



ROME-FLOYD ECO CENTER

ANNUAL REPORT

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A LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

On behalf of the Rome-Floyd E.C.O. Center staff, I would like to thank the citizens of Rome and Floyd County for their continued support. From 2011 to present day, we have provided natural resource programs for over 60,000 students and adults. As 2021 brought challenges of its own, natural resource education continues to be an integral part of how we grow as a community and region. Conservation leadership, sustainability, and stewardship of our natural resources is the forefront of our mission. Our programs and events continue to inspire children and adults to learn about and experience the ecology of Northwest Georgia and our state. Thanks again.

Ben Winkelman

BEN WINKELMAN

Director



TOTAL REACH

8173

students & adults

engaged in natural resource and native wildlife education through

91

programs & events



PARTICIPANT TOTALS

2976

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

1338

EDU. PROGRAMS & EVENTS

262

SPEAKER SERIES

3597

WALK-IN VISITORS



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

2976
students

The E.C.O. Center's 2021 school programs consisted of large and small groups from public schools, private schools, homeschool groups, and college classes. With educational content centered on wildlife and natural resources, we created interactive opportunities, both in-person and virtually, for students preschool through college. The E.C.O. Center continues to develop curriculum and content that is relevant to the current ecological trends and topics.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS

1338

students & adults

The E.C.O. Center provided educational opportunities for both children and adults beyond our school programs including youth archery, videos, Little Critters preschool programs, a valentine's craft day, and Christmas with the Critters. A variety of programs and events leads us to reach a diversity of populations.



SPEAKER SERIES



262
students & adults

The E.C.O. Center proudly offers a series of educational presentations by various wildlife and natural resource professionals each year. These programs cover a multitude of topics and are free for the public to attend. This year we hosted 5 events, covering native/invasive species, fisheries, snakes of Georgia, bats, and Georgia amphibians. Presenters were from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Berry College, and The Amphibian Foundation.



ANIMAL EXHIBITS



34
exhibits & habitats

The E.C.O. Center proudly maintained 34 animal exhibits that showcase some of the native wildlife of Northwest Georgia. Many of these animals were used in hands-on educational programs and were the focus for walk-in visitors. Our exhibits and habitats are meticulously maintained on a daily basis by staff & volunteers.



In addition to regular maintenance, the E.C.O. Center made the following additions and improvements:

- 4 new animals added:
 - 2 juvenile alligators
 - 1 spiny softshell turtle
 - 1 gopher tortoise
 - Juvenile trout tank
- Semi-aquatic tank designed and added for plain-bellied water snakes

VOLUNTEERS



13
volunteers dedicated

55
hours per week

Without a dedicated volunteer base, the E.C.O. Center would not be able to accomplish all of the educational and program goals that it does. Our volunteers work hard every day to make sure that the animal enclosures and building are neatly maintained and presentable.



The majority of our volunteers are from Berry College and Shorter University, with some work-study students from local high schools. Each year it is an honor to have these students serve alongside us as we strive to also invest in their experiential education. Volunteers are invaluable to the day-to-day operations of the E.C.O. Center and continue to be an excellent extension of the staff.