



The Dragonfly

EEA'S QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2022

THE LEADING EDGE: RESEARCH FINDINGS TO INSPIRE BEST PRACTICES

Do Lessons in Nature Boost Subsequent Classroom Engagement? Refueling Students in Flight

Teachers who would otherwise wish to teach lessons outside might hesitate out of fear that it will leave students overstimulated and unable to concentrate when they return indoors. To the contrary, researchers in this study hypothesized that lessons in nature have positive aftereffects on subsequent student engagement. They based their hypothesis on past research which showed that small doses of nature had positive effects on attention, memory and enjoyment. They also referred to research that showed exposure to greener landscapes was positively linked to higher performance on standardized tests.

Using intentionally matched pairs of lessons (one taught in a streamside woodland area and one taught inside a classroom), researchers observed both groups of students during a following indoor lesson. Over the course of ten weeks, they repeated this mini-experiment ten times in each of two 3rd grade classrooms. Results indicated that when students came in after an outdoor lesson, they were more focused and teachers were able to instruct them for twice as long before needing to redirect their attention, compared to students who stayed indoors for both lessons.

Kuo, M., Browning, M. H. E. M., & Penner, M. L. (2018). Do lessons in nature boost subsequent classroom engagement: Refueling students in flight. *Frontiers in Psychology*. doi:<https://www.eealliance.org/frontiers-special-edition.html>

Translating Research into Practice: *What did the research conclude?*

The research found higher levels of engagement and ability to concentrate after lessons were conducted in nature, compared to the period following the same lessons, taught indoors. Students who learned a lesson outside returned to the classroom more focused and attentive than those who stayed inside for the same lesson, even when the subject was not nature-related.

What is the take-away? How can we alter our teaching to take these findings into account?

- The results of the study support and encourage teaching more lessons in natural settings.
- Educators are encouraged to try teaching at least 2-3 lessons in nature before determining if the after-effects of increased engagement and attention are noticeable and worthwhile.

**Environmental
Education
Alliance
of Georgia**



UPCOMING EVENTS

Outdoor Learning Collaboratory
August 24th - 7:00 PM EST
[Register here!](#)

Greensleeves Book Club
August 25th - Diary of a Young Naturalist
by Dana McNulty
October 24th - On Display
by Christy Baker Knight
[Learn more!](#)

**EEA 30th Conference & SEEA 10th
Research Symposium and Conference**
September 29th - October 1st
Unicoi State Park near Helen, GA
[Register today!](#)

**NAAEE Annual Conference &
Research Symposium**
October 11th - 15th
[Learn More!](#)

- [EEA events](#)
- [Partner Organizations' events](#)

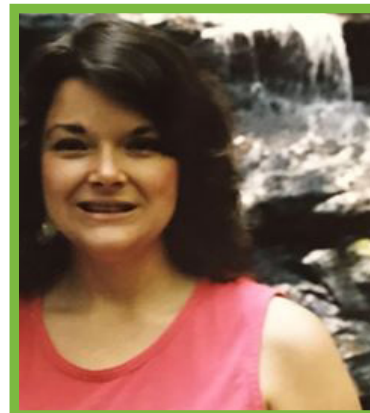
FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR...

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year in August! This is the time of year when EEA's new board is elected, a new fiscal year started, and new goals prioritized from the Strategic Plan. As we begin this year, I'm excited about the groundbreaking work EEA is undertaking, as the backbone organization for environmental education and outdoor learning in Georgia.

New GOLD Grants in Georgia

A powerful alliance of 120 environmental education and outdoor learning providers make up EEA's organizational members. In partnership with Georgia Science Teachers and Georgia Science Supervisors Associations, our alliance advocated for a state grants program before Senator Sheik Rahman's bipartisan Senate Study Committee on Outdoor Learning. Many of EEA's member organizations testified, took legislators on tours, or signed letters of support. As a result, the new Georgia Outdoor Learning Demonstration (GOLD) Grants will be available this school year!



Karan Wood
EEA Executive Director

New Guidelines for Best Practices in Outdoor Learning

The Outdoor Learning Collaboratory is a new community engagement initiative that EEA is leading to solicit ideas, experiences, and research on effective outdoor learning. As a result of this year-long process, EEA will propose guidelines for best practices covering everything from schoolyard design to instructional strategies. The Guidelines for Excellence in Outdoor Learning will be adopted internationally after a review/comment period.

New Planning Tools for Equitable and Inclusive EE

As a member of the eight-state Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA), EEA recently conducted a survey of nature centers and outdoor learning providers in Georgia. The information was incorporated into a set of maps and planning tools known as the EE Landscape Analysis, available for free on the EEA website. The second stage of this project: a survey of schools, kicks off this fall.

New Regional Conference & Research Symposium

EEA is happy to be hosting the eight-state SEEA Research Symposium and Conference along with our own 30th Anniversary Conference at Unicoi State Park from September 29 - October 1. Be sure to join us for the awesome professional learning opportunities and stay for the epic field trips and fall festivities. The keynote speaker will be Regional Administrator Daniel Blackman of EPA Region 4.

New Self-Paced EE Credential Courses

Partnering with several environmental organizations led by people of color, with backing from the Tides Foundation, EEA is creating the "JEDI Path" online course, which focuses on outdoor instructional strategies designed to engage all children. This course will be part of the new self-paced EE Credential series, launched as a companion to the ATEEG certification program for environmental educators.

New EEA Executive Committee

The newly-elected officers for the EEA Board's Executive Committee, including Board President Korri Ellis (Paideia School), Vice President Jennifer McCoy (Cobb County Water), Treasurer Susan Meyers (Monarchs, Milkweed and More), Secretary Stefan Moss (The Moss Group and Whitefield Academy), and Past President Zipa Vokhiwa (Mercer University). What an exciting time for environmental education and outdoor learning in Georgia! Bring it, FY2023!

Take care,

Karan J Wood

Karan Wood
EEA Executive Director

MEMBER UPDATES



Outdoor Learning Collaboratory

WEDNESDAY
AUGUST 24
.....
7:00 PM EST

THE OUTDOOR LEARNING STORE
A CHARITABLE NON-PROFIT

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

*What makes an effective outdoor learning experience?
How can we create spaces that enhance outdoor learning?
Join us to contribute your expertise and ideas
regarding best practices in outdoor learning.*

Register Now
tinyurl.com/bestpracticesoutdoorlearning

For More Info
www.eealliance.org

in collaboration with the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education and NAAEE

Outdoor Learning Collaboratory

Please join us on August 24 at 7:00 pm for an interactive webinar seeking your ideas and experience about best practices in outdoor learning.

With your feedback and ideas as well as that of other practitioners, educators and experts, research findings, and case studies, EEA will draft Guidelines on the design, installation, practice, and sustainability of outdoor learning in school and informal settings. These guidelines will become part of the National Project for Excellence in Environmental Education, after review and adoption.

Your input is critically important to this community engagement process and your ideas are needed. [Register here.](#)

Those who are unable to join us on August 24 will have future opportunities at the EEA/SEEA Conference September 29 - October 1 and at the NAAEE Conference in Tucson, October 11 - 15.

Petey Giroux Dragonfly Grant for EE and the ARTS

EEA offers mini-grants up to \$1000 to current EEA members for environmental education / performing and visual arts projects in honor of environmental educator Petey Giroux (1945-2008). Applications are due by August 31, 2022. Recipients will be announced at the EEA Conference on September 30, 2022. [Apply here.](#)

**Submit a Nomination for an Annual EEA Award**

Individuals, non-governmental and governmental organizations, institutions and agencies, and for-profit and not-for-profit entities are eligible for recognition for outstanding work in the fields of environmental and outdoor education. Nominators must be members of EEA or have a co-nominator who is a member. Nominations are due by August 31, 2022. Recipients will be announced at EEA's annual conference on September 30, 2022. Submit a nomination [here](#).

Award Categories

- Dr. Eugene Odum Lifetime Service
- PK-16 Formal Educator of the Year
- Outstanding Service to EE by an Individual
- Outstanding Service to EE by an Organization



UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

The Outdoor Learning Symposium 2022 Was a Success!

Sixty five outdoor educators from across Georgia came together on June 24th in Marietta to enjoy a day of professional development and networking on outdoor learning. The day opened with Keynote Speaker Brendon Barclay, Director of Education & Engagement for the National Wildlife Federation in GA, encouraging all to enjoy the outdoors and believe that simple acts can lead to great accomplishments.

Presenters shared valuable information on topics ranging from food access and school gardens, to interpreting nature for kids, finding resources for outdoor learning, and making rain barrels. Participants acquired new ways to observe nature and teach about rocks, human ecology and resiliency learning labs. Many thanks to presenters, attendees, sponsors Life University and Soil3, OLS Chair Mike Kahle, and CoOL Chair Stefan Moss. More information: www.eealliance.org/cool.



New GA Outdoor Learning Demonstration (GOLD) Grants!

Georgia has a new statewide learning grant program: the GOLD Grants (GA Outdoor Learning Demonstration Grants). EEA proposed and advocated for this grant fund, and is grateful to the bipartisan Senate Study Committee on Outdoor Learning, the Georgia legislature, and all the EEA member organizations and partners who supported this effort. Grants will be available for schoolyard improvements, supplies, field trips, and/or professional development. Details coming this fall.



Symbolic Migration

The annual migration of millions of monarch butterflies across North American is one of the world's most amazing events. EEA's Monarchs Across Georgia invites classrooms, nature centers and families across the US and Canada to learn about monarch conservation through participation in Symbolic Migration, an exciting cultural exchange with students in Mexico. The postmark deadline for completed paper butterflies is October 7.



Board Leadership Clinic

The North American Association for Environmental Education (NAAEE) and the NAAEE Affiliate Network held a leadership clinic in Pacific Grove, California. Three board members from the EEA attended: Jay Bassett (Strategic Partnerships Chair), Korri Ellis (President) and Jennifer McCoy (Advisory Council Chair). This five-day clinic in May, provided the opportunity for teams from each state to work together and strengthen their leadership skills. Participants also met with consultants and learned about different models for fundraising, cultural competency, communications and organizational management.



UPDATES & OPPORTUNITIES

ATEEG Certification: New Cohort Starting Oct 1st at Conference

Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia (ATEEG) is a nationally-accredited professional certification program for teachers and non-formal educators, based on the Guidelines for Excellence in Environmental Education. The 4- part program is offered by EEA in partnership with University of Georgia and implemented by EEA's ATEEG Certification Advisory Board. A new cohort begins at the EEA Conference on Oct 1 with the first part of Core Course 1. [Register Now](#) @ \$70 for Conference attendees; \$100 for others. Use the EEA discount to spend Saturday night at Unicoi and enjoy OktoberFest in Helen.



MAG Educator Workshop Offered at Conference Oct 1st

The last day of the EEA / SEEA Conference is a crowd-pleaser! A day-long post-Conference Monarchs Across Georgia (MAG) Educator Workshop will be offered at half-price. Participants will learn about basic monarch biology and ecology, monarch citizen science projects, and how to create pollinator habitats. "Monarchs and More: An Inquiry and Arthropod-Based Curriculum" will be provided for schoolyard explorations. [Register Now](#) @ \$50 for Conference attendees (\$100 for [workshop only](#)). Consider spending Saturday night at Unicoi State Park with EEA discount and enjoy OktoberFest in Helen.



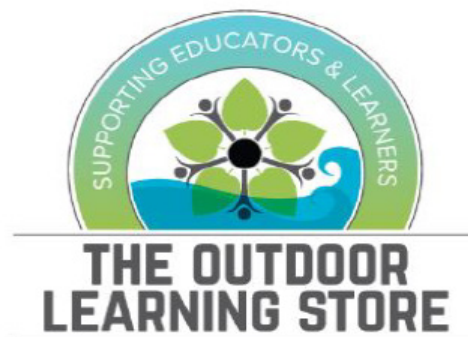
EEA Offers Wildlife Cameras, Activities to Schools & Nature Centers

Ever wonder what critters venture into the schoolyard once students go home? A Wildlife Viewing Grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources has made it possible for EEA to offer wildlife cameras, lesson activities, and teacher training to schools and nature centers this fall. Recipients will use the equipment and lessons to help students or visitors learn about native wildlife, including vulnerable and endangered species, and to conduct student-designed investigations and projects. To [learn more](#) or apply, email: info@eealliance.org



The Outdoor Learning Store: Pssst! There's a secret code!

EEA has partnered with the Columbia Basin Environmental Education Network (CBEEN) to bring Georgians the non-profit Outdoor Learning Store. Every Georgia purchase results in a percentage of sales shared with EEA. During the month of August anyone can use this code for a 5% discount: `eea22$%`! Log into the EEA member portal for future discount codes and check out special Georgia sale prices for items such as nature guides. Visit [The Outdoor Learning Store](#).



CORNERSTONES



Korri Ellis

**Incoming EEA President
Sustainability Coordinator, The Paideia School**

Korri has been involved in environmental education for more than 20 years. She started her career in various informal settings, including Camp Wahsega and Zoo Atlanta, before moving into the school setting as a science teacher at Grady High School. Since 2016, she has been Sustainability Coordinator at Paideia School, where she works school-wide empowering K-12 students with tools they can use to help take care of the earth they will inherit from us.

How long have you been working in the field of environmental education?

I have worked in environmental education for 22 years in a variety of capacities, both in formal and informal spaces. I started in ee at Camp Wahsega in North Georgia, and since then my career has led me down many paths and to a variety of places. I have worked at a wildlife park in Texas, a marine science camp on Catalina Island in California, and Zoo Atlanta. After my time traveling the country doing seasonal work, I settled in Atlanta and have mostly been engaged in the formal education sector, first at Midtown High School (formerly Grady High School). In my current position, I have just finished my 6th year at Paideia school as the Sustainability Coordinator.

Tell us about your current position and some of your key roles and responsibilities.

My current job is a position that I dreamed up in my later years working for Atlanta Public Schools thinking about my next career steps. It is my dream job. I get to work school-wide (K-12) with classroom teachers and other colleagues to develop programming that empowers our students with the knowledge and tools that they can use to help take care of the earth that they are inheriting from us. I teach a Marine Science course in the high school, I help to plan service learning experiences and overnight trips, as well as manage a grant program that supports sustainability related projects that integrate environmental learning into our school curriculum.

What are some intriguing highlights of your past work in environmental education?

All of it has been an adventure, but one of my most exciting jobs was my time on Catalina Island. The staff lived and worked at a camp with no roads going in and out- we did everything by boat. I led students on snorkel and kayak trips, hikes, and had lots of adventures on the weekends with my coworkers including whale watching, SCUBA certification, cross island hikes, and more.

I am forever grateful to my first principal in my formal education journey, Dr. Vincent Murray, who believed in me and trusted my vision during my time at Midtown (Grady) High School- even when he thought my ideas were a bit crazy. It was essential in setting me up for success in my current position. I was given the freedom to develop new environmental programs and courses. During my tenure at Grady I established a school recycling program, a school garden, and new science courses for our school including AP Environmental Science and Oceanography.

What is something that new EEA members would find helpful?

Our conferences are a great time to connect with other environmental educators in our state. I have gained valuable resources, teaching ideas, and made connections that have proved invaluable in my career journey.

What excites you about the upcoming work of the EEA in 2022-2023?

In May, I had the privilege of attending the NAAEE Leadership Clinic at Asilomar in Monterey Bay, CA along with board members Jennifer McCoy and Jay Basset. During our stay, we had the opportunity to meet with other NAAEE affiliate leaders from 30 states around the US. It was a hard-working week in a beautiful setting. We had the opportunity to share our work, as well as hear about the work of the other affiliates in leadership positions to share ideas about how they, and we, may be able to build capacity in our organization. I am looking forward to sharing these ideas with the board and getting their feedback about how we can grow as an organization.

CORNERSTONES

Who are some current leaders in environmental education that you look up to?

My favorite people in environmental education include the many visionary folks working in the city of Atlanta who are innovating urban agriculture and urban environmental education. I have also been looking to young people across the world for inspiration in my work who are rejecting the status quo and speaking out about inaction on climate change and environmental injustice. In addition, I have gained lots of inspiration from those who are working to elevate indigenous voices and practices as a way to course correct the environmental and social impacts of colonization, and guiding us to look to indigenous practices as a way to solve our current environmental challenges.

Some of my newish favorite books and media include Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall-Kimmerer, and the book and following Netflix series High on the Hog. The book is written by Jessica B Harris and the Netflix special series is hosted by Stehen Satterfield. The book and series highlight the way the trans-atlantic slave trade and the African Diaspora have shaped American food culture and agricultural practices.

With regards to fellow members' contributions to making environmental education the best it can be in Georgia, what are you most proud of?

Again, the innovations that I have seen over the years. Especially in the city of Atlanta there have been so many new ideas and organizations formed during my time here that are working to bring environmental justice to the forefront of our work.

How do you connect with the outdoors? Share with us some of your favorite outdoor activities.

I love hiking, but have not been able to do so for the past year due to a hip injury. I have recently had corrective surgery and am looking forward to hitting the trails again soon. I also love to garden both food and native plants- gardening and growing is a constant science experiment that fuels my continuing curiosity about the natural world.

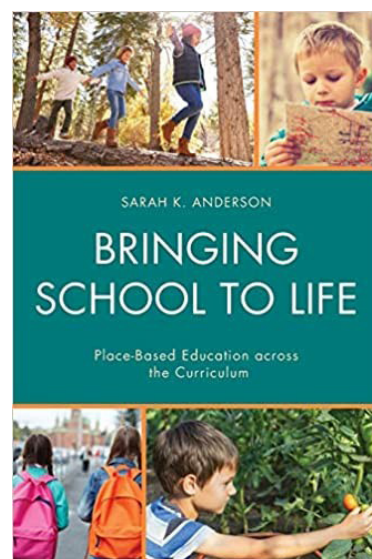
Tell us about your favorite places in Georgia to visit.

This one is hard- I'm not sure I can pick just one because Georgia contains so much diversity throughout our state. I love Cascade Nature Preserve in southwest Atlanta, and I have a special place in my heart for Sapelo Island. One of my goals is to be able to grow some greater connections between my students and the generational residents of the island, as well as to figure out ways to be of service in this special place in the years to come.

Volunteers Needed for EEA Conference

Want to get involved in EEA? Volunteers and Scholarship recipients will be working before, during and after the EEA / SEEA Conference to organize the online conference platform, review presentation proposals, coordinate logistics for researchers and presenters, write press releases, market the event, coordinate the Silent Auction, process evaluations, and thank presenters, sponsors and attendees. Contact Conference Chair Hannah Penn at info@eealliance.org

Recommended Resource



Bringing School to Life: Place-Based Education Across the Curriculum

By Sarah K. Anderson

Place-based education involves hands-on learning through experiences inextricably linked to community; these experiences, in turn, help students to appreciate nature, help strengthen connections with students and their community, and help inspire within them a lifelong spirit of civic engagement. In her book, *Bringing School to Life: Place-Based Education Across the Curriculum*, author Sarah Anderson draws upon her experience as a place-based educator for The Cottonwood School in Portland, Oregon. In it, she gives guidance and presents realistic examples for educators wishing to establish a successful place-based education curriculum for K-8 students. Readers will find sections encompassing several key components to place-based learning like mapping, local history and community science. She also shares strategies for building collaborative community partnerships and ways to integrate place-based learning and projects across grades. Her work is a worthy supplement resource to David Sobel's book "Place-Based Education: Connecting Classrooms and Communities" and David Sobel and Greg Smith's Book "Place- and Community-Based Education in School."

FYI...



Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia **SEEA**
Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance

10TH ANNUAL SEEA CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

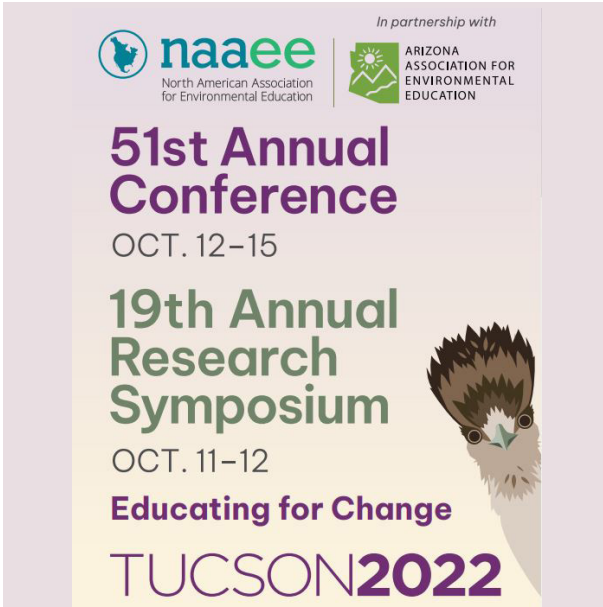
Hosted by EEA during our 30th Anniversary Year

"Illuminating the Landscape of Environmental Education and Outdoor Learning in the Southeast"

UNICOI STATE PARK & LODGE HELEN, GA
September 29, 2022 - October 1, 2022

Submit conference session proposals at:
<https://tinyurl.com/3vm2hwua>

Check out our conference webpage at:
<https://www.eealliance.org/eea-annual-conference>



naaee North American Association for Environmental Education
In partnership with **ARIZONA ASSOCIATION FOR ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION**

51st Annual Conference

OCT. 12-15

19th Annual Research Symposium

OCT. 11-12

Educating for Change

TUCSON 2022



MONARCHS ACROSS GEORGIA
A COMMITTEE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE OF GEORGIA

SYMBOLIC MIGRATION

Send A Monarch to Mexico!

The annual migration of millions of monarch butterflies across North America is among the world's most spectacular natural events. Through the Symbolic Migration Project, youth can also become active participants in monarch conservation. Families, home schools, nature centers, youth groups, and classrooms are welcome to participate!

Postmark Deadline: October 7, 2022

<https://www.eealliance.org/symbolic-migration.html>



Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

SUPPORTING EDUCATORS & LEARNERS

THE OUTDOOR LEARNING STORE

Now open in Georgia!

OUTDOORLEARNINGSTORE.COM

Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia



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