



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 almost 70,000 students and adults. This past year boasted our largest in numbers to date, and we had the privilege of celebrating 10 years as a natural resource education center! 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

12,418

students & adults

engaged in natural resource and native wildlife education through

111

programs & events



PARTICIPANT TOTALS

4968	SCHOOL PROGRAMS
2314	EDU. PROGRAMS & EVENTS
180	10 YEAR CELEBRATION
4956	WALK-IN VISITORS



SCHOOL PROGRAMS

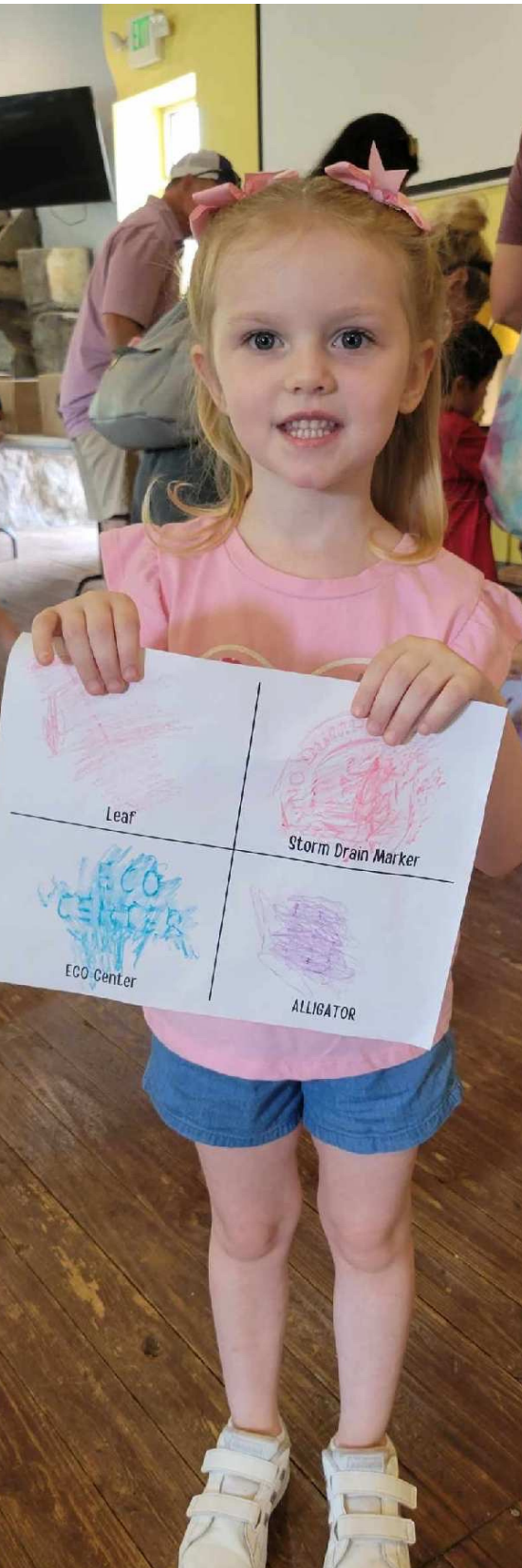
4968
students

The E.C.O. Center's 2022 school programs consisted of large and small groups from public schools, private schools, homeschool groups, and preschools. With educational content centered on wildlife and natural resources, we created interactive opportunities, both in-person and virtually, for students across a variety of ages and skill levels. The E.C.O. Center continues to develop new curriculum and maintain its reputation for quality school programs that meet both student & teacher expectations.



EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS & EVENTS

2314
students & adults



The E.C.O. Center provided educational opportunities for both children and adults beyond our school programs including youth archery, outreach events, Little Critters preschool programs, summer camps, library programs, and so much more. A variety of programs and events leads us to reach a diversity of populations.



10 YEAR CELEBRATION



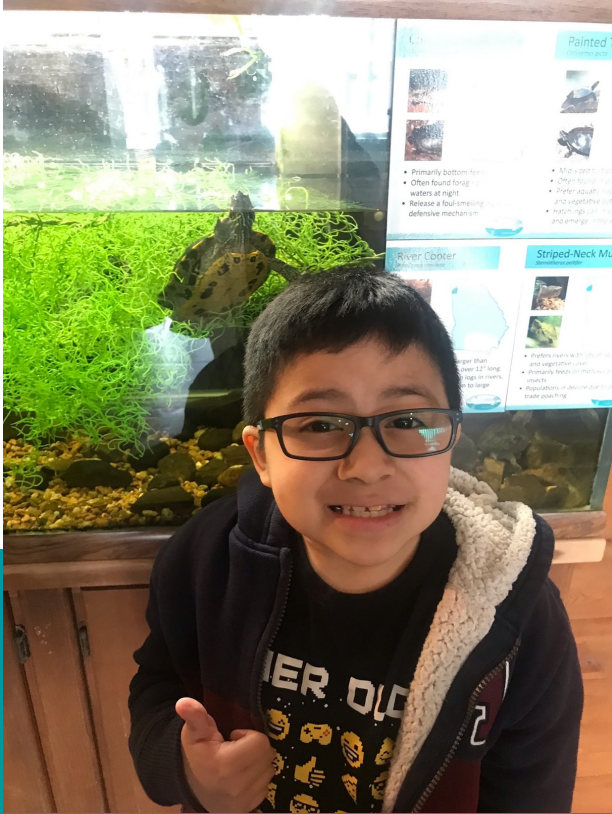
65,000+
students & adults

The E.C.O. Center reached an important milestone in 2022, celebrating 10 years of natural resource education. What began as a facility with just a couple of exhibits and very few programs or visitors is now a top education center serving Rome-Floyd County and the surrounding areas. Over 65,000+ students and adults have been impacted by an E.C.O. Center program or event these past 10 years which would not have been possible without the support of our City and County officials and the loyalty of our community. Thank you Rome and Floyd County!

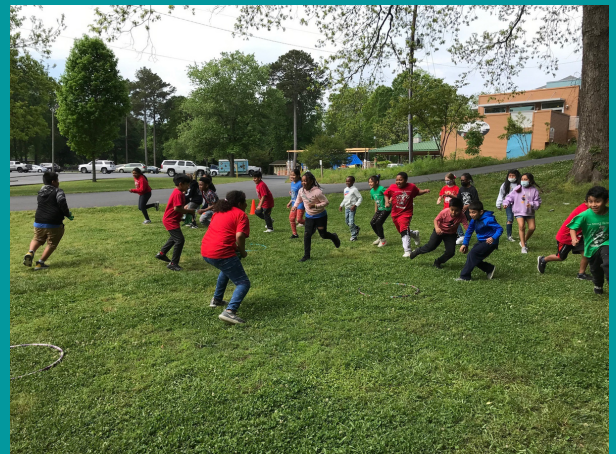


3RD GRADE GRANT

728
students



The International Paper Foundation graciously awarded the E.C.O. Center a \$3400 grant to cover the program fees for all 3rd graders in the city and county school systems. Nine of the thirteen elementary schools participated in the opportunity in the spring of 2022, totaling 728 3rd grade students. The E.C.O. Center helped connect classroom learning with hands-on experiences as students explore plants, wildlife, and habitats of the geographic regions of Georgia at this grade-level. Utilizing the Center's life animal exhibits and wetlands demonstration area, students could see first-hand the adaptations of wildlife that allows them to survive in their habitat.



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:

- A new mammal joined the team: Lucy the Virginia opossum
- A new lake sturgeon
- Upgraded juvenile spiny softshell tank
- Staff & volunteers began salamander exhibit project, expected to be complete in 2023

VOLUNTEERS



9-14
volunteers dedicated

50-84
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. Led by our Biologist II and Volunteer Coordinator, Jason Hosford, 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.