



## Growing Green with the Next Generation

at the 2016 EEA Annual Conference

March 4-5, 2016 • Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center, Buford

We hope you will join us at the upcoming EEA Annual Conference, where we will be exploring tools and techniques for building and sustaining environmental education programs that are impactful, innovative, and relevant. This year's conference features a wide variety of hands-on sessions, inspiring outdoor activities, and countless opportunities to network with fellow educators. Each conference strand focuses on a different aspect of the work we do to advance environmental education:

**Extending Our Reach:** At sessions like "Tweaking Environmental Curricula to Meet the Needs of the Formal Educator," you will learn about programs and projects that focus on training educators, developing curriculum and toolkits, reaching out to underserved audiences, bringing the outdoors in, and creating new learning spaces.

**Keeping Current, Looking Ahead:** Next Generation Science Standards, emerging issues, integrating technology, and cultivating future environmental leaders will be the topics of discussion at sessions such as "Service is a Verb – Using Dynamic Learning to Teach Environmental Science" and "Savoring Nature Through Photography."

**Supporting Our Programs:** Learn the ins and outs of successful environmental education and outdoor learning programs at sessions like "Deconstructing the Use of Live Animals in EE," "Landfill Events that Soar," and "Festivals for Dummies: How to Organize and Manage a Large-Scale Event."

**Exploring EHC:** The Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center is a LEED Gold certified building and features hands-on science, cultural and natural history exhibits, nature trails, and outdoor classrooms. Fully experience everything this amazing facility has to offer at "Exploring EHC" sessions. Tour the building and surrounding sites and learn about EHC's K-12 programs, the LEED certified building, local flora and fauna, and more.

The conference will begin at 8am on March 4th with time to check-in followed by a welcome and a presentation on the Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia program. We are pleased to announce that environmental writer Charles Seabrook will deliver the keynote address. An awards luncheon will take place after the morning session, and there will be opportunities to network, visit exhibits, and shop at the EEA store throughout the day. On Saturday, March 5th, enjoy morning sessions, a provided lunch, and tours and special activities in the afternoon.

Go to the [conference webpage](#) for more information and to register. Special early bird pricing of \$115 is in effect until February 15, 2016. Full conference registration after 2/15/16 is \$135 for current EEA members and \$160 for non-members. Student discounts are available.

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# History-Making Opportunities for Environmental Learning in Congressional Education Bill

North American Association for Environmental Education  
Originally released on December 09, 2015



**Passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (also known as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or ESEA) is a big win, opening avenues for students and teachers in environmental and nature literacy.**

The North American Association for Environmental Education ([NAAEE](http://www.naaee.org)) applauds the Senate passage (12/09/15) of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaces No Child Left Behind. The much-anticipated bill includes language that, for the first time, supports opportunities to provide students with environmental education and hands-on, field-based learning experiences. A companion bill overwhelmingly passed the House last week (12/02/15).

“The inclusion of environmental education language in the Every Student Succeeds Act signifies an important step forward for teachers and school systems who know what a rich and engaging context the local environment is for learning,” said Judy Braus, Executive Director of NAAEE. “We congratulate Congressional leaders for recognizing the role that environmental education can play in providing students with a well-rounded, 21st century education and preparing them for a lifetime of success.”

Under Title IV of the new bill, environmental education would be eligible for funding through grants to states for “programs and activities that support access to a well-rounded education.” Environmental literacy programs are now also included among eligible programs for funding through 21st Century Community Learning Center grants. Additionally, the inclusion of Title IV funds for hands-on, field-based, or service learning to enhance understanding of science, technology, engineering, and math subjects provides a potential boost for environmental science education programs.

The gains for environmental education come as a result of years-long work by champions of the bipartisan No Child Left Inside (NCLI) Act, which sought to secure federal dollars to support states’ efforts to implement environmental literacy plans in K-12 public schools.

“Environmental education can have a positive impact on kids’ health, academic achievement, and understanding of the natural world. This bill represents a major step forward, giving schools new opportunities to engage students through environmental education. I first introduced NCLI back in 2007, and since that time, thanks to the advocacy of coalitions and organizations like NAAEE, we’ve made real progress in elevating the importance of environmental education and getting more schools to develop outdoor, hands-on learning as part of their curriculum. And that has a tremendous benefit for students and our communities,” stated U.S. Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), the chief Senate sponsor of the NCLI Act.

The Every Student Succeeds Act includes provisions from the No Child Left Inside Act that support student learning about the environment, conservation, and field studies, such as:

- Congress supports the basic idea that environmental literacy and conservation education should be included as a part of a well-rounded education for any student.
- Congress encourages the enrichment of After School programming with environmental and conservation education.
- Congress supports more Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education highlighting the desirability of field study and service learning both of which are solid engagements of environmental and conservation education approaches.

[www.southeastee.org](http://www.southeastee.org)

*Continued on page 3*

*Congressional Education Bill... Continued from page 2*

Congressman John Sarbanes (MD-3) has sponsored NCLI in the House. "ESSA is a tremendous victory for advocates of environmental education who've fought long and hard to inspire the next generation of environmental stewards with outdoor, hands-on learning programs," said Congressman Sarbanes. "I commend my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for passing a comprehensive education reform package that has immense benefits for students, teachers and schools across the country."

NAAEE is dedicated to advancing environmental literacy and civic engagement through the power of education and supports a network of more than 20,000 educators, researchers, and organizational members. Through community networks, publications, and signature programs, NAAEE provides leadership, professional development, and resources for professionals working in all areas of the field. For more information, visit [www.naaee.net](http://www.naaee.net).

To read this press release online, go to <http://www.prweb.com/releases/2015/12/prweb13120108.htm>.

*Update: President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act into law on December 10, 2015.*

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## Grants & Awards



*2008 MAG Service Award winner,  
Jennifer McCoy.*

### MONARCHS ACROSS GEORGIA 2015 SERVICE AWARD

Do you know of an individual or organization that has made an extraordinary contribution in the field of monarch education, conservation, and/or habitat restoration in the state of Georgia during 2015? Submit a nomination to Monarchs Across Georgia for the 2015 Service Award!

The following are eligible for nomination: schools, educational institutions, individual teachers, non-governmental and governmental organizations, for-profit and not-for-profit entities, parents, principals, and community volunteers. Nominees are not required to be members of the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia. A donation to the [Monarch Butterfly Fund](#) will be made in the name of the award recipient. Go to the [MAG Service Award webpage](#) to submit a nomination.

**All nominations are due by January 7, 2016.**

### PETEY GIROUX DRAGONFLY GRANTS FOR EE AND THE ARTS

EEA is pleased to offer mini-grants to current EEA members for up to \$1,000 for environmental education/performing and visual arts projects in honor of environmental educator, Petey Giroux (1945-2008). Petey brought much joy and enthusiasm to her work and was a master at using the power of the performing and visual arts to support her teaching. In presenting these grants, we honor Petey's life of service and her legacy of environmental education through the arts. For more information on Petey Giroux, please go to [www.eealliance.org/petey-giroux](http://www.eealliance.org/petey-giroux).

Any Georgia educator of K-12th grade students, including those in public and private schools, home schools, scout troops, religious groups, community organizations, 4-H Clubs, etc., is eligible to apply. **Proposals are due by January 22, 2016.** For more information, please visit the [Dragonfly Grant webpage](#).

### 2016 STATE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION AWARDS

Nominations for the 2016 EEA Awards are now being accepted! These awards are given annually to individuals, non-governmental and governmental organizations, institutions and agencies, and for-profit and not-for-profit entities that have made significant contributions to the cause of EE or to EE research. The award categories are: Dr. Eugene Odum Lifetime Achievement Award, Outstanding Service to Environmental Education by an Individual, Outstanding Service to Environmental Education by an Organization, and PK-16 Formal Educator of the Year Award.

To submit a nomination, go to the [State EE Awards website](#). **Submissions are due by January 22, 2016.**

**Award and grant recipients will be announced at the EEA Annual Conference, March 4-5, 2016, at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center in Buford.**

# Activities for Exploring Nature During Winter

by Liz Swafford

Dalton-Whitfield Solid Waste Authority and Keep Dalton-Whitfield Beautiful  
EEA Regional Director - North

**A**fter experiencing the joy of teaching your students outdoors on warm and pleasant days, going outside during the chill of winter may feel very intimidating. With the official start of the winter season on December 21st, it has been getting colder and chillier and shivery and just *buurrrr!* The frosty weather is enough to make us want to stay cozy in a warm classroom.

Don't let the cold weather convince you to miss out on enjoying and exploring nature during the winter with your students. Going out in the wintertime is not as bleak as it sounds, especially with these tips and activities to try - even if it is as cold as Christmas.

## Preparation is key during winter,

even for short outdoor classroom visits. Notify students ahead of time that you will be going outside so they arrive wearing appropriate clothing. Encourage students to layer on warm clothes, coats, hats, scarves, and gloves. Wool and silk materials are warmer than cotton. Also, ask them to wear shoes and clothes that they would not mind getting dirty. If it is raining, remind them to take an umbrella or wear a raincoat. Wear sunscreen any time you're going outside, even in the wintertime.

In preparation for going outside, you may want to **request a snack and water** from the cafeteria or have students bring their own from home. Though they may not realize it because it is nice and cool outside, our bodies always need water. Have the students drink water on regular intervals, even if they do not feel thirsty or sweaty. Snacks like a granola bar or apple will help keep energy levels up, especially for the younger ones in your group.

Once you are outdoors, there are many activities you can

do such as bird watching, leaf art, and nature photography. Here are instructions for six activities you can try with little or no supplies. Dress warmly and don't let the cold keep you cooped up inside!

- **Start a Nature Journal:** If your students do not have a nature journal yet, now is the perfect time to start. All you need is paper and a pencil or pen. Get scrap paper from your recycling bin and staple or tie them together to make an upcycled journal. Or simply use a small composition notebook. When you go outdoors, have students make observations about the environment, jotting them down in the notebook with a description or drawing. Gather leaves or other specimens you come across and add them to the journal too. Over time you will have a unique learning tool and scrapbook filled with information about all the places you have explored.



*Don't let the chilling weather deter you from enjoying nature and being outdoors! Dress warm and enjoy a fun activity like making a unique piece of art in the rain. Photo credit: [www.activekidsclub.com](http://www.activekidsclub.com)*

- **Winter Nature Walk or Hike:** Walking outdoors can be done anywhere - around the school, at a local park, on a nature trail, or at a state park. During a nature walk, take some time to look

for signs of nature and observe all the changes in the environment. Look for bird or squirrel nests in trees, do some bird watching, make a list of the variety of plants and trees in the area, watch for animals, and even find animal tracks. Record your observations in your nature journal.

- **Measure Your Shadow:** In the winter, the Earth's northern hemisphere is tilted away from the sun. This means that the sun is lower in the sky, creating longer shadows. Have some fun taking photos of the students making shadow poses and record their measurements during different times of day.

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## ATEEG Courses Offer Professional Development and Networking Opportunities

by Megan Sheehan  
Keep North Fulton Beautiful  
EEA Website Chair & ATEEG Participant

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN! The next round of ATEEG courses (the [Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia](#)) are starting on January 22nd. If you've been thinking about taking this course but couldn't find a reason to, hear from some individuals who have gone through ATEEG:

*"The ATEEG program has offered me so many wonderful and unexpected opportunities, including friendships and an environmental education program that has helped me expand my knowledge base, expertise, and confidence. This certification has offered a professionalism that has allowed me to expand my current career goals and opened doors to new career possibilities. I highly recommend this program to anyone wishing to grow in his or her professional understanding and knowledge of environmental education. You won't regret it!" - Joanna Gerber*



Photo credit: Linda May

Joanna is a 2nd grade teacher at The Friends School in Decatur, GA and is currently in the process of submitting her independent study project proposal for the ATEEG program. Participants of the program have three years to finish the three core courses and complete an independent study project to show their mastery of environmental education.

*"The ATEEG program provided me the knowledge and confidence to develop, implement, and evaluate environmental education activities and programs. The program allowed me to network with formal and non-formal educators, which eventually led to my employment at the nature center. I am very thankful for this program and encourage many people to participate." - Jackie Sherry*

Jackie is currently the Program Manager at the Dunwoody Nature Center in Dunwoody, GA and has graduated from the ATEEG program. Her project focused on deeply evaluating the ATEEG program itself. Participants of the ATEEG program are encouraged to choose subjects for their final independent study project that are of interest to them. Whether that means evaluating a program you are currently implementing, or creating a completely new one - the choice is up to you.

Each participant of the ATEEG program is personally matched with a mentor to help guide them through the process of choosing, implementing, and evaluating their final project. Collaboration with other participants and instructors during each of the courses is a staple of ATEEG and helps to fuel true understanding of the topics covered.



Photo credit: Linda May

The first course, Core Course 1, centers on environmental education itself – what it is and why it matters. Sign up for the Foundations of EE, Core Course 1 class (January 22-24) by [clicking here](#). **The registration deadline for this course is January 12, 2016!**

Core Course 2 focuses on different ways of teaching and learning and how an environmental educator should foster the learning of others. To sign up for the Fostering Learning, Core Course 2 class (February 26-28), [click here](#).

The last ATEEG course, Core Course 3, is where participants reflect on the importance of evaluation for environmental education, as well as how to evaluate your own programs. ATEEG Core Course 3 will be held during June 17-19. To sign up for Core Course 3, please [click here](#).

# 2015 Outdoor Learning Symposium a Huge Success

**Honeycomb** from the "Want Honey?" session, which provided information on pollination, types of bees, hive structure, equipment, and honey collection.



**New this year**, the conference featured "Outdoor Learning Talks," during which a team of experienced facilitators addressed common concerns and misconceptions related to outdoor learning. Thanks to Jeremy Peacock (GSTA), Jerry Hightower (NPS), Karan Wood (Captain Planet Foundation), and Cashawn Myers (Founder Habasha) who led the talks.



**Networking** during Jan Kent's Climate Change session.



**Governor Nathan Deal proclaimed** November 13, 2015 as [Outdoor Learning Day](#) in Georgia, recognizing outdoor learning for its significance in educating Georgia's students. In this picture, Anne Shenk, Healing Medicinal Plants presenter, is asking the group how they could modify the outdoor activities discussed for their audiences.

*Photo credits: Linda May, Megan Sheehan, and Kathleen Lemley*

**The Outdoor Learning Symposium**, held on Friday, November 13th, 2015, brought over 100 environmental educators from across the state together for an amazing day of networking and sharing lessons, ideas, and encouragement for taking students outside.

The Council of Outdoor Learning and EEA would like to thank the Fortson 4-H Center for hosting OLS. We would also like to thank our generous lunch sponsors, who provided a delicious (and healthy!) meal: Empire State South, Miller Union, One Eared Stag, The Turnip Truck, Wrecking Bar Brewpub, and Home grown.

Did you enjoy the Outdoor Learning Symposium and want to take part in making future symposia successes? Contact Jennifer McCoy to join the Council of Outdoor Learning and help plan OLS 2016: [jennifer.mccoy@cobbcountry.org](mailto:jennifer.mccoy@cobbcountry.org).

## First Grove of EEA Memorial Forest Planted

To honor deceased, exemplary environmental educators and stewards and to celebrate relationships and interactions between dynamic natural and human systems, EEA is planting memorial trees in remembrance of our friends. Located in meaningful EE locations and hosted by partner organizations, the EEA Forest is being created grove by grove across the state. Utilizing native trees, we strive to plant diverse groves for beauty, wildlife, and ecological function, reflecting the deep ethic and passion for local ecology fostered by each of these individuals.

The inaugural grove was planted during the 2015 Outdoor Learning Symposium at the Fortson 4-H Center in Hampton. EE members helped install the trees and will continue to be included during future plantings. Memorial markers are being placed at each grove to identify the plantings as part of the EEA Forest.



Please visit the [Memorial Forest webpage](#) to learn more, donate, and read about our friends who are the inspiration for this project.

*Thank you to our program partners: Harps Farm Market & Nursery, Trees Atlanta, Giles Marble Works.*

## Join the EEA Board of Directors

**Each winter**, the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia accepts nominations to the [Board of Directors](#). This open process helps the Nomination Committee accomplish its mission to promote cultural, geographical, and organizational diversity in EEA's leadership.

Apply yourself or nominate someone you know to represent and serve on the EEA Board of Directors. We are specifically seeking chairs and co-chairs for the following committees: Fundraising; Annual Conference; Council of Outdoor Learning/Outdoor Learning Symposium; EEA Store; Current Issues; Volunteer Management; Regional Directors: East Ga, Central Ga, Coastal Ga, Metro Atlanta.

**The application for Board terms beginning July 1, 2016 is now open.** You must be a current member of EEA to apply. To be considered, please submit your application no later than **April 15, 2016**. Visit the [nomination page](#) of EEA's website for more information and to submit a nomination.

Questions about the board nomination process? Contact the [Nominations Committee Chairs](#).

### *Winter Activities... Continued from page 4*

- **Have a Winter Picnic:** Pack a basket full of warm foods to enjoy outside like hot chocolate or hot soup in a thermos. You could also bring toasted sandwiches or cookies wrapped in aluminum foil straight out of the oven to keep them warm. Enjoy your picnic sitting on blankets or cushions laid out on the ground during a non-rainy winter day.
- **Winter Scavenger Hunt:** Make a scavenger hunt list that includes several senses and can be done in your outdoor classroom or at your favorite park. For example, things to see would include: an evergreen tree, a pinecone, a feather, a plant with berries, an insect, buds on trees, and animal tracks. Things to hear: a bird chirping and leaves rustling in the wind. Things to feel: a smooth rock, something wet, and a tree with rough bark. Add the page to your nature journal. When the search is done, go back inside, warm up, and talk about everything you saw.
- **Make Rain Art:** Even when it is raining you can still have fun and make observations about nature. You will need a paper plate for each student and food coloring. Gear up to go out in the rain with raincoats, hats, and rain boots. Sprinkle a few drops of food coloring on a paper plate and head outside. Let the rain hit the plate and mix and swirl the colors. Back inside, set the plate in a safe place to dry and enjoy your unique work of art.

Liz Swafford is the Recycling and Education Program Coordinator for the Dalton-Whitfield Solid Waste Authority and Executive Director of Keep Dalton-Whitfield Beautiful. Contact her at 706-278-5001 or [lswofford@dswa.org](mailto:lswofford@dswa.org).

# UNPLUGGED & OUTDOORS WITH EEA

## Member Field Excursions for 2016

**EEA is pleased to announce** monthly opportunities for our members to visit different regions of the state, immerse themselves in the outdoors, and get to know other environmental educators and EEA board members. Trips are available to EEA members and one guest. If you are not currently a member, you may join EEA when you register. Save the dates and check our [website](#) after January 10th for registration information! Contact Sonya Wood Mahler, EEA's Member Services Chair, for more information: [membership@eealliance.org](mailto:membership@eealliance.org).

### Flint River Exploration Saturday, February 27th

10:30am-3:30pm

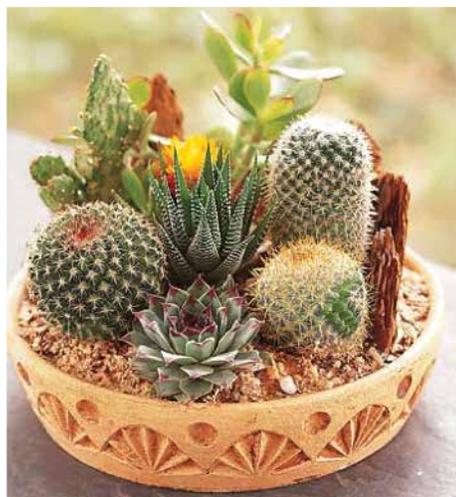
#### Flint RiverQuarium, Albany

**Activities:** Take guided tours of the [Flint RiverQuarium](#), watch an Imagination Theater movie, and hike a 3 mile stretch of the Riverfront/Greenway Trail. This three mile guided excursion will introduce you to southwest Georgia and the Flint River. You will also be taken on a general exhibit tour to view all of our animals and a behind-the-scenes tour of the care involved in animal husbandry at our facility.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee plus \$35 admission fee plus lunch.

**Nearby motels and camping:** If you decide to lodge in Albany and take in other sites, camping at Chehaw is available. There are also hotel options including the Hilton Garden Inn. Or if you prefer more modest accommodations, Merry Acres Inn is a great choice. Motels and campgrounds are within 3 miles from the Flint RiverQuarium.

**Coordinator:** Melissa Martin, [mmartin@flinriverquarium.com](mailto:mmartin@flinriverquarium.com)



### Plants of the Desert: Growing Cacti and Succulents

Saturday, March 26th

9:00am-4:00pm

#### State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Athens

**Activities:** Participate in a workshop led by Kevin Turner, succulent enthusiast and professional horticulturist, held at the [State Botanical Garden](#) Visitor Center. Bring your own container and create a succulent dish garden to take home. Eat lunch together in the café and go on a tour of the botanical garden led by the education coordinator.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee plus \$50 workshop fee plus lunch.

**Nearby motels and camping:** The Georgia Center is close to the Garden and downtown Athens and is moderately priced. Hotel Indigo is pricey but very nice and is known for their hospitality and sustainability. For camping, Fort Yargo is about 35 minutes away.

**Coordinator:** Cora Keber, [ckeber@uga.edu](mailto:ckeber@uga.edu)

### Diamorpha Weekend

Saturday, April 9th and Sunday, April 10th

1:00pm Saturday thru 12:00pm Sunday

#### Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve, Lithonia

**Activities:** Explore [Arabia Mountain](#) and its surroundings in the Arabia Mountain National Heritage Area, an area of adventure, learning, and peace. Includes ranger-led hikes to view *Diamorpha smallii* in peak bloom, sunset program and campfire, and Sunday morning hike. Snacks and libations will be provided.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee plus \$25 program fee plus meals.

**Nearby motels and camping:** Fairfield Inn or Hyatt Place at the Mall at Stonecrest just 3 miles away. Camp at the Preserve in a primitive campground for free.

**Coordinator:** Robby Astrove, [rlastrove@dekalbcountyga.gov](mailto:rlastrove@dekalbcountyga.gov)

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Member Events... Continued from page 8

### Park Paddlers Club Challenge Part I

Saturday, May 21st and Sunday, May 22nd

10:00am Saturday thru 3:00pm Sunday

Sweetwater Creek State Park and Chattahoochee Bend State Park

**Activities:** Kayak George Sparks Reservoir in [Sweetwater](#) (look for ducks and wild azaleas) and a forested stretch of the river in [Chattahoochee Bend](#) (look for river otters and bald eagles). Picnic lunch in our boats. Out to supper together. Camp or stay in a nearby motel.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee, \$10 state park membership card, plus two lunches, supper, breakfast, camping fee or motel, kayak rental (if needed).

**Coordinator:** Sonya Wood Mahler, [sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com](mailto:sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com)



### Park Paddlers Club Challenge Part III

Saturday, July 16th and Sunday, July 17th

10:00am Saturday thru 3:00pm Sunday

Stephen C. Foster State Park and Crooked River State Park

**Activities:** Kayak the Okefenokee Swamp to historic Billy's Landing and back in [Stephen C. Foster](#) (look for alligators, black bears, and wood storks) and on a tidal river thru salt marsh and past sandbars in [Crooked River](#) (look for dolphins and fiddler crabs). Lunch along the way. Out to supper together. Camp or stay in a motel.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee plus two lunches, supper, breakfast, camping fee or motel, kayak rental (if needed).

**Coordinator:** Sonya Wood Mahler, [sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com](mailto:sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com)



### Park Paddlers Club Challenge Part II

Saturday, June 25th and Sunday, June 26th

10:00am Saturday thru 3:00pm Sunday

George L. Smith State Park and Reed Bingham State Park

**Activities:** Kayak along the lake following reflectors on the trees in [George L. Smith](#) (look for beaver dams and cypress trees) and Little River along the "Roundtree Run" in [Reed Bingham](#) (look for water lilies and tupelo trees). Snack on lunch in our boats. Out to supper together. Camp or stay in a motel.

**Cost:** \$5 EEA registration fee plus two lunches, supper, breakfast, camping fee or motel, kayak rental (if needed).

**Coordinator:** Sonya Wood Mahler, [sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com](mailto:sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com)

*In cooperation with Friends of Georgia State Parks, complete all 3 trips (22 total miles of scenic waterways at 6 state parks) to receive a "members only" t-shirt and bragging rights!*



*Diamorpha smallii in bloom at Arabia Mountain.  
See these beauties at the April member event.*

## Fresh Faces, Fresh Ideas

### Featuring EEA's newer members

by Sonya Wood Mahler  
EEA Member Services Chair

#### Larry Stevens Atlanta, Georgia

##### Finding EEA

Larry Stevens retired in the fall of 2012 and moved back to Atlanta, where he enrolled in Dr. Tom Howick's Master Naturalist course at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. After docenting at the center, Tom invited him to work as a naturalist in the education programs. He jumped at the opportunity. Larry also began working as a volunteer assisting Ranger Jerry Hightower with his education programs at the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. During this time he met various environmental educators, who, along with Tom and Jerry, talked about EEA and what a valuable service the organization offers. Larry joined EEA in late 2013 and subsequently participated in Projects Wet, Wild, and Learning Tree workshops; attended the 2015 conference; and signed up for the ATEEG program.

##### Work, travel, & fun

For income, Larry works as a part-time naturalist at the Chattahoochee Nature Center. Not for income, he does household chores and spends time with his grandchildren. For fun, he likes to hike, canoe, go birding, read, go to organ recitals, and hang with fellow naturalists. As for travel, Larry and his wife (he calls her "my Maria") spent five weeks touring Southeast Asia last winter and two weeks in Spain this past summer.

##### Favorite thing about being an environmental educator

Larry enjoys being outdoors and has always been concerned with what impacts our environment. Being an environmental educator gives him the opportunity to keep learning and share his enthusiasm and what he knows with the ones who will assume responsibility for the Earth when they grow up. He feels that he might even influence today's adults. It's encouraging working with the students, but it's equally great getting to be around more experienced environmental educators to absorb their energy, wisdom, and ideas. He takes much satisfaction from a teacher or parent approaching him to say, "It's obvious you love what you're

doing. It really shows, and the kids love it." After more than 40 years in the corporate world, 35 years with the Army on active duty or as a reservist, and no one ever saying it was obvious he loved his job, it's good to know he's finally found his niche, his home.

##### Favorite quote from a kid

There's one from Larry's eight-year-old grandson, Addison Stevens, who loves exploring the outdoors with him and on whom he practices his environmental education techniques. One day Addison had a friend over who just wanted to watch TV. Addison kept saying, "Let's go outside." His friend kept saying, "No. Let's watch TV." Exasperated, Addison finally asked, "Why do you want to watch TV? It's not raining outside."

##### Best EE moment

Larry was leading third grade students from an inner city school around the nature center property. When they reached a woodland trail, one girl became very anxious about going into the woods. She was even afraid she might fall in the pond, which was about 40 meters away. Larry reassured her that she would be okay and offered to let her hold his hand (with the teacher's permission). They spent half an hour on the trail. Along the way the little girl had stopped holding his hand. In fact, she'd become so comfortable that as they were leaving the trail, the teacher called out to him that they needed to wait. When he walked back to see what was the matter, he found the girl literally hugging an old sycamore tree.



##### Suggestion for how EEA can better help its members

Larry would like to see more of an effort to make the general public aware of the profession of environmental education and the professionalism of environmental educators. This could be accomplished through public speaking engagements or pitching feature stories to local and state media outlets on individual environmental educators and projects. The focus should be to promote the fact that environmental education is not some nice, warm, and fuzzy extracurricular activity but is important to our existence. It's FULL STEAM ahead!

## NEWS FROM OUR PARTNERS

### Confluence, Georgia Adopt-A-Stream Annual Volunteer Conference

Georgia's volunteer-based water quality monitoring program, Adopt-A-Stream (AAS), has engaged citizens in scientific assessment and awareness of their local waterways for over 20 years. AAS volunteers monitor water chemistry, bacterial levels, and biological communities of streams, wetlands, lakes, and estuaries. Confluence is Georgia Adopt-A-Stream's annual conference which brings together volunteers, trainers, community partners, students, and educators from across Georgia and beyond to build their knowledge about water quality monitoring and nonpoint source pollution.

AAS Confluence 2016 will be held at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center in Buford, Georgia on Friday & Saturday, March 11-12. Event activities include hands-on water quality workshops, the AAS volunteer awards celebration, annual student water science poster competition, and much more! Session topics include green infrastructure and community involvement, native fishes, watershed mapping, and amphibian identification.

Participants selected for the AAS student poster competition will present their posters at the conference. This event provides students with the opportunity to share water science research projects, receive recognition throughout the water quality monitoring community, and interact with peers and professionals in the field. Cash prizes will be awarded to winners. Abstract submissions for Graduate College, Undergraduate College, and High School (9th-12th grade) levels are due **January 15, 2016**. Travel stipends are available for eligible participants. Guidelines and submission information are available under the Confluence tab at [www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org).

**Friday Evening:** Student Poster Competition and AAS Social

**Saturday:** Water Quality Workshops, Exhibits, and Awards Ceremony

Come experience:

- Hands-on water quality workshops
- Professional development and networking
- Expert talks on advanced monitoring and program development
- Volunteer, trainer, and watershed group awards celebration
- Student water science poster competition
- Meeting and sharing with others interested in water quality monitoring!

For more information, visit the Confluence page at [www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org](http://www.GeorgiaAdoptAStream.org). Registration is required and opens January 2016. For questions, contact (404) 651-8512 or [AAS@gaepd.org](mailto:AAS@gaepd.org).



*Keynote address, Confluence 2015  
Photo credit: Dr. Andrew Osborne*



*Conference workshop on stream habitat and macroinvertebrates, Confluence 2015  
Photo credit: Dr. Andrew Osborne*

## EE in the Southeast

Did you know that EEA is part of a regional collaboration? The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) is a network of state affiliates of the North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) located in the southeastern region of the U.S. Member states include AL, FL, GA, KY, MS, NC, SC, and TN. This effort has been ongoing since the mid-2000s.

Two representatives from each state serve as leaders for this alliance. A member of the EEA Board of Directors and a member of the EEA Advisory Council represent Georgia on the leadership team. Through annual meetings and conference calls, SEEA has developed bylaws and elected officers. Jennifer McCoy, 2011-2012 EEA President, is serving as Secretary as well as representing EEA. Robby Astrove, current EEA President, is the second Georgia representative.

The mission of SEEA is to provide southeastern state environmental education associations and their members with valuable networking and communication opportunities that lead to greater success for all. Through this collaborative effort, SEEA has been able to obtain funding to build EE capacity for the southeast. Most recently, we received EPA funding to offer EE sub-grants. Projects were funded in both 2013 and 2014 to six Georgia organizations. In addition, SEEA leadership continues to work on the regional work plan and environmental literacy plans in the southeast. In 2015, the 4th Regional Conference was hosted by our neighbors in Tennessee. **The next Regional Conference will be held in 2017 and hosted by EEA at the Gwinnett Environmental & Heritage Center.**

Be on the lookout for more regional updates in the coming months. Also, check out regional news at [www.southeastee.org](http://www.southeastee.org).



### Shop at Kroger and Amazon, Earn Money for EEA!

You can now support EEA by shopping at Kroger and on Amazon. Help EEA earn up to \$8000 per quarter by signing up for both of these programs below:

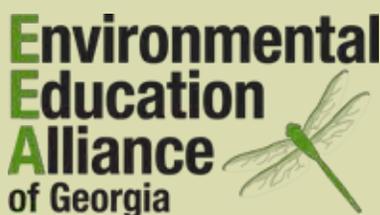
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Find us on Facebook and Twitter for pictures, program updates, upcoming events, articles of interest, grant opportunities, and more!

**We'd love to hear from you!** For comments and article suggestions or submissions, please email [news@eealliance.org](mailto:news@eealliance.org).



The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia's mission is to promote communication and enrichment among professionals in the field of environmental education through partnerships, initiatives, and access to knowledge and experiences.

P.O. Box 768081  
Roswell, GA 30076  
[www.EEAlliance.org](http://www.EEAlliance.org)

#### 2015-16 Board Officers

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<b>Vice President</b>	Cora Keber
<b>Treasurer</b>	Paul Coote
<b>Secretary</b>	Vicki Culbreth

#### 2015-16 Board of Directors

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Kathleen Lemley	Allen Nasworthy	Jackie Sherry
Sonya Wood Mahler	Michael O'Shield	Liz Swafford

For board member bios, roles and committees, and contact information, visit the Board of Directors page of the EEA website: [www.eealliance.org/board-of-directors](http://www.eealliance.org/board-of-directors).