

## Florida *PLTree Line* Newsletter, December 2008 Issue

This bi-monthly newsletter is for you. Let me know what type of information you would like to see. I invite everyone to submit a blurb about how your school or center is using PLT with youth.

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

### Inside:

1. PLT News
2. Upcoming PLT Events and Workshops
3. Conferences/Events/Workshops
4. Grants/Contests/Awards
5. Connecting PLT to the Classroom
6. School Spotlight
7. Resources
8. Book Review
9. Interesting Tree Fact #28

### 1. PLT News

#### Call for Presenters 2009 PLT Conference—PLT Extravaganza

Florida PLT welcomes proposals for sessions from PLT-trained educators, facilitators, PLT Schools, PLT EE Centers, as well as from others in the environmental education (EE), education, natural resources, and other related fields. The conference theme is Sustainability. This is an opportunity to share information about global climate change, energy, water, green schools, future of Florida's environment, health issues (getting outdoors) and more.  
[http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events\\_calendar/PLT\\_Conference\\_2009.html](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events_calendar/PLT_Conference_2009.html)

Note: The Florida PLT Conference is scheduled for November 4–7, 2009. Registration details will be available in February 2009.

### 2. Upcoming PLT Events in 2009

\* **January 16:** PLT and WILD K-12 Educator Workshop at Orange Lake Resort in Kissimmee (Osceola County). For information including registration information send an email to [SheilaBolin@orangelake.com](mailto:SheilaBolin@orangelake.com) and put "Educator Workshop" in the subject line. \$15 registration fee.

\* **January 19:** PLT Biodiversity Workshop for Middle and High School Educators at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in Jacksonville (Duval County). Sponsored by Florida SFI Committee. For information, including registration, visit <http://www.jaxzoo.org/education/teachers.asp> and scroll down to the bottom. *\$5 registration fee for Zoo Members, \$10 registration fee for non-Zoo Members*

\* **January 24:** PLT K-5 Educator Workshop at The Environmental Center at Jacksonville Zoo and Gardens in Jacksonville (Duval County). Workshop is sponsored by the Rayonier and

International Paper Foundations. For information, including registration, visit <http://www.jaxzoo.org/education/teachers.asp> and scroll down to the bottom. *\$5 registration fee for Zoo Members, \$10 registration fee for non-Zoo Members*

\* **February 7-8:** WET, WILD and Woodsy [PLT] Two-Day Educator Workshop at a local Girl Scout Camp in Bradenton (Sarasota County). Download registration form from [http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events\\_calendar/Wet\\_Wild\\_Woodsy\\_2009\\_Registration\\_Form.pdf](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events_calendar/Wet_Wild_Woodsy_2009_Registration_Form.pdf). *\$15 for workshop, no food or lodging, \$50 for workshop, includes food and lodging*

\* **February 13 and 25** (same workshop offered different days): PreK-8 Workshop at Leon County Extension Office in Tallahassee (Leon County). Sponsored by the Leon County Extension Service. For information, including registration, contact: Robin Will, [Robin\\_Will@fws.gov](mailto:Robin_Will@fws.gov). *\$15 registration if not yet registered.*

For more information about these and other events, please see the Calendar of Events on our Web site at [http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events\\_calendar/calendar.html](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/events_calendar/calendar.html)

### **3. Conferences/Events/Workshops**

#### **Ocala National Forest Centennial Celebration—December 13, 2008**

Guided hiking tours, canoe trips, and a forest wide clean-up are some of the events scheduled for this celebration. For more information, pictures, and events visit <http://ocalanfc.org/>.

#### **2009 LEEF Annual Conference, Energize Florida!—Call for Presenters Open**

Join us for the 27th Annual LEEF Conference at Wekiwa Springs State Park March 26-29, 2009. Field trips, hands-on workshops, discussion/panel roundtable sessions, fellowship, and campfires will provide opportunities to network, make new friends, and grow in our knowledge of the world we live in.

<http://leef-florida.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=47778.0.110.37432>

#### **National EE Week—April 12-18, 2009**

The theme this year is *Be Water Wise!* Register your school or organization online today. [www.eeweek.org/register](http://www.eeweek.org/register)

#### **Fossil Finders Professional Development—August 9-14, 2009**

This professional development program is for teachers of grades 5-9 using fossils in the classroom.

[http://www.fossilfinders.org/teacher\\_zone/registration/reg\\_workshop.php](http://www.fossilfinders.org/teacher_zone/registration/reg_workshop.php)

### **4. Grants/Contests/Awards**

#### **Captain Planet Foundation Grants**

This grant funds projects that help students better grasp environmental issues. Projects must focus on hands-on activities, promote teamwork, and develop planning and problem-solving skills. Deadline: December 31, 2008

<http://www.captainplanetfdn.org/grants.html>

### **American Planning Association's Scholarship Essay Contest**

APA's contest asks students to develop an historic preservation plan to preserve the most significant historic areas, buildings, elements, and features of individual communities.

Deadline: January 15, 2009

<http://www.planning.org/essay/2009/index.htm>

### **Children's Painting Contest**

Persons ages 5-13 can submit paintings on the theme "Climate Change: Our Challenge," focusing on a particular environmental issue and how this issue affects their community.

Deadline: January 15, 2009

[http://www.bayerus.com/msms/web\\_docs/18thICPCpkt.pdf](http://www.bayerus.com/msms/web_docs/18thICPCpkt.pdf)

### **Toyota Tapestry Grants for Science Teachers**

A range of grants from \$2,500 to \$10,000 will be awarded to K-12 science teachers. The categories are Physical Science Application, Environmental Science Education, and Integrating Literacy and Science. Deadline: January 21, 2009

<http://tapestry.nsta.org/>

### **Volvo Adventure Contest**

This competition, open to youth ages 13-16, challenges participants to develop environmental projects to improve their local environments. Winners may receive up to \$10,000. Deadline: January 31, 2009

[www.volvoadventure.org](http://www.volvoadventure.org)

### **Education Association Student Achievement Grants**

This grants funds programs to improve the academic achievement of students in U.S. public schools and public higher education institutions in any subject area(s). Applications may be submitted at any time.

[http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/StudentAchievement\\_Guidelines.htm](http://www.neafoundation.org/programs/StudentAchievement_Guidelines.htm)

### **Toshiba America Foundation Grants**

This grant funds programs, projects, and activities for grades 7-12 that have the potential to improve classroom teaching and learning of science, mathematics, and the science and mathematics of technology. Deadlines vary.

<http://www.toshiba.com/taf/apply.html>

### **Young Naturalist Awards Competition**

Students in grades 7-12 conduct research in the natural world to investigate questions they have in the areas of ecology, biology, Earth science, and astronomy and present their findings in an essay. Deadline: March 2, 2009

<http://www.amnh.org/nationalcenter/youngnaturalistawards/>

## **5. Connecting PLT to the Classroom**

### **Florida Arbor Day – January 16<sup>th</sup> 2009**

#### **(use with PreK-8's Three Cheers for Trees! #30 and Plant a Tree #31)**

Celebrate Florida's Arbor Day by exploring the benefits of trees and even planting one with your students. For more information on Arbor Day visit [www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org).

### **Ploppy, A Spanish Water Website for Kids**

**(use with PreK-8's Every Drop Counts #38 and Water Wonders #44)**

This is an interactive water cycle web site for kids. Ploppy's web site was put together by the Spanish Institute of Geology and all of the activities are in Spanish. Have fun exploring the water cycle in Espanol!

<http://www.ploppy.net/>

### **Careers in Forestry**

**(use with PreK-8's A Forest of Many Uses #32, Who Works in this Forest? #34, Loving It Too Much #35, and Forest for the Trees #69)**

This site has career and education information relevant to middle school and high school students interested in pursuing careers in forestry or natural resources.

[www.ForestryCareers.org](http://www.ForestryCareers.org)

## **6. School Spotlight**

Lakeland Christian School (Lakeland, Florida) held their annual Creation Care Week at their school in March. PLT school coordinator, Jane Kriegbaum, organized several exciting events for the children, including a bat presentation, a talk on water conservation by the local utilities company, and bird watching.

Lakeland Christian School is one of eleven schools throughout the state of Florida designated a PLT school. For more information on how your school can receive this designation, visit [http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/schools\\_and\\_centers/schools.html](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/schools_and_centers/schools.html)

## **7. Resources**

### **Recently Updated! Estuaries Government Site**

This revamped site is a hub for exploration and discovery of our nation's estuaries! In addition to the Estuaries 101 Curriculum, students and educators can access videos, fact sheets, and animated interpretations.

<http://www.estuaries.gov/estuaries101/Default.aspx>

### **Florida Manatee Activity Workbook —Revised Edition Now Available**

Good information on manatees including connection to Sunshine State Standards.

<http://leef-florida.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=78212.0.0.37432>

### **Curious George Helps Bring Earth Science to Kids**

This resource outlines how to set up and run hands-on "Curiosity Centers" where children can make their own discoveries about sand, water, soil, wind, and recycling. How-to includes simple materials lists, learning goals, leader notes, and tips for success.

<http://pbskids.org/curiousgeorge/parentsteachers/activities/>

### **Carbon Footprint Calculator Designed for Students**

National Environmental Education Week offers a carbon calculator specifically designed for students. This calculator encourages students, classrooms, and entire schools to measure and manage their own carbon footprints while developing creative ways to curb their carbon output and slow climate change.

<http://zerofootprint.net/youth/neew>

### **Earth Gauge Kids Launched!**

Designed for students in grades 5-8, the web site focuses on a different weather-environment theme each month. Students can find an interactive quiz, activity ideas, fun facts, and links to "cool tools" and games on the web.

<http://www.earthgauge.net/kids/index>

### **Climate Ambassadors**

EPA is launching a campaign to educate middle and high school students about climate change, its effects on children's health, and actions teens can take to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Encourage your students to become Climate Ambassadors in their communities.

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

### **NOAA's Nautical Charts**

This new multimedia education program, designed for students in grades 3-5, teaches youth about charting and navigation. This web site contains movies, sounds, pictures, and more!

[http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/nautical\\_charts/](http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/education/nautical_charts/)

### **FastCheckEd**

This web site helps students to learn that not everything can be taken at face-value. Using internet research, weighing evidence logically, and avoiding conclusions based on bias are some of the skills taught.

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

### **Earth Learning Idea**

For the International Year of Planet Earth (IYPE), ELI is publishing one activity a week through 2008. Each activity is designed to maximize student participation, learning, and enjoyment while minimizing cost. Strategies promote interactive teaching and students' investigational and thinking skills.

<http://www.earthlearningidea.com/>

### **The Study of Tree Rings**

Learn about tree rings, the science of dendrochronology, and try techniques for yourself. The Laboratory of Tree-Ring Research at The University of Arizona site includes exercises to help familiarize you and your students with the concepts and techniques of dendrochronology.

<http://tree.ltrr.arizona.edu/treerings.html>

## **8. Book Review**

*By Summer Solomon, Garden Specialist, Learning Gate Community School*

### **Peter McHoy, "Practical Small Gardens" ISBN 1843092433**

Winter in Florida is the perfect season to plan and set your spring garden. Peter McHoy offers a fantastic collection of photographs and sketches for the novice gardener to use to get inspired to get grubby. Avid gardeners can incorporate the whimsical and practical elements of his designs to improve and rejuvenate their garden spaces. This great book gives simple advice for projects that schools, scouting and gardening clubs, and home schooling cooperatives could use to adopt a space and plant a garden. Read the full review at

[http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/newsletter/PLTreeline\\_2008\\_12\\_Bookreview.html](http://sfrc.ufl.edu/plt/newsletter/PLTreeline_2008_12_Bookreview.html).

## 9. Interesting Tree Fact #27

### Trees can communicate too!

\*Trees release chemicals in response to biotic damage, like herbivory, and abiotic damage, like fire. In this way they attempt to fight against the agent causing harm.

\*Damaged and undamaged trees can communicate with one another. Scientists believe trees "talk" through the atmosphere using pheromones; these pheromones can stimulate an undamaged tree to produce a damaged response. This may give the unharmed tree an advantage in protection from future harm.

\*Some trees emit chemicals, attracting other organisms to harm predators. For example, some varieties of corn produce a chemical to attract a nematode that kills root worms. These root worms are the larvae of a beetle that eats the corn plant.

\*Trees don't just communicate for defense. They can also communicate to coordinate blooming. This may also act as protection if a predator is not able to attack all the flowers in a mass bloom.

Mystery question: The fall webworm commonly feeds on the foliage of several trees found here in Florida, often causing a chemical response. Can you name any? If yes, send an email to Jenny at [jacohen@ufl.edu](mailto:jacohen@ufl.edu) with the names of the trees.

-----

Items are from the EdInfo listserv, NAAEE listserv, National PLT listserv, and a variety of education focused newsletters.