

The Hyla

VOL. 24, NO. 2

Summer 2008

Making Every Day Earth Day

by Kate Mowbray, SCNC Naturalist

Earth Day is an annual celebration held on April 22nd that focuses our attention on our planet and things we can do to improve it. On Earth Day, many participate in activities such as planting a garden or clearing privet from our parks. When I think of Earth Day, I think it should be a time to celebrate, not work so hard. To earn this celebration though, we need to protect the world everyday, instead of working only one day a year and missing the fun of the celebration. Why not make every day Earth Day?

Now is the time to start our work. I'm sure many of you already do little things that help improve the Earth. After the severe drought we have been in, we have become more aware of our water usage. Thanks to the help of our visitors last summer, we collected a fantastic list of water saving tips that you do at your home. The ACC recycling division provides no room for excuse to not recycle. At events, work or school, their presence is there in the form of blue and green bins. At home, recyclables are collected and put out by the curb or can be taken to one of the many drop off sites around the county. Electricity bills tend to rise during these hot summer months, so we become more aware of wasting



energy. We turn off the lights when we're not in the room, and program thermostats to adjust with our daily routines. If you are already doing these easy, earth-friendly tips, you are off to a great start. No one is perfect, so there is always room for improvement by taking the next step in improving our planet.

You're probably thinking the next tips will be too hard or time consuming or maybe too expensive. Lucky for you, these are just as easy and affordable as the things you are already doing. To help save water, checking for leaks and fixing them, can save hundreds to thousands of gallons of water, also saving you money! If you like to garden, plant native plants that can tolerate dry conditions. Collect rain water from your roof into rain barrels to use when the rains don't flow as often. Use the wasted water from waiting for your shower to heat up in your toilet tank. It is as easy as keeping a bucket by the shower.

Reducing the waste from your home may be a matter of thinking ahead. When shopping, take reusable bags instead of using the bags from the store each time. Buy products with the least amount of packaging possible. Many items are plastic wrapped, boxed and wrapped again-such a waste! When you do buy these items, recycle as much of the packaging as possible. Another waste we accumulate is food scraps. Compost any foods that will break down easily such as fruits and veggies. Don't forget your yard waste can go into your compost too!



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SANDY CREEK NATURE CENTER
Off of Commerce Highway, 441 North,
1/2 mile north of the Athens bypass, on left
phone: (706) 613-3615

www.sandycreeknaturecenter.com

Note: all staff emails have changed
first and last name@co.clarke.ga.us

For Information Contact:

KateMowbray@co.clarke.ga.us

HOURS OF OPERATION

8:30 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. Tuesday through Saturday
Building closed Sunday and Monday
Trails open daily sunrise to sunset.

Leisure Services Department

John Dargle - Director

Natural Resources Division

J. Michael Wharton - Administrator

Sandy Love - Admin. Secretary

Janice Denney- Volunteer Coordinator

Ted Grannan - Greenway Coordinator

Nature Center Staff

Randy Smith - Facility Supervisor

Edith Hollander - Assistant to the Board

Kate Mowbray - Naturalist

Berkeley Boone - Naturalist

Parker Barnett - Animal Caretaker

SANDY CREEK

NATURE CENTER, INC.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

holds monthly meetings in the

ENSAT Building of Sandy Creek Nature Center.

The public is welcome to attend.

Call for dates and time.

Send contributions to:

Editor - Kate Mowbray

Sandy Creek Nature Center

205 Old Commerce Road

Athens, GA 30607

The Hyla is a seasonal publication of Sandy Creek Nature Center, Natural Resources Division of the Athens-Clarke County Department of Leisure Services. Issues are mailed to all nature center members and are available to Sandy Creek visitors. Contributions, in the form of articles, artwork, poetry, and anecdotes on natural subjects are welcomed.

The Hyla is printed on recycled paper.
Masthead illustration
by Cindie Brunner.

Area Businesses Invited to Join SCNC, Inc.

by SCNC, Inc. Board

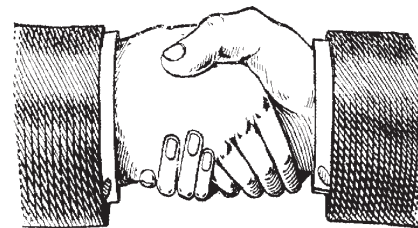


In an effort to create a stronger relationship with the business community, the Board of Directors of Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc. has created the Corporate Partnership Program. While SCNC Inc. has always had businesses and area foundations supporting its work, these have often been focused on a particular event, such as the Jack-O-Lantern Jog and Frog Hop 5k, or focused on a particular project, such as the current capital campaign to expand the exhibit area and create new hands-on exhibits.*

The Corporate Partnership Program is a one-year partnership between the business and the Nature Center, resulting in a stronger connection between the two and greater benefits for both. For the business, the Corporate Partnership will mean it is supporting one of the most innovative and engaging public facilities in the region. Sandy Creek Nature Center provides hands-on educational activities to participants of all ages on a very expansive list of subjects, as well as a visually beautiful and diverse property to explore.

For SCNC Inc., these Corporate Partnerships will allow the non-profit organization to continue its 34-year history of support for the mission, property and programs of the nature center. Over the years, this organization has provided over \$1 million in direct support to the nature center by building Walker Hall, creating and maintaining trails, funding the Discovery Box program, purchasing microscopes, books, puppets, the portable planetarium, the new Smart Board in the classroom and more. The Board of Directors has worked in partnership with Nature Center staff and all levels of Athens-Clarke County government to guarantee that the growth and development of the nature center stay on mission and meets the needs of the residents and visitors of this region.

Businesses will receive corporate benefits based on the level of support selected. These benefits range from having the business logo on event t-shirts, to designation on the website as a Corporate Partner, to free tickets to Snake Day and free room rentals. As Sandy Creek Nature Center now hosts over 50,000 visitors each year for programs, events and casual enjoyment, there is a lot of value for area businesses who partner with SCNC, Inc.. For more information about the Corporate Partnership Program, please contact Edith Hollander at 706-613—3615 x 235 or by email at



edithhollander@co.clarke.ga.us.

* **Thanks to the following businesses and foundations who have supported SCNC Inc. for many years:** the Newland Family Foundation, Athens BMW, R.E.M., Papa John's Pizza, Coca Cola, First American Bank, orthodontist Dr. Gary Jones, veterinarian Dr. Bryan Hendrix, Wal Mart Super Center, Publix Super Market Charities, Athens Banner-Herald, Flagpole Magazine, Athens Parent Magazine, Southern Broadcasting, EarthFare, New World Graphics, Athens Blueprint and Copy Shop.

Eco-Adventure 2008

by Janice Denney, Volunteer Coordinator

Twenty-three teams competed in this year's survival of the fittest. New additions to this year's race included combining the running and orienteering portion of the race starting at the Nature Center teams had to run together to complete the course. We also replaced the plant identification section with an Eco-IQ challenge. Questions related to Georgia's native flora, fauna and ecology. After completing 14 miles of biking, running, hiking and canoeing, teams crossed the finish line at Sandy Creek Park, cheered on by family and friends and rewarded with dinner catered by Brett's Casual American.

*Congratulations to all competitors!
And a very special thanks to all our sponsors!*

Gold Level sponsors:

Brett's: Casual American
Oconee River Greenway Commission
Sandy Creek Nature Center
Sandy Creek Park

Silver Level sponsors:

Mama's Boy, GORP, Broad River Outpost, St. Mary's, Classic Race Services, Georgia Cycle Sport, Coca Cola, Georgia Orienteering Club

Bronze Level Sponsors:

The Hub, Sunshine Cycles, Barberito's, Free Willy's Mexican Grill, Shane's Rib Shack, Lowe's, Earth Fare, Mellow Mushroom, Blockader, Abbey West, Archery Traditions, Shirtworks, Aromas, Copper Creek, Kinnucan's.

1st place: Incredible Bog Stompers
2nd Place: The Untouchables
3rd place: Hot Pursuit

So Long, Farewell

By Allie Hill, Intern

Well, it had to happen. It was inevitable. My time here as Intern at SCNC is over. I am sad to be leaving—I will surely miss the wonderful people and the beautiful property—but I've had such a great experience and learned so much that I know I am well prepared for the future. Since I began interning nine months ago, I've helped write a grant, gone to a national conference, created displays, planned a wide variety of programs, and performed LOTS of birthday parties. Needless to say, I've learned a lot and I owe so much to everyone who has helped me improve over the last several months. Thanks everyone! Goodbye!



New Displays at SCNC

This summer when you come to Sandy Creek Nature Center, look for a few new displays.

In the exhibit hall, look for the legendary Bigfoot. People all around the world claim to have seen this mysterious and hard to capture creature. Whether you know it as Yeti, Sasquatch or Bigfoot, decide for yourself if it is fact or fiction.



We will have a display in the library in honor of Dr. Eugene Odum, the father of ecology. Look for a few of the instruments he used in the field and books that were donated by his family.

Coming this summer are new display signs around the center inside and out. In the exhibit hall, identification information for our salt water tanks will be updated and displayed using electronic picture frames. A piedmont prairie sign will be displayed next to the prairie as you pull into the ENSAT parking area. Along the boardwalk will be a new sign near the Watchable Wildlife blind.

Volunteer Notes

Janice Denney, Volunteer Coordinator

janicedenney@co.clarke.ga.us / (706) 613-3615 x227

Volunteers bring life to the Nature Center. Through their efforts with programming, operations and events, volunteers transform the nature center into an environment to learn, explore, and have fun. We are so appreciative of our volunteers' efforts to ensure the success of so many programs and events this past spring. From yearly events like Super Science Day to committed Trail Guides who help with weekly school programming, we would be at a loss without their support. A huge thank you goes out to each of your volunteer's efforts.

If you are looking for a way to become apart of a community of volunteers, please give me a call to set up a volunteer orientation. We have a quarterly orientation coming up in July. Alternatively, we can set an orientation at your convenience.

Call or email Janice for more info or to sign up for any of these events!
(706)613-3615 x227
janicedenney@co.clarke.ga.us

TRAIL GUIDE TRAINING!

Trail Guides make a difference! Throughout the school year, trail guides make school programming at the nature center a reality. If you have a couple of mornings a month free and would like to take small groups of school children on hikes around the Nature Center trails - we'd love to have you learn to be a trail guide. No experience is needed and training is free! Just a love of the outdoors and a desire to share that with kids is all you need!

One Day Trainings Available:

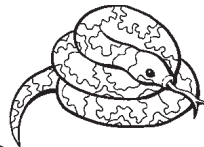
Sandy Creek Nature Center
9:30 - 12:30

August 23, 28, or 29

Please call for more information or to register!

SNAKE DAY NEEDS VOLUNTEERS!! Saturday, June 7, noon - 4pm Sandy Creek Nature Center

Join the fun! Don't worry if you are not a fan of snakes; volunteers are needed to assist with a variety jobs that are pivotal to the success of this year's event.



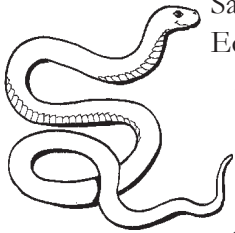
- ✓ concessions
- ✓ ticket sales
- ✓ face painting
- ✓ games
- ✓ arts & crafts
- ✓ and more!

If you are interested in learning more about what you can do to help out Athens' natural resources, please join us for our next New Volunteer Orientation.

Saturday, July 26
Sandy Creek Nature Center
11am-Noon

Slither out to Snake Day 2008!

Sandy Creek Nature Center's 30th annual Snake Day will be held on Saturday, June 7, 2008, from 12:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the ENSAT building. Snake lovers of all ages are invited to spend an afternoon learning about these misunderstood creatures. The fee is \$3 per ACC-resident and \$5 per non-ACC resident.



The main feature of Snake Day: live snakes exhibited by Sandy Creek Nature Center, Savannah River Ecology Lab, members of Southeastern Hot Herp Society and Georgia Herpetological Society. In addition to getting the chance to touch a live snake, attendees will be able to participate in snake-themed activities and crafts.

Snakes from Georgia will be highlighted, although different snake species from around the world will also be represented. Guest speakers will familiarize participants with the diversity of snakes throughout Georgia.

This program is open to the public and pre-registration is not required. For more information about Snake Day 2008, call Sandy Creek Nature Center at 613-3615 x 0 or visit us on the web at www.sandycreeknaturecenter.com.

Earth Day cont...

We all want to save money, so saving electricity will reduce your bill. Make sure filters for your heating and cooling systems are clean, therefore making them more efficient. Change light bulbs to the compact fluorescent lights, they cost more initially but make up for it in energy savings.



Unplugging electronics such as your TV, radios, and computers when they're not in use will reduce energy consumed.

So you see, it is not too difficult to make a difference everyday. Each change you make does make a difference. Let's get out there and start making a few changes and by next Earth Day 2009, we'll have a chance to celebrate the work we have accomplished during the rest of the year.

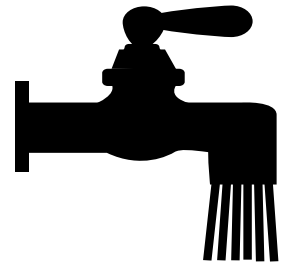


Water Conservation Tips to Help You Through Summer

Spring is here, and the summer heat is not far away. Last summer's relentless heat was a major contributor to Athens' terrible drought. While we've been lucky to get a little bit of rain, it hasn't been enough to get us out of the drought. Water conservation is still necessary, and may become more important as the temperatures rise.

Here are some helpful water conservation tips that SCNC visitors have suggested:

- Check faucets & toilets to make sure there are no leaks
- Save water from the shower while it warms up, then use it to flush the toilet
- Don't wash clothes unnecessarily—wash only the things that need it
- Limit your showers to once every other day
- Skim non-soapy water from your washing machine to water house plants, etc....
- Use hand sanitizer to cut back on the amount of water you use to wash your hands



Remember:

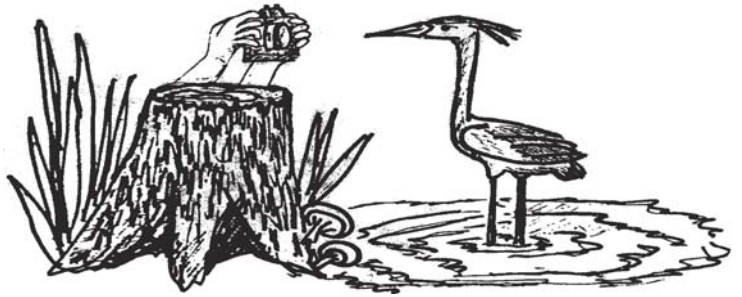
Athens uses water from the North Oconee River, Middle Oconee River and Bear Creek Reservoir. Water we waste at the sink, depletes these resources.

Outdoor water use is still restricted!

Check www.athensclarkecounty.com/publicutilities for updates and other important information on water conservation.

Nature Photography Contest

- Photographs **must** be taken at Sandy Creek Nature Center, featuring the plants and animals that inhabit it.
- Photographs may be in digital format (camera should be set at a minimum of 300 dpi) or 4" x 6" prints on glossy photo paper.
- Submitted photographs are the property of SCNC and will not be returned. By your submission, you give SCNC permission use your photograph in our calendar, in-house exhibit, and with other nature center projects.
- We welcome photographs from all ages and experiences!



Deadline: July 31, 2008

For more information: Call SCNC at (706) 613-3615 x 235 or email EdithHollander@co.clarke.ga.us. Photo submission and description may be sent to: SCNC Photo Contest, 205 Old Commerce Rd., Athens GA 30607 or emailed.

A Special Thanks:

... to these area businesses who supported Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc., by carrying the 2008 Calendar in their shops this year: The Rolling Pin Kitchen Emporium, The Junkman's Daughter's Brother, Designs by Donna, A Flair With Hair, Thyme After Thyme Nursery, Home Place Gifts, and Nature's Outpost.

... also to these area businesses who supported Sandy Creek Nature Center, Inc., by selling raffle tickets for the beautiful quilt made by the Cotton Patch Quilters and the Shetland Pony Horse, donated in part by Home Place Gifts, in support of the Agriculture Interactive Learning Center: Home Place Gifts, Nature's Outpost, Charmar Nursery and Gifts, For Love of Stitches and Dragonfly Quilt Shop. Thanks also to Frances Lang for selling so many tickets on our behalf.

Nominations Being Accepted

Sandy Creek Nature Center Inc. is looking for members interested in serving on the Board of Directors. The Board meets the first Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in the ENSAT building. The Board of Directors works to raise awareness of the Nature Center's mission of preservation and education. It also works to raise funds in support of the Nature Center's outstanding programs and facilities. For more information, contact Larry Dendy at 706-542-8078 or by email at ldendy@uga.edu.



Donors and Contributors

Thanks to all the following members who joined or renewed during this past quarter.

Sustaining

Mary Case

Contributing

Ken and Sandy Cook
John and Sally Crymes
Margaret Davis
Mr. and Mrs. Leon Farmer III
John and Mary Hood
Anne Howe
Ruth Furukawa and
Marcus Fechheimer
Dorothy and Jim Newland
Oconee Rivers Audubon Society
Philip Pollock
Ann Mahoney and Fred Rossini
Robert Saveland
Harry and Joy Schomberg
Fred and Sharon Stephenson

Family

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Jim and Laurie Anderson
C. Terrell Austin
Angie Baker
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Martha B. Beeson
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