trail and you follow it until it ends at the Conference Center. There are four separate buildings. The banquet hall is the farthest building.

From Monticello, follow Hwy 11 north approximately 17 miles and look for signs on your right. Go to the second entrance sign (a large sign) and turn right onto Marben Farm Road to the center.

Access onto Hwy. 11 can be obtained from highways 129, 42, 83 and 212.