



## **Georgia Urban Ecologists (GUE) 2024-25: Atlanta Cohort 2**

**Sessions occur one Saturday per month from 10 AM-1 PM**, unless otherwise noted. Atlanta Cohort 2 is open to students across metro-Atlanta counties who have participated in Cohort 1 and are returning for a second year or more.

### **Sunday, September 22-- Orientation with Birds Georgia via Zoom, 4:00-5:00 PM**

### **October 19--Hydroelectric Dam Tour at Morgan Falls Dam (Rain or shine)**

There are 19 hydroelectric dams in Georgia, which provide 2% of the electricity in our state. During this session, students will experience a rare behind-the-scenes tour of Morgan Falls Dam. Morgan Falls Dam was built in 1904 to power Atlanta's streetcars. Not only does Morgan Falls Dam affect the ecology of our state by providing renewable energy, but the dam has impacted the surrounding ecology by turning a narrow, rapid river into Bull Sluice Lake, with wetlands and mudflats. The tour should take around an hour, and the remainder of our session will be spent birding Morgan Falls Park.

**Meeting location: Morgan Falls Dam, 200 Morgan Falls Rd, Sandy Springs/Fulton**

### **November 16-- Wildlife Studies at Berry College - Using Technology to Explore Biodiversity.** **(rain date November 17)**

We will see how the 27,000-acre Berry College campus is being used as a living laboratory to study biodiversity. Technological innovations now allow us to study animals - including herps, birds, bats, and other mammals - that were previously elusive and difficult to detect. In addition, we will learn about the conservation of local longleaf pine and chestnut trees. Exact meetup location will be announced prior to the session.

**Meeting location: Berry College/Floyd**

### **December 14-- (rain or shine) Hatchery Tour at Buford Fish Hatchery**

The GA Department of Natural Resources uses Buford Fish Hatchery to raise five hundred thousand brown and rainbow trout to stock the Chattahoochee River each year. Buford Dam has changed the ecology of the Chattahoochee River in many ways, and one way is making the river cold enough to support trout. After our hatchery tour, we will explore the trails of Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area/Bowman's Island Unit.

**Meeting location: 3204 Trout Place Road, Cumming/Forsyth**

**January 25– Georgia Geology at Stone Mountain Park (Rain date February 15)**

**Note late start time: 11:00 AM-1:30 PM**

Formed over 300 million years ago, it's no wonder the granite outcrop at Stone Mountain Park is so well-traveled. With five distinctive geologic regions, the geography of Georgia is incredibly varied. At Stone Mountain, students will discover geologic features unique to the Piedmont region, observe the unique stages of ecological succession on the mountain, and learn about some of the endemic species of the environment—quillwort, clam shrimp, and the Georgia oak.

**Meeting location: 2003 Robert E Lee Blvd, Stone Mountain, GA 30086, Stone Mountain/DeKalb. NOTE: Transportation info will be needed to waive park entrance fee. Please park in the Walk-Up Trail parking lot.**

**February 15–Exploring Panola Mountain with GA DNR State Parks & Historical Sites (rain date February 16) Note earlier start time: 9:00 AM-12:00 PM.**

Panola Mountain is a 100-acre granite outcrop similar to Stone Mountain, but smaller and more pristine. Since the mountain is closed to the public except during ranger-led hikes, students will get the unique opportunity to hike up the outcrop and experience it just as Native Americans did centuries ago, learning about the mountain's unique history, geology, flora, and fauna along the way. This hike is considered moderately strenuous and covers approximately 3.5 miles of distance. Participants should plan accordingly and bring plenty of water and sturdy closed-toed shoes suitable for hiking. Hiking sticks are permitted but cannot have a metal tip for the continued preservation of the mountain. **Meeting location: TBD**

**March 15– Native Plant Propagation with Stone Mtn Propagation Project (Rain date TBD)**

During this session, students will learn about native plants and propagation through hands-on experience with the Stone Mountain Propagation Project (SMPP), which was established in 2007 to support Georgia Native Plant Society habitat restoration projects and, more recently, Birds Georgia projects as well. Since its inception, SMPP volunteers have grown numerous varieties of native forbs, shrubs, and vines from seed and cuttings, fine-tuning different propagation techniques.

**Meeting location: Stone Mtn Park, Stone Mountain/DeKalb GPS: 33.813,-84.159, Driving directions will be provided. NOTE: Transportation info will be needed to waive park entrance fee.**

**April 19– Weather Radar and Bird/Insect Tracking with National Weather Svc. (rain date TBD)**

Details coming soon!

**May 17–Chattahoochee River Paddle and Pizza Party (Rain date TBD)**

Enjoy a 3-mile round-trip paddle with professional canoe guides from the Chattahoochee Nature Center. We will discover plants and animals that live in and around the Chattahoochee River, and soak up the beautiful scenery. After our paddle, we will celebrate the end of a great year with a pizza picnic. **Meeting location: Chattahoochee Nature Center, 9135 Willeo Road, Roswell/Fulton**

*Thank you to our partners who make this program possible: Georgia Power/Southern Company, Berry College, Stone Mountain Memorial Association, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia Native Plant Society, DeKalb County Parks, and Chattahoochee Nature Center.*