

IN THIS ISSUE:

1. Student Challenge Awards Program
2. EnviroBowl Competition
3. "Green Neighborhood Plan" Essay Contest
4. International Young Eco-Heroes
5. Scholarships for High Achievers
6. Turkey on Display
7. Enviro Tip of the Month
8. What You Can Do, what You Can Use
9. Free Energy Lesson Plans & Activities
10. Operation Monster Storms
11. It's a Wild Ride
12. From Cow Pies to Cow Pots: Managing Farm Waste
13. Fishing, Hunting & Wildlife-Associated Recreation
14. Bald Eagle Leaves Endangered Species List
15. Agricultural & Environmental Science and Policy Center
16. Did You Know? Facts & Figures about Biological Diversity
17. Controlling Soil Erosion
18. Increase in Fuel Efficiency

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1. STUDENT CHALLENGE AWARDS PROGRAM

Deadline: November 30, 2007

The Earthwatch Student Challenge Awards Program (SCAP) offers students aged 16-18, gifted in the arts and humanities, an opportunity to spend two to three intensive weeks during the summer at a scientific research station. Awards cover the students' travel costs and living expenses at the research site.

<http://www.earthwatch.org/site/pp.asp?c=dsJSK6PFJnH&b=393895>

2. ENVIROBOWL COMPETITION

Registration Deadline: December 14

Legacy, Partners in Environmental Education, will host its Fifteenth Annual EnviroBowl Competitions with six regional competitions and a statewide final. EnviroBowl is a double-elimination, question and answer competition played between two high school teams consisting of four students each.

The top three teams at each regional competition will be eligible to advance to the state competition.

Each game is played in two rounds. The first round directs two questions worth ten points each, to pairs of teammates. The second round consists of twenty toss-up questions, worth ten points each, and ten point bonus questions, all within a twenty-minute time limit.

Questions for the competition are taken from Legacy materials, and from other sources, including state textbooks. The questions are designed to test the students' knowledge of the environment and related fields, such as forestry, wildlife, chemistry, waste management, ecology, geology and pollution.

One senior participant from each regional competition will be selected to receive a \$1,000 college scholarship. These scholarships will be selected by a team of Legacy volunteers and will be awarded at the state competition.

To download the Team Registration Form, go to <http://www.legacyenvd.org/pdf/2008EBowlBrochure.pdf>

To download the Volunteer Registration Form, go to <http://www.legacyenvd.org/pdf/2008VolunteerForm.pdf>

3. ESSAY CONTEST - CREATING A GREEN NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Deadline: January 15, 2008

This American Planning Association (APA) contest encourages U.S. high school students to address some of the critical planning issues in their own communities. APA is promoting awareness of all the elements that go into making a great neighborhood through this essay contest and the 2007 National Community Planning Month's theme, "Great Streets, Great Neighborhoods: Greening Streets and Neighborhoods."

<http://www.planning.org/institutions/hsessay.htm>

4. INTERNATIONAL YOUNG ECO-HEROES

Action For Nature is proud of its 2007 International Young Eco-Hero Award winners. Young people aged 8 to 16, selected for their outstanding environmental achievements, are from Turkey, India, Korea, Costa Rica, Canada, and the USA. The next application deadline is February 28, 2008. Read about the

inspiring 2007 awardees and get information on the guidelines and application for 2008 on the Web site.

<http://www.actionfornature.org/eco-hero/index.html>

5. SCHOLARSHIPS FOR HIGH ACHIEVERS

Deadline: March 26, 2008

The Davidson Institute for Talent Development is offering high achieving young people (under age 18) the opportunity to be named as 2008 Davidson Fellows. Scholarships in the amount of \$50,000, \$25,000, or \$10,000 will be awarded to recognize a significant piece of work in the categories of Science, Technology, Mathematics, Music, Literature, Philosophy, or Outside the Box.

http://www.ditdservices.org/Articles.aspx?ArticleID=36&NavID=1_0

6. TURKEY ON DISPLAY

Wild Turkeys are not often all "puffed up".

From the Thanksgiving centerpieces we often see, it's easy to think that all Wild Turkeys look puffed up here. This is a courtship posture, however, used by male turkeys to attract the females in the spring.

The Wild Turkey's worst enemy is probably the mingling of semi-domesticated birds with the wild populations. Unlike their domestic relatives, Wild Turkeys are alert and extremely wary; mixed offspring decrease the survival success of the overall population.

As you prepare your Thanksgiving bird this year, enjoy your centerpiece for what it really is: a bit of spring in November!

<http://www.enaturalist.org/unit/275>

7. ENVIRO TIP OF THE MONTH

eCycle - take your old computers or other electronics to a local recycling center. This helps keep lead, cadmium, and other substances out of the landfill. Find eCycling centers near you. <http://www.epa.gov/ecycling/live.htm>

8. WHAT YOU CAN DO, WHAT YOU CAN USE

Look for bathroom sink faucets bearing the WaterSense label

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-1_watersense

Change a light, Change the world with energy-efficient light bulbs

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-3_energy_star

Shop for a 2008 vehicle based on new fuel economy test methods

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-12_fuel

Use Energy Star "Home Advisor" for warm homes and cool

savings
http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-24_energy_star

Getting lead out of the home - prevent lead poisoning at home

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-19_lead

Yes, kids, there really is a Magic School Bus

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-18_magic_bus

Schools - EPA calls for partnering on school chemical safety

http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2007-10-23_cleanout

Source: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

9. FREE ENERGY LESSON PLANS & ACTIVITIES

The U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy offers 350 downloadable lessons and activities on energy efficiency and renewable energy, organized by grade level and topic.

<http://www.eere.energy.gov/education/lessonplans/>

10. OPERATION MONSTER STORMS

From The JASON Project, this free and online curriculum is designed to teach students (grades 5-8) how powerful storms form and how advanced technology is used to better understand and forecast weather. The five- to nine-week core science unit covers key middle school National Science Education Standards, and can be aligned to state standards.

<http://www.jason.org/public/Curriculum/Curriculum.aspx?pos=1>

11. IT'S A WILD RIDE

Here's what you can do to help to help cut back on the number of animals killed on highways and roads—as well as lessen the harm to drivers and their cars.

- Never throw food from a vehicle.
- Don't let dogs and cats roam free. They can get hit and injured or even killed by cars.
- Ask drivers to go more slowly and to keep an eye out for animals and animal crossing signs.
- Ask drivers to use high-beam headlights at night whenever possible. That helps the driver see and avoid animals in the road or next to it.

For more information, go to

<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/wildlifecrossings/> .

Source: National Wildlife Federation

12. FROM COW PIES TO COW POTS: A CREATIVE WAY TO MANAGE FARM WASTE

Dairy farmers constantly struggle with the challenge of managing nutrient runoff from the farm. A creative brotherly duo from Connecticut has developed an innovative and environmentally-sound solution to this problem, CowPots.

Ben and Mathew Freund created a digestion and dehydration process to overcome the troublesome odors and high nitrate content in cow manure. The remaining manure fibers are then formed into a variety of shapes and sizes to create CowPots, which can be planted in the ground to fertilize plants.

CowPots are easy and convenient to use for every level of farmer and gardener. CowPots are sturdy enough to withstand months in the greenhouse, but begin to degrade shortly after being planted in the ground. As the pot dissolves into the soil, it continues to feed the plants. To see the rest of the article, go to

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/research/2007/cowpots.html> .

13. NATIONAL SURVEY OF FISHING, HUNTING AND WILDLIFE-ASSOCIATED RECREATION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife today released the complete 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. The report Serves as the baseline for examining how Americans are spending their time and money outdoors.

The National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation has been conducted every five years since 1955 and is one of the nation's most important wildlife-related recreation databases. It is considered to be the definitive source of information concerning participation and expenditures associated with hunting, fishing and other forms of wildlife-related recreation nationwide.

The 2006 Survey shows that 87.5 million U.S. residents 16 years and Older participated in wildlife-related recreation - a six percent increase From 2001. The number of hunters and anglers fell from 37.8 million in 2001 To 33.9 million in 2006. The most recent survey also showed an eight Percent increase in the number of wildlife-watchers since 2001 but little change In total expenditures for that activity. This report provides a broader and more in-depth look at the data than the Preliminary Findings report issued in May 2007.

The full Survey - and additional reports and earlier Surveys - can be downloaded at:

<http://federalasst.fws.gov/surveys/surveys.html>

Sources: Nicholas Throckmorton (202 208 5636) & Joshua Winchell (202 219 7499), U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

14. BALD EAGLE LEAVES ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST

After plummeting to nearly 400 pairs in the lower 48 states in 1963, the population has rebounded to more than 10,000 pairs today.

The legal protections afforded by the ESA, along with the crucial decision by the Environmental Protection Agency to ban the general use of the pesticide DDT in 1972, provided the springboard for recovery. Other efforts by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its partners included captive breeding programs, reintroductions, law enforcement measures, protection of habitat around nest sites and land purchase and preservation activities.

The Service will work with state wildlife agencies to monitor bald eagles for at least five years. If it appears that eagles again need the protection of the ESA, the Service can propose to relist the species.

The bald eagle will continue to be protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

For more information on bald eagles, please visit the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service webpage at <http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/BaldEagle.htm> .

Source: Valerie Fellows 202/208 3008

15. AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND POLICY CENTER

In an effort to better address the environmental issues related to agriculture, an Agriculture and Environment Science and Policy Center has been created in Penn State's College of Agricultural Sciences.

Falling under the college's Environment and Natural Resources Institute, the center will be a focal point for cross-disciplinary research and outreach on air and water quality, soil conservation, invasive species, climate change and other environmental issues of consequence to agriculture. For more information, contact Jeff Mulhollem at jjm29@psu.edu or 814-863-2719.

16. DID YOU KNOW...? Facts and Figures about Biological Diversity

* The leading causes of aquatic species decline and ecosystem degradation are physical alteration, habitat degradation and destruction, water withdrawal, overexploitation, pollution and the introduction of non-native species.

* It is rare that a species or habitat is endangered by a single threat and to determine the root cause is very difficult, if not impossible to determine, because of the complexity of the systems involved.

* While only 12 percent of species find their habitat within coastal or freshwater ecosystems, nearly all terrestrial species depend on water for their survival. In addition, in Europe, 25 percent of birds and 11 percent of mammals use freshwater wetlands in order to breed and feed.

* Studies regarding global aquatic biodiversity only began in earnest in the early 1990s and there are still relatively few global assessments that have taken place.

* More freshwater ecosystem species are threatened with extinction than either terrestrial or marine species. In one study, it was found that, on average, about 50 percent of freshwater species populations fell between 1970 and 2000.

* According to the IUCN, there are over 3,000 freshwater species that are listed as threatened, over 1,000 are fish and nearly 1,900 are

amphibian.

* For larger freshwater species, four out of the five river dolphins and two out of the tree species of manatees and 40 freshwater turtles are threatened.

The section "Did You Know...?" is taken from the 2nd United Nations World Water Development Report: "Water, a shared responsibility. Found at http://www.unesco.org/water/wwap/wwdr2/table_contents.shtml . The specific citations of the material above may be found through this link.

Source: UNESCO WATER PORTAL BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER No. 187

17. CONTROLLING SOIL EROSION

Soil erosion from rain and wind produces water quality issues in streams, rivers and lakes, degrades soil quality, and affects human health. Forest Concepts LLC, a small business in Auburn, WA, developed an environmentally-friendly solution called WoodStraw, an innovative erosion control material made from sliced strands of wood that is tailor-made for use on forests, highway projects, watersheds and other natural areas.

Previous erosion control methods, specifically the use of straw, were hampered by lack of stability under windy conditions, possible introduction of noxious weeds, chemical residue from pesticides and short-lived performance. WoodStraw is heavier than straw, making it less likely to be blown away when exposed to high winds.

The patented WoodStraw brand wood-based erosion control material is highly effective. An American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers study in California and Washington indicated application of the WoodStraw product reduced erosion by 98 percent compared to bare soil. In addition, a field experiment by the USDA Forest Service in Colorado noted WoodStraw outperformed all other mulch treatments.

WoodStraw is naturally weed-free and long-lasting. Since its introduction, WoodStraw has achieved regulatory approval by the Washington State Department of Transportation for use on transportation projects across the state and is recognized by the Washington Department of Ecology as an effective erosion control material.

Research and scientific progress continue to shed light on new benefits of WoodStraw. The product is currently being evaluated to see how it would perform for wind erosion and dust control on construction sites

and for controlling blowing ash on burned areas such as rangelands.

WoodStraw technology earned an AE50 award from the American Society of Agricultural and Biological Engineers as one of the 50 most innovative new agricultural, food and natural resource technologies of 2006.

This project received Phase I and Phase II funding from the USDA's Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service (CSREES) Small Business Innovation Research Program (SBIR) for developing and marketing this product.

The SBIR program enabled the rapid successful commercial launch of WoodStraw. Since completion of SBIR Phase II, the company has attracted several significant investors and brought on board a general management, sales and operations team with considerable experience.

"Without the support from USDA, the depth of science and disciplined engineering would not have been financially feasible," said James Dooley, co-founder of Forest Concepts LLC.

<http://www.csrees.usda.gov/newsroom/research/2007/woodstraw.html>.

Sources: Stacy Kish & Jennifer Martin, (202) 720-8188

18. INCREASE IN FUEL EFFICIENCY FOR 2007

Reversing a long-term trend of slightly declining fuel economy, EPA is reporting an increase in fuel efficiency for 2006 and 2007, an average of 20.2 miles per gallon (mpg) for cars and light duty trucks. For the first time, real-world fuel economy values are based on the new, more realistic EPA test methods that have taken effect for model year 2008 vehicles.

"America's drivers want the biggest bang for their fuel buck, so this report is great news for both our wallets and our environment," said EPA Administrator Stephen L. Johnson. "Automakers are answering President Bush's call to improve fuel economy and decrease our nation's dependency on foreign oil."

EPA's annual report, "Light-Duty Automotive Technology and Fuel Economy Trends: 1975 through 2007," provides data on the fuel economy and technology characteristics of new light-duty vehicles (cars, minivans, sport utility vehicles, and pickup trucks). The report projects average real-world fuel economy for model year 2007 to be 20.2 mpg, the same as 2006.

This report confirms that average fuel economy improved in both 2005 and 2006, the first consecutive annual increases since the mid-1980s. The 20.2 mpg value for 2006 and 2007 is 0.9 mpg higher than in 2004, reversing a long term trend of slightly declining fuel economy since its 1987 peak. Most of the increase in overall fuel economy since 2004 has been due to higher light truck fuel economy. Fuel economy standards have risen each year since 2005 for light trucks. Another reason is slightly lower light truck market share, which peaked in 2004 at 52 percent and is projected to be 49 percent in 2007.

For recent model years, the improved method yields industry-wide combined city/highway fuel economy estimates that are about six percent lower than past estimates. Accordingly, year-to-year comparisons only should be made between data listed in today's report.

The Bush Administration is taking several actions to promote better fuel economy. First, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has raised fuel economy standards for light trucks for every year from 2005 through 2011. Additionally, President Bush has issued an Executive Order directing EPA, DOT and other federal agencies to initiate a Clean Air Act rulemaking to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from new vehicles, aimed at improved fuel economy as well.

The new report can be found at: <http://www.epa.gov/otaq/fetrends.htm>

Source: Jessica Emond, (202) 564-4355 / emond.jessica@epa.gov
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)