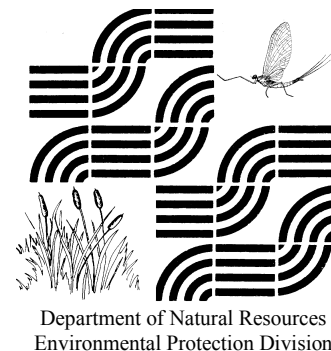


# GEORGIA Adopt-A-Stream

Volume 25, Number 2 April – June 2018  
*Adopt-A-Stream Staff, Editors*



## *Congratulations to the 2017 Adopt-A-Stream Award Winners!*

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream is sincerely grateful for all the volunteers, trainers and partners who give their time and energy to protect and improve Georgia's waterways. We are honored to recognize the following individuals and groups for their achievements.

### *2017 Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Awards*



#### **Brittaney Dyer, *Volunteer of the Year Award***

*Hiwassee River Watershed Coalition ♦ Chemical and Bacterial Monitor ♦  
Active Since Nov 2015 ♦ 24 Monitoring Events in 2017*

Brittaney has conducted 26 consecutive months of bacterial and chemical water testing for two streams, Stink Creek and Upper Nottely River. In addition to her diligent sampling, she not only participates in Rivers Alive stream cleanups but also conducts outreach to her community about nonpoint source pollution and water quality issues. Brittaney is passionate about water quality and encourages other volunteers to take water observations of their adopted site and its surrounding environment.

#### **Catherine Warren, *Outstanding Outreach and Partnership Award***

*Richmond Hill Ecological Studies Program ♦ Chemical Monitor ♦ Active Since  
Jan 2014 ♦ 6 Monitoring Events in 2017*

Catherine leads 6th-9th grade students in monitoring the Ogeechee River and partners with Ft. Stewart biologists for game fish population surveys. The program is in its third year of the "Seeds to Shoreline Project" in partnership with the DNR CRD, helping to restore areas of salt marsh that have suffered die back. Catherine has provided students with opportunities to be citizen scientists and learn the importance of ecological stewardship.



#### **Tom Bates, *Excellence in Data Collection Award***

*Upper Ocmulgee River ♦ Chemical, Bacterial, and Macroinvertebrate Monitor ♦  
Active Since 2015 ♦ 43 Monitoring Events in 2017*

Tom has consistently monitored 4 sites and he has taken on a new monitoring effort each year. He is diligent in testing regardless of weather and communicating with his local coordinator when he needs new supplies to continue his monitoring efforts. In 2017 alone, he donated 30 hours of volunteer time, not including the time spent driving to each site and processing bacterial results. Tom's efforts represent persistent excellence in volunteering with our program.

# 2017 Adopt-A-Stream Volunteer Awards continued

## Paula Heer, Red Flag Award

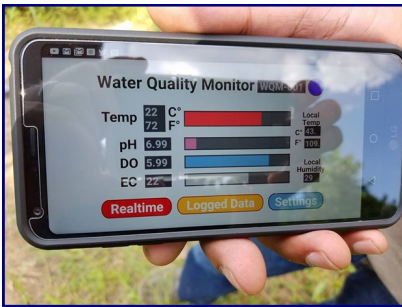
*Chattahoochee Riverkeeper ♦ Bacterial Monitor*

Paula Heer was nominated for her detection of high bacteria counts in Ansley Creek following a sewer line break. She not only helped identify the initial consequences of the break, but also followed up with additional data that indicated issues further downstream. Her many site observations, weekly sample collections, and detailed reports to Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and the City of Atlanta have identified and stopped contamination sources throughout the year in several streams.



## Ralph Cromer & Andres Torres, Innovation in Adopt-A-Stream Award

*Keep Forsyth County Beautiful ♦ Chemical and Bacterial Monitoring ♦ Active Since July 2013*



As an active monitor with AAS, Ralph conceptualized a remote water monitoring station for science teachers to demonstrate the connection between technology and environmental stewardship. He reached out to Andres who used his background in instrumentation to assemble the sensor. The device collects real-time data for six parameters that is then transmitted to an Android device via Bluetooth. The system is solar powered, can operate for years without needing new batteries and is currently

deployed in a stream near an elementary school where students will record, analyze and interpret the data.

## Karen Goode, Nymph Award

*West Fannin Elementary School ♦ Chemical, Macroinvertebrate and Visual Monitor ♦ Active Since Nov 2015 ♦ 12 Monitoring Events in 2017*

Karen has initiated programs at two elementary schools focusing on Georgia Adopt-A-Stream's visual surveys and macroinvertebrate monitoring. These programs also satisfy the State of Georgia's STEM and 4th grade 'Ecosystems' standards. By applying Adopt-A-Stream methods in these schools, Karen facilitates learning and discussion in environmental literacy, experimental design, research procedure and data interpretation. Mrs. Goode's programs have not only been an invaluable learning experience for her students at both schools, but have also heightened awareness of water quality for the teachers, parents and staff involved.



## Tennessee River Gorge Trust, Beyond Borders Award

*Chattanooga, TN ♦ Chemical, Bacterial and Macroinvertebrate Monitor ♦ Active Since Jan 2016 ♦ 85 Monitoring Events in 2017*



With the help of four trained and dedicated volunteers, staff member Mariah Prescott and volunteer Rob Richie use the AAS protocols to monitor monthly for chemical, bacteria, flow, and turbidity, and quarterly for macroinvertebrates. They hold water quality workshops with the goal of

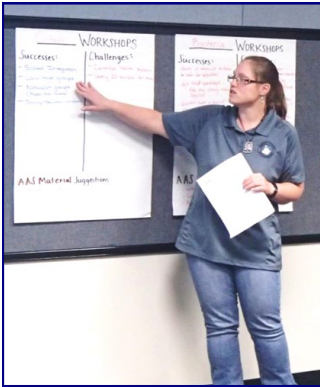
educating the Trust's members and the public on why water testing is important. Out of the 13 monitoring sites, 7 of them are linked to the Trust's Louisiana Waterthrush geo-locator project. This project focuses on Neotropical songbirds that are in decline and only breed in streams with high macroinvertebrate counts and relatively neutral pH levels. Monitoring strategic areas helps the Trust keep a close eye on potential environmental threats.



## *2017 Adopt-A-Stream Trainer Awards*

### *Alexa Robinson, Trainer of the Year Award (Paid)*

*City of Griffin Public Works • Trainer since 2011 • 28 Workshops in 2017, 129 Certifications*



In addition to hosting workshops, Alexa routinely contributes materials, time, and expertise to volunteers. She also holds workshops on her own time and conducts them outside of her own county for volunteers who don't have a trainer nearby. Alexa has also worked hard to increase public awareness of AAS. In 2017 alone, she conducted 79 education and outreach events and interacted with over 1,800 people! She is involved in the AAS program at Cowan Road Elementary School, in which every fourth grade student learns about AAS and macroinvertebrate monitoring. Every fifth grade student gets an AAS refresher and learns about chemical monitoring. She helps take a total of 200 students out at least once a month to a nearby stream.

### **Legacy Trainer**

Thank you, **Tyler Sims** with City of Gainesville, for 10+ years of active service as an AAS Trainer and for your dedication and enthusiasm!

## *2017 Adopt-A-Stream Watershed Awards*

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream's annual Watershed Awards honor the efforts of local public utilities, government agencies, regional commissions, non-profits and watershed organizations that excelled in implementing the goals of AAS.

### **Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (CRK)** *Nonprofit*



With the help of an instrumental network of dedicated volunteers from Neighborhood Water Watch (NWW), CRK has collected and processed over 5,000 water samples in 2017, stopping 15 major sewage spills. Over the years, CRK has strived to develop working relationships with multiple municipalities and counties to streamline communication and get problems fixed quickly. When they discover a spill, they follow through not only by establishing contact with the local city or county, but also with additional monitoring of the contaminated waterway. In addition, community forums like their annual River Rendezvous educate citizens on issues facing their watershed and foster passion for the streams that flow through their local neighborhoods and parks.

### **Keep Forsyth County Beautiful** *Government*



Keep Forsyth County Beautiful (KFCB) has been involved in AAS since 2007, during which they adopted two sites and held 33 events for bacterial, chemical and macroinvertebrate monitoring. Interest in the Forsyth County Adopt-A-Stream program has continued growing and attracting partnerships which have helped provide equipment for volunteers, training with all grade levels between 3rd and 12th grade, free field trips for students, and a frog monitoring and education program. KFCB presents water quality lessons annually to 4,000 students and over the past 11 years, KFCB has provided 264 free school and community workshops in which over 3,000 people have earned over 4,000 certificates!

## *Help Us Find This Year's Award Winners!*

See full award category descriptions and submit nominations all year on the [AAS Awards Submission](#) page at [AdoptAStream.Georgia.gov](http://AdoptAStream.Georgia.gov).

# *25 Years of Protecting and Improving Water Quality in Georgia*

## **David Fountain, *Friend of Adopt-A-Stream***

*Long Island Creek, Sandy Springs ♦ Chemical Monitor ♦ Certified in 1994*

AAS awards are selected by the AAS Advisory Board. The one exception is the Friend of AAS award which was created for the AAS staff to select anyone that they considered to have provided a significant contribution to the program, but who may not necessarily fall into any of the previous award categories.

We don't always hand out a Friend of AAS award, but when we started mulling over possible candidates this year, one name always rose to the top. We asked ourselves who would be best qualified to win this award on this momentous occasion, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our program? And the answer was obvious—a volunteer who has participated in our program continuously for 25 years! This is an impressive achievement and requires considerable personal dedication and community support, as well as indicates a strong program.



David got involved to monitor the stream in his backyard with his daughter and has since identified sewer spills and water quality monitoring trends. Citizen scientists like David can contribute to science in a way that's really unique. Volunteers get involved for personal reasons and often will monitor continuously for several years and thus can detect trends that otherwise would go unnoticed. Oftentimes, their contributions are not immediately obvious, but come to light only after analysis many years later. It's been proven time and time again that citizens can and do produce scientifically rigorous data. To scientists analyzing long-term trends, analysis on this level can be incredibly important, because the data otherwise just wouldn't exist. Congratulations and thank you, David!

## *Board Member Highlight: Tom Weiland, Georgia Southwestern State University*



With an educational and professional career that somewhat follows the path of the Water Cycle, it was only natural for Tom Weiland to become involved in the Adopt-A-Stream Program. Growing up along coastal New Jersey and graduating from Ocean City High School, he had a passion for surfing and sailing. This love of the ocean evolved into an interest in oceanography and Earth science that led him inland to higher elevations to pursue collegiate education from universities on the Piedmont. After completing his undergraduate and graduate work in geology and geochemistry, he then moved back downstream to the Coastal Plain to work as a geology professor at Georgia Southwestern State University.

While teaching at Georgia Southwestern, Tom found that AAS workshops and materials could be easily integrated into several of his courses and student research projects. He used the AAS resources not only to teach the students how to correctly collect water quality data, but just as importantly how to analyze the resulting information. Since becoming a trainer in 2002, he has led 46 workshops and awarded 262 certifications. His students have also completed several water quality studies in different parts of Georgia. His wife Lynn, a middle school science teacher and certified AAS volunteer, is also an advocate for hands-on learning and field-based experiences. She has likewise incorporated the AAS water testing protocols and materials into her sixth grade classes. Both educators have found that the resources not only provide an excellent opportunity to promote critical thinking and science literacy, but also to encourage better stewardship of our water resources.

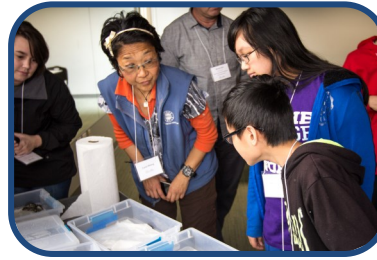
After thirty years of teaching, Tom and Lynn are now following the flow and returning to the coast to spend more time surfing, paddling, traveling and volunteering. It seems only appropriate that they return to where the cycle started. They also hope to become more involved in the Adopt-A-Wetland program and other coastal education projects.



## Thank YOU for Making Confluence 2018 a Success!



"What a great day to get together with peers in the field and discuss issues and successes!"



"It was my first time at Confluence! I really enjoyed being able to present a poster and be surrounded with experts in the field."

"Go Ga AAS!"

"As always I left this year's Confluence energized to up my AAS game and inspired by the speakers, instructors, and my peers."



"I brought 2 children, aged 10 and 11. We all learned a lot. Will come back every year and hopefully, can make an impact as they mature"



Quotes from Confluence attendees via post-survey. See more photos from the conference on the [AAS Facebook](#) page!

## Thanks to our Generous 2018 Confluence Sponsors



**Mountain Cabin**  
Clayton, GA  
**Steven Blackburn &  
Melissa Stevens**

For a complete list of event sponsors, visit the [Confluence page](#) at [AdoptAStream.Georgia.gov](#).

## Want to Organize a River Cleanup in your Neighborhood?

The Rivers Alive website offers many resources to help you organize and promote a safe and fun cleanup in your community! Check out the homepage for links to 'Tools for Organizing a Cleanup' as well as our Organizer's page for a FAQ guide, checklists and important documents to help your event run smoothly.

**Register your August to December cleanup by July 31st to be eligible for free t-shirts and promotional materials!**

Or, you can volunteer at an existing cleanup to help protect your local waterways! Head over to the 'Locate a cleanup' page for a listing of upcoming cleanups. [RiversAlive.Georgia.gov](#)

The preparation of the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream quarterly newsletter is financed in part through a grant from the US Environmental Protection Agency under provisions of Section 319(h) of the Federal Clean Water Act of 1987, as amended. For more information about the Georgia Adopt-A-Stream program or to contribute to the newsletter, contact:

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Dragonfly



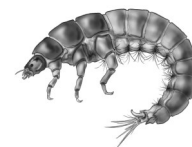
Riffle Beetle



Dobsonfly



Stonefly



Net Spinning Caddisfly

## *Thank you to the 2018 Water Science Poster Session Presenters!*

This year's water science poster session held at the annual Adopt-A-Stream conference Friday Social on March 23<sup>rd</sup> was a great success!

Eight presenters educated attendees about their student research and volunteer water quality monitoring projects. The session included presentations and posters from high school, undergraduate and graduate students as well as AAS volunteers. Presenters' projects and abstracts can be found on the [Water Science Poster Presenters & Winners](#) page!



Want to be a part of this fun session next year? Check out the guidelines and resources on the [Confluence](#) page of the AAS website.