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BRIARLAKE FOREST PARK IN DEKALB COUNTY RECOGNIZED AS ATLANTA AUDUBON WILDLIFE SANCTUARY

(Atlanta, Ga.) February 12, 2019 – On Friday, February 8, the Atlanta Audubon Society officially recognized Briarlake Forest Park, in DeKalb County, as an Atlanta Audubon Certified Wildlife Sanctuary. The certification was a collaborative effort between Atlanta Audubon and the Friends of Briarlake Forest. The designation is a fitting tribute for the friends group that has worked tirelessly to protect and restore this 21-acre old-growth forest located near Northlake Mall.

The Atlanta Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary Program encourages both private and public properties to enhance their land for birds and other wildlife by installing native plants and providing food, water, and shelter for birds and other wildlife.

“Atlanta Audubon is thrilled to partner with the Friends of Briarlake Forest Park to add this beautiful old-growth forest to our network of more than 500 certified wildlife habitats in Atlanta and north Georgia,” says Melinda Langston, Atlanta Audubon board member and Wildlife Sanctuary Program Coordinator. “The welfare of birds and other wildlife is directly linked to the quality of food and shelter available to them. The hard work of the friends group has not only created valuable habitat for birds and other wildlife, but has also preserved this wonderful forest located in central DeKalb County for future generations.”

The 21-acre Briarlake Forest Park was acquired by DeKalb County’s Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Affairs in 2015. The Friends of Briarlake Park have worked with DeKalb County to remove invasive plant species, such as privet and English ivy, and to add native plant species, including native azaleas, autumn fern, blueberry bushes, and native grasses that benefit birds and other wildlife. With multiple trails for public use, Briarlake Forest Park boasts more than 60 specimen trees, including a 250-year-old white oak that stands near the house on the property and several magnificent beech trees. Future plans call for the old homestead to be developed into an education center for the community.

“The friends group for Briarlake Forest Park wishes to thank Atlanta Audubon for recognizing the significant habitat that we have been able to save and protect for the future of our community,” says Margo Reynolds, a member of the Friends of Briarlake Forest Park and Chair of the Grounds, Trails, and Maintenance Committee. “Our goal is to maintain an environment that encourages protection for all of our bird species and other wildlife within the forest for generations to come and to educate our children about

the value of having green space in our neighborhoods. Having a 21-acre old growth forest in the middle of an urban community is a rare and beautiful asset and having the bird population that the forest supports is a testament to nature that is a joy to behold.”

For more information on certifying a property as an Atlanta Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary, visit <https://www.atlantaaudubon.org/wildlife-sanctuary-certification.html>.

Media Note: Photos to accompany this article and a MS Word version of this press release are available for download at <https://www.dropbox.com/sh/y3l9s32oktcs94e/AADL4n1VHbxzzwGhN455VJ-fa?dl=0>.

Atlanta Audubon Society is committed to building places where birds and people thrive. We create birds - friendly communities through conservation, education, and advocacy.

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