

Program of Events

2024 Annual Conference

April 11-14, 2024



The codes that follow each session description indicate which strand the session addresses as follows:
 NCH = Honoring Natural and Cultural History; F = Future of EE; B = Business of EE; I = Inclusion in EE

Graduate Credit and Contact Hours are Available!

Thursday, April 11, 2024

9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Ohio Student Wildlife Research Symposium

Join Ohio high school students and teachers as they present their wildlife and habitat research projects in this student-focused symposium. Free for students, presenters, and advisors, includes lunch; \$40 for all others. See agenda at <http://eeco.wildapricot.org>. *Please note, this event has a separate registration through the EECO website*

Friday, April 12, 2024

9:00 am—5:00 pm

Friday Full Day Field Trips

F1—Live on the Wild Side: Behind the Scenes Tour of The Wilds **\$50** **NCH/F**

Take a guided safari tour through wide open pastures with endangered species. Pet a rhino at the Rhino Barn and see Ohio’s largest salamander at the Hellbender Breeding Facility. Stop by the conservation education camp and learn how The Wilds is cultivating the next generation of conservation professionals. Includes lunch from The Overlook restaurant. *Danny Lough, The Wilds.*

F2-The Sun and the Moon Tour: Ancient Earthworks and Modern Solar Systems **\$20** **NCH/I**

Visit Newark Earthworks, the newly inscribed UNESCO World Heritage Site and Flint Ridge to learn about the Hopewell Culture’s deep connection with the land and sky. Stop by Muskingum University for a tour of their solar array and presentation by installers Kokosing Solar. Includes a lunch stop in historic downtown Newark; lunch is on your own. *Sarah Hinkelman, Ohio History Connection*

9:00 am—4:00 pm

Full Day Workshop

W1—4H Junior Master Gardener Train the Trainer **\$5** **F**

Participants will engage in the 4H Junior Master Gardener curriculum teacher and leader guide by participating in eight hands-on station rotation activities. *Hannah Albers and Michelle Wallace, Central State University Extension*
Indoors

9:00 am—Noon

Morning Workshops

W2—WILD About Research **\$5** **F**

Learn more about how to help your students conduct research on Ohio wildlife and their habitats within your courses. Experience hands on opportunities to set up research studies, information on how to collect data, and how to showcase your results. *Jen Dennison, Ohio Division of Wildlife*
Indoors & Outdoors

W3—Honoring Plant Medicine and Traditional Ecological Knowledge **\$25** **NCH**

In this hands-on workshop, participants will make a variety of foods, drinks and medicines derived from trees and plants using ethical wildcrafting with a focus on traditional ecological knowledge. *Beth Bridgeman, Antioch College*
Indoors & Outdoors

Noon—1:00 pm

Lunch Break

An optional box lunch is available for \$20 as part of the registration process. Otherwise, participants should make plans to provide their own lunch, either by ordering from the lodge restaurant, or packing their own.

1:00 pm—4:00 pm

Afternoon Workshops

W4—Wildlife Investigative Techniques for Nature-based Inquiry

\$5

F

From radio telemetry, camera traps, bioacoustics monitoring, to handheld electronic microscopes, technology is more accessible than ever. Play with these devices, and explore how today's technology can help make programs more engaging while learning about local wildlife. *Joshua York and Erin Rowekamp, Five Rivers MetroParks*

Indoors & Outdoors

1:00 pm—4:30 pm

Afternoon Field Trips

FT3—Life at Salt Fork (Historic Homestead Tour and Optional Wildflower Trail Hike)

\$10

NCH

Discover the historic Kennedy Stone House, a homestead that pre-dates Salt Fork Lake. Tour inside the sandstone structure to learn about early settlers and farmers in the area. Optional: Enjoy a one-mile guided hike on one of Ohio's most amazing wildflower trails along the shores of Salt Fork Lake. Stroll through a pawpaw grove and past rock outcrops. *John Hickenbottom, ODNR*

Evening Activities

5:00 pm—6:00 pm

Silent Auction Open for Bidding and Hospitality Room Open

6:00pm—7:00 pm

Friday Night Welcome Dinner

Join us on Friday Evening as we officially kick-off the 2024 EECO Annual Conference. Learn about exciting projects happening in Salt Fork State Park and throughout the ODNR park system including the new Great Council State Parks.

7:00pm—8:30 pm

A Bug in the System: Insects in the Classroom

Learn basic husbandry techniques, get hands-on experience creating habitats, and learn to keep classroom insects happy, healthy, and ready for the many learning opportunities that in-class insects offer. *Jeni Filbrun and Carrie Elvey, United Titanium Bug Zoo*

Indoors

7:30pm—8:30pm

Bigfoot Night Hike

Follow park naturalist John Hickenbottom out into the night air. Find out if the legendary Bigfoot lives in Salt Fork State Park. Flashlights optional.

Outdoors

8:30pm—11:00pm

Hospitality Suite Open / Interest Group Meetups / Campfire

EECO Kids Conference

On Saturday, while you attend EECO conference sessions, your child/ children can, too! EECO offers a Mini Conference for kids! Kids **LEARN** about Environmental Education and gain an appreciation for nature and environmental stewardship. Like our adult attendees, they **CONNECT** with new friends in a positive and supportive setting. Take advantage of this fabulous opportunity to enjoy the conference and begin a family tradition. Watch your children **GROW** into our future EECO Leaders, all while enjoying the amenities of the state park! Ages 6 and up are welcome!

\$15 fee per child includes the full 4 session kids conference. Payable at the registration table. Lunch is not provided. Children's meal tickets will be available for purchase at the registration table.



Saturday, April 13, 2024

Concurrent Sessions, Keynotes, Exhibits

7:00 am—8:00 pm Morning Bird Hike (optional/tentative)

8:00 am—9:00 am **Breakfast**—Join your EECO Regions and network while enjoying your breakfast. Get connected to EECO committees. Sign up to be part of all the good work committees are doing.

9:00 am—9:15 am **Welcome and Conference Opening**—*Brenda Metcalf, EECO Executive Director*

Silent Auction

The silent auction raises money to help EECO grow. Donations for silent auction items and experiences are welcome and appreciated. Drop off donations for the silent auction and live auction in the Morgan Room prior to 5pm Friday.

The silent auction will be in the Morgan Room and will be open for select hours on Friday evening and throughout Saturday. Hours will be posted at the conference. **All bidding ends at 6 pm on Saturday.**

9:30 am—10:30 am

Concurrent Session 1

A1—Unveiling the Hidden World of Fungi in Environmental Education

HNC

Learn about different ways to teach students about Ohio's wild mushrooms and fungi's overall role in agriculture, ecosystems, and the environment. *Erika Lyon, OSU Extension*

Indoors

A2—Mapping Monarchs: Creative Responses to Science Learning

HNC

Explore this STEAM project that teaches about Monarchs, contributes to their conservation and celebrates their beauty through original poetry and artwork. Participants will use interactive digital tools to create their own poems and share them on a community website. *Lynn Gregor, Old Trail Intermediate School*

Indoors

A3—EE in SE Ohio: Overview, Best Practices and Lessons Learned

F

Come learn about the Environmental Education program at Rural Action; a non-profit organization operating in several south east Ohio counties including Athens, Perry and Morgan. This EE program has been running for 12+ years with a robust AmeriCorps service program, an annual outdoor education conference, several long-standing watershed day camps and a robust network of educators working to bring outdoor education to as many Ohio youth and adults as possible. In this session we will review a brief history of the program, what informs our work, some recent success stories and our visions for the future! *Carrie Vieland, Rural Action*

Indoors & Outdoors

A4— Teen Changemakers: Fighting for the Future

F

Teens know the planet is facing challenges and they want to be active participants in fostering change! Learn how our program, Conservation Leaders, is creating a culture of teen conservationists. *Erin Rowekamp and Joshua York, Five Rivers MetroParks*

Indoors

A5-Double Session: Wildlife Management and Shooting Sports

HNC/F

Explore how hunting is an important tool for wildlife management and learn how important hunting is in the Salt Fork region. The local Conservation Kids 4H club members are very knowledgeable and passionate about shooting sports. Let these young experts teach us some shooting sport safety. Hear their stories about how shooting sports connects them to nature. Try out hunting equipment while at the range. *Levi Mercer, Guernsey Soil and Water Conservation District and Conservation Kids 4H Club*

Outdoors

10:45 am—11:45 am

Concurrent Session 2

B1—Discovering the University of Akron Museum of Zoology through Scientific Collections **HNC**

A lithograph depicting a "natural history room" at The University of Akron (UA) dated to 1882 led to a semester-long class studying art and science of natural history collections at UA. Hear this amazing story. *Lara Roketenetz and Gary Holliday, University of Akron* **Indoors**

B2—Utilizing Sit Spots in Early Childhood Education **HNC**

Explore ways to use sit spots in an Early Childhood Program (preschool to 1st grade) to encourage mindfulness, language, and literacy development. *Grace Gordon, Columbus Academy* **Indoors & Outdoors**

B3—Encouraging DEI through Project Learning Tree Activities and Guides **HNC**

Recognizing that environmental education can serve as a powerful tool to advance diversity, equity, and inclusion, Project Learning Tree has been developing new guides and additional resources to increase awareness of challenges faced by diverse communities, engage all students in learning about and becoming actively involved in the environment and their communities, and to introduce youth to the wide variety of green careers with shared career pathway stories from professionals in the field. Learn about the new PLT activity guides, resources, and innovative approaches to engaging students and supporting educators. *Heather Sheets, Project Learning Tree* **Indoors & Outdoors**

B4—Career Pathways & Pre-Apprenticeships in Agriculture, Food, & Natural Resources **F**

Discover a process to secure a grant for and partner with several area schools and agencies to create a Youth Pathways to Agricultural Careers program, from planning to site visits to securing the funding and next steps. Learn about the new pre-apprenticeship programs as a replacement for graduation and honors diploma requirements for students. Check out a Soil Painting activity used with the HS 21st Century student/parent night. *Betsy Rosser, Muskingum Soil and Water Conservation District* **Indoors**

B5—Wildlife Management and Shooting Sports (Continued) **HNC/F**

12:00pm—2:00pm

Lunch, Business Meeting, & Keynote Speaker

Find a lunch table based on EECO committees. Hear about what EECO's been up to in the past year, including an opportunity to meet your current Board of Directors and review the annual budget.

Keynote: Matt Thomas

From Clean Water Flows Opportunity

The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District (MWCD) has held conservation at the core of its mission for 90 years and counting. Now, with the twin fortunes of oil and gas revenue and a strong public appetite for stewardship, we are in a unique position to support conservation efforts across the Muskingum Watershed. Our region boasts some of the best water quality in the state of Ohio, but we still have work to do to address impairments. Water quality starts with land use. Increased support for best management agricultural practices, sustainable forestry, and wetland conservation are some of the ways we plan to build our legacy of opportunity for decades to come.

Matt A. Thomas was named Chief of Conservation in September of 2021 after serving as the Water Quality Coordinator for the MWCD since January 2019. In his position, Matt manages and directs the conservation, sustainability, and water quality programs within the MWCD. He brings with him over 20 years of experience working on a diverse array of environmental issues within the Great Lakes and throughout Ohio. His career includes serving as the Laboratory Manager for the biological field station, F. T. Stone Laboratory, in Lake Erie and most recently as the Farm Production Manager for the Route 9 Cooperative in Carroll County. Matt holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology with an aquatic focus from The Ohio State University.



2:15pm—3:15pm

Concurrent Session 3

C1—Spotted Lanternfly in Ohio: Opportunities for Awareness & Outreach

F

Spotted Lanternfly populations are predicted to build in Ohio. Learn innovative educational outreach techniques that you can use with the public to increase awareness for this invasive insect. *Carrie Brown, OSU Extension*

Indoors & Outdoors

C2—The Question Formulation Technique: Empowering Youth through Inquiry

I

Experience how the QFT allows participants to take the lead, hear how we used it to empower youth from historically excluded communities and reflect on applying it in your setting. This session pairs with D2-Wetland Detectives during Concurrent Session 4. *Timothy Becker, Cuyahoga Soil & Water Conservation District*

Indoors & Outdoors

C3—Renewing our School Community: Building Group Work Skills in Schools Post-COVID and Beyond

F

This workshop will highlight an ongoing project launched by Rural Action to bring teamwork and social skill development to more students in rural schools, and how it contributes to positive school culture. *Dan Vorisek and Adam Bently, Rural Action*

Indoors

C4—AmeriCorps and NOWCorps: Gateway into the Environmental Education Field

F/B

NOWCorps provides service, leadership, and career experience for individuals seeking to enter fields including environmental education. This panel explores the program's purpose and the opportunities that members receive upon enrollment. *Kristina Hass, Holden Forests and Gardens*

Indoors

3:30pm—4:30pm

Concurrent Session 4

D1—People and Wildlife: Lessons on Interconnections and Biodiversity

HCN

Discover hands-on, interdisciplinary activities to promote students' understanding of the delicate balance between people's environmental footprints and the sustainability of habitats and biodiversity in Ohio and around the world. *Kayla Lawyer, Glen Helen Outdoor Education Center*

Indoors

D2—Wetland Detectives: A Wetland Delineation Simulation Game

HNC

The University of Akron Field Station developed an interactive game to teach students the procedures for identifying wetlands in the field. The curriculum can be used in any space. This session pairs with C2-The Question Formulation Technique during Concurrent Session 3. *Lara Roketenetz and Isabel Neeley, University of Akron, and Timothy Becker, Cuyahoga Soil and Water Conservation District*

Indoors & Outdoors

D3—Rediscovering Joy: Engaging Adult Audiences

HNC/I

Studies show that adults desire nature connection, but define that connection differently than children. Explore these differences, engage with best practices, and incorporate life-long learning into your program offerings. *Carrie Elvey, Darwin's Dream.*

Indoors

D4—Twelve Years of Internships in Environmental Consulting: Lessons Learned and Discoveries Made

B

Learn about ecological and wetland consulting in Ohio from a certified Professional Wetland Scientist and hear stories and life lessons learned from interns. *Jenny Adkins, MAD Scientists*

Indoors

4:00 pm—6:00 pm

Networking, Silent Auction

Chat with new and old friends. Get your bids in on all the fantastic silent auction items. Silent auction closes at 6pm.

5:00 pm –6:00 pm **Environmental Education Certification Poster Session**

Check out all of the hard work accomplished by the EE Certification class during their poster session.

6:00 pm –9:00 pm

Awards Banquet and Live Auction

Recognize and celebrate the talented and dedicated environmental education professionals in Ohio. Bid on excellent live auction items and be entertained by bidding wars. All proceeds go to the EECO Endowment Fund.

9:00 pm

Campfire and Hospitality Suite

Sunday, April 14, 2024

7:00 am—8:00 am Morning Bird Hike (optional/tentative)

8:00 am—9:00 am Breakfast

Morning Workshops

9:00 am—12:00 pm

W5—Art in Nature Leads to Nurture

\$5

HNC/F

We take care of what we love. We love what we connect with. We connect with what we interact with. In this program we will be drawing from different studies that show that making art in Nature can lead to a better connection with nature which can then lead to more environmental conservatism. Learn how to facilitate a Paint-the-Parks program in your community. Head out into the great outdoors with watercolor pencils and paper in search of inspiration. Return to the park lodge to use water and brushes to finish individual artwork. Reflect on feelings that emerged while creating art in nature and feelings at the experience closing. *Mary Beth Hobson, Five River MetroParks* *Indoors & Outdoors*

If you have any questions about the program, the registration process, or any other topics or issues, please contact Brenda Metcalf, EECO Executive Director, at 740-653-2649 or director@eeco-online.org or You can also contact Denise Natoli Brooks, Conference Co-Chair, at 740-801-0775 or dbrooks@centralstate.edu for assistance.

The EECO Board of Directors and Executive Director are thrilled to offer this exciting and beneficial professional development opportunity for the environmental education community. We look forward to seeing you at Salt Fork State Park!

Thank you to the following conference sponsors:

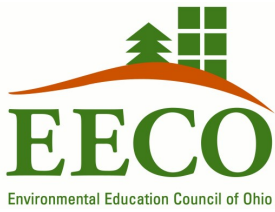


EECO Annual Conference 2025 ~ Save the Date

April 4-6, 2025 at Mohican State Park Lodge

Student Wildlife Research Symposium ~ Save the Date

April 3, 2025 at Mohican State Park Lodge



2024 Annual EECO Conference Registration

April 12-14, 2024

Salt Fork State Park

Early Bird Deadline: March 18, 2024

Register online at <http://eeco.wildapricot.org/>



Registration Details (please print)

Name: (last)		(first)	
Name as it should appear on name tag:		Do you have an Ohio EE certification: (Yes or No)	
Organization:			
Address:			
City:	State:	Zip Code:	County:
Phone: ()	Cell: ()	Email:	
Emergency contact name:		Emergency contact phone: ()	

I will bring a silent auction item Special Needs (mobility, vegetarian, food allergies, etc.)

Presenters: I plan to attend the full conference (\$25 discount) I plan to attend my presentation session only

Join or renew your EECO Membership and save money on your conference registration!

\$35 Supporter	\$20 Student/Senior	\$50 Professional	\$70 Non-Profit	\$100 Sustaining	\$150 Business	\$250 Champion
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See additional information on the next page to join one of EECO's special interest sections.

Please indicate registration choices	Full Conference (Includes Fri dinner, all Sat meals, Sun breakfast)	Friday Only (includes Fri dinner)	Saturday Only (Includes all Sat meals)
Member	\$190 Early Bird/\$215 Regular/\$90 EECert	\$50 Regular	\$120 Early Bird/\$135 Regular
Non-Member	\$250 Early Bird/\$275 Regular	\$90 Regular	\$170 Early Bird/\$185 Regular
Student (Must show ID upon arrival)	\$155 Regular		\$110 Regular
Presenter (use Code)	\$165/member \$225/non-member		

My child/children plans to attend the Saturday Children's Conference. Number of children planning to attend.

Field Trips and Workshops

Note: No lunch provided on Friday. Participants can order from the lodge restaurant, pre-purchase a box lunch for \$20, or pack a lunch.

Friday Field Trips

- FT-1—(full day) Live on the Wild Side Tour —\$50
- FT-2—(full day) The Sun and the Moon Tour —\$20
- FT-3—(pm) Life at Salt Fork Tour—\$10

Friday Workshops

- W1—(full day) Junior Master Gardener Training—\$5
- W2—(am) WILD about Research -\$5
- W3—(am) Honoring Plant Medicine and TEK—\$25
- W4—(pm) Wildlife Investigative Techniques—\$5

Sunday Workshop

- W5—Art in Nature Leads to Nurture—\$5

Saturday Concurrent Sessions—Circle one choice in each column

Session 1 9:30 am	Session 2 10:45 am	Session 3 2:15 pm	Session 4 3:30 pm
A1 Hidden World of Fungi	B1 Discovering UA Museum	C1 Spotted Lanternfly	D1 People and Wildlife
A2 Mapping Monarchs	B2 Utilizing Sit Spots	C2 Question Formulation	D2 Wetland Detectives
A3 EE in SE OH	B3 Encouraging DEI with PLT	C3 Group Work Skills	D3 Rediscovering Joy
A4 Teen Changemakers	B4 Career Pathways	C4 AmeriCorps and NOWCorps	D4 Internships in E. Consulting
A5 Wildlife Management (Double Session)	B5 Wildlife Management (Double Session)		

Total Registration Costs	
Conference Registration Fee	\$ _____
Field Trips/Workshops	\$ _____
Friday Boxed Lunch	\$ _____
EECO Special Section Fee(s) The first section is free; additional sections are \$5	\$ _____
EECO Membership	\$ _____
Additional donation to EECO Endowment Fund	\$ _____
Total	\$ _____

Register online at <http://eeco.wildapricot.org> with a credit card or make checks payable to EECO and mail with this completed form to:

Brenda Metcalf
EECO Executive Director
PO Box 1004
Lancaster, OH 43130
(740) 653-2649

If you wish to bring a guest who will be attending meals, contact Brenda directly to have them registered at a reduced rate.

Please select all meals you will be attending:

- Friday Dinner Saturday Breakfast Saturday Lunch Saturday Awards Banquet Sunday Breakfast

Early Bird Registration Deadline March 18, 2024

_____ I am interested in receiving Graduate Credit from Ashland University. The cost is \$210 for one credit hour. Please contact Linda Pettit EECO Region 1 Director, at linda-pettit@franklinswcd.org.

Certificates with contact hours are available upon request.

Lodging Information – Salt Fork State Park Lodge & Conference Center

14755 Cadiz Rd., Lore City, OH 43755

Room Block will be held until March 8, 2024

Reservations—(740) 435-9000. Ask for the “EECO Conference” room rates or code “EE24”.

Lodge Room Rates: \$139.00/night/room ~ Cabin rate is \$189/night/cabin ~ Lakeside Chalet rate is \$219/night

Join one of EECO’s special interest sections!

EECO offers special interest sections to its members to promote networking among peers and groups with similar interests. EECO members may join one section at no additional cost to regular membership dues. Each additional section joined is \$5 per section. Please check which section(s) you would like to join.

___ *Business, Industry and Trade Associations*

___ *Environmental and Community-based Organizations*

___ *Environmental Education and Outdoor Education Organizations*

___ *Government Agency*

___ *Higher Education*

___ *Preschool, Elementary and Secondary Education*

Cancellation Policy

All participant cancellations require written notice (U. S. Mail or electronic) to be sent to Brenda Metcalf, EECO Executive Director, P.O. Box 1004, Lancaster, Ohio 43130-1004, director@eeco-online.org and will be refunded according to the following schedule:

— full refund - at least 30 days before the conference — 50% - at least 16 days before the conference — no refunds within 15 days of the conference —

Please read and sign the notice below:

Please be aware that activities during this conference may carry risks which may not always be obvious.

I am aware of the risks inherent in these activities and assume all responsibility to myself whatever the cause. I agree to hold EECO, all conference personnel, and all participating agencies/organizations harmless for any injury that I may sustain in the course of participating in the conference.