

JANUARY 2021

EEAA News

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

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Environmental Education Association
of Alabama

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FACEBOOK: ENVIRONMENTAL
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF
ALABAMA

Conference updates from EEAA President, Allie Sorlie.



Happy New Year educators!

New Years is always my favorite time of year. It is a time to reflect on the year behind us and to get excited for the one ahead. What can we say about this last year? That it has been challenging, exhausting, and surreal? That our routines were disrupted and our lives were overcome with uncertainty and worry? Yes. But we can also say that we have relied on our skills as educators to think on our feet and adapt to rapidly changing situations. We have emerged as digital content creators, social media managers, and online presenting superstars or, as I like to call us, Zoomers. We have transferred our in-person educational experiences to virtual ones and utilized the skills of ourselves and our colleagues in new and exciting ways. If you asked me this time last year if I would know how to edit video and lay a voice over, I would have said “who has the time to learn all of that?” But now? Well, I am just mediocre at it, but I am further than I was before and have many opportunities to improve on the horizon. This past challenging, exhausting, and surreal year has given me a lot, but mostly it has shown me an appreciation for you, the educators, that I never knew could deepen.

So what about this new year? Well, EEAA has decided to change things up a little. Usually, we would see you in February for a conference at one of Alabama’s many environmental gems. Unfortunately we are not able to hold a meeting like that this year. We played with the idea of an all virtual offering, but decided that with the Zoom fatigue many of us are feeling, an all virtual offering was not really what we were looking for. Being an environmental organization, we wanted to get out and explore! So instead, we have decided to offer a hybrid experience. We will be offering both in-person (small group) and virtual field trips across the state at environmental centers and outdoor locations that will showcase the natural beauty of Alabama. Like our conference, each field trip will focus on environmental education tools you can use in the classroom and resources available to you year round. Keep February 25-27, 2021 on your calendars and an eye out for more details to come.

Thank you for all that you do for our beautiful state. We look forward to seeing you in February!

Keep exploring,
Allie Sorlie
EEAA President



Alabama Students Win National Environmental Competition

The Bio Bucs, left to right, are Abhinav Gullapalli, Noel Ponder, Carson Perry, Abigail Collins, Reid Markland.



By Shelly Haskins | shaskins@al.com

They call them the Bio Bucs. They are Hoover High School's biological science STEM team, and they are national champions. This year, the team of six dedicated science students won \$25,000 regional and national levels of the Lexus Eco Challenge competition -- \$17,000 for college scholarships for them, and \$8,000 in grant money for the Hoover STEM program. The competition is a partnership between Lexus and the children's book publisher, Scholastic. In support of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda, each year, the Lexus Eco Challenge invites students in grades 6-12 to tackle environmental issues in their communities and awards more than \$500,000 in prizes.

The Bio Bucs won the regional in January, but didn't find out until April that they had won their division at the national level, which they had to scramble to enter in mid-March, after their school had already shut down due to the COVID-19 outbreak. "Of course, we couldn't go screaming and yelling down the hallways," said Janet Ort, the team's sponsor and environmental science teacher at Hoover. "All we were able to do was get on Google meets and scream." The team, chosen by Ort because of their dedication to science and demonstrated ability to follow through on challenging work, included Abhinav Gullapalli, Noel Ponder, Carson Perry, Abigail Collins, and Reid Markland for the regional competition. Navya Gullapalli was added to the national team.

To win the elite science competition, they created a system to measure how much carbon dioxide is emitted into the atmosphere organically from bodies of water and from under the soil. Using a wireless CO2 monitor from Vernier Industries, the team made a monitor connected to an app that could measure the output and adapted the device to water by affixing it into a floating container.

In addition to testing it locally, they used Ort's global environmental connections to test their concept in globally. Ort is an advisory board member for the Morpho Institute, an environmental non-profit in South America, and someone from Morpho placed monitors for them. "We were testing in the Peruvian rain forest, and we got proof that the concept would work," Ort said. After successfully designing the unit, they were able to create a 3D model that could be copied by environmental engineers worldwide. In addition, the group created a game called Carbon Towers (similar to Jenga) to demonstrate how carbon moves through the ocean, air, and soil. They co-sponsored events at Hoover and three other local schools, and brought their research and game to local science classes, teaching younger students how to follow the carbon. "This is for the final challenge, they use their data to compare how CO2 concentrations change in fragile habitats. Their efforts were published in Vernier Biology's publication, "Caliper" and its website, and partnered with NASA's GLOBE Observe. The team was also featured on the local Fox news channel and website. Their goal is to create a network of students around the world who will measure organically generated carbon gas that's present in the atmosphere. Shelly Haskins writes about points of pride statewide. Email your suggestions to shaskins@al.com, or tweet them to @Shelly_Haskins using #AlabamaProud a problem that teachers have, helping students visualize what happens to carbon dioxide," Ort said.



CAMEO
Citizens Archive for Mobile Bay
Estuarine Organisms

Citizen Science Trainings Coming Up!

January 30th 2020: 1-4 pm
February 20th 2021: 1-4 pm

Start planning your citizen science
adventure today!

Sign up at DISL.edu





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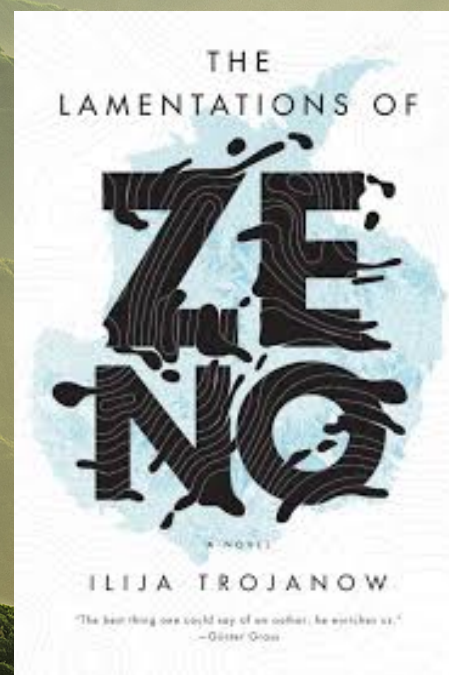
OR CALL OUR OFFICE AT (251) 861-2141, EXT 7515.




Book Review: The Lamentations of ZONE

An interesting YouTube book review. A book about
climate change and scientists studying melting glaciers.
The Lamentations of Zeno by Ilija Trojanow and Philip
Boehm

<https://youtu.be/Sp2NS8zflwE>





UPCOMING EVENTS

**Jan 11 Camp McDowell -
Teacher Workshop**

**Jan 15 deadline, Citizen
Science, Civics, and
Resilient Communities
Project**

**FEB. 23-MAR. 9, Creative
Placemaking: Creating
Communities We Love Through
Arts & Culture, Diverse Partners
and Community Spaces**

**Feb. 25-27
EEAA Conference**

**September 10-11
SEEA Conference
Arden. NC**

**October 13-16
NAAEE Conference
Pittsburg, PA**

Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance Awarded \$100,000 Grant to Expand Don't Waste It! Curriculum Across the Southeast

Don't Waste It! is a new educator guide to waste management. The guide includes 11 lessons covering five themes: municipal solid waste, recycling, plastics, composting, and landfills. Don't Waste It! Is designed for both formal and non-formal educators with lessons for pre-K to 12th graders that can easily be adapted for adult audiences. Each lesson includes a group activity, independent practice, extensions, and additional activities. Developed by North Carolina's Chatham County Solid Waste and Recycling, Don't Waste It! Is going to be expanding through the southeast. The Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance (SEEA) has been awarded a \$100,000 environmental education grant from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Over the next two years, we'll be creating new state-specific versions of the guide for Kentucky, Tennessee, Georgia, Alabama, and Florida and then launch in-person and virtual training opportunities for educators in these states to learn the curriculum. "The Don't Waste It! project will help current and future educators across the southeast understand the systems for solid waste, recycling, and composting in their state. We're excited to provide educators across our region with resources and lessons to share this knowledge with students, in order to inspire their local communities to get involved with composting, recycling, and other waste reduction activities," said Don't Waste It! Project Coordinator, Lauren Pyle. The Kentucky Association for Environmental Education (KAEE) is the fiscal agent for this project. The project will be led by Lauren Pyle of the Environmental Educators of North Carolina and Shannon Culpepper of Chatham County Solid Waste and Recycling. For more information, contact Lauren Pyle at director@eenc.org.

AUM Experimental Education and Engagement Center partners with Oak Mountain State Park for “Warhawk Workdays”

Shelly Taliaferro brought a group of her students from Auburn University-Montgomery to Oak Mountain State Park to assist with both the Alabama Wildlife Center and Oak Mountain Interpretive Center’s Native Plant Butterfly Garden. This program is for all majors and provides real world experience to students from various majors and backgrounds. Oak Mountain State Park is proud to partner with this program and the opportunity to expose these students to environmental education and potential careers. Lauren Muncher, Oak Mountain State Park Naturalist is the coordinator for this project.



naaee

North American Association
for Environmental Education

2021 Annual Conference and Research Symposium: Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
50th Anniversary Celebration

Research Symposium: Tuesday, October 12–Wednesday, October 13

Pre-Conference Workshops: Wednesday, October 13

Conference: Wednesday October 13–Saturday, October 16

Pittsburgh Convention Center

EEAA: January 2021



Changes for this Spring at Camp McDowell

Changes for this Spring

We wanted to let you know that we ARE having schools coming here again starting in March. We know that this may not be a possibility for you this year but if it is we have some updates. Due to Covid-19 and how that has affected our programs we have made an exciting change for THIS spring. We are working together as two programs. What that means for you is that when you schedule a visit you are able to offer your students Farm and Environmental Center classes. If you want more focus on the Farm side or on the Environmental side that is still an option. However, we wanted you to know that you now have the option of both in one trip.

McDowell Comes to You

Both programs have started going into schools and it has been incredibly successful. We know that many schools are not able to come to us in the Spring and wanted to make sure that you knew that we are able to come to you. Please let us know if that is something that you want to do for any month between January-May of this year.

Virtual Classes

One last way for your students to connect to Camp this Spring is through Virtual Classes. This can feature the Farm and Environmental Center. Please discuss with us what you would like to have covered for your students. We would love to interact with them in any way that you feel would be beneficial to them and to YOU!

Thank You

Thank you so much for everything you are doing. Anything that we can do to help make this year great for your students we want to be able to do. Contact us if you want to find out more about your options for this year with McDowell Educational Programs.

<https://campmcdowell.org/>



Call for Applicants: 2021 Citizen Science, Civics, and Resilient Communities (CSCRC) Project

The NOAA-funded Citizen Science, Civics, and Resilient Communities (CSCRC) project is pleased to make available one-time stipends to 20 recipients selected through a competitive application process. The purpose of the stipend is to support the implementation of the CSCRC project, which includes engaging public participants in active learning about climate hazards through citizen science, deliberative forums and resilience planning. This project is led by the Museum of Science, Boston (MOS) in partnership with SciStarter, Arizona State University (ASU), Northeastern University (NEU), and the National Informal STEM Education Network (NISE Network). [read more](#)

Environmental Education and Nature-Rich Experiences: Essential for Youth and Community Well-Being During the COVID-19 Pandemic and Beyond

Recently published Policy Analysis for California Education (PACE) Report written by Nicole Ardoin and Alison Bowers on why EE is more than a "luxury" during COVID-19 and beyond. [read more](#)

Broadening Community Partnerships Through Creative Placemaking

Join the Harbinger Consultancy and Suzanne Ishee—talented Broadway performer and director of the NJIT Hub for Creative Placemaking—for a three-session online course (plus optional Q&A with practitioners) to explore how to make the most of creativity in your community. Creative placemaking leverages arts and culture to engage, revitalize and reshape communities. [read more](#)

A collage of four images illustrating creative placemaking: a person in a red shirt and yellow vest working on a wall, a colorful mural on a building, a group of people sitting around a table outdoors, and a display of various plants and flowers.

Creative Placemaking
creating communities we love through
Arts & Culture, Diverse Partners & Community Spaces

A Harbinger Consultancy online course • Feb. 23, Mar. 2 & 9, 2021 • 11-1 PT/2-4 ET
3 Live Video Conference Sessions + Q&A with Practitioners + Optional 1-on-1 Coaching

Environmental Literature Illuminates Our Connection to Nature

By Claire Datnow

Environmental Literature Illuminates Our Connection to Nature The storm winds of climate change are calling. They're calling to scientists, and writers, and artists to weave stories that will inspire the children of tomorrow to dream up a brighter future. Happily, they are responding to that call with a spate of new nature and environmental stories that use science as a springboard to create powerful children's literature. Science and Nature Build a Bridge to Tomorrow (Boris Datnow) This is why, now more than ever, I'm committed to keep on writing science-based environmental fiction, which will ignite the imagination and show kids (and the young at heart) that their actions matter. For over a decade I've been writing an Eco mystery series for young readers, The Adventures of The Sizzling Six. Recently, I completed Red Flag Warning, my first Eco Adventure on Climate Change. I want to encourage other writers and scientists to communicate their narratives because: In the not-too-distant future young people in our neighborhoods and schools will have joined the workforce. Some will find themselves working as scientists discovering and studying creatures and plants on our planet's highest mountains, deepest oceans, driest deserts, wettest rainforest, and in the concrete jungles of cities. Others will find themselves working for corporations, sitting behind desks, standing on podiums, in classrooms teaching students, or running for political office. All of them will be making decisions, voting for leaders, and for actions that will, for better or worse, affect the health of our planet and the survival of life on this planet. That's a huge responsibility for the older generation to place on their shoulders. So what can we do to help them? I am certain that young people studying the natural sciences from kindergarten to college will bloom into the next generation of environmental leaders. They will understand the science and the issues underpinning society's challenging ecological problems. They will apply their knowledge to create a stronger connection between what must be done and how to get things done. Nature Writing and Science Connections (Boris Datnow) Using the building blocks of powerful writing, science and storytellers can cross-fertilize one another to communicate the discoveries of science in a dramatic and compelling way. Science and storytelling share the WOW, or the wonder, which drives the vision, curiosity, and perseverance at the heart of both science and storytelling. Science asks: how can we explain this Wow? Storytelling asks: how can we tell compelling narratives about this Wow? As storytellers we hold the power to touch the hearts of young people, to ignite their imagination to build a bridge to tomorrow, and to empower them to take action for the greater good of humanity and the wellbeing of the Earth. Nature and Science Writing Connections (Claire Datnow) This is why I strive to create Eco Adventures that will entertain, inform, and inspire young people to preserve nature's rich biodiversity. We need stories that illuminate the truth of our connections to each other and to this precious blue planet. We need to reject narratives of division. We need storytellers who merge the boundaries, expand empathy, and stretch our capacity for caring. The winds of change are calling loud and clear for narratives that will illuminate our vital connection to one another and to this precious blue planet on which all life depends.



SEEA Conference 2021

Southeastern Environmental Education Alliance

Hosted By: Environmental Educators of North Carolina

The 2021 SEEA conference will be September 10-11 at Lutheridge in Arden, NC. This site has a wonderful camp-like feel, even though it's less than 10 minutes from the Asheville Airport. We'll be just over 2 hours from Columbia, SC, a bit over 3 hours from Atlanta, GA, and only 4.5 hours from Lexington, KY!

<https://eenc.wildapricot.org/conference>



JEDI Course - coming soon to Alabama!

"As you may have heard from SEEA, we are working with Laura Downey in Kansas (along with some amazing national-level consultants) to design an online, asynchronous justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) course this year. We will be creating this very introductory 10 hour course in an online platform called Moodle, so it is easily shareable between any state using that platform. Our plan was to share it with you all once the design work is finished this winter, but we've just found a potential funding opportunity to put some money behind it.

This could potentially include: · creating additional state-custom content such as videos, local speakers/organization features, etc.(external contractor and/or staff time), · Moodle platform set up, · providing scholarships/defraying course fees for participants (so your state could choose to offer this at a lower costs or free to a certain number of people), · marketing/administrative costs · and/or follow-up deep dive in-person DEI workshops for online course graduates (could include custom board training if your board takes the course!)"

More updates coming soon!

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Finds Endangered Species Act Listing for Monarch Butterfly Warranted but Precluded

December 15, 2020

After a thorough assessment of the monarch butterfly's status, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has found that adding the monarch butterfly to the list of threatened and endangered species is warranted but precluded by work on higher-priority listing actions. With this decision, the monarch becomes a candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and its status will be reviewed each year until it is no longer a candidate. "We conducted an intensive, thorough review using a rigorous, transparent science-based process and found that the monarch meets listing criteria under the Endangered Species Act. However, before we can propose listing, we must focus resources on our higher-priority listing actions," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Aurelia Skipwith. "While this work goes on, we are committed to our ongoing efforts with partners to conserve the monarch and its habitat at the local, regional and national levels. Our conservation goal is to improve monarch populations, and we encourage everyone to join the effort." "The Monarch Joint Venture is committed to continuing its conservation efforts for monarchs. Each of our partners, and many other stakeholders, come to the monarch conservation table with different approaches, audiences, strengths and opportunities to make a difference. There is a role for everyone in monarch conservation," stated Wendy Caldwell, Executive Director, Monarch Joint Venture. [read more](#)



I wanted to share some of the high level detail on education funding within the combined FY21 omnibus and COVID relief package passed by the House and Senate yesterday. I know that some of you are tracking funds that could potentially support outdoor and environmental education programs, especially in light of challenges related to COVID and school facilities. After the holiday break, I'll provide some additional information and suggestions for how you might leverage the provisions outlined below to advocate for EE at the state and local level.

Best,

*Sarah Bodor (she/her)
Director of Policy & Affiliate Relations
NAAEE*

Relevant Details for Environmental Educators in the FY 2021 Education funding bill (regular appropriations)

\$73.5 billion overall in discretionary appropriations for the Department of Education, an increase of \$716 million above FY20 and \$6.9 billion above Trump's request, including: \$16.6 billion for Title I Grants to Local Educational Agencies \$14.1 billion for Special Education \$1.3 billion for Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers These funds are directed to states and awarded to LEAs through competitive grant programs for out of school time educational activities. Under the 2015 Every Student Succeeds Act, environmental education is an allowable use of funds within these programs. \$2.6 billion for higher education programs, with \$808 million to assist primarily Minority Serving Institutions \$1.22 billion for the Title IV.A program, a \$10 million increase over FY20 Title IV.A grants are distributed to states and LEAs according the Title 1 formula and may be used to support a wide range of activities for student health and well-being and to provide a "well-rounded education," including environmental literacy Career, technical, and adult education – The career and technical education state grant program got a \$52 million (4.1%) increase and adult education got an \$18 million (2.7%) increase.

Key Education Details for the COVID-relief bill (new stimulus) More information is available in the attached section by section summary

An extension for state spending — State and local governments now have until Dec. 31, 2021 to spend aid provided by the CARES Act.

Department of Education – \$82 billion

Education Stabilization Fund – \$81.9 billion allocated as follows: \$819 million for the Bureau of Indian Education and outlying areas; \$4.1 billion for the Governors Emergency Education Relief (GEER) Fund*; \$54.3 billion for the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief (ESSER) Fund*; and \$22.7 billion for the Higher Education Emergency Relief (HEER) Fund.

*The legislative language surrounding both the GEER and ESSER allows for tremendous flexibility in how the money can be spent to best meet the unique needs of any given school or district. ESSER funds may essentially be used for anything that is already allowed for under existing law (e.g., environmental education as provided for in Title IV of the Every Student Succeeds Act) and also adds provisions for funds to be used for improvements to school facilities or other needs associated with providing a safe and healthy learning environment.

<https://naaee.org/eeepro/blog/advocacy-update-december-23-2020>

Info on new PPP loans

As you know, Congress yesterday passed a new relief package and funding omnibus for FY2021. For those who are interested, I'm passing along helpful information provided by our attorneys on what the relief bill includes on new PPP loans and eligibility: See below and attached for some summary materials on the just-passed COVID relief legislation that might be useful. In particular, the first page of the first attachment provides some additional detail regarding PPP availability and terms including with respect to small businesses. Some highlights: Eligible parties can apply for a second PPP loan. Funds are set aside specifically to support (1) first-time PPP borrowers with 10 or fewer employees, (2) second-time PPP borrowers with 10 or fewer employees, (3) first-time PPP borrowers who are newly eligible, and (4) second-time returning PPP borrowers. PPP second draw eligibility for entities that demonstrate at least a 25% reduction in gross revenues between comparable quarters in 2019 and 2020. The Act also includes provisions to improve the PPP program administration, including simplifying the loan forgiveness application process for smaller loans (up to \$150,000) (also increases SBA ability to audit and review forgiven loans), and allowing PPP borrowers to include additional group insurance payments (including e.g. vision, dental, disability, and life insurance plans) in calculation of PPP payroll costs. In addition, EIDL loan advances no longer have to be subtracted from PPP forgiveness. We'll continue to share information and updates on these loans as we receive them. In a separate email, I'll send out a summary of what both the relief bill and the federal appropriations bill include with respect to schools and education that may be of interest. Warm wishes and happy holidays to you all!

Sarah Bodor

(she/her) Director of Policy & Affiliate Relations

NAAEE



The Winds of Change: Children's Environmental Climate Fiction

by Claire Datnow

The gale force winds of climate change are calling. They're calling to scientists, writers, and artists to weave stories that will inspire the children of tomorrow to dream up a brighter future. Happily, many are responding to that call with a spate of new nature and environmental narratives using science as a springboard to create powerful children's literature. After decades of misinformation, denial, and inadequate attempts to reduce the dire impact of climate change young people around the world are troubled, angry, and frustrated. They are searching for ways to understand and take action. I am sure that compelling stories interwoven with science can educate, inspire, and empower these young people.

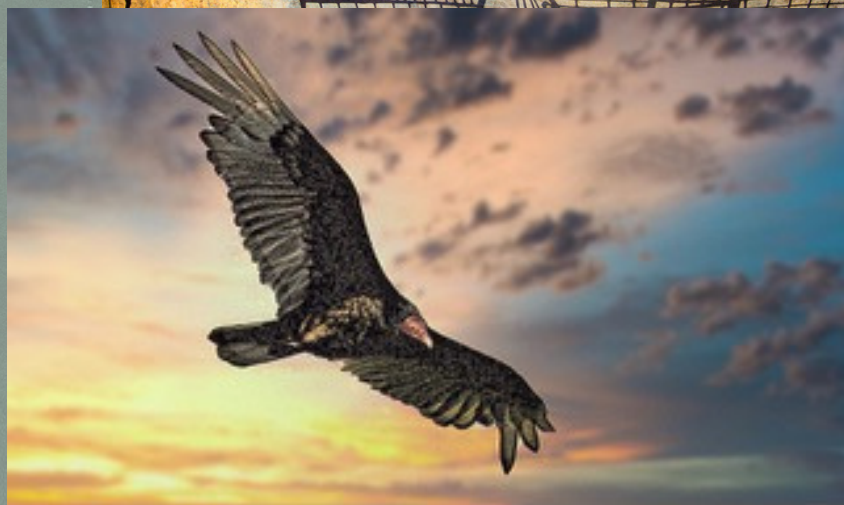
Manmade Environment in Harmony with Nature (Boris Datnow) The epiphany that inspired me to begin writing Eco mysteries struck me one morning driving to work down the road winding through a wooded hillside. As I approached the bottom of hill, I screamed out loud, "How dare they!" Overnight a swath of naked red dirt had replaced a verdant forest. A forest of oak, hickory, poplar, and pine which had sheltered and sustained a rich diversity of life, had been bulldozed to barren patch of clay. Just one ancient white oak, standing like a tower of hope, had been spared. The birds, possums, the squirrels had all fled for their lives when the machines arrived. Nine months later, *The Adventures of The Sizzling Six: The Lone Tree* became the first Eco mystery to blossom into a series of nine books published over the past decade. Woven into this, I hope, entertaining story about six feisty girls there's a serious theme. The loss of forests and diverse habits threatens the survival of many species including humans, and reduces the ability of forests to sustain clean air and water. 1.6 billion people depend on forests and one billion of them are among the world's poorest. Yet, all is not yet lost. Science-based solutions such as forest restoration can reduce the worst effects of deforestation and recover the ecological, social, climatic and economic benefits of our forests. That is why I apply scientific knowledge to create plausible and hopeful, but realistic endings for my stories rather than gloomy or magical fairytale ones.

Climate Change is a Global Threat to All Species (Boris Datnow) Following *The Lone Tree*, I created stories for *The Sizzling Six* series woven around North America's threatened and endangered species. My focus widened to the international sphere with *The Case of the Missing Piping Plover*, *Monarch Mysteries*. And with *Vanishing Birds* I expanded my stories globally to include the entire length of the Atlantic migratory flyway from Baffin Bay in the Arctic to Tierra Del Fuego, a remote island on the southern most point of South America. I've just completed *Red Flag Warning*, my first Eco Adventure on Climate Change—broadening the stories from local, national, and international to global issues. This middle grade and up ecological adventure was sparked (pun intended) by the devastating wildfires now exploding around the globe. The story is told through the eyes of three diverse teenagers: Aisyah from Sumatra, Kirri from Western Australia, and Hector, from Northern California brought together by a powerful gift—the ability to communicate with animals—and by the animals who save them from certain death during a frantic race to outrun the inferno roaring toward them.

Book Cover For Climate Change Novel Now more than ever, I am convinced that scientists, educators and artists need to use their talents to inspire students to "see" the interconnectedness of their world—to understand what happens in their town or country may impact other distant places on our planet. At this very moment the Covid-19 pandemic is making that message horrifyingly clear. And more than ever, I am committed to keep writing science-based environmental fiction that will ignite the imagination and show kids (and the young at heart) they can take action and that their actions matter. A lone voice can make a small difference to the children, however, many united voices can persuade the powers that be to do more to spread the message of environmental conservation. I know it's not easy, but I want to encourage writers and artists, teachers and nature guides, scientists and technologists to tell their stories and their knowledge to the next generation in whatever way they choose. In the not-too-distant future young people in our neighborhoods and schools will have joined the workforce. Some will find themselves working as scientists discovering and studying creatures and plants on our planet's highest mountains, deepest oceans, driest deserts, wettest rainforest, and in the concrete jungles of cities. **Continued on page 15**

Others will find themselves working for corporations, sitting behind desks, caring for patients in hospitals, standing on podiums, in classrooms teaching students, or running for political office. All of them will be making decisions, voting for leaders, and for actions that will, for better or worse, affect the health of our planet and the survival of life on this planet. That's a huge responsibility for the older generation to place on their shoulders. So what can we do to help them? I am certain that young people studying the natural sciences from kindergarten to college will bloom into the next generation of environmental leaders. They will understand the science and the issues underpinning society's challenging ecological problems. And they will apply their knowledge to create a stronger connection between what must be done and how to get things done. Still, we need something more to close that chasm between cognition and action. We need something to electrify us, move us, spur us on, to stop us in our tracks. Science and literature can cross-fertilize one another. Storytellers need to understand the powerful methods of science which provide solutions to pressing problems.

Scientists need to apply the building blocks of powerful writing and art to become better communicators. Although science and storytelling employ different methods, they share the WOW or the wonder that drives their vision, because curiosity, and perseverance are at the heart of both disciplines. Science asks: how can we explain this Wow? Storytelling asks: how can we tell compelling narratives about this Wow? Yes, indeed I'm committed to keep on writing science-based environmental fiction for kids, and the young at heart. As storytellers we hold the power to touch their hearts, to ignite their imagination to build a bridge to tomorrow, and to empower them to take action for the greater good of humanity and the wellbeing of the Earth. Environmental Education Building a Bridge to Tomorrow (Boris Datnow) We need to reject narratives of division. We need storytellers from all disciplines to blur boundaries, expand empathy, and stretch our capacity for caring. The winds of change are calling loud and clear for narratives that will illuminate our vital connection to one another and to this precious blue planet on which all life depends.



National Forest Foundation Accepting Conservation Connect Fellowship Applications

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) invites graduate students (pursuing a master's or doctoral degree) to apply to the 2021 Conservation Connect Fellowship Program. The fellowship includes a summer 2021 or academic year 2021-22 practicum at NFF's Missoula, Montana office, a field office, or hosted by a partner organization. Conservation Connect fellowships aim to build experience, knowledge, and skills within the next generation of collaborative and conservation leaders to support each other and advance the field. We are striving to build a cohort of emerging leaders, connecting graduate students who will go on to do important work with communities and public lands in the future!

Applications accepted through Feb. 15, 2021

<https://naaee.org/eeopro/groups/advocacy-policy-and-civic-engagement/discussions/national-forest-foundation-accepting>



BIRMINGHAM
BOTANICAL GARDENS

Virtual Field Trips & Digital Resources

We are delighted to share these additional resources for teachers, students, and families as you dig deeper into the wonders of Birmingham Botanical Gardens. Below you'll find the first in a series of virtual Discovery Field Trips that encourage hands-on learning and connecting with nature. All field trips extend the life science concepts taught in the classroom and correlate with the Alabama State Course of Study and Alabama College and Career Ready Standards, as well the National Science Education Standards.

<https://bbgardens.org/virtual-field-trips-and-digital-resources.php>



2021 Sustainability Summit

The Seventh Annual Sustainability Summit will be a two-day virtual event to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

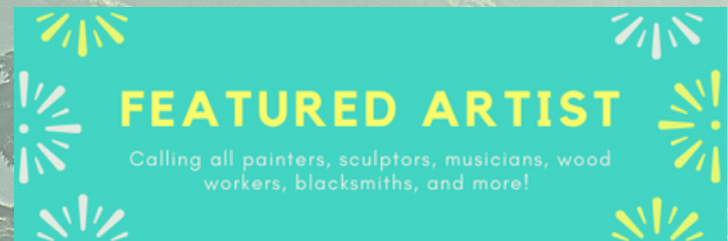
Thursday, January 28, 2021 1:00pm-5:00pm

Friday, January 29, 2021 9:00am-3:00pm

The Seventh Annual Sustainability Summit will take place as a two day virtual event on Thursday, January 28th (1:00pm-5:00pm) and Friday, January 29th (9:00am-3:00pm) with the theme "Creating Resilient Communities: Intersections of Ecology, Equity, and Human Health."

Registration is now open and the schedule will be published on December 15.

<https://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/events/seventh-annual-sustainability-summit/>



Since Canyon Fest, our annual art festival held the first Saturday in November, has been canceled by COVID, we have been looking for virtual ways to showcase and support our local artists. Our plan is to feature an artist here each week, throughout the holidays, and share with the world their unique creations, in progress or completed during the pandemic.

Anyone can apply! Painters, sculptors, musicians, wood workers, blacksmith, etc. as long as the art is hand-made and original. We want to highlight regional creativity that's been impacted by coronavirus the quarantine.

<http://www.jsu.edu/epic/EventCC.html>