



**The mission of South River Watershed Alliance is to protect and restore the water quality and biodiversity of the South River watershed to the beneficial use of people and wildlife.**

## August 2015

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Young rivercane growing at Panola Mountain State Park. Photo: Jackie Echols

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## Turning a lemon into lemonade

*Tapestry Community works to reclaim Stockade Creek*

Long ago, the City of Atlanta buried Stockade Creek in a huge concrete pipe that runs along the channel where the stream used to be. Stand atop the pipe and listen carefully, you can hear the gurgling sound of the creek under your feet.

Buoyed by Atlanta's decision to separate the sewers - the process of putting stormwater in one pipe and sewage in another - in the Stockade Basin ten years ago, the Tapestry Community is working to recreate a functioning remnant of the Stockade Creek aquatic ecosystem. The creek itself has been reduced to an intermittent stream that only carries water when it rains, but nature is amazingly resilient.



Stockade Creek is buried in this huge concrete pipe.  
Photo: Jackie Echols

The revival process began in 2007, when the community reached out to a number of organizations for help with everything from tree plantings to removal of invasive vegetation. In 2009, with the help of a host of volunteers, 100 tires and a 30 yard dumpster of trash were removed from the creek's channel and bank. In 2010, the community's focus shifted to replanting trees, some of which were lost during the sewer separation process, and other native shrubs and perennial plants. To date, more than 42 native trees suitable for wetlands have been planted along with a variety of vegetation that removes pollutants from the stor



Beaver pond has formed in the Tapestry community greenspace. Photo: Jackie Echols

mwater that fills the channel when it rains.

Efforts to return this intermittent stream to a more natural environment were expanded in 2013 with a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This funding attracted even more partners and volunteers to the restoration effort resulting in even more trash and invasive plant removal and native tree, shrub, and grass plantings.

Functioning ecosystems attract nature - wildlife, birds, insects,

and aquatic life. In the summer of 2014, a single beaver migrated to the area, constructed a dam, his or her version of home, at the site where a nearby small stream intersects with the Stockade channel. This newcomer to the community has taken up residence in the pool of water that formed behind the dam. It was not long before a second beaver joined the first, followed by an abundance of wildlife never before seen on the property including a pair of residing green herons, blue heron, frogs, turtles, damsel and dragonflies, snowy white egret, a mama duck with three ducklings, and no mosquitoes. The community has planted alder shrubs along the stream bank to increase the beaver's food supply.

Tapestry's beavers have made it possible for an entirely new ecosystem to develop on the seven acre urban oasis but this accomplishment is not without its challenges. Inclusion of a functioning urban natural environment and the wildlife it attracts into

Atlanta's urban landscape oftentimes conflict with the narrow views of some local officials, especially those that manage Atlanta's wastewater utility.

Decades after the City of Atlanta made the decision to bury Stockade Creek in the concrete pipe where it remains today, and ten years after separating the sewers, there is an opening to work with the Tapestry Community and nature to reclaim this urban environment and stream. Restoring and protecting small streams is the best way to ensure environmental and community benefits such as clean water and flood reduction. We can only hope that the City views this opportunity as a step towards becoming the green sustainable place that it is so fond of talking about.



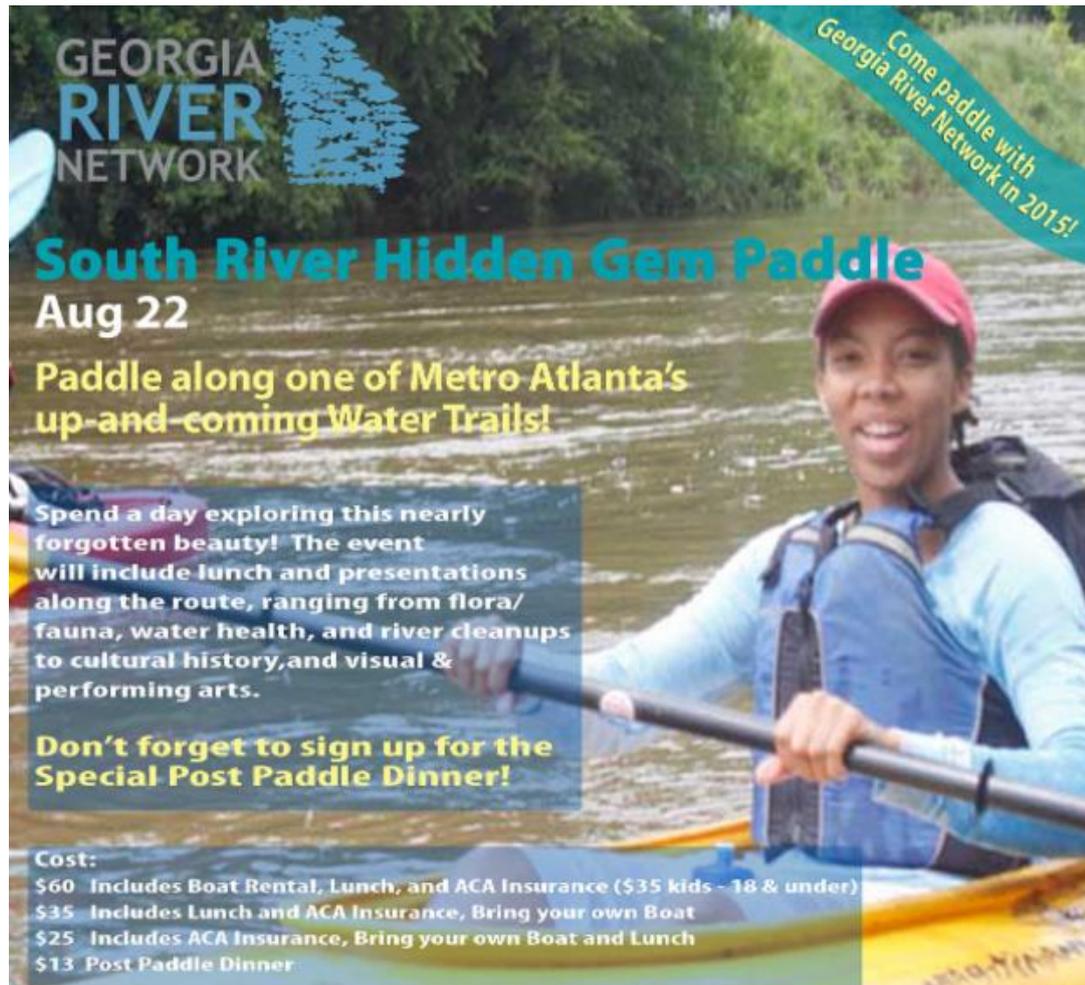
Tapestry's greenspace includes an urban garden and children's playground. Photo: Jackie Echols

Note: The Tapestry community greenspace is located on East Confederate Avenue at Walker Street in southeast Atlanta. Stockade Creek is a tributary of Intrinchement Creek which flows to the South River.

The Tapestry Community and its seven acres of greenspace are in the Beltline overly. On the Beltline Master Plan Subarea 3 the community greenspace is identified as the Ormewood Greenway.

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## South River Hidden Gem Paddle



**GEORGIA RIVER NETWORK**

**South River Hidden Gem Paddle**  
Aug 22

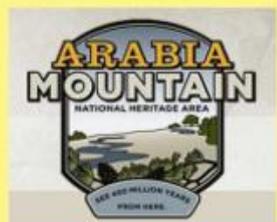
**Paddle along one of Metro Atlanta's up-and-coming Water Trails!**

Spend a day exploring this nearly forgotten beauty! The event will include lunch and presentations along the route, ranging from flora/fauna, water health, and river cleanups to cultural history, and visual & performing arts.

**Don't forget to sign up for the Special Post Paddle Dinner!**

**Cost:**  
\$60 Includes Boat Rental, Lunch, and ACA Insurance (\$35 kids - 18 & under)  
\$35 Includes Lunch and ACA Insurance, Bring your own Boat  
\$25 Includes ACA Insurance, Bring your own Boat and Lunch  
\$13 Post Paddle Dinner

**Event partners include:**



**Register at <http://south-river.eventbrite.com>**

*Come paddle with Georgia River Network in 2015!*

The August 22 event will feature the Georgia River Network's Hidden Gems paddle. It is part of the Hidden Gems Paddle Series sponsored by South River Watershed Alliance and Georgia River Network. This event will attract river enthusiasts from across the state and serve as the inaugural launch of the South River Watershed Alliance's campaign to designate the South River Water Trail. The day will include a picnic lunch and presentations along the route, ranging from natural history and water-quality testing to river clean-up training. Seats are limited and available on a first come first serve basis. Click here to sign up <http://south-river.eventbrite.com>.

## South River selfie

One picture is worth a thousand words. See yourself in this selfie. Make plans to join SRWA on the last South River paddle of the year, August 22. You will be smiling too!



Selfie of July 25 South River paddlers - South River (DeKalb County)

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## Nature note

by Phil Delestrez

The Louisiana Waterthrush is a riparian specialist. They can be found along river and stream corridors, and often are only heard with a loud clear three note call, followed by a series of descending jumbled notes. The Waterthrush prowls the rocks and brush near the water, bobbing its tail up and down as it searches for insects. They are fairly common near the South River and surrounding Arabia Mountain heritage area, and can be heard on paddle trips April - June.



Louisiana Waterthrush  
Illustration: Phil Delestrez

Original acrylic paintings and prints available at <https://www.etsy.com/shop/DelestrezArts>  
[www.ArtPal.com/Delestrezart](http://www.ArtPal.com/Delestrezart);

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## Upcoming Events

### **South River Hidden Gems Paddle, Lorraine Park & Trailhead to Oglesby Bridge Road (Rockdale County), Saturday, August 22, 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

This is a SRWA, Georgia River Network, Arabia Mountain Heritage Area Alliance, Rockdale County partnership event. Register at <http://south-river.eventbrite.com>.

**For information about beginner paddler scholarships for August 22 paddle call Jackie, 404-285-3756.** These Arabia Mountain Park Adventures are made possible in part by a grant from the National Park Foundation through the generous support of Coca-Cola and Subaru.

**South River Jamboree, "Celebrating 5 Years, One River, and You", Saturday, September 26, Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Center, 6:00 - 9:00 p.m.** Join SRWA for a casual evening of conversation and camaraderie as we celebrate accomplishments over the last five years in support of the South River. Light hors d'oeuvres and refreshments served. RSVP to [southriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com](mailto:southriverwatershedalliance@gmail.com).

### **Dog Days of Summer, August 8, 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m., Alexander Lakes @ Panola Mountain State Park, 4835 Flat Bridge Road SW, Stockbridge, GA.**

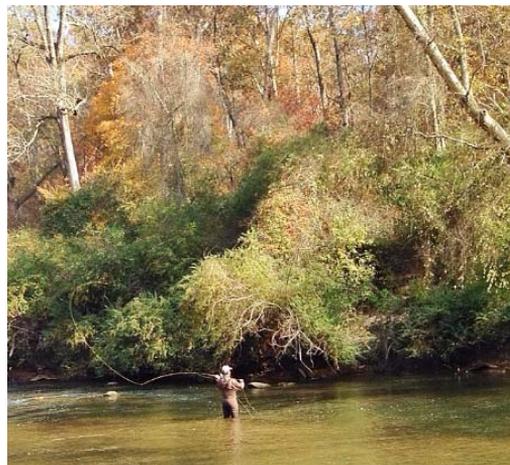
Hot dog, summer's almost over! Time for one last day in the park with your family, and that means Fido too! There will be Tree Climbing (\$5), pet adoptions, a silent auction, a canine obstacle course, K-9 search and rescue teams, face painting, a guided dog walk around the lake, and games for you and your pooch alike. Free admission. Parking \$5.

[Find out more](#)

## Give to South River Rainy Day Fund

This photo speaks volumes about how far the South River has come, but it is still in danger and need our help and financial support.

For the South River, rainy days are particularly awful. When it rains human poop pours into South River from the Custer Avenue combined sewer overflow facility. This situation will get even worse if the GA EPD removes BOD and TSS performance standards from Atlanta's 2015 clean water (NPDES) permit.



George Moll fly-fishing on South River in Rockdale County

Don't bet public health and the river's future on GA EPD doing the right thing. Without your generosity a decade of progress will be lost. Please donate \$25, \$50, \$100 or more or whatever you can afford today via Paypal at