

Under the Dock

March/April 2023



Newsletter of the Georgia Chapter of the
American Fisheries Society

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Mark Your Calendar

- **March 3-9**
 - 9th World Fisheries Congress, Seattle, WA
- **March 25-26**
 - Etowah Wildlife Expo, Canton, GA
- **Mid to late-April (Date TBD)**
 - GAAFS Virtual Business Meeting
- **April 22**
 - GA DNR CRD CoastFest, Brunswick, GA
- **May 12**
 - Trout Fishing with Mom at Unicoi State Park
 - 9am - 2pm (fishing with a spinning rod)
 - volunteers needed to help participants
 - contact Sarah Baker (sarah.baker@dnr.ga.gov)
- **May 15-18**
 - 1st Latin American & Caribbean Fisheries Congress, Cancun, Mexico
- **August 20 - 24**
 - AFS 153rd annual meeting, Michigan
- **January 31 - February 4**
 - SDAFS annual meeting - Chattanooga, TN

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 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/>

The newsletter is interactive - if the font is blue you can click on it for more information. Click on a laptop image for a video



We are looking for high-quality photos to use for the newsletter cover page. We are in need of pictures showing fisheries professionals and students working (lab, fieldwork, etc.).



Do you have an idea for an article?

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. Articles range from 250 to 1200 words.

Contact us at GeorigaAFS@gmail.com if you have questions. We also welcome suggestions for an aquatic species to highlight, safety tips, and ideas for the sections *Did You Know* and *The Bookshelf*.

ON THE CALENDAR

March 21 International Day of Forests

Celebrated on March 21st every year, the International Day of Forests was established by the United Nations General Assembly in 2012.



The theme for 2023 is "**Forests and health.**"

Forests give so much to our health. They purify the water, clean the air, fight climate change, provide food, and produce life-saving medicines.



Forests play an important role in keeping our rivers, streams, lakes, and oceans healthy. Trees and other vegetation improve water quality by reducing soil erosion, decreasing stormwater runoff, and filtering out sediments and chemical pollutants.

March 21 - June 21 Great American Cleanup

Celebrating its 25th year, the Great American Cleanup creates opportunities for millions of volunteers to have remarkable results – picking up millions of pounds of litter, cleaning over 100,000 acres of public spaces, and tens of thousands of miles of roadways and shorelines.

In 2022, the Keep Georgia Beautiful Foundation network collected 608,563 pounds of litter and debris; recycled over 1.28 million pounds of materials; cleaned 3,322 miles of roadways, waterways, parks, and trails; and planted 4,919 trees and shrubs.

Clean up around your favorite fishing spot
or find an event near you.

<https://www.kgbf.org/the-great-american-cleanup>



NEWS & UPDATES

Georgia AFS 2023 Annual Meeting

The 2023 Georgia AFS annual meeting at Epworth by the Sea was a great success. Although we had to move to a new venue at the last minute the planning team was able to put together a great meeting for our 144 attendees. The success of the meeting was because of the many volunteers we have that give their time and energy to make sure we are able to deliver a memorable meeting experience for our participants.

Thank you all for contributing to the success of the annual meeting



Marion Baker
Brandon Baker
Dawn Franco
Craig Franco
Brent Hess
Kevin Cavallaro
Zack Brock
Steve Sammons
Jamie Roberts
Lauren Albury
Kevin Bleier
Jim Page

Jackson Sibley
Richard Childers
Garrett Cooke
Carolyn Belcher
Justin Bythwood
Donna McDowell
Chalisa Fabillar
Kimberly Clements
Jonathon Pritchard
Mike Newbrey
Ani Escobar
Lauren Carroll-Everett

Jay Shelton
Guy Eroh
Clint Peacock
Amory Cook
Robert Bringolf
Doug Haymans
Hunter Roop
Emilia Omerberg
Laura Wenk
Don Harrison
Bryant Bowen
Rebecca Brown

In addition to the names listed above a shout out to our keynote speaker, Mike Allen, volunteer judges, session moderators, special session presenters (Kimberly Bonvechio, Bryan Fluech, and Jim Page), oral and poster presenters, and the staff at Epworth by the Sea.

We Had A Record-Setting Year

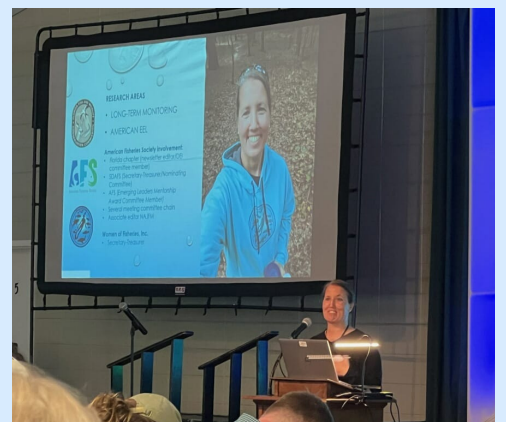
- 3 - the most meeting venues selected for a meeting
- 48 - most student participants
- 11 - most colleges and universities represented
- 21 - most student posters presented
- \$7000 - most money raised by annual fundraiser
- 1 - most AFS President-elects to attend meeting



GAAFS 2023 Annual Meeting

Special Events

This year the GAAFS 2023 planning team had a goal of including a few special events and additional networking opportunities for meeting participants. In addition to our keynote speaker, Mike Allen, starting off our meeting by sharing how we can improve our impact as fisheries professionals by collaborating with other stakeholders, we had our first in-person trivia night hosted by Jonathon Pritchard, a fly fishing 101 crash course facilitated by Jay Shelton, Jackson Sibley, and Guy Eroh, our first student-mentor luncheon organized by Lauren Carroll-Everett and Ani Escobar, and an afternoon of special sessions by Kimberly Bonvechio (*Women of Fisheries, Inc. and the Importance of Allyship*), Bryan Fluech (*UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant - Student Opportunities*), and Jim Page (*Building Partnerships with Other Stakeholders*).



GAAFS 2023 Annual Meeting Awards Ceremony



Each year at the annual meeting Georgia AFS recognizes and acknowledges outstanding individuals or organizations for their achievements and excellence in support of the Chapter's mission and objectives.

Georgia AFS 2023 Certificate of Appreciation

McDuffie Environmental Education Center



For their commitment and dedication to teaching Georgia's youth about aquatic conservation and sustainability.

Craig Franco & Inspire



For setting up the background lights for our annual meeting and adding a little flare to the Brown Center auditorium.

Awards Ceremony

Georgia AFS 2023 Distinguished Service Award

Zack Brock



Hospitality Coordinator, GAAFS
Annual Meeting Planning Team,
Judge, Technical Assistant,
Fundraising Team

Lauren Carroll-Everett



Chair of GAAFS Membership and
Student Affairs Committee,
Student-Mentor Luncheon, Student
Colloquium, Fundraising

Georgia AFS 2023 Hidden Hero Award

Our Professional Awards Chair was inspired by a song on the way home from SDAFS 2023 and thus we have renamed the Unsung Hero Award.

Jeff Bishop

Mr. Bishop has supervised the Boating Access Unit in the WRD Fisheries Section for the past 8 years. During that time, he has tirelessly served our boating constituents by working with all personnel necessary for the construction and repair of our popular boating access sites. This has required him to demonstrate the ability to work with a multitude of personalities and positions, from construction crews to city/county councilmen, from riverkeepers to state legislators, from private citizens to state and federal regulators, and many others in between. In these efforts, Jeff has delivered consistent excellent service to all constituents, and without his effective skills the quality boating access sites that we provide to the public would certainly not be of the standard that they are today. He consistently excels in providing exceptional internal and external customer service, working tirelessly to provide the public quality boating access that this and future generations can enjoy. He has a wealth of knowledge that is invaluable to our agency, and the fruits of his creativity and labor will be enjoyed by anglers and boaters alike for decades to come.

Awards Ceremony

Georgia AFS 2023 Career Contribution Award

Bert Deener



Bert began his GADNR career in 1993 as an hourly biologist at Marben PFA prior to becoming a full-time biologist in Waycross in January 1994, where he has since remained. In 2000, he was promoted to Regional Supervisor of the Waycross region. In this role, Bert has greatly impacted those whom he has supervised. He has mentored numerous biologists and technicians, proving to be a compassionate leader who truly cares about his staff both professionally and personally. His willingness to always listen to the thoughts and concerns of his staff has been greatly appreciated, as has the sound guidance and prayers he has offered.

Bert's greatest contributions can be tied to his true passion: fishing. He has graciously passed much of his knowledge and love of our various fishery resources onto others through the numerous articles he has written for Georgia Outdoor News; the hundreds of kids' fishing events he has participated in; and the multitude of other education and outreach efforts he has so passionately assisted with.

Anthony Rabern



Anthony began his career in fisheries working with Marine Extension in 1984 and then as a Fisheries Biologist for DNR in 1986. Throughout his career, Anthony has made significant contributions to fisheries in north Georgia and beyond. As a reservoir biologist, Anthony designed and implemented Georgia's walleye production program that continues to sustain our state's walleye fisheries. Anthony was instrumental in drafting regulations to address introduced populations of blueback herring in an attempt to prevent their further spread. He leveraged settlement funds for the Lake Hartwell fishery by advocating for improved angler access and enhanced fish habitat, resulting in the addition of access to the Hartwell tailrace trout fishery, the Green Pond Event Center and several mega ramps, publicly accessible fishing piers throughout Lake Hartwell, and numerous fish attractors and fish habitat structures. Recently, Anthony executed a large-scale telemetry study of striped bass on Lake Hartwell to determine their seasonal habitat use.

Awards Ceremony

Georgia AFS 2023 Professional of the Year in Fisheries Management



Emilia Omerberg (Winner)

Emilia is a fisheries biologist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division, Fisheries Section. This past year she implemented two new studies. One to understand angler exploitation and the population dynamics of largemouth bass in Tired Creek Reservoir to examine potential regulation changes. The second study was an age, growth, and diet study of the invasive blue catfish in the ACF system. Throughout the year Emilia sought out ways to grow as a professional and volunteer her expertise and resources in her community.

Paradise PFA Team (Runner-up)

The team at Paradise PFA are exceptional performers in a wide variety of their duties. They are self-motivated individuals that are continually striving to provide the highest quality experience possible to visitors. They often think out of the box for ways to enhance the area (i.e. this year they refurbished a section of an old gangway obtained from another PFA to create a new fishing pier on one of the lakes at Paradise PFA). Paradise PFA staff also recently managed the construction of a new shelter at the Kids Fishing Event ponds, which will be greatly appreciated by their customers.



Dean Barber, Jesse Boles, Kellen Hughes, and Alyssa Wood

Jonathon Pritchard (Runner-up)

Jonathon has many qualities that deserve recognition. Firstly, he is a dedicated teacher. On many occasions, he has not only volunteered for but engendered opportunities for outreach and education. From working with community schools to internships, he genuinely enjoys sharing fisheries knowledge. Secondly, he has an uncanny ability to squeeze blood from a stone. His colleagues have developed the term "Jonathon dollars" to describe the amount this man can do with very little budget. Using spare parts and leftover materials he has built a shock boat and three fishing piers for the PFA.



Awards Ceremony

Georgia AFS 2023 Professional of the Year in Fisheries Science & Research

Kady Lyons (Winner)

Kady works on a range of projects from understanding how various chemical tools can be used to elucidate a species' ecology and physiology that can be applied to inform species conservation. She is able to perform this work by partnering with various institutions that span academia, government, and the private sector. Her research projects include looking at the change in the microbiome community in stingrays across both polluted and unpolluted reaches of Georgia's coastline and looking at the long-term effects of legacy chemicals like this as they move up the marine food web toward sharks. This past year Kady brought about a fundamental change in the Georgia Aquarium internship program.



Susan Wilde (Runner-up)

Susan's research focuses on impaired aquatic systems and interdisciplinary challenges with invasive plants/animals, nutrient pollution, harmful algal blooms, emerging contaminants, and their implications for fish, wildlife, and even humans depending on these water resources. Susan collaborated with a team of researchers to confirm the structure of the toxin, *Aetokthonos hydrillicola*, that causes vacuolar myelinopathy. These findings published in Science were the culmination of 20 years of research that led to the discovery of the mass bald eagle mortality events caused by a neurotoxin produced by a novel cyanobacterium growing on invasive aquatic plants. This international publication was chosen for the AAAS Newcomb Cleveland Prize in 2022.



Cameron Brinton (Runner-up)

Cameron has been essential in organizing Georgia's coastal habitat restoration. He organizes projects that range from oyster restoration along Georgia's coastal shore to offshore artificial reefs. The success of these projects is thanks to Cameron reaching out and working with government agencies, local business owners, academic institutions, and non-profits. Cameron is more than happy to share with others his research and work to better Georgia's coastal habitats for anglers and other marine recreational activities.



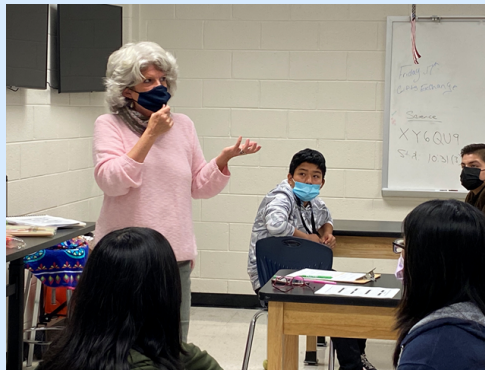
Georgia AFS 2023 Fisheries Conservationist of the Year

Tixie Fowler

Tixie has created educational videos for students called "Careers in Conservation" and has hosted numerous educational workshops for youth and adults. By expanding her network of contacts, Tixie has been successful in bridging her local conservation districts with federal, state, and university partnerships that have further enhanced their outreach potential. She is an environmental educator, works part-time with the Gwinnett County Soil and Water Conservation District, and she is the founder of the Gardens for Growing Community (G4GC), a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that supports youth from under-served and under-represented communities.

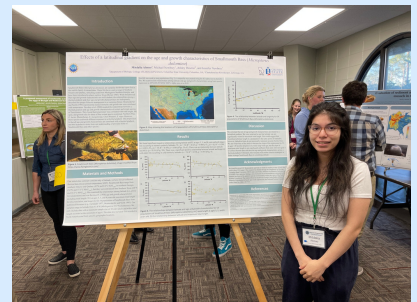
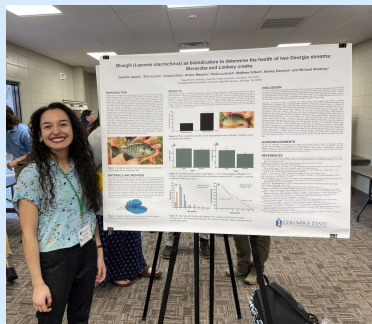
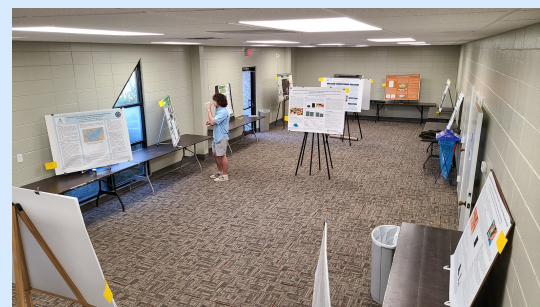
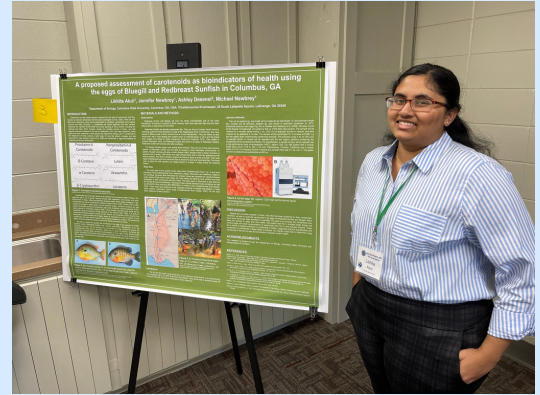
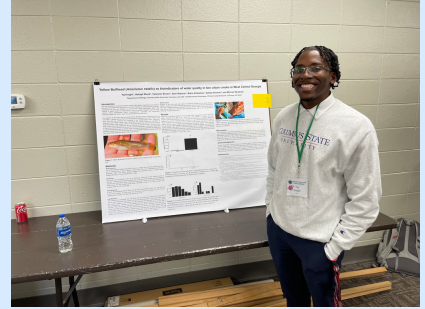
Tixie regularly engages with young people primarily from Title 1 public schools (where the majority of the student population comes from under-resourced and/or under-represented families) in an intentional effort to stimulate their interest in environmental stewardship and increase their awareness of careers in conservation.

What else is Tixie working on these days? Some of her other projects include the Crayfish Creek Restoration Project, working with high school interns documenting aquatic restoration projects, organizing river cleanups, convincing Norcross City Council to approve a Parks, Greenspaces & Trails Commission (which she is now the board's chairperson, organizing a 7-day paddle/camping experience for students from under-resourced and under-represented communities, teaching environmental workshops, and more.

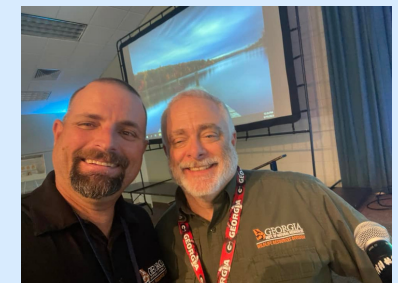
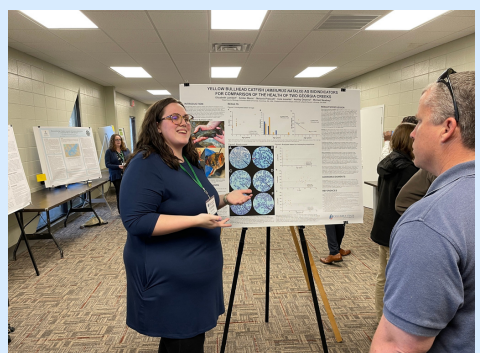
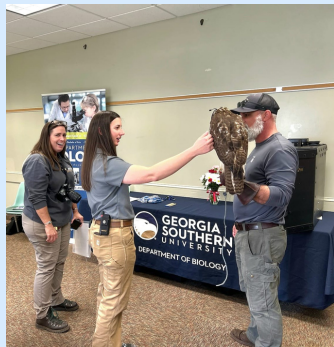
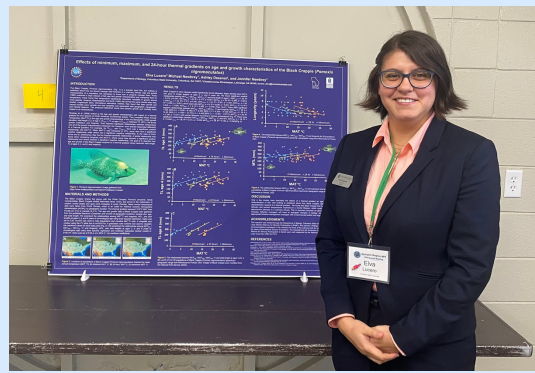
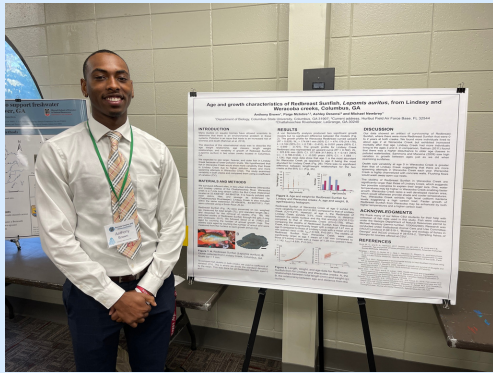
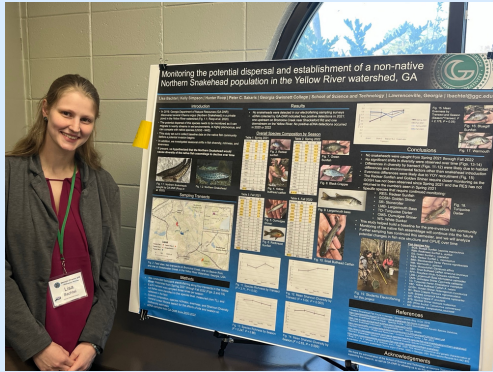


"By providing experiences that inspire a sense of passion for the streams and rivers in their communities, and encourage a sense of self-efficacy, I feel that my work benefits young people, and their work will benefit Georgia's aquatic communities, and who knows? Maybe the world."

Georgia AFS 2023 Annual Meeting Pictures



Georgia AFS 2023 Annual Meeting Pictures



GAAFS 2023 Annual Meeting

Professionals and Students from 11 Different Colleges

Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College
Auburn University
Columbus State University
Emory University
Georgia Gwinnett College
Georgia Southern University
Middle Georgia State University
University of Georgia
University of North Georgia
University of West Georgia



CAMPUS CORNER

2023 Student Award Winners

We had 48 students from 8 colleges and universities participate in the 2023 annual meeting at St. Simons Island this year. The [program](#) included 12 student oral presentations and 21 student posters.

Student Oral Presentations

First Place

Hayley Robinson (University of Georgia)

Second Place

Eric Walther (University of Georgia)

Third Place

Maxwell Kleinhans (University of Georgia)

Student Poster Presentations

First Place

Kelly Simpson (Georgia Gwinnett College)

Second Place

Matthew Gilbert (Columbus State University)

Third Place

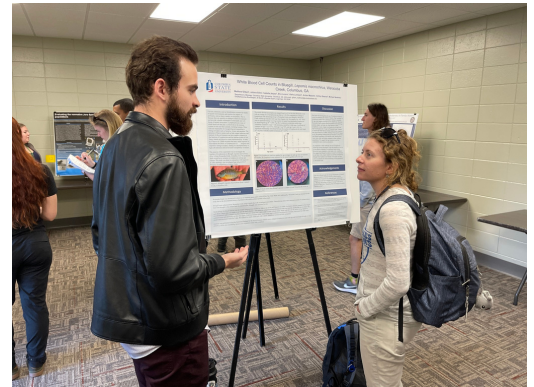
Patrick Lewis (Georgia Southern University)



Georgia Gwinnett College crew - Dr. Pete Sakaris, Kelly Simpson, and Lisa Bachtel



Hayley Robinson (UGA) and her advisor Dr. Peter Hazelton



Matthew Gilbert (CSU) sharing his research with Dr. Kady Lyons (GA Aquarium)

Georgia AFS Distinguished Service Award

Lauren Carroll-Everett (University of Georgia)

Georgia AFS Travel Award

Taylor Bell (University of Georgia)
Kelly Simpson (Georgia Gwinnett College)
Lisa Bachtel (Georgia Gwinnett College)



Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship

Taylor Bell (University of Georgia)

Thank you for your Support!

GAAFS 2023 Sponsors

Platinum



Georgia
Power

Gold



Warnell School of Forestry
& Natural Resources
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Silver



In-Kind
Donation



Accent Lighting
provided by:
Johnny Clark
&
Craig Franco

Thank you for your Support!

Georgia AFS 2023 Fundraising Donors



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA





IN MEMORIAM



Dr. Robert E. Reinert

January 4, 1935 ~ February 16, 2023 (age 88)

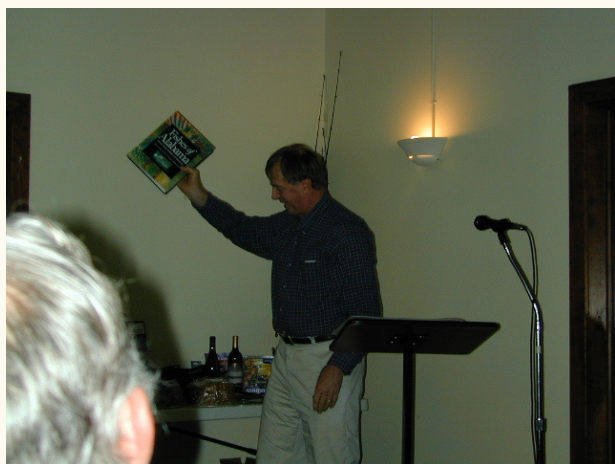


Dr. Bob was a teacher, a mentor, an advisor, a friend, and/or a colleague. Dr. Bob taught and mentored students at the UGA Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources for 27 years. Many of us fisheries professionals spent many hours sitting in Bob's office talking about fish, fishing, and family.



Dr. Bob was very involved with the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (GAAFS) and before that the Georgia Fisheries Workers Association (GFWA). As the newly appointed Door Prize Chairman in 1977, Dr. Bob brought lots of "goodies" to use for door prizes at the GFWA annual meeting. Because of his success in 1977, the members unofficially selected Dr. Bob as "Door Prize Chairman for Life" in 1978. During annual meetings, Dr. Bob was known for flinging Zoom bait worms and other prizes across the ballroom to raffle and door prize winners.

Thank you Dr. Bob for all the memories. You will be deeply missed.



A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, March 12, 2023, beginning at 2:30 pm at Flinchum's Phoenix of the Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources, 650 Phoenix Rd, Athens.

In lieu of flowers, please honor Bob's memory by taking a kid fishing. You may also support the Warnell school and its students with a donation made In Memory of Dr. Bob Reinert. Please contact Bridget Harden (bharden@uga.edu) for options.

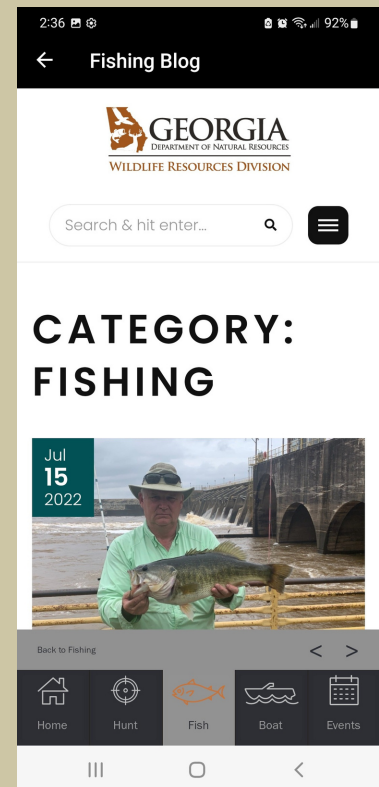
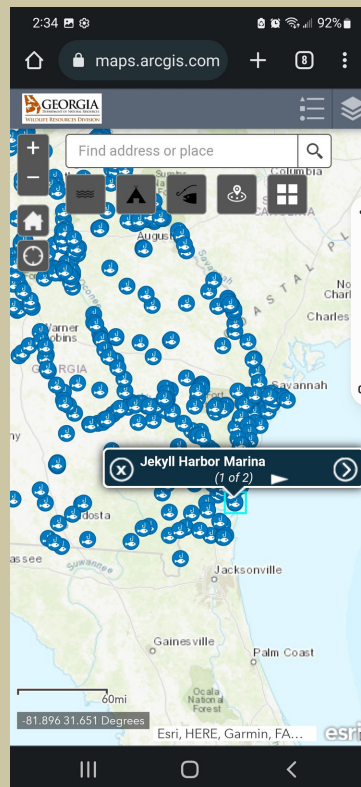
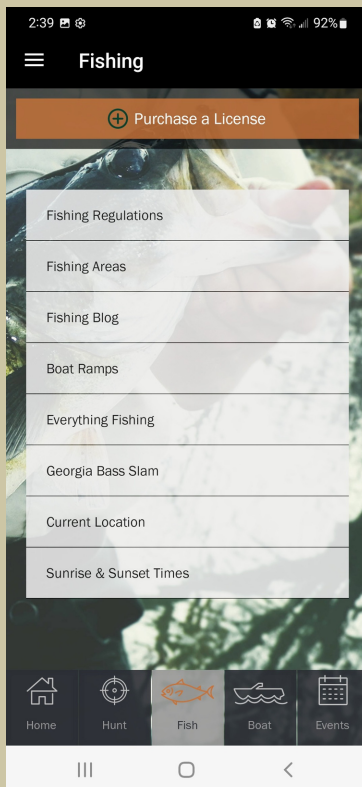
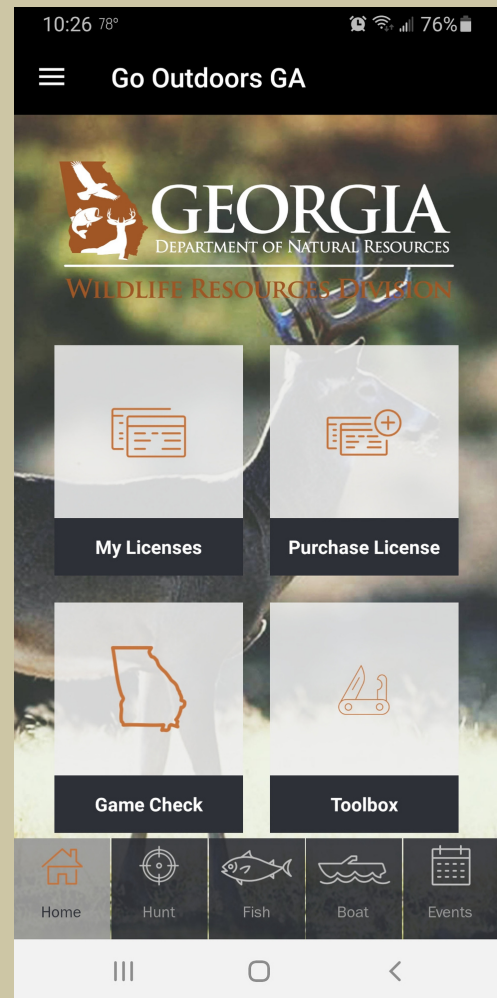
Dr. Bob's Obituary 

Have you tried the Go Outdoors GA app?

The Outdoors GA app, free in [Google Play](#) or [Apple store](#), has multiple uses.

- Fishing regulations - some rules change each year
- Boating rules - know before you go
- Fishing locations
- Boat ramps - plan your next kayaking adventure
- Tide information
- Purchase your fishing license (don't forget your SIP)
- Store your fishing license - avoid awkward moments
- Event calendar - find a KFE near you
- [Georgia DNR Fisheries Blog](#)
- And it has hunting stuff too

DOWNLOAD THE APP TODAY AND PLAN YOUR NEXT OUTDOOR ADVENTURE





Lure Making – The Evolution of Bert's Jigs & Things

By Bert Deener

One of the most exciting things in fishing is to make your own fishing lure and actually catch a fish on it. For me, that started when I was 12 years old and my father, Herb, took me to a fly-tying class taught by members of the Brotherhood of the Junglecock in Thurmont, Maryland. Gray-haired fly-flingers passed on the art of transforming chicken feathers, foam, chenille, hair and the like into tasty morsels resembling aquatic nymphs, crayfish, and terrestrial insects. Some were just plain silly looking. I remember one of my first flies being a red and yellow attractor streamer that was just plain ugly.

Week after week I would go with my dad to learn new techniques and use different materials, and those two hours were my most-anticipated all week. I graduated from the ugly streamer to dry flies to my favorite.....crayfish imitations. Over the course of the class, my fly box filled up with lots of stuff that I realized that I would rarely use. I didn't enjoy busting my shins on slippery rocks, so the trout patterns were simply fun to make for me.

My fly fishing experience at that point was floating the Potomac River in our canoe and catching smallmouth bass. My dad and I floated the river, often camping overnight, several times each summer, and my love of rivers was etched in my heart trip by trip. Marabou muddler minnows were my favorite pattern, as smallmouths crashed the surface to inhale them. Soon, though, I learned that I could catch many times more fish on spinning tackle. Curly-tailed grubs, Rapala minnows, and Mepps spinners became my go-to river lures, and I soon began pouring my own jigheads and piecing together a whole host of components onto wire shafts to create my own spinners.



Bert's lures have caught many different species in south GA Rivers. Don Harrison fooled this 1-lb., 3-oz bluegill on the Satilla River with a Satilla Spin.

My love of making fishing tackle continued developing into my teenage years. At age 17, my girlfriend (who is now my wife of 32 years) bought me a jig mold for Christmas. I tied deer hair, fox hair and strands of rubber onto heads from that mold all winter for friends. I was making way more than I would ever use and decided to get a table at a local fishing flea market to see if anyone wanted

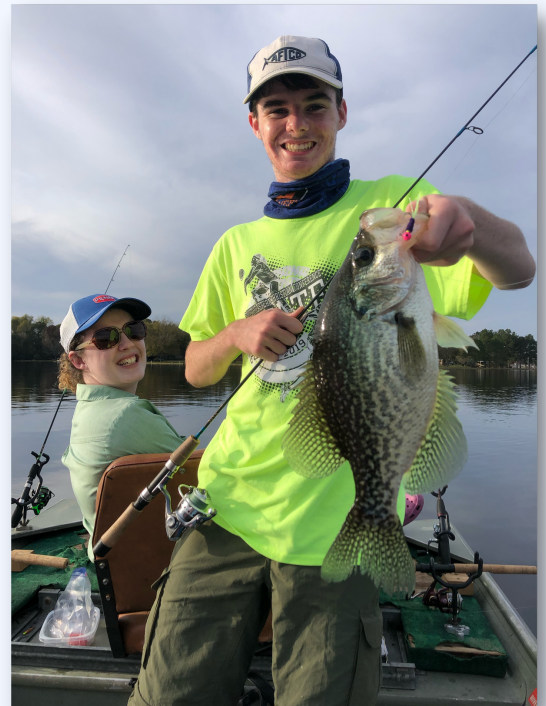
to buy some. I took the jigs that I already had made up and a batch of bare jigheads and materials. During the show, I got order after order for custom-tied jigs, and at the end of the day, Bert's Jigs and Things was born.

I have financed some of my college expenses, fishing trips, and my wife's engagement ring by tying mostly hair jigs. Through the years, the business has grown from buying 100-packs of hooks to buying thousands of hooks at a time directly from the manufacturers.

One of the neatest experiences a lure maker can have happened to me a few years back while fishing on Chesapeake Bay. I had shipped many white perch spinnerbaits to the Bay area tackle shops over the years, so I knew anglers were using them. We regularly caught 100-200 white perch per trip whenever I would go to the Bay while visiting family in Maryland. On one trip, I started noticing that as we went past dock after dock after dock, almost every boat that had fishing rods in it had my Perch Hounder Spinnerbait tied on. That was a WOW moment that I will never forget.



Today, I still ship lures all over the country, and my favorites are helping anglers figure out what color combinations or specific lures will help them catch fish or win a tournament. Todd Woods from Las Vegas just won the co-angler side of a western series FLW event on Lake Havasu with a custom jig that we designed together just a couple weeks before the event in early February. That's exciting stuff for a lure maker!



Timothy Deener caught this youth angler award crappie on one of Bert's Specktacular Jigs in a south Georgia lake.



Bowfin are one of Bert's favorite species to catch. He chases them with his Dura-Spins that he designed. This one was 9lb 8oz.



Timothy Deener caught this angler award-sized grass carp on a fish food fly that Bert designed.

If you have had an interest in making your own lures, spinners are a great place to start. Barlows Tackle, Jann's Netcraft or Bass Pro Shops have small amounts of the various components you need to make a lure that will catch a whole host of species. It only takes a few minutes on YouTube and you will know the basics. Fly fishing/tying clubs that used to only be found in the mountains are now available all over the place (and even in saltwater areas), so it should not be hard to find one if you are interested in fly fishing or tying.

When I tied that first ugly streamer in the old log cabin in the woods of Thurmont, Maryland, I never dreamed that I would be supplementing my retirement by making fishing lures. But, 42 years later, that's exactly where I am. Whether you just want to catch a fish on something you have made or make a living at it, fashioning materials into a fish-catching lure is a rewarding experience.

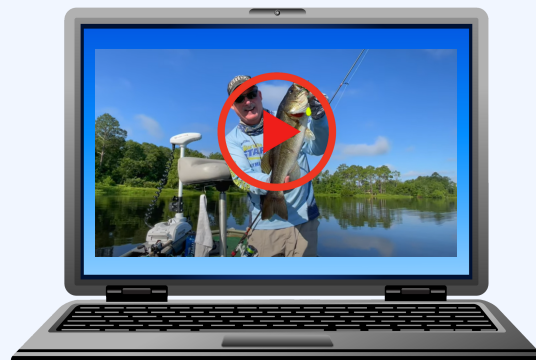


Dr. Robert Bringolf caught his first fish in Okefenokee Swamp on a yellow sally made by Bert.

More information about Bert's Jigs & Things

Facebook: Bert's Jigs & Things

and



Bass Fishing with the Dura-Spin



Chapter Spotlight

Ryan Harrell

Ryan began working at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division in 2012 where he was originally hired on as a Marine Technician. He is currently a Marine Biologist 2 working with the Marine Sportfish Population Health Survey (MSPHS) in the Altamaha estuary and St. Andrew Sound where most of his time is spent setting gillnets and trammel nets for Red Drum, Spotted Seatrout, and other recreationally important estuarine fish. Ryan also manages the Carcass Recovery Program, the American Eel survey in the Altamaha River, as well as serving on the ASMFC technical committees for Black Drum and American Eel.



What inspired you to pursue a career as a marine biologist?

Honestly, I never thought I would be a Marine Biologist. (The one thing) All I knew was I loved fishing and wanted to be able to work outdoors as much as possible. When I first decided to pursue fisheries in school I thought I would have a career in pond management. It wasn't until I was able to work a summer job with Dr. Brett Albanese and Jason Wisniewski at WRD that I realized research and management were viable careers within fisheries. After college, I went back to work for the UGA sturgeon lab in Darien, GA where I had worked the previous summer. There I fell in love with the Georgia coast. It was happenstance while working on the Altamaha River that a job opened working with gillnets and trammel nets in the Altamaha estuary, which is exactly what I was doing except further down in the salt.

Where did you go to school and what did you study?

After a stint in technical school and 2 years at Gainesville State College, I eventually went to the Warnell School of Forestry at the University of Georgia where I received my B.S. in Fisheries and Aquaculture in 2010.



**Warnell School of Forestry
& Natural Resources**
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Chapter Spotlight Continued

Describe the most rewarding experience you have had during your career.

I'm still early in my career so it's hard to describe the MOST rewarding experience I've had. I will say we do a lot of PR events where I get a chance to present some of my work to various groups of all ages. Often, these groups are filled with people who could care less about fish but every once in a while you'll find that one person who's just enamored with what you do and want to pick your brain for hours. It's especially rewarding when it's a high school student or young college student trying to decide what their next step in life is going to be.



Describe a project you are currently working on as part of your current position.

We recently started an Acoustic Telemetry project in St. Simons Sound focusing on Red Drum. Currently, we have 12 receivers within the sound along with receivers located on our nearshore reefs. So far, we have tagged 34 Red Drum but that number keeps growing every day. The purpose of this study is to be able to provide a better understanding of the movement, habitat use, and fishing mortality of Red Drum within Georgia's waters. I'm sure I'll be presenting this at the GA AFS chapter meeting in the future.

What do you most enjoy about your current position and what do you find most challenging?

I enjoy being able to work in the field more than anything. Whether it's setting gillnets, trammel nets, checking receivers, or tagging fish...I just feel at home on the water. The challenging part of my job is balancing fieldwork and office work. I really enjoy being able to go collect the data but the job doesn't stop there. When I'm not in the field I'm writing reports, querying data for others, sitting in meetings, balancing budgets, and all the other stuff you don't see on the pictures of fisheries brochures.

What advice would you give to someone pursuing a profession in fisheries science?

I know it sounds cliché but first and foremost take advantage of every opportunity you can even if it involves stepping out of your comfort zone. If it wasn't for my summer jobs while in college, there is no way I would have learned the skills needed for the job I currently have. Another thing would be to vary your experiences. Work one summer in freshwater and another in saltwater. Try different regions. If you've only worked in a lab, get out in the field. You'll become more well-rounded and who knows where your passion may fall as well as the connections you'll make along the way. Lastly, I know it's not needed for every job but take a boaters safety course and learn to drive a boat.



Chapter Spotlight Continued



What is your favorite fish and why?

There is no way I can limit it down to one, so I'll give you a saltwater, freshwater and an anadromous fish. Red Drum is one of the primary species I work with and also one of my favorite to target in my small skiff. I grew up in Southwest Georgia on the Kinchafoonee Creek (a tributary to the Flint River) so Shoal Bass have always intrigued me and wade fishing in the shoals of the Flint during the heat of the summer is one of my favorite things to do. Finally, my grandfather had a 47 lb Striped Bass hanging on the wall that he caught from the dam wall of the Flint River in Albany. I think my grandfather's passion for fishing and that fish is the whole reason I am where I am today.

What is one thing on your bucket list?

The bucket list is pretty vast but if I had to choose one it would probably be to vacation and fish in the Maldives or some other tropical island in the middle of nowhere. The idea of staying on an atoll and being able to chase Giant Trevally has always been a dream of mine.



What would be your walk-up song?

*My walk-up song would be **Nerdy by Poison the Well**. You've probably never heard it...it's loud and obnoxious just like me.*



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

I'm a music junkie, though my taste is probably different than most of the GA AFS members. I still enjoy going to hardcore, metal, and punk shows. I also collect records, cds, band shirts, and even cassette tapes.



Searching for a fisheries job or internship?

Resources

- AFS Career Center
- Georgia AFS Job Postings
- Georgia AFS Internship Postings
- UGA Warnell School of Forestry and Natural Resources
- USFWS Internships and Fellowships
- UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant
- USGS Summer Field Training Program
- Careers with Georgia Department of Natural Resources
- USA Jobs
- Indeed



How Can You Improve Your Candidacy

Volunteer work, internships, and short-term fish technician positions are good ways to gain valuable training that can give you an edge in the competitive job market.

- Do your research...know what the job/internship you are applying for expects of you.
- Create a resume that will stand out, but do not exaggerate on your skills and experience
- First impressions are important. Dress appropriately for your interview.
- Take the boating safety course and take a course in CPR and First Aid
- Become sufficient in backing up a trailer - important for some internships
- Be comfortable working in extreme conditions or inclement weather
- SCUBA certification can be very beneficial when seeking that ideal fisheries job
- Be able to identify the fish you will be working with (do your research)
- Know electrofishing safety procedures
- Do not be afraid to ask questions - clearly understand what your job requirements will be

Be A Fisheries Technician for a Day

Contact: *Chalisa Fabillar*
(Chalisa.Fabillar@dnr.ga.gov)

The ladies of Artemis GA and Georgia Becoming an Outdoors Woman will be joining forces to help McDuffie Hatchery with producing catfish eggs and fry to help meet the quota for the state hatchery system. This is a unique opportunity to work alongside the Fishery Technicians of McDuffie Warm Water Fish Hatchery for a day of sexing catfish, pairing males and females, checking for eggs, and taking care of catfish fry.

Located in McDuffie County, this warmwater hatchery raises multiple fish species. In May, the hatchery will be focused on channel catfish (*Ictalurus punctatus*) and striped bass (*Morone saxatilis*, or "striper") production for stocking in public waters. Some channel cats are grown to catchable size for kids fishing events and stocking PFAs. McDuffie Hatchery is located in McDuffie County. The central region of Georgia and part of Georgia's upper coastal plain.

Participants will also have access to McDuffie PFA, which offers anglers 7 ponds ranging in size from 5 to 37 acres. Fishing ponds are stocked with Largemouth Bass, Bluegill, Channel Catfish, and Redear Sunfish.

Optional camping is available on the McDuffie property. There are hotels in nearby Thomson, Harlem, and Wrens. Participants are welcome to hang out for a day or two and enjoy the many amenities offered by McDuffie PFA and the McDuffie Environmental Education Center. Bring along your kayak for some kayak fishing Wednesday evening, or fish from the bank or one of the fishing docks at the different public fishing ponds.



This is a work day, not a spectator event. We are going to get dirty! Due to the muddy/boggy areas we will be working in, every participant must bring their own pair of waders to wear.

Additionally, this event carries some physical requirements. Participants must be able to lift 30 pounds and be able to walk/hike 1-2 miles across uneven terrain. We will be handling live fish in a potentially hazardous setting of thick mud and bogs that may be difficult to maneuver. As such, the ability to understand and follow verbal and nonverbal instructions related to physical activities is a must.

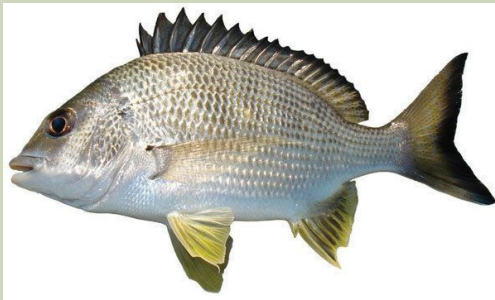


DID YOU KNOW?

What is a bream?

Would you know what bait to use while fishing for bream in England?

Which of the following fish is also known as a bream?



All of these fish are called bream by anglers. Starting from the top left: bluegill (*Lepomis macrochirus*), redear sunfish (*Lepomis microlophus*), Wuchang bream (*Megalobrama amblycephala*), yellowfin bream (*Acanthopagrus australis*), common bream (*Abramis brama*), black sea bream (*Spondyliosoma cantharus*), redbreast sunfish (*Lepomis auritus*), warmouth (*Lepomis gulosus*), and red sea bream (*Pagellus bogaraveo*).

The fish in the center, the common bream (*Abramis brama*), is found in England. Anglers in England suggest you use sweet corn niblets as bait.

strikeandcatch.com/best-baits-for-bream/



Fishy News

Around the World

Click on title of article

ON THE TROUBLING USE OF PLASTIC 'HABITAT' STRUCTURES FOR FISH IN FRESHWATER ECOSYSTEMS - OR - WHEN RESTORATION IS JUST LITTERING

Dr. Steven Cooke of Carleton University in Canada shares his research and views on the use of plastics to create artificial fish habitats.

NSU RESEARCH VIDEO SHOWS SAILFISH'S POINT OF VIEW AND REVEALS NEW HUNTING BEHAVIOR

Scientists have designed a novel electronic tag package incorporating high-tech sensors and a video camera in order to document a detailed view of exactly how sailfish behave and hunt once they are on their own and out of view of the surface.

youtube.com/watch?v=ouVnskumc2Y

STUDY REVEALS BIODIVERSITY ENGINE FOR FISHES: SHIFTING WATER DEPTH

Yale researchers have found that the ability of fish, in temperate and polar ecosystems, to move between shallow and deep water triggers species diversification. Their findings suggest that as climate change warms the oceans at higher latitudes, it will impede the evolution of fish species.

WHY ARE MUSKIES THE FISH OF 10,000 CASTS? ILLINOIS STUDY EXPLAINS

Researchers got into the minds of muskies to learn what personality traits make the fish more likely to strike. In the process, they learned valuable lessons that could help conserve the important aquatic predators.

FISH SENSORY ORGAN KEY TO IMPROVING NAVIGATIONAL SKILLS OF UNDERWATER ROBOTS

Scientists, led by University of Bristol, have been studying a fish sensory organ to understand cues for collective behaviour which could be employed on underwater robots.

INVASIVE RATS TRANSFORM REEF FISH BEHAVIOUR

Scientists have discovered for the first time that invasive rats on tropical islands are affecting the territorial behavior of fish on surrounding coral reefs. The new study shows that the presence of invasive black rats on tropical islands is causing changes in the territorial behavior of the jewel damselfish.



BUBBA'S SHORT VIDEO PICKS

The One Thing All Great Teachers Do
| Nick Fuhrman | TEDxUGA



If you have ever been asked to teach a group of kids
this is a video for you



*Fishing for the ELUSIVE
Chattahoochee Bass!*

Aaron's Outdoors



BUBBA BASS RECOMMENDS

Are you looking for something new to try?

Click on image to visit website



*Georgia State Parks
offer all types of fun
outdoor activities.*

*Noontootla Creek Farms
is more than a great
place to catch some
very nice trout.*



H I G H

HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA

Even if you are not that much into art you should
visit the High Museum at least once. You will be
impressed with their collection.



*Before it gets too hot consider
taking the family to Zoo
Atlanta. Lots to see and learn.*



ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN

*Spring is a great time to visit the Atlanta
Botanical Gardens.*

BUBBA BASS SAFETY TIP

Chainsaw Safety



When one talks about chainsaw safety they do not normally think of fisheries professionals. Chainsaws are part of the many types of equipment used by fisheries professionals to do their jobs.

Operating chainsaws can be hazardous. Avoid injury by using following safe operating procedures. A few safety tips...

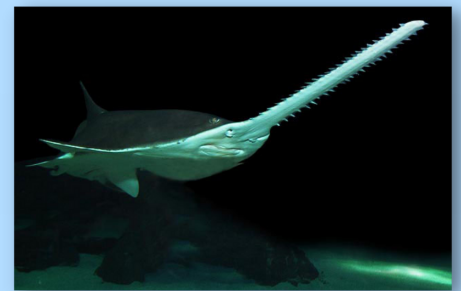
- Before starting make sure you are wearing all of the protective safety equipment and check your chainsaw controls, chain tension, and all bolts and handles.
- Do not drop start a chainsaw. Start the saw on the ground or on another form of firm support.
- Before cutting a tree look for nails, spikes, or other metals stuck in the tree.
- Always maintain balance when operating the saw.
- When cutting be careful that the trunk or tree limbs will not bind against the saw.
- Hung trees and trees under tension are a hazard and extreme caution should be taken to properly fell the tree.



Bubba's Friends

Smalltooth Sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*)

The smalltooth sawfish is one of five species of sawfish. All sawfish belongs to a group of fish called elasmobranchs that includes rays, skates, and sharks. Smalltooth sawfish live in tropical seas and estuaries of the Atlantic Ocean. Their average lifespan is unknown (30 - 60 years).

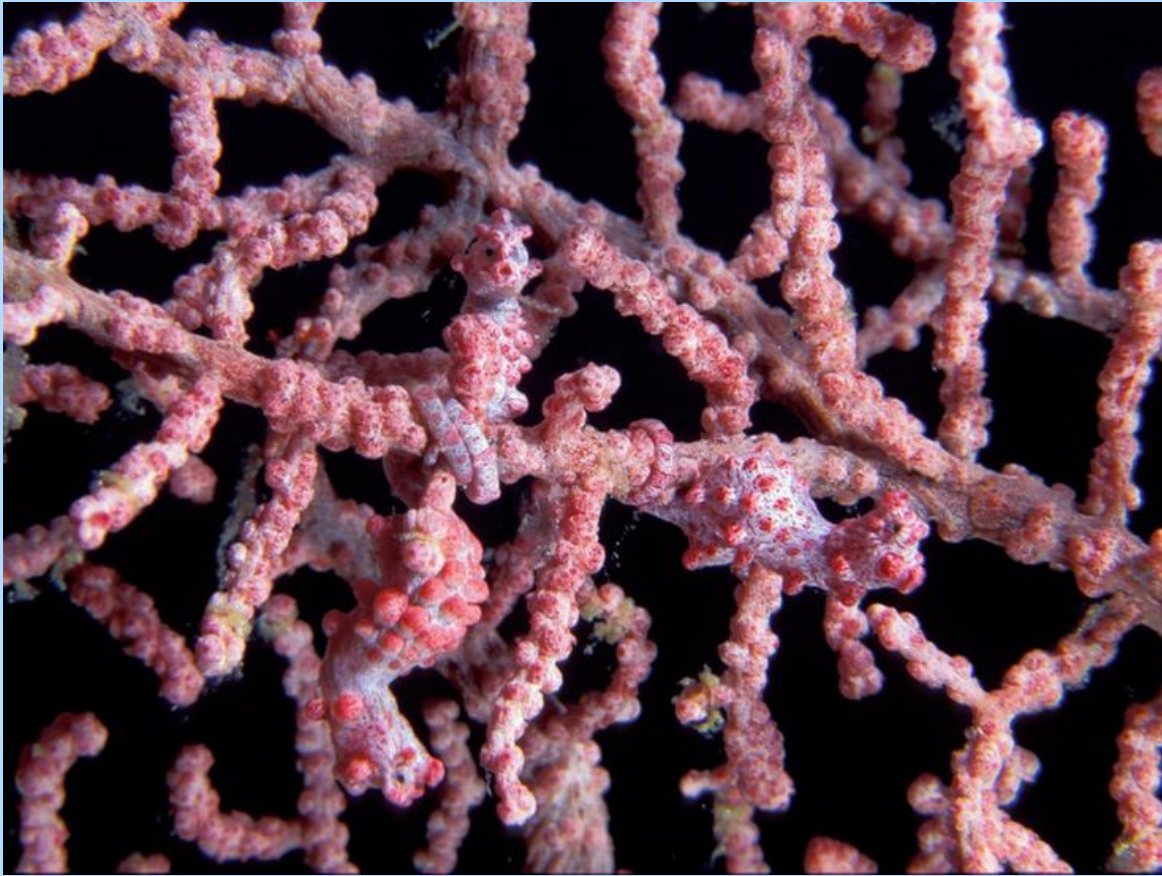


INTERESTING FACTS

- They can grow up to 16 ft and weigh several hundred pounds
- Males appear to mature around 11 feet long and females likely reach maturity at larger sizes—around 12 feet long.
- Females reproduce every other year and return to the same nurseries to give birth.
- The rostral teeth of sawfish are actually specialized denticles, which are a type of scale.
- Rostral teeth that are lost will not grow back; however, chipped teeth will continue to grow as long as the base is intact.
- The smalltooth sawfish was the first marine fish to receive federal protection as an endangered species under the Endangered Species Act in 2003.

Fin and Games

How many fish do you see?



Answers on back page



Bert Deener



Robert Bringolf



Justin Bythwood



Tim Bonvechio



Robert Bringolf

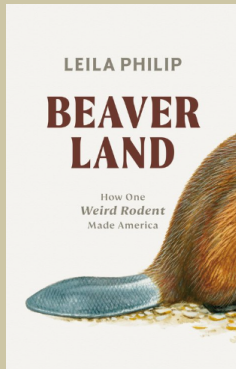


Justin Bythwood

PROPS!

THE BOOKSHELF

ADULT NON-FICTION SECTION



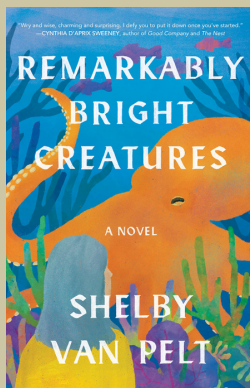
Beaver Land By Leila Phillip

From award-winning writer Leila Philip, BEAVERLAND is a masterful work of narrative science writing, a book that highlights, through history and contemporary storytelling, how this unusual rodent has played an oversized role in American history and continues to feature in its future.

[Learn More Link](#)



ADULT FICTION SECTION



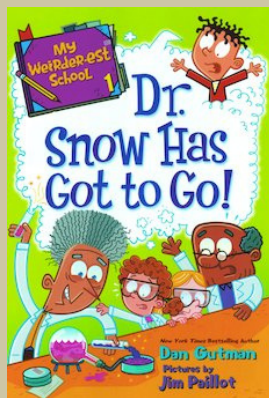
Remarkably Bright Creatures: A Novel By Shelby Van Pelt

New York Times Bestseller and 2022 Book of the Summer. A luminous debut novel about a widow's unlikely friendship with a giant Pacific octopus reluctantly residing at the local aquarium—and the truths she finally uncovers about her son's disappearance 30 years ago.

[Learn More Link](#)



YOUNG READER SECTION



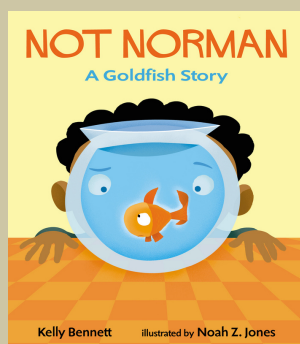
Dr. Snow Has to Go By Dave Gutman

In this chapter book, Ella Mentry School is having a science fair! Guest scientist Dr. Snow has arrived to help A.J. and his friends conduct their own cool experiments. But what is "the Snowman" really planning? And what does S.T.E.M. even stand for, anyway?

[Learn More Link](#)



BEGINNING READER SECTION



Not Norman, A Goldfish Story By Kelly Bennett (Author) and Noah Z. Jones (Illustrator)

Norman the goldfish isn't what this little boy had in mind. He wanted a different kind of pet — one that could run and catch, or chase string and climb trees, a soft furry pet to sleep on his bed at night.

[Learn More Link](#)



Membership Information



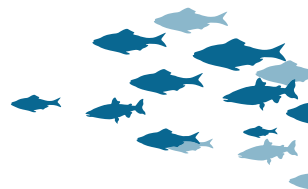
Are you a member of the American Fisheries Society?



American Fisheries Society

Please visit the AFS membership website to learn more about being part of the largest professional society of fisheries scientists in the world.

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/>



Are you a member of the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society?

Membership to the Georgia Chapter is separate from being a member of the American Fisheries Society (AFS). Membership in the Georgia Chapter is open to anyone interested in the progress of fisheries science and education in Georgia and the conservation and management of Georgia's fisheries and aquatic ecosystems. Chapter annual membership dues are \$10.



Georgia AFS Membership: gaafs.org/membership/

Georgia AFS membership dues support fisheries and aquatic conservation projects as well as aquatic education outreach programs in Georgia.



AFS/SDAFS MEETINGS



American Fisheries Society

Future AFS Annual Meetings

- 2023 Grand Rapids, MI: August 20–24, 2023
- 2024 Honolulu, HI: September 15–19, 2024

2023 Annual Meeting

Adaptive Approaches to Understand and Manage Changes in Fisheries

afsannualmeeting.fisheries.org/



The Southern Division
of the American Fisheries Society

sd.fisheries.org/

**The next SDAFS meeting will be in
Chattanooga, Tennessee**

January 31 - February 4, 2024

Information

Support for Fisheries Conservation and Sustainability

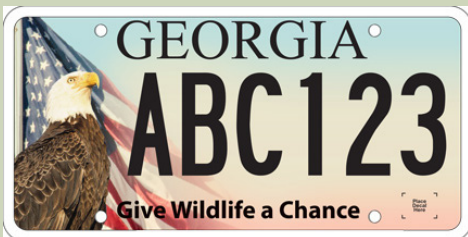


Do you have a specialty license plate that supports the conservation of Georgia's fisheries and aquatic ecosystems?



More information:
<https://gadnr.org/license-plates>

Click on the license plate for more information



80 percent of that \$25 fee goes directly to wildlife programs (\$19 the first year, \$20 with every renewal). Only \$5 goes to the State of Georgia General Fund.



Certified Fisheries Professional

There are many reasons for seeking professional certification. For some it represents achievement of a career goal while for others it represents a credential necessary to perform their job.

[Frequently Asked Questions about certification](#)

[AFS Application Process and due dates](#)

Pesticide Applicator License

If you wish to purchase or use a restricted use pesticide (RUP), you or your supervisor must have a pesticide applicator's license from the Georgia Department of Agriculture.

[Georgia Dept. Agriculture Pesticide License Information](#)

[UGA Extension Pesticide Safety Education](#)

[Pesticide License Exam Study Videos](#)

Job Hunting

AFS maintains an excellent Career Center page on its website. AFS provides several resources to help you find that fisheries job you want.

[AFS Career Center](#)

Do you want to improve your chances of getting that dream fisheries job?

[Georgia AFS Fisheries Career Tips](#)

Internships

Internships are a great way to gain valuable work experience employers look for in potential new hires.

Georgia AFS maintains a list of internships for fisheries students on its webpage.

[GAAFS Internship listing page](#)

Help us spread the word about interesting and insightful information about the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems.

The Chapter newsletter is designed to spread the word about the exciting work being done by fisheries professionals and students, deliver information about upcoming meetings and events, and provide other useful information for fisheries professionals and students. 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 can range from a paragraph to 3 pages. Let us know if you have an idea for an article but are not sure if it is suitable for the newsletter. Topics for the newsletter can include any of the ideas listed below.

- Fisheries science research updates or innovative ideas
- Articles with advice for students and young professionals
- Accomplishments such as recently publishing a research paper, giving a talk at a community event, being interviewed for a podcast series, and anything in the realm of communications and outreach
- Environmental concerns related to fisheries and aquatic ecosystems
- Safety tips for fisheries professionals and students

Send your submissions to Rebecca Brown at georgiaafs@gmail.com.

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