

April 2005

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.

Thanks for all your support,  
Jenny Seitz  
Florida PLT Coordinator

Inside:

1. PLT Environmental Education Centers
2. National Environmental Education Week
3. Conferences and Workshops
4. Resources for Educators
5. Florida PLT Awards
6. Interesting Tree Fact #4

1. PLT Environmental Education Centers

On February 24, representatives from nature centers, museums, and school districts came to Austin Cary Forest in Gainesville to receive training to become Florida PLT EE Centers. These centers will serve as locations for educator workshops across the state and a place for educators to find resources in their region. PLT Central welcomes the following centers into our program:

- Brevard Zoo: Melbourne
- Brooker Creek Preserve EE Center: Tarpon Springs
- Camp Crystal Lake: Starke
- Chinsegut Nature Center: Brooksville
- Environmental Center at Miami-Dade College: Miami
- Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge: Titusville
- St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge: St. Marks
- Tallahassee Museum of History & Natural Science: Tallahassee
- TreeHill Nature Center: Jacksonville
- Weedon Island Preserve Cultural & Natural History Center

The following centers will soon receive training to be part of this program:

- Calusa Nature Center and Planetarium: Ft. Myers
- Nature's Classroom: Thonotosassa
- Roy Hyatt Environmental Center: Pensacola

2. National Environmental Education Week: April 10 – 16, 2005!!

National Environmental Education Week will take place April 10 – 16, 2005 and will be the single largest environmental education event in the U.S. It is a full week of educational preparedness for Earth Day and will involve some 400,000 educators and 15 million students.

#### National EE Week Photo Contest

Here's your chance to win a Canon digital camera or camcorder for your classroom! Submit up to five of your best photos, along with a 150 word narrative that describes how you celebrated National Environmental Education Week. The winning photos will be featured on the EE Week and Project Learning Tree web sites. The deadline for photo submissions is Friday, May 6, 2005.

### 3. Conferences and Workshops

#### Annual LEEF 25th Conference

Come celebrate this milestone with educators across the state. The conference is scheduled for April 7-10, 2005 in Pinellas County.

Visit the LEEF web site (click above) for registration information.

#### PLT Schools' Conference: October 5-7, 2005

Mark your calendars for the bi-annual PLT Schools' Conference! The conference will be held at the Withlacoochee Training Center in Brooksville, Florida. Stay tuned for registration information.

#### WET, WILD and Woodsy: June 13-14, 2005

Join us in St. Petersburg for a two-day adventure exploring Florida's watersheds. This Free training will provide educators with activity guides from Projects WET, WILD, Aquatic WILD and PLT. A limited number of stipends are available to educators in the Southwest Florida Water Management District who pre-register. Deadline to register is May 31. Contact Jenny Seitz for registration information.

#### Project Shark Awareness Workshops

Project Shark Awareness is a project of the Florida Museum of Natural History. The workshop will help train educators on how they can use this program in the classroom. Workshop activities include sessions on shark, sawfish, and ray biology; shark species identification; commercial shark fishery; shark attacks; and conservation as well as a shark dissection! Each participant will receive a Project Shark Awareness Teaching Kit for use in the classroom. This kit includes a teaching binder and cd as well as hands-on items including a shark jaw, shark embryo, and shark skin plus more! There will be four free workshops held at the Florida Museum of Natural History during this summer for secondary school teachers. For more information, please contact Cathy Bester, Education Coordinator of the Florida Program for Shark Research, at [cbester@flmnh.ufl.edu](mailto:cbester@flmnh.ufl.edu).

#### Summer science opportunity for high school teachers: June 19-25, 2005

The Center for Precollegiate Education and Training is starting the UF Summer Science Institute (SSI) which will offer different content- rich science workshops each summer. Participants have the chance to work with UF faculty and graduate students, perform authentic research, visit laboratories and facilities, hear talks by research and industry leaders, and develop classroom

applications. This year's offering will be Biotechnology Techniques and Applications, considering many areas influenced by biotechnology from biomedical advances to agricultural enhancement. It will be held at the University of Florida, Gainesville. The registration fee is \$350 which includes materials, supplies and take-home resources. On-campus housing is available for an additional \$150. Teachers are encouraged to speak to their administrators and/or district science supervisor about funds set aside for professional development such as Title II from the No Child Left Behind act. A minimum number of registrants must be secured by April 15 to offer this workshop. For questions about the UF Summer Science Institute, please contact Julie Bokor at 352.392.2310.

#### 4. Resources for Educators

##### Early Childhood Education PLT Activities

Wisconsin PLT has created an Early Childhood Activity Guide with accompanying Music and Movement CD. The set of materials includes EE activities integrating music and movement, literature, art, outdoor exploration, and assessment opportunities. It is designed for ages three through six. The activity guide, CD, and resource materials can be ordered for \$15. For an order form please contact Jenny Seitz.

##### MarcoPolo Program

MarcoPolo provides the highest quality educational resources to teachers and students. Developed by world-renowned organizations who are experts in their fields, these standards-based resources include lessons plans, student materials, and reviewed Web resources. The highlight of this program is the monthly MarcoGram. MarcoGrams are valuable curriculum e-mail newsletters, highlighting common themes from space exploration to family culture. Each MarcoGram features motivating warm-ups for classroom discussion and links to the best K-12 interdisciplinary lessons and resources from our Content Partners.

##### April is National Garden Month

The purpose of National Garden Month is to reflect on and recognize the critical role plants play in our lives. Visit Kids Garden News produced by the National Gardening Association for research resources, suggestions, and standard-based activities.

##### Free Children's Book Teaches Watershed Ecology and Nonpoint Source Pollution

The Maine Coastal Program at the Maine State Planning Office has published a free environmental children's book, *The Watershed Journey of Linus Loon*. The book is entertaining and educational, and includes many illustrations. The book, designed for grades 3-7, teaches students the basics of watershed ecology and nonpoint source pollution, and encourages environmental appreciation, awareness, and stewardship. This book is accompanied by an Educator Handbook and a Student Handbook. *The Watershed Journey of Linus Loon* is available to educators in hardcopy free of charge, and may also be downloaded at the Linus Loon Web site. To request a hardcopy version of the book, contact Josh Atwood at the Maine Coastal Program: [josh.atwood@maine.gov](mailto:josh.atwood@maine.gov) or 207-287-9981.

(Courtesy of SIFT)

##### Tree of Life

A tool for learning and teaching about biodiversity and the evolutionary history (phylogeny) and characteristics of creatures, from frogs and flowers to dinosaurs and protists. The ToL Learning project invites teachers and youth to explore Life on Earth and share their own learning by creating ToL treehouses. This is a great way to incorporate technology into the classroom and have your students become part of the scientific community. Classrooms of all ages can become ToL learning materials contributors and learn how to make their own treehouse web pages using the ToL web-based Treehouse Editor. Treehouse builders will create, access and use digital media: images, audio, movies, and text. Builders can publish treehouse games, stories, investigations, art and cultural pieces, biographies, and teacher resources on the Tree of Life. Builders will learn about phylogenetic biology, new places, organisms and projects and connect their work to the larger bioscience community.

(Courtesy of SIFT)

#### Earth & Sky Radio Series

Earth & Sky stories highlight the wonders of science and nature. They feature astronomy, biology, chemistry, Earth science, environmental science, physics, and more. A number of the shows are correlated to Project Learning Tree activities. The shows can be listened to directly from a computer or through a local radio station. Transcripts are provided for each radio show ahead of time to help develop reading comprehension skills while sparking an interest in science. Students can read along while they listen to the program!

#### Growth and Water Resources Training Module

This new on-line, distance learning training module explains how changes in land use affect water resources, and presents national data on trends in development patterns and activities on land that have become increasingly significant challenges for achieving water quality standards. The module describes a combination of approaches to accommodate future growth in a way that benefits the economy and the environment and will help us meet our water resource goals. The module also includes a "tools" section with links to on-line resources. This training module was developed by EPA's Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds Smart Growth Team. For more information, please contact Jamal Kadri at [kadri.jamal@epa.gov](mailto:kadri.jamal@epa.gov).

(Courtesy of National PLT)

#### Science Songs

A great source for science songs of all topics. Space, Energy & Motion, Experiments, Weather, and Nature. The songs are recorded as MP3. You can listen to the songs off of the internet but I am not sure if you can download them onto a CD-ROM.

(Courtesy of SIFT)

#### Camp Invention

Camp Invention, a non-profit outreach program of the National Inventors Hall of Fame®, offers premium curricula for children in grades 2 - 6. Both summertime Camp Invention® and afterschool Club Invention® feature inquiry-based learning that align with Sunshine State Standards. The content integrates science, math, language and fine arts, and history with hands-on FUN. Schools can host these enrichment programs virtually risk-free. The host site provides the space and the staff for the tuition-based program; Camp Invention provides the field-tested curriculum, all the supplies, flyers and posters, administrative support, insurance, and

compensation for the staff. Because the programs are eligible for Title I and 21st Century grant funding, some schools prefer purchasing licenses and paying their own staff. To learn more about running a program or enrolling a child, visit [www.campinvention.org](http://www.campinvention.org) or [www.clubinvention.org](http://www.clubinvention.org), or telephone 800.968.4332.

(Courtesy of SIFT)

#### 5. Florida PLT Awards

Here's your chance to recognize an individual or organization for their efforts in promoting and enhancing environmental education. Nominate an educator, facilitator, or business partner of the year for the Annual Florida PLT Awards. Deadline for nominations is May 15.

#### 6. Tree Fact #4

Did you know...

That everyday, U.S. papermakers recycle enough paper to fill a 15-mile long train of boxcars.

About 87% of the more than 520 paper and paperboard mills in the U.S. recycle some recovered paper. Recovered paper provides over one-third of all the fiber used at U.S. mills.

In the U.S., paper accounts for two-thirds of all the packaging material recovered for recycling—more than glass, metal, and plastic combined!

Interesting tree fact information courtesy of Paper University.