



## Spring Schools

Forest Elementary, Neighborhood Charter, AR Lewis, Paideia, Brockett Elementary, Ethel Kight, Ford Elementary, Walker School, Sewell Middle School, Loganville Christian Academy, Tattall High School, Jack and Jill, Lafayette Christian School, Cheatham Hill, Kingsley Charter, Morningside Elementary, Bulloch Academy

## THEY SAID IT!

Here are some quotes from students this spring...

*"I learned that a stream isn't just something to play in, it's someone's home."*

*"The Waterfall Hike was my favorite! Cause I love to walk and observe nature as it is."*

*"I learned that when EVERYBODY cooperates a group can accomplish quite a task."*

*"Under every rock— something is living there!"*

And teachers said...

*"The kids really liked Aquatic Ecology. They learned a lot of things that built on previous knowledge."*

*"Thank you for a very informative, action-packed trip!"*

## Eastern Worm Snakes

by Kendall Ostendorff

While exploring the micro-communities under various rocks and decomposing logs along the Forest Trail, students from Ford Elementary discovered what they thought were earthworms. Then one of the little "worms" stuck out its tongue and they realized they had found baby snakes! As we looked at them we determined that the snakes were non-venomous based on the shape of their head and their round pupils. (Venomous snakes have triangular shaped heads and elliptical pupils).

We brought some back to main camp to determine what type of snake we had found. After searching through an identification book, we concluded that they were Eastern Worm Snakes. The Worm Snake reaches a length of 8-10 inches and has a glossy black/brown back and a pink belly. They feed on earthworms and other soft bodied insects. It is a very secretive snake and is rarely seen by humans. We were quite lucky and excited to get a chance to see them!

## Adopt - An - Animal:

Kate Long  
adopted



"Gummi" the black rabbit!

## Tree-Huggers

by Traci Heffelbower

Walking down the nature trail with a group of eager young minds firing questions behind me, I pause to talk about the large tree in the center of the trail, patting it affectionately. "You're a tree-hugger, aren't you?" a boy sneers. I'm a little taken aback hearing this taunt from someone so young. It is true I enjoy being a part of nature. It gives me a sense of peace and tranquility. However, I think this has more to do with our history as humans living so closely tied to natural rhythms for the past 3 million years than with our recent stereotype of the crazed environmentalist.

I'm not a hippie, a communist, unpatriotic, anti-business, or a tree-hugger. You can just call me "concerned with the survival of our species." In the past, civilizations such as Easter Island, Sumer, and the Aztecs have proven that we can overuse our natural environment to the point of desolation. We have the knowledge and technological ability now to prevent this from happening, but we must learn from the past. **With a global economy, we have nowhere to go if we overuse our resources.** I do not mean only resources like petroleum, ores, and water, but the entire biosphere – the interdependent living system that is so magnificently complex we cannot begin to recreate it . . . the system WE depend upon for survival.

**Our challenge** to keep this system intact involves more than just environmentalism; it is about understanding that there are consequences to our actions that we will face together. There is no one easy solution. We may **each think of what sustainability** means for us and then incorporate these values into our lifestyles. We have the power of choice. These choices can start out small and grow larger. Standing up for the natural world and our own survival is not something **to be ashamed of**, it is a matter of common sense.

Etc, etc. etc. add more and/or increase font

# Wildflowers

by Carolyn Seramur

Waiting patiently for spring is always a struggle, and this year was no different. Evergreens like rhododendron, Christmas fern, mountain laurel, and Eastern Hemlock showed the persistence of year-round plants, but "where are those wildflowers?" I kept asking myself. The timing of spring wildflowers depends on amounts of cool night temperatures and frost, daytime warmth, moisture, and exposure to sun and shade. Nature has an itinerary determining what comes up first, what comes next, and who is on deck. Many early wildflowers sprout before the canopy trees pop their leaves out. Right now the tree leaves are starting to show and the shade on the forest floor is increasing! Below is a partial list of plants already spotted flowering:

Trout Lily (*Erythronium americanum*), Southern Wild Ginger (*Asarum arifolia*), Red Trillium (*Trillium sessile*), Rue Anemone (*Anemonella thalictroides*), Halberd-leaved Violet (*Viola hastata*), Eastern Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*), Dwarf Iris (*Iris verna*), Common Blue Violet (*Viola sororia*), Daisy Fleabane (*Erigeron philadelphicus*), Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*), Jack-in-the-pulpit (*Arisaema triphyllum*)

Still anticipated to bloom this fine spring:

Rhododendron and Azalea, Mountain Laurel (*Kalmia latifolia*), Wild Geranium (*Geranium maculatum*), Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*), Yellow Lady's Slipper (*Cypripedium calceolus*)



## Director's Niche

by Josh Rood

**Invasive Species Report:** Evidence of the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has been spotted at Blue Ridge! Native to Asia, these tiny insects secrete white beads at the base of hemlock needles where they consumes sap, starving the tree to death within 3-10 years.

The best large-scale defense against the adelgid is to use biological controls. To this end, the Forest Service is releasing the Pt beetle, which feeds only on the woolly adelgid.

To learn more, visit [www.saveourhemlocks.org](http://www.saveourhemlocks.org)

If you are considering a trip to Blue Ridge for Fall 2007, **NOW** is the time to call to reserve a date. For more information, call or e-mail:

**(706) 886-7621**

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*Great things are done when men and mountains meet. ~ William Blake*