

Walking through the
Nature Doorway, and
keeping it open for
others to follow.

Alex Troutman
N8ture_AL



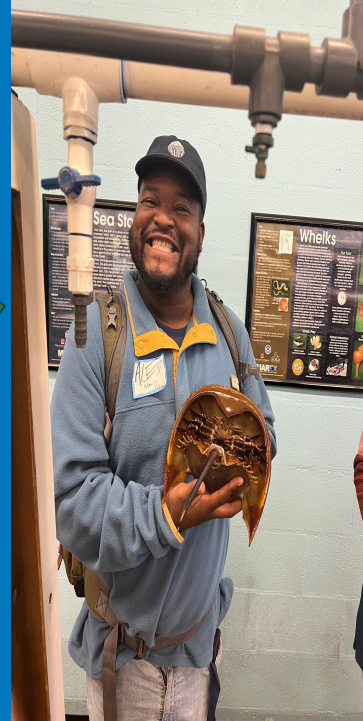
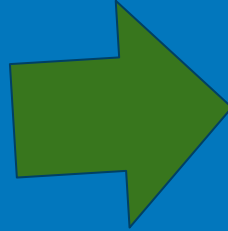
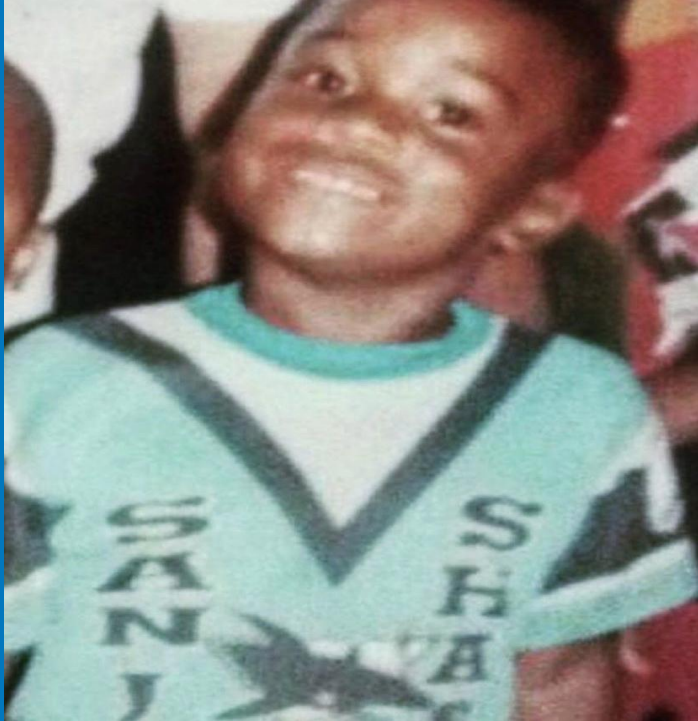
About me

Austell, GA

- Georgia Southern University
- Georgia Aquarium
- United States Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Coastwise Consulting
- Fish and Wildlife private lands Biologist USFWS



So...how did this happen?..



It all started with walking through the Nature doorway..



What is a Nature doorway?...



The Nature doorway is..

Any item/thing/idea and or place that draws, connects or inspires one to nature/outdoors .

Things Like:

- Magazines
- State parks
- Backyard
- Beaches
- smells
- Binos
- Birds
- Frogs
- people(siblings,conservationist, tv host..)

My Nature doorway involved a SPARK... Bird and a few fish.



My love for nature and birds started with me spending time with my family at a local state park fishing.

That's where I saw the fiery glow of this bird, the Red-tailed Hawk soaring high over the creek.

At that time i didn't know what a spark bird was, but I can tell you it sure did spark a love for nature.

A doorway to lead me to...



How do we keep the Nature Doorway open?...



Acknowledging privileges

There's a privilege that comes with being able to access nature and even more privilege to access it without fear.

For many reasons one may not want to camp or explore the woods, and even more so work in the outdoors.



We have to tear down barrier!.. While The door to Nature is always open, equal access is not ...

- Systemic Racism
- Lack of opportunities
- Lack of situation Awareness
- We have always done it this way attitude -Traditions
- The “Silver streak” pass- “I’m old/ They’re old”
- Concerned Neighbors / park users- the “I’m worried they’re up to no good folks”
- Lack of Finances, Transportation and adequate gear-
- Language/ science terms



Grab a hand and take someone with you...



We must engage the whole team...

Each individual or group brings their own strength and talents.

We have to have a collaborative effort for working with all people.

- Young
- Old
- BIPOC
- Allies

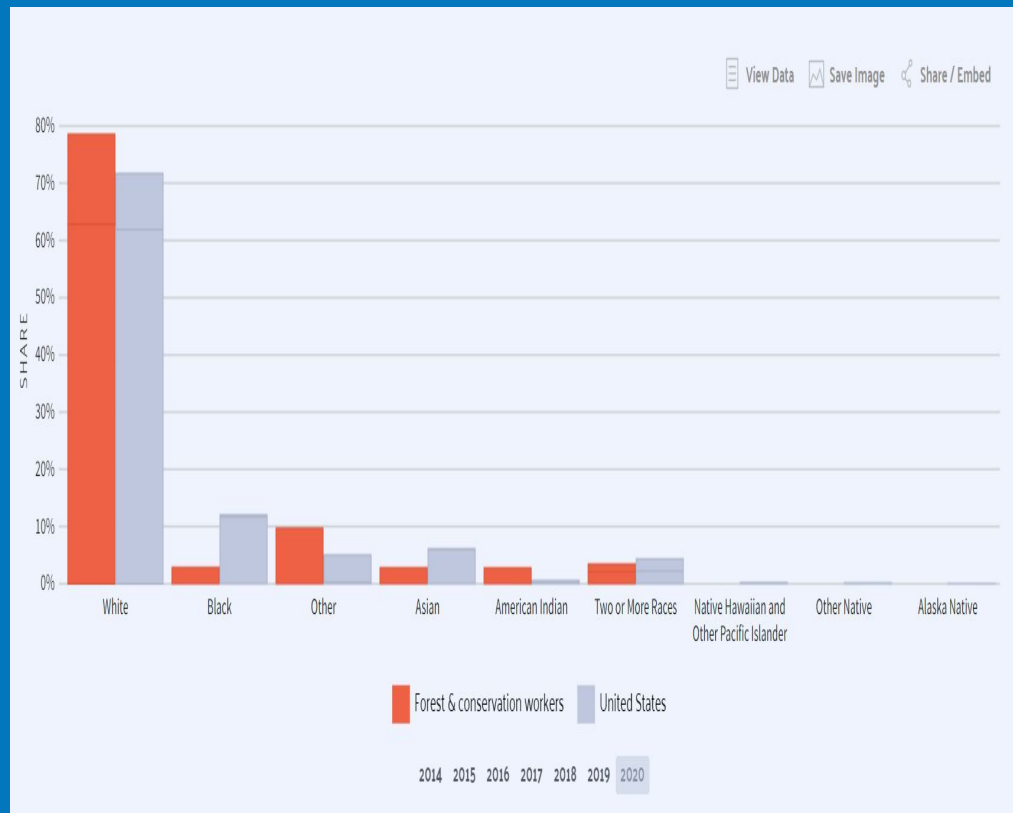


The Conservation workforce needs more diversity.

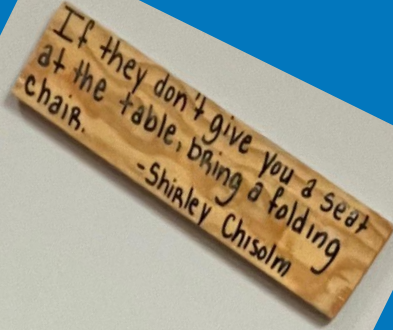
Black, Indigenous and People of Color Conservation workers are just as rare and endangered as some of the wildlife and plant species we study.

According to Census Bureau Data as of 2020, White Individuals make up almost 80% of conservation and forest workforce while We (BIPOC individuals) only make up less than 20% of forest & conservation workers in the US.

Increasing diversity leads to better problem solving and conservation through acknowledging local and traditional ecological knowledge.



WE Must Dismantle and Destroy systems that was never meant for all of us...



If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair.
- Shirley Chisholm

A photograph of a wooden sign with the quote "If they don't give you a seat at the table, bring a folding chair. - Shirley Chisholm" written on it in black marker. A hand is visible at the bottom left, pointing towards the sign.

While we are on the subject of dismantling systemic barriers and powers, we must dismantle and destroy the *TAINTED* conservation table that we know of today. It's built on decades of lies, stolen lands, murders, and broken promises. Even if we put a clean tablecloth on it, it is still the same tainted table. We need a new table where all are welcome and can contribute input equally. This table that I am referring to is the hypothetical table many conservation agencies and organizations have boasted about, saying things like everyone is welcome, and we all have the same opportunities as others to listen, speak, influence decisions, and make a difference without judgment or punishment. Only this table is one that for centuries has excluded Black, indigenous, and people color and their ideas. While many times happily accepting our labor and the spoils or rewards that came along with it. A table where conservation policies, laws, and discoveries were made. The same table that allowed indigenous individuals to be removed off their land and Black towns to be converted into military bases and flooded, and turned into lakes and parks. This is the table that we are now welcome at! A table that is standing on the blood, tears, and memories of our ancestors, memories that we should forget because we now "have a seat at the table." So shall we sit at this table with the beautiful, adorned tablecloth built on privilege and betrayals, or together build a new table for all?

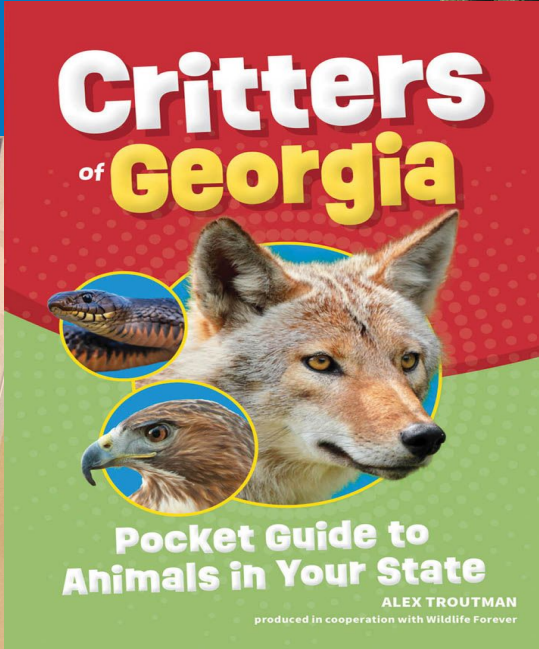
Take Up and Create Space..!

Remaining safe conducting Field work While Black (FWB), and Tips for PIs, Universities, and Employers of Black Individuals ^{FREE}

Alex Troutman ✉

Journal of Comparative Biology, Volume 63, Issue 1, July 2023, P. 1-113,

Career Chat with Wildlife Biologist: Alex Troutman



We Must stick together..



Diversity is not enough....

