



# EEA's Annual Conference

**Environmental Education:  
Everyone, Everywhere, Everyday**

A healthy environment—clean air, plentiful water, a diversity of wildlife, and a prosperous economy are things **everyone** needs. Many people are committed to teaching about Georgia's environment **everyday**. Some work in classrooms, local, state and national parks, at nature centers, zoos, botanical gardens, for corporations, universities, government agencies and non-profit organizations. Some provide environmental education through PTAs, Scouts, 4-H clubs, YMCAs, YWCAs, churches, camps and other youth development programs. Still others share their environmental message as parents or grandparents. Educators **everywhere** are invited by the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia to build relationships, share ideas and learn from each other on March 22-24, 2002 at Unicoi State Park Lodge in Helen, Georgia.

Plan to come to the beautiful North Georgia Mountains and enjoy a weekend at Unicoi State Park, nestled on 1,081 acres in the midst of the Chattahoochee National Forest. Experience too the 5,555 acres of beautiful mountain woodlands and blue ribbon trout streams of Smithgall Woods State Park in the Dukes Creek Watershed.

Partially funded by a grant from the North American Association for Environmental Education, EEA will offer full-day workshops, 8 concurrent sessions, thematic panel discussions, and exciting field trips. A conference designed to

renew your spirit, you will network with colleagues, make new acquaintances, gather resources and share your ideas, programs and talents with others. Session details, event schedules, and a registration form are included with this newsletter. **To qualify for our early bird rates, your registration must be post-marked by February 25!**

Onsite registration and check-in begins at 8:00 a.m. on Friday, March 22. For those arriving on Thursday, check in is from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and from 8:00 p.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and Sunday registration will begin at 8:30 a.m.

New this year is a pre-conference activity on **Thursday**: You're invited to join the EEA Conference Hospitality Committee for dinner at Edelweiss Restaurant and a night hike to Anna Ruby Falls for folklore, fun, and maybe even to meet the mysterious mountain Foxfire.

For the first time, we will feature exhibitors—you'll want to make time to visit all of them for even more resources. And this year there will be two formats for the sharing sessions: ten-minute long "presentation-type" sessions as well as stations for you to visit at your leisure. Both formats will be offered daily from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. There will be lots to check out!

We guarantee you'll be deluged with educational resources and great sessions on **Friday**, the first full day of the conference. (See the enclosed conference registration brochure for complete information on each day's schedule of sessions). Choose from: a full-day Georgia Conservancy "Native Seasons" workshop; bottle biology; SACS accreditation; grant writing; tool kits for water education; interactive tour of Georgia's new web site for EE resources; packaging curriculum-based EE lesson plans for the outdoor classroom; and tried and true ideas for low-cost, self-guided programs presented by Callaway Garden staff. Panel discussions carry our conference theme throughout the weekend—"EVERYONE" theme panels include discussions on "Community Youth

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# Georgia EE Providers: Region 1



*Editors' Note: With the publication of The Georgia Environmental Education Teacher Resource Guide, EEA and The Link continue to share with our members and readers a sampling of EE providers from various regions across Georgia. In this issue we highlight the locations of EEA's 2002 Conference: Unicoi State Park and Smithgall Woods-Dukes Creek Conservation Area, Helen GA 30545, [www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/parks](http://www.dnr.state.ga.us/dnr/parks)*

Named for the Unicoi Turnpike (an ancient Cherokee trail that later became a toll road), **Unicoi State Park** is 1,023 acres next to the 741,000 acre Chattahoochee National Forest. Located within the park are a 53-acre lake for fishing, swimming, and canoes; 12.8 miles of hiking trails; interpretive trails; and 7 miles of mountain bike trails. Park rangers lead guided nature walks, sharing with visitors the plants and creatures that are a special part of different park areas. Environmental experiences are available such as night sensitivity hikes, exploring natural sounds, and finding animal tracks. Weekly program topics may include hands-on studies of reptiles and amphibians, mammals, forest and aquatic ecology, and weather. Corporations and school groups alike practice team building and leadership skills. Outdoor adventure programs range from orienteering to canoeing, wilderness survival and how to prevent becoming lost. Cultural and living history programs feature the history of the area from the Cherokee times to the days of gold rush fever. Contact Unicoi State Park staff at 706-878-3983.

Dukes Creek, North Georgia's premier trout stream, runs through **Smithgall Woods-Dukes Creek Conservation Area**, a Georgia State Parks and Historic site near Unicoi State Park. Hikers and cyclists can explore hardwood forests, mountain streams and wildlife along 22 miles of trails on 5,600 acres. Trout fishing and guided tours are also offered on certain days, so visitors need to call ahead. Education programs at Dukes Creek Conservation Area reflect the diverse richness and fragility of the Appalachian habitat protected therein. A full-time Master Teacher and DNR staff work with young learners and teachers from around the State. Since the inception of these programs in 1998, almost 10,000 students a year study stream ecology, wildlife identification, and fishery and archery programs. At Smithgall Woods, the education mission is threaded with natural resource management and historic resource protection. A variety of outdoor recreation activities are also available for traditional state park visitors. Teacher workshops and outreach programs are offered to school systems within the Pioneer Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) district. Contact Smithgall Woods staff at 706-878-3087.



## EEA Spotlight: Cindy Reittinger

EEA member Cindy Reittinger played a key role in helping the conference committee secure not only the state park sites for EEA's 2002 Conference, but also the creative energy of the parks' interpretive staffs. As an interpretive specialist, Cindy supports interpretive efforts at Georgia State Parks and Historic Sites. There are 63 such sites in Georgia, about half of which are staffed with interpreters. She says she has a fun job that's both challenging and creative! Growing up in New York in the early days of public television, Cindy was inspired by Jane Goodall, fascinated with animals and read everything about them. Summers spent with her grandmother in the Adirondacks provided experiences with "real nature." Early in her career, she spent several seasons as a National Park Service ranger and one season as an Ohio State Parks naturalist. Cindy taught biology at Purdue University and spent ten years working for botanic gardens, most recently as the Director of Education at the Atlanta Botanical Garden. At ABG she developed The Children's Garden and feels very

strongly about the importance of exposing young children to experiences in the outdoors. Her work with Georgia's state parks and EEA brings her full circle. "Environmental education is a big component of what the state parks are about," says Cindy, "and bringing environmental educators to Unicoi and Smithgall for the EEA conference gives us the opportunity to meet and share first hand what's going on in state parks." Contact Cindy at 404-657-0029 or via e-mail: [Cindy\\_Reittinger@mail.dnr.state.ga.us](mailto:Cindy_Reittinger@mail.dnr.state.ga.us).



# Judy Braus: Bringing Biodiversity Home to Georgia

Most of us have used publications she edited to add creative, hands-on activities to our EE programs. Our closing speaker is **Judy Braus**, Director of Education for the World Wildlife Fund, United States Office, (WWF) and former editor of *Naturescope* and *Ranger Rick*. At WWF, Judy oversees a variety of education initiatives, including *Windows on the Wild* — a biodiversity education program. Judy will share her unique experiences, inspiring us to deepen our commitment to maintaining biodiversity worldwide and here in Georgia. Judy will speak at **noon on Sunday, March 24**.

Before joining WWF, Judy coordinated the Peace Corps' environmental education activities in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the South Pacific and Eastern Europe. She was Director of Schools Programs at National Wildlife Federation (NWF), where she also edited the award-winning environmental education activity series, *NatureScope*, and *Ranger Rick*, NWF's best known children's magazine.

Judy was president of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) in 1999, and a board member for more than 10 years. She serves on the national

education steering committee of Project Learning Tree, *Dragonfly*, and other advisory groups. She has written several children's books and co-authored a book for educators, *Environmental Education in the Schools: Creating a Program That Works!*



Honored as NAAEE's Outstanding Environmental Educator in 1993, she also received the 1998 Taft Campus Award for outstanding contributions to the field of EE. In

addition, WWF recently won the 2001 NAAEE award for outstanding international education.

Come join us for the closing ceremony and leave the conference reinvigorated and re-dedicated to bringing EE to *everyone, everywhere, everyday!*

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Development Leaders using EE in their Program” and “Concerned Citizens Take Action to Protect and Preserve Water Resources.”

Meet our “Fascinatin’ Buzzard” to pick up your “Hike and Hunt” clues and compete in the **Second Annual Buzzard Hike and Hunt**—an adventure of cultural and natural discoveries along one of Unicoi Park's beautiful mountain trails. Attend a combined Leadership Training (Refresher) for Project Learning Tree, Project WET and Project WILD facilitators and keep your facilitator status current! Our EEA Hospitality Committee invites you to a Cash Bar and social Friday evening at Unicoi Lodge. Enjoy barbecue, vegetables, good company, and music and storytelling by Pete Griffin, interpreter extraordinaire from Smithgall Woods. The evening will conclude with a campfire so bring your musical instruments and stories to share!

On **Saturday**, conference check-in begins at 8:30 a.m. Saturday's opening sessions include: a PLT workshop; “Monarchs Across Georgia;” and

Tallulah Gorge State Park's “Common Threads” Cultural Crafts to Enhance EE. Other Saturday session topics: green schools; managing volunteers; attracting hummingbirds; partnering with your local Keep America Beautiful affiliate; how to turn any EE activity into science education; and a National Wildlife Federation session on “Access Nature”—a new inclusive outdoor education curriculum with adaptations suitable to all learners. “EVERYWHERE” theme panels will showcase the environmental justice movement and how EE Leaders in other states are building capacity for EE.

There are field trips for “EVERYONE”—hiking, canoeing, biking, fly-fishing or learning about mountain skills and crafts. (Field trips are described in the enclosed conference registration form). Make your choices early because space is limited for some trips. Additional field trip details and conference information will be posted and updated on our website **www.eealliance.org**, so keeping checking back! Read all about our Saturday evening EEA Awards Ban-

quet on page 4 of the newsletter. Help us honor our talented and dedicated volunteers and environmental educators in Georgia!

**Sunday** sessions include Natural History Exploration Kits; the Girl Scout Water Drop Patch; teaching the scientific method; “Leaves of Steel;” and linking literature to EE. The “EVERYDAY” theme panel explores EE in the school community. You all know our keynote speaker even if you've never met her. Have you ever used lessons from National Wildlife Federation's *Naturescope*® or read *Ranger Rick*®? **Judy Braus** edited these publications and is currently the Director of Education for World Wildlife Fund. Learn more about this dynamic environmental educator and speaker in the article above.

EVERYONE will find something of interest among this diverse line-up of conference sessions and field trips. Come to North Georgia and receive the wisdom of the black bear, the energy of the grouse, and the savvy of the mountain salamanders!

**See you at Unicoi!**

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GAINESVILLE, GA 30501



EEA is a self-governed, non-profit organization that promotes communication and education among professionals in the field of environmental education in Georgia. EEA is an affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education.

**Time to renew your EEA membership? Check your mailing label for your membership expiration date.**



# Second Annual EEA Awards Ceremony

Relax with us at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday evening at a Cash Bar Social even if you aren't planning to stay for the Awards Banquet. Take this opportunity to network, meet new colleagues and regale fellow Buzzard Hikers and Hunters with your adventures on the trail!

Then at 7:30 p.m., **Everyone**, please join us for the Second Annual EEA Awards Ceremony. Members of EEA and its conference partner organizations, including Georgia Adopt-A-Stream, Georgia Project Learning Tree, Georgia Project WET, Georgia Wildlife Federation and National Wildlife Federation, will honor their outstanding environmental educators and volunteers.

**Everywhere** storyteller Sherry

Norfolk goes, the laughter is sure to follow. As this year's awards ceremony entertainer, she will dazzle us with stories 'a spinning through the evening. Her storytelling is rhythmic and melodic, lively with movement and sparkling with a multiplicity of voices and sounds. Sherry is an acclaimed performer and has appeared at venues such as the Atlanta Storytelling Festival, Grand Canyon National Park, and in Ireland at the Verbal Arts Centre. She was a member of *Interpretive Voices*, a consortium of storytellers who provide training for state and national park interpretive rangers. This evening is guaranteed to leave you with a warm feeling in your heart and a smile on your face, happy memories to carry with you **everyday** for quite some time.



## Newsletter Committee

Vicki Seastrom, National Wildlife Federation & Barbara McDonald, U.S. Forest Service, *Managing Editors*

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*The Link* is published four times annually. EEA member contributions are encouraged. Deadlines for articles and news of interest are:

Issue	Deadline
Winter .....	December 1
Spring .....	March 15
Summer .....	June 15
Fall .....	September 15

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