

15th Annual
**Youth Birding
Competition**

September 24th – October 3rd, 2021
Virtual Awards Ceremony October 5th



Alston Li - 2020 art winner



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Calendar of Events

June-September	Mentors meet with their teams (<i>optional</i>)
August 20	Deadline for registration (<i>required</i>). Register online at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC
September 20	Deadline for photo and liability waivers (<i>required</i>)
Sept. 24-Oct. 3	Teams select a 24-hour period to bird within this window
October 3	8PM – final deadline to submit a checklist; however, checklists must be submitted within 3 hours of a team finishing its count
October 5	6PM virtual awards ceremony – teams will be provided a link

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 Virtual?

The last two years have been challenging for us all. We have all had to make hard decisions both personally and professionally at work, home and school to minimize the risk of COVID-19. While we had hoped that we could return to a normal Youth Birding Competition following the cancellation of the event in 2020, it has recently become clear that the rapidly spreading Delta variant, which is much more contagious than past versions of the virus, poses a more significant risk of COVID spread.

The traditional Youth Birding Competition packs children and teens from multiple families into shared vehicles as they crisscross the state looking for birds. Given that most participants are not eligible for a COVID-19 vaccination because of their age, and that some older participants and parents may have decided not to be vaccinated, for the health and safety of all we are strongly encouraging precautions to minimize the risk of transmission during the event (*see page 7 for details*).

Along with these safety guidelines and changing the competition to a virtual event, we also are shifting the traditional awards banquet and ceremony to an online ceremony.

We sincerely hope these are one-time changes and we can return to a more normal event next year. We appreciate your understanding and hope that we can still host an enjoyable and meaningful event despite the challenges posed by the coronavirus.

Summary of 2021 Changes

- Teams can conduct their 24-hour count at a time of their choosing from September 24th – October 3rd. This 10-day window includes four weekend days and will hopefully allow teams to plan around any conflicting events.
- Teams can start and finish their bird count at any time they like as long as it is a contiguous 24-hour period (for example, 5PM to 5PM – the traditional YBC time period – or midnight to midnight, etc.).
- All teams are strongly encouraged to follow safety guidelines during their count (*please carefully review and follow the recommendations on page 7*). While these precautions may hamper the competition in some ways, the safety and health of all is a priority for the event.
- Teams will submit their checklists within three hours of finishing their count.
- The awards ceremony will be held online at 6PM October 5. Teams will be provided a link in advance.
- Awards will be mailed to winning teams. YBC T-shirts will be mailed to all teams.

Event Checklist

Thank you for your interest in the 2021 Youth Birding Competition. This will be both our first fall and our first virtual YBC. We hope this nice change of pace minimizes the risks of COVID transmission. 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
_____	August 20, 2021	Registration deadline (register online – after carefully reviewing event rules and guidelines). www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC
_____	September 20, 2021	Send/e-mail/fax in liability waiver (page 24) & photo release form (page 25) - Send to Tim Keyes (address page 2)
_____	September 24, 2021	5 PM – Start of 10-day window for teams to select a 24-hour period in which to bird
_____	October 3 rd , 2021	5PM – End of birding competition window
_____	October 3 rd , 2021	8PM – Final deadline for checklists. If count is conducted prior to October 3 rd , checklist must be turned in within three hours of the end of the count. Submit checklists via eBird or email (how-to on page 29).
_____	October 5 th , 2021	6 PM – Attend the virtual awards ceremony! A link will be provided to participants in advance.

2021 Youth Birding Competition!



What is it?

It is a 24-hour birding event during an almost two-week window during the peak of fall migration. Youth teams select a 24-hour period between September 24th and October 3rd and spend the day (and night!) finding as many species as possible as they compete against teams their own age. Checklists are turned in via a shared eBird list or email.

When is it?

Teams select a 24-hour period between September 24 and October 3rd (a 10-day period that includes four weekend days). Teams can start and finish their count at any time that works best for them as long as it is a contiguous 24-hour period (for example, 5PM-5PM or midnight-midnight).

Where is it?

Visit as much or as little of the state of Georgia as you want. Without a set “finish line” there are no restrictions on where you can bird during your count. You do not need to turn in lists in person, but will submit them electronically.

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 mentor information. ***During the competition, only the youth participants can identify birds.***

Who does it benefit?

Teams can use the Youth Birding Competition to raise money for the Georgia Wildlife Conservation Fund – the main fund for DNR’s Wildlife Conservation Section – or for the conservation organization of their choice.

Are there prizes?

Of course! For each age group (grades K-2nd, 3-5th, 6-8th or 9-12th), teams will compete for the most birds and the most money raised. Grand prizes include new binoculars for the team finding the most birds.

How much does it cost?

Participation is absolutely FREE.

How can you register? Register online by August 20th at www.georgiawildlife.com/YBC.

Birding 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 team comes to a consensus on the identification of a bird, and the adult knows it is wrong, they 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 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).
 - a. *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 some 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 September 24th and October 3rd. Teams can start and finish their count at any time as long as it is a single contiguous 24-hour period (ex., 5PM to 5PM, midnight to midnight, noon-noon, 6AM to 6AM, etc.).
15. The team must submit its checklist via eBird or send images of that checklist by email within 3 hours of completing count (details on page 29). The final deadline to submit a count ending at 5PM October 3rd is 8PM that day. Each team can submit only one checklist.
16. Totals are considered final once checklists are submitted.
17. The decision of the judges in all rulings is final.

YBC Safety Guidelines

We strongly encourage that all teams 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 a team's tournament day supersede any YBC guidelines. For more health and safety 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, as well as quickly evolving best practices. These rules and guidelines are adopted to ensure that health and safety are the top priorities as participants have fun, connect with one another (virtually or safely in person) and fundraise for avian conservation work throughout Georgia.
3. For teams with participants younger than 12 and for other teams in which all participants and drivers are not fully vaccinated, 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>)



Youth Birding Competition 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 fall in Georgia. Some early wintering birds will have returned by the YBC date, and many songbirds and shorebirds will be in peak migration. There will be challenges as fewer birds will be singing, and some birds will have lost their breeding plumage, but this is all part of the challenges of birding! 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 there way back towards the mountains.

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



What to Bring on the Big 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

Within three hours of completing your Bird Count, and at latest 8PM October 3rd, please submit:

- Checklist of birds counted (via eBird or email).
- Fundraising amount (if your team raised money)
- Mentor Score Sheet (if Mentor is competing for prize)



Being a Youth Birding Competition 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. Also, 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.



Youth Birding Competition 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 **on or before 5:00 PM on October 3rd, 2021**. 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 _____

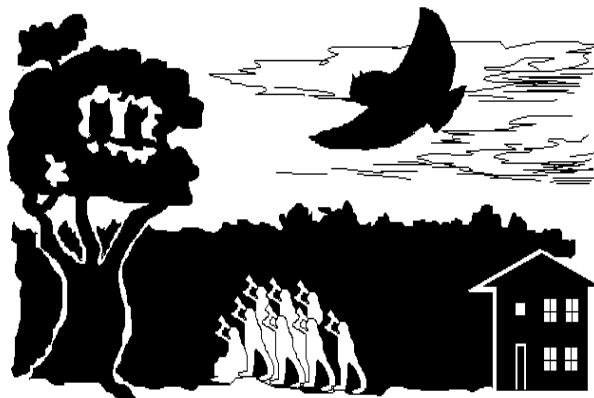
 YBC Team Name(s) _____

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 want to send, fax or email it before the event, send to:
 Tim Keyes, GA DNR, Wildlife Section, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520, fax (912) 262-3143
 or tim.keyes@dnr.ga.gov by October 3rd

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 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 a 24-hour period from September 24 to October 3, 2021, 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

YBC 2021 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.					
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32.					
33.					
34.					
35.					
36.					
37.					
38.					
39.					
40.					
Total		\$	\$	\$	\$



Youth Birding Competition 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.

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 - 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) - www.oconeeriversaudubon.org
 - Ogeechee Audubon Society (Savannah) - www.ogeecheeaudubon.org
 - Southern Wings Bird Club (Lawrenceville) - 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 - www.birds.cornell.edu/home/education
- eBird - www.ebird.org
- Great Backyard Bird Count - www.birdsource.org/gbbc
- NestWatch - www.nestwatch.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

- **Project Flying WILD/Project WILD** - www.projectwild.org

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** - www.projectwild.org

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
- Rare Bird Eggs for Sale
- Shrinking Habitat
- 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 consists 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, 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 - www.audubon.org

Cornell Lab of Ornithology - www.birds.cornell.edu

Dedicated to advancing the understanding and protection of the natural world, the Cornell Lab joins with people from all walks to make new scientific discoveries, share insights and galvanize conservation action. Their All About Birds website (www.allaboutbirds.org) is a useful guide to birds and bird watching. It includes detailed information about bird species such as field marks, habitat preference, behavior and range maps. Other features include a section on bird ID skills as well as tips for feeding birds and creating bird-friendly homes.

Partners in Flight - www.partnersinflight.org

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

Hummingbirds - 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)

An excellent ornithology text.

The 2019 Competition

NEW RECORD, INSIGHTS MARK 14TH DNR BIRDING COMPETITION

SOCIAL CIRCLE, Ga. (April 30, 2019) – The Georgia Youth Birding Competition connected scores of children and teens with birds last weekend, with one team setting a record count and all 27 teams gaining a greater appreciation of wildlife.

About 80 youth from kindergarteners to high school seniors took part in the 14th annual Department of Natural Resources birdathon, held from 5 p.m. Friday to 5 p.m. Saturday. Teams used as much of the 24-hour period as members wanted to count native bird species across the state.

For the second straight year, the Wood Thrushes finished as the overall winner. Yet this year, the crew – with members hailing from Decatur to Lamar County – totaled 171 species, a new high for the event.

Competition coordinator Tim Keyes also pointed out that the Wood Thrushes raised \$1,885 to help restore red-cockaded woodpecker habitat and nest sites lost in south Georgia to Hurricane Michael. Fundraising for conservation is a voluntary part of the event. Almost \$4,000 was raised this year.

“The interest we have helped foster through the Youth Birding Competition has grown in these kids into a real concern for the conservation needs of birds, and the willingness to do something about it,” Keyes said. “This is exactly what I hope the (event) accomplishes! I could not be more proud of these kids.”

Keyes, a wildlife biologist with DNR’s Wildlife Conservation Section, noted that the competition had six new teams – involving youth new to birding is another goal – and during the banquet at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, each team was asked to describe one event highlight. Which, in itself, was a highlight.

“It was great hearing kids talk about their favorite birds and the bird behaviors they observed.”

Several teams saw raptors hunting chipmunks or squirrels, sights that, as Keyes explained, help reveal that birds are “are so much more than a check on a list, and the location and identification of birds is just the entry point into this endlessly fascinating world.”

The event also featured a T-shirt art contest that drew a record 272 entries. Birders turning in their checklists Saturday were handed shirts featuring a barn owl painted by Kaichen Guo, an 11th-grader at Lambert High School in Suwanee. As grand-prize winner, Guo received a \$100 Michaels gift card.

The competition ended with a wildlife program and awards banquet at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, near Mansfield. T-shirt art contest winners were chosen beforehand and contest artwork was displayed at the banquet. Winning entries are posted in the 2019 album at <https://bit.ly/2FTrF1V>.

The birding and art contests are sponsored by DNR's Wildlife Conservation Section, The Environmental Resources Network Inc. (TERN)—friends group of the agency—and others, including the Georgia Ornithological Society and the Atlanta and Albany Audubon societies.

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 (171 species), and overall competition winner
- The Pi-ed-billed Grebes (138 species)
- Froggo and the Crew (101 species)

Middle School Division

- Amazing Anhingas (120 species)
- Mylo (105 species)
- Counting Crows (74 species)

Elementary School Division

- Bufford Bluebirds (71 species)
- Feagles (65 species)
- Thompson (56 species)

Primary School Division

- The Cardinals (64 species)
- (tie) Nutty Nuthatches and Team Raptor (38 species)
- Helida's Herons (36 species)

Fundraising (division leaders)

- Wood Thrushes (High School Division) and overall top fundraiser, raising \$1,885
- Bold Eagles, \$355: Middle
- The Cardinals, \$304: Primary
- Bufford Bluebirds, \$70: Elementary

Fundraising for conservation is voluntary.

Top Rookie teams (first-year teams)

- Primary: Team Raptor (38 species)
- Elementary: Thompson (56 species)

Mentor Award

- Tom Painting, mentoring Pi-ed-billed Grebes (High School Division)

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 September 24-October 3, 2021. 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 the event officials by September 20. Form does not need to accompany registration. Return completed form to Tim Keyes. Georgia Department of Natural Resources, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520 or fax to (912) 262-3142.

DNR Photo, Video, and Audio

Consent and Release 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 Department of Natural Resources, One Conservation Way, Brunswick GA 31520 or fax to (912) 262-3142 by September 20.

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

Since we will not be meeting in person for the awards ceremony, you will need to submit your checklist to the YBC staff for the judges. We have provided several 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" 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 within three hours of completing your tournament day.

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 virtual awards ceremony scheduled for 6PM on October 5th, 2021.