



## **Georgia Urban Ecologists (GUE) 2024-25: Atlanta Cohort 1**

This drop-off program for youth in grades 8 through 12 provides opportunities for hands-on field experiences and fun with peers. Perfect for students interested in pursuing careers in science or conservation or those who just enjoy being outside in nature--learn alongside experts in the field and establish a network of environmental professionals while enjoying the outdoors! **Sessions occur one Saturday a month from 10 AM-12:30 PM**, unless otherwise noted. Atlanta Cohort 1 is open to students across metro-Atlanta counties who will be participating for the first time.

### **Calendar:**

**Sunday, September 14-- Orientation with Birds Georgia via Zoom, 5:00-6:00 PM**

### **October, Date TBD**

#### ***Tree Identification and Service Learning***

During this session, we'll gain a better understanding of the dynamic role that trees play in urban ecosystems and learn how to identify a few trees commonly found in Atlanta. Students will also participate in a habitat restoration project by planting trees or removing invasive plants.

**Meeting Location: Trees Atlanta, 825 Warner Street, Atlanta/Fulton**

### **November 9 (rain date November 10) AWARE Atlanta Wild Animal Rescue Effort**

#### ***Urban Wildlife Rehabilitation***

AWARE Wildlife Center rehabilitates injured and orphaned wildlife from across Atlanta. Students will get to meet several of AWARE's rescued ambassadors up close, including owls, hawks, opossums, and more, while learning what goes on inside a rehabilitation center. They will also learn what to do when encountering a wild animal that needs help. We will end the session with a hike in adjacent Panola Mountain State Park.

**Meeting Location: AWARE, 4158 Klondike Rd, Lithonia/DeKalb**

### **December 7 (rain date December 14) Mason Mill Park**

#### ***Natural and Human History***

During this session, students will explore the ways that humans have affected our local environment over the last 12,000 years, as well as the way the environment affects human history. During our hike with DeKalb County's Ranger Jonah, we'll visit ancient rock outcrops, modern train tracks, ruins of a former park and defunct water treatment plant, and the confluence of two important county waterways, viewing the physical results of human history on the landscape.

**Meeting Location: Parking lot, Mason Mill Park, 1406 McConnell Dr, Decatur/DeKalb**

### **January 11 (rain date January 18) Zoo Atlanta**

#### ***Wildlife Conservation***

Zoo Atlanta is directly involved in field conservation programs for wildlife and wild places around the globe right here in Georgia. In this session, students will get a behind-the-scenes tour with Zoo Atlanta staff to learn more about wildlife conservation efforts, career paths at the zoo, and how they can help save species in their own community. Details on meetup location will be send prior to the session.

**Meeting Location: Education Gate, Zoo Atlanta, 800 Cherokee Ave SE, Atlanta/Fulton**

**February 8 (rain date February 15) Newman Wetlands Center**

***Wonders of Water***

How often do you think about water — and the vital role it plays in our lives? This program focuses on the importance of watersheds and wetlands in biological, social and cultural ways. On a guided hike of a wetland, participants will complete a field study that includes water quality testing and biodiversity observations. Discussions will bring attention to participants' personal relationships with the waters around them, their watershed address, and how wetlands mitigate human impact.

**Meeting Location: Newman Wetlands Center, 2755 Freeman Road, Hampton/Clayton**

**March 8 (rain date March 9) Fulton County Public Works**

***Urban Water Systems***

During our tours of the Tom Lowe Atlanta - Fulton County Water Treatment Plant and the Johns Creek Environmental Campus with Fulton County Public Works, we'll see first-hand how drinking water gets to our sinks and what happens to it when it leaves our homes while learning about the importance of protecting our water resources and the many careers involved in keeping water treatment systems running 24/7.

**Meeting Location: Tom Lowe Atlanta-Fulton County WTP, 9750 Spruill Road, Johns Creek/Fulton**

**April 12 (rain date April 19) Amphibian Foundation**

***Amphibians of Metro Atlanta***

During a field survey at Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve with the Amphibian Foundation, students will learn how to identify common frogs and salamanders of Atlanta, as well as best practices for locating and safely handling amphibians. After the session, students can continue to participate in the Metro Atlanta Amphibian Monitoring Program ([www.maamp.us](http://www.maamp.us)), collecting data on our urban amphibian communities.

**Meeting Location: Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve, 2580 Pine Bluff Dr, Decatur/DeKalb**

**May 11 (no rain date) Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center**

***Graduation Boat Ride and Picnic (Locust Grove)***

Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center is a Henry County Water Authority (HCWA) wetland enhancement and protection corridor created to improve and protect existing habitats while providing an avenue for public education and recreation. At this final session, we'll take a boat tour of one of the five reservoirs managed by HCWA, observing a diversity of birds and other wildlife that make their homes here while learning about the multi-faceted work HCWA staff is doing to improve the landscape for both people and wildlife. We'll wrap up with a picnic lunch and a celebration of our time together this year.

**Meeting Location: Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Ctr, 100 Collins Road, Locust Grove/Henry**

***Thank you to our partners who make this program possible:***

*Trees Atlanta, Dekalb County Parks, Zoo Atlanta, Newman Wetlands Center/Clayton County Water Authority, Amphibian Foundation, AWARE Wildlife Center, Fulton County Public Works, and Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center*