

Under the Dock

November-December 2025



Newsletter of the Georgia Chapter of the
American Fisheries Society

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Mark Your Calendar

- **November 12**
 - Georgia AFS Professional Award Nominations deadline
- **November 15**
 - Registration deadline for Georgia Freshwater Fishes ID Workshop
- **November 20 - 21**
 - Southeastern Fishes Council Meeting
 - Tuscaloosa, AL
- **December 10**
 - Georgia AFS Recognition Award nominations deadline
- **December 17 - 19**
 - 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

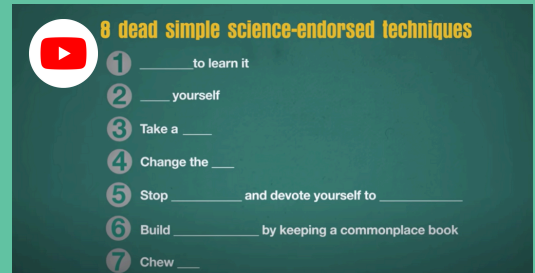
OUR MISSION

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

Leadership is More Than a Title: Lessons from the Natural Resource Profession

Leadership is widely regarded as a core competency in the natural resource profession, yet it remains one of the most misunderstood. It is often associated with individuals who hold formal titles such as program manager, regional supervisor, or division chief. However, those working in fisheries, forestry, wildlife, and environmental management understand that leadership extends far beyond job descriptions and organizational charts. True leadership is demonstrated every day by individuals who take initiative, find solutions under challenging conditions, and inspire others to pursue shared goals in conservation and resource stewardship. Leadership, therefore, is less about hierarchy and more about influence, character, and example (Kouzes & Posner, 2019).



Leadership Through Action

In the field of natural resource management, the most respected leaders are those who lead by example. It emerges when professionals demonstrate initiative, responsibility, and commitment to shared objectives (Lencioni, 2002). Field crews quickly learn that real leadership comes from the person who rolls up their sleeves, faces challenges alongside the team, and finds solutions when conditions are unpredictable. A technician who stays late to help collect water samples, a fisheries biologist who mentors a new intern on proper data collection, or a forester who helps a landowner understand sustainable management practices are demonstrating leadership through action. Their influence does not come from authority, but from reliability, competence, and the willingness to serve a larger mission.

Natural resources work often involves unpredictable weather, long hours, and complex ecological challenges. A calm, resourceful person who keeps morale high and safety first during a difficult field day may not have a leadership title, but their actions exemplify what real leadership looks like in practice. As Northouse (2021) notes, leadership involves influencing others to achieve common goals, and that influence often comes through modeling dedication and competence rather than exercising authority.

The Role of Integrity and Character

Integrity is the foundation of leadership in any profession, but it holds particular weight in natural resource management. Natural resource professionals serve as stewards of the public trust, managing ecosystems and wildlife that belong to society at large. Decisions must be made ethically, transparently, and based on sound science. A title can give someone authority to make management decisions, but only integrity earns the trust of coworkers, stakeholders, and the public.



Leaders demonstrate integrity by communicating honestly, acknowledging mistakes, and basing management decisions on sound science rather than personal or political influence. For instance, when a biologist presents research results that may not support popular opinion, they demonstrate integrity by staying true to the data rather than bending to pressure. Similarly, a manager who admits an error in a population survey or regulatory decision builds credibility rather than losing it. The public expects honesty from natural resource professionals, and colleagues respect those who remain truthful, fair, and accountable. As Wondolleck and Yaffee (2017) emphasize, ethical leadership in conservation strengthens public confidence and supports long-term collaboration.

Empathy and Emotional Intelligence

Leadership also depends on understanding people as much as understanding ecosystems. Emotional intelligence is the capacity to understand and manage one's own emotions while being sensitive to others (Goleman, 1998). Natural resource professionals work with diverse groups such as landowners, anglers, volunteers, policymakers, and the general public. Empathy and emotional intelligence allow leaders to listen to different perspectives, navigate conflict, and find common ground between diverse interests.

For example, a fisheries biologist leading a stakeholder meeting about harvest regulations must balance scientific data with local traditions and community concerns. By listening carefully and showing respect for differing opinions, that biologist demonstrates leadership that builds relationships instead of barriers. Within teams, emotional intelligence helps supervisors recognize stress, prevent burnout, and maintain morale during demanding projects. In this sense, empathy is not a soft skill, but a strategic leadership asset that strengthens organizational effectiveness (George, 2000).



Empowering Others to Lead

In the natural resource field, no single person has all the answers. Effective leaders recognize this and focus on building capacity within their teams. Leaders who share knowledge, encourage decision-making, and mentor others create more resilient and capable teams. Empowerment allows organizations to sustain leadership capacity even as individuals move between projects or agencies (Folke et al., 2005).



A senior biologist who takes time to teach young professionals proper sampling techniques, explains the reasoning behind management decisions, or encourages innovative ideas is investing in future leaders. Likewise, a crew leader who trusts their team to make on-the-spot decisions during fieldwork shows confidence in others' abilities. Empowerment not only develops new skills but also builds ownership and pride in the work being done. In the long term, empowerment fosters a culture where everyone, regardless of title, sees themselves as a steward and leader within the profession.

Leadership Beyond Recognition

Leadership within the natural resource profession often takes place quietly, without titles or formal recognition. It emerges in the field technician who mentors seasonal employees, the biologist who engages local students in learning about invasive species, and the volunteer who organizes a community cleanup. These individuals demonstrate leadership through commitment and care rather than through authority or recognition.

Leadership in this context reflects the concept of “servant leadership,” where the primary motivation is to serve others and the mission rather than to seek status (Greenleaf, 1977). Such leaders strengthen institutions from the ground up, fostering trust, cooperation, and shared responsibility.



Vision, Courage, and Adaptability

Leadership in the natural resource profession requires vision and adaptability. Environmental challenges are complex and constantly evolving, from climate change to habitat loss and invasive species. Effective leaders must be able to envision long-term ecological outcomes while adapting to changing data, technologies, and public expectations (Armitage, Berkes, & Doubleday, 2007).

Visionary leaders motivate others to look past short-term challenges and stay focused on the long-term goals of sustainable resource management. Equally important is the ability to evolve our management strategies as new knowledge and conditions arise. For instance, a leader who revises an established fish

stocking policy in response to updated ecological data exemplifies both scientific integrity and adaptive leadership. The blend of foresight and flexibility is vital for addressing the inherent uncertainties that come with managing dynamic, living systems.

Conclusion

Leadership in the natural resource profession is far more than a title or position. It is demonstrated through action, integrity, empathy, empowerment, and vision. It is the ability to inspire others to care deeply about conservation, to work together toward shared goals, and to act responsibly toward both people and the environment. Whether a person is a seasonal technician or an agency director, leadership emerges through behavior, not hierarchy. Titles may confer authority, but integrity, service, and vision earn respect and trust.

As professionals charged with caring for the planet’s resources, natural resource leaders must model the values they hope to inspire in the form of collaboration, accountability, and respect for both people and the environment. Leadership, in this field, is not defined by where one stands in an organization, but by how one stands up for the mission of conservation.



**Visionary
Adaptive
Collaborative**

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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 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.



Registration Deadline



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!**

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)

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

Professional Award
Deadline 11/12/25

Recognition Award
Deadline 12/10/25



Are you looking for examples of how to write an award nomination summary?



**Georgia AFS
Awards**

The Georgia AFS Awards & Recognition Committee worked with the Communications Committee to provide our members with guidelines for writing award nominations. In addition to the guidelines several examples are provided to assist our members when they nominate a colleague for a Georgia AFS award.

Georgia AFS YouTube Channel

Twice a year the Communications Committee reviews and updates the Georgia AFS YouTube Channel. This resource is a collection of videos (organized into [playlists](#)) that provide information about various topics that might of interest to students and professionals. All of the videos are vetted for content.

Some of Our Playlists

Public Speaking Tips <i>Overcome Anxiety Body Language Do's & Don'ts</i> LEARN MORE	Campus Corner <i>Mental Health Study Tips Graduate School</i> LEARN MORE	Leadership & Communication <i>Running a Meeting Inspiring Others Storytelling</i> LEARN MORE	Creating PowerPoints <i>Tips & Tricks Interactive Tabs Do's & Don'ts</i> LEARN MORE	R Programming <i>Beginners Info ggplot and much more</i> LEARN MORE
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What if you don't find what you are looking for? Visit the YouTube Channel of the videos we selected. For example: [R Programming 101](#) is constantly making videos for their channel.



Georgia AFS Career Resources

The Georgia AFS Career resources include information for both students and professionals.

Careers in Fisheries Information for those considering a career in fisheries Tips for navigating your fisheries career path CLICK HERE	Jobs & Internships Website sources Job Postings Internships Summer/Seasonal Jobs CLICK HERE	Resume & Interviewing Tips Resume Tips Interviewing Tips Mock Interview Materials Resources CLICK HERE
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Breaking Barriers on the Water: New Documentary Highlights Women in New England's Maritime Trades

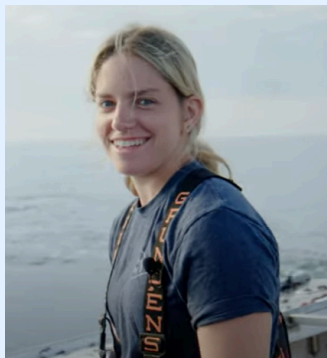
A new documentary, [Women on the Water](#), premiered on Vermont Public Television on October 9, 2025, as part of the station's *Made Here* series. The 44-minute film shines a spotlight on six women from New Hampshire who are charting their own course in the traditionally male-dominated fishing, aquaculture, and seafood industries.



The documentary is a part of a film series by New Hampshire Sea Grant, showcasing not just personal stories but illustrating how women are contributing to evolving regional fisheries, aquaculture, and seafood distribution.



These candid reflections reveal both the challenges and rewards of working in a field where gender barriers remain deeply entrenched. The women profiled—including lobster harvester Ella, crab marketer Jillian Robillard, oyster-farming sisters Laura and Krystin, and tuna fishers Michelle and Lea—share personal stories of perseverance, community, and passion for their craft. Together, they represent a new generation of maritime professionals committed to sustainable practices and equitable opportunities.



2026 Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program

The **Hutton Junior Fisheries Biology Program** is an eight-week paid summer internship and mentoring program for high school students sponsored by the American Fisheries Society (AFS). The vision is to stimulate interest in fisheries and aquatic science among underrepresented groups in the profession today. Participating students receive a \$3,000 stipend and hands on experience with fisheries professionals. AFS has a network of mentors that provides them the opportunity to place students in all 50 states, Canada, Mexico, and Puerto Rico within a 45-minute commute of the student's home.



Student Applications

Applications for 2026 are open from November 21, 2025 to January 25, 2026. Applicants must be at least 16 years of age by the end of the application period.

Mentor Applications

Mentor applicants are strongly encouraged to apply as soon as possible and to recruit students. **2026 Mentor** applications are currently open and are due by Feb. 1st.



2026 Georgia DNR Career Academy



Georgia DNR invites rising juniors and seniors to a week-long summer camp where students will have the opportunity to explore future career options, receive training and education, and make connections with current DNR employees. Attendees will work alongside field professionals and receive hands-on training from game wardens, park managers, and wildlife, fisheries, and marine technicians while traveling across the state visiting wildlife management areas, state parks, fish hatcheries, historic sites, and Georgia's coast.

Deadline to **apply: November 17**

Student Awards

Ronnie J. Gilbert Scholarship

\$500 Scholarship
for Undergraduate
and Graduate
students attending
school in GA

Due: Dec. 15

Robert E. Reinert Travel Award

Covers lodging and
registration expenses for an
undergraduate student to
attend the Georgia AFS annual
meeting. Student must live
and attend school in GA.

Due: Dec. 15

Georgia AFS Travel Grant

Covers lodging and/or
registration expenses
for Graduate students
to attend the Georgia
AFS annual meeting.
Students must live and
attend school in GA.

Due: Jan. 4

Gift of AFS Membership

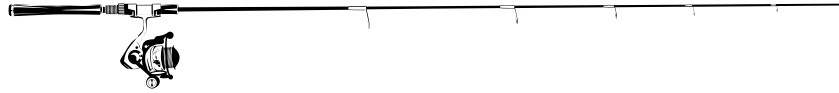
Undergraduate and
Graduate students
attending school in
Georgia

Due: Nov. 5



**Click here for more
info about each
award**

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](#)

- **November 12:** Professional Award nominations deadline
- **December 10:** Recognition Award nominations deadline

Program Committee

We are using a Google Form to submit [abstracts](#) for the annual meeting. This will make it easier for us to organize and manage submissions. Follow the instructions provided on the form. [Tips for Delivering Powerful Presentations](#) (oral/poster)

Scholarship and Travel Awards Committee

We are strict on the deadline (December 15) 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](#)

Continuing Education Committee

Registration deadline for the December workshop, [Georgia Freshwater Fishes Identification Workshop](#), is November 15.

Membership and Student Affairs Committee

Professionals interested in participating in the Student-Mentor Luncheon need to complete the volunteer form by December 19. [Georgia AFS Mentor Volunteer Form](#)

Planning Committee

Pay attention to deadlines for early registration and for making your hotel reservations. Room block rates for [Villas](#) ends January 16. Make your reservation before that date. Check the website for additional deadlines and meeting information ([Georgia AFS 2026 Annual Meeting](#)).



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

Helpful Links

[Registration](#)

[Abstract Submission](#)

[Special Symposium](#)

[Lightning Talks](#)

[Hotel Reservations](#)

[411 for Students](#)

[Presentation Tips and Guidelines](#)



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.

Tips for PowerPoint Presentations

Designing Your PowerPoint

- It is easier for audience members with dyslexia if you select familiar sans serif fonts such as Arial or Calibri with adequate spacing between letters. Avoid using all capital letters and excessive italics or underlines. Choose a [font size](#) that is easily visible by all audience members in the ballroom.
- Use color blind-safe colors. Most issues for colorblind people come from the prevalence of red-and-green combinations as a pair of opposites in design. The first rule of making a [palette for colorblind](#) – avoid combining red and green.
- Use sufficient contrast for text and background colors. Bright slide backgrounds can make text harder to read. Choose an off-white or cream background. The text should be dark, with lots of space around the letters. A dark background and white text also work.
- Provide adequate white space, avoid clutter, and visually highlight sections with borders, colored headings, and white space.
- Do not use a laser pointer during your presentation. Laser pointers can be a distraction or you risk alienating your audience members when more than one screen is used to display your presentation. A well-placed arrow, [circle](#) or other animation built into your slide will often show something more effectively.
- Be creative with your slides to capture the attention of the audience, but don't overdo it. Avoid any transitions or animations that will distract your audience. Consider how you can use [Morph](#) in PowerPoint to highlight sections of your presentation.

Presentation Tips

- Be aware of your time limit. Rehearse your presentation so you have time for both your presentation and time for questions from the audience.
- Have a bottle of water at the podium in case you need it.
- Talk to your audience, not at them.
- Speak loudly and clearly.
- It is okay to move away from the podium.



Visit the [Georgia AFS YouTube Channel](#) or [Website](#) for additional tips and guidelines for presenting your research

Tips for Poster Presentations

Designing Your Poster

- The title should be informative and effectively capture the attention of the audience.
- All sections should be clearly laid out, moving from top left to bottom right.
- Do not go overboard on the use of colors. Remember to avoid using red and green colors when possible to be considerate of audience members with color-blindness.
- It is easier for audience members with dyslexia if you select familiar sans serif fonts such as Arial or Calibri with adequate spacing between letters. Avoid using all capital letters and excessive italics or underlines.
- Your poster should be attractive, balanced, and not cluttered. Leave open space around your text boxes and images to make it easier to read.
- Use high-resolution photographs and do not forget to credit who took the photo. Your photos should be checked to ensure there is no indication of not following safety protocols.
- Do not include your abstract. A poster is an abstract of your research.
- Posters with less text are more inviting and easier to absorb. Avoid using long paragraphs. Use bullet points and/or short direct statements.
- Review [good and bad examples of research posters](#) to help guide you to create a great research poster.

Presenting Your Poster

- Smile and make eye contact with interested individuals who approach your poster and then introduce yourself and your poster.
- Have a 2-3 minute “elevator pitch” that touches upon the basic components of your poster that focuses on your results. Practice. Practice. Practice.
- Be excited about your research.
- Use your poster as a visual tool. Point to areas of interest to keep your audience focused and engaged.
- Ask if your audience has any questions at the end.
- Have your contact information ready. You might consider printing business cards with your name, phone number, and emails (school and personal).
- Don’t forget to thank people for visiting your poster.

Georgia AFS Contests for Members

Georgia AFS Trash2Art Contest



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

The Georgia AFS EXCOM invites 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 fisheries and aquatic ecosystems.

Artwork will be **scored** on:

- Relevance to fisheries or aquatic ecosystems
- Creativity and Originality
- Use of discarded or repurposed material
- Craftsmanship and Technique
- Aesthetic Impact

[Link for Trash2Art Judging Form](#)

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
- Creativity and originality
- Cultural or ecological storytelling
- Caption clarity and informativeness
- Technical quality

[Link for Photo Contest Judging Form](#)



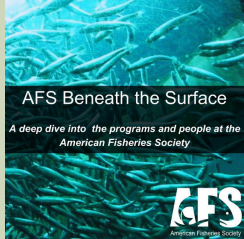
2025 Photo Contest 2nd Place “Tools of the Trade” submitted by Andrew Taylor

**For All Rules and
Guidelines Tap Here**



Plugged In

Do you listen to podcasts while driving? Exercising? Did you know you can download podcasts to your phone and listen when you are traveling in areas with low or no cell service?



[AFS Section Roundup: Marine Fisheries Section](#)

This week, we're making another stop on the tour of AFS Sections, and this time it's the Marine Fisheries Section (MFS). Susan Piacenza, the current president of the Section, stopped by the podcast recently to share updates about MFS activities - and to chat about her work with sea turtles!



[Texas' Native Guadalupe Bass!](#)

Meet the official state fish of Texas and the gem of central Texas: the Guadalupe Bass! Native only to the clear, groundwater-influenced streams of the Texas Hill Country, this spunky fish is an amazing catch and will absolutely tear into your light tackle and crater your topwater..



[Blue Light Special](#)

Corey and Ben as they sit down with District II Captain Kyle vanAlthuis for an inside look at life in the Law Enforcement Division. Kyle shares how NC Wildlife Officers collaborate with biologists and the public. This episode highlights how enforcement supports both conservation efforts and the angling community.



[AFS' Vision for the future with Executive Director Jeff Kopaska](#)

Preston chats with the new Executive Director of AFS, Jeff Kopaska. They cover the unprecedented challenges Jeff has faced in his first year in the new role and the success of the San Antonio meeting in August. Jeff then discusses his innovative vision for how AFS can evolve to continue to meet the needs of its diverse membership base and to support federal employees in the current unpredictable political climate.



[AFS 2025 Excellence in Public Outreach](#)

AFS is back with a new "Beneath the Surface" episode! This time, we're highlighting 2025 Excellence in Public Outreach honoree, David Shiffman. David shares insights on social media best practices and why sharks matter!

Membership Dues

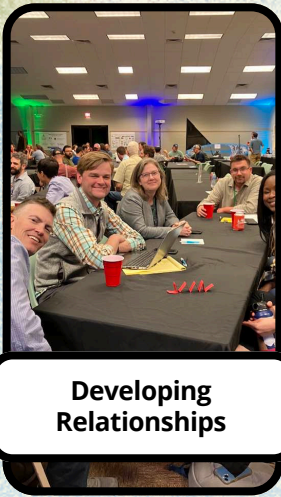
The Georgia AFS mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. Your paid membership helps us achieve that mission.

Georgia AFS
Annual Membership Dues

\$ 10

JOIN NOW

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



**Developing
Relationships**



**Leadership
Opportunities**



**Supporting Aquatic
Conservation**



**Enhancing Your
Resume**



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.



What's Cooking?

Are you looking for some delicious budget-friendly fish recipes? We are too! Send us your favorite fish recipe (GeorgiaAFS@gmail.com). It must be budget-friendly - no saffron, white truffles or Matsutake mushrooms. If we get enough recipes we will post them to the Georgia AFS website.



BLUEGILL CHOWDER WITH BACON

Ingredients

- 1 lb bluegill fillets, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 slices bacon, chopped
- 3/4 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup diced carrots
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 2 medium potatoes, diced into 1/2-inch cubes
- 4 cups water
- 1 can (about 15 oz) cream-style corn
- 1 cup heavy cream
- Salt and pepper to taste



Instructions

1. In a large stockpot over medium-high heat, cook the chopped bacon until crisp. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon and set it aside on a paper towel.
2. Pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the bacon grease from the pot. Add the chopped onion, carrots, and celery, and sauté for 2–3 minutes until softened.
3. Stir in the diced potatoes and cook for another 2–3 minutes.
4. Add 4 cups of water and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.
5. Stir in the bluegill fillets, cream-style corn, and heavy cream. Continue to simmer for about 5 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through and flakes easily.
6. Season to taste with salt and pepper.
7. To serve, ladle the chowder into bowls and top with the crumbled, cooked bacon.

Sponsor Highlight



The "University by the Sea"

Founded in 1890, Savannah State University is Georgia's first public historically black college and university (HBCU). Located in Savannah, the campus offers a dynamic blend of academic excellence, cultural heritage, and community engagement.

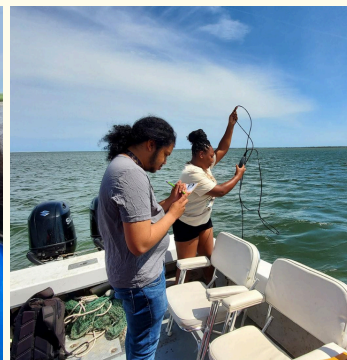
Marine and Environmental Science Department

Their location in a growing port city adjacent to a salt marsh tidal creek, makes it ideal for marine and environmental training and research. The campus has convenient access to marine and terrestrial coastal environments, in a region increasingly impacted by industry and development. They offer Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Undergraduates can apply for paid research internships and fellowships may be available for graduate students.



SSU Marine Science Research Dock

[Plan a visit](#) 



Graduate and undergraduate students in the SSU Marine Science Department participate in marine education and outreach throughout the Savannah area and surrounding cities through community events, local school visits, and Coast Camp. Students are trained in science communication through their outreach activities with community partners.

[More Info](#) 

DID YOU KNOW?

Lionfish have become one of the most notorious aquatic invaders, ranking alongside zebra mussels, snakeheads, and Asian carp in their ecological impact. Their rapidly expanding populations threaten marine ecosystems throughout the Atlantic Coast, Gulf Coast, and Caribbean.



Two species of Indo-Pacific Lionfish (*Pterois volitans* and *P. miles*) are the first reported non-native marine fish to become established in the Atlantic Ocean. Genetic studies indicate that Lionfish in the Atlantic are likely all descendants of a few individuals, consistent with the widely held belief that Lionfish were introduced into the Atlantic as a result of accidental or deliberate release of aquarium pets.

- Native to the Indo-Pacific - first detected along Florida coasts in the mid 1980s
- Mature Lionfish (1 year old) can spawn or lay eggs every 3 to 4 days
- Females lay about 30,000 eggs each time (about 2 million eggs per year)
- Eggs are protected by a toxic coating
- They live 5 - 15 years in the wild (dependent on food availability)
- They eat all the time - will eat anything they can fit into their mouths
- They are a threat to coral reefs because they eat the herbivores that eat the algae growing on corals (excessive algae on coral impact the health of the coral)
- A typical Lionfish has 18 venomous spines
- They are tasty - some say their taste is similar to grouper or hogfish



Fishy News Around the World

Click on title to access article

DEEP-SEA MINING RISKS FOR SHARKS, RAYS, AND CHIMAERAS

New research reveals that deep-sea mining could dramatically threaten 30 species of sharks, rays, and ghost sharks whose habitats overlap with proposed mining zones.

INVASIVE FLATHEAD CATFISH NOW TOP PREDATORS IN SUSQUEHANNA RIVER IN PENNSYLVANIA

Using stable isotope analysis, researchers uncovered how the invaders disrupt food webs, broaden dietary overlaps, and destabilize energy flow across the river system. The findings show how a single invasive species can spark cascading ecological consequences.

DECODING A DECADE OF GROUPE GRUNTS UNLOCKS SPAWNING SECRETS, SHIFTS

More than a decade of acoustic recordings of grouper grunts are providing new insight into how sound can be used to monitor and manage vulnerable fish populations.

GLOBAL THERMAL TOLERANCE COMPILATION FOR FRESHWATER INVERTEBRATES AND FISH

A research team at the University of Duisburg-Essen has published the largest openly accessible collection of data on the thermal tolerance of freshwater organisms to date. This data helps water management and government authorities to enact preventive measures to protect animals living in and around water.

NEARLY ALL US AQUARIUM FISH ARE SOURCED DIRECTLY FROM THE WILD

Almost 90 percent of marine aquarium fish sold online in the United States are sourced directly from wild populations and many of those are from coral reefs in the western Pacific and Indian Ocean, already under pressure from climate change.

RANCHING WILD FISH TO REBUILD MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

Ecocean's technique of capturing, ranching and then releasing wild fish offers an alternative to traditional aquaculture – enhancing rather than exploiting marine ecosystems – but can it be made to pay?



Bubba Bass

Video Picks

Leadership

Leadership Styles - the six leadership styles you need! Daniel Goleman
Leadership Styles based on EI

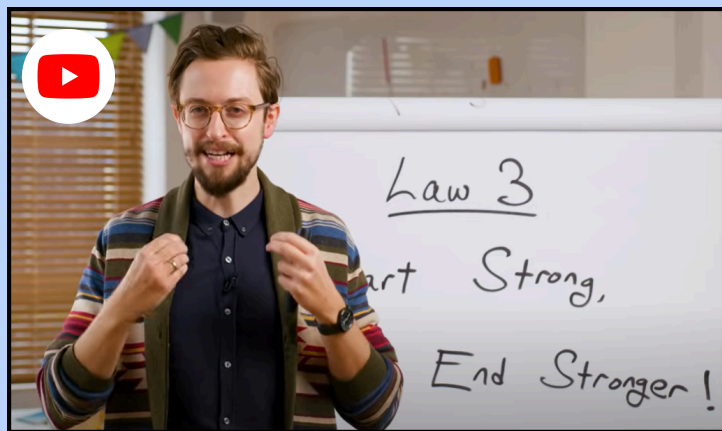


Leadershipahoy!



Communication

Become A Better Workshop FACILITATOR
In 8 Minutes



AJ&Smart

Ocean Conservation

Rolex presents: Sylvia Earle – Guardian of the Deep (9M+ views)



Rolex



Fisheries

Blue Light Special | Better Fishing with Two Bald Biologists | NC Wildlife



N.C. Wildlife Resources Division

BUBBA BASS SAFETY TIP

Chemical Safety

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Appropriate gloves, eye protection, protective clothing
- Protective sleeves can prevent skin contact

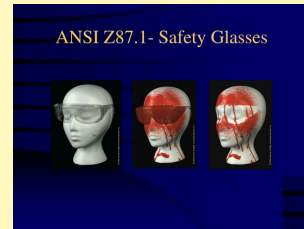
Chemical Handling and Application

- Read and follow labels
- Use chemicals only as intended
- Minimize drift when applying chemical herbicides
- Use the right product for the job
- Store properly according to label

Hygiene

- Always wash your hands thoroughly after handling chemicals
- While working with chemicals keep your hands away from your mouth, eyes, and nose
- Properly clean your clothes after working around chemical herbicides (read chemical label)

**Safety Glasses and
Splash Goggles are not
the same thing**



Bubba's Friends: Eastern Hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis alleganiensis*)

The eastern hellbender is a large, fully aquatic salamander found in cool, fast-flowing streams and rivers of the eastern United States. Known for its flattened body and wrinkled skin folds, this species is an indicator of high water quality and plays an important role in freshwater ecosystems.

- North America's largest salamander (up to 29 inches long)
- Their loose, wrinkled skin folds help absorb oxygen directly from the water.
- They are nocturnal predators, feeding mostly on crayfish, insects, and small fish.
- Hellbenders are sometimes called "snot otters," "devil dogs," or "lasagna lizards" because of their appearance.
- They can live for 30 years or more in the wild.
- Males guard nests and fan the eggs with their tails to keep them oxygenated and free of sediment.
- Populations have declined due to pollution, sedimentation, habitat loss, and disease.



**Video: The Last Dragons -
Preserving Appalachia's
Hellbenders
(Freshwaters Illustrated)**



Fin and Games: Find the Hidden Objects

Sitting at the dentist office I came across an issue of Highlights. Still love the *Hidden Pictures* section. FYI... Looking for hidden objects in an image is good for your brain and helps with stress relief. ([link for answer key](#)).

Hidden Pictures®



Highlights™

Want a challenge?

Fold back this page to hide the picture clues.



comb



spoon



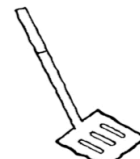
snow cone



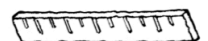
toothbrush



button



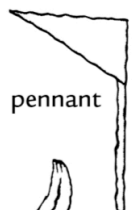
spatula



ruler



crown



pennant



slice of pie



banana



kite



feather



camera



candle



sailboat

CHECK OUT OUR **Hidden Pictures® APP!**



We added a few extras: 3 hooks, 1 bobber, 1 crankbait fishing lure, and 1 popper fishing lure.



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

INSPIRE



Georgia AFS 2025 Fundraising Donors

Thank you for your Support!



Vera Bradley

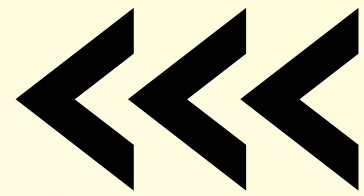
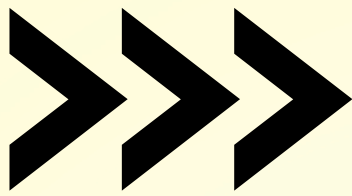


Alliance Theatre



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**



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



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

Learn More



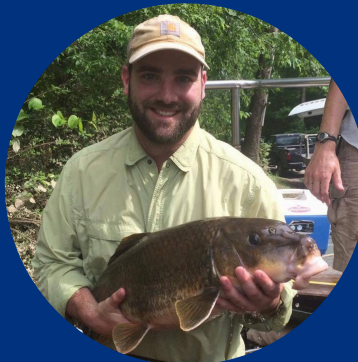
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AFS/SDAFS MEETINGS

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

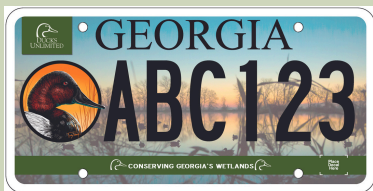
sd.fisheries.org/

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](#)

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](#)

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](#)

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](#)

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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