



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022



**BLUE HERON**  
NATURE PRESERVE



# 2022: A YEAR OF RENEWAL

Last year, I wrote that 2022 promised to be a year of renewal for Blue Heron Nature Preserve (BHNP) and I'm pleased to report that promise is being fulfilled every day. Our paths are filled with nature enthusiasts. Our camps are creating the next generation of nature enthusiasts. Our arts programs are attracting creative minds who are inspired by nature. We are preserving our Preserve and it, in turn, is providing a place to build community.

That community continues to grow. In 2022, we welcomed a record number of corporate sponsors and individual donors. These relationships are critical to maintaining our trail system, protecting our natural resources and offering arts and education programs. Though BHNP is a City of Atlanta park, all amenities are funded entirely by our nonprofit organization and are not possible without the generosity of our donors and sponsors. This support enabled BHNP to continue to strengthen its three focus areas during 2022.

## PRESERVING OUR PRESERVE

Our foundation centers around the 30 acres of natural habitat with which we are entrusted to preserve. To this end, we are excited to partner with Georgia Tech and the City of Atlanta to leverage drone technology that is documenting a benchmark on the health of BHNP's tree canopy. This benchmark, conducted during 2023, will enable us to monitor and better manage our forested acres against the impacts of climate change and other threats. Also supporting our conservation efforts is a steady stream of volunteers, who numbered more than 200 during 2022 and contributed nearly 900 hours of service.

Encroaching development is an ongoing concern for any natural habitat in an urban environment. We have worked continuously to protect areas adjacent to a new subdivision on Emma Lane. In addition, we expect to acquire during 2023 a small tract of land—currently owned by the subdivision developer—that is critical to maintaining trail connectivity among our three major land holdings. We are indebted to Trees Atlanta and the City of Atlanta for facilitating and funding this acquisition.

## NURTURING THE NEXT GENERATION OF NATURE ENTHUSIASTS

During 2022, we were thrilled to restore our full cadre of education programs and participation has steadily increased, and the 2023 summer camp enrollment has surpassed the 90% mark. We run eight afterschool programs and have extended environmental education into under-resourced communities through partnerships with Greening Youth Foundation and Los Ninos Primero. In total, we welcomed more than 900 students this year for our environmental education programming.

## INSPIRING ART THROUGH NATURE

The arts continue to be an important part of our legacy and our programs today. During 2022, we hosted one of our most innovative events to date, Fertile Ground: From Sankofa to Blue Heron, in partnership with Atlanta Public Schools (APS) and ZuCot Gallery. APS students created nature-inspired art, with 19 winning artworks displayed in Blue Heron's indoor art gallery. Approximately 80 APS art educators gathered at BHNP for the APS Professional Learning Day in March with encouraging words from Mayor Andre Dickens. We also continued our highly popular Art of Nature exhibit, in which selected artists create exhibits in the Preserve itself.

## BUILDING A NATURE-INSPIRED COMMUNITY

While the challenges of preserving natural assets in an urban environment can be daunting, we are energized by our cause and our community of support. The 30 acres of natural habitat that we are entrusted to preserve will always be our foundation, but equally as valued are the connections that we build with one another as we experience nature. Thank you for being a part of that community.

Melody Harclerode, FAIA  
Executive Director

Robert Cook  
Chairman

*Melody Harclerode* *Robert H. Cook*



# 2022 SIGNATURE ACCOMPLISHMENTS



**214** volunteers  
donate **868** hours



**931** participants  
from education  
programs



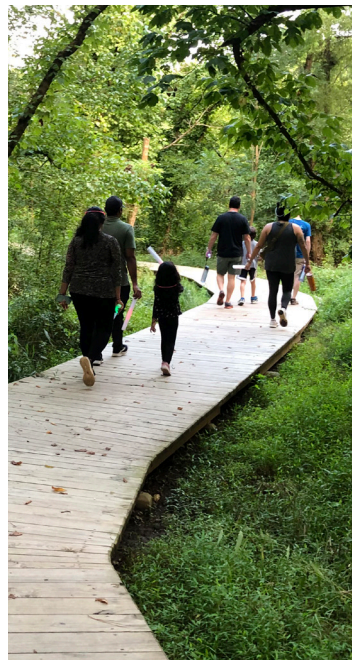
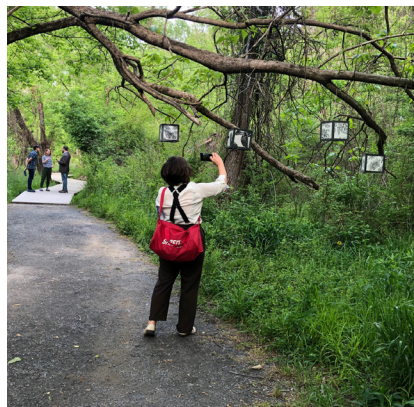
**8** after-school  
environmental  
education  
programs in  
**7** elementary  
schools



**14** visual and  
performing artists  
at the *Art of Nature*  
exhibit



**289** total  
individual and  
corporate donations







# SPREAD YOUR WINGS

## THANK YOU TO OUR CIVIC PARTNERS:

City of Atlanta  
Georgia Audubon  
Amphibian Foundation  
Acton Buckhead

Park Pride  
Atlanta Public Schools  
ZuCot Gallery  
Fulton County

Southeast Beescapes  
Georgia Native Plant Society  
Georgia Institute of Technology  
University of Georgia

## THANK YOU TO OUR CORPORATE PARTNERS:

Northside Hospital  
Perkins&Will  
YKK AP  
Kaiser Permanente

REI Coop  
Bennett Thrasher  
BlackRock  
Bryan Cave Leighton Paisner

Morris, Manning, & Martin  
Aprio  
North Atlanta Eye Care  
Georgia Power Foundation



*"Such a beautiful light hiking trail. Nature surrounds you everywhere you would forget you are right off such a central busy and residential area. The river is beautiful and looks very clean. Lots of wildlife to enjoy and quirky little hidden trails amongst main trails ie: Butterfly garden, Honey Bee garden and Compost garden. Great place to take kid and even have a picnic under a large gazebo with tables."*



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Blue Heron Nature Preserve is a 501(c)3 non-profit and entirely community-supported: [bhnp.org/donate](http://bhnp.org/donate)