IN THIS ISSUE:

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1. LIVE CHAT WITH GLOBAL WARMING EXPERTS

On Friday, April 21, Earth Day Network will host a live chat with world-renowned global warming experts. The event will be broadcast over the internet live from the George Washington University and will be accessible to all who are interested. Additionally, high school and college classrooms that sign up with EDN will be able to have their questions about global warming answered directly by these experts.

The panel includes Vicki Arroyo, Director of Policy Analysis for the Pew Center on Global Climate Change; Dr. David Battisti, professor of Atmospheric Sciences at the University of Washington; Dr. John Harte, professor of Environmental Sciences at the University of California at Berkeley; Dr. John Reilly, Associate Director for Research in the Joint Program on the Science and Policy of Global Change at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology; and Dr. Daniel Schrag, professor of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Harvard University.

Here are the details:

* Interested high school and college classrooms can ask the panelists questions through email and have them answered in real-time through the video webcast. To sign up for this great opportunity send an email with the subject heading "Climate Change Live Chat" to education@earthday.net by Friday, April 14. Include in the text your school's name and location, and the grades and subjects you teach.

* Classrooms or other persons that are unable to directly participate in the event may still view the event live on April 21 by going to the Earth Day Network website. The only technology requirement is an internet connection and more detailed information regarding the event will periodically be available from the EDN website.

* The webcast will subsequently be available to download from the EDN website for those who are unable to view the event live.

* EDN will hold an essay contest for classrooms that watched the webcast. Students can write a two-page essay on what they learned from the panelists and how it has influenced them to take action. Winners will receive prizes and recognition on the EDN website. More detailed information on the essay contest will be available at a later date.

For more information about the live chat, please visit this page on the Earth Day Network website: http://www.earthday.net/news/LiveChat.aspx.
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2. LEGACY'S 2006 SUMMER TEACHER (& AGENT) INSTITUTE
For Extension Agents & Agent Assistants. July 16 - 21 at Birmingham Southern College. Applications can be downloaded from Legacy's web site at http://www.legacyenved.org/, or contact the Legacy office for a registration form - 334-270-5921. Questions? Contact Marijean Hadley, Education Manager Legacy, Partners in Environmental Education at marijean@legacyenved.org or Ph: (334)270-5921/Fax: (334) 270-5527.
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3. DISCOVERING OUR HERITAGE THROUGH THE OUTDOORS:
The Ultimate Learning Lab for Educators

The Alabama Wildlife Federation (AWF) will be hosting the 2006 Discovering Our Heritage through the Outdoors workshop during the week of June 19-23 at their Lanark headquarters in Millbrook, Alabama. This is the Ultimate Environmental Learning Lab for educators in Alabama. It offers a variety of exciting, innovative methods for integrating environmental education into the classroom. A key component of the workshop will include training in how to use the Discovering Our Heritage (DOH) program.

Cost: $35.00 workshop fee (Please send this along with your application form. It will not be cashed until you have been notified of your acceptance to the workshop and we have verified your ability to attend.)

Deadline for applying: May 5, 2006 or until enrollment is full (20 educators)
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Application
Name:_____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: ___
Zip: _____Phone: _____
E-mail:_____
School: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ Zip:_____
School Phone: _____
Grades Taught:_____
Gender (for housing purposes): (Please circle) M or F
I will need housing for the workshop: (Please circle) Yes or No
To apply for this workshop, please complete the above registration form and mail it along with the $35 registration fee to:
Doyle Keasal, Discovering Our Heritage Program, 209 Extension Hall
Auburn University, Alabama 36849

If you have any questions, please contact Doyle Keasal at (334) 844-6398 or keasade@aces.edu. You may also call the AWF at 1-800-822-9453.
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4. "ASK THE EXPERT" DATABASE

"Ask the Expert" is a nature database of Alabama animals, plants, insects, aquatic life, rocks, and minerals. Project Community members and Discovering Alabama have partnered together to provide this new high-tech extension to the outdoor classroom, which was created specially for the students of our state to aid them in identifying the natural wonders of Alabama. The website allows students to submit a photo of an animal, plant, rock or mineral to be identified by a group of experts. In addition, students can send the experts questions regarding the subject in their photos. http://www.discoveringalabama.org/
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5. GEOCACHING-WHAT IS IT?

Geocaching is a GPS scavenger hunt. It is a worldwide sport, played by using GPS units to seek hidden "treasures" called caches located at various waypoints (unique latitude and longitude coordinate). More information about Geocaching can be found at http://www.geocaching.com/.
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6. A GRAPHIC LOOK AT THE STATE OF THE PLANET

From The global Education Project:
http://www.theglobaleducationproject.org/index.shtml
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7. ECOTERRORISM: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Available in PDF format at:
http://www.aces.edu/timelyinfo/Poultry/2006/March/psMar30.pdf

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8. LEARNING FROM NATURE THROUGH BIOMIMICRY
This eMagazine article by Starre Vartan discusses innovative new home products mimicking nature in helping people build and maintain safer cleaner homes. http://www.emagazine.com/view/?3104
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9. "DUCKY SCULPTURE" CRAFTY PROJECT FOR KIDS
This pinecone craft is all it's quacked up to be!
What you need:
* 2 small, round pinecones (One cone that's slightly smaller than the other makes a good duck's head.)
* scraps of green and orange construction paper
* craft glue
* pair of googly eyes
What you do:
Glue the smaller pinecone on top of the larger one to make the duck's head and body. Set aside to dry.

Cut two feet and a bill out of orange construction paper. Note that the bill is folded in half to make an upper and lower bill.

Cut two wings out of green construction paper.

Dab glue on the feet and lay the pinecone "body" on top of them.

Put a small amount of glue on the edges of the wings and slide one wing between the cone scales on each side of the body.

Put glue on the folded edge of the bill and slide it between the scales on the front of the head.
Dab a small amount of glue onto the googly eyes and stick them in place.
Let the glue dry thoroughly before handling your pinecone critter.

Source: National Wildlife Federation
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10. "BRING ON THE BUTTERFLIES!" ACTIVITY FOR KIDS
Have you ever chased a butterfly through a meadow? Or watched one flit from flower to flower? Butterflies are beautiful, and they're almost everywhere-more than 700 species of butterflies live in North America. Do this activity to bring some of their bright colors and lively fluttering to your backyard.

Visit your school library to find out what butterflies live in your area. Or, visit eNature's website at http://www.enature.com/home/ to get a list of the

butterflies you might find near you by typing in your zip code. You might want to ask for a parent's help and permission, first!

Go to a garden center and select one or two native plants that your local butterflies prefer to sip from. (A native plant is one that occurs naturally in your area and hasn't been introduced from somewhere else.)

In general, butterflies are attracted to red, yellow, orange, pink, or purple blossoms. They also prefer flowers that are flat-topped or that grow in clusters. (Why do you think that might be?)
Ask someone at the garden center for more help in selecting butterfly plants, or visit NWF's Backyard Wildlife Habitat pages for help getting started.
http://www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/attractbutterflies.cfm

Plant these plants outside in a sunny spot in pots or in the ground, and then wait for your butterflies to arrive. It may take several weeks, but, if you're patient, you'll see some.

Source: National Wildlife Federation
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11. "WEATHER WATCHING" ACTIVITY FOR KIDS
Spring is a great time to go outside and try checking out the weather near you. Here are two tricks to try.

Gone with the Wind
On a breezy day, take a container of bubbles outside. Stand in one spot and slowly turn in a circle as you blow bubbles. When the bubbles drift straight out in front of you, that tells you the wind is coming from directly behind you. Now turn around to face into the wind. Do you see clouds, rain, or blue sky in that direction? Whatever weather you see, the wind will probably bring it your way soon.

Wowed by Clouds
Lie down and look up at the clouds. Are they wispy or fluffy, lumpy or puffy? Moving fast or moving slow? Up high or down low? If you switch on your imagination, you may see animal shapes, letters of the alphabet, or other pictures in the clouds. To learn the names of different kinds of clouds, check your library for The Cloud Book by Tomie de Paola (see Book Nook) or other books about weather.

Source: National Wildlife Federation
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12. GREEN ROOF RESEARCH PROJECT STUDIES STORMWATER ABSORBENCY
One of the most interesting stormwater control systems under evaluation

by EPA is the "green roofs" program. Green roofs are vegetative covers applied to building roofs to slow, or totally absorb, rainfall runoff during storms.

While the concept of over-planted roofs is very ancient, the goals of modern green roof technology are to replace the absorptive capacity of the land on which the building was erected. Research into this approach has been growing steadily since the 1980s, especially in Europe.

In the United States, EPA is cooperating in several projects testing green roof technologies; in one of these, created in partnership with Penn State University, risk management researchers are evaluating performance data that could be used to enhance municipal stormwater management planning. The cooperative agreement is being managed by National Risk Management Research Laboratory Urban Watershed Management Branch in Edison, NJ, to demonstrate and promote green roof research, education, and technology transfer in the Northeastern U.S. Initial results have been presented at several conferences. A final EPA report on the research results is anticipated in late 2006.

Green roofs (eco roofs) contain vegetated plantings about 4-6 inches deep applied over waterproofed roofs of concrete, wood or metal. Plant size and selection depend on the depth of the growing medium and on local climate. Green roofs offer a practical alternative for new roof construction and for retrofitting existing roofs. They are designed to slow rainfall runoff primarily from larger storms; smaller storms often have no runoff from a green roof.

Germany, a leader in this field, now has an estimated 800 green roof projects in place. In European countries, many communities have mandated the implementation of green roofs on new buildings. With municipalities in the U.S. looking for flexible ways to control stormwater, including the use of stormwater credits or watershed-based trading, the development of new stormwater controls such as urban green roofs is a vital initiative for EPA.

The EPA-Penn State project investigates the effectiveness of green roofs in limiting stormwater volume discharge and reducing pollutant runoff content. The main research facility consists of six small buildings. Three of these have traditional asphalt shingle roofs and three have green roofs. All building gutters are connected to runoff barrels fitted with pressure transducers to measure runoff. The field tests include real-time continuous runoff, storage, and runoff quantity and quality

monitoring to compare green roofs to non-green roofs in the field.

In addition to stormwater runoff, energy data from the test buildings in the field is being recorded. Buildings are insulated, equipped with heaters, and air conditioning, and are instrumented to collect data on heat flux, energy use, and roof-top surface temperature.

Preliminary results from spring 2005 indicate that green roofs effectively buffer acid rain. During the summer of 2005, runoff from many rainfall events of less than 1-inch was entirely contained by the green roofs. Research on design and performance will help municipalities and private entities make decisions associated with green roof technology and assist in matching this technology with other technologies as part of an overall stormwater management plan.

More information on the can be found at:

* US EPA Heat Island Effect Green Roofs (http://www.epa.gov/heatisland/strategies/greenroofs.html)
* US EPA Vegetated Roof Cover (PDF, 3 pp) (http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/roofcover.pdf)
* NRMRL's Wet-Weather Flow Research (http://www.epa.gov/ednnrmrl/)
* Regional Applied Research Effort (RARE) Program (http://epa.gov/osp/regions.htm
* EPA's Region 3 stormwater program (http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/stormwater)
* EPA's Region 3 landscaping (http://www.epa.gov/reg3esd1/garden)
* EPA's Region 3 nonpoint source pollution (http://www.epa.gov/reg3wapd/nps)
* Green Roof Research at Penn State (http://hortweb.cas.psu.edu/research/greenroofcenter/)

For further information, contact Patricia Schultz, NRMRL Office of Public Affairs, 513-569-7966, or email to schultz.patricia@epa.gov.
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13. BATS--A VIRAL MISFIRE

A recent wave of scientific literature on viral diseases finds some virologists - and the mass media - suggesting that bats pose a serious health risk to people. Reality, however, rarely matches sensational headlines like this one: "Scientists have discovered an unexpected but potent threat to global health: bats."

When this issue is carefully examined, we find some surprising leaps from initial facts to sweeping suppositions. And those suppositions too often are presented as "facts" in newspapers and on television news.

While antibodies to several disease-related viruses have been found in bats, the critical question remains: what does it really mean? The answer is far from clear. Antibodies for the Hendra virus, for example, were isolated from captive flying foxes that had been maintained in very close contact with their human caretakers for many years. Yet there have been no cases of disease transmission from these bats.

Relevant statistics are often lost in such discussions. How common are Ebola antibodies in bats? Ninety-six percent of the 679 African bats tested did not harbor the antibodies or related nucleotide sequences, but 27% of domestic dogs tested in one outbreak region did.

What about the highly publicized SARS-like virus found in some species of horseshoe bats in Asia? That virus is Bat CoV - not the SARS virus that infects humans. In fact, researchers have been unable to grow the Bat CoV virus in cultures that support the growth of the human SARS virus.

In general, virologists concede that it is unlikely these diseases are transmitted from bats to humans. In the case of the Nipah and Hendra viruses, they speculate that viruses present at relatively low levels in bats may be transmitted to intermediate hosts, such as pigs or horses, where the virus is amplified (concentrated) until it is capable of transmission to people.

Obviously, it is important for researchers to study relationships between animals and human diseases. But it is imperative that preliminary results do not lead to unsupported speculation that bats pose a serious health risk to people.

Contrary to common misconceptions, bats have an above-average record when it comes to living safely with humans. Just ask the people of Austin, Texas, who have benefitted greatly from sharing their downtown area with 1.5 million bats for nearly 25 years without a single case of bat-related illness - despite initial public health warnings.

Source: Merlin D. Tuttle in April Bat Conservation Times
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14. JURY DUTY SCAM

Most of us take those summonses for jury duty seriously, but enough people skip out on their civic duty, that a new and ominous kind of scam has surfaced. Fall for it and your identity could be stolen, reports CBS News.

In this con, someone calls pretending to be a court official who threateningly says a warrant has been issued for your arrest because you didn't show up for jury duty. The caller claims to be a jury coordinator.

If you protest that you never received a summons for jury duty, the scammer asks you for your Social Security number and date of birth so he or she can verify the information and cancel the arrest warrant Sometimes they even ask for credit card numbers. Give out any of this information and bingo! Your identity just got stolen. The scam has been reported so far in 11 states, including Oklahoma , Illinois , and Colorado This (scam) is particularly insidious because they use intimidation over the phone to bully people into giving information by pretending they're with the court system.

The FBI and the federal court system have issued nationwide alerts on their websites, warning consumers about the fraud.

Check it out here: http://www.snopes.com/crime/fraud/juryduty.asp

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