

# Environmental Education

*For Tomorrow's Stewards*

## Staff Spotlight

Meet Katie Wisniewski of Tennessee State Parks

Katie Wisniewski has recently been promoted to the Regional Interpretive Specialist position for Middle Tennessee State Parks and will continue to promote, facilitate, and work with Tennessee's environmental education initiatives. Katie holds a B.S. in Wildlife and Conservation Biology from The University of New Hampshire and has served Tennessee State Parks on the staff of the Junior Ranger Programs since 2014. In this capacity, she has worked with park managers and rangers across the state, lead teacher workshops, and supervised seasonal interpretive programs.



In her spare time, Katie loves backpacking, eating new foods, and trying to make her cat love the outdoors. You can contact her at [katie.wisniewski@tn.gov](mailto:katie.wisniewski@tn.gov).

She holds certification from the National Association for Interpretation as a Certified Interpretive Guide, the Spirit of America Youth Boating Program and is a facilitator with Project Learning Tree. She has worked with Tennessee State Parks on two major grants in order to promote a healthier lifestyle and get youth outdoors and active. She has been instrumental with the NFL Play 60, Girls Outdoors workshops and Backpacking with Kephart programs.

## Staff Spotlight

Meet Sarah Green of Tennessee State Parks

Sarah Green joined Tennessee State Parks in January 2018, after earning a B.A. in Geography with a concentration in Climate and Climate Change. She has ten years of teaching experience, and will be using her education background in her service as an Appalachia CARES AmeriCorps Member and Environmental Literacy Coordinator for Tennessee State Parks.



In her spare time, Sarah loves exploring Tennessee State Parks, discovering hidden gems of Nashville, and finding new ways to live with simplicity. You can contact her at [sarah.green@tn.gov](mailto:sarah.green@tn.gov).

Sarah links students and teachers with Tennessee State Parks through place-based learning opportunities, classroom visits, and afterschool programming. She also hopes to support park rangers by providing the tools and resources to best meet the environmental education needs of Tennessee students and families. Sarah works to facilitate the implementation of Tennessee's Environmental Literacy Plan which is part of a national movement to equip the next generation to solve tomorrow's environmental challenges. Sarah also supports the Office of Policy & Sustainable Practices in its environmental education initiative.

# 2018 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Nominations

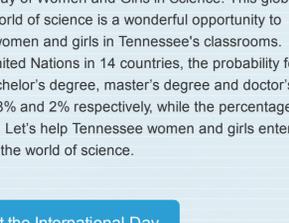
The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation is now accepting nominations for the 2018 Governor's Environmental Stewardship Awards. If you know a spectacular environmental advocate whose work should be recognized, please nominate the individual for this prestigious award.

The Environmental Education and Outreach award will recognize an outstanding education and/or outreach program that promotes environmental stewardship, increases citizen awareness, and results in enhanced environmental protection. Nominations may include demonstration projects, awareness campaigns, or programs allowing communities to address environmental issues such as non-point source pollution.

**The nomination period is from now until March 30th.**

[Nominate Your Advocate](#)

## International Day of Women and Girls in Science



This **February 11th** is the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. This global effort to bring gender equality to the world of science is a wonderful opportunity to advocate science as a career for the women and girls in Tennessee's classrooms. According to a study conducted by the United Nations in 14 countries, the probability for female students of graduating with a bachelor's degree, master's degree and doctor's degree in science-related field are 18%, 8% and 2% respectively, while the percentages of male students are 37%, 18% and 6%. Let's help Tennessee women and girls enter and succeed in the world of science.

[Learn More About the International Day](#)

## Student Fundraising Opportunity

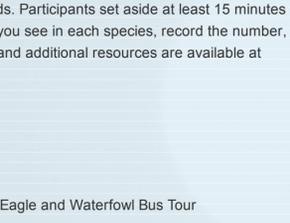
### World of 7 Billion Video Contest

Create a short video (up to 60 seconds) on a topic below for the chance to win up to \$1,000! **Contest submissions are due by February 22nd.**

- Advancing Women and Girls: Access to education, gender equality, women in government, women's health, child marriage
- Preventing Pollution: Impacts on air, water, and land, climate change, human and wildlife health, ecosystem destruction
- Feeding 10 Billion: Hunger, food waste, resource and energy use, deforestation, pollution

[World of 7 Billion Video Contest](#)

## Bird Feeding and Watching Month



February is Bird Feeding and Watching Month! Use this month to educate others about the diverse bird populations in Tennessee. According to The Tennessee Ornithological Society, 409 species of birds have been recorded in Tennessee so get out and appreciate them.

**February 16th-19th** is the Great Backyard Bird Count, an annual event that engages Tennesseans in counting and watching birds. Participants set aside at least 15 minutes for this activity. Count the number of birds you see in each species, record the number, and report it. Account set up is necessary and additional resources are available at <http://BirdCount.org>.

### Tennessee State Park Birding Events:

- Reelfoot Lake State Park:
- February Weekends Eagle and Waterfowl Bus Tour
  - February 10th Birding Field Trip
  - February 17th 7pm Live Birds of Prey Show

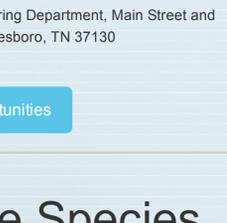
- South Cumberland State Park:
- February 17th Hawk Talk
  - February 22nd Intro to Birding on the Meadow Trail

[More Tennessee State Park Birding Opportunities](#)

[Field Checklist for Tennessee Birding](#)

[Tennessee Birding Facts](#)

## Professional Development



**Project Wet Workshop "Getting Little Feet Wet"**

**Saturday, February 10th 9am – 1pm**

Looking for a standards-based activity for your Pre-K to 2nd graders? Check out this action-packed professional development opportunity!

**Contact:** Contact Bonnie Ervin ([bervin@rutherfordcountyttn.gov](mailto:bervin@rutherfordcountyttn.gov)) or (615) 907-3538 to PREREGISTER (required).

Enrollment is limited to 25 participants.

\$10 enrollment fee

**Location:** Rutherford County Planning and Engineering Department, Main Street and Church Street, #1 Public Square, Suite 200, Murfreesboro, TN 37130

[Project WET Opportunities](#)

## National Invasive Species Awareness Week

**This February 26th – March 2nd is National Invasive Species Awareness Week!**

Join us in bringing awareness to non-native plants, animals, and pathogens that can harm people, the environment, and the economy. According to experts with the Weed Science Society of America, the damage done by invasive plants alone costs the U.S. an estimated \$34.7 billion a year.

**Tennessee State Parks provides several opportunities to spread awareness of invasive species.**

**Find a teachable moment near you!**

Cedars of Lebanon State Park: 1st Saturday of each month

T.O. Fuller State Park: 2nd Saturday of each month

Seven Island State Park: 3rd Saturday of each month

Radnor Lake State Park and Natural Area: 4th Saturday of each month

[Get Involved With Your Tennessee State Park](#)

[Introduction Invasive Species Video](#)

[Tennessee's Invasive Species](#)

## 2018 Weed Wrangle

On **March 3rd** Tennessee State Parks and Natural Areas is partnering with The Garden Club of Nashville and Invasive Plant Control, INC in its annual Weed Wrangle. Volunteers across state join together in eradicating non-native plants in public spaces. Find your local Tennessee State Park event, volunteer, or learn more about this year's Weed Wrangle.

[Weed Wrangle Opportunities](#)

## 2018 Environmental Educator Nominations

Know a teacher who teaches about the environment? The **Presidential Innovation Award for Environmental Educators** recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers who use innovative approaches to environmental education, and use the environment as a context for learning for their students.

**The nomination period is open now until March 1st.**

[Nominate Your Educator](#)

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