



## EEA Offers New Membership Levels!

**W**hen you join EEA, you become a part of a larger community of concerned and active people. Your membership will connect you with myriad resources, curricula, events, and activities focused on environmental education. Our members are environmental education professionals - nature/museum staff, outdoor interpreters, government employees, parks and recreation staff, corporate outreach employees, teachers, students, and other professionals that wish to support environmental education in Georgia. EEA has recently revamped our membership levels to reflect the diversity of individuals and organizations that make up the environmental education community in Georgia.

### **Student (\$15/year) & Individual (\$25/year)**

Benefits include:

- Networking - opportunities to share ideas with other environmental professionals.
- The Link newsletter - quarterly information on educational resources, training opportunities, legislative issues/updates, organizational news of interest and grant resources.
- Special Events and Field Trips organized especially for Members.
- Discount to attend Outdoor Learning Symposium (member price)
- Discount to attend Annual Spring Conference (member price)
- Discounts on Green Teacher magazine subscriptions. Receive \$2.00 off a one year or \$3.00 off a two year subscription.
- Member window cling
- Welcome in our newsletter and e-news blast

### **Non-Profit: \$125/membership up to 5 people OR \$200/membership up to 10 people (20% discount)**

Includes individual benefits, PLUS:

- One free exhibit at conference and symposium with member paid registration per event.
- 10% discount **ONLY** on early bird member price conference and symposium registration per person (member rate).
- Listing, link, and description on our website as a non-profit member.
- Member window cling
- Special EEA Member Trip partnered with your organization.
- Welcome to your organization in our newsletter and e-news blast (audience of over 1,500 members statewide)
- EEA Board Member liaison to assist you with your membership benefits and communications with EEA

### **Corporate: \$300/membership up to 5 people OR \$400/membership up to 10 people**

Includes individual benefits, PLUS:

- One free exhibit at conference and symposium.
- Free registration for 1 member to attend conference and symposium.
- ~ OR ~
- Free registration for 1 member to attend ATEEG Core Course I (early bird cost; no lodging covered)
- 10% discount on early bird prices for conference, symposium, and/or ATEEG registration for remaining members.
- Listing, link, and description on our website as a corporate member.
- Member window cling
- Welcome to our organization in our quarterly newsletter and monthly E-News
- EEA Board Member liaison to assist you with your membership benefits and communications with EEA

For more information or to become a member of the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia, please visit [www.eealliance.org](http://www.eealliance.org) and select About EEA > Become a Member.

## 2013 Annual Conference Overview

This past March, EEA headed to Athens for our Annual Conference where sessions focused on communicating in the 21st century. Attendees enjoyed sessions on using social media to promote programs, designing programs to reach generations Y and Z, managing a web presence, STEM, learning gardens, and identifying skulls, just to name a few! Attendees raved about the sessions they attended and EEA is so appreciative of all the great presenters!



Friday morning we celebrated some of EEA's accomplishments over the past year, including ATEEG becoming the first nationally accredited EE certification program! We also got a chance to recognize all of the ATEEG graduates on Saturday at the awards luncheon. Everyone enjoyed celebrating the accomplishments of the leaders in our field as our partner programs, WET, WILD, PLT, and MAG handed out their annual awards, along with the EEA awards. Congratulations to all of our inspiring recipients!



Friday evening was a great chance to relax and enjoy a top-notch improv troupe from The Village Theatre in Atlanta. Their performance had everyone laughing and anyone who has taught can relate to the need for improv skills! We also enjoyed a tour of the LEED certified Hotel Indigo and a performance from UGA's EcoTones and Swung. Both groups were a real treat for attendees.

Our keynote speaker on Saturday morning, Deron Davis, engaged participants with advice on targeting your audience and communicating in the most effective ways. Deron is a long time EEA member and always provides great insight into the field of EE.

Despite rainy weather on Saturday afternoon, attendees finished out their conference experience with field trips all over Athens, including local school gardens and the Bear Hollow Zoo! We hope you left Athens feeling energized and motivated to put into action the ideas you learned at Conference. EEA's Annual Conference is always a great time to visit with old friends (and make new ones!), share new ideas, catch up on all the happenings within EEA, and be reminded that you are part of a great network of people around the state working hard to bring EE to all students.

A big thank you to the Conference planning committee and most importantly to all our attendees! We appreciate you being a part of our 2013 Conference and we look forward to seeing you next year, March 28-29 at Rock Eagle for the 2014 Conference!

## Monarchs Across Georgia Reveals its new Certified Pollinator Habitat Sign!

Monarchs Across Georgia (MAG) has given their pollinator sign a facelift! The new design portrays a few of our favorite pollinators - bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, and beetles - highlighting the importance of all pollinators in our ecosystem.

Do you have a garden that meets the requirements to be a Certified Pollinator Habitat? We would love for you to join our network of habitats across the state and get a sign of your own!

[Learn how you can get certified!](http://www.monarchsacrossga.org)



## EEA Member Highlight: Deron Davis

If you attended the EEA annual conference this year, then you will recall our keynote speaker Deron Davis. He has been with EEA for a long time and has served in almost every position on the board of directors—newsletter editor, secretary, conference chair, vice president, and president. He has seen and helped it to grow from a tiny, isolated organization to what it has become today: a professional association for educators across Georgia. It takes interdisciplinary effort to promote environmental conservation, and this is where Deron works his magic: networking and connecting people of varying interests to achieve a common goal. He is a prodigy of how motivation and social intelligence can focus a community on common interests.



Deron came to the realization that he wanted to work in environmental conservation during his junior year at UGA in Business Administration. Since Deron is an empathizer at heart, he knew that advocacy was not the path for him. However, the vehicle of education was appealing because it provided a way in which people can grow together; this was a good fit for Deron. The art of being able to teach is valuable on many levels, because anywhere can become a classroom and anyone can be your audience. Deron started expressing his determination through active involvement such as volunteering and interning with the Georgia Conservancy, CNN, and as an early protege of Jerry Hightower. Although he never worked in traditional business, his schooling proved an important approach to environmental conservation, especially in a world where ever increasing interdisciplinary cooperation is necessary to grow and transform.

### ***Deron on the importance of environmental education***

*In the world of environmental conservation, there is a role that regulation alone can not fulfill and only personal lifestyles choices can complete. We can get far with regulation, but it will never make it all the way. When people are educated—so that they realize their own dependency on natural resources and that every decision makes an imprint*

*on the Earth—then they can choose to lessen those impacts through better decision making. The key to attaining what regulation cannot is this enlightened self-interest that our survival depends of the health of the planet.*

*From a more ethical standpoint we can ask of ourselves, what is our responsibility as human beings on this planet? Regardless of ones spiritual beliefs, the answer can be as simple as applying “the right thing to do” value system. Are we going to add value to something, or leave it worse off from how we found it? Environmental literacy helps people realize the value of something that they might have been taking for granted, and a conversion experience can happen at any stage of their life through a wide variety of introductions. Entering into this realization can be rooted from deep connection with nature since childhood, or it can come from the pragmatic outlook on how we can build more sustainable communities to ensure our survival. No matter your perspective, it is a meaningful and rewarding way to contribute to society. For the nascent environmentalists who are dealing with the overwhelming realization - find a balance, and do the best that you can! Remember to stay passionate, but in a way that is effective.*

Deron is socially savvy when it comes to dealing with people who may not share the same views in regards to conservation. He does this frequently as the Director of Conservation for The Nature Conservancy.

*The best thing to do is to remember that someone else’s life experiences are going to be quite different from your own, and that their beliefs are based on those experiences. As environmental educators, we have to first connect with people on a basic human level before jumping into anything remotely controversial and try to add to their knowledge in a nonthreatening way. Sometimes you have to let things unfold a little at a time. As educators, we also need to express our own commitment through our actions. When others see your commitment and witness your actions, you will have made a greater impact than any amount of preaching can ever make. This will create the space where real conversations can start. Once those conversations start, we need to truly listen to other people’s points of view, because the situation is rarely black and white.*

Part of Deron’s job is to come together in the gray areas to create new solutions.

*Continued on page 4.*

## Volunteer Opportunities Abound through EEA!

EEA is powered by volunteer service from an engaged and active membership and a hard-working and dedicated Board of Directors who collectively plan events and programs that allow members to develop their enthusiasm and passion for environmental education.

We continue to improve our infrastructure to better receive and place volunteers within our Committees. EEA has welcomed one new volunteer since January 2013, bringing our total pool of active volunteers to 28. We should note that each year the Annual Conference recruits their active volunteers from the scholarship winners who are required to give of their time. The 2013 Annual Conference had 13 volunteers who gave a combined 26 hours in service.

Our organization thrives because of the volunteer hours given by individuals all over the state. From January through April 2013, EEA volunteers gave over 898 hours in service! Our collective work supports environmental educators across Georgia as we strive to achieve our vision, a statewide culture of environmental literacy and stewardship. We appreciate the time, talent, and interest given by each of our volunteers.

Here are some examples of volunteer opportunities with EEA:

- The Current Issues committee is seeking volunteers who can help with hot topics in environmental education. Current issues involve a need to encourage the Department of Education's development of an Environmental Literacy Plan for the state, help recruit teachers to the Advanced Training in Environmental Education in Georgia (ATEEG), and expand ATEEG across the state's universities and colleges.
- Member Services needs volunteers to coordinate member events through the year.
- Monarchs Across Georgia (MAG) seeks volunteers to set up and man booths and displays at plant sales and related events.

For more information about volunteering for EEA, please visit [the volunteer section of our website.](#)

*Deron Davis... Continued from page 3.*

*The interesting thing about environmental conservation is that we need people on every end of the spectrum: the empathizers who seek compromise to the impatient noise-makers who push the movement forward. It takes all of us—regulators, activists, field workers, scientists, and volunteers—in order to make a difference.*

### **Deron on EEA: Where are we heading?**

*Classrooms and children are not the only places and people where EEA is desperately needed. We need to reach a great number of people and education is a versatile platform. There are different strategies to reach people, from school-based to community based, and EEA has been focusing on school-based outreach the longest. The issue is that environmental conservation is not core to what schools are required to accomplish: environmental education is supplementary, and it needs a category lift. We need to start talking about new ways to reach new groups of people.*

Deron is originally from Peachtree City and currently the Director of Conservation at The Nature Conservancy. You can find him managing field staff on projects across the state, overseeing projects in water quality and land management. Deron does the “dance” that connects needs with the resources to support those needs. One of his current projects is developing the LEAF program at Arabia Mountain High School, a EIC training and LEED certified school, in Dekalb County. Its objective is to introduce students to environmental programs as incentive for higher education.

## Be Wild, Be Free... with EEA Member Events!

### The Art & Ecology of a Barrier Island

JULY 26-28, 2013 • JEKYLL ISLAND, GEORGIA

Georgia's coast is an incredible place to explore, with over 500,000 acres of marshes and over 13 barrier islands. This special EEA weekend member trip will take you on adventures exploring the landscapes of Jekyll Island. From observing sea turtles to painting sea scapes, there will be many opportunities to enrich your spirit. The weekend offers guided beach ecology walks, creative outlets, kayak adventures in the tidal marshes, birding, and even training in mother earth healing techniques. Come explore the beautiful Georgia coast with EEA!

**Lodging:** We will be bunking it up on the south end of the island, right on the beach, at the Jekyll Island 4-H Center: <http://www.jekyll4h.org/environmentaleducation/documents/ji-bragbook.pdf>

**Cost:** \$70 for EEA members, \$95 for non-members (includes \$25 membership fee). Cost includes 2 nights lodging, Friday dinner, guided tours, morning coffee and tea, and canoe/kayak rental. Other meals and transportation are not included, but we will arrange carpooling. Some activities will have an additional cost but most are free (and all are optional)!

**For more information:** Contact Tara Muenz at 404-675-1635 or [tara.muenz@gaepd.org](mailto:tara.muenz@gaepd.org)  
Reserve your spot now! Space is limited, and reservations will be taken up until July 9th.

[See photos from last year's trip!](#)

**Environmental  
Education  
Alliance  
of Georgia**



*EEA works to promote environmental education by providing opportunities for members, schools, organizations, and the general public to get involved through the annual EEA conference, Outdoor Learning Symposium, and other special events.*

#### 2012-2013 BOARD OFFICERS

**President** Laura Aikens  
**Vice President** Kris Irwin  
**Treasurer** Jo Adang  
**Secretary** Naomi Thompson

#### 2012-2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Robby Astrove	Eli Dickerson	Tara Muenz
Melanie Biersmith	Ginny Elliott	Sharon Smith
Laurie Crooks	Joseph Giunta	Derek Swanson
Vicki Culbreth	Linda May	

P. O. Box 170458  
Atlanta, GA 30317  
[www.EEAlliance.org](http://www.EEAlliance.org)