



Volume 16, Number 3

The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

Fall 2008



My Space... is Outside!

*Connecting Kids to the
World Wide Wonder of the Outdoors*

Georgia's twelfth annual Outdoor Classroom Symposium will take place on Friday, November 14, 2008 at Rock Eagle 4-H Center in Eatonton, GA. This year's theme of "My Space is Outside: Connecting Kids to the World Wide Wonder of the Outdoors" will focus on the many ways outdoor classrooms can help cure children's "Nature Deficit Disorder." An outdoor classroom usually consists of a garden, trail, or wildlife habitat where teachers lead cross-curricular activities and students find inspiration, greater motivation to learn, and a stronger connection to the environment.

The symposium will offer hands-on training sessions, networking opportunities, classroom resources, and informative exhibits prepared by program providers and outdoor classroom experts. Participants may choose from almost 40 different concurrent sessions on topics such as Sustainable Edible School Gardens, Rain Barrels, No Child Left Inside, Vermicomposting, Wildlife Sanctuary Outdoor Learning Centers, Citizen Science Projects, Recycled Items in the Garden, Carnivorous Plants, Grant Writing, Geo-caching and Nature Questing, Green Schools, Biodiversity Surveys, Amphibian Monitoring, Technologies for Environmental Education, Rain Gardens, and more! Many "make and take" sessions will also be offered.

In addition, educators may choose to earn one Professional Learning Unit (PLU) by participating in one of two different post-symposium workshops to be offered at Rock Eagle on Saturday, November 15. The "Our Shared Forests" workshop will introduce educators to a multi-cultural, environmental education project featuring standards-based curriculum units on ethnobotany, migratory birds and sustainable forests as well as family science night kits. The other workshop choice is Georgia's Native Seasons, featuring newly revised interdisciplinary activities exploring Georgia's plants, animals, and habitats.

This annual Outdoor Classroom Symposium is sponsored by the Outdoor Classroom Council, a committee of the Environmental Education Alliance (EEA) of Georgia, and a coalition of organizations and individuals who share an interest in the design, development, maintenance and use of outdoor classrooms. The event typically draws over 250 participants including teachers, parents, principals, community volunteers, and nonformal educators. Last year's symposium had the largest attendance ever, but rest assured, there will be plenty of room at the Rock Eagle 4-H Center!

Registration is now open! For complete details, session schedule, registration form, etc. please visit www.eealliance.org.

Thoughts from the Butterfly Symposium



By: Rick Mikula, the Butterfly Guy

Having just returned from the Monarchs Across Georgia Butterfly Symposium, I have to say that I have never attended such a well orchestrated event. Susan Meyers and Trecia Meal did such an excellent job in assembling a collection of great speakers, and the day flowed flawlessly. Kudos to “The Danaus Duo” because the entire atmosphere of the day made me wish that it would not end.

The only down side (if there was one) to the day was that there were so many great programs that participants couldn’t attend every one. On the other tarsi, there was so much to choose from that you simply couldn’t go wrong! Plus not only did I get to hang out with Trecia and Susan at the Symposium, but I also got to rub elbows with Carole Jordan and that, for me, made it worth the trip.

If you had thought about attending the Symposium but didn’t, do so next year. It is so, so, worth it. I can’t wait to see the speaker line up for the next symposium because it is going to be hard for Susan and Trecia to outdo this year. If you are going on Monarchs Across Georgia’s Mexican trip or still considering it, I am so envious. I am sure that it is as well planned and coordinated as the Symposium was and will certainly be the trip of a lifetime. These patron saints of the orange winged wonders know what they are doing, and they do it right

Finally don’t forget to get your habitat or garden certified as a “Certified Pollinator Garden.” To find out more, contact Trecia or Susan through www.monarchsacrossga.org. The metal certification sign is so awesome that I hung mine above my desk because it is just too cool to put in my garden. What a great trophy the certification sign is for any school or nature center to earn and display.

H.R. 3036: No Child Left Inside Act of 2008: The First Hurdle Jumped!

On September 19th The US House of Representatives approved the No Child Left Inside Act of 2008 (NCLI) The bill received bipartisan support and was approved by a vote of 294 to 108. Six out of thirteen Georgia Representatives supported the bill. The NCLI amends the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 in the following ways:

- **Provides federal funding** (approx. \$100million) to states for teacher training & development in environmental education (EE).
- Requires states to **create environmental literacy plans** to ensure that high school graduates are environmentally literate.
- Provides **grant funding** (approx. \$500 million) to build state and national EE capacity. This is money that could come to EE practitioners to support schools!
- **Re-establishes the Office of Environmental Education** within the U.S. Department of Education.

There is no doubt of the importance of getting people outside and in touch with their environment. Test

scores increase, excitement for learning occurs, activity happens, teaching is fun and science just seeps out everywhere!

This is just one step, but it’s a big one. Please drop a “Thank You” if your Representative supported the bill, and if they didn’t, then ask them why not? Make your voice heard because this is far from over. The bill now goes to the Senate.

Please check out www.nclicoalition.org for more information and history of the No Child Left Inside bill to get involved and see how your representatives voted on this important legislation.

Georgia Representative “Nay” Voters

No Vote	GA-1	Kingston, Jack [R]
Nay	GA-3	Westmoreland, Lynn [R]
Nay	GA-6	Price, Tom [R]
Nay	GA-7	Linder, John [R]
Nay	GA-9	Deal, Nathan [R]
Nay	GA-10	Broun, Paul [R]
Nay	GA-11	Gingrey, John [R]

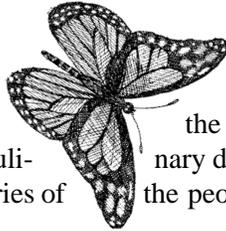


So...How About a Trip to Mexico this Winter?

Travel to Michoacan, Mexico with us for the experience of a lifetime! Walk through the pristine forests atop the Transvolcanic mountains where millions of Monarch butterflies drape the trees and flutter in the beams of sunlight that pierce the canopy. The silence is broken by a cascade of butterflies dropping off of a branch above your head and the beating of their wings surrounds you like soft rain falling. This is truly a magical place.

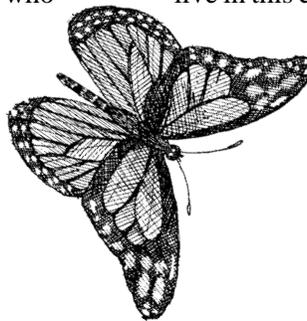


We will visit several butterfly colonies during our weeklong stay and enjoy the rich cultural heritage of this delightful winter home of the Monarch. From the charming colonial city of Morelia to the lava fields of Paricutin, you will taste the culinary delicacies, touch the artisans' handiwork, view the unearthed ruins of past civilizations and hear the stories of the people who live in this colorful land.



Dates: January 31 - February 7, 2009
February 7 - February 14, 2009
February 14 - February 21, 2009

Cost: \$1500.00 double occupancy
\$1900.00 single occupancy
plus airfare to Morelia, Mexico



Visit the Events section of our website Monarchsacrossga.org for a complete itinerary, details and an application. Space is limited!

Five PLU credits are available to Georgia certified teachers. Attendance at all pre- and post-trip meetings plus journal and lesson plan are required for credit.

Nature Myth Buster

I remember being horrified when I first heard about Chiggers. I was a young girl traveling with my parents to Florida. We stopped at a private campground somewhere off of I-75 in south Georgia. The owner told us of these tiny creatures that burrow under your skin and lay eggs. They cause red itchy bumps in "sensitive" areas and the only way to get rid of them is to use nail polish to smother them. It wasn't until I became an EE teacher that I discovered the truth about them. I find that many people, both young and old, still believe that story, and the children I teach often tell me that "you get chiggers from Spanish moss". Well, here's the real story.

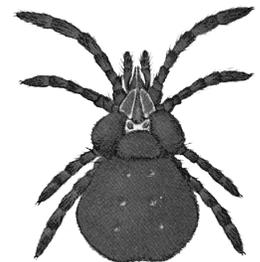
Chiggers a.k.a. Red Bugs a.k.a. Harvestmite *Trombicula alfreddugesi* (Oudemans) are the larval stage of a spider mite. They are unique in the mite family in that they only dine on vertebrate flesh during their larval stage-they need that one last shot of protein to complete their life cycle. Chiggers complete their life cycle within the ground. They are very tiny (1/150" long) and red in color, but not from sucking blood. They move rapidly for such a tiny critters and can move the length of your body starting from your ankles in 15 minutes. Once they are on your body they will wander around until they find a tender area of skin to penetrate. Their specialized mouth parts cannot penetrate the tougher skin and that is why they tend to bite around your ankles, behind your knees, in your armpits or groin area and under the restricted parts of your clothing, like cuffs, waistbands, etc.



larva
0.3 mm(0.01")

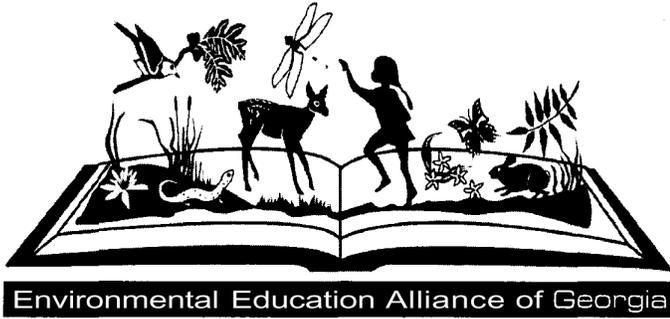


half grown



adult, 3 mm (0.1")

(continued on page 4)



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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.

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Next Deadline

December 31, 2008

Give us something to
Talk About!

Without getting too detailed, basically chiggers bite in a skin pore or hair follicle and they inject their saliva which contains an enzyme that breaks down your skin cells. Then, just like drinking a milk shake, they suck up your liquified flesh! The intense itching that results, actually comes from your body's defense when it hardens the cells around the saliva area, forming a tube called a stylostome. The chigger uses the stylostome for feeding and the longer it feeds, the deeper the stylostome gets.

Affective repellents such as Skin So Soft, or other bug repellents work well. The repellent we use most around work is sulfur (powder) in a sock and dabbed around the ankles, waist, and wrists. The best treatment if you suddenly realize that you may have been walking in a chigger prone area, is to take a shower right away! But if you're too late, use a good anti-itch cream and avoid scratching which can cause a secondary infection that's worse than the bite!

Illustration by: Nicholas Strekalovsky from "Spiders and Their Kin" A Golden Guides Book. 1996

If you would like to contribute to "Myth Buster" please send an email to: annie.quinting@sccpss.com

Member Survey:

Would you be interested in participating in EEA member led field trips?

Respond to: sharon.smith@fultoncountyga.gov