

MAY 2022

# EEAA News

The latest news, events and announcements from the  
Environmental Education Association of Alabama

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EEAA Conference  
Feb 2-4, 2023**

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**JEDI Course begins May 23**

Environmental Education Association  
of Alabama

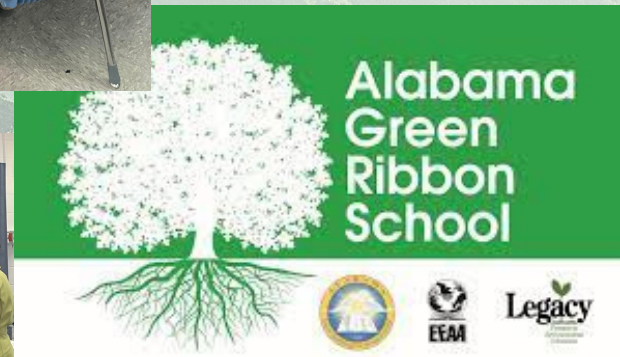
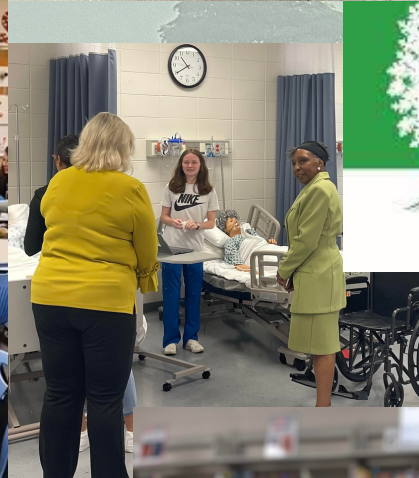
**EEAA: MAY 2022**



# Charles R. Drew Middle School Lincoln, AL

## 2022 Alabama Green Ribbon School

The aim of the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools (ED-GRS) is to inspire schools, districts, and institutions of higher education (IHEs) to strive for 21st-century excellence by highlighting promising school sustainability practices and resources that all can employ.



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# Bringing Ecotourism to the Alabama Black Belt

Alabama Audubon's Black Belt Birding Initiative works to bring the economic and environmental benefits of bird-based ecotourism to one of the country's most economically challenged rural areas. Through field trips, special events, research partnerships, and national outreach, we're leveraging our organization's expert staff and statewide reach to make a positive difference for the Black Belt's birds and the people who love them. Support our Black Belt Birding Initiative today at [alaudubon.org/black-belt-giving](http://alaudubon.org/black-belt-giving).

Save the date for our next Black Belt Birding Festival 29–30 July 2022!

- [Alabama Audubon's Black Belt Birding Initiative on our website](#)
- [2021 Alabama Audubon Black Belt Birding Festival on Vimeo](#)
- [Alabama Audubon - Black Belt Birding Initiative - Bird Collective](#)
- [How Ecotourism Can Help West Alabama Take Flight](#)
- [Black Belt cattle farmer embraces bird watchers, ecotourism](#)





# Toni Bruner appointed president of Environmental Education Association of Alabama

## By: Leslie Leak



Toni Bruner, education and outreach coordinator for the Auburn University Museum of Natural History, or AUMNH, was nominated and unanimously appointed as president of the Environmental Education Association of Alabama, or EEAA, at its annual conference held February 24-27 at the Gulf State Learning Center in Gulf Shores.

Bruner will serve in the leadership role over the next two years. At the start of her career in environmental education 18 years ago, Bruner initially became involved with EEAA as a conference participant and has served as an EEAA board member for the past 16 years.

"I am thrilled to serve as president of EEAA and lead the amazing group of educators that we have," said Bruner. "Any time you are asked to lead an organization, it is a huge honor and is very humbling. I am excited to see how we can continue to help the organization grow."

Formed in 1994, EEAA is a non-profit association comprised of educators from around Alabama who share a passion for educating the citizenry, especially young people, on the diverse natural resources our state enjoys. Its mission is to enhance the abilities of formal and informal educators to connect people to the natural world in order to foster responsible stewardship. EEAA is an affiliate of the North American Association for Environmental Education.

EEAA is involved in various types of outreach initiatives throughout the state. The association publishes a newsletter that highlights environmental news, events and announcements, and it also annually recognizes the best environmental education programs in Alabama by presenting the BEEP awards, as well as the Jeffrey Scott Hughes Lifetime Achievement Education Award named after EEAA's founder, Jeff Hughes.

Additionally, the association partnered with the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance, the Center for Diversity in the Environment, EcoInclusive, and Youth Outside to create an online, self-paced Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, or JEDI, course for educators that provides a strong foundation in the language, concepts and principles of equity work.

EEAA currently has 119 active members and maintains a database of approximately 690 educators – some who teach in school systems and some who are nonformal educators, such as those who teach at nature centers, state park naturalists, or retired educators. **[Read More](#)**



# SEEA Landscape Analysis Hub

What does environmental education (EE) look like on the ground? How do we work together to strengthen EE in the southeast? What would a stronger, more inclusive EE movement look like?

For the past two years, driven by the desire to learn the answers to these questions, the Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA), of which EEASC is a part, dove into a brand new undertaking: a landscape analysis of EE efforts in eight southeastern states.

Funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Pisces Foundation, the project included a comprehensive study of the environmental education already happening on the ground and was designed to help us—and many others—better understand the challenges and opportunities for environmental education in the southeast.

And now, through our new **online hub**, we'll show you the outcomes of the analysis and how you can use our new tools to build or strengthen your own EE programs and networks.

Through the hub, you can access the shareholder report, case studies, a searchable dashboard and maps, and more. Search, filter, and export datasets through an interactive dashboard. Discover new partners and programs in your area. Identify gaps and barriers to access. Build and strengthen your networks. Use it as a model for your own region. Cultivate collective impact. The possibilities are endless!

P.S. With the launch of the landscape analysis hub, we're opening the survey response period again for organizations that didn't respond in the previous period. If you would like to complete the survey and be added to the maps and the field trends dashboard, you can access the **survey here**.





# Climate Change Updates



This is the link to the You Tube Climate Change Video of the Panel Discussion at the EEAA Conference. **[Click Here](#)**

A follow-up to Jim McClintock's keynote presentation at the 2022 EEAA Conference. **[Click Here](#)**



# Climate Change cont.

## NIEHS Climate Change and Environmental Justice Stakeholder Engagement Meeting (May 17)

You are cordially invited to the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) Worker Training Program (WTP) virtual meeting:

Tuesday, May 17, 2022 from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. EDT

Event registration: <https://nih.zoomgov.com/meeting/register/vjlsdeipqzkuG-i1wbXnUiPAeflJ1IM6Nql>

### The purpose of the meeting is two-fold:

1. To share information about the Justice40 Initiative and also one of the pilot programs covered under the initiative – the NIEHS Environmental Career Worker Training Program (ECWTP).
2. To solicit your feedback and suggestions on how to enhance the program's effectiveness.

Please consider attending this event so that we can develop a more robust workforce development model to conduct environmental and construction-related training for disadvantaged and underserved populations throughout the United States.

### Background

The ECWTP provides training to increase opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged and underserved communities to obtain careers in environmental cleanup, construction, hazardous waste removal, and emergency response. The ECWTP is a part of the broader Worker Training Program (WTP) which is located within the NIEHS Division of Extramural Research and Training.

Authorized by the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986 (SARA), WTP funds nonprofit organizations that have demonstrated experience with providing high-quality occupational health and safety training to workers who may be involved in handling hazardous materials or engaging in emergency response activities.

### Other Important Links and Documents:

- [ECWTP 25th Anniversary Page](#)
- [Mitigating the Impact of Climate Change and Securing Environmental Justice Through Safety and Health Training \(2-page summary\)](#)
- [The Economic Impact of the Environmental Career Worker Training Program \(PDF\)](#)
- [Environmental Factor - August 2020: Environmental Career Worker Training Program celebrates 25 years](#)

For up-to-date information about Environmental Justice funding opportunities, events, and webinars, subscribe to EPA's Environmental Justice listserv by sending a blank email to: [join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov](mailto:join-epa-ej@lists.epa.gov). Follow us on Twitter: @EPAEnvJustice



# Conference Updates



**TUCSON2022**  
conference.naaee.org

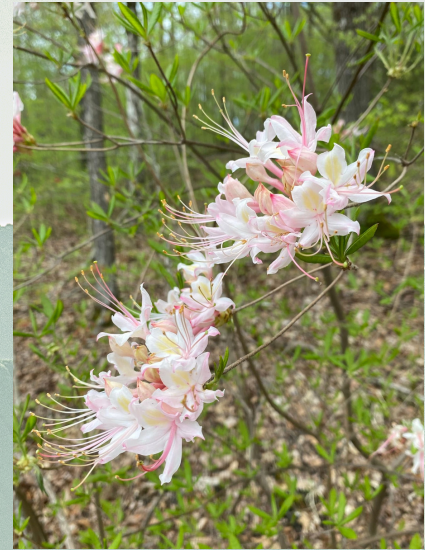
## 51st Annual Conference

OCT. 12-15

## 19th Annual Research Symposium

OCT. 11-12

**Educating for Change**



Environmental  
Education  
Alliance  
of Georgia

## 30TH EEA ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

### CALL FOR PROPOSALS

EEA's 30th Anniversary Annual Conference at Unicoi State Park will take place in conjunction with the SEEA Regional Conference & Research Symposium, September 29-October 1, 2022. Make plans to join us for this amazing double event during the peak of fall color in the north Georgia mountains, only two miles from Oktoberfest in Helen, GA.

What a celebration it is going to be! We hope you'll join us to learn, connect with colleagues, and collaborate on the future of our field.

Prospective presenters are invited to submit proposals for the conference and/or research symposium portions of this convening. The review process is competitive and proposals will be considered on a rolling basis through the end of May. A variety of formats - from poster session to traditional presentation or interactive workshop - are available. You need no previous experience to apply. Both proven strategies and innovative approaches are valued. Conference theme and strands can be found on our conference website link below.

Submit conference session proposals at  
<https://www.eealliance.org/2022-eea-annual-conference.html>

**UNICOI STATE PARK  
& LODGE | HELEN, GA**



**2023 EEAA Conference  
February 2-4  
Lakepoint State Park**



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# Aquaponics 101 Professional Development



July 11-15, 2022, Mon-Fri at 8:00 AM (8 hours Mon-Thurs, 4 hours Fri)

This 5-day professional development workshop is designed for teachers that would like to integrate aquaponics into their curriculum. The workshop is geared to middle and high school teachers, but adventurous elementary and pre-service teachers are welcome. Aquaponics is a combination of aquaculture and hydroponics, the growing of plants without soil. The fish and plants form a symbiotic relationship where the fish provide nutrients for the plants and the plants help clean the water for the fish. Classrooms across the country incorporate aquaponics to engage students and teachers in real world applications of chemistry, biology, math and agriculture science.

The workshop provides professional development credit (32 hrs) and hands-on opportunities to build small aquaponics systems and interact with aquaponics experts.

Topics covered at the workshop include integrating plant and fish culture, the nitrogen cycle, water quality, components of a recirculating aquaculture system, plant and fish selection, plant and fish disease and pest management and many others. Attendees will have the opportunity to design and build an entire aquaponics system that they will be able to take back to their schools. [Register Here](#)

## AQUAPONICS 101

Teaching with Tilapia and Tomatoes

July 11-15, 2022



**extension**  
ALABAMA A&M & AUBURN UNIVERSITIES

**Sea Grant**  
Mississippi-Alabama

**AU**  
AUBURN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE  
AND AQUATIC SCIENCES

## Aquaculture / Aquaponics 101 Teacher Workshop

July 11-15, 2022 – Auburn, Alabama



Aquaponics is being utilized in classrooms across the country to excite and engage students and teachers. Aquaponics is the art/science of growing fish and plants in a symbiotic relationship in a single system. It is a combination of aquaculture and hydroponics. The fish are fed a high quality prepared diet and their waste is used as fertilizer to grow plants. The plants in turn act as a filter to clean the water that can be returned to the fish tank. There is tremendous interest in Aquaponics and aquaculture as a platform to teach real world applications of biology, chemistry, math and science. Working with an aquaponics system also requires technical skills in plumbing, carpentry and sometimes masonry. It is an excellent tool to examine the different elements of business management and marketing.

The trouble is that most teachers don't have any training in aquaponics. The **Aquaculture/Aquaponics 101 Workshop** provides hands-on training and expert advice on how to start and operate an aquaponics system and provides resource materials to help integrate the knowledge into existing curriculum. Teachers will design and build a complete aquaponics system that they can take back to their school. Faculty from Auburn University, the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama, Mississippi Sea Grant Consortium provides expert instruction.

The workshop will be held at the E.W. Shell Fisheries Center, 2101 N. Collage St. July 11-15, 2022, in Auburn, Alabama. The cost for the workshop is \$295 and 32 hours of continuing education credit is available.



The AU Fisheries and Aquaculture program world renowned for its teaching, research and Extension efforts. The facility is the largest of its kind in the world with over 1800 acres, 350 ponds, and nearly 2,000 aquaria.

[Photos from the 2019 Aquaponics 101](#) [Teacher reactions to the workshop](#)

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# Justice, Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion in Environmental Education

*an online course offered by*



This course is designed to provide a strong foundation in the language, concepts, and principles of equity work. It is meant to be an introductory course and spark interest in further learning around justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion. It was developed through a partnership between the Center for Diversity and the Environment, EcoInclusive, Environmental Educators of North Carolina, Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education, Kentucky Association for Environmental Education, and Youth Outside.

Moderated by  
Paul James, Lighthouse Strategy Consulting





# Oak Mountain State Park

## Lunar Eclipse Viewing Party

Come to OMSP to view the Total Lunar Eclipse!

FOOD TRUCKS WILL BE ON SITE! Come eat dinner with us before the eclipse!

Totality is at 11:11pm! Stay and watch until midnight! The park will be open for this event only!

DATE: May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022

TIME: 8:30pm – 12am

LOCATION: Golf Course Driving Range

Free with paid admission into Oak Mountain State Park and overnight guests

Wheelchair and Stroller accessible



## Tree Ring Printing! Telling Nature's Story

Come out to OMSP and make your very own tree ring print!

Tree rings tell the history of not only trees but of our environment through time as well. By printing tree rings you can age the tree and capture a piece of history and turn it into art you can take home!

DATE: June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2022

LOCATION: Oak Mountain Interpretive Center

TIME: 1pm

Free with paid admission into Oak Mountain State Park and overnight guests

Wheelchair and Stroller accessible



## \*EEAA Member Exclusive\*

### The Oak of Oak Mountain: Exploring the Boynton Oak Tree

Visit the Critically Endangered Boynton Oak Tree that is only found in Alabama. Oak Mountain State Park has the largest population of these amazing trees, and you will get a chance to see them and learn all about them!

DATE: July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022

LOCATION: Oak Mountain Interpretive Center and Boynton Oak Tree habitat

TIME: 2:00pm – 3:30pm

Free with paid admission into Oak Mountain State Park and overnight guests





# Cheaha State Park

## Nature Program Highlights

### Take a Hike: Wildflower Hike with Mike

Spring has sprung in Cheaha State Park! Trails throughout the park are lined with the lacy blooms of Mountain Laurel, Butterfly Weed, Turk's Cap, Flame Azalea, Butterfly Pea, and so many more. Everywhere you turn, plants are bursting with vibrant, colorful blossoms. Join Park Naturalist Emeritus and wildflower expert Mike Ezell as he guides you through the wonderful world of wildflowers within Cheaha State Park.

**Date:** Saturday, May 14, 2022

**Time:** 1:00 PM -3:00 PM

**Location:** Mountain Laurel Trail (Chalet Road Trailhead)

**Cost:** FREE for overnight guests or with Park Admission

### Take a Hike: Tree Tea Hike (EEAA Members EXCLUSIVE)

Trees are known for supplying lumber for homes, paper for notebooks and fuel for campfires, but they provide so much more! Trees are also delicious and nutritious! Join Park Naturalist Mandy Pearson for an edible and medicinal plant and tree walk which will include a native tree tea tasting.

**Date:** Sunday, May 29, 2022

**Time:** 1:00 pm-3:00 pm

**Location:** Mount Laurel Trailhead (Chalet Road)

**Cost:** FREE for overnight guests or with Park Admission

### Bark in the Park at Cheaha State Park

Programs, hikes and activities for dogs and their humans, because we absolutely love our Bark Rangers! Enjoy a special mystery scent hike for you pups, meet Joe Cuhaj, author of Best Dog Hikes Alabama, learn special tips and concerns for hiking with your pup from veterinarian Niki Wayner, create a special take-home dog print art piece and so much more!

**Date:** Saturday, June 4, 2022

**Location:** Mike Bosarge Dog Park

**Cost:** FREE for overnight guests or with Park Admission

### International Fairy Weekend

Welcome to lovers of nature and the wee folk! Enjoy a magical weekend filled with storytelling, sparkling bubbles, whimsical fairies, fairy house building, and fun in the forest. Put on your wings, see nature as you've never seen it before, let your imagination run wild, and join us for this enchanted adventure.

**Date:** June 24-26 2022

**Location:** Cheaha Lake

**Cost:** FREE for overnight guests or with Park Admission



MAY 2022





# WIND CREEK STATE PARK

## PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

### WORLD AROUND YOU WALKABOUT

Alabama is home to all sorts of amazing plants and animals, and you won't find a better place to see them than at Wind Creek State Park! Join Wind Creek interpreters as they guide you around the park in search of the birds, flowers, insects, and more that call Wind Creek home!

**Date:** Saturday, May 28, 2022

**Time:** 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

**Location:** Wind Creek Clubhouse

**Cost:** FREE with paid park admission and for overnight guests

### SCALES AND TAILS

Alabama is home to a variety of wild residents. Join Wind Creek interpreters as they introduce you to some of the reptiles and amphibians who call Alabama home! Bring your camera and don't miss this opportunity for an up-close encounter with these amazing teacher creatures!

**Date:** Saturday, June 11, 2022

**Time:** 12:00 PM – 1:00 PM

**Location:** Wind Creek Clubhouse

**Cost:** FREE with paid park admission and for overnight guests

### GOOD FIRE: BENEFITS OF PRESCRIBED BURNING (EEAA MEMBER EXCLUSIVE)

Fire cleanses, purifies, and is essential for habitat throughout Alabama. Learn about prescribed burning and how it benefits native plants and animals within Wind Creek State Park.

**Date:** Sunday, June 19, 2022

**Time:** 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM

**Location:** Wind Creek Front Office

**Cost:** FREE with paid park admission and for overnight guests



EEAA Board Member Claire Datnow at the GirlSpring STEM Fair last month to encourage girls to enter STEM related careers.



The 30th Annual Wildflower Saturday was recently held at DeSoto State Park in Fort Payne, AL with presentations and field study of the incredible diversity of wildflowers of Lookout Mountain. Presenting this year was Park Naturalist Brittney Hughes, Mike Ezell, and Michelle Reynolds. Special study was given to the Sandstone Glade Plants of Alabama by Michelle. A great learning experience for all guests that were involved. Check it out next year for the 31st annual!





# Environmental Education Association of Alabama

**Email:** [contact@eeaa.us](mailto:contact@eeaa.us)

**Website:** [eeaa.US](http://eeaa.US)

**Facebook:** Environmental Education Association of Alabama



Thank you Mike Ezell for the spring  
flower photography sprinkled  
throughout the May edition of the  
EEAA newsletter.

EEAA: MAY 2022

