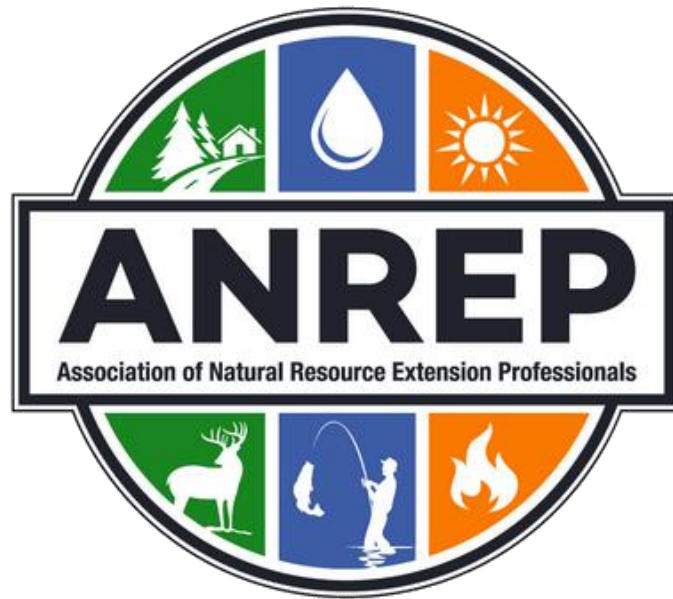


Association of Natural Resources Extension Professionals



Award Recipients 2025

The ANREP Awards Program fosters high standards within the membership, recognizes significant achievement, and expands the use of high quality, innovative materials and programs by honoring the outstanding members and partners who developed them.

Outstanding Educational Materials Awards

Webinars

Gold Award

Landscape University Annual Webinar Series

Morgan Pinkerton, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Hannah Eason, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Orange County; Brooke Moffis, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Lake County

In Florida, the nursery and landscape industries generate \$25.4 billion in sales and support 242,000 jobs annually. Professionals must obtain state pesticide licenses and earn continuing education units (CEUs) to apply pesticides and COVID-19 prompted a need for innovative CEU opportunities. Landscape University, a six-week annual webinar series for license holders, is held annually since 2021 via Zoom. It has featured topics like pollinators, pruning trees, palms, agroecology, composting, weed management, and more. Thus far, the program has engaged 860 live participants with 590 CEUs issued (150 views on YouTube). Post-webinar surveys showed 92.9% increased their knowledge, and 6-month follow-up surveys demonstrated 90.4% adopted at least one learned practice since attending the webinars (i.e. properly identify pests, rotate modes of action, etc.).

Silver Award

Final Fridays from the Garden Series

Kaydie Gene McCormick, UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Morgan Pinkerton, UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Jamielyn Daugherty UF/IFAS Extension Sumter County

In 2024, the Final Fridays from the Garden series of interactive webinars provided Florida homeowners with science-based horticultural education. Covering topics from tree pruning to sustainable turfgrass management to mushroom identification, these sessions attracted diverse audiences seeking practical, environmentally responsible gardening solutions. Each webinar featured engaging visuals, expert-led discussions, and live Q&A, ensuring accessibility and retention. The series emphasized ecological responsibility, integrating climate adaptation strategies and invasive species awareness. Evaluations demonstrated significant knowledge gain, with participants reporting increased confidence in sustainable gardening practices and adoption of those practices within a three-month period after attending the webinars. This innovative approach to Extension education effectively connected with both novice and experienced gardeners, fostering community engagement and long-term environmental stewardship.

Bronze Award

Ecotourism Webinar Series

Carolyn Kovacs, UF/IFAS Extension; Kate Rose, UF/IFAS Extension, Mike Sipos, UF/IFAS Extension

Three Florida Sea Grant Extension Agents partnered with the Florida Society of Ethical Ecotourism to offer a six-part educational webinar series geared towards ecotourism operators to increase knowledge of Florida's resources and tourism best practices. Topics covered Florida ecosystems, invasive species, plastic pollution, and citizen science programs. The webinars reached 128 attendees live, and recordings were viewed 676 times. Post-program evaluations revealed a 24% knowledge gain, and 94% of participants applied new behaviors 3-6 months after the webinars. Behavior changes include participating in citizen science, reducing plastic use, and removing invasive species. Ninety-four percent of viewers also used the information in a professional setting, with those in the ecotourism and education sectors sharing the information learned with both visitors and residents of Florida.

Websites/Apps/Educational Technology

Gold Award

Florida Well Owner Network Website

Yilin Zhuang, UF/IFAS Extension; Andrea Albertin, UF/IFAS Extension; Stella Canfield, UF/IFAS Extension

The Florida Well Owner Network (FWON) website (<https://water.ifas.ufl.edu/well/>) stands as an exemplary resource for private well owners in Florida, offering accessible, science-based information to help safeguard groundwater quality, well functionality, and public health. It is a one-stop platform that addresses the critical need for well owners to better understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining safe and reliable water sources.

Silver Award

Costs and Trends of Southern Forestry Practices Dashboard

Dr. Adam Maggard, Auburn University and Alabama Extension; Jeremy Natzke, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Dr. Lauren O'Shea, Forest Landowner Foundation; Michelle Cain, Forest Landowner Foundation

The Costs and Trends of Southern Forestry Practices (CTSFP) dashboard is an online and interactive platform that provides a comprehensive, data-driven experience to meet the needs of forest landowners, land managers, researchers, policymakers, and other forest enthusiasts seeking this valuable dataset. The platform reports the findings of the Cost of Southern Forest Practices Survey, which is presented across various tabs, where you can explore regional bar charts and colored-coded maps, bar charts, and tables summarizing the average weighted cost per acre of various forest management activities. Additionally, the platform provides summarized historical data from as far back as 1952, including trend data reported in nominal or historic dollars and real dollars, adjusted for inflation using the producer price index.

Bronze Award

Visualizing Community Conservation with ArcGIS WebApps

Shannon Carnevale, University of Florida IFAS Extension Polk County; Lara Milligan, University of Florida IFAS Extension Pinellas County

Urban development is reducing tree canopy cover and habitat availability, limiting nesting sites for cavity-nesting birds like Eastern screech owls and wood ducks. Traditional conservation education programs encourage nestbox installation but often lack measurable follow-through. To bridge this gap, we developed an ArcGIS Online web app that maps installed nestboxes across multiple counties, allowing communities and Extension professionals to visualize conservation efforts at scale. The tool currently tracks 78 installed nestboxes across five counties and has been viewed over 900 times since August 2024, with clear engagement spikes following social media outreach and workshops. Designed for scalability, this tool enables Extension professionals to identify strategic workshop locations, guide species selection for new installations, and inspire broader participation in urban wildlife conservation efforts.

TV/Video

Gold Award

Bees in the Woods

Lauren Grand, Oregon State University; Brad Withrow-Robinson, Oregon State University (retired); Jacob Putney, Oregon State University; Stephen Fitzgerald, Oregon State University; Hayley Brazier, High Desert Museum; Pat McAbery, Sight and Sound Services

The Bees in the Woods video series is an engaging and science-based educational resource that empowers landowners and managers. It highlights the critical role of native bees in Oregon's managed forests and offers practical strategies to enhance pollinator habitat through common forestry activities such as timber harvest, prescribed fire, and invasive species management. With over 600 bee species in the state, this 15-video, peer-reviewed series has been a game-changer, receiving overwhelmingly positive feedback with over 2,000 views and inclusion in partner publications like *Bees in Managed Forests*, published by the Oregon Forest Resources Institute. Its innovative approach, clear educational value, and strong impact make it an invaluable resource for native bee and forest management education.

Silver Award

Great American Kestrel Conservation

Sanford Smith, Penn State Extension

Sanford Smith enjoys the challenge of making educational videos that are both compelling and enjoyable to watch. The COVID era afforded him the opportunity of time to learn the art of teaching

with video. He has produced sixty-four videos for Penn State Extension since 2021, and a favorite one produced in 2024 is: "Great American Kestrel Conservation." It is an example of his "interview" style videos. Last year alone, it received 1100 views after it was posted in late June 2024. The best place to view this video is at: <https://extension.psu.edu/greatamerican-kestrel-conservation>.

Bronze Award

Floridian Flora Fridays: Like, Share, Grow Native

Heather Kalaman, UF/IFAS Extension Orange County; Chris Weber, UF/IFAS Extension Orange County

Floridian Flora Fridays is a successful monthly video series shared on UF/IFAS Extension Orange County's social media platforms, highlighting Florida's native plant diversity. The videos showcase low-maintenance species that attract wildlife, promote sustainability, and have ecological and aesthetic benefits. Each video is filmed at the UF/IFAS Extension Orange County Exploration Gardens and includes plant information, such as scientific and common names, growth conditions, and wildlife value. The series has reached over 80,000 unique users, consistently drawing strong engagement, with individual posts reaching hundreds to thousands of likes, comments, shares, and saves. The program fosters an appreciation for the ecological importance of these species while offering practical guidance for integrating them into home and public landscapes, ultimately contributing to a more resilient and environmentally sustainable future.

Short Publication

Gold Award (tie)

Responsible Scallop: Build Your Own Scallop Sorter

Brittany Hall-Scharf, University of Florida; Victor Blanco, University of Florida

"Let 'Em Grow: Scallop Best Practices" is an educational publication aimed at promoting sustainable bay scallop harvesting in Florida's Gulf Coast. Developed by Florida Sea Grant Extension Agents, it provides recreational scallopers with best practices to ensure long-term population stability. The publication explains the importance of selecting only mature scallops for harvest and introduces the Scallop Sorter Tool, a simple yet effective device that helps scallopers measure and return undersized scallops to their original habitat. It also discusses broader management strategies such as rolling bag limits and later harvest seasons. By implementing these responsible fishing techniques, this guide helps safeguard scallop populations, ensuring that future generations can continue to enjoy this valuable fishery.

Gold Award (tie)

Save Your Seedlings for New Jersey's Sake!

Jean Epiphan, Rutgers Cooperative Extension

New Jersey has a severe future tree deficit. There are not enough unharmed native seedlings and saplings naturally growing to replace older trees as they are lost over time. Readers are called to action in their own yards to help reforest New Jersey. They are taught step-by-step how to naturally promote native seedling germination, perform accurate identification to prevent invasive seedling growth, build wire mesh barriers to protect seedlings from deer browse and buck rub, and how to steward their young trees by improving soil health. This article was distributed to 3500 readers. It resulted in 636 native tree seedlings being identified and protected to ensure their survival and growth. These efforts support long-term forest restoration across all landscape types in New Jersey.

Bronze Award

Stall Talk series: Sustainability

Marnie Ward, UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County; and Toni Noaker, UF/IFAS Extension Citrus County

Educators seek to reach the public and sometimes that means catching their attention in unlikely places. In this case, factsheets are posted in bathroom stalls to add visual interest and educational content. The objectives were: to provide relevant, research-based information to citizens in Citrus County, show citizens ways to incorporate sustainable practices in their daily lives, and drive traffic to the UF/IFAS Extension web-based resources. Each factsheet included a “call to action”, inspiring the reader to act in a positive way. The QR code on each factsheet led the reader to additional educational resources and website analytics revealed 23% of traffic attributed to the factsheets.

Promotional and Marketing Materials (including social media)

Gold Award

2024 Seminole County Farm Tour Promotional Kit

Morgan Pinkerton, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; JK Yarborough, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Kaydie McCormick, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Bennett Lloyd, Museum of Seminole County History; Shane Michael, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Tina McIntyre, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Karen Henry, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Wanda Adorno, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Kelly Field, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Rachel Rector, Seminole County Government; Ally Lineville, Seminole County Government; Kurt Slafkovsky, Seminole County Government; Meredith Brown, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County

Seminole County, FL is home to over 320 farms that have been challenged with severe reduction in farmland and increasing urban development in recent years. To combat this, the Seminole County Farm Tour aims to connect residents with local agriculture through guided farm visits, highlighting sustainable practices and the vital ecosystem services provided by farms. The Seminole County Farm Tour promotional kit includes a flyer, blogs, social media graphics, and a video shared through email listservs, social media, live tv, and more, collectively reaching over 40,000 people. The 2024 Farm Tour had 101 live participants and in post-tour surveys, 97.4% (75/77) reported an increase in knowledge on Florida agriculture, and 98.7% (76/78) intend to adopt at least one practice learned in support of local agriculture.

Silver Award

Operation TRAP promotional kit

Monica Wilson, University of Florida; Savanna C. Barry, University of Florida; Laura K. Reynolds, University of Florida; Morgan A. Edwards, University of Florida; Michael Loizzo, University of Florida; Hayden Henke, University of Florida; John Polasik, University of Florida; Emily Colson, University of Florida

Operation TRAP began in July of 2023 with the goal to capture litter at the source by installing interception technologies to trap and prevent litter from entering Florida's Aquatic Preserves in the Big Bend and Nature Coast region of Florida's Gulf Coast. By intercepting debris at the source, we are reducing the risk of wildlife entanglement or ingestion and helping to maintain the natural beauty of these aquatic preserves. The team has produced a website, logo, flyer, blogs, videos, online trainings, and plastic free promotional materials to promote and support its education and outreach goals. Collectively, the website, blogs, videos, and webinars have been viewed over 1,600 times. We have shared information, distributed flyers and promotional materials, and educated approximately 1,730 people at outreach events.

Bronze Award

2024 Garden Festival & Plant Sale

Clarissa Chairez, UF/IFAS Extension Orange County- Residential Horticulture Agent/Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator; Laynie Yip, UF/IFAS Extension Orange-County Master Gardener Volunteer; Amber Boas, UF/IFAS Extension Orange- County Master Gardener Volunteer

The Orange County Master Gardener Volunteer Garden Festival & Plant Sale (GFPS) is the largest community outreach, educational event, and fundraiser of the year. Planned by Master Gardener Volunteers with support from Clarissa Chairez, Master Gardener Volunteer Coordinator, the 2024 event, themed “Cultivating Sustainable Bliss,” featured plant vendors, youth activities, garden tours, and workshops on topics such as Water Conservation, Pollinator Gardening, and Plant Propagation. Partnerships with Orlando Utilities Commission and O-Town Compost enhanced sustainability efforts. A comprehensive promotional strategy included a blog, social media campaign, flyers, and brochures. With 105 volunteers, the event welcomed 2,000+ attendees, educated 237 participants, and raised \$6,900 in profit.

Podcast/Radio

Gold Award

Marine Science Minute with Florida Sea Grant Radio Spots

Savanna C. Barry, University of Florida; Ana N. Zangroniz, University of Florida; Carolyn J. Kovacs, University of Florida; Donielle N. Nardi, University of Florida; Victor Blanco, University of Florida; Brigid R. Massey, University of Florida; Sarisha S. Boodoo, University of Florida; Maia P. McGuire, University of Florida; Holly A. Abeels, University of Florida; Armando Ubeda, University of Florida; Anna E. Braswell, University of Florida; Joshua T. Patterson, University of Florida; Monica Wilson, University of Florida; Victoria Gambale, University of Florida; Vincent Encomio, University of Florida; Michael J. Sipos, University of Florida; Laura G. Tiu, University of Florida; Nicholas Haddad, University of Florida; Razieh Farzad, University of Florida; Eric J. Cassiano, University of Florida; Lisa Krinsky, University of Florida

Marine Science Minute with Florida Sea Grant is a weekly one-minute public service announcement aimed at increasing engagement with Florida Sea Grant (FSG) resources. A team of FSG Extension Agents and staff collaborated to produce 52 one-minute spots in early 2024. Spots have aired weekly on WUFT FM and hourly on Surf 97.3 FM since April 2024. Radio spots cover a range of timely coastal topics, directing listeners to seek more from FSG Extension and county extension offices. Data indicate the Marine Science Minute program appears to have driven up website traffic and engagement, with more than double the number of users and triple the number of sessions compared to the year prior to

program airing. See: <https://www.flseagrant.org/marine-science-minute-with-florida-sea-grant/> for more, including archived episodes.

Silver Award

I Want to Know, Have You Ever Smelled the Rain?

Shannon Carnevale, University of Florida IFAS Extension Polk County; Lara Milligan, University of Florida IFAS Extension Pinellas County

Rain is more than just water—it carries a scent that evokes biological responses. In this episode of Naturally Florida, we explored petrichor, the unique scent associated with rainfall, and the science behind how Florida's ecosystems interact with moisture, soil microbes, and weather patterns. Released in September 2024, the episode performed 44% above average within its first 30 days, making it one of the best-performing episodes of the season. With 736 plays, 228 total listeners, and a 92% average consumption rate, this episode demonstrated the podcast's ability to connect people to the natural world in engaging, accessible ways. Listener surveys confirmed that the episode inspired real-world behavior changes, including spending more time outdoors, sharing knowledge about Florida ecosystems, and engaging in native landscaping efforts.

Bronze Award

Cultivating Curiosity Podcast

Alyssa Vinson, UF/IFAS Extension; Dr. Taylor Clem, UF/IFAS Extension

In a rapidly changing learning environment, Extension educators must be able to adapt to meet the needs of their audiences. Podcasting represents an opportunity to meet potential extension clientele through new platforms while offering a unique setting for Extension agents, audiences and researchers to interact. In January 2024, a new Extension podcast, 'Cultivating Curiosity', was launched. The podcast explores topics related to plants and horticulture through conversations with professionals and researchers. Twelve episodes were released in 2024 on a variety of topics ranging from botany to fungi and lichens, to urban forests, gene editing, and palms. To support the podcast, a website and marketing materials were developed.

Newsletter/Series of Articles/Blogs

Gold Award

Canopy View News e-newsletter

Alicia Christiansen, Oregon State University; Lauren Grand, Oregon State University

Canopy View News is an e-newsletter developed by the Oregon State University Extension Forestry and Natural Resources Agents serving Douglas and Lane Counties in Western Oregon. This quarterly publication reaches 1,600 forestland owners, managers, students, and members of the public interested in learning more about forestry and natural resource topics happening in and around

Douglas and Lane Counties. Each newsletter includes a letter to readers, calendar of events, announcements, articles, and introduces identification and uses of a native tree. Ninety nine percent (99%) of Canopy View News readers enjoy reading the newsletter, and respondents to a 2024 survey indicated that they read the newsletter most of the time (27%) to all of the time (67%).

Silver Award

Aquatic Invasive Species Detectors Newsletter

Michelle Isaacson, University of Minnesota Extension; Megan Weber, University of Minnesota Extension; Daniel Larkin, University of Minnesota

The University of Minnesota AIS Detectors Program, jointly supported by the University of Minnesota Extension and the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center, is proud to send their volunteers and stakeholders an electronic newsletter every other month highlighting a programmatic update from the team, species feature, volunteer spotlight, research paper summary, and a listing of AIS in the news and upcoming events. The audience is a mix of the public and industry experts with subscription numbers of 2596 (April 2024), 2453 (June 2024), and 2433 (August 2024) for the newsletters presented.

Bronze Award

The Spooky Bug Brigade: A Blog Series

Jackie Leboutitz, UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County

The “Spooky Bug Brigade” blog series, developed by UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota, addresses several misunderstood denizens of the garden, dispelling their negative perception by highlighting the many benefits they bring to both people and the environment. The series has a general introduction and landing page that visually directs readers to ten individual blogs on the following arthropods: spiders, scorpions, millipedes, whip scorpions, whip spiders, harvestmen, assassin bugs, wasps, antlions, and earwigs. Each of these blogs provides an in-depth description of the species, overview of ecosystem services it provides, habitats in which it can be found, a fun fact accompanied by a video, and relevant resources. The series uses a mixture of media to create engaging, themed blogs that appeal to a wide audience.

Long Publication

Gold Award

Great Lakes Almanac to Invasive Crayfish

Paige Filice, Michigan State University Extension; William Budnick, Michigan State University; Rachel Feagley, Michigan State University; Brian Roth, Michigan State University; Lucas Nathan, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Invasive crayfish are appearing in waterways far outside of their natural ranges. One reason is due to hobbyists discarding their aquariums in natural waterways. There are state and federal regulations pertaining to crayfish, however research has shown that pet retailers are often unaware of regulations

and have difficulty identifying species. To fill this educational gap, Michigan State University Extension led the development of the Great Lakes Almanac to Invasive Crayfish. This innovative product aids in the identification of four invasive crayfish and the steps retailers should take if they are in possession of a regulated species. Information in the Almanac applies to any Great Lakes state and over 35,000 copies have been distributed to ten states and over 35 government agencies and organizations.

Silver Award

Introduction to Forest Carbon, Offsets and Markets

Jacob D. Putney, Oregon State University; Norma Kline, Oregon State University; Stephen Fitzgerald, Oregon State University; Lauren Grand, Oregon State University; Chris Schnepf, University of Idaho; Greg Latta, University of Idaho; Patrick Shults, Washington State University; John Rizza, Oregon State University (former)

The carbon economy has emerged and evolved rapidly, resulting in a growing need for resources relevant for forestland owners interested in participating. In response, colleagues from Oregon State University, University of Idaho, and Washington State University developed an Extension resource to orient forest owners, land managers, and natural resource professionals to the carbon space and help them understand the opportunities and requirements of forest carbon projects. We secured funding and support to draft this publication, which includes foundational information, explanatory, newly designed graphics, and a multitude of resources for getting started. Since the release of the online publication, it has 4,072 views and 2,356 engaged sessions. Additionally, four invited presentations and classes have been provided because of this publication, reaching 197 participants.

Bronze Award

Choose Native Booklet

Amber Stilwell, Penn State Extension and Sea Grant Pennsylvania; Justin Mansberger, Penn State Extension; Beth Yount, Penn State Extension; Zach Nemec, Penn State Extension and Sea Grant Pennsylvania; Kelly Donaldson, Sea Grant Pennsylvania; Amanda Mullen, Pennsylvania Sea Grant

The objective of the Choose Native Initiative Team was to utilize the public outreach capacity of Penn State Extension, Pennsylvania Sea Grant (PASG), Great Lakes Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS), and Great Lakes Commission (GLC) to raise awareness and facilitate behavior change in consumers, growers, and plant retailers to “Choose Native” species and reduce the use of invasive species, particularly in aquatic habitats. This was accomplished by developing and promoting “Choose Native” resources and outreach materials, facilitating three in-person workshops for landscapers, water gardeners, municipalities, and one virtual workshop for Penn State Extension volunteers and community members during the period of January 1, 2023, to November 15, 2024.

Book or Comprehensive Program Curriculum

Gold Award

Basics of Landscaping in Florida Bilingual Book

Hannah Wooten, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Orange County; Morgan Pinkerton, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Tina McIntyre, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Seminole County; Tatiana Sanchez-Jones, University of Florida/IFAS Extension Alachua County

Florida's \$10 billion environmental horticulture industry employs over 100,000 individuals, with 33% identifying as Hispanic/Latino. However, most landscaping educational materials are available only in English, creating a barrier to sustainable pest management adoption. A team of University of Florida (UF) Extension agents developed the Basics of Landscaping in Florida / Conceptos Básicos de Paisajismo en Florida, a waterproof, pocket-sized bilingual booklet. This resource presents science-based landscaping best practices with accompanying photos and illustrations side by side in both English and Spanish. Since its publication in April 2024, over 200 copies have been distributed for free, while the UF/IFAS Bookstore has sold 160 copies. The booklet supports industry and homeowner practice adoption, bilingual workforce education and Extension training, increasing sustainability and strengthening Florida's landscaping industry.

Silver Award

Be Septic Safe: A User's Guide to Taking Care Of Business

Susan Lunt, Clemson Extension; Charly Greenthaler, Clemson Extension; Ellen Sturup Comeau, Clemson Extension; Bea Calhoun, Clemson Extension

The *Be Septic Safe: A User's Guide To Taking Care Of Business*, developed by a team of Clemson Cooperative Extension (CCE) agents during 2023-2024 and printed in 2024, provides South Carolina (SC) septic system owners with a quick reference resource on how a septic system work and ways to care for systems, to answer questions when issues arise, and to document location of tank, drainfield, connections, and maintenance. In addition, the guide provides QR codes linking users to the CCE Be Septic Safe website where expanded information and videos on all things septic-related can be found. Bacteria is the top pollutant for SC waterways. Failing and leaking septic systems are a contributing source to the contamination, making it an essential target for water quality education.

Bronze Award

Georgia 4-H Friends Pollinator Magazine

Kasey Bozeman, University of Georgia; Becky Griffin, University of Georgia; Tim Welsh, University of Georgia

The Georgia 4-H Friends Pollinator Magazine is an 8-page publication designed for Extension professionals to use when teaching pollination concepts to elementary students. Aligned with Georgia Dept of Education Agriculture and Science Standards, the magazine explains the pollination process,

animals that aid in pollination, and the importance of pollinators. Throughout the book, youth complete activities such as completing a pollinator census count and a honey taste-testing activity.

Achievement Awards

Achievement Awards recognize exceptional ANREP members who exhibit outstanding leadership and program excellence individually and in teams.

Early Career Leadership

Michael Sipos, University of Florida and Florida Sea Grant

Michael Sipos's extension work is imbued with an obvious enthusiasm for the outdoors and educating others so they can experience our marine systems in a sustainable way. Since Michael started with University of Florida and Florida Sea Grant in 2019, he has developed a broad extension program that impacts end users far outside Collier County, including national and state award-winning educational programs. Program areas that showcase Michael's greatest impacts are sustainable fisheries/seafood and invasive species. He is often sought out by his peers for his input on fisheries and invasive species related issues and holds committee and leadership positions in those fields from the local to national level. Michael is a strong collaborator and is regularly pursued to join grant funded teams covering topics fisheries, invasive species, habitat restoration and red tide. His practical knowledge in his field allows him to deliver relevant, innovative and high-quality extension programming.

Innovative Program (*three-way tie*)

Ecological Landscape Design for Coastal South Carolina

Maeve Snyder, North Inlet Winyah Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve; Brooke Saari, South Carolina Sea Grant Consortium; Kaitlyn Dirr, ACE Basin NERR/South Carolina Department of Natural Resources

The North Inlet - Winyah Bay NERR, ACE Basin NERR, and the S.C. Sea Grant Consortium worked together to create a training series called "Ecological Landscape Design for Coastal South Carolina". This was an innovative take on a hybrid program utilizing pre-recorded online training videos and field based experiences to teach methods and benefits to incorporating native plants and green infrastructure into professional landscape design. This program was a success as we were able to engage a target audience that we are not normally able to reach and proved that this alternative style programming could work in the right circumstances.

Climate-ready woodlands: A resilience toolbox

Emily Dombeck, University of Minnesota Extension; Angela Gupta, University of Minnesota Extension; Anna Stockstad, University of Minnesota Extension

The University of Minnesota Extension Forestry team responded to demand for climate-resilient tree and plant recommendations with 33 region-specific lists, statewide workshops, and participatory science projects, benefiting Minnesota's woodland stewards and forest ecosystems across the state. By providing a toolbox of resilience-focused stewardship options, the Climate-Ready Woodlands program

empowers woodland stewards to manage their woodlands for long-term health and resilience under a changing climate.

The Water Ambassador Program-Connecting Communities to Water

Lorna Bravo-UF/IFAS Extension Broward County

The Water Ambassador Program, led by Lorna Bravo of UF/IFAS Broward County, addresses water conservation challenges in Florida's urban areas. This initiative combines Master Gardener Volunteer training with advanced water conservation education, featuring a 'Connected to Water' scale and 6-week courses. Since 2020, it has trained 35 Water Ambassadors, conducted 50 landscape inspections, and awarded 33 Florida-Friendly Landscape recognitions. The program has saved an estimated 11 million gallons of water annually, enough to supply 125 households. Recognized with the Outstanding Collaboration State Award in 2021, the Water Ambassador Program is expanding its reach through new workshops for urban residents, demonstrating an effective approach to sustainable landscaping and water conservation in Florida's growing urban areas.

Outstanding Team

Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant Connects Youth to Local River

Ashley Belle, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant; Janice Milanovich, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant; Kristin Tepas, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant; Megan Gunn, Illinois-Indiana Sea Grant; Co-organizers, The Nature Conservancy; Presenters, Dunes Learning Center; Presenters, Fish and Wildlife Service; Presenters, Indiana Department of Natural Resources; Presenters, Shirley Heinze Land Trust; Presenters, Audubon Society

The Grand Calumet Stewardship Day promotes diversity in STEM by engaging underrepresented youth in field-based environmental science education. This initiative targets students from economically disadvantaged schools, predominately serving Hispanics and African Americans, in the Grand Calumet River Area of Concern. The program is organized by IllinoisIndiana Sea Grant and The Nature Conservancy. Through hands-on learning at various activity stations, led by diverse environmental professionals, students explore topics such as water quality and local habitats, with bilingual support available. Over two years, 120 students showed increased knowledge and interest in nature and/or STEM careers. Teacher feedback highlighted the program's effectiveness in inspiring students and connecting them to their local environment.

Excellence in Natural Resources Extension and Service Award

Sanford S. Smith, Penn State University

Sanford "Sandy" Smith has led a distinguished career in natural resources Extension combined with a long record of service. Along with conducting years of effective forestry and wildlife education programs for youth and adults, his past and current leadership roles include: ANREP NE Regional Rep. (2009-11) and the three ANREP presidential positions (2012-14). He also served as the first president (2020-22), Vice President (2024), and third President (2025) of the Natural Resources Extension

Education Foundation. Sandy believes that by volunteering and taking on leadership roles, one grows and develops skills, but most importantly, serves and helps others.

2025 ANREP Awards Committee: Catelyn Turner (Chair), Alicia Betancourt, Victor Blanco, Taylor Clem, Tim Daly, Thomas Derbes II, Terra Freeman, Jamielyn Hagyar, Judy Jean, Katie Mastenbrook, David Outerbridge, Linda Sapp, Alexander Tays, Megan Weber, Ondine Wells

2025 ANREP Awards Judges: Holly Abeels, Sharon Ashworth, Michele Bakacs, Marguerite Beckford, Carrie Berger, Victor Blanco, Leslie Boby, Mikaela Boley, Carrie Brown, Rachel Cochran, Tim Daly, Jim Davis, James Ekins, Terra Freeman, Erin Garrett, Christine Gelly, Brenda Jackson, Carri J. Jagger, Carolyn Kovacs, Sabhyata Lamichhane, Erika Lyon, Justin Mansberger, Amanda Marek, Lara Milligan, Laura Mirarchi, Rachel Pienta, Danielle Rhea, Brooke Saari, Carrie Stevenson, Amy Stone, Femeena Pandara Valappil, Sarah Waddle, Megan Weber, Ondine Wells, Martin Wunderly, Yilin Zhuang