

HAVE A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY SEASON. SEE YOU IN 2007!
IN THIS ISSUE:

1. A Christmas wish for Our Watersheds
2. Toyota Tapestry Science Grants
3. My "Hometown Helper" Grants
4. Environmental Ed Association of AL Conference
5. Legacy Environmental Partnership Conference
6. "Small Seek" Activity
7. Message to 4-H Shooting Sports Instructors
8. Wilderness First Responder Course
9. EPA Revamps Climate Change Website
10. Test Your "WaterSense" about Water Efficiency
11. Frozen Feathers?
12. Journey to the Planet Earth
13. Pack Your Bags for "Planet Plant"
14. World Wetlands Day 2007
15. Recent Changes in the Earth's Fresh Water Distribution
16. Tiny Trailblazers
17. Cardinal Cut Out
18. Alabama's Winter Frog Calls
19. Where in the World is the Arctic?
20. Critter of the Month
21. Wildlife Print Art & Habitat Information
22. Fish & Wildlife Habitat Management Leaflets
23. 4-H Archery Instructors May Join NADA at Reduced Rate
24. 4-H Shooting Sports, Sport fishing & ATV Safety Training at Volunteer Leader Forum

1. A CHRISTMAS WISH FOR OUR WATERSHEDS
"Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the watershed
Not a creature was stirring, they'd all gone to bed.
The river was nestled all snug in her banks
Not a sign of erosion, for this we give thanks.
To the citizens who spent their time planting trees
And the native wildflowers that attracted bees.

When out near the lake there arose such a clatter
A deer raised its head to see what was the matter.
It was merely a dog who barked to get loose
Chasing away another pesky Canada goose.
The lake, how it shimmered.
The water, how clean.
Its hypolimnion well-aerated
Its IBI value a dream.

When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But signs all around me of people who care.
Shoreline homeowners who'd come to their senses
Farmers ensuring their stream banks have fences.
Well maintained buffers all planted with trees
Townships installing their own BMPs.

Infiltration! Bioretention!
Sand filters and more,
To keep dirty storm water
From reaching the shore!
With a staff gage in place at the monitoring station,
And the permits acquired for wetland restoration.
I marveled to myself, as I surveyed the scene
Thank goodness for all who keep my watershed clean!

FREE AQUATIC STUDY AREAS WORKSHOP

When: Jan 25

If you would like to learn how to set up a water garden in your outdoor classroom site for hands-on aquatic study activities, then this workshop is for you! Workshop participants will also find out how they can participate in the Ponds for Kids program. Workshop topics include pond design, maintenance, aquatic plant selection, and much more! Note: This workshop is required for all schools interested in participating in the Ponds for Kids program.

Register today while there are still a few slots open!

http://www.alabamawildlife.org/conservation_education/teacher_workshops.asp

3. "MY HOMETOWN HELPER" GRANTS

Funding Source: General Mills, Hamburger Helper

Funds Available: Up to \$15,000 per project

Deadline: Continuous until May 2007

Overview:

Individuals from communities and organizations across America are asked to submit a written essay describing how the grant would help improve their community project. Applicants can request a one-time award of between \$500 and \$15,000 during any single month. All requests must be sponsored by a municipal or civic organization or public school. Examples of possible community projects include computers for the local library,

clean-up projects and training for volunteer firefighters. Funds will be awarded based on the merit of the project, including its impact on and support within the community.

For More Information: <http://www.myhometownhelper.com/>

4. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF ALABAMA CONFERENCE

Dates: February 1-3

You do not have to be a current member to attend this very informative and fun event at Alabama's first State Park, Cheaha Mountain State Park. Visit with other educators to learn new and share your ideas about teaching environmental education.

The conference includes workshops, field trips and time to sit around and share with each other. Also, there is a silent auction and a live auction where you can get cool items. Don't miss out on this opportunity. Go to the EEAA website <http://www.aces.edu/eeaa/main.html> for more information and to download a registration form.

5. LEGACY 2007 PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE:

Topic: Energy and the Environment

Dates: February 14-16, 2007

Location: Perdido Beach Resort, Orange Beach, Alabama

Registration Information : http://www.legacynevad.org/events/events_conf.htm

6. "SMALL SEEK" ACTIVITY

This activity will take your students outside to explore the amazing world of tiny plants and animals that live on a rotting log. Through investigation and identification students will learn about a variety of fascinating creatures that help with the process of decomposition. Check out Small Seek!

<http://online.nwf.org/site/R?i=pwwVgBPdiKEmJ7k1v5pXTg>.

7. MESSAGE TO 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS INSTRUCTORS

As an instructor for the 4-H Shooting Sports program you continue to play an important role in actively promoting activities that help youth learn marksmanship, the safe and responsible use of firearms, and the principles of hunting and archery.

To this end, I am enormously pleased to report that the National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation is joining a newly formed coalition of organizations to promote the safe and responsible storage and use of firearms. National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation will join the International Hunter Education Association (IHEA), USA Shooting, and the National Shooting Sports Foundation (NSSF) to work together on a new

initiative to enhance the education and training of the nation's firearms instructors and their work with hunters, competitive shooters, and firearm owners - a number that already exceeds 100,000. Child Guard, LLC, will serve as an official Supporting Partner of these organizations, providing technical expertise, financial support and products in support of the program. Please visit our 4-H Shooting Sports web-site www.4-hshootingsports.org for continuing updates on this important safety training initiative.

Additionally we would like to announce to all of you an agreement between the National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation and Child Guard concerning the Child Guard CS-100. The Child Guard CS-100 is a patented safety device for firearms that has become the proven solution to increased security for storing and transporting firearms. We have tried this exceptional gun lock, and I have found that it allows quick access to your firearm (less than two seconds); a custom fit from rifles to shotguns to revolvers and to pistols by utilizing moveable safety posts. It is guaranteed not to damage the finish of firearms, and is undefeatable with common household tools. The stronger-than-steel, tungsten carbide skeleton assures exceptional strength and cut resistance. California approved; the only lock to pass using a bi-metal hacksaw.

We are impressed with the CS-100, and with our relationship with Child Guard. In addition company's CEO, Jim Burton, is making a special offer to 4-H Shooting Sports instructors. Child Guard will provide a complimentary CS-100 to the first 1,000 instructors who register in the Child Guard instructor program. After these complimentary units are gone, interested instructors will receive a 50% discount to purchase one unit for \$15.00 (including shipping and handling). To obtain a free lock (first 1,000) and promotional kit, instructors should go to the Child Guard web-site at www.childguardusa.com , select the instructor tab, and register on-line or call Child Guard at 866-381-4882.

In addition, every lock purchased by a 4-H Shooting Sports member or student will result in Child Guard making a \$5.00 contribution directly to the 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation. For 4-H Shooting Sports to receive this contribution, instructors should advise their students to order from the www.childguardusa.com. <<http://www.ChildGuardUSA.com>> On the order page, they need to select how they learned about the CS -100 (from an instructor) and then select 4-H education programs as the organization of choice. It is just this simple.

We appreciate all that you do to make 4-H Shooting Sports the leading youth educational program that it is today.

Sincerely,

John Kvasnicka, Executive Director, National 4-H Shooting Sports Foundation
507-635-5600

8. WILDERNESS FIRST RESPONDER COURSE

The University of Arkansas 4-H Youth Development program will be sponsoring a National Outdoor Leadership School - Wilderness First Responder Course (80 hours) March 11 - 20, 2007 at the C.A. Vines Arkansas 4-H Center in Little Rock, Arkansas. For copies of the information sheet and course outline, contact Lynda Montgomery at 334-844-2232 or montly@auburn.edu . For more information, contact Mike Klumpp, Associate Professor, 4-H Youth Development, University of Arkansas CES, (501) 671-2105, mklumpp@uaex.edu .

9. EPA REVAMPS CLIMATE CHANGE WEB SITE

To provide the public with the most up-to-date information on climate change, EPA is unveiling its new climate change Web site. The site provides the latest scientific information and highlights a wide range of U.S. government programs that are actively addressing climate change at the local, state, national and international levels. The updated Web site still contains all information that was on EPA's global warming Web site but organizes it for easier access and adds new information.

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange>

10. TEST YOUR WATER SENSE ABOUT WATER EFFICIENCY

Which activity uses less water-a five-minute shower or a full bath? How can you test whether your toilet has a leak? How much of the earth's water is available for human use? The answers may surprise you as you take EPA's new interactive quiz, "Test Your WaterSense." The quiz was created by EPA's WaterSense program and provides an entertaining way for both adults and children to learn more about why it is important to save water and how to be more water efficient in your home.

To take the quiz, players must maneuver the water-efficiency hero Hydro through a maze while avoiding water-wasting monsters such as Sogosaurus and Drainiac. As Hydro, players must answer questions along the way that test their knowledge of water-using behaviors and common water-saving opportunities. Questions deal with water use in the kitchen, bathroom, laundry room and yard.

WaterSense is a voluntary public-private partnership that identifies and promotes high-performance products and programs that help protect the future of our nation's water supply. The WaterSense program seeks to generate support for consumer use of water-efficient products such as water-saving faucets; certification activities for water industry professionals; and innovation in water-efficient product manufacturing.

More information: Test Your WaterSense quiz:

<http://www.epa.gov/watersense/water/test.htm> & WaterSense program:

<http://www.epa.gov/watersense>

11. FROZEN FEATHERS?

As temperatures drop, many people wonder how birds survive cold, icy, or snowy conditions. While it may seem like birds have very little protection, they actually have some amazing adaptations for weathering the cold! Underneath the layer of stiff outer feathers, which protect against wind, rain, and snow, birds have a warm layer of down feathers to insulate against cold temperatures. You may also see birds "puff" their feathers, which traps warm air near their skin to provide extra warmth.

While they may be able to stay warm, your backyard feathered friends can have a harder time finding food and water when temperatures drop, because many natural sources will freeze. This is a great time to make sure backyard feeders are full of nourishing seed. You might also consider adding a heated birdbath to your yard, which provides a year-round, frost-free water source.

(Sources: US Fish and Wildlife Service. "How Birds Stand the Chill." & the National Audubon Society)

12. JOURNEY TO PLANET EARTH

10th episode broadcast date: March 28, 2007 on PBS

PBS series "Journey to Planet Earth" explores critical environmental, political, economic, and social issues of the 21st century. <http://www.pbs.org/journeytoplanetearth/>

13. PACK YOUR BAGS FOR "PLANET PLANT"

Botanic Gardens Conservation International new Web site "Planet Plant" for kids ages 9-12. Check out the online and offline art, science, outdoor, and botanic garden activities that will get kids excited about the importance of plants and the need for conservation. Every month features a new plant with a great conservation story to tell.

<http://www.planetplant.org/>

14. WORLD WETLANDS DAY 2007 - FISH FOR TOMORROW?

February 2, 2007 is World Wetlands Day.

Check the Ramsar Convention's Web site for a new selection materials, activities, and information packs downloadable and free of charge.

http://www.ramsar.org/wwd/7/wwd2007_index.htm

15. RECENT CHANGES IN EARTH'S FRESHWATER DISTRIBUTION

Recent space observations of freshwater storage by the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment (GRACE) are providing a new picture of how Earth's most precious natural resource is distributed globally and how it is changing.

Researchers are using GRACE's almost five-year data record to estimate seasonal water storage variations in more than 50 river basins that cover most of Earth's land area. The variations reflect changes in water stored in rivers, lakes, reservoirs; in flood plains as snow and ice; and underground in soils and aquifers. <http://www.csr.utexas.edu/grace/>

16. TINY TRAILBLAZERS

Everyone knows that hummingbirds, at least in the East, are creatures of summer--those dazzling, iridescent flashes of color that sum up the warmth and richness of the season. But a growing number of hummingbirds ordinarily found in the West are turning up in eastern states during the winter. Click below to see how.

<http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?issueID=112&articleID=1411>

17. CARDINAL CUT-OUT

Make a colorful cardinal out of red paper plates and a few other things.

<http://www.nwf.org/kidzone/kzPage.cfm?siteId=2&departmentId=149&articleId=1161>

18. ALABAMA'S WINTER FROG CALLS

A great activity for children during winter when it might be a little too cold to go outside is to go on-line to learn about some of Alabama's frogs and the calls they make during the wintertime.

Click below to hear these special sounds of winter!

<http://www.alabamawildlife.org/stewardship/alabamaWinterFrogs.asp>

19. WHERE IN THE WORLD IS THE ARCTIC?

Did you know that the arctic tundra spans the globe and is found in Asia, North America, and eight northern countries within Europe? Students learn about this mysterious land by using geography and math skills to map where the arctic is in relation to their own home.

<http://www.nwf.org/schoolyard/newsletteractivity.cfm>

20. CRITTER OF THE MONTH

My color changes from brown or grayish to white as winter approaches. I have short legs, thick fur and live in the tundra at the edge of northern forests. My home is a burrow dug into the side of a hill. I eat voles, lemmings, ground squirrels, birds, fish, berries and occasionally leftovers from other animals. Perhaps you've seen a reddish colored relative of mine in the woods near your house. Can you guess who I am?

<http://enature.com/fieldguides/detail.asp?allSpecies=y&searchText=arctic%20fox&curGroupID=5&lgfromWhere=&curPageNum=1>

Source: National Wildlife Federation

21. PRINT ART ONLINE TEACHER'S GUIDE

"An Exploration of Wildlife Habitat" lures students into the wild with images of a variety of species. The colorful paintings, combined with descriptions and enhanced lesson plans, provide enrichment to almost any area of academia, including language arts, social studies, biology and the arts. Click below to read more and launch the program!

http://www.lexmark.com/lexmark/sequentialem/home/0,6959,204816596_777577787_0_en,00.html

22. FISH & WILDLIFE HABITAT MANAGEMENT LEAFLETS

Discover the habitat needs of butterflies, birds, frogs, snakes, bats and many others, as well as how you can manage for these incredible wildlife species in your Schoolyard Habitat. Check out these handy leaflets! <http://www.whmi.nrcs.usda.gov/technical/leaflet.htm>

23. 4-H ARCHERY INSTRUCTORS MAY JOIN NADA FOR A REDUCED RATE

NADA is the National Alliance for the Development of Archery. It is a non-profit alliance of certified archery instructors with a mission to help the public discover archery--through the training of new basic instructors.

NADA is under contract by both the National Archery Association and the National Field Archery Association to provide official "USA Archery" instructor training materials.

NADA members may purchase quality program equipment at a reduced rate through NADA through the cooperation of industry partners. Visit the equipment section of the web site for complete details <http://www.teacharchery.org/>.

Contact us for a full catalog. All proceeds directly support NADA's non-profit instructor certification programs.

Since Alabama 4-H is an organizational member of NADA, all 4-H Archery Instructors who have a 4-H Instructor Card or a NADA Level I card can join for \$15 (instead of \$40). To join, click on NADA Membership on the Orange Banner on the left. Then Download the membership application or contact Lynda Montgomery at 334-844-2232 or mongly@auburn.edu to request a copy. Be sure to write "Alabama 4-H" next to your name.

If you need any assistance from NADA, call Pat Snider. She is very helpful. You can reach her c/o NADA, 25145 NW 8th Pl, Suite 60, Newberry, FL 32669; 352-472-2388 PHONE; 352-472-2375 FAX; or pat@teacharchery.org.

24. 4-H SHOOTING SPORTS, SPORTFISHING & ATV SAFETY TRAINING AT LEADER FORUM

All Alabama 4-H volunteers, parents and staff are invited to join the Alabama 4-H

Volunteer Leader Association Jan. 19-21 at the Alabama 4-H Center in Columbiana. Some of the many workshops planned include certification in 4-H Shooting Sports, Sportfishing and ATV-Off Road Vehicle. Others include livestock topics, guidelines for new 4-H contests, information on performing arts, science and technology, the 4-H Achievement Program, 4-H Club lesson plans and many more.

Cost of registration and meals for the three-day, two-night forum is \$75 per person. For those who only can attend two days and one night, registration cost is \$50. Lodging is extra and participants must make their own reservations by calling (205) 669-4241. Hotel lodging is on a first come, first served basis. Hotel costs are \$50 for single occupancy and \$30 each for double occupancy. Dorm rooms are \$22.50 for double occupancy. For those who only can attend the Saturday workshops and certification sessions, the cost is \$25. For a registration form, visit www.alabama4h.com.
. Deadline for registration is Jan. 10. Checks for the forum should be made payable to Alabama Cooperative Extension System.

Anyone interested in becoming certified in 4-H Sportfishing or Shooting Sports instructors or club leaders must attend the Friday night and Saturday day sessions. ATV-Off Road certification attendance is required for Saturday only.

Attendees are asked to bring an item for the auction on Saturday night. All proceeds from the auction will go toward 2007 youth scholarships. Three scholarships were given in 2006.

Membership in the Alabama 4-H Volunteer Association is included in the forum registration. Membership benefits include a 4-H newsletter to help you stay informed about the latest happenings in 4-H, a chance to have input on 4-H program and planning issues, 4-H volunteer and family support, training and certification opportunities and sharing of ideas.

Emily B. Kling, Ed.D.
Extension Specialist, 4-H & Youth Development
Alabama Cooperative Extension System
210 Duncan Hall
Auburn University, AL 36849-5620
PH: (334) 844-2226
FX: (334) 844-2252
CELL: (334) 750-3540
klungeb@auburn.edu