



GEORGIA AUDUBON

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GEORGIA AUDUBON INSTALLS BIRD-FRIENDLY FILM AT ELACHEE NATURE SCIENCE CENTER

(ATLANTA, GA.) December 11, 2020 – Visitors to Elachee Nature Science Center, in Gainesville, will notice some new window treatments on the Visitor Center windows, including images of Georgia birds and wildlife and tiny dots adorning the glass. The purpose of the treatments is to prevent birds from flying into the windows, an all too common problem. The project is thanks to a partnership between Georgia Audubon and Elachee Nature Science Center, with a grant from the Disney Conservation Fund.

The treatments are a special CollidEscape film that reduces the transparency of the glass and breaks up reflection, preventing bird-window strikes. CollideEscape film has been applied to approximately 538 square feet of Elachee’s exterior windows. Spaced two inches apart, the dots break up the reflection and alert birds that the space is not a clear flyway, causing them to stall and fly in a different, safer direction.

“In recent years, Georgia Audubon has been working with buildings and nature centers across the metro area to treat problematic buildings and protect migrating birds,” said Betuel. “Our goal is not only to educate people about the threat windows and reflective glass pose to birds, but also to show that there are many attractive solutions to make windows safer for birds.”

“The Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve is designated as a National Audubon Society *Important Bird Area*,” explains Peter Gordon, Elachee’s Director of Education. “As Elachee Nature Science Center sits in this 1,440-acre protected green space, these special window treatments are a terrific addition to our buildings. With a mission to promote environmental understanding through education and conservation,

these treatments will also be an invaluable teaching tool emphasizing the importance of bird conservation to the tens of thousands of children and nature lovers who visit Elachee and hike in the Chicopee Woods each year. Special thanks to Georgia Audubon for selecting Elachee for this beneficial project.”

Elachee Nature Science Center was chosen as a demonstration building because they were experiencing bird collisions and also because their high visitation rate presents a unique opportunity to educate the public on steps they can take to reduce bird-window collisions at home.

Elachee Nature Science Center is the seventh building to be treated by Georgia Audubon using grants received from the Disney Conservation Fund and from the Georgia Ornithological Society. Other buildings include the Melvin L. Newman Wetlands Center, Chattahoochee Nature Center, the Blue Heron Nature Preserve, the Trees Atlanta Kendeda Center, Southface Institute, and the Sawnee Mountain Preserve Visitor’s Center.

Each spring and fall, millions of birds migrate between wintering grounds in Central and South America, the southern U.S., or the Caribbean to breeding grounds throughout North America. Sadly, many never arrive at their destination due to a man-made problem—building collisions. Attracted and/or disoriented by night-time lights or confused by day-time reflections of trees and grass in shiny windows, many birds become disoriented and fly into the buildings, ending their journeys and their lives prematurely. A 2019 study by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology ranked Atlanta number four during fall migration and number nine during spring migration for the potential for bird-building collisions due to high numbers of birds being exposed to nocturnal lighting.

Georgia Audubon has been studying bird-building collisions in the metro area through its Project Safe Flight Program since 2015. Since the program began, volunteers have collected more than 1,700 birds of over 115 different species that have perished due to building collisions. Since we only patrol a few limited routes during times of peak migration, we know that this is just a small sample of the number of birds that are actually perishing as they fly through the metro area, says Betuel.

In 2018, Georgia Audubon was awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Disney Conservation Fund (DCF) as part of the Fund’s focus on reversing the decline of threatened wildlife around the world. The conservation grant recognizes Georgia Audubon’s efforts to reduce bird-building collisions across the state. Georgia Audubon recently announced that it has received an additional grant from the Disney Conservation Fund to treat four additional buildings beginning in 2021.

About Georgia Audubon: *Georgia Audubon is building places where birds and people thrive. We create bird-friendly communities through conservation, education, and community engagement.*

About Elachee Nature Science Center: *Elachee Nature Science Center promotes environmental understanding through education and conservation.*

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