

June 2007

This bi-monthly newsletter is for you. Let me know what type of information you would like to see. I invite everyone to submit an environmental related article or blurb that would be of interest to PLT educators and supporters.

Thank you for all your support,
Jennifer Seitz
Florida PLT Coordinator

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1. PLT News

Florida Teacher Receives Barb Pitman Outstanding Educator Award

Project Learning Tree is proud to announce that Michelle Hunter of Crawfordville is this year's recipient. This award is in memory of Barb and her commitment to environmental education, children's literature, and high quality education principles. Michelle is a fourth grade teacher at Shadeville Elementary. She was honored at National PLT's 21st International Coordinators' Conference, May 7-11, in Wichita, KS.

Congratulations Michelle!

Looking for Pilot Testers for New Secondary Module

PLT is working on a new curriculum project to supplement the Exploring Environmental Issues: Focus on Risk secondary module. The supplement will focus on Biotechnology and will consist of about three activities. Activities will foster critical thinking skills that enable young people to make informed decisions about complex environmental and human health issues. If you are interested in piloting an activity with your secondary audience, please contact Catherine Estes at cestes@plt.org.

2. 2007 PLT Annual Awards

An Educator of the Year, Facilitator of the Year, and Partner of the Year are chosen by the Florida PLT Steering Committee to recognize an outstanding individual or organization in each of these categories. The recipients must meet high standards for helping with workshops or using PLT in the classroom. Congratulations to the following individuals for their excellent contributions to PLT!!

Educator of the Year: Karen Weigelt (Bear Creek Educational Forest)

Facilitator of the Year: David Moody

Business Partner of the Year: St. Johns Water Management District

3. Upcoming PLT Events and Workshops

*June 5 and 12 (two separate workshops): PreK-8 Educator Workshop at Nature's Classroom (Thonotosassa). Contact Karen at karen.johnson@sdhc.k12.fl.us to register.

*June 15: Urban Forest Workshop at Nature's Classroom (Thonotosassa). Contact Jody at jowens02@tampabay.rr.com to register.

*July 27: WET, WILD and Woodsy at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens (Jacksonville). Contact the Education Department at 904-757-4463 ext. 122.

*September 22: PreK-8 Educator Workshop at Austin Cary Memorial Forest (Gainesville). Contact Joe at ufplt@ufl.edu to register.

For more information about these and other events, please see the Calendar of Events on our [web site](#).

4. Grants/Contests/Awards

2007 Hooked on Hydroponics Awards

Classroom hydroponics offers eager students loads of opportunities to explore concepts across the curriculum, from biology to economics. Winning programs receive a compact hydroponics package that includes everything required to grow plants successfully indoors.

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/grants/2007-hoh-landing.asp>

Healthy Sprouts Awards

NGA, sponsored by Gardener's Supply, offers these awards to encourage the growth of health-focused youth gardens that teach about nutrition and the issue of hunger in the United States.

<http://www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts.asp>

Garden Crusaders

This year, Gardener's Supply will award more than \$15,000 in cash and products to individuals across the country who are using gardening to make a difference in their communities. Award Categories: Education, Urban Renewal, Restoration, Feeding the Hungry. To learn more about the awards visit the web site and click on the Community tab for an online application.

<http://www.gardeners.com>

2008 Volvo Adventure Awards

In collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the Volvo Adventure Award rewards young people creating their own environmental projects. There are two competitions for the 2008 awards:

(1) The Adventure Award is for youth, ages 13-16, working in groups of two to five. Winners are invited to the final competition in Göteborg, Sweden, where the best will be awarded cash prizes to support their projects.

(2) The second competition is the Great Big Bob the Bunny Cartoon contest for youth under the age of 13, to create a cartoon picture using Bob the bunny. Winning cartoons will be included in a book, and the winners will be invited to a UNEP Children's conference in Stavanger, Norway, in 2008.

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

5. Connecting PLT to the Classroom

Earth & Sky Web site

Take a look at the new Teacher's Section on the Earth & Sky web site. You can browse by topic to find radio shows with correlated PLT activities. You can also click on each PLT activity to find the correlated radio shows. Additional web site resources are available for most of the correlated radio shows. The links from the PLT web site to the Earth & Sky radio shows will be updated shortly.

<http://www.earthsky.org/teachers>

Free EE Video

(resource for the PreK-8's "Pollution Search", "Energy Sleuths", "In the Driver's Seat")

The Easy Breathers high school student produced video investigates air pollution problems and teaches new teen drivers the importance of making wise, eco-friendly driving choices. It's a great springboard for science, driver's education, or environmental lessons. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is in the process of distributing as many as possible to the EE community at no charge. For single, multiple, or bulk orders, please contact Elisabeth Olson at Elisabeth.Olson@wisconsin.gov or (608) 264-9258.

Invasive Plant Curricula

(resource for the PreK-8's "Invasive Species")

An assortment of lesson plans and PowerPoint presentations, low cost resources, and plant id services can be found on this site.

<http://plants.ifas.ufl.edu/education/>

6. Resources

Smithsonian Education

More than 1,200 education resources aligned with standards of learning in every state. Enter your state in the search engine to find lessons, exhibits, photos, art work, and research on the

Apollo missions, U.S. presidents, marine science, minerals and gems, money, shape-note singing, spiders and snakes, and more.

http://free.ed.gov/resource.cfm?resource_id=44

Announcing: A FactCheck for the Classroom

The site provides tools for high school students to help them dig for facts, debunk deceptions, set aside preconceptions and weigh evidence logically – and to help their teachers guide them toward good strategies for doing that. There is a lesson plans page for educators.

<http://www.FactCheckEd.org>

Looking to Improve Your Latin?

How to pronounce the Latin names of plants confuses many a plant-based educator. This web site from Cape West Publishing takes the mystery out of making sense of Latin taxonomic names.

<http://www.saltspring.com/capewest/pron.htm?jmid=906804654>

Seeking High School Science Teachers to Field Test Curriculum

Technical Education Research Centers is seeking high school science teachers to participate in the 2007-2008 pilot test or the 2008-2009 field test of its Biocomplexity and the Habitable Planet curriculum. Pilot and field test teachers will receive stipends for providing feedback and completing other responsibilities. Contact: Gillian Puttick at gilly_puttick@terc.edu or 617-873-9712.

<http://www.terc.edu/newsroom/916.html>

Explorations Magazine Now Online

Scripps's Explorations magazine is now free and published monthly on the Web as part of the institution's public education programs. A variety of educational materials are available including Voyager for Kids, 40+ video clips, archives of articles over the last 13 years, and more.

<http://explorations.ucsd.edu/>

Education Reporting, Inc.

The web site facilitates the voices of teachers, education stakeholders, and parents in improving education and integrating "green" education into class curriculum. Education tools offered include symposiums, polls, free document downloads, free report card services, current research and data, and comprehensive resources about what is happening in K-12 learning communities.

<http://educationreporting.com/GreenSchoolSymposium.aspx>

Bioassessment Posters

Water pollutions and aquatic insects. A variety of posters to download for use with students.

<http://www.dep.state.fl.us/water/bioassess/posters.htm>

League of Environmental Educators in Florida New Web Site

LEEF's web site is new and really has its act together. In addition to information on LEEF, it provides a search engine to locate environmental education programs around the state with ease.

[Http://www.leef-florida.org](http://www.leef-florida.org)

7. Interesting Tree Fact #18

Deepest Roots

A Wild Fig tree at Echo Caves, near Ohrigstad, Mpumalanga, South Africa has roots reaching 400 feet making it the deepest a tree's roots have penetrated.

The Fastest Growing Tree

In 1974, it was noted that an *Albizzia falcata* in Sabah, Malaysia had grown 35 feet and 3 inches in 13 months: an approximate of 1.1 inches per day.

The Slowest Growing Tree

A White Cedar located in the Great Lakes area of Canada, has only grown to less than 4 inches tall during its 155 years.

The Greatest Girth

In the late 18th century a European Chestnut known as the Tree of the Hundred Horses on Mount Etna in Sicily, in Italy had a circumference of 190 feet. It has since separated into three parts.

The Most Massive Tree

The "Lindsey Creek Tree", a Coast Redwood with a minimum trunk volume of 90,000 cubic feet and a minimum total mass of 3630 tons was the most massive known tree until it blew over in a storm in 1905. The most massive living tree is "General Sherman", a giant sequoia found in the Sequoia National Park in California. It is 275 feet tall with a girth of 102 feet and 8 inches.

Information taken from: United Nations Environment Programme: Environment for Development—Tree Planting.

<http://www.unep.org/Documents.Multilingual/Default.asp?DocumentID=445&ArticleID=4852&l=en>

Note: A correction from April's Interesting Tree Fact #17

Correction: Oaks are divided into white and RED oaks, not black.

Thank you to forester, Ed Lewis for pointing this out!

Items are from the Kids Gardening web site, EdInfo, NAAEE listserv, NSTA Reports, Botanic Gardens Conservation International Newsletter, Pelotes Island Nature Preserve newsletter, National PLT notices, and a variety of education focused newsletters.