

Under the Dock

September-October 2025



Newsletter of the Georgia Chapter of the
American Fisheries Society

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Mark Your Calendar

- **October 20 - 21**
 - Georgia Resiliency Conference 2025
 - Jekyll Island Convention Center
- **October 26 - 29**
 - SEAFWA (Biloxi, MS)
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 - North American Lake Management Society
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 - Fish ID Workshop
 - Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, Mansfield
- **February 3 - 5, 2026**
 - Georgia AFS 2026 Annual Meeting
 - Villas by the Sea, Jekyll Island
- **March 5 - 8, 2026**
 - SDAFS New Orleans, LA

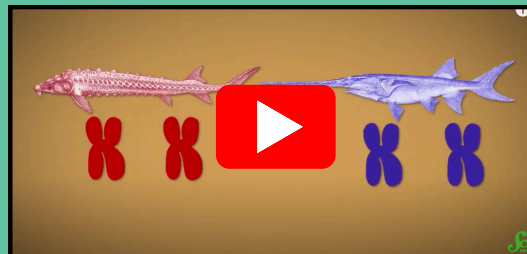
OUR MISSION

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 or underlined you can click on it for more information. Click on images with a play button 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.).



Bubba Bass

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 *Fin and Games*.

DOCKSIDE

The Balancing Act of Leadership: Guiding When Needed, Stepping Back When Not

In any workplace or team setting, individuals have different levels of independence and guidance requirements. Some employees or team members thrive with minimal supervision, while others require more direction to stay on track. Understanding how to effectively manage and collaborate with both types of individuals is crucial for maintaining team efficiency, productivity, and morale. A balanced approach that accommodates different work styles can lead to a more cohesive and successful team.

Understanding Different Work Styles

People vary in their ability to work independently. Some individuals prefer autonomy, taking initiative and making decisions on their own with little oversight. They are often self-motivated, proactive, and comfortable with ambiguity. On the other hand, others may require more guidance, structured expectations, and frequent check-ins to perform effectively. These individuals often excel when provided with clear instructions and well-defined tasks.

Several factors contribute to these differences, including experience level, confidence, personality type, and familiarity with a given task or role. For instance, a new employee may need more direction initially but develop greater independence over time. Similarly, some people naturally prefer collaborative environments where they can receive continuous feedback, while others are more comfortable working alone.

Challenges of Managing Different Needs

One of the primary challenges in working with people who need varying levels of direction is ensuring that everyone remains productive and engaged. Without proper balance, team efficiency can suffer. Employees who require more guidance may slow down workflows if they are not given clear expectations, while highly independent workers may feel frustrated if they perceive excessive oversight as micromanagement.



Additionally, differences in work styles can lead to misunderstandings or conflicts. Those who require little direction may assume that highly guided colleagues lack initiative, while those who need more structure may feel unsupported if expectations are not clearly defined. If not managed well, these differences can create friction within the team.

Strategies for Effective Collaboration

To work effectively with individuals who need varying levels of direction, it is essential to adopt a flexible and adaptive leadership style. The following strategies can help create a productive and harmonious work environment:

Identify Individual Needs Early

Understanding how each team member works best is the first step in managing different levels of direction. Observing work habits, asking about preferences, and assessing performance can provide insights into who thrives with autonomy and who benefits from more structured guidance.

Provide Clear Expectations for Everyone

Regardless of whether someone needs frequent direction or prefers independence, establishing clear goals and expectations helps keep everyone aligned. Clearly defining objectives, deadlines, and desired outcomes ensures that all team members understand their responsibilities without unnecessary confusion.

Use Tailored Communication Styles

People who need more direction often benefit from detailed instructions, regular check-ins, and structured guidance. On the other hand, independent workers may prefer high-level goals with the freedom to determine their own approach. Adjusting communication styles to match these preferences can improve productivity and morale.

Encourage Self-Sufficiency When Possible

For those who require more direction, gradually increasing their level of responsibility can help build confidence and independence. Providing resources, mentorship, and constructive feedback allows them to develop problem-solving skills and become more self-reliant over time.



Teaching a young angler how to fish using a fly rod requires more direction in the beginning until they have the confidence and skills to try on their own.



If a football coach over-directs, it can send a message that players are not fully trusted to make their own decisions. This can lead to hesitation, stifle creativity, and erode a player's self-confidence, causing them to play safe and avoid risks.

Avoid Micromanaging Autonomous Workers

While offering support to those who need more guidance is essential, it is equally important to avoid micromanaging individuals who work best with minimal oversight. Trusting their ability to manage their tasks and giving them the freedom to make decisions fosters motivation and engagement.

Implement a Flexible Support System

A hybrid approach, such as regular but optional check-ins, can help balance different needs. For example, scheduling weekly meetings where guidance is available but not mandatory allows those who require direction to seek help while independent workers maintain their autonomy.

Foster Team Collaboration

Encouraging teamwork between individuals with different work styles can create a learning environment where they complement each other. Pairing independent workers with

those who need more guidance allows for skill-sharing and mentorship, benefiting both parties.

The Benefits of a Balanced Approach

By recognizing and respecting the different needs of team members, organizations and leaders can create a more efficient and harmonious work environment. Providing necessary guidance to those who need it while allowing autonomy for others leads to increased productivity, employee satisfaction, and overall team success.

Additionally, fostering adaptability within the team ensures that individuals can develop new skills and grow into their roles. Those who initially required more direction can become more self-sufficient over time, while independent workers can learn to collaborate effectively with others.

Conclusion

Successfully working with individuals who need more direction than others requires a thoughtful and adaptable approach. By identifying individual needs, setting clear expectations, tailoring communication, and fostering both autonomy and support, teams can create an environment where everyone thrives. 🏈

GUIDE. SUPPORT. EMPOWER

NEWS & UPDATES

2026 Georgia AFS Annual Meeting

The Science Behind Sustainable Fisheries: Bridging Management, Policy, and Conservation

We want to invite you to join us for the 40th Georgia AFS annual meeting at Jekyll Island's [Villas by the Sea](#) on February 3 - 5, 2026. The Georgia AFS Planning Team has been busy working on ideas to provide all our participants with a worthwhile meeting experience.

This year's symposium, The Role of Science in Shaping Natural Resources Policy and Regulation, will feature a keynote address and a diverse lineup of speakers who will share insights on how scientific knowledge drives the development and implementation of natural resource policy. The symposium will emphasize the importance of rigorous research, data-driven analysis, and evidence-based decision-making in guiding effective and sustainable management of our natural environment.



Visit the website for information about:

- Meeting Registration
- Abstract Submission
- Special Symposium
- Lightning Talks
- Hotel Information
- Award Nominations
- Student Awards
- Sponsorship



Check out the [Georgia AFS Meeting Tackle Box](#)

Georgia AFS 2026 Awards Nomination Process

This year we are using a nomination form for all award submissions. This will allow us to better collect and organize all of the awards. The Google Forms make it easy for committee leaders to track submissions.

The nomination forms for the Georgia AFS Professional Awards have been revised for nominators to answer each question individually about their nominee and to submit a short summary of their nominee's outstanding achievements, performance, and contributions. The questions help focus the nominator's submission on specific aspects of the nominee's qualifications and contributions relevant to the award criteria.

Furthermore, the questions provide a standardized framework, requiring all nominators to provide the same type of information about their nominees. This makes it easier for the judging panel to compare candidates consistently and objectively.

Do you have a question about a particular award?

For Professional Awards contact Aaron Gray (aaron.gray1@dnr.ga.gov) and Jim Page (jim.page@dnr.ga.gov)

Professional Award
Deadline 11/12/25

For Recognition Awards contact Rebecca Brown (GeorgiaAFS@gmail.com)

Recognition Award
Deadline 12/10/25



New Addition to Georgia AFS Travel Grant



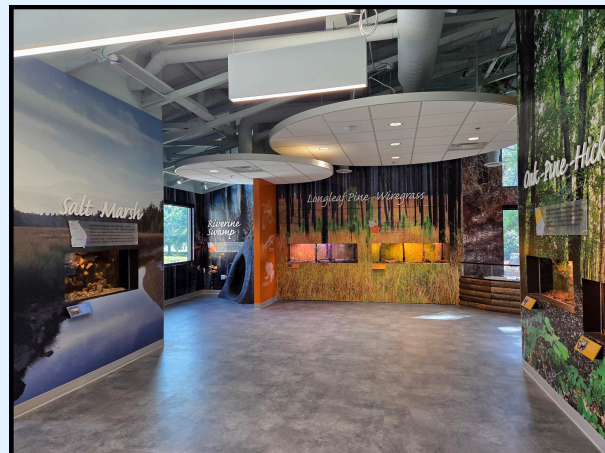
**Georgia AFS
Travel Grant**

Read instructions carefully

The Georgia AFS Travel Grant now includes retired fisheries professionals in addition to professionals and graduate students. The Travel Grant is only available to Georgia AFS members in good standing. The grant can be used to cover hotel accommodations and/or registration for Georgia AFS annual meetings.

Georgia AFS Freshwater Fish ID Workshop

You will not want to miss the Freshwater Fish ID Workshop in December. Brett Albanese and our all-star team has begun planning this workshop that will take place at the new Joe Tanner Discovery Center located at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center. Workshop participants will learn how to identify a diversity of Georgia freshwater fish species.



Mark your calendars for December 17 - 19. The workshop will begin the afternoon of December 17 and end at noon on the 19th. We will have door prizes and more for our participants. Registration will be limited to 30 people.

Meals: Dinner on day one; breakfast, lunch, and dinner on day two, and breakfast on day three.

Full Registration - Includes accommodations and meals

	Georgia DNR Non-Profit Academic	Private Sector Other Government Agencies	Students
Georgia AFS Member	\$300	\$550	\$250
Non-Member	\$325	\$600	\$275

Registration-Only - Includes lunch day two

	Georgia DNR Non-Profit Academic	Private Sector Other Government Agencies	Students
Georgia AFS Member	\$65	\$315	\$45
Non-Member	\$90	\$365	\$60

**Georgia AFS
Freshwater Fish
Identification
Workshop
Registration Form**



**SEATS ARE LIMITED
REGISTER NOW!**

AFS Releases Tomorrow's Catch



Tomorrow's Catch: Securing our Future Fisheries is an ambitious digital series produced by the American Fisheries Society (AFS) in partnership with Content With Purpose (CWP). At a time when freshwater and marine ecosystems face mounting threats, this series explores how fisheries science is leading the way in protecting biodiversity, advancing sustainability, and restoring the health of our waters.

Tomorrow's Catch: Securing Our Future Fisheries



Georgia Department of Natural Resources WRD fisheries professionals are among the 22 series partners. Visit the website for the full list of videos.

➤ [Managing Georgia's Fisheries](#)

➤ [The Work Beneath the Surface](#)



SDAFS 2026 First Call for Symposia and Workshops

The Louisiana Chapter invites you to submit a proposal for a symposium or continuing education workshop at the 2026 Annual Meeting of the Southern Division of the American Fisheries Society in New Orleans!

Deadline for submissions is September 15, 2025.

Symposia may be scheduled in two-hour blocks ranging from two hours to full-day (6–8 hours) sessions and may include individual presentations, panel discussions or other formats. Symposium proposals should state symposium title, symposium objectives, format, time required, tentative list of topics and participants, and audio-visual requirements. Organizers will be responsible for ensuring submission of abstracts for presentations in their sessions. Symposium proposals should be submitted to Robby Maxwell rmaxwell@wlf.la.gov.

Workshops may be scheduled in half-day (four hours) or full-day (6–8 hours) increments. Workshops Proposals should state workshop title, workshop objectives, format, time required, maximum number of participants, and audio-visual requirement. Please direct inquiries to Quenton Fontenot at Quenton.fontenot@nicholls.edu.

Savannah State University Marine Science Program

The Savannah State University (SSU) Marine Science Program is one of the “best kept secrets” on the Georgia coast. Their Master of Science in Marine Sciences (MSMS) program is the only one of its kind based in Southeast Georgia with direct access to estuarine, coastal and open-ocean research environments. SSU is known as ‘the University by the Sea’ and the Georgia estuarine salt marsh ecosystem is out the backdoor of our classrooms and laboratories.



*Dr. Dionne Hoskins-Brown discusses the SSU Marine Science Program with the local news station WTOG. She talks about how much the program has grown and its influence on coastal fisheries. **Watch the [video](#).***

Learn More About the SSU Marine Sciences Department

- [Undergraduate Program](#)
- [Graduate Program](#)
- [Community Outreach](#)
- [Bridge to Research in Marine Sciences](#)



Other News



ECO Magazine featured an article on current research at the Skidaway Institute of Oceanography on monitoring coastal HABs.

[Expanding Coastal HAB Research](#)



USGS researchers at the Mississippi Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit are working with volunteer anglers and Texas Parks and Wildlife (TPWD) to explore a one-of-a-kind fisheries database.

[Texas Anglers Unite to Fill Knowledge Gaps on Black Bass](#)

Recent Scientific Publications by Chapter Members

Two new species of *Micropterus* (Centrarchidae) endemic to Atlantic Slope river drainages in Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina, U.S.A.

Authors: Byron J. Freeman, Mark C. Scott, Kelly N. Petersen, Natalia J. Bayona-Vasquez, Andrew Taylor, Bryson G. Hilbrun, Mary C. Freeman, and John P. Wares

[Zootaxa Open Access Paper](#)

“We describe as new species *Micropterus pucpuggy* Freeman & Freeman (Bartram’s Bass), sp. nov., and *Micropterus calliurus* Freeman & Freeman (Altamaha Bass), sp. nov., which occur allopatrically in four river systems draining the Atlantic Slope of the southeastern United States.”



Standard weight equation and standard-length categories for Flier

Authors: Tim F. Bonvechio, Kevin J. Dockendorf, Kimberly I. Bonvechio, and Martin J. Hamel

AFS [North American Journal of Fisheries Management](#) (access only to AFS members)

“To date, no standard weight equation has been developed to assess the condition of Flier *Centrarchus macropterus* across its range. Additionally, the current standard-length categories needed to be revised based on the more comprehensive data set that was obtained for this study.”

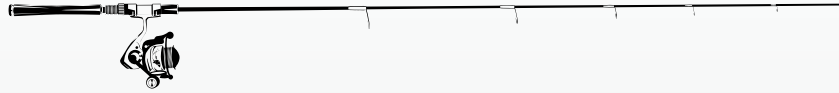


Georgia DNR WRD - How Healthy is My Fish?

Georgia DNR WRD has added a new web page for anglers. Now anglers can easily calculate the relative weight of the following fish they catch: Largemouth Bass, Spotted Bass, Striped Bass, Rainbow Trout, Hybrid Bass, Channel Catfish, Bluegill, Blue Catfish, Black Crappie, and Flathead Catfish.

Anglers just need to visit the [How Healthy is My Fish](#) website and input the length and weight of their fish. Their information will be calculated and the relative weight displayed. It will even tell you if your fish is “thin for its length” when the relative weight is low.

Reeling in Reminders



Awards and Recognition Committee

Review the award nomination process and consider nominating a colleague for one of the Georgia AFS awards. Award nomination forms: [Award Nominations](#)

Nominations Committee

Time to nominate a colleague for chapter officer. All chapter officers must be a 2026 member of Georgia AFS and a member of AFS. [GAAFS Officer Nominations Form](#)

Program Committee

We are using a Google Form to submit [abstracts](#). This will make it easier for us to organize and manage submissions. Follow the instructions provided on the form.

Scholarship and Travel Awards Committee

We are strict on the deadlines to apply for the Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship and the Robert E. Reinert Travel Award. Follow all directions when applying for these awards. Information about each award: [Student Awards](#)

Grants Committee

Travel grants are for professionals, graduate students, and retired professionals who are in good standing with the Georgia Chapter. Read carefully the instructions for applying for the grant. [Georgia AFS Travel Grant](#)

Continuing Education Committee

The R Programming Workshop in July was a success. The planning for the December workshop is underway. We are limited to 30 seats for the [Georgia Freshwater Fishes Identification Workshop](#).

Student Awards

Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship

Undergraduate and
Graduate students
attending school in
Georgia

Due: Dec. 15

Robert E. Reinert Travel Award

Undergraduate
students attending
school in Georgia

Due: Dec. 15

Georgia AFS Student Awards



Georgia AFS Travel Grant

Graduate students
attending school in
Georgia

Due: Jan. 4

Gift of AFS Membership

Undergraduate and
Graduate students
attending school in
Georgia

Due: Nov. 5

Membership Dues

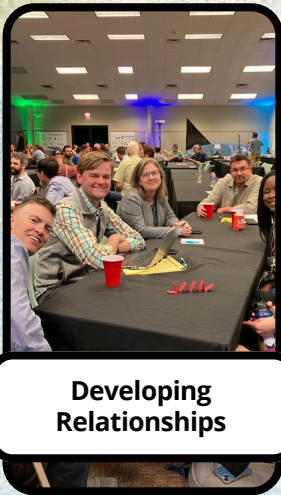
The Georgia AFS mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. Your paid membership helps us achieve that mission.

Georgia AFS
Annual Membership Dues

\$ 10



What are some benefits of becoming a member of Georgia AFS?



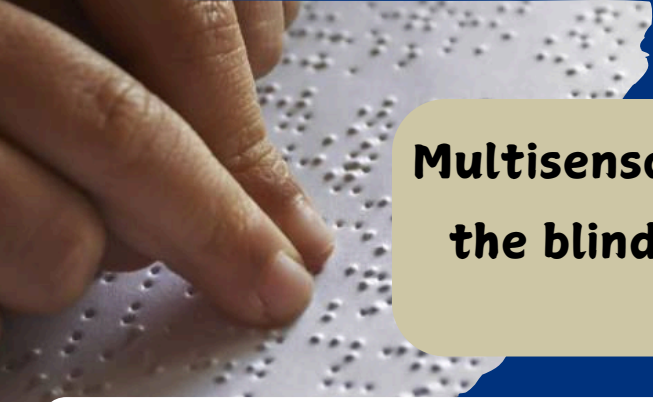
To vote on Chapter business/elections you must be a member of AFS.

AFS Membership Information

Membership in an AFS Chapter does not automatically make someone a member of the American Fisheries Society. To serve as an officer of Georgia AFS you need to be a member of AFS.

Consider joining the American Fisheries Society (AFS), the world's largest professional organization for fisheries scientists.





Multisensory learning: Creative ways to include the blind and low vision in science activities

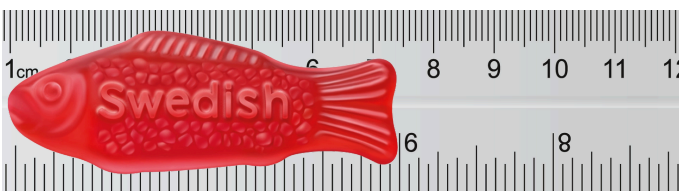
By Carla Curran

I've always known I wanted to teach science. That passion led me to the Southeast, where I taught marine science to non-majors, majors, and graduate students. When I noticed non-majors struggling with the metric system, I got creative.

I introduced candy Swedish fish as a hands-on way for students to practice measuring in millimeters and centimeters. They weighed the candy fish in grams and calculated the fish density by scattering them on the floor and counting individuals per square meter. After years of data collecting, we learned plenty about the candy. Red was the predominant color in mixed bags (no surprise) and were the longest even though green fish were slightly heavier. While these results were not scientifically important, the students learned what mattered: how to use measurement tools, practice scientific thinking, and gain confidence before collecting real fish data on our beach seining trips.

Little did I know that this lab activity would lead my career in a direction I would never have imagined—publishing K-12 STEM activities in education journals that teachers can access and use in their classroom. I had never even heard of such a thing until a friend encouraged me to give it a try with my candy fish activity (Curran, 2003). This leap ultimately led to my foray into scientific communication by collaborating with teachers to develop other K-12 activities, encouraging my graduate students to develop STEM activities as part of their thesis, and incorporating the opportunity for students to create a science activity as a class assignment and then try to publish it.

Over the past decade, I have focused on modifying these activities for blind and low vision students. In collaboration with the Perkins School of the Blind in Massachusetts and the Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, I tested and implemented simple yet effective changes such as thicker fonts (like Arial Black), bold graph lines, and the use of



stick-on gem beads or stars, puff paint for raised lines, or even glued-on spaghetti (Figure 1). Teachers of the visually impaired (TVIs) have told me that their students often feel excluded but feel incredibly empowered when they complete such work on their own. I noticed this firsthand when students were excited to show family members the graph they generated.

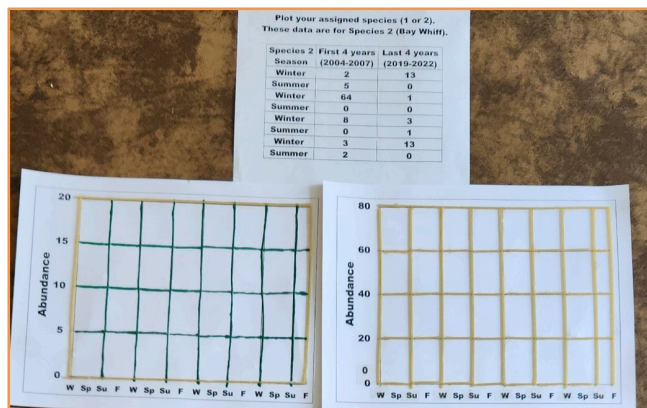
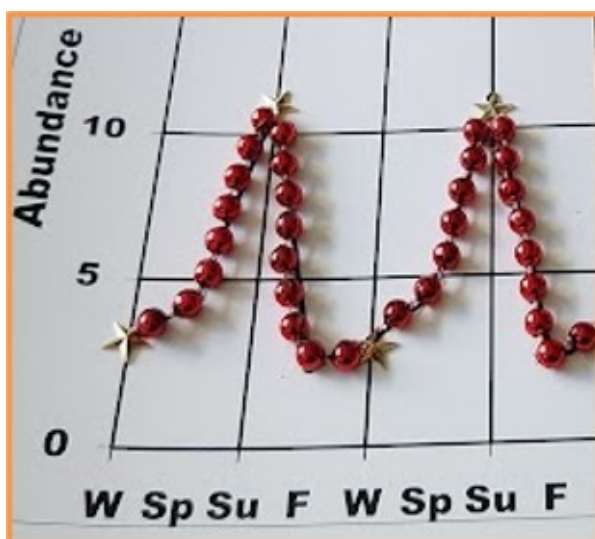


Figure 1. Modifications for the blind and low vision include: large print data table for graphing, graph with raised grid lines using puff paint or spaghetti (top), and tactile graph with beads and stars to feel data trends (bottom)



Student placing beads on the graph

Over time, my work evolved beyond tactile learning to incorporate sound as part of a multisensory approach. By integrating audio into science activities, blind and low vision students can engage in data interpretation through hearing. For example, students can listen to recordings of common bottlenose dolphin whistles (Curran et al., 2019) or compare marine mammal vocalizations (Sayigh and Curran, 2023).

Currently, I'm adapting a 19-year flatfish dataset from the Georgia coast into a sonified science activity by translating numerical data into pitch so students can hear patterns in the data.

The data, originally published in scientific literature (Curran & Wilber, 2019; Curran et al., 2021), reveal seasonal differences in two species: Bay Whiff (*Citharichthys spilopterus*) are most abundant in winter, and Blackcheek Tonguefish (*Symphurus plagiusa*) peak in summer (Figure 2). By converting these data into audio, students can listen to the changes in pitch and identify the peak season for each species. In the following recordings, the average seasonal abundance is repeated four times (starting with winter) to provide multiple opportunities to hear the pattern.

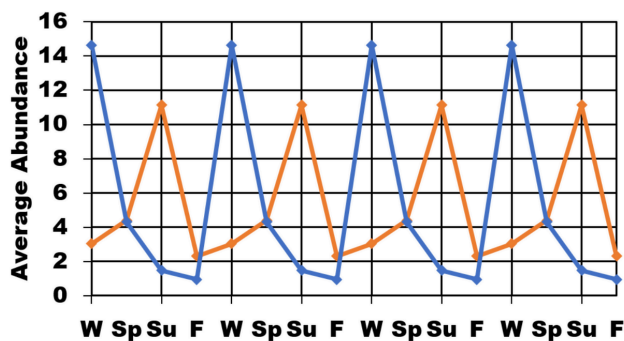


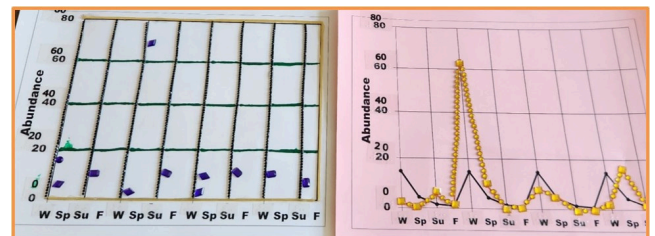
Figure 2. Average seasonal abundance of the Bay Whiff *Citharichthys spilopterus* (blue) and the Blackcheek Tonguefish *Symphurus plagiusa* (orange) in Wyll Creek near Savannah, GA. Note that there is only one average value for each season, but the data are repeated four times to provide four opportunities to hear the data in the corresponding sound clip for each species. Large thick print is used to accommodate the blind and low vision

[Bay Whiff Audio](#)

[Blackcheek Tonguefish Audio](#)


Using the sonified data, blind and low vision students can listen for seasonal patterns, compare them to printed or braille tables, and make their own chart of the selected data (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Student uses large-print data table then places gem stick-on beads onto a graph (top), example of student graph for the four years of data she was assigned (lower left) that is similar to answer key peaks (lower right)



This exemplifies some of the annual variability and thus the need for consistent multi-year sampling to elucidate accurate trends in fish abundance.

Multisensory learning is not just for blind and low vision students; it boosts engagement and comprehension for everyone. Even small changes can make a big difference in creating a more inclusive classroom.

By sharing this story, I hope scientists and educators will consider making a few thoughtful modifications of their work to open the door to a wider audience. I can almost guarantee that they will benefit from the experience by thinking about their product in a better, clearer way, while possibly inspiring a new generation of scientists. 

Literature Cited

Curran, M.C. 2003. Learning the metric system: Calculating fish distributions, densities, and means using candy fish. *Current: The Journal of Marine Education* 18(4):28-31.

Curran, M.C., J.J. Wiggins, and D. Wilber. 2021. Flatfish habitat use of a small southeastern U.S.A. tidal creek: long- and short-term occupancy patterns. June/Dec. *Estuaries and Coasts*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12237-021-00903-8>

Curran, M.C., L.S. Sayigh, and K. Patterson. 2019. Eavesdropping on marine mammal conversations: An activity suitable for the visually impaired. *Current: The Journal of Marine Education* 33(2):33-42.

Curran, M.C. and D.H. Wilber. 2019. Seasonal and interannual variability in flatfish assemblages in a southeastern USA estuary. *Estuaries and Coasts* 42(5):1374-1386.

Sayigh, L.S. and M.C. Curran. 2023. Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution Website. How noise pollution impacts communication in whales and dolphins. Under K-12 Resources/Classroom Activities: [Sayigh and Curran OCF Ocean Noise Aug 2023.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Biosketch

Mary Carla Curran retired as a Full Professor in the Department of Marine and Environmental Sciences at Savannah State University and is now professor emerita. She has published over 30 peer-reviewed science publications but also has extensive experience translating scientific research into peer-reviewed K-12 activities often with modifications for the blind and low vision. She has been attending AFS meetings for decades but hadn't attended a Georgia chapter meeting until retiring, but hopes to attend more!

Publishing K-12 Activities

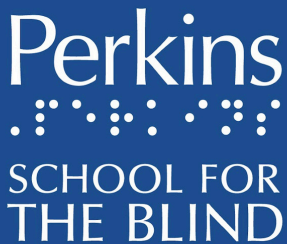
There are a variety of journals that publish K-12 activities that teachers can access for classroom use. The generalized structure is that articles have: background information about the topic for the teacher to use as needed (insert some primary literature citations for a thorough background), national (or state) standards, a supply list, any safety concerns, the activity itself (which may include a worksheet and answer key), proof that the activity was tested in the classroom (photos, trials and tribulations, reflections, student quotes), a literature cited section, and a biosketch for each author.

- [The American Biology Teacher Journal](#)
- [National Science Teachers Association](#)
- [Journal of Marine Education](#)
- [Frontiers in Young Minds](#)



NSTA Journals (K - College)

Blind and Low Vision Teaching Resources



[General Tips for Teaching Science to Students with Visual Impairments](#)

[Accessible Science: Student Projects](#)

[Tactile Graphics](#)

[STEM](#) playlist of videos



GEORGIA RESILIENCY CONFERENCE 2025

October 20 - 21, 2025
Jekyll Island Convention Center

The Georgia Resiliency Conference is hosted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and brings together more than 430 leaders and experts from the public, private, nonprofit and academic sectors to collaborate, raise awareness of work across the state, highlight progress and identify opportunities to do more. They are focusing on two areas:

- What does a changing climate mean for Georgia?
- What can we do about it?

Conference Website



Planning for the Georgia Resiliency Conference 2025 is currently underway. Please check the conference website, social media, or visit their website and sign up for email updates.



Call for Posters
Deadline August 31



Sponsor 2025 Georgia
Resiliency Conference



Keynote Speaker
Wayne Clough



Registration will open in
July of 2025.



The Science Behind Sustainable Fisheries: Bridging Management, Policy, and Conservation

Helpful Links

[Registration](#)

[Abstract Submission](#)

[Special Symposium](#)

[Lightning Talks](#)

[Hotel Reservations](#)

[411 for Students](#)

[Annual Fundraiser](#)

[Sponsorship Support](#)



[Volunteering](#)

[Volunteer Form](#)

[Volunteer Guidelines](#)

[Have Questions](#)

GeorgiaAFS@gmail.com

Welcome

Georgia AFS invites you to join us at the Villas by the Sea on Jekyll Island for our 40th annual meeting.

The theme "The Science Behind Sustainable Fisheries: Bridging Management, Policy, and Conservation" emphasizes the essential role of science in supporting healthy fish populations and aquatic ecosystems. It highlights how sustainability in fisheries depends on integrating three interconnected pillars:

- Science-based management, which uses data and research to guide harvest limits, habitat protection, and population monitoring;
- Informed policy, which translates scientific findings into regulations and governance frameworks that protect resources while supporting economic and recreational interests;
- Conservation efforts, which aim to preserve biodiversity, restore degraded habitats, and ensure long-term ecosystem resilience.

By bridging these areas, the theme calls attention to the need for collaboration among scientists, resource managers, policymakers, and conservationists to develop effective strategies that ensure fisheries remain productive, diverse, and resilient for generations to come.

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.



UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA
EXTENSION

As part of the UGA College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, UGA Extension agents and specialists serve our Georgia communities at work, home and play. They support our communities through personalized services like workshops, classes, consultations, certifications, camps and educator resources.

UGA Extension offers extensive knowledge to serve all Georgians:

- Agriculture and Natural Resources
- Landscapes and gardening
- 4-H Youth Development
- Family and Consumer Sciences
- Emergent topics



4-H students preparing to learn about stream biology

Their mission is to extend lifelong learning to Georgia citizens through unbiased, research-based education in agriculture, the environment, communities, youth and families.

Examples of Programs and Services they Provide

- Soil and Water Testing services
- Radon Testing services for your home
- School Garden Curriculum for educators
- Master Beekeeper program
- 4-H Summer Camp

They have faculty and staff in every county across the state that are available to assist you. For information or the status on programs, [contact your local Extension](#) office by email or phone.

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Expert Resources

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Georgia AFS Contests for Members

Georgia AFS Trash2Art Contest



*2025 Trash2Art Contest 1st Place
Winner, submitted by Laura Wenk*

The Georgia AFS EXCOM wants to invite you to participate in our Georgia AFS Trash2Art Contest. This is an opportunity to upcycle trash and create a two-dimensional or three-dimensional art piece representing fish and aquatic ecosystems.

Artwork will be scored on:

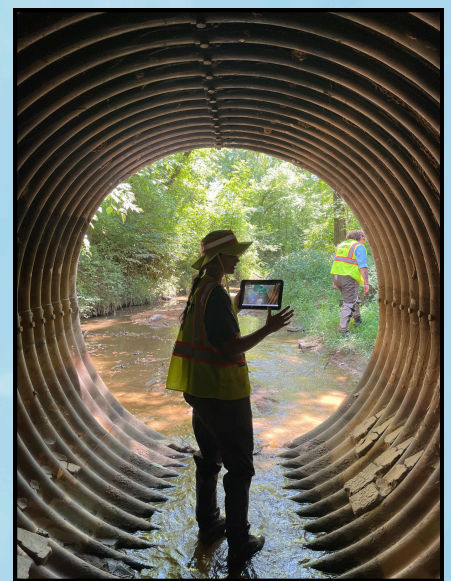
- Relevance to fisheries or aquatic ecosystems
- Creativity and Originality
- Use of discarded or repurposed material
- Artistic skill and execution

Georgia AFS Photo Contest

The Georgia AFS photo contest is a great way to interact with our fisheries community and showcase the talent and creativity of our chapter members. The theme for 2026 is “Human-Water Connection.”

Photos will be scored on:

- Relevance to the theme
- Visual and emotional impact
- Cultural or ecological storytelling
- Caption clarity and informativeness
- Technical quality



*2025 Photo Contest 2nd Place
“Tools of the Trade” submitted
by Andrew Taylor*



Georgia AFS
Art and Photo Contest
Rules and Guidelines

Plugged In

Take a break and listen to your favorite podcast or try one of the podcasts listed below.



[Section Roundup: Invasive and Introduced Species Section](#)

The AFS Sections roundup continues today with an introduction to the Invasive and Introduced Species Section! Today's guest is Nathan Lederman, the Section's current president. Join us to learn about this section's history and current projects.



[Utah's Cutthroat Trout](#)

Get to know and explore the state of Utah by discovering its amazing cutthroat trout diversity! We are joined by two guests with the Utah Department of Natural Resources: Mike Slater and Trina Hedrick. You'll learn where these fish live, why they're so cool, how to go about completing the Utah Cutthroat Trout Slam.



[Reintroducing a Rusty Angler to Fishing](#)

Corey and Ben hit the water with NC Wildlife's Ryan Kennemur, a self-proclaimed rusty angler on the hottest day of the year. Listen in as they dive into starter gear every new angler needs, luck vs. persistence while fishing, and more.



[Pit Tag Primer with Brian Beckley of VodaIQ and Josh Murauskas](#)

On this weeks episode Brendan sits down with Brian Beckley and Josh Murauskas for a deep dive into PIT tags - a small electronic device used in fisheries science for a number of interesting applications. They discuss the what how and why of PIT Tags, the origins of PIT tags in fisheries science, and how they are used and applied throughout North America.



[Sportfish Restoration Act 75th](#)

Get to know the history behind the Sport Fish Restoration Act as we kick off a month celebrating its role (and yours) in fisheries conservation and access. Our guests are Mark Madison (a historian at our National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia) and Tom Decker (branch manager with our Office of Conservation Investment).

DID YOU KNOW?

Lake Baikal, located in southern Siberia, Russia, is Earth's deepest and largest freshwater lake by volume... and it's still growing.

Facts about Lake Baikal

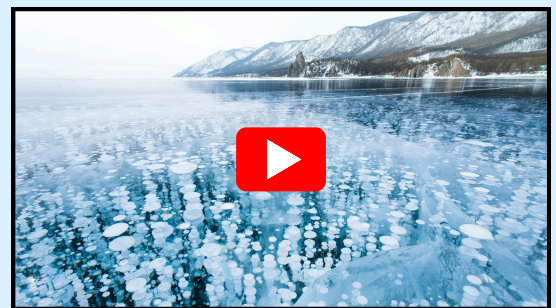
- Depth is 1,642 meters (5,387 ft); volume is 22995 cubic kilometers (5,666 cubic miles)
- Is the oldest freshwater lake on Earth - 25 million years old
- Contains roughly 20% of the world's surface water
- Is 636 kilometers (395 miles) long and 79 kilometers (49 miles) wide
- Is a rift lake (Baikal Rift Zone) and slowly widening at 2 cm per year
- Known for its exceptionally clear water - popular among divers and researchers
- In winter the lake freezes over, creating a thick, clear ice sheet
- Roughly 2,630 species have been recorded, 65% of them endemic
- 54 species and subspecies of fish
- Home to the Baikal seal, which is the world's only entirely freshwater seal species
- Designated as a UNESCO World Heritage site in 1996

Lake Baikal's Famous Fish - Omul

The Omul is endemic to Lake Baikal and is considered a delicacy - when smoked.



Learn more facts about Lake Baikal



Fishy News Around the World

Click on title to access article

FOR FISH, HOVERING IS NOT RESTFUL

The findings, published today in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, overturn the long-standing assumption in the scientific literature that maintaining a stationary position in water is virtually effortless for fish with swim bladders.

THE GREAT LAKES ARE IN AN EXTREME NEW ERA

Heat waves and cold spells are now more common on the Great Lakes, according to U-M research, with implications for the region's weather, economy and ecology.

LOSS OF NATURAL AREAS AND INTRODUCTION OF EXOTIC SPECIES REDUCES FISHING YIELDS IN THE PARANÁ RIVER IN BRAZIL

An analysis of data collected over 20 years in the upper stretch of the river shows a 50% loss in economic gains from fishing. Native fish have become smaller and smaller. Conversely, invasive species are becoming more abundant.

GENETIC STUDY OF CARIBBEAN HAMLETS QUESTIONS TRADITIONAL DEFINITIONS OF SPECIES

According to the genic view, species are characterized by the genes that underlie functional divergence. Here, we take a phylogenomic approach to assess this view at the scale of a whole radiation.

MISTAKEN IDENTITY: RESEARCHERS DEVELOP NEW METHODS TO IDENTIFY SUCKERS IN THE INTERMOUNTAIN WEST

Two Idaho State University professors and their students have developed a new process to precisely identify suckers that call southeast Idaho and some of the surrounding areas home.

THE HEATWAVE THAT SHATTERED ECOSYSTEMS, STARVED WHALES, AND DROVE FISH NORTH

A scorching marine heatwave from 2014 to 2016 devastated the Pacific coast, shaking ecosystems from plankton to whales and triggering mass die-offs, migrations, and fishery collapses.



Leadership

*The Quiet Power of the Empathetic Leader
with Navy SEAL turned rowing coach
Gordon Schmidt*



Simon Sinek



Communication

10 Tips On How To Run PERFECT Meetings



AJ&Smart

Fish Biology

*How massive, feral goldfish are threatening
the Great Lakes ecosystem*



PBS NewsHour



Lake Management

*FishSport Inc. CEO Les Ager talks
about Lake Management & Fishing*



Mossy Oak Gamekeeper

BUBBA BASS SAFETY TIP

Do you know what to do if someone falls overboard of an electrofishing boat with the power on?

First: Prioritize Safety

- Do not attempt to rescue until first ensuring your safety and turning off the electrical current

Second: Immediately shut down the equipment

- Activate emergency stop button on electrofishing unit, switch off electrodes, turn off generator

Third: Access the situation and call for help

- After power is off cautiously approach the person and check for responsiveness and breathing
- Call 911 clearly stating that it is an electrical injury

Fourth: Provide first aid while awaiting medical assistance

- If person is unconscious and not breathing, begin CPR immediately
- If conscious check for burns and treat according to first aid protocols

Bubba's Friends: Burbot (*Lota lota*)

Burbot are native to the subarctic regions of the Northern Hemisphere. They are the sole species in the genus *Lota* and the only freshwater representatives of the order Gadiformes. Often described as resembling a cross between a catfish and an eel, burbot are easily recognized by the single barbel located on their chin.

- Appear to be scaleless, but have tiny scales
- Reach sexual maturity between 4 and 7 years of age
- Unlike other freshwater fish, they spawn mid to late winter, under the ice, in writhing masses
- Similar to other cod species - vocalizations are part of the mating ritual so males and females can find each other
- They are broadcast spawners and spawn multiple times in a year, but not every year
- Popular among ice anglers - do a YouTube search and see
- Largest caught - 25lb 2 oz (Saskatchewan, Canada)






Burbot are considered invasive in the Green River drainage, specifically in the Flaming Gorge Reservoir, in Utah and Wyoming.

Fin and Games: Aquatic Invasive Species

Test your knowledge of aquatic invasive species. Decide if the statement is True or False.

[Answers](#) on the back page.

- 1 Flathead Catfish are native to the Altamaha River. 
- 2 Silver Carp are filter feeders and do not have a true stomach. 
- 3 Hydrilla infestations can cause the death of Bald Eagles due to the chlorine ions present in the hydrilla leaves. 
- 4 Giant salvinia is an important aquatic plant for lakes because it provides habitat for fish and releases oxygen into the water. 
- 5 Wading birds such as blue herons are a potential pathway for whirling disease. 
- 6 The Weather Loach can absorb oxygen through its intestine allowing it to survive in challenging environments. 
- 7 Mature female lionfish reproduce year-round laying eggs every three to four days. 
- 8 Once a year, mature female Chinese/Japanese mystery snails from the genus *Cipangopaludina* give birth to 25-35 fully formed and shelled offspring. 
- 9 Zebra mussels have byssal threads that allow them to attach to hard surfaces. 
- 10 Aquatic invasive species are typically specialist species. 

How many did you get correct?

10 = Excellent

8 or 9 = Strong

6 or 7 = Good

Below 6 = Needs Improvement

*Click on the link for
explanation of answer*

2025 Georgia AFS Sponsors

Thank you for your Support!

Platinum



Gold



Warnell School of Forestry
& Natural Resources
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



Silver



Bronze



Marine Extension and
Georgia Sea Grant
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA



In-Kind Donation



Georgia AFS 2025 Fundraising Donors

Thank you for your Support!



Vera Bradley

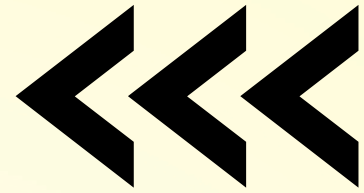
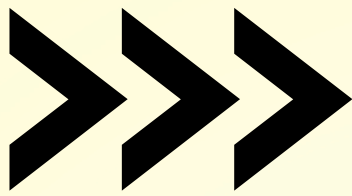


Alliance Theatre



HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA





The benefits of being a member of the American Fisheries Society:

- **Build your professional network support:** you have access to more contacts, more resources, and more information; chances are, someone in AFS has “been there/done that”; you can participate in one of the AFS Sections to connect with others who are likeminded and/or working in the same niche you are
- **Demonstrate your professionalism:** your membership demonstrates a commitment and dedication to your profession; you serve as a role model for those entering the field as well as have an opportunity to share your own insights and expertise with peers and colleagues
- **Build your own skills:** AFS has opportunities for you to take on a leadership role that might not yet be available at work; participate in AFS workshops and webinars; present at conferences; write a newsletter article; become a mentor
- **Have a voice:** one of the important roles AFS is advocacy - that is, helping decision makers understand what members do in the workplace and why it is important; a larger group has a louder voice
- **Give yourself an advantage:** build your professional reputation and boost your credibility; build your resume; connect with more experienced professionals



MORE ABOUT AFS



**AFS PUBLISHES
JOURNALS**



**AFS ADVISES
POLICY**

Learn More



**AFS HAS A VARIETY
OF SECTIONS YOU
CAN JOIN
DEPENDING ON
YOUR INTERESTS**



**AFS SUPPORTS THE
HUTTON JUNIOR
FISHERIES BIOLOGY
PROGRAM**

AFS/SDAFS MEETINGS

Future AFS Annual Meetings



American Fisheries Society

- 2026 Columbus, OH: August 30 – September 3
- 2027 Pittsburgh, PA: September 26 – 30

Volunteer to Serve on an AFS Committee

Any active member of the American Fisheries Society (AFS) is welcome to serve on AFS Committees.

MORE INFO



The Southern Division
of the American Fisheries Society

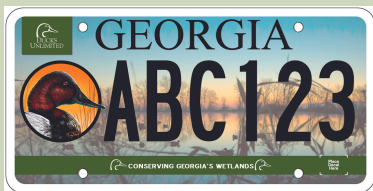
sd.fisheries.org/

Future SDAFS Meetings

- 2026 New Orleans, LA: March 4-7, 2026
- 2027 Alabama (Location and date TBD)
- 2028 Mississippi (Location and date TBD)

General 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](#)

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 Interviewing Tips](#)

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.

[UGA Extension Pesticide Safety Education](#)

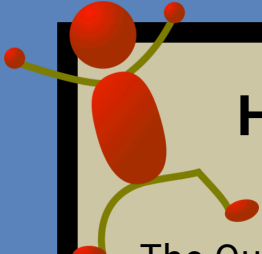
[Pesticide License Exam Study Videos](#)

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](#)

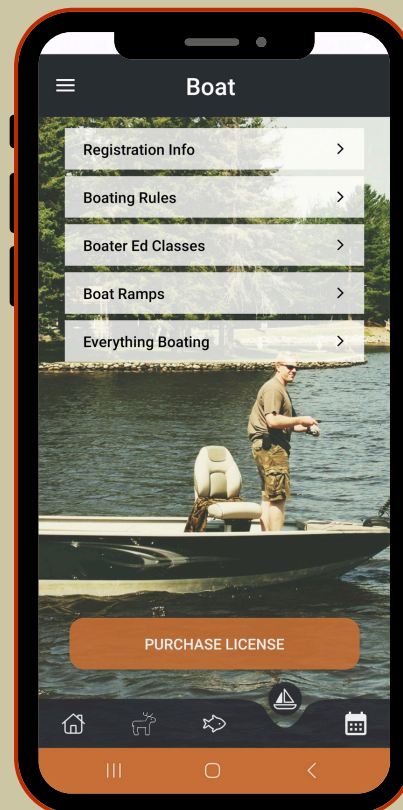
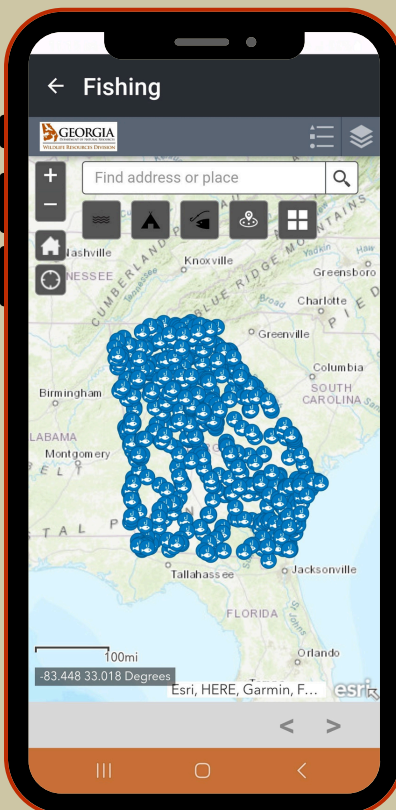
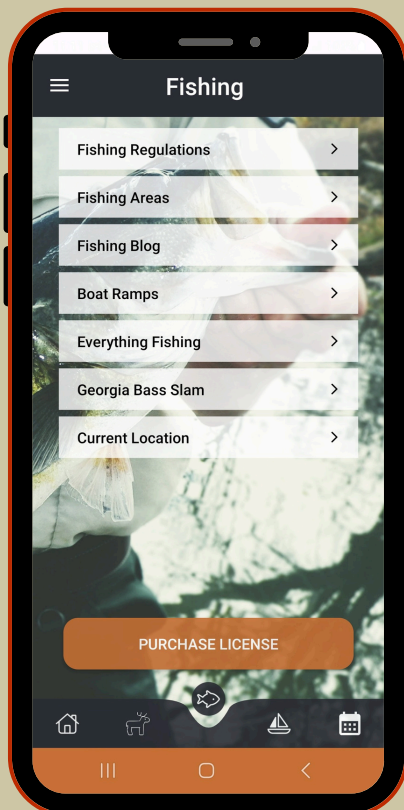
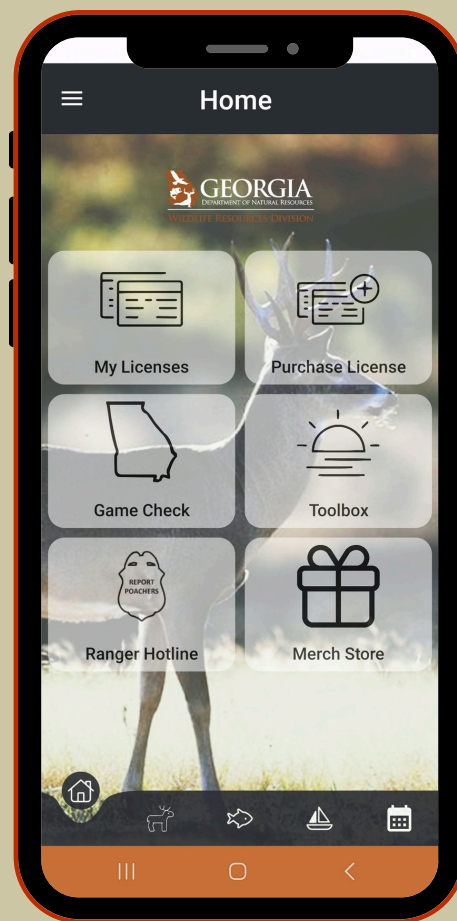


Have you tried the Go Outdoors GA app?

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**



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Science Worth Sharing. Stories Worth Telling.

The Chapter newsletter aims to highlight the exciting work of fisheries professionals and students, share details about upcoming meetings and events, and offer other valuable information relevant to the fisheries community. We encourage a wide variety of submissions related to research, ideas, and developments in marine and freshwater finfish and shellfish, along with their respective fisheries and environments. Contributions can range from a short paragraph to three pages in length. If you have an idea for an article but are unsure whether it's a good fit, feel free to reach out, we're happy to discuss it. Suggested topics include, but are not limited to, the areas 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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Newsletter Editorial Board

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Brent Hess
Dawn Franco
Camm Swift

Answers to Fin & Games

1. False
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. True
7. True
8. True
9. True
10. False