

The Lettered Olive: S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Education News

[May 19, 2023]



Educators, we're in the home stretch. It's also the time when we feel as though we are in a constant state of warp speed. Wasn't it just March? And, what happened to April? Testing, field trips, end-of-year projects, and planning for summer camps and programs can make for a fulfilling -- and sometimes exhausting -- point in the year. Our featured creature this month, the Florida softshell turtle (*Apalone ferox*), also knows a little something about a fast pace. Despite the name "turtle," softshells are anything but slow; in fact, they are considered to be the fastest of all chelonids (i.e., tortoises, terrapins, and turtles) in the water and on land. Speed isn't the only characteristic softshells have that distinguishes them: Instead of boney scutes, softshells have a flat, cartilaginous carapace that is covered by leathery skin. The Florida softshell turtle is native to the Southeast with a range stretching from Alabama to South Carolina. Frequenting freshwater and occasionally brackish environments, softshells dine on primarily insects, snails, crustaceans, and fish. As adults, their main predator are alligators, but the eggs and juveniles are hunted by raccoons, armadillos, birds, and foxes. Florida softshells can easily be identified by their tubular, or snorkel-like, nostrils and oblong-shaped shell that is dark brown or olive green in color. Similarly, females can be distinguished from males through sexual dimorphism, with the female being significantly bigger in size.

So, while we shell-abrate the end of the school year and the beginning of the summer break, we encourage you to take a look at some of these education opportunities from the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium and our partners. They are turtle-y awesome.

Photo Credit: E.V. Bell

Educator Professional Development

**Seining, Seashells, and Sharks Teeth:
EEASC-SCMEA Networking Event
June 8, 2023 from 4:30 – 7:30 PM
Grice Beach (Charleston, S.C.)
Deadline to Register: June 1, 2023**

Join the [Environmental Education Association of South Carolina \(EEASC\)](#) and the [South Carolina Marine Educators Association \(SCMEA\)](#) for an afternoon of seining, beachcombing, and marine-themed art activities. Along with Grice Marine Field Lab staff, we will wade over to undeveloped Grice Beach where we will discover different flora and fauna that are caught in the seine net and found along the shoreline. Following these activities will be a delicious dinner, networking, and creative activities using our



beach finds! Participants should expect to get wet during this experience and wearing closed-toe shoes is required. This event is free-of-charge and open to both EEASC and SCMEA members and nonmembers. The deadline to [register](#) is June 1, 2023. Questions can be sent to [E.V. Bell](#) or [Heidi Champion](#).

EEASC Conference "InclusivitEE"
June 21 - 24, 2023
Penn Center (St. Helena Island, S.C.)



Just a few spaces are left! Don't miss out on registering for the 2023 Environmental Education Association of South Carolina (EEASC) Conference, "InclusivitEE: Environmental Education for Everyone"! This year's conference will take place at the historic Penn Center on St. Helena Island from June 21 - 24, 2023 and will provide ample opportunities for learning, engagement, and exploring. Check out the [conference webpage](#) for a sneak peek at sessions, field trips, and networking events. Conference questions can be sent to [Chanda Cooper](#).

From Seeds to Shoreline®
Workshops
August 8, 2023 (Veteran Teachers)
August 9, 2023 (New Teachers)
Deadline to Register: July 17, 2023



The From Seeds to Shoreline® (S2S) program wants *you* to join our team for the 2023 - 2024 school year! The S2S program, coordinated by the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium in partnership with S.C. Department of Natural Resources and Clemson University, is the only salt marsh restoration program in the state designed specifically for K - 12 students and teachers. By growing *Spartina alterniflora*, the dominant plant of southeastern salt marshes, throughout the school year and transplanting young seedlings to areas of the coastline, students not only learn about the importance of this critical ecosystem but they also serve as environmental stewards. Two training sessions will be offered:

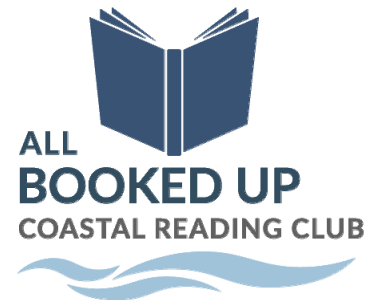
August 8, 2023 (Veteran Teacher Training): This one-day training is optional for those S2S teachers who have been with the program for at least one year. Join us for a fun-filled day of exploration and networking, new resources, giveaways, and much more!

August 9, 2023 (New Teacher Training): This one-day training is a pre-requisite for new teachers interested in participating in S2S for the upcoming school year. The training offers sessions on salt marsh ecology, restoration techniques, classroom applications, and more! There is no cost to attend, however, pre-registration will be required.

Please visit the S2S program [website](#) to get more information and to register. Questions can be sent to [Morgan Treon](#).

All Booked Up Coastal Reading Club

Are you a formal, nonformal, or homeschool educator interested in discussing books focused on the environment? Join the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium's All Booked Up (ABU) Coastal Reading Club!



Please visit the [ABU webpage](#) to join our listserv and learn about benefits of becoming a member. Our next book will be *Braiding Sweetgrass* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. Questions can be sent to [E.V. Bell](#).

Teachers on the Estuary Workshop "Explore the ACE Basin" July 25 - 27, 2023



Join the ACE (Ashepoo-Combahee-Edisto) Basin National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) education and research staff for their annual Teachers on the Estuary (TOTE) Workshop! Using South Carolina estuaries as the classroom, participants will explore salt marsh dynamics, collect and analyze data, and receive standards-based, STEM (science-technology-engineering-math) classroom lessons to use with your students. For more information on the workshop and to sign up, please visit the [registration page](#). Questions can be sent to [Erica Connery](#)

Awards and Nominations

EEASC Annual Environmental Awards

The Environmental Education Association of South Carolina (EEASC) is pleased to give recognition to those individuals and businesses that have supported environmental education efforts across the state. EEASC is currently accepting nominations for the following categories and the winners will be announced at the [2023 EEASC Conference](#).



- Environmental Educator of the Year
- Green Business of the Year

- Non-Profit Organization of the Year
- Outstanding Youth
- Legislator of the Year

To nominate an individual or organization for one or more of these prestigious awards, please visit the [EEASC Awards](#) website for more information.

Additional Opportunities and Resources

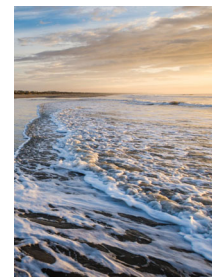
S.C. Department of Natural Resources Education Needs Assessment



The S.C. Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) is conducting a needs assessment of teachers and students who use educational resources provided by SCDNR and the ACE (Ashepoo-Combahee-Edisto) Basin NERR (National Estuarine Research Reserve). The survey will take about 20-30 minute and upon completion you can enter to win a YETI Roadie® 24 Hard Cooler (\$250 value). The deadline has been extended to June 1 for those interested in completing the needs, and the winner of the cooler will be notified shortly after the deadline. Please access the survey [here](#).

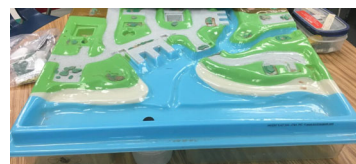
S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Speaker Request Form

Do you have a science night or career day coming up in the future? Would you like a speaker for your students or organization? The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium (Consortium) has plenty to share regarding marine science careers, current research projects, and engaging coastal science activities for all ages! Be sure to check out our [career page](#) to learn more about the Consortium, and if you are interested in booking the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium for an upcoming career day or science night, please fill out this [request form](#).



Enviroscape Loaner Program

The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium offers use of the [Wetlands Enviroscape Model](#) free-of-charge to any S.C. K-12, nonformal, and homeschool educator. The model provides a hands-on demonstration about how watersheds can be affected by development, pollution, and other human-made and natural impacts. Included as part of the demonstration are ways in which potential pollution impacts can be mitigated (e.g., riparian buffers and salt marshes). To find out more information on



requesting to borrow the Enviroscape, please visit the [Enviroscape Loaner Program webpage](#) to fill out the request form. Questions can be sent to [Morgan Treon](#).



Have Something to Include?

Have an opportunity or resource that you would like to add to the next S.C. Sea Grant Consortium Education email update?

[SUGGEST A RESOURCE](#)

Get Updates

Join hundreds of South Carolina educators like you! The S.C. Sea Grant Consortium sends out marine science and coastal education updates every month with opportunities and resources.

JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST



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