

Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy

Science Sustaining Water



Camp at the Swamp: Ever wonder what it would be like to camp at Phinizy Swamp? Now you can find out. On Friday September 19th you, your family or friends can stay over night, enjoy a hot dog roast and make s'mores. Get up Saturday and go for a guided hike or bike ride.

For those who would like to learn survivalist techniques we will also have outdoor survivalist Mike Whitten on hand. Mike has 33 years of experience teaching wilderness survival. He is a former U.S. Navy Survival Instructor, and for three years he was in charge of the Navy's wilderness survival training of flight students. Mike supervised 12 survival instructors and was responsible for the survival training of over 3,000 students per year in Pensacola, Florida. He was teaching survival "the real thing" long before it became popular on reality TV.

Techniques that will be demonstrated include how to make a fire without matches, how to find and purify water, how to improvise emergency shelters, how to find directions without a compass or GPS, edible wild plants, items to include in a personal survival kit, and more!

Watch our web site for more details and to register.

\$25.00 per group: members
 \$35.00 per group: non-members
 A group is 6 or less. -
 add 5.00 per person for groups /
 families with over six people



Here's What's Happening

First Saturday Hike and Bike: Free Event

June 7th 9:30 - 11:30 hike

August 2nd 9:30 - 11:30 hike

July 5th 9:30 - 11:30 hike or bike

September 6th 9:30 - 11:30 hike

Photography Contest: If you have not been to our Facebook Page then check it out now! We are currently showing all of the entries in our annual photography contest. The images are diverse, and offer a stunning look at the beauty of the park. Although we have a professional panel of judges who are deciding category winners along with the overall winner, we are asking you to take part in deciding the peoples choice winner. Just log into our Facebook site, look at all of the photographs, and then "like" your favorite. The image with the most likes will be the winner of the 2014 PEOPLES CHOICE AWARD. The deadline for voting is June 6th at 12:00 PM. A sample of the images are shown above. Images will also be part of a traveling show. For exhibition locations and dates please visit our website.

Swamp Soiree: Our annual fundraiser the Swamp Soiree is just around the corner. On the evening of June 12th, approximately 500 individuals will get together at the riverfront home of Mrs. Lelia Barrett for a wonderful evening of food, music, and entertainment. If you are interested in learning more about this event or would like to attend please call the office for more information.

Friday the 13 Full Moon Hike: Hiking in the park in the evening once it is dark is a wonderful way to experience Phinizy Swamp. To add a special twist to the unique experience, our next full moon hike will be held on Friday the 13th of June. If you would like to be a part of this hike call the park and make your reservation today. Limited spots are available.

Price \$5.00 members..... \$10.00 nonmembers

Nature Printing Course:

Nature printing on Paper: Saturday July 19th 9:00 - 4:00

Nature printing on Fabric: Saturday July 26th 9:00 - 4:00

Join master Nature Printer and teacher John Doughtry at Phinizy Swamp Nature Park for these one day adult classes on how to use plants to create stunning nature prints. The process is easy and fun, and no prior experience is needed. The art is already in the plants used! All materials for the class are provided, you will only need to bring a sack lunch. Old clothes or an apron are suggested as the inks are permanent. Classes are limited to 12 participants each Pre registration is required. For more information email info@snsaphinizy.org or call 706.828.2109.

\$40.00 members.....\$50.00 nonmembers per class



Volunteer Corner Workdays Prep for 2014 Earth Day Celebration:

We are thankful to all of our volunteers who continually offer their personal time and effort into the upkeep of the nature park and assisting our visitors. With all the excitement of our annual Earth Day Celebration in the air we planned to clear the invasive Sea Myrtle (*Baccharis halimifolia*) from around the campus and Rain Garden Pond to enhance the grounds. Several volunteer groups stepped up to include a number of U.S. Navy sailors; and the staff of Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.

On April 5, 2014, approximately 20 Booz Allen Hamilton volunteers removed the invasive species with chain saws, axes, picks, and more; working until the area in front of the pond was cleared. The view of the Rain Garden Pond is magnificent, what a difference it has made to the grounds!

After all their hard work, Booz Allen Hamilton employees and families enjoyed a fun filled day at the swamp playing volley ball, walking our nature trails & board walks, and serving a delicious lunch! Our thanks to Jackson Murray and his team of volunteers for their hard work.

Education Update:

February's ice storm delayed the start of the Academy's spring school field trip season but shortly after we recovered ... we were off and running. Every field trip brings a great day at Phinizy Swamp Nature Park, and on April 16 we had an exceptional day. We celebrated the first field trip for Richmond County's newest magnet school: Richmond County Technical and Career Magnet School. A class of 16 tenth graders came out for an advanced study on dissolved oxygen (DO). After an active learning session in the education lab we were off to the field donning waders. We splashed in the Rain Garden and then were off to Butler Creek to compare the differences in temperature, DO, pH, conductivity, and turbidity levels. Most of the students were just beginning their studies in chemistry and this field trip gave them an extra boost. They provided good thoughts and answers to our questions and challenged us with some excellent questions of their own. We look forward to many more field trips with the new magnet school, and hope always for the beautiful weather that came with them.



OUR MEMBERS ARE A VITAL PART OF KEEPING OUR MISSION ALIVE! FOR AS LITTLE AS \$50 PER YEAR FOR A FAMILY, OR \$35 FOR AN INDIVIDUAL, YOU CAN HELP KEEP OUR WATERS CLEAN FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS, HELP EDUCATE THE NEXT GENERATION OF BIOLOGIST OR NATURALISTS, AND CAN HELP MAINTAIN THE PARK FOR ALL VISITORS TO ENJOY!

JOIN OUR SNSA PHINIZY FAMILY TODAY. Inquire about membership at info@naturalsciencesacademy.org

Feedback Please!



What do you like most about SNSA? We are trying to determine why people support or visit us. Is it the research we do with water, endangered fish species, mosquito control? Are you interested in our educational programs such as Creek Freaks, our field trips, or Master Naturalist? Is it special events, such as our recent Earth Day celebration. Or finally, are you a park enthusiast ... and so love to take pictures in the park, come out and paint the ever changing scenery, go birding, hiking, biking, or look for animals or plants found in the park or swamp? Having your feedback helps us plan and develop new programs and opportunities for our visitors and supporters alike. Please take just one minute and go to our Facebook site at facebook@phinizy.com or email us at info@naturalsciencesacademy.org and let us know what you like most about us ... we are also always open to new ideas or suggestions for improvement.



What a wonderful success this year's Swamp Stomp 5 & 10K and Earth Day were! The day began at 8:00 with the Swamp Stomp. This year we had 138 runners come out for the two races that included running through wet cells, on paths that ran throughout the forest surrounding the swamp and then finally on to the finish line at the picnic pavilion.

For the first time this year we partnered with both the City of Augusta and GRU to bring a bigger and better Earth Day celebration to our visitors. Although there is no way of knowing exactly how many people attended we are estimating there were between 1,500 - 2,500 people in attendance. Participating vendors offered activities, give aways, and provided information spotlighting our environment. Those who attended could get free trees, re-useable bags, and other eco friendly items. There were talks and behavioral demonstrations of snakes, gators, turtles, frogs and other amphibian and reptiles. There were gator hikes, a concert, a fashion show using repurposed clothing, a raptor show, and our first annual recycled art competition. Finally there was great food for everyone along with many crafts for children, inflatables, balloon animals, and face painting.

We also provided drop spots for tires, old mechanical equipment, and cooking oil. Goodwill was also there with a donation truck. In all, we collected 4.29 tons of tires, 2.15 tons of electronics, and about 700 pounds of recycling materials.

Swamp Stomp and Earth Day ...
A Great Success!

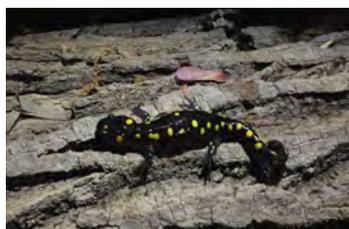


BIOBLOITZ HITS THE SWAMP

Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy hosted the University of Georgia, Athens (UGA), herpetological society's annual Bioblitz in Phinizy Swamp on April 4-6, 2014. The Bioblitz is an event in which groups of people search an area intensively, to find and record all the amphibian and reptile species present. In past years, the event has been a competition against student groups from other schools. This year, a small group from GRU participated as collaborators rather than competitors. We had approximately 20 participants searching Phinizy Swamp Nature Park to find and record as many species as possible to document the diversity of herpetofauna in the swamp. Over the course of a weekend, students found 32 species of reptiles and amphibians, including 2 salamander species, which were found on the Merryland Brickyard property in the northern portion of Phinizy Swamp. One find of particular interest, was the discovery of a dwarf waterdog. The dwarf waterdog is one of Georgia's least-known salamanders and there are few known localities for this species in the state.

GROUP NUMBERS: Lizards: 4 Snakes: 10 Turtles: 10 Frogs: 8
(by species) Salamanders: 4 Alligators: 1 Totals: 32 species

Since many reptiles and amphibians are secretive, inactive for long periods of time, or generally difficult to find, they are often not well studied or their ranges and distributions aren't well documented in comparison with many mammal and bird species. The results of this event will be useful to help develop a species inventory for the park and help to give students and researchers a better understanding of the ecology of the Phinizy Swamp Ecosystem.



SNSA Phinizy
1858 Lock and Dam Road
Augusta, GA. 30906

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The purpose of the Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy is to provide leadership to balance sustainable watersheds and economic vitality through solution-based research, education, and public involvement.

Want more information? Call us today at 706.828.2109 / www.naturalsciencesacademy.org

A Face Lift in the Visitors Center

Have you been to our visitors center on any of your visits to the park? This space is beautiful! Now we are changing it up a bit so that we can add to the enjoyment of our visitor's experience. Additions include:

- A water table that demonstrates basic principles of river behavior, subtle channel morphology and sediment transport processes
- Live turtles, snakes, frogs and fish displays and informational cards
- A new expanded touch table
- More mounted animals on display
- We are offering cold water, energy bars and other light snacks and drinks
- A flat screen TV that will be showing our park video, readings from the sonde's, and other SNSA videos along with listings of upcoming events
- A coloring, interactive table for children.
- New "nature inspired" merchandise (members get regular discounts)

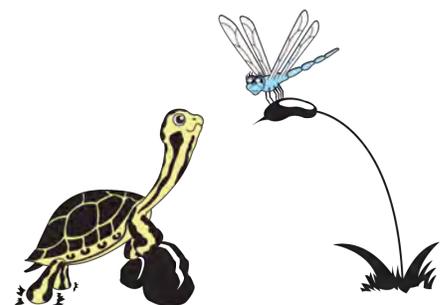
Coming soon: picnic tables, rockers on the porch and porch swings, newly built shelves in the visitors center to hold displays and educational materials and rental bikes

Current visitors center hours: Saturday 10:00 - 5:00
Sunday 1:00 - 5:00

Meet Phin and Izzy

Phin and Izzy are the new mascots of the park. You will find Phin, the yellow bellied slider living in our Visitors Center. Izzy and her family are now flying all around the swamp.

In our visitors center, you can also find Phin and Izzy on toddler and youth t-shirts, either together or by themselves. You can also pick up free coloring pages, stuffed Phin turtles and Izzy magnets. Soon you will find Phin and Izzy (puppets) walking around at our events.



PHIN & IZZY
Phinizy Swamp Nature Park