



MONTHLY REPORT

September 2026

SOIL
&
WATER



BUZZING WITH SCIENCE: TEENS GET HANDS-ON IN ENTOMOLOGY LAB



At a Travelers Rest Library program, Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell led teen scientists in an immersive entomology lab designed to connect students to their local environments. Participants learned about common insect pollinators and the significant connections among insects, our food supply and stormwater pollution. Participants also took home pinned butterfly specimens and a collection jar for invasive species.

Trivia Question

Which specialized structure do butterflies use to drink nectar, inadvertently helping with pollination? A) **Proboscis**
B) **Mandible** C) **Antenna** or D) **Palp**

Answer on page 3



DISTRICT EARNS MODEL STATUS FOR ITS STORMWATER EDUCATION



The district's Stormwater Public Education work was one of four practices that won Model status during Greenville County's American Public Works Association accreditation evaluation. After many months of preparation, Greenville County is now fully accredited.

The county demonstrated 100% compliance with all applicable practices and we had four practices recommended as Model practices. Evaluators deemed the documentation not only met the standards but could be used for Models for other agencies seeking accreditation.

"We truly are the best of the best," said Hesha Gamble, assistant county attorney for Greenville County.



The team: Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell, District Programs Coordinator Olivia Reed, District Manager Ronn Beebe and Administrative Specialist Lainey Veltri



LEAVE YOUR LEAVES ON THE LAWN TO CREATE A VITAL WILDLIFE HABITAT



Conservation Corner

SUSTAINABLE TIPS FOR A GREENER TOMORROW

This fall, consider leaving the leaves on your lawn to help vital pollinators, birds and beneficial insects survive winter's colder months. Dead plant material, fallen leaves and standing hollow stems provide winter habitats.

Did you know?

- Leaving a thick layer of **fallen leaves creates a mini-ecosystem**, proving insulation and camouflage for overwintering queen bumblebees, moth cocoons and beneficial predatory beetles.

- Instead of bagging leaves, **rake them into garden beds** as a free, nutrient-rich mulch. If they're too thick, chop them up with a mulch mower rather than blowing them away.
- Dried cone flowers, sunflowers and black-eyed Susans are packed with high-energy seeds. **Leave them standing** to provide a food source for goldfinches when food becomes scarce.
- Pile fallen branches or logs** in a quiet corner of your yard to create shelter for frogs, toads and small mammals.

Not sure you're ready to let your yard go wild? Then just reserve 10% of your property to the cause. Choose a single backyard flower bed or quiet corner and leave it untouched this fall.



FUTURE EDUCATORS DIVE INTO STEM LEARNING WITH SC PROJECT WET



project WET

WATER EDUCATION TODAY

Students aspiring to become teachers underwent a variety of professional development sessions, including STEM activities, led by SC Project WET Coordinator Kendall Juell. Juell, who also serves as the district's Stormwater Education Coordinator, attended the Greenville County Schools' FTA iTEACH Conference at Roper Mountain Science Center, leading students through Project WET's "Blue Planet," "Incredible Journey" and "Macroinvertebrate Mayhem" activities to showcase how teaching science through water curriculum can be engaging and fun.

Juell frequently partners with organizations like Greenville Water, SC Adopt-A-Stream and Palmetto Pride to host professional development (PD) events. Lessons are built to be multisensory and interdisciplinary, encouraging students to solve real-world problems, play science-based games and explore water concepts through song, story or drama.

STADIUM SCIENCE: STUDENTS EXPLORE WATERSHED HEALTH



More than 4,000 Greenville County students attended STEM Match Day at the Greenville Triumph soccer stadium, where staff set up to teach about stormwater runoff and the health of local waterways. Students applied their classroom learning to a soccer match and explored STEM educational booths throughout the game. GCSWCD staff demonstrated water moving through the watershed model, taught on the properties of water with Project WET's "H2Olympics" activities and used macroinvertebrate models to teach about stream health.



BUILDING A NETWORK WITH FELLOW CONSERVATION DISTRICT EMPLOYEES



The GCSWCD team attended the SC Conservation District Employees Association in Myrtle Beach, where they met other conservation district employees across the state and had the opportunity to swap ideas and resources.

The team left with plenty of ideas for kids' learning activities, including a craft project that uses natural materials found outdoors, and learned more about how to effectively network to farmers and landowners on subjects like NRCS applications, grants and local work group meetings.

Answer to trivia question on Pg 1: (A) - A butterfly's proboscis is a long, straw-like mouthpart that stays coiled up under its chin when not in use. When a butterfly lands on a flower, it uncoils this tube to deep-dive into the blossom and suck up liquid nectar. Pollen also sticks to their faces, eyes and proboscis, which they then carry to the next bloom.



FROM BRACELETS TO BUCKETS: STUDENTS STUDY WATER SCIENCE

Project WET Coordinator Kendall Juell partnered with Clemson University to train Environmental Education (EE) students in the new Project WET Water in Earth Systems curriculum. Students engaged in hands-on youth water education activities to be applied to a class service learning assignment. Activities included making a water cycle bracelet in "The Incredible Journey," investigating the impacts of watershed pollution in "Sum of the Parts" and analyzing the amount of potable water on Earth in "A Drop in the Bucket."

PROGRAM OFFERS TIPS ON SEED HARVESTING

Stormwater Programs Coordinator Kendall Juell partnered with Greenville Library System's Adult Programs Coordinator Nathaniel Lord to host a seed saving program. Participants received a seed harvesting and saving guide, and learned about the timing and best practices for breeding heirloom garden plants to save future seeds. Participants also took home packets of locally harvested marigold seeds.

Interested in seed saving?

Beans, peas, okra, lettuce and tomatoes are the easiest local crops to begin saving in the Upstate. These crops are excellent for beginners because they are predominantly self-pollinating, meaning they have a low risk of accidentally cross-pollinating with other varieties in a typical backyard garden. They also thrive in the hot, humid climate and produce mature seeds in a single growing season.



FIRST GRADERS EXAMINE SEEDS AND LEAVES DURING DISTRICT PROGRAM

First graders at Blythe Academy of Languages donned magnifying glasses to study the differences in a variety of tree seeds and compared preserved leaf and seed specimens during a program facilitated by the district's Stormwater Programs Coordinator, Kendall Juell. The students matched leaves of similar physical characteristics in a matching game and dissected lima beans to learn about how seeds grow. They also learned the importance of roots as the first structure to emerge from seeds, as well as the seed coat in protecting the seed from harsh conditions.



» SOCIAL MEDIA

Stormwater	Total Posts	Followers	Follower Growth	Impressions
Facebook	2	2197	+10	4710
Instagram	2	1499	+8	5768
RRWQG				
Facebook	0	594	0	138
Instagram	1	210	+4	92
GCSWCD Sites	Total Views			
	1274			
RRWQG Sites	438			

» STORMWATER

- Responded to **10 citizen questions** about stormwater, erosion and flooding issues
- GCSWCD websites had **1274 page views** this month.
- Distributed **15 storm drain** markers.
- Soil and Water staff continues to support the **Reedy River Water Quality Group** by **serving on the Public Outreach Committee**. RRWQG websites CleanReedy.org and ReedyReportCard.org, are maintained by Soil and Water staff. RRWQG website had **438 page views**.

» AGRICULTURE / FOOD SECURITY

- Continued **Seed Library partnership** with the Greenville Library, providing free vegetable seeds to Greenville residents as a vector to give information about insecticides, herbicides and fertilizers
- Made **no-till drill, a roller crimper and soil penetrometer** available to county farmers

» INTERDEPARTMENTAL SUPPORT

- **Litter Ends Here** - Supporting social media engagement, participation on the board
- **Keep Greenville County Beautiful** - Participate on the board and work closely with leadership
- **Land Development Dept.** - Aid LDD by spearheading the Public Education element of Greenville County's SCDES Stormwater (NPDES MS4) permit

