



Spend some time with EEA this year! EEA's 2017-18 Calendar of Events

The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia has been serving environmental educators throughout the state since 1992, and the 2017-18 year will be another great one filled with fun, learning, and inspiration for your classroom. EEA supports environmental educators through conferences, workshops, member events, access to information and networking, and so much more. Please join us at our upcoming events!

Monthly Field Excursions for EEA Members • Various dates and locations

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 educators and EEA board members. Enjoy paddling, camping, hiking, snorkeling with manatees, and more. ([read more on page 2](#))

Monarchs Across Georgia "Pollinator Symposium"

Saturday, September 23, 2017 • Monastery of the Holy Spirit, Conyers

Join Monarchs Across Georgia for a day of speakers, nature walks, exhibitors, and demonstrations. Topics will include monarch butterflies, native bees, hummingbirds, and gardening for pollinators. ([read more on page 3](#))

2017 Outdoor Learning Symposium

Friday, October 20, 2017 • Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy, Atlanta

OLS is an annual fall event intended for teachers, PTA, youth leaders, non-formal educators, camp counselors, and any interested individuals that provides opportunities for networking, exciting outdoor teaching ideas, and strategies for taking students outside. ([read more on page 9](#))

2018 EEA Annual Conference • March 2-4, 2018 • Unicoi State Park and Lodge, Helen

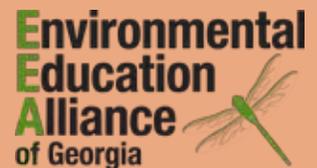
Make a positive impact, locally and globally, by giving your lessons a "Bird's-Eye View." Learn about new innovations to bring technology into your classroom and outdoors.

Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia (ATEEG) 2018 Courses Various dates • Charlie Elliott Conference Center, Mansfield

Take your teaching to the next level by becoming a certified environmental educator with ATEEG! Whether you're new to the field or simply looking to reinvigorate your current teaching, ATEEG can provide the foundation, resources, and network to take your career to the next level. ([read more on page 11](#))

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Unplugged & Outdoors with EEA!

2017-18 Member Field Excursions

EEA is excited 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.

You must submit a completed form and \$5.00 registration fee by the registration deadline of the trip in order to participate. To register or for more information, contact Sonya Wood Mahler, EEA's Member Services chair, at sonyawoodmahler@yahoo.com. Read more about each trip at www.eealliance.org/member-field-excursions.



Saturday, August 19th

Chattahoochee Bend near Newnan, Georgia

Part of the Park Paddlers Club Challenge with Georgia State Parks. Paddle five miles on the Chattahoochee River beginning at McIntosh Reserve Park, just off Highway 5. End at the Chattahoochee Bend Day Use Area Boat Ramp.

Registration deadline: Saturday, August 12th

Saturday, September 30th

Lake Allatoona in Acworth, Georgia

Kayak from the Dallas Landing Park south to Allatoona Creek. Explore the creek. Picnic on a tiny island and circle back.

Registration deadline: Saturday, September 23rd



Tuesday, February 20th - Friday, February 23rd, 2018 Crystal River, Florida & Dunnellon, Florida

Tour Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park to see the captive manatees, native birds, and other wildlife. Rent full wet suit, fins, mask, and snorkel from dive shop in Crystal River. Snorkel with the manatees at Three Sisters Springs. Drift down Rainbow River from Rainbow Springs State Park to KP Hole County Park and Boat Ramp. Tour Crystal River Archaeological State Park. Shop for manatee souvenirs, clothing, or kayak gear in Crystal River. Moonlight pontoon boat ride on Withlacoochee River.

Registration deadline: Thursday, January 5th, 2018

Monarchs Across Georgia presents the 2017 Pollinator Symposium

Saturday, September 23, 2017

Monastery of the Holy Spirit, Conyers

Join Monarchs Across Georgia for a day of renowned speakers, butterfly and nature walks, exhibitors, and demonstrations. The \$75 cost will include lunch and a one year EEA membership. Participants will take part in four presenter sessions, nature walks around the grounds of the monastery, and a demonstration of monarch tagging and testing for the *Oe* parasite. Butterfly walks will be led by Phil Delestrez, Northern Resource Manager for Georgia State Parks, and Father Francis Michael Stiteler, Land Manager for the Monastery. The nature walk will be led by Robby Astrove, Park Ranger at Davidson-Arabia Mountain Nature Preserve. Exhibitors will be on site with information. The Monastery's Abbey Garden Center will have pollinator plants, including native milkweeds, for sale. Speakers and their topics will include:

Monarch Butterfly, presented by Sonia Altizer: Sonia Altizer graduated from Duke University with a B.S. in Biology and the University of Minnesota with a Ph.D. in Ecology. She is currently a professor with the Odum School of Ecology, University of Georgia. Her research interests include population ecology; ecology and evolution of infectious diseases; evolution of host resistance and parasite virulence; monarch butterfly ecology and evolution; anthropogenic change; and infectious disease emergence. Sonia will be presenting on the population ecology and general status of the monarch butterfly as well as infectious diseases of the monarch butterfly.

Native Bees, presented by Nancy Adamson: Ecologist Nancy Adamson is the East Region Pollinator Conservation Specialist for the Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation and the US Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service in Greensboro, NC. She promotes habitat restoration that benefits pollinators and other beneficial insects on farm lands and in community and home landscapes. Join us to learn about common native bees we can support by protecting and planting pollinator habitat. Bumble bees, mason bees, mining or digger bees, sunflower bees, carpenter bees, hibiscus bees, and leafcutter bees are all groups you can easily recognize when you slow down and take a look. Nancy's program will highlight nesting habits to help you in supporting these diverse native pollinators.



Hummingbirds, presented by Kim Bailey: Kim Bailey has an M.S. in Curriculum and Instruction – Science Education. An environmental educator for over 20 years, she has enjoyed a wide range of experiences including teaching middle school life science, leading wilderness adventure trips, conducting ecology outreach programs, directing outdoor education programs, and training teachers and naturalists. Kim now enjoys growing milkweed, wildflowers, fruits, and vegetables; producing open-pollinated seeds for Sow True Seed; keeping bees; and raising butterflies at her farm, Milkweed Meadows Farm in Fruitland, NC. Kim also works for the Captain Planet Foundation as their Curriculum Editor. Kim will present facts and feats of hummingbirds and how to attract them.

Gardening for Pollinators, presented by Karen Giovengo: Karen Giovengo is the EcoScapes program manager with UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant. She provides education, outreach, technical assistance, and research support regarding natural resource-based sustainable land use practices in Georgia. Karen will provide a brief overview of the diversity of pollinators in Georgia, challenges they face, and basic habitat requirements that need to be addressed in pollinator gardens. She will emphasize sustainable best management practices and tools that gardeners can implement to achieve these habitat requirements.

Learn more and register at www.ealliance.org/mag-events.

The online registration deadline is September 16, 2017. No on-site registration will be available.

An excerpt from

THE NATURE OF AMERICANS

Disconnection and Recommendations for Reconnection

by Dr. Stephen R. Kellert, Yale University

David J. Case, Dr. Daniel Escher, Dr. Daniel J. Witter, Dr. Jessica Mikels-Carrasco,
and Phil T. Seng, DJ Case & Associates

From the study published in April 2017 at <https://natureofamericans.org>.

FOUNDATIONAL TO THE RECOMMENDATIONS from the study is the core premise that connection to nature is not a dispensable amenity but, rather, is essential to the quality of life, health, social well-being, prosperity, and productivity of all Americans. This stems from the biophilia hypothesis, which describes the basic human inclination to affiliate with nature. However, the inclination is one that is not “hard-wired,” but requires the experience of repeated exposure and social support to develop and become functionally beneficial. Connecting Americans and nature must therefore be a vibrant, ongoing effort propelled by all members of the public, including sectors as diverse as healthcare, education, urban planning, conservation, recreation, and community development.

Three different research methods were used in this study, each closely integrated with the others.

- 15 focus groups with a sample of 119 adults in major cities in Florida, Texas, California, Illinois, and New York
- Online survey of 10,156 adults across the country: 5,550 in the US as a whole + a separate sample of 2,227 adults in Florida + a separate sample of 2,379 adults in Texas
- Interviews with 771 children ages 8–12 and an online survey of one of each of their parents in Florida, Texas, California, Illinois, and New York.

The study identifies that adults and children feel affection for nature, are attracted to its beauty, and even appreciate the improvements to physical health and emotional outlook. The study also reiterates the competing priorities for time, attention, and money that are keeping Americans away from nature. It is increasingly normal to spend little time outside, because we are captivated by the entertainment provided by omnipresent electronic media. Other barriers include a concern for safety, lack of financial resources, and a lack of social support, such as adults to accompany children outside, or friends to encourage other adults to make time for nature. Members of various sectors need to listen closely to how particular communities and groups experience disconnection from nature—and how they seek to adjust their lifestyles in response.

Promote nature not only as a place for experiences, but also for involvement and care

Promote making contact with nature habitual—a more routine part of daily and weekly life, rather than a once-a-month, once-a-year, or even a once-a-lifetime activity. In addition, *connections* rather than *experiences* instill a sense of responsibility and commitment toward the natural world. For adults and children in the study, connections seemed to emerge when nature was not passively enjoyed but, rather, was something to be involved in via exploration, care and responsibility, observation, learning, and familiarity with a particular landscape. Recommendations include providing opportunities for adults and children to take responsibility for the natural world in places and ways that are easily suited to them – in settings such as their neighborhood, workplace, schools, etc. A starting point for such activities could be at more curated places like parks, zoos, and aquariums. It could also involve a multitude of other possibilities, such as - creating a habitat for birds in suburban environments, or planting and caring for native plants, not only during early childhood, but also during adolescence and into adulthood and older age.

Experiences in nature are deeply social

Americans make time for nature when they have the social support to do so and when the activities involve their friends and family. The default design and promotion of programs and natural areas should nurture and portray the sociability of participants and opportunities to forge connections with nature together. This may in turn alleviate the concerns of people who are wary of being alone outdoors. By recruiting groups of people who are already connected to one another through a common interest, activity, or lifestyle, the social familiarity of the setting or activity increases. Thereby, participants can more readily focus on building familiarity and comfort with the natural environment.

Similarly, the act of socializing children to have interest in, respect for, and commitment to nature appears to have a

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reciprocal effect on the adults who do the socializing. In addition to parents, there are other people in children's lives that can influence their views and connections to the natural world. Parents are important, but so too are spouses and partners, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends, cousins, nieces and nephews, and more. Nature centers need to support mentorship that extends beyond the parent-child relationship, but also friend-friend, grandparent-child, conservation professional-adult, and so on.

Deepen local experiences in nature near home

Americans (especially adults) need to be assured that connection to nature can happen in their local community. It doesn't take a long, expensive trip away from home. However, for children, nature is located quite literally right out the door, and unforgettable memories often consist of back yards or nearby woods, creeks, and gardens. Experiences should therefore provide opportunity for doing the things in which children already express interest — for example, climbing trees, exploring woods, and learning about the natural world through firsthand observation. Such experiences could also illuminate how nearby natural places and processes (such as water supply and quality, weather patterns, migration routes, erosion, and more) link with distant processes and places.

Programs could use overlapping interests between children and adults to promote inter-generational participation, leveraging the finding that children learn about and experience nature most often with a family member. Both children and adults expressed high interest in visiting places like zoos and aquariums that teach, allow for exploration, and promote social interactions. These nature-education centers can serve as gateways and entry points to activities outside of those places. This indicates the importance of training and providing teachers, docents, and interpretive guides who can interact successfully with a diverse range of audiences to spark interest and participation and who can provide suggestions to parents of ways to encourage involvement at home through, for example, the care of special plants or animals.

Access to nature is as much about the quality of places as their quantity

When asked about places near where they live, minorities and urban residents perceived fewer places nearby to enjoy the outdoors. In terms of the quality of places, overall, less than one-third of adults were very satisfied with places for outdoor and nature recreation near where they live. The social safety of places (traffic, speeding vehicles, dangerous people, noise, etc.) was an important concern for all parents and children, and even more so for minorities and

urban residents. Program planners and communications professionals should also pay attention to how they label and frame activities. For example, among certain minority groups, interest in hiking paled in comparison to interest in taking a walk outdoors, likely due to differences in perceptions about the social and geographic familiarity and safety of the two activities.

A majority of people support the expansion of nature-related programming, and support the use of a variety of funding sources to pay for these. Furthermore, they understand that the improvement of their connection to the outdoors, and the conservation of nature and wildlife, is directly linked to the betterment of their health, productivity, and quality of life.

Experiences in nature need to nurture the various ways Americans value nature

Experiences and programs that only teach formal knowledge about the natural world speak to only one way Americans interact with and enjoy nature. While adults and children show interest in learning about how nature works, or about specific insects or plants, they also look for other outcomes, such as – discovery, peace, challenge, curiosity, beauty, love, etc. Attracting a broader, more diverse, and larger number of participants to programs depends on promoting and speaking to a range of values, including:

- Affection and even love for nature, the outdoors, and wildlife
- Appreciation of nature's aesthetic appeal and beauty
- Enhancement of intellectual development and knowledge
- Appreciation of the many practical ways people benefit from the natural world if utilized in a sustainable fashion
- Feelings of peacefulness and spiritual connection to the natural world

Programs need to cater to the differences in Americans' complex and nuanced relationship with nature

While Americans of all types were similar in the general interest in nature, clear differences emerged across and within race and ethnicity, residential location, and age in two particular areas - interest in particular recreational activities, and barriers to those interests. For instance, interest in camping and hiking differed dramatically across groups, while interest in activities like fishing, walking outdoors, and visiting nature-education centers was more widely shared. These results point to the level of cultural competency required for various sectors to reach new constituencies and work to connect all people to nature. Program providers need to place themselves in the lives and neighborhoods of the constituencies they seek to serve, and also consider age of participants as a salient factor affecting programs, policies, and campaigns related to nature.

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The research provides evidence for the need for robust social analysis to avoid relying on “silver bullet” solutions or unverified explanations for particular outcomes. The study finds that multiple causal pathways can produce the same outcome. For example, support for nature-related programming came from people with feelings of affection toward wildlife, as well as from adults with strong values of control toward and exploitation of nature. Clearly stating, tracing, testing, and analyzing causal pathways can help in the development of a successful nature program.

Exposure to nature promotes physical, psychological, and social well-being

Interest in nature is highly positively associated with experiences in nature, which in turn are positively associated with particular benefits and connection to special places and unforgettable memories. Thus, expenditures on enhancing children's connections with nature represent an investment no different than expenditures on health care, formal education, and other services that improve quality of life. Better connection to nature also creates places where Americans want to live, work, and flourish. These outcomes provide a powerful justification for forging partnerships across sectors as diverse as healthcare, education, urban planning,

conservation, recreation, and community development so that everyone might work toward connecting Americans and nature.

CONCLUSION

We live in a remarkable age when quarter centuries seem to pass in the blink of an eye; the state of the natural world and our place within it cannot afford for us to act slowly. Members of the conservation and environmental communities can no longer rely on pre-existing social expectations, uncritically repeat many of the programs that have worked in the past, or simply rely on providing more information extolling the benefits of nature. There is deep potential for various sectors - conservation, healthcare, education, and so on - to step in and propose ambitious solutions to shape a society that matches what most Americans themselves personally value.

To read the full study, go to natureofamericans.org.

Congratulations to the Recipient of the 2017 Petey Giroux Dragonfly Grant for EE and the Arts:

Catherine Reuter

Walton County Soil and Water Conservation District

EEA is pleased to announce that Catherine Reuter, with her “Garden Trail Mobile Mural” project, is the recipient of the 2017 Dragonfly Grant. Targeted at high school art students at Monroe Area High School, Ms. Reuter’s project will have students designing and painting a large mural on a 4-H garden trailer based on the 2017 Stewardship Theme for the National Association of Conservation Districts, “Healthy Soils are Full of Life.” Prior to designing the mural, students will engage in a lesson and discussion on the importance of soil resources to both wild ecosystems and agriculture. Students will be required to research the organisms that are found in healthy soil and provide a scientific explanation for the inclusion of different elements in their mural design. Creation of the final mural will allow students to practice important elements of visual design and mural execution. This project will be an excellent way of starting a discussion about soil conservation with students outside a traditional science setting. Once completed, the mural will transform an anonymous white trailer into a high-profile mobile outreach vehicle that will spread the message of soil conservation as it moves around town.

The [Petey Giroux Dragonfly Grants for EE and the Arts](#) are mini-grants offered to current EEA members for up to \$1000 for environmental education/performing and visual arts projects in honor of environmental educator, Petey Giroux (1945-2008).

Getting Ready For Back to School

by Liz Swafford

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

If you have a child going to school this fall, the much-anticipated return to school usually equals a lot of shopping, which may include brand new school supplies, clothing, and even computers. As you prepare for this new year, keep the three Rs in mind. Reduce, reuse, and recycle can end up saving you some time, money, and best of all, it's also beneficial for the planet.

Before you run off in a panic to the first retail store you see, take a few moments to prepare with what you already have at home. Gather all of the school supplies you have on hand and take an honest assessment of what can be used again for this school year. Pens, crayons, notebooks with lots of blank pages, rulers, pencil boxes, and more products are probably in fairly good condition after surviving the previous school year. Freshen up the appearance of these previously loved items by gently cleaning them or decorating them with stickers.



Get ready for school this month by doing an inventory of the supplies you already have at home. Reusing last year's school supplies is good for your wallet and the planet.

an assessment, you'll have a list of things to buy that are actually necessary. When shopping, look for items that are made with recycled content or are manufactured in an environmentally friendly way. For example, notebook paper and composition books made with 100% recycled content are readily available. Other products, like rulers made from recycled plastic, may not be so obvious, so read the labels closely.

Invest in more durable, higher quality items like backpacks made with thick fabric instead of the thin plastic or vinyl versions. While the cost may be higher up-front, you'll end up saving money in the end by not having to replace cheap products that can easily fall apart. I remember getting several years of use from my JanSport backpack with a leather bottom. A sturdy binder with a fabric cover and a stainless-steel lunchbox can also last several years.

School supplies that are refillable are another good investment. For example, pens that accept ink refills and mechanical pencils that use pencil lead refills. Using refillable items helps reduce the amount of waste you throw out during the year too. Currently, my favorite pen is the gel roller B2P by Pilot. The transparent outer casing is made from recycled water bottles! The ink refill is the same for the G2 gel pen, which is actually easy to find wherever pens are sold. These small actions will lead to less waste and a huge win for you and the planet.

*Liz Swafford is the Recycling & Education Program Coordinator for the Dalton-Whitfield Solid Waste Authority.
Contact: 706-278-5001; lswafford@dswswa.org; www.dswswa.org.*

FRESH FACES, FRESH IDEAS

Getting to Know Our Newer Members

by Sonya Wood Mahler
EEA Member Services Chair



With her quick smile and infectious laugh, **Lanie Jordan** lights up any room she enters. A smart and dedicated student in the field of environmental education, EEA is lucky to have Lanie as a new member.

Finding EEA

Lanie Jordan is a student at Georgia College & State University (GCSU), a public liberal arts university in Milledgeville, Georgia. GCSU was well represented at the EEA annual conference in March 2017. Lanie's professors encouraged her and several others to attend the conference and join EEA.

Day to day work in environmental education

Lanie is focused on finishing her Outdoor Education degree. In the past, she has worked at an environmental education summer camp at Lockerly Arboretum in Milledgeville. At this camp, she helped educate pre-K, elementary, and middle school participants

about the native plant and animal species and local ecosystems. This summer Lanie is helping to lead camp at Buffalo Cove Outdoor Education Center near Deep Gap, North Carolina.

Favorite thing about being an environmental educator

Lanie's favorite part of educating about the environment is inspiring people to care for the natural world. Teaching experientially gives her students a new perspective on why it is important to care about our environment.

Best EE moment

Her most favorite EE moment was when she took a group of participants to the river to catch as many aquatic species as they could. They brought the critters back to their shack and identified the species all together. It was a blast having fun, getting dirty, and figuring out what they had caught.

Relaxation, travel, and fun

Shooting the Hooch is one of Lanie's favorite outdoor activities. She loves being on the water hanging out with friends and meeting new people.

Favorite outdoor place in Georgia

Lanie has found that Amicalola Falls State Park in Dawsonville, Georgia, with its 729-foot waterfall and 8-mile falls trail, is a great place to chill outdoors and enjoy nature.

Suggestions for a better EEA

Lanie had a suggestion for the next conference or Outdoor Learning Symposium. She wishes there had been a list of times when the representatives from various agencies and centers were going to be by their exhibits. It was difficult finding people at their booths and finding time to talk with them.



Lanie Jordan (second from right) on a backpacking trip.

YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO ATTEND THE

2017 Outdoor Learning Symposium

THE COUNCIL OF OUTDOOR LEARNING PRESENTS A DAY OF OUTDOOR EDUCATION SESSIONS

DEAR EDUCATOR,

The Council Of Outdoor Learning (COOL) proudly presents the 2017 Outdoor Learning Symposium (OLS). **The conference takes place on Friday, October 20, 2017 at the Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy in Atlanta, Georgia.** Registration and conference information is available at www.eealliance.org/outdoor-learning-symposium. The cost is \$35 for members of the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia and \$60 for non-members, which includes a one year membership to EEA.

OLS is an annual fall event intended for private and public school teachers, PTA volunteers, youth organization leaders, resources agency educators, nature center instructors, camp counselors, and all interested volunteers from across the state, providing opportunities for networking, sharing lessons learned, exciting outdoor teaching ideas, and strategies for taking students outside. This year's Symposium will provide sessions on Georgia reptiles and amphibians, simple app creation for use in outdoor learning, Georgia geology and biogeography, garden math, citizen science, and much more. Registration begins at 8:00am followed by age-oriented outdoor learning sessions, networking opportunities, and lunch provided by local chefs.

I cannot begin to tell you what a wonderful opportunity the Outdoor Learning Symposium is for educators, PTA volunteers, Para-Pros, and other interested persons. The networking opportunities are worth \$35.00 alone, but the learning sessions, which are presented by persons with experience in successful outdoor learning programs, are invaluable. Return to your school or facility with great ideas and information to improve your own Outdoor STEM learning areas and programs.

Please Join me.

Your friend,
Jerry Hightower
Council of Outdoor Learning Committee Chair
U.S. National Park Service

Notable About OLS 2017

- Southwest Atlanta Christian Academy is a school with a growing, successful outdoor learning area and program.
- Each session is targeted at a distinct grade level: elementary school, middle school, high school, fourth grade and higher, and all ages.
- Sessions on basic content knowledge are offered along with sessions on innovations, techniques, and strategies.



Over 120 environmental educators from across the state gathered together for an amazing OLS 2016. We hope you will join us for another great Symposium on 10.20.17!

CORNER STONES

Celebrating 25 Years of EEA

by Sonya Wood Mahler
EEA Member Services Chair

I have so enjoyed meeting **Venetia Butler**. She is an old soul with a playful spirit and has made substantial contributions to the fields of marine and coastal education.

First encounters with environmental education

Venetia Butler has been involved in environmental education throughout her entire career. She started teaching in 1971 and was never satisfied with staying in the classroom to just teach the three Rs. At that time, a new conservation curriculum was being offered, and she jumped on it. The inner city school where she was teaching in Savannah had a small forest with a pond at the back of the schoolyard. Her third graders loved doing lessons there. Her next school was on Tybee Island, with the beach and marshes within walking distance of the school. She started leading outdoor projects - like having the students measure and chart the change in the height of a sand dune over time and filling ghost crab and fiddler crab burrows with melted wax to learn about their shelters. They only lost one or two crabs to the wax!

Venetia's passion for outdoor education led to working with a colleague, Ellen Roach, to write a curriculum entitled Environmental Studies for the Primary Grades.

Thanks to a very supportive Science Coordinator for the Savannah Schools, this curriculum received the 1986 National Science Teachers Association Star Award. It all eventually led to Venetia teaching at the Oatland Island Education Center (now the Oatland Island Wildlife Center), which focused on environmental education.

Teaching other teachers

Venetia substitute teaches at the Oatland Island Wildlife Center, and she is an advisor for the Tybee Island Marine Science Center. She also coordinates a weeklong Schoolyard Program at the University of Georgia Marine Institute on Sapelo Island for the Georgia Coastal Ecosystem Long Term Ecological Research (GCS-LTER). During this week, teachers work in the field with scientists. Venetia guides them to transfer their experience from the field to the classroom with a focus on helping students participate in long term coastal ecology research.

In addition to EEA and ATEEG, Venetia has served on numerous committees, boards, and advisory councils throughout her career, including President of the Georgia Science Teachers Association (GSTA), President of the Georgia Association of Marine Educators (GAME), Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary, Center for a Sustainable Coast, Center for Ocean Science Education Excellence (COSEE), and American Physical Society Department of Plasma Physics (APS DPP) Education Committee. While serving on GSTA, she was intimately involved with the award-winning leadership program Science Teachers Teaching Teachers (ST3). She is very proud of its twelve year run and the participants who went on to be leaders of education throughout the state and beyond. Venetia was also an instructor for Project Learning Tree, Project Wild, Project Wet, Project Wild Bird, and Project Aquatic Wild.

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Become a Certified Environmental Educator with ATEEG

Whether you're new to the field of environmental education or simply looking to reinvigorate your current teaching, [Advanced Training for Environmental Education in Georgia \(ATEEG\)](#) can provide the foundation, resources, and network to take your career to the next level. Open to formal and non-formal educators across the state, the program helps participants of all backgrounds better measure the success of their programs, expand their knowledge of instructional techniques, and get to know other educators working in the field.

A nationally-accredited professional certification program based on the [North American Association for Environmental Education \(NAAEE\)](#) Guidelines for Excellence, ATEEG certification consists of three core courses, 30 hours of specialization workshops, and an independent study project. Each participant is matched with a professional mentor to guide them through the process of designing, implementing, and evaluating their final project. Participants have three years from the start of their first core course to complete the requirements for certification. Register for these upcoming course and learn more at www.eealliance.org/ateeg.

The following three courses will be held at the Charlie Elliott Conference Center in Mansfield, GA and begin at 1:00 p.m. on Friday adjourning at noon on Sunday.

Core Course 1 (Foundations of EE) - January 26-28, 2018 - To develop foundations of environmental literacy based on ecology and professional principles. **Register by January 15, 2018.**

Core Course 2 (Fostering Learning) - March 23-25, 2018 - To increase understanding of how to implement environmental education programs that foster learning. **Register by March 12, 2018.**

Core Course 3 (Assessment and Evaluation) - June 8-10, 2018 - Increase skills and knowledge associated with program evaluation including identifying outcomes, data collection methods, and data analysis and interpretation. **Register by May 25, 2018.**

Cornerstones... Continued from page 10

Recognition for her work

Other honors that Venetia has received include Georgia Marine Educator of the Year and the Millie Graham Award (Georgia Association of Marine Education), Teaching Conservation Educator of the Year (Georgia Conservancy), NOAA Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary Volunteer of the Year, Gray's Reef NMS representative at the Capitol Hill Ocean Week in Washington, DC, and the most coveted GSTA Dallas Stewart Award for Excellence in Leadership.

Some leaders in the field who have served as mentors

Venetia's very first idol in EE was Pat Conroy, with his style of teaching students on Daufuski Island in South Carolina, described in the book *The Water is Wide* and the movie *Conrack*. Venetia has been very fortunate to have worked with the best. The names that continually stand out are Petey Giroux and Jerry Hightower. Their love for the environment and the arts and their humor, kindness, knowledge, dedication, and understanding have always been an inspiration. Another name that Venetia mentioned as a significant mentor was Will Hon, educator and artist extraordinaire, who spent many years at the UGA Marine Center and Aquarium in Savannah. She was also inspired by Margaret Olsen, who was well known throughout Georgia for her accomplishments and dedication to education, particularly concerning the coast.

A fond memory of the early years of EEA

The best times were the gatherings around a fire or just about anywhere for swapping stories, telling jokes, sharing ideas, learning from each other, and just plain having fun together. Venetia has always loved the theatrics and creativity of the Petey Giroux and Jerry Hightower team. One memory that stands out is a very poignant night when Petey was honored with a raptor release during the 2008 conference at Unicoi State Park.

Service to the Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia

Venetia first became involved with EEA when Petey Giroux and Jerry Hightower brought a small conference to the Oatland Island Education Center in Savannah in 1996. She served on the Board of Directors for EEA from 2006 through 2011 and helped with the Dragonfly Grant program. She has been involved with Advanced Training for EE in Georgia (ATEEG) since 2007 and has served in every capacity from surveys, focus groups, curriculum development and instruction, operations development, and continuous revisions. Though she stepped off the Certification Advisory Board (CAB) in the spring of 2016, she remains available to mentor ATEEG certification candidates. The networking and the extent to which our organization reaches its mission, vision, and goals continue to make her proud.



News from our Partners

Save the Date! 6th Annual Southeastern EE Alliance (SEEA) Conference

Save the date for the [6th Annual Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance Conference & Research Symposium](#), hosted by the League of Environmental Educators in Florida, **March 16-18, 2018 in St. Petersburg, FL.**

March 16: Research symposium at the Florida Wildlife Research Institute and field trip opportunities

March 17-18: Concurrent conference sessions at the University of South Florida - St. Petersburg and Hilton Bayfront

2017 Georgia Farm to School Summit

Registration is now open! The **6th Georgia Farm to School Summit** will be held **Oct. 5-6, 2017 at Helms College in Augusta, GA.** Hear from [Keynote Betti Wiggins](#) and Honorary Co-Chair Donna Martin, tour dynamic school gardens and educational farms, and choose from twenty-one education sessions, including full tracks on curriculum, school gardens, cooking with kids, and more! Visit the [Summit website](#) for more information and to register.

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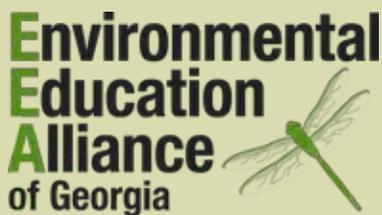
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The Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia's mission is to promote communication and enrichment among professionals in the field of environmental education through partnerships, initiatives, and access to knowledge and experiences.

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