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New Guidebook Shows Atlantans Where to Hike, Close to Home

Spring is finally on the way to metro Atlanta, and if you love the great outdoors, you won't need to plan an entire weekend getaway to enjoy it. "Don't let the asphalt and skyscrapers of Atlanta fool you," says outdoor educator Jonah McDonald. "Hikers don't need to drive hours to the mountains. Chances are, you live mere minutes from wooded trails."

McDonald reveals these local getaways in his new guidebook, *Hiking Atlanta's Hidden Forests: Intown and Out*. Listing 60 hikes within 30 miles of Georgia's Capitol dome, the new guide shows experienced and casual hikers alike how to get out on the trails without leaving the city. Of the 60 hikes, 20 are inside the perimeter and nearly half have appeared in no other guidebook. Hike routes range from less than a mile to 12 miles.

"My goal is to share opportunities for getting outside closer to home," says McDonald. "I want Atlantans to know about the amazing trails in and around our city. These hikes and greenspaces are local treasures for us to be proud of."

Besides essential information like maps, turn-to-turn hiking directions, and trailhead addresses with GPS coordinates, each route description includes data on champion and sentinel trees—important specimens noted for their size, age, or other salient characteristics—along the trail. Many also list birds commonly seen. Hike destinations and highlights include waterfalls, ruined bridges and historic mills, rocky outcrops that make good picnic spots, and unusual bamboo groves.

Jonah McDonald is the founder and principle guide of Sure Foot Adventures. His guidebook was inspired in part by his discovery of the many small nature preserves and neighborhood parks within the Atlanta perimeter while leading outdoor excursions for schools and families. An Appalachian Trail 2000-miler and former school teacher, he resides in Atlanta.

Hiking Atlanta's Hidden Forests: Intown and Out will be available beginning April 1 wherever good books are sold, and may also be ordered directly from the publisher at 828-488-6601 or online at www.milestonepress.com.

April 1, 2014 □ **Hiking GA** □ **Paperback Original**
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