

# Georgia WILD Newsletter: April 2009

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## How we got our kids outdoors

"The thing about kids is that they don't get to choose their parents, so right from the start my kids had no choice. My wife and I are trained biologists so they have been taken outside since they were tiny. On some days if they have been inside too long, we kick them out and lock the doors. They may whine at first but eventually they find something to do. What's important to know is that you don't need some grand experience. There's always something to do, you just have to get them outside. There's a lot of cool stuff to do right in your backyard. My daughter is happy to grub around in the backyard looking for butterflies, worms, etc."

**Mark Dodd** (children ages 8 and 11)

"I have taken my kids out into the field with me from the time they were little. We also live on a farm so they are always outside. We also try and go to as many outdoor events and festivals as we can. We have tried to instill a love of the outdoors into our children primarily because there are too many kids that have a huge disconnect from so many aspects of nature. They don't know where their food comes from or have any understanding of the predator/prey relationship. We garden, have chickens and my husband takes the girls hunting. They are not bothered when he kills a deer or they see a snake eat a mouse; they understand why that has to happen."

**Nikki Castleberry** (children ages 2 and 5)

"When she was smaller I took her birding or hiking in the backpack every few weeks and she loved it. She really enjoys being outside. We live in the city and our yard happens to be super steep, terraced with rocks and concrete paths, so we try to take our daughter to local parks where she can explore safely. Also, when she was born we bought a family membership to Zoo Atlanta and we try to go every other week or so. She loves it."

## Lichens poster, workshop offered to teachers

The Lichens of Georgia poster, the latest addition to the Species of Georgia poster series, will brighten up the classroom and bring a spirit of "likin" lichens to students. Shown in brilliant color, the fascinating forms that lichens take across the state are highlighted on the poster, which was illustrated by photographers Hugh and Carol Nourse and Vitaly Charny and designed by artist James Savage. Nearly two dozen lichens are represented from major groups, with a map showing the distribution of each species. In addition, the poster demonstrates basic lichen biology and identification.

Project coordinators Bob Hill and Tommy Jordan of the University of Georgia composed the poster for use in classrooms from grade school through high school; it is supported by a full suite of classroom materials developed to meet Georgia Performance Standards by the Likin' Lichens Workshop. This workshop is a for-credit (professional learning units) series of classroom and field instruction open to Georgia educators through a federal Improving Teacher Quality grant.

Materials are available online. By visiting the Web site, teachers can see maps showing where lichens are found in Georgia and download information on how to sign up for the annual Likin' Lichens Workshop.

The workshop is tailored to GPS standards. Teachers can earn PLUs for attending. The class includes lichen identification in the field and lab, plus how to apply lichens in the classroom and how to use a global positioning system or GPS unit. The workshop is set for July 12-15 at Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center in Mansfield, Ga.

Lichens of Georgia posters are available free to teachers by contacting Melissa Hayes of the Wildlife Resources Division's Nongame Conservation Section, (478) 994-1438 in Forsyth.