

# Under the Dock

March 2022



Newsletter of the Georgia Chapter of the  
American Fisheries Society

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## **Mark Your Calendar**

- **March 31**
  - Georgia Fish Art entries are due
- **April 22**
  - Earth Day
- **May 16 - 20**
  - Joint Aquatic Sciences Meeting in Grand Rapids, MI
- **May 21**
  - World Fish Migration Day
- **August 21 - 25**
  - AFS National Meeting in Spokane, WA
- **February 1, 2023**
  - SDAFS annual meeting in Virginia

***The newsletter is interactive - click on anything underlined or highlighted for more information and click on a laptop image for a video***



**Don't forget to nominate someone for the Chapter Spotlight**

**Professional Spotlight Nomination Form**  
**<https://forms.gle/T4cwW4A1zxkmzs7X6>**

**Student Spotlight Nomination Form**  
**<https://forms.gle/Xger4SyZozZx8fUg7>**

## **OUR MISSION**

**The mission of the American Fisheries Society and the Georgia Chapter is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.**

**You can help support our mission by becoming a member of Georgia Chapter AFS, joining the American Fisheries Society, becoming a Georgia AFS Sponsor, donating to our annual fundraiser, or participating in our annual meeting. Visit our website for more info.**

**<https://gaafs.org/>**

We welcome a broad range of submissions that address research and ideas relevant to marine and freshwater finfish and shellfish and their respective fisheries and environments. Submissions are due on the 21st of each month unless told otherwise.

Contact Rebecca Brown (georgiaafs@gmail.com) if you have questions. We also welcome suggestions for an aquatic species to highlight, safety tips, and ideas for the section *Did You Know*.

# DOCKSIDE

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I begin my term as President of the GA Chapter, I want to thank all those who attended our annual meeting in February, especially those who contributed their time and service to make the meeting a huge success. In addition to the work of these many hands, this meeting would not have been possible without generous financial support and merchandise contributions from our donors and sponsors. Supporting these businesses, individuals, and organizations is one small way we can express our appreciation. I want to thank all Georgia AFS members for continuing to support our Chapter and the efforts of our members.

I am humbled and honored to have the opportunity to serve such a prestigious group of individuals. I see how passionate you are when sharing your endeavors and it is truly inspiring. I believe in each of you, and I want to support your efforts and applaud your accomplishments. My goal is to assist you in finding solutions to the challenges we face and find others who may be willing to help.

Our Chapter is filled with Georgia's leading experts and researchers in the field of fisheries and beyond. I can assure you that your hard work and dedication are not going unnoticed. During the 2022 Southern Division of the

of the American Fisheries Society, our Chapter was presented with the SDAFS "Outstanding Small Chapter Award". This is the second year in a row the Chapter has earned this award and our Chapter is automatically submitted for consideration of the 2022 American Fisheries Society "Outstanding Small Chapter Award".



I am excited about some of the upcoming projects we have, including new continuing education opportunities, potential partnerships and collaborations, outreach opportunities, recruitment efforts, and more. I look forward to hearing any ideas and suggestions that you have which align with the mission of our Chapter: *to improve the conservation and sustainability of*



*fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals.*

Jane Goodall once said, "You cannot get through a single day without having an impact on the world around you. What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make." The impact of our Chapter's efforts is strengthened by your involvement. I encourage you to use your time and energy to move the Chapter forward. If you are currently serving on one of our Chapter committees, I extend my gratitude and encourage you to continue serving. If you have not yet found a place to serve, please consider reviewing our [standing committees](#) to see where you and your skills fit best. There is a place for everyone to serve, so please let me know where you feel compelled to contribute.

Lastly, I implore you to look around at the people you interact with on a regular basis. Do you see anyone that is not aware of our Chapter? I encourage you to send them a copy of our monthly newsletter, invite them to a meeting, or explain the benefits of Chapter membership and committee involvement. Do you see anyone who doesn't quite understand what we do or why? Offer to take them fishing or bring them into the field, lab, or classroom with you. There are many individuals in this world that are not aware of what we do, nor do they know how important it is, and it is up to each of us to educate them. Each of you possesses the ability to change that narrative... one person at a time.

*Marion Baker*

## **What can you find on our website?**

Our website is where we share information about the Chapter and its mission as well as additional resources for fisheries professionals, students, environmental educators, and others who are interested in the sustainable use of our aquatic resources.

Did you know our website also has:

- [The key to making great presentations for both oral and poster presenters](#)
- [Guidelines for facilitating a training workshop](#)
- [Aquatic education materials and resources](#)
- [Information for people interested in pursuing a career in fisheries science](#)
- [Strategies to improve your candidacy when applying for a fisheries job](#)



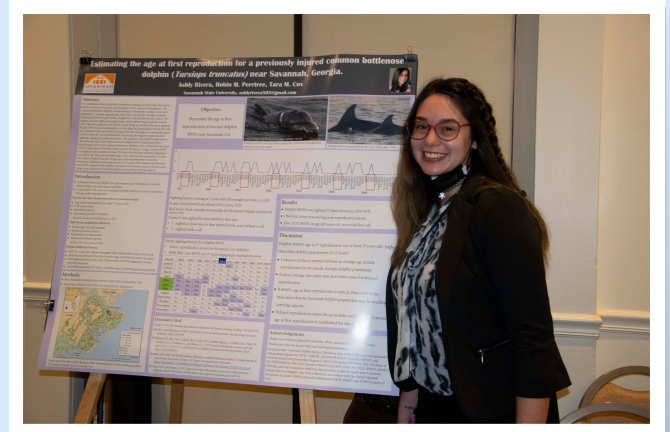
# NEWS & UPDATES

## Georgia AFS 2022 Annual Meeting

It was exciting to see everyone at the annual meeting on Jekyll Island last month. This meeting was our opportunity to connect or reconnect with colleagues and showcase some of the excellent work going on around our state.

The success of this year's annual meeting would not have been possible without the commitment of our Chapter officers, committee members, and volunteers as well as the generosity of our financial sponsors Georgia Power, University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, Georgia Aquarium, Lake Specialist, Pond Dam Piping, Georgia Southern University, University of Georgia Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant, and Eclipse Marine Group. We are also thankful to our local health care providers Northside Hospital Forsyth, Northeast Georgia Health System (Gainesville), and Georgia Department of Public Health Coastal Health District (Brunswick) for donating hand sanitizer for our event.

The meeting theme, *Exchanging Ideas, Removing Barriers, and Forging Partnerships for Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems* was our guide as we planned our annual meeting. The annual meeting was attended by 120 fisheries professionals and students who were able to enjoy the experience of a professional meeting in a format similar to the times before COVID. We had 44 students in attendance representing the University of Georgia, Savannah State





## News & Updates Continued



University, Georgia Southern University, Georgia Gwinnett College, Georgia College and State University, Kennesaw State University, College of Coastal Georgia, University of West Georgia, Clemson University, and Auburn University. The program included 35 oral presentations, 12 of which were by students, as well as 10 poster presentations, 9 of which were students. The featured symposium organized by Carolyn Belcher (Georgia DNR Coastal Resources Division) and Bryan Fluech (UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant) was *A Case Study in Interstate Fisheries Management: South Atlantic Red Drum*. The symposia included fisheries professionals from Georgia, South Carolina, and Florida. Additional presentations included an investigation into the abundance of mesopelagic species at the Cape Hatteras shelf break, Warrior bass distribution in Alabama, the spatial distribution of longnose gar in the Altamaha River, using UAVs to identify aquatic vegetation in reservoirs, contaminants in prey fishes near a superfund site in Brunswick, using genetic coding to connect mussel-host relationships in the Lower Flint River, controlling and managing whirling disease in Georgia, and many more. The complete program with abstracts can be found on our Chapter's website. <https://gaafs.org/2022-annual-meeting/>

Our keynote speaker, Susan Shipman, began the meeting with her presentation "The Path to Healthy Aquatic Ecosystems". Susan shared with us the importance of the Public Trust Doctrine as the fundamental legal underpinning for the stewardship of common property resources. It is a core principle central to natural resource conservation. Public trust lands, water, and living resources are held by the State for the common benefit of all people. This concept is continually being challenged by private property interests on the coast, especially given the real estate values of coastal

property. Essential fish habitat is a risk if the public trust doctrine is ignored or eroded. Through the Land Trust partnerships have been formed to help protect coastal shorelines from rising sea levels by using our knowledge of bioengineering and constructing living shorelines. These living shorelines protect valuable land and aquatic habitats.

### Georgia Chapter AFS 2022 Awards Ceremony

#### GAAFS Professional of the Year in Science and Research

This year the Chapter separated the GAAFS Fisheries Professional of the Year into two separate categories: GAAFS Professional of the Year in Fisheries Management and GAAFS Professional of the Year in Science and Research. We had many amazing nominations for each of the GAAFS Professional of the Year awards. Using the information provided by the nominators (excerpted below) we were able to select three finalists per each award category.

#### **Brett Albanese (Winner)**

- Brett Albanese is the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Conservation Assistant Chief. In January of 2021 he was moved to WRD headquarters to work on the upcoming State Wildlife Action Plan revision, regulatory issues related to nongame species, and supervision of the newly formed Freshwater Biodiversity Program. Additionally, this past year he helped form a new subcommittee of the SEAFWA Wildlife Diversity Committee, served as the Georgia DNR representative to the Sicklefin Redhorse Conservation Committee, taught the Georgia Fishes Course, and helped to develop and co-authored the description of the Etowah Bridled Darter that was published in 2021.





## GAAFS Professional of the Year in Science and Research



### **Bryan Fluech (First Runner-up)**

- Serving as Marine Extension and Georgia Sea grants State Fisheries Specialist, Bryan works with numerous programs and efforts around the State. In the past year, he assisted researchers in research projects ranging from developing new crab baits and understanding black gill in shrimp to developing new seafood products and ropeless technologies for fishing. He worked closely with management agencies including DNR and the South Atlantic council and served on recreational fishing task forces. He also went above and beyond to offer all of the UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant student interns, trainees, and visitors opportunities to learn about our State fisheries.



### **Peter Hazelton (Second Runner-up)**

- Pete Hazelton took active steps to advance DEI in the field of fisheries and STEM education in 2021. For example, he established a new collaborative project with UGA, Albany State University, and the Flint River Aquarium to help identify fish hosts for mussels in the Flint River. Peter also participated in an NIH program to give women and underrepresented scholars a path to research in biomed and life sciences. The student he mentored was able to actively participate in several research and outreach efforts, gaining valuable exposure to the fisheries profession.

## GAAFS Professional of the Year in Fisheries Management

### **Sarah Baker (Winner)**

- Sarah maintains a "can do" attitude in all areas of her job. Sarah led the effort to determine the disease status of our trout hatcheries and stocked trout waters by determining sampling protocols, collecting fish, processing fish tissue samples, coordinating with disease labs, and maintaining communications with all parties. Sarah surpasses her predecessors in using new tools for assessing and enhancing wild trout populations. Sarah also conducted several fishing workshops this year, which underscores her deep commitment to sharing her passion for fishing and the outdoors with women's groups and students.



### **John Lee Thomson (First Runner-up)**

- John Lee Thomson oversaw the 2-year renovation of Burton Trout Hatchery with incredible zeal and tenacious diligence. Trout fishing is a unique and high-demand element of fishing in northern Georgia, and the Burton facility is responsible for producing at least ¼ of a million trout each year to contribute to the statewide stocking program. It was critical that this renovation met the requirements to maintain or improve upon historical production efficiency, and John Lee provided invaluable feedback through hatchery construction that resulted in its successful completion. John Lee effectively communicated with engineers and regional staff while also serving as a reliable and congenial point of contact by the public throughout the process.





### **GAAFS Professional of the Year in Fisheries Management**

#### **Travis Ingram (Second Runner-up)**

- This past year Travis held the role of Senior Biologist, Hatchery Manager, and Hatchery Assistant. He shared his extensive knowledge of fish culture and biology with our new biologist and hatchery manager. He has mentored both with excellent results increasing fish production at the Cordele State Fish Hatchery. In addition, fish production under Travis' direct management at Steve Cocke Hatchery exceeded all fish crop quotas.



### **GAAFS Fisheries Conservationist of the Year**

The GAAFS Fisheries Conservationist of the Year is an award that is open to an individual or group for their outstanding contributions or service to fisheries conservation in Georgia. We had two exceptional candidates nominated this year for their phenomenal work to protect and conserve our trout fishery in Georgia.

#### **Oconee River Trout Unlimited Chapter (Winner)**

- The members of the Oconee River Chapter of Trout Unlimited (ORCTU) dedicate hundreds of volunteer hours to protecting, reconnecting, restoring, and sustaining Georgia's fisheries resources (including both cold- and warm-water streams and rivers). ORCTU was one of two key stakeholders responsible for initiating the Crayfish Creek Restoration Project on a tributary of the Chattahoochee River. ORCTU volunteers participate in many educational programs to increase awareness of aquatic conservation issues including the UGA 5 Rivers Club for college students, Trout In The Classroom programs for middle and high schools, the Athens Water Festival, Boy Scout Fly Fishing Merit Badge, and others. ORCTU members sponsor numerous events throughout the year designed to recruit, retain and reactivate anglers and get them engaged in aquatic conservation, including fishing trips, fly tying nights, and others.



### Georgia Department of Natural Resources Trout Program (Runner-up)

- Georgia DNR's trout hatchery program had an unusual year and was impacted by two new pathogens of extreme environmental concern. The trout hatchery team responded rapidly to thoroughly assess trout hatcheries and stocked streams, ethically euthanizing and disposing of all trout at two hatcheries as well as thoroughly disinfecting these facilities. In addition, the team was proactive in educating and updating the public and resource partners through news releases, social media posts, and public presentations. The team made great strides in replenishing the trout inventory with the purchase of disease-free fish from outside sources. Members of the trout hatchery team went above and beyond their regular work responsibilities to protect the health of all our trout species in Georgia.



### Certificate of Appreciation

- **Go Fish Education Center** for their commitment and dedication to aquatic educational outreach programs and your continual support of the Chapter and its mission.
- **Emily Owenby** for her dedication to learning about and implementing land conservation practices to help improve the ecosystem health of the Noontootla Creek watershed.
- Those who worked tirelessly to help put together the 2022 annual meeting:
  - **Brent Hess**
  - **Kevin Cavallaro**
  - **Zack Brock**
  - **Jordan Steele**
  - **Dawn Franco**
  - **Silk Road Catering**

### Distinguished Service Award

- **Jim Page** in recognition for his outstanding gift of time and energy supporting and contributing to the success of the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.

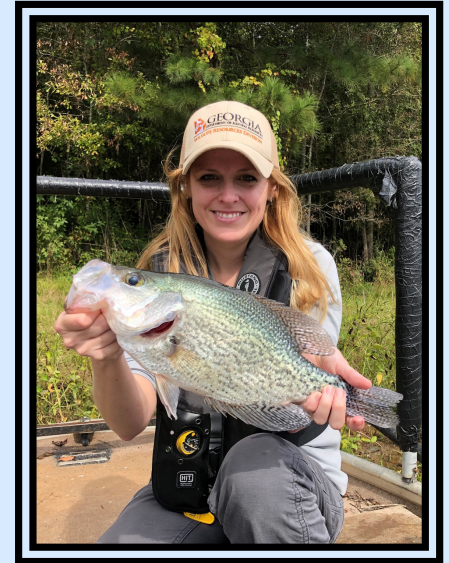
### Unsung Hero Award

- **Melissa Cummings** for her valuable behind-the-scene contributions to the conservation and sustainability of our fishery resources.



### Chapter President Award

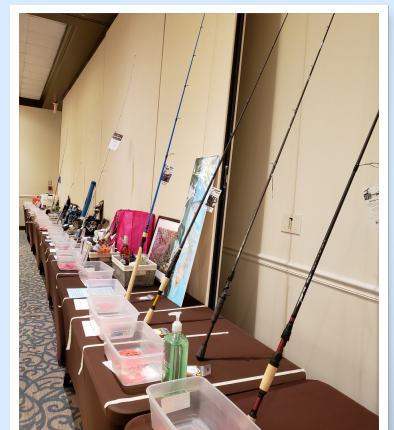
- **Marion Baker** for her outstanding service to the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society. This past year Marion has helped to develop a draft for a Women in Fisheries Retreat, contributed to the Chapter's fundraising efforts, is a fundamental member of the Chapter's newsletter editorial team, assisted with the design of the new Chapter logo, helped set up for the FAMS training workshop at the Go Fish Education Center, gave publicity to the Chapter and its mission on several different occasions, collaborated with other members of the Chapter to create the aquatic nuisance species workbook, is our liaison for the AFS Hutton Scholar Program, and helped with the design of the poster for the 2021 AFS national meeting.



***See Campus Corner for our list of student award winners.***

### **Georgia Chapter AFS Annual Fundraiser**

Our fundraising team keeps raising the bar. We had more than 40 businesses and people donate an item(s) for our annual fundraiser. And thanks to our generous members participating in our annual raffle and silent auction we were able to raise \$5500 to support aquatic education outreach projects, habitat restoration projects, continuing education workshops, and future projects that support the Chapter's mission. We are very thankful to all those who were able to donate to our annual fundraiser and make this possible. You can find a complete list of our fundraising donors on our website. <https://gaafs.org/>





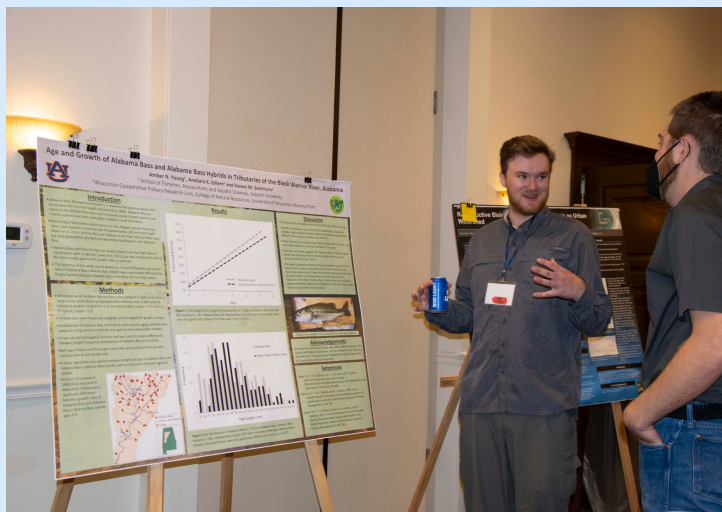
## New Chapter Logo

The new Georgia Chapter AFS logo has been selected. Members voted on their favorite design and the following logo was chosen to represent the Chapter.



## The 2022 Executive Committee Members

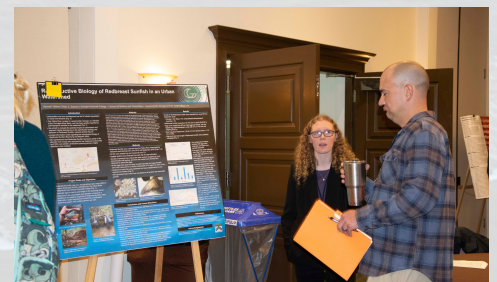
- Chapter President: Marion Baker
- President-Elect: Ani Escobar
- Recording Secretary-Treasurer: Dawn Franco
- Executive Secretary-Treasurer: Rebecca Brown
- Past President: Robert Bringolf
- UGA Subunit President: Joel Yeager
- *Ex Officio*: Cecil Jennings





# 2022 Student Award Winners

Last month college students from Georgia, South Carolina, and Alabama attended the 2022 Georgia Chapter AFS annual meeting at Jekyll Island. Twenty-one of these students also presented their research as an oral presentation or a poster presentation. Students in attendance were from the University of Georgia, Savannah State University, Georgia Southern University, Georgia Gwinnett College, Georgia College and State University, Kennesaw State University, College of Coastal Georgia, University of West Georgia, Clemson University, and Auburn University.



Each year at our annual meeting we award the best student oral presentations and best poster presentations. Our volunteer judges remarked how incredible our student presenters were this year. The forms used by our judges can be found on our website along with a list of resources to assist students and professionals when they are preparing their presentations for a professional meeting. <https://gaafs.org/presentation-resources/>



# Best Student Oral Presentations



## First Place

Taylor Ransome

Savannah State University

"Ingestion of nylon fibers by larval freshwater Dipteran, *Chironomus riparius*"



## Second Place

Alaina Davis

University of Georgia

"Effects of environmental factors on spatial distribution of Longnose Gar (*Lepisosteus osseus*) in the Altamaha River"



## Third Place

Maxwell Kleinhans

University of Georgia

"Modeling water quality influence on juvenile Atlantic Sturgeon aggregation in the Altamaha River Estuary, Georgia"



# Best Student Poster Presentations



## First Place

Amber Young

Auburn University

"Age and growth of Alabama bass hybrids in tributaries of the Black Warrior River, Alabama"



## Second Place

Lady Volmar and Alexandria Tennant

Savannah State University

"Microplastic characteristics, distribution, and abundances in the Savannah River, Georgia"



## Third Place

Eric Parks

Savannah State University

"Recruitment and abundance of larval and juvenile Bay Whiff, *Citharichthys spilopterus*, in Wyll Creek near Savannah, Georgia"



# Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship



The Ronnie J. Gilbert Student Scholarship provides \$500 to one outstanding student who is a member of the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society at the time of their application. College students who are currently pursuing an education that will allow them to seek careers that help improve, manage, and protect our aquatic natural resources are encouraged to apply.

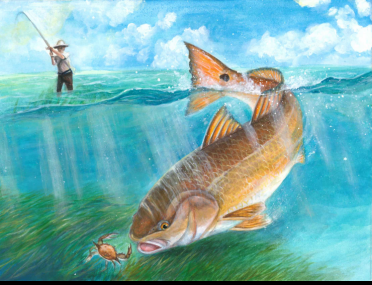
Lauren Everett was this year's recipient of the Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship. Lauren is a graduate student at the University of Georgia Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources. Lauren is interested in exploring long-term and

short-term fishery-independent data to investigate patterns, determine the influence of environmental and bioclimatic variables, and hopefully create Georgia's first quantitative estuarine food web to forecast future changes to the fishery. Her special interests include data visualization through both GIS and R, to present work in ways that are helpful for scientists, but also to convey findings to the general public. She hopes to create a dynamic food web for the general public to explore and experiment with online.

Lauren is a very active member of the Georgia Chapter AFS and the GAAFS UGA-Student Subunit. Most recently Lauren organized the first ever Georgia Chapter AFS Student Colloquium. This virtual event provided students an opportunity to practice their presentations before presenting at the Georgia Chapter AFS annual meeting. Students presented their work to their peers, received constructive peer-feedback, and had an opportunity to get to know each other prior to the annual meeting. Although the first student colloquium was smaller than she hoped, the students who participated enjoyed the experience and connecting with students from other colleges.

Next year Lauren plans to host the GAAFS Student Colloquium the week prior to the Chapter's annual meeting to provide students more time to prepare their presentations. Any student interested in learning more about how they can participate in Georgia Chapter activities can contact Lauren at [lauren.carroll25@uga.edu](mailto:lauren.carroll25@uga.edu).





# Georgia Fish Art Contest



Got a young artist residing in your home? Be sure to encourage them to enter Wildlife Forever's annual Fish Art contest. This contest is open to kids in Grades K-12, but the **deadline for entries is March 31st**.

Students across the United States and internationally have the opportunity to win prizes and recognition while learning about fish species, behaviors, aquatic habitats, and conservation. Using art, this contest ignites children's imagination while teaching them about fish and fishing.

The Fish Art Contest offers many different award categories to recognize our contestants' unique talents and to focus on important conservation topics and issues.

To enter, young artists create an original illustration of their chosen fish species from the Official Fish List. **An essay, story, or poem based on species behavior, habitat, and/or conservation needs is also awarded.**



## ENTRY GUIDELINES

## DIFFERENT AWARD CATEGORIES

## GEORGIA ENTRY FORMS



# SDAFS AQUATIC PLANT TREATMENT PLANS

The **Small Impoundments Technical Committee** is planning to host an aquatic plant workshop at the 2023 SDAFS annual meeting. Our goal is to provide identification as well as up-to-date control information for the most problematic aquatic species we are faced with within the Southeast. By polling SDAFS representatives from each state, we have developed a list of the top 23 problematic aquatic plants in southeastern impoundments. As new products and techniques are being used to control aquatic vegetation in both private and public water bodies in the Southeast, the informational literature is outdated. Therefore, we are polling professional applicators across the Southeast to gather more up-to-date control information that can be available to applicators. Please use this form and answer the questions for each plant listed below based on your own personal experiences, and in as much detail as you are willing.



**<https://forms.gle/TEoQRESKwq1Eonrh9>**

**NOTE:** Obviously, choosing the best, comprehensive weed control program for a particular body of water can be very subjective and requires a level of experience literature can't provide. This poll is just intended to provide the best biological and chemical tools available to battle each plant species. Thus, for now, there is no need to mention other techniques such as retreatment, combining biological and chemical, shading with fertilization or dyes, deepening shallow areas, nutrient reduction, etc. There is no need to indicate any state restrictions for biological control or chemical control agents. Applicators should be aware of this already. Also, refrain from listing specific chemical application rates or possible water quality/toxicity issues as this information is listed in the product label and should be left to the discretion of the applicator in each situation.

**ANOTHER NOTE:** You will be asked to provide the most effective chemical treatment for each plant; however, a different chemical treatment may be more practical or affordable in some situations. Provide that info in the "Additional Notes or Comments" section at the bottom. Also, if your control information for one plant is the same as another plant on the list, then you can just indicate that besides the plant's name. If you have no experience controlling a particular plant, just leave blank.

**Alligator weed**

**American Lotus**

**Bluegreen Algae**

**Brazilian Elodea**

**Cattails**

**Coontail**

**Duckweeds**

**Eurasian Watermilfoil**

**Filamentous Algae**

**Fragrant Water Lily**

**Giant Salvinia**

**Hydrilla**

**Muskgrass (Chara sp.)**

**Parrot Feather**

**Pondweeds (Potamogeton spp.)**

**Southern Naiad**

**Spatterdock (or Cow lily)**

**Water Hyacinth**

**Water Lettuce**

**Water Pennywort**

**Water Primrose**

**Watermeal**

**Watershield**



# Sponsor Highlight

**Our sponsors are critical to the success of our annual meeting and our efforts to promote the conservation and sustainability of our fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems in Georgia.**



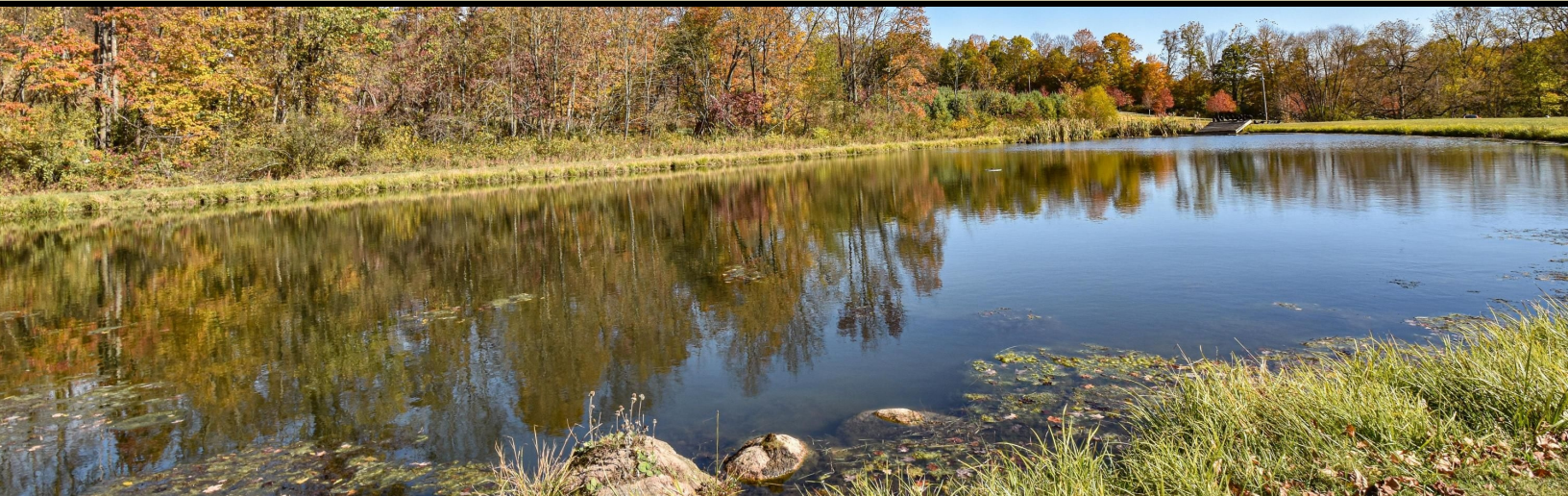
Pond Dam Piping, Ltd. has over 30 years of experience in assisting landowners and contractors with pond installation. They offer conventional PVC pond pipe systems, spillway siphon systems, and the low watershed "A" system for effective, low-cost water management control to fit any aquacultural development.

Their large inventory of stock items ensures quick, efficient service. Customized systems, which may require fabricated specialized fittings, are their specialty and can be shipped without undue delay. Along with the basic components needed to complete the project, Pond Dam Piping, Ltd. offers a line of accessories that will add to the enjoyment of any pond. A "custom made" dock can be assembled from their "Connect-A-Dock" sections.

**Visit their website for more information**



**<https://www.ponddampiping.com>**



# Thank you for your Support!

## GAAFS 2022 Sponsors

Click on image to visit website

### Platinum

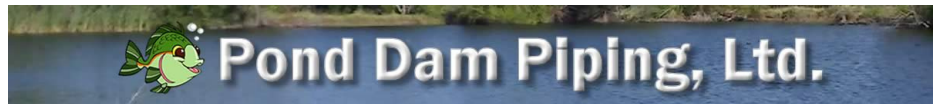


Georgia  
Power

### Gold



### Silver



Marine Extension and  
Georgia Sea Grant  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



### Bronze



In-Kind  
Donation



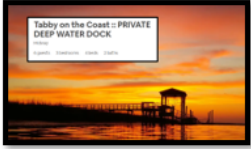
Northeast Georgia Health System, Inc.™



# Thank you for your Support!

## GAAFS 2022 Fundraising Donors

Click on image to visit website





## Chapter Spotlight

Cameron Atkinson

Cameron is from Rome, GA. He is currently a master's student at Savannah State University. As an undergraduate, he attended the College of Coastal Georgia. His research interests center around fish habitat restoration and how fish utilize these restored habitats. He will be finishing his master's degree in December 2022. Prior to his final year at the College of Coastal Georgia, he had the opportunity to intern with the GA DNR, CRD. This internship afforded him the opportunity to work with "many great fisheries professionals and to gain skills that will prove invaluable as my career progresses." Cameron was the recipient of the Georgia Chapter AFS Scholarship in 2020 and won first place for best poster presentation that same year.



### What attracted you to pursue a degree in fisheries science?

*My love for fishing is what lead me to pursue a degree in fisheries science. As a young kid, I was fortunate enough to have a small pond in the woods behind my house that was full of bluegill and small catfish. I would spend hours on the bank of the pond catching fish with my small Zebco rod baited with bread I took from our pantry. When I was in middle school, I discovered saltwater fishing while on a trip to the beach. Saltwater fishing immediately became my favorite hobby, and I quickly began to realize how much I was intrigued by marine fishes. When it came time to go to college, I knew I wanted to pick a course of study that would allow me to obtain a career working with the marine fishes that I loved.*

### What is one of your favorite memories as a student at Savannah State University?

*One of my favorite memories during my time at SSU came at the 2022 GA AFS meeting. I enjoyed getting to presenting the data I have collected during the first year of my master's research. It was also great to attend the meeting with several other SSU students and watch them present their research.*



### What advice would you give other students?

*There are two key pieces of advice I would give to other students. First, take advantage of every opportunity to participate in field work. There are many valuable skills in this career path that you cannot gain without being out in the field. Secondly, try to familiarize yourself with as many statistical and spatial analysis programs as possible. Being able to successfully use these programs will be crucial to analyzing the data you collect in your research.*



# Chapter Spotlight Continued

## Describe any projects you are currently working on for your research.

*My thesis research is comparing the use of a traditional (bagged oyster shell) and a novel (Oystercatcher – jute fibers dipped in cement) substrate for oyster reef restorations in Georgia. I am quantifying the growth and development of the restored reefs to determine if one substrate type is potentially more successful in Georgia's estuaries. I am also quantifying nekton-use metrics between the reef types to determine if the habitat is being provisioned at different rates between substrate types. The goal of this research is to develop a better understanding of how to increase the success rate of future restoration projects.*

## In 10 years, what would you like to have accomplished?

*In 10 years, I hope to have contributed useful research for fisheries managers through the completion of my master's and PhD degrees. I also hope to be settled into a career working at either the state or federal government level as a fisheries scientist that is actively involved with improving fish habitat.*

## What is your favorite fish and why?

*My favorite fish is the Tarpon (*Megalops atlanticus*). There are many unique facts about this prehistoric fish that I find intriguing. However, the main reason the Tarpon is my favorite fish is due to just how fun is to fish for them. For me, there is nothing more exciting than watching a school of rolling Tarpon swimming toward you, getting one to eat your bait/lure, and fighting the fish as they jump out of the water trying to throw the hook.*



## What is your favorite quote?

*"The time is always right to do what is right."  
~Martin Luther King Jr.*



## What are some of your favorite extracurricular activities?

*The things I love to do the most all center around being out in nature. Like many in this field, I love to go fishing and SCUBA diving. I try as much as I can to make it back up to Rome during the turkey and deer seasons to go hunting. I grew up playing just about every sport that was offered which made me into a competitive person, so I try to scratch that itch by playing golf. My wife is a good tennis player and I have recently started playing against her which has been a good way to get the competitive juices flowing.*



## What is something about yourself that others may be surprised to know about you?

*Others might be surprised to know that I am a complete nerd about golf course architecture. If it wasn't for my passion for fisheries science, I would have likely pursued a career in golf course architecture. I am particularly intrigued by some of the first golf courses that were ever constructed in Scotland and I hope to visit these courses someday.*

# DID YOU KNOW

## Carp Fishing Is Very Popular in the UK Premier Fishing Competition

Fish 'O' Mania, now over a quarter of a century old, is one of the great summertime sporting occasions in Europe. Known as the 'FA Cup of Fishing', the competition involves 24 anglers who have qualified through heats across England and Europe, fishing for a massive £50,000 first prize (more than 67,000 U.S. dollars).

The event gains much of its excitement by abandoning the traditional weigh-in at the conclusion of the match and instead features weigh-ins every 30 minutes which gives the event a changing leader board that makes the action easy to follow. At the conclusion of the five-hour match, the angler with the greatest aggregate weight of the ten weigh-ins will be declared the champion.

The evening prior to the tournament the 24 qualified anglers draw for their peg assignment. Every angler must fish from within one meter on either side of his/her designated peg. Some other general rules include:

- Only silver fish to count and F1's/Goldfish (no king/mirror/koi/grass carp)
- A competitor shall have in use one rod or pole, one line, and one single hook at a time.
- Any bait, subject to local rules, can be used except live or dead fish, frogs, spinning baits, or artificial lures.
- The maximum permitted length of poles is 16 meters (~52 feet).
- No floating baits, barbless hooks only, and no use of floating poles



*Harry Bignell won 2021 Cazoo FishOMania by the biggest winning margin in the competition's history as he landed the £50,000 title with 85.225kg, 63kg more than second-placed Sam Brown.*



*Learn more about this fishing event - FishOMania 2018*



*Using slingshots to lure fish in with groundbait seems to be popular among FishOMania anglers.*



# BUBBA'S PLACE

## COFFEE BREAK

### What is the largest crayfish in the world?

The Giant Freshwater Crayfish (*Astacopsis gouldi*) is the largest freshwater crayfish in the world and is found only in rivers in the north of Tasmania. Mature adults are capable of reaching 6 kg (~13 lbs) in weight. But in recent years the majority of larger specimens are 2–3 kilograms (4.4–6.6 lbs).



## BUBBA'S VIDEO PICK

**Jeremy Wade captures giant  
crayfish of Tasmania**



## BUBBA RECOMMENDS

Bubba has art on his mind because Georgia Fish Art Contest entries are due March 31st. Check out some of our local artists who contributed to our 2022 annual fundraiser.

Jody Rankin - Local Coastal Studio  
<https://localcoastal.com/>



Eric Jablonowski  
<https://www.ericjablonowski.com/>



Eric recently was awarded first place in the annual Pacific Salmon Conservation Stamp Competition. His entry, *On the Move - Salmon Swimming Upstream* will be featured on the 2022-23 Salmon Conservation Stamp.

## Safety Tip

from Bubba Bass



### **PREVENT THE SPREAD OF ANS**

Aquatic Nuisance Species, or ANS, continue to create significant problems throughout the country, including Georgia. These invasive species cause serious ecological and economic damage to our ecosystems, and the best way to defeat them is to prevent their introduction. Do you properly clean your fish sampling equipment after a long day of work on the water? Fisheries professionals, anglers, boaters, and students all need to take precautions to prevent these unwanted pests from being introduced. So, how can YOU help?

#### **Practice CLEAN, DRAIN, DRY:**

- **CLEAN** all sampling equipment thoroughly, removing visible aquatic plants, animals, and mud. This includes washing the exterior and interior of collection tanks/buckets, waders, sampling gear, boats, trailers, motors, etc. For maximum benefit, use high-pressure hot water when possible, including flushing the motor with hot water.
- **DRAIN** watercraft bilge, collection tanks, motors, live-wells, and other water-containing devices after thoroughly cleaning them.
- **DRY** everything for 5 days or wipe thoroughly with a towel before you reuse.

Taking actions like these will help minimize the likelihood that ANS are unknowingly transported to and released into other water bodies. Remember, **THE ACTIONS WE TAKE AND THE CHOICES WE MAKE TODAY IMPACT TOMORROW AND BEYOND.**

## Bubba's Friends



### **Redbreast Sunfish (*Lepomis auritus*)**

The redbreast sunfish is one of our most colorful sunfish. It is a panfish native to the river systems in the eastern United States and eastern Canada, from New Brunswick to Central Florida. The redbreast sunfish is often sought out by anglers because they taste good.

Redbreasts prefer areas that have moving water. The best place to look for the redbreast sunfish is in streams, swamps, and rivers that have current.

The redbreast sunfish diet is more varied than all other sunfishes. It prefers bottom-dwelling food organisms like snails, insect larvae, clams, small fish, and crayfish. Sometimes it eats small minnows, crawdads, and mollusks when available.

Invasive flathead catfish in the Altamaha River and the Satilla River are a threat to the redbreast populations because large flatheads like to feed upon sunfish and other small fish species.



**Georgia State Record**  
**1 lb. 11 oz.**



## Fin and Games

**Do you know what fish has the longest known lifespan of all vertebrate species?**

The Greenland shark. Greenland sharks grow at a very slow rate (less than 1 cm per year) and they can reach over 6 meters in size. By carbon-dating a protein found in their eyes scientists found, a 5-meter female, was between 272 and 512 years old.



## Boost Your BrainPower

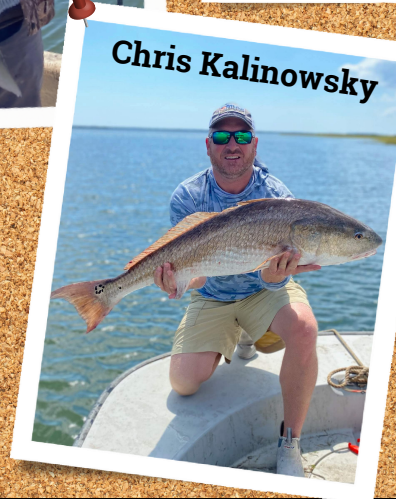
**Cryptogram - use the clue provided to solve the phrase**

YQUXU MXU ODULYN HK KBFQ BL YQU FUM.

Hint: There are 3 T's

(Answer on last page)

**CONGRATULATIONS** Ryan Harrell of Georgia DNR Coastal Resources Division for winning our first ever Bubba's Contest that Pays! Thank you to all who participated. We will have a few more contests this year. The answers to January's word scramble can be found on the last page.

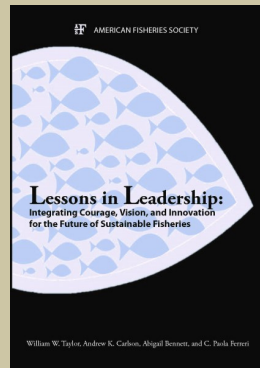


**PROPS**



# The Book Shelf

## PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE SECTION

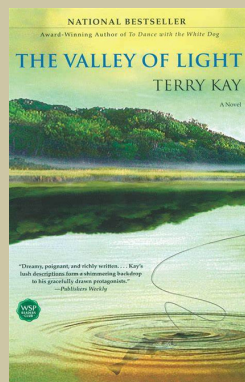


### Lessons in Leadership: Integrating Courage, Vision, and Innovation for the Future of Sustainable Fisheries

Edited by William Taylor, Andrew Carlson, Abigail Bennett, and C. Paola Ferreri.

<https://fisheries.org/bookstore/all-titles/professional-and-trade/55083p/>

## FICTIONAL SECTION

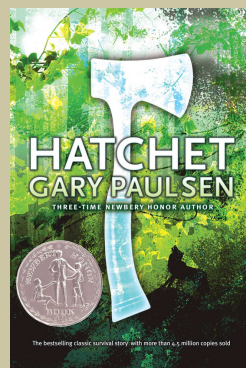


### The Valley of Light By Terry Kay (Georgia Author)

A quiet, simple man and a war veteran, Noah has a mystical gift for fishing. His wandering—doing odd jobs and catching fish for sale or trade—is both an escape from his past and a search for a place to call home.

[Amazon Link](#) 

## YOUNG ADULT SECTION



### Hatchet By Gary Paulsen

This award-winning contemporary classic is the survival story with which all others are compared—and a page-turning, heart-stopping adventure, recipient of the Newbery Honor. Hatchet has also been nominated as one of America's best-loved novels by PBS's The Great American Read.

[Amazon Link](#) 

## CHILDREN'S SECTION



### A Different Pond By Bao Phi

A 2018 Caldecott Honor Book that Kirkus Reviews calls "a must-read for our times," A Different Pond is an unforgettable story about a simple event - a long-ago fishing trip.

[Amazon Link](#) 



# FISHY NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

## **Minnesota Sea Grant**

### SEA GRANT STUDY SEEKS INCREASED IN-STATE GOLDEN SHINER PRODUCTION

If successful, this project could increase the supply of in-state produced Golden Shiners for anglers, create new in-state business opportunities for growing bait, and help protect native fish communities.

## **The Fish Site**

### UPWARD FARMS ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR WORLD'S LARGEST INDOOR VERTICAL FARM

Upward Farms new Pennsylvania facility boasts an aquaponics system for microgreens and fish production, with plans to serve the Northeastern United States and beyond.

## **Science Daily**

### ANTARCTIC RESEARCH REVEALS LINK BETWEEN WARMING AND FISH ABUNDANCE

A long-term study in the Southern Ocean reveals a clear correlation between warming waters, decreased sea ice, and reduced abundance of Antarctic silverfish. These small, abundant fish are important prey for penguins, seals, and other regional marine life, in a role similar to that played by anchovies or sardines in more temperate waters.

## **National Fisherman**

### ROPELESS GEAR PUTS SOUTH ATLANTIC BLACK SEA BASS FISHERMEN BACK ON THE WATER

For the first time in nearly a decade, South Atlantic pot fishermen will be able to harvest black sea bass in winter months, bringing life back to an artisanal, yet economically important, fishery for Southern ports. NMFS recently granted an Exempted Fishing Permit — the first of its kind — that allows fishermen to deploy ropeless gear to catch the species.

## **Australia**

### WEST AUSTRALIAN HERRING STOCKS 'FULLY RECOVERED' AFTER SEVEN YEAR FISHERY CLOSURE, REPORT SAYS

The method takes advantage of data collected by underwater microphones known as hydrophones and provides an efficient and inexpensive way to understand changes in the marine environment due to climate change and other human-caused influences, said researchers from Oregon State's Cooperative Institute for Marine Ecosystem and Resource Studies.

## **Eureka Alert (Flinders University)**

### THE SECRETS OF FISH SURVIVAL IN THE DESERT

How life manages to persist in unpredictable and extreme environments is a major question in evolution. For aquatic animals, extreme environments include those with little water such as the deserts of central Australia.

# AFS INFORMATION



## What Do Fish Mean to Us? Perspectives Above and Below the Water

The American Fisheries Society, President Leanne Roulson, the AFS Western Division, and the Washington – British Columbia Chapter are excited to host the 152nd AFS Annual Meeting, August 21–25, 2022, in the second largest city in Washington State, Spokane. The city of Spokane is on the Spokane River, part of the Snake and Columbia River system, making it ideal for examining the variety of roles and meanings of fish in science and culture. The Spokane area, part of the unceded lands of the Spokane Tribe, is rich in resident and migratory fish and wildlife important to indigenous peoples of the area. We hope that you will take advantage of this opportunity to experience and explore this focal area for fish, fisheries conservation and management, and human resource use.

We will bring together professionals from across North America and countries around the world under the theme of “What Do Fish Mean to Us?”. In the spirit of exploring differing perspectives, we are soliciting symposia topics, collaborative efforts, contributed papers, and posters that exemplify the latest research in fisheries science and that will benefit a range of audiences with the aim of advancing the science of fisheries ecology, conservation, and management.

<https://afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org/>

### Are you a member of the American Fisheries Society?

- Membership to the Georgia Chapter is separate from being a member of the American Fisheries Society (AFS). Please visit the AFS membership website to learn more about being part of the largest professional society of fisheries scientists in the world.



<https://fisheries.org/membership/types-of-membership/>

Some benefits for becoming a member of AFS:

- Free online and mobile app access to AFS publications
- Discounts on books in the AFS bookstore
- Discounted registration fees
- Opportunities for AFS travel grants
- Attend continuing education courses at reduced registration rates
- Access to online webinars
- Able to vote on Society and Chapter business



Learn more about AFS: <https://fisheries.org/about/>

**Click on the laptop to watch a video**





American Fisheries Society



## Don't Miss Out — Renew Today!

Renew your AFS Membership today to continue enjoying the plethora of resources that help members **Connect**, **Advance**, and **Save** in their careers as a fisheries professional!

### Connect

Network with fellow fisheries professionals through AFS events and groups!

- Meetings — Enhance your network at in-person, virtual, regional, and/or international meetings
- Volunteer for service opportunities — Join an AFS Committee!
- Join an AFS Section specific to your area of expertise

### Advance

Take advantage of AFS's multiple career-enhancing opportunities!

- Continuing Education (CE) Courses
- AFS Career Center and Job Board
- Professional Certification Program
- Access to AFS's Webinar Series

### Save

Receive substantial discounts on a multitude of fisheries resources!

- Registration discounts for meetings
- AFS Bookstore — more than 180 fisheries book titles!
- Free online access to AFS Journals
- *Fisheries* monthly magazine included

# SUGGESTIONS? LET MINNOW!

**You can contribute. We need your input. Help keep the GA AFS members connected.**

Are you working on an interesting project you'd like to share with other Georgia AFS members? Do you have news to share with colleagues? Please make note of upcoming events, projects, personnel changes, issues, or anything else of interest to other Georgia AFS members, and pass them on to us for inclusion in the next newsletter.

Do you have any pictures you want to share with us to use on our website or newsletter? We are always looking for fish pictures, pictures of you working, aquatic scenic pictures, etc.

Do you have someone you want to nominate for the professional or student spotlight?

Have you caught a fish recently you want to submit for our "Props!" page? We also welcome immediate family members pictures of fish they recently caught.

You can send your nominations, requests, pictures, suggestions, and comments to Rebecca Brown at [georgiaafs@gmail.com](mailto:georgiaafs@gmail.com).

## Stay Connected

### GAAFS Website

[gaafs.org](http://gaafs.org)

### Facebook

[facebook.com/groups/georgiaafs.org](https://facebook.com/groups/georgiaafs.org)

### Twitter

[@GeorgiaAfs](https://twitter.com/GeorgiaAfs)

### Instagram

[@georgiaafs](https://www.instagram.com/georgiaafs)

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Brent Hess**

Answer to Fin and Games  
There are plenty of fish in the sea  
January answer  
Just Keep Swimming