



ALABAMA AUDUBON

A message from our Executive Director

BIRMINGHAM, AL, June 3rd, 2020—From Minnesota to Florida, California to Alabama, the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis last week has served as a terrible reminder of a long and devastating history of Black Americans losing their lives in police custody. The pain of this history is real and far reaching, and all of us have a responsibility to sit with it, reflect upon it, and find ways to address its root causes.

To all of our Black birder friends and members: Alabama Audubon values you, supports you, and wants to hear from you. As our organization's Executive Director, I invite you to email me directly and let me know what our staff and board can do to be a part of the solution: ansel@alaudubon.org.

To all the allies out there in the birding world: let's work even harder to make the outdoors a respectful and safe place for everyone. A good place to start is by following and amplifying the many excellent leaders participating in the #BlackBirdersWeek campaign on social media. Hear their voices and listen to their concerns, then act to make field trips, get togethers, and natural spaces safer for Black Americans.

To anyone who's wondering why a bird conservation organization needs to make a statement like this: please consider that among the many damages racism has wrought upon our country, its impact on the work of conservation has been both detrimental and profound. Until everyone who loves birds and nature has the opportunity to enjoy them free of discrimination, harassment, and brutality, we'll never be able to muster the people power necessary to solve our conservation challenges. In other words, a bright future for birds is indistinguishable from a just future for people, and we can't achieve one without the other.

Finally, please know that Alabama Audubon remains committed to being an inclusive, welcoming, and anti-racist organization, one that strives to reflect the wonderful diversity of the state we represent. We look forward to working with each and every one of you to get there together.

Sincerely,

Ansel Payne, PhD
Executive Director

Things you can do right now:

On social media, follow #BlackBirdersWeek.

Read recent articles related to this topic, such as:

- [#BlackBirdersWeek Aims to Raise Awareness, Grow Community](#) - *BirdWatching Magazine*
- ["How Am I Going to Be Perceived as a Black Man with Binoculars?": J. Drew Lanham on Christian Cooper and Rules for the Black Birdwatcher](#) - *Vanity Fair*
- ["These Black Nature Lovers Are Busting Stereotypes, One Cool Bird at a Time"](#) – CNN
- [Nine New Revelations for the Black American Bird-Watcher](#) - Another great piece by our friend Dr. Drew Lanham from *Vanity Fair*