

280 Sites + **8** Trails
 in **65** Counties
 =
Great Alabama Birding



Over 15 years in the making, the system of eight trails highlights the best public locations available to watch birds year-round. Interest in wildlife observation continues to grow, and more and more people want to explore our amazing biodiversity, which makes us second only to Florida in the Eastern U.S. in total number of species of plants and animals. The Birding Trails project provides a major attraction for nature-loving tourists, while offering exciting birding opportunities for Alabama's school groups, families, and seasoned birders.

The eight Alabama Birding Trails unify existing and potential birding sites into a series of cohesive trails and loops that are collectively marketed as part of a state-wide system. Many of the sites along the various trails are already being used by thousands of birders and other visitors annually.

The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development (UACED) is providing the leadership role of facilitation and project scope; The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources is providing their depth of knowledge relative to wildlife habitat, birding and previous birding trails experience; The Birmingham Audubon Society has provided experience that only deeply knowledgeable birders could. The Alabama Tourism Department and the Alabama Association of RC&D Councils and UACED have provided funding for the project; Chambers of Commerce across the state have taken great pride in the project, as have our Federal partners, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, National Forest Service and others.

Economic Impact of Alabama Birding Trails

\$734 million in state expenditures on wildlife watching by residents

\$813 million total expenditures on wildlife watching by residents

Economic Impact of Birding Nationally

46.7 million bird-observers nationwide

\$17.27 million trip-related expenditures nationwide

*Source U.S. Fish and Wildlife 2011 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

The South in general has substantially more interest in birding than the rest of the country with 34% overall interest, followed by the Midwest at 24%.



Birding Partners

Alabama Association of RC&D Councils
 Alabama Dept. of Conservation & Natural Resources
 Alabama Cooperative Extension System
 Alabama Dept. of Economic & Community Affairs
 Alabama Historical Commission
 Alabama Tourism Department
 Alabama Forestry Commission
 Alabama Mountain Lakes
 Alabama Ornithological Society
 Alabama State Parks
 Auburn University
 Birmingham Audubon Society

Birmingham-Southern College
 Central Alabama Community College
 Chambers of Commerce
 County Parks
 Jacksonville State University, Field School
 Moundville Archaeological Park
 The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development
 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
 U.S. Department of Interior
 U.S. Fish & Wildlife
 U.S. Forest Service

Appalachian Highlands Birding Trail



From the forested hills of the Ridge and Valley region to the rich pastures and farmlands of its river-carved valleys, the Appalachian Highlands Birding Trail provides a wide diversity of habitats for birds, including the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker. Especially noteworthy for bird-lovers are the many rivers that flow through this region, including the Black Warrior, the Cahaba, the Coosa, and the Tallapoosa.

Soaring Bald Eagles share the rolling terrain with a variety of hawks and owls. Colorful warblers and other migrating songbirds pass through each spring and fall, many staying to nest during the summer. Waterfowl are plentiful on our lakes and ponds each winter, and wading herons and egrets can be found year-round.

With Alabama's highest mountain and the deepest gorge east of the Mississippi, the Appalachian Highlands Birding Trail is noted for its scenic beauty.

Rich hardwood forests, abundant rivers and lakes, lush meadows framed by steep mountain ridges—you'll find them all here. And along the way, you'll find some amazing birding, as well!

Project Lead Partners



The mission of the Nongame Wildlife Program is to manage, protect, and enhance the populations of nongame wildlife which make Alabama so unique. Nongame wildlife are those species that are not legally hunted, which make up more than 95% of the native species that Alabama has to offer, making our mission a formidable task to handle.



UA Center for
Economic Development

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®

Founded in 1987 The University of Alabama Center for Economic Development (UACED) serves as a gateway to technical assistance resources at The University of Alabama. Through the utilization of professional staff and customized project teams, UACED assists communities, agencies and organizations to take an "asset based" planning approach to economic development opportunities.



**BIRMINGHAM
AUDUBON**

Founded in 1946, Birmingham Audubon is Alabama's leading non-profit organization engaging people in the enjoyment and conservation of birds, their habitats, and the natural world. A certified chapter of the National Audubon Society serving central Alabama with projects statewide.