Through education, research, and management, DNR Wildlife Conservation safeguards Georgia’s native diversity of wild animals, plants, and their habitats while also encouraging outdoor enjoyment. We are pleased to offer a $1000 grant to a third-, fourth-, or fifth-grade teacher (including science specialists) who demonstrates exceptional energy and innovation in teaching life sciences. Prospective teachers must use Georgia’s native animals, plants and habitats as the context for learning the grade-level Georgia Standards of Excellence listed below. Projects that highlight rare wildlife and/or plants will receive extra points; visit www.georgiawildlife.com/species for a list.

While science standards are emphasized, cross-curricular teaching is highly encouraged. Preference will be given to teachers who incorporate outdoor activities into their lessons.

Previous grant recipients must wait a minimum of three years before applying again.

3rd Grade Life Science
S3L1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the similarities and differences between plants, animals, and habitats found within geographic regions (Blue Ridge Mountains, Piedmont, Coastal Plains, Valley and Ridge, and Appalachian Plateau) of Georgia.
   a. Ask questions to differentiate between plants, animals and habitats found within Georgia’s geographic regions.
   b. Construct an explanation of how external features and adaptations (camouflage, hibernation, migration, mimicry) of animals allow them to survive in their habitat.
   c. Use evidence to construct an explanation of why some organisms can thrive in one habitat and not in another.

S3L2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the effects of pollution (air, land, and water) and humans on the environment.
   a. Ask questions to collect information and create records of sources and effects of pollution on the plants and animals.
   b. Explore, research, and communicate solutions, such as conservation of resources and recycling of materials, to protect plants and animals.

4th Grade Life Science
S4L1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about the roles of organisms and the flow of energy within an ecosystem.
   a. Develop a model to describe the roles of producers, consumers, and decomposers in a community. (Clarification statement: Students are not expected to identify the different types of consumers – herbivores, carnivores, omnivores and scavengers.)
   b. Develop simple models to illustrate the flow of energy through a food web/food chain beginning with sunlight and including producers, consumers, and decomposers.
c. Design a scenario to demonstrate the effect of a change on an ecosystem.
   (Clarification statement: Include living and non-living factors in the scenario.)

d. Use printed and digital data to develop a model illustrating and describing changes to the flow of energy in an ecosystem when plants or animals become scarce, extinct or overabundant.

S4L2. Students will identify factors that affect the survival or extinction of organisms such as adaptation, variation of behaviors (hibernation), and external features (camouflage and protection).
   a. Identify external features of organisms that allow them to survive or reproduce better than organisms that do not have these features for example: camouflage, use of hibernation, protection, etc.).
   b. Identify factors that may have led to the extinction of some organisms.

5th Grade Life Science

S5L1. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information to group organisms using scientific classification procedures.
   a. Develop a model that illustrates how animals are sorted into groups (vertebrate and invertebrate) and how vertebrates are sorted into groups (fish, amphibian, reptile, bird, and mammal) using data from multiple sources.
   b. Develop a model that illustrates how plants are sorted into groups (seed producers, non-seed producers) using data from multiple sources.

S5L2. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information showing that some characteristics of organisms are inherited and other characteristics are acquired.
   a. Ask questions to compare and contrast instincts and learned behaviors.
   b. Ask questions to compare and contrast inherited and acquired physical traits.
      (Clarification statement: Punnett squares and genetics are taught in future grades.)

S5L3. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information to compare and contrast the parts of plant and animal cells.
   a. Gather evidence by utilizing technology tools to support a claim that plants and animals are comprised of cells too small to be seen without magnification.
   b. Develop a model to identify and label parts of a plant cell (membrane, wall, cytoplasm, nucleus, chloroplasts) and of an animal cell (membrane, cytoplasm, and nucleus).
   c. Construct an explanation that differentiates between the structure of plant and animal cells.

S5L4. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information about how microorganisms benefit or harm larger organisms. (Clarification statement: Possible microorganisms could include Tardigrades, Lactobacillus, Probiotics, Rotifers, Salmonella, Clostridium botulinum (Botox), E coli, Algae, etc. Students are not expected to know these specific microorganisms. The list is provided to give teachers examples.)
   a. Construct an argument using scientific evidence to support a claim that some microorganisms are beneficial.
   b. Construct an argument using scientific evidence to support a claim that some microorganisms are harmful.
In addition to the $1000 grant, registration fees to the 2020 Environmental Education Alliance of Georgia Annual Conference (March 6-8, 2020 – www.eealliance.org) will be provided. The recipient is encouraged to submit a proposal to present their project at the conference, but doing so is not required. The recipient may be asked to write an article for EEA’s newsletter, The Link.

Fact sheets and other information about Georgia’s rare, threatened, and endangered species are available at http://georgiawildlife.com/species.

For more information on this grant opportunity, please see the following websites - www.eeingeorgia.org and www.georgiawildlife.com/TeachingConservationGrant - or contact Anna Yellin (anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov) or Linda May (linda.may@dnr.ga.gov) at the GA DNR Wildlife Conservation office in Social Circle: 706.557.3213.

Much thanks goes to the DNR Wildlife Conservation friends group, TERN, for making this grant opportunity possible!

Application Deadline: September 6, 2019 (e-mailed or postmarked by).

Send grant applications to Anna Yellin at anna.yellin@dnr.ga.gov or:

Anna Yellin  
GA DNR-WRD, Wildlife Conservation  
“Conservation Teacher of the Year” Grant  
2065 US Hwy. 278 SE  
Social Circle, GA  30025

NOTE – By submitting a grant application, you agree to the following:

• My grant proposal promotes the understanding of environmental issues facing wildlife (animals and plants) and Georgia habitats.
• My grant proposal does not seek more than $1,000.
• If funded, I commit to follow-up communication with GA DNR Wildlife Conservation staff concerning the execution of this grant, including a brief final report. Media to accompany this report (photos, video, PowerPoint, etc.) is encouraged.
• I understand that my project(s) must include ADULT supervision on school grounds. Grant funds may not be used to cover transportation costs (buses, gasoline, etc.).
• My principal or director has approved this project.
• I have viewed the application’s scoring rubric (point-weighted questions) and understand the guidelines that will be used to score my application.
• If funded, I understand that a check will be made out to my school / organization. Winner will be notified by September 27, 2019 and funds awarded soon thereafter. Grant funds must be spent by May 31, 2020.
• If funded, I agree to submit a final report to DNR by June 15, 2020. All receipts must be submitted with final report.