

2022  
FISCAL YEAR SUMMARY

CONSERVING GEORGIA'S  
WILDLIFE



GEORGIA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

WILDLIFE RESOURCES DIVISION



RESTORING  
HABITAT

CONSERVING  
WILDLIFE



ENGAGING  
GEORGIANS



MAKING A  
DIFFERENCE



At Georgia DNR's **Wildlife Conservation Section**, we work to save and restore native wildlife that aren't fished for or hunted, plus rare plants and the natural habitats all of these species need.

Our mission is guided by the **State Wildlife Action Plan**. The plan is a comprehensive strategy for protecting animals, plants and places before they become more scarce and costly to conserve.

Georgia is amazingly rich in wildlife. With your help, we can keep it that way.

This summary offers a glimpse of that effort. Scan the code or visit [georgiawildlife.com/conservation/annualreport](https://georgiawildlife.com/conservation/annualreport) to learn more.



Bald eagles (Jenny Burdette Photography/Georgia Nature Photographers Association)



## MILESTONES THIS YEAR

- Record-high nest counts documented for bald eagles, kestrels and loggerhead sea turtles.
- The Wildlife Resources Division topped its best prescribed fire year, burning 75,000-plus acres.
- Staff responded to an outbreak of highly pathogenic avian influenza in eagles, vultures and waterfowl.
- Rules were strengthened to protect Georgia wildlife from invasives like tegus and non-native crayfish.
- Botanists found plants thought gone from Georgia and new sites for endangered pondberry and others.

Entangled right whale and calf (NOAA permit 20556)



- Visitation at DNR regional education centers exceeded 94,000.
- Virginia Tech surveyed Georgia wildlife viewers to help DNR better serve them.
- Amphibian Foundation, a DNR partner, bred rare frosted flatwoods salamanders in captivity.
- Another first: Biologists spotted a right whale entangled in fishing gear but raising a newborn calf.
- Records key to conserving 51 priority fishes such as holiday darter and Atlantic sturgeon were updated.
- Aided by allies, DNR added 11,600 acres to Ceylon, completing the coastal WMA prized for its wildlands.

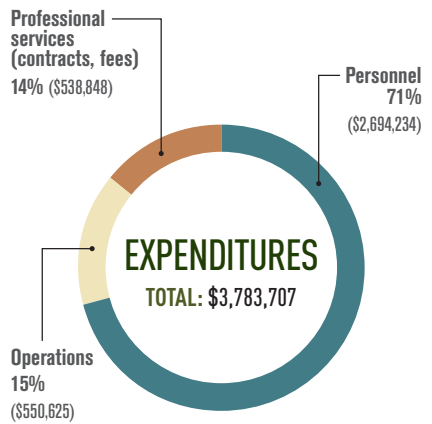
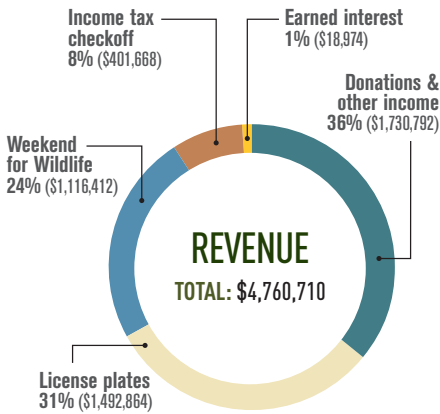
(Mac Stone/Mac Stone Photography)



“Ceylon is without a doubt the single-most important conservation project I’ve worked on.”

Jason Lee  
program manager, Wildlife Conservation Section

# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



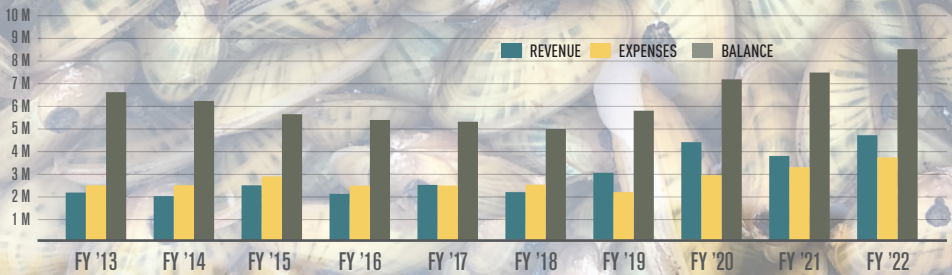
Does not include federal and other grants, or \$312,605 in state appropriations for the Wildlife Conservation Section.

Expenditures paid through the Nongame Fund.

\*Includes revenue from the 2022 Weekend for Wildlife disbursed by the Georgia Natural Resources Foundation to the Nongame Conservation Fund in fiscal 2023.

## NONGAME WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND

Listed in millions per year



Alabama rainbow mussels marked for release at Holly Creek (Bruz Clark/Lyndhurst Foundation)

## DID YOU KNOW?

State funding makes up only about 5% of the Wildlife Conservation Section's research and conservation budget. That means we depend largely on fundraisers, grants and donations.

Partner with us as a supporter, volunteer, landowner or organization and give wildlife a chance!

“Through the cooperation of landowners, nonprofits and agencies, we are making great progress in stewarding the unique aquatic life in northwest Georgia’s Holly Creek.”

Ani Escobar  
Coosa River basin biologist,  
Wildlife Conservation Section



Ani Escobar with Alabama rainbow mussels (Kaitie Owens/The Nature Conservancy)

DNR's Daniel Soltenberger shows an eastern indigo snake to visitors at Fernbank.



# HOW YOU CAN HELP



**BUY** an eagle or monarch butterfly license plate or renew these or an older design, like the hummingbird tag.



**DONATE** to the Georgia Wildlife Conservation Fund at [gooutdoorsgeorgia.com](http://gooutdoorsgeorgia.com). Click "Licenses and Permits" to create an account.



**CONTRIBUTE** through the Wildlife Conservation Fund state income-tax checkoff. Details at [georgiawildlife.com/donations](http://georgiawildlife.com/donations).



**PURCHASE** a hunting or fishing license. A license returns to Georgia wildlife the fee and up to \$45 in federal excise taxes paid by hunters and anglers.



**VOLUNTEER** with DNR and join conservation organizations such as our friends group, The Environmental Resources Network. More at [gooutdoorsgeorgia.com](http://gooutdoorsgeorgia.com) and [tern.homestead.com](http://tern.homestead.com).



"We are grateful for the vital support provided by individuals, private foundations and other partners. By donating, volunteering or helping spread the word about Georgia's wildlife conservation challenges, you are truly making a difference."

**Dr. Jon Ambrose**  
Chief, Wildlife Conservation Section

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COVER: Yearling frosted flatwoods salamander (Mark Mandica/Amphibian Foundation)

PHOTO CREDITS

INSIDE COVER: Loggerhead sea turtle hatchling | Palamedes swallowtail on Chapman's fringed orchid  
Painted bunting banded at Camp TALON | DNR's Stephanie Koontz with endangered Virginia spirea

All photos are from DNR unless noted.