

habitat



News and Information from the Environmental Learning Center

September/October 2009

Construction Underway!



Photo by
Doug Graybill

We are moving at a fast pace in our rebuilding efforts. The June 30, 2008 lightning-caused fire destroyed the Wet Lab exhibit area, Classroom and Bathrooms. Worry not. Wait until you see what we have planned! The project is expected to take 9 months. Watch the progress by viewing our webcam. Go to: www.DiscoverELC.org. Click on Live EcoCam.

The Basics on Ocean Acidification By Sarah Rhodes-Ondi, Naturalist

One of the most significant issues facing our oceans during the 21st century is ocean acidification. As we emit large amounts of carbon dioxide (CO₂) in our atmosphere primarily by burning fossil fuels, the ocean absorbs a fraction of the excess CO₂. This is making the ocean more acidic. Over the past 250 years oceans have absorbed

about 1/3 of the total CO₂ emitted in the atmosphere by human activity. Per day this is about 79 million tons. The average weight of a blue whale is about 200 tons. The ocean is absorbing the equivalent of 395 thousand blue whales of CO₂ per day!

Scientists world-wide are tackling how this increase in ocean acidity will

affect oceanic communities. Most of the research so far has examined specific animals on short time scales of a few days or weeks. There are many unanswered questions regarding the long-term effects on marine communities. All oceans are unlikely to be affected in exactly the same way.

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Unplug, Escape, Discover the ELC!

Three Cheers for our 2009 Summer Camp Counselors

by Rosemary Badger, Naturalist



ELC Summer Camp Counselors provided 1,056 hours of volunteer time. What a remarkable group of role models.

Pond dip-netting, looking for insects, learning about native plants, seining, hiking, biking, kayaking, camping, snorkeling, surfing, canoeing, beachcombing, scavenger hunts, blowing bubbles, arts and crafts (and of course, drinking lots of lemonade) were just a few of the activities during this year's ELC summer ecology camps.

ELC offers summer camps for children ages 4-18. Camp counselors (6th-12th graders) assist our Naturalists with many details from camp preparation and clean up to helping campers with all activities. We have such wonderful and caring youth in our community who donate their time and energy to help younger children learn about our natural environment.

This year's 41 counselors were enthusiastic, dependable, safety conscious and great role models. A couple even rode their bikes to the ELC (helping to save energy). The counselors provided 1,056 hours of volunteer hours and we thank them very much.

We also received assistance from some of our adult Naturalists' Assistants. Many thanks go to Ed Carr, Jan Garrison, Angie Jones, Jim Newcomer, Seth Puglio, Bob Sears, Don Wickstrand, and Richard Woodard.

2009 Camp Counselors

Basil Bastaki	Ben DeMars	Suzie Hopkins	Melissa Tench
Lucy Beddow	Cheyenne Dong	Hannah Johnson	Taylor Tench
Zoe Beddow	Molly Fitzpatrick	Nikki Lindsay	Maia Tinder
Andrew Berg	Heather Fredrickson	Evan MacKay	Julia Visser
Brandon Berg	Sage Gallarano	Emily Majersky	Leigh Wilson
Samantha Bowman	Kyle Gerber	Jaden Monnett	JJ Wright
Adrien Carlson	Madison Gerber	Baily Ogle	Phillip Yonge
Aleia Carlson	Shealyn Gerber	Emily Piscitelli	Ryan Zerega
Pamela Clothier	Haley Glaab	Siera Snapp	
Robbie Crum	Ian Gronosky	Joe Sutherland	
Danielle Dean	Danielle Harris	John Sutherland	

Mark Your Calendar

Sept 1 - 30, 2009

Annual Sale in The Nature Nook gift shop

Dec 1, 2009 • 3 - 5pm

Annual Volunteer Open House

Drop in to learn more about becoming an ELC volunteer

Dec 4, 5 & 6, 2009

Holiday Celebration in The Nature Nook
Special hours, events, and savings

Dec 4, 2009

17th annual Charity Golf Tournament to
benefit ELC's education programs
at Bent Pine Golf Club

Mar 7, 2010 • 12 - 4pm

EcoFest - ELC's Open House Extravaganza
(this year's EcoFest dedicated in memory of
Billy Willer of The River Rats Band)

Apr 17, 2010

Annual Gala to benefit ELC's education programs

Thanks Basil

by Rosemary Badger, Naturalist

If you have visited our Entry Pavilion lately you might have noticed a new touchable display. Well...it's not completely new. Basil Bastaki, one of ELC's many summer youth volunteers, refurbished our Touch Box display (which definitely needed a facelift). He gave it a new coat of paint, redid the front flap on each box, and replaced some of the missing items. It looks great!

Basil also helped education staff with other summer tasks. Additionally, he was a camp counselor and a camper, attending the Florida Fun in the Keys camp. He certainly has spent a lot of time around the ELC this summer and we appreciate it. Thank you so much, Basil.



The Basics on Ocean Acidification *continued from page 1*

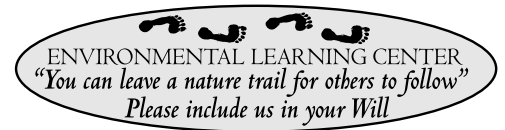
Food webs, habitats, developing organisms, and fish dependent economies are all at risk. Invertebrates are likely to be directly affected by ocean acidification. Acidic conditions weaken the shells of marine creatures. There are many potentially affected plants and animals: benthic mollusks, echinoderms, plankton, corals, and corraline algae are a few. Larval fish survival has been shown to decrease with acidic conditions. Increasingly acidic conditions will likely block coral's ability to repair itself following natural erosion events and the reefs may wear away over time. Some CO₂ absorbing plant like plankton; however, may

actually thrive under these conditions. Recent work suggests that a specific type of phytoplankton, a coccolithophore, actually makes stronger internal cell walls under more acidic conditions.

Though much remains a mystery in the field of ocean acidification, there are many behavioral changes we can make to decrease our fossil fuel consumption. Use less electricity, carpool, support green energy and local farmers who strive to decrease the carbon footprint of their community. Plant trees whenever you can. The Marine Resources Council in Brevard County and the Florida Department of



Environmental Protection plant mangrove trees and wetland plants in our area and are always looking for volunteers to help.



Help Wanted!

Call Nancy at (772) 589-5050 or
Nancy@DiscoverELC.org

Festival set up/take down. What do we mean?

ELC is looking for volunteers who will be responsible for setting up and taking down a tent, table and display board when we are participating in festivals and other public events.

Please contact ELC Volunteer Coordinator, Nancy Puglio, to learn more about the requirements, time commitment, and how much ELC will appreciate your time.

Join Maria in supporting ELC's Fire Fund Campaign



All ages are helping ELC's Fire Fund Campaign. Pictured here is Maria Roch. This industrious ELC supporter had a lemonade/chocolate chip cookie/rice crispy treat stand in May. She raised \$43 and donated all of it to our Fire Fund.

Please accept this gift to ELC's Fire Fund Campaign: \$ _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

(ELC will not distribute your email address)

Check enclosed made payable to ELC Fire Fund

Mail to: ELC Fire Fund, 255 Live Oak Drive, Vero Beach, FL 32963

Charge to my credit card VISA MasterCard

Account# _____ Expiration Date _____

Name on Card _____

Signature _____

Donations to the ELC Fire Fund Campaign are tax deductible in accordance with IRS guidelines. EIN# 65-0064129.

A COPY OF THE OFFICIAL REGISTRATION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION MAY BE OBTAINED FROM THE DIVISION OF CONSUMER SERVICES BY CALLING TOLL-FREE WITHIN THE STATE 1-800-HELP FLA (1-800-435-7352). REGISTRATION DOES NOT IMPLY ENDORSEMENT, APPROVAL, OR RECOMMENDATION BY THE STATE.

Sale! Sale! Sale! Sale! Sale!

Sale runs the entire month of Sept.

40% off everything with the exception of books, greeting cards and postcards

No additional ELC membership discount

Photo by Jon Pine



Shop Open
Tues - Fri 10a - 4p
Sat 9a - 12p
Sun 1p - 4p

Shop closed the month of Oct.
Reopening Nov. 3rd with new Eco-Friendly merchandise!

40% off Sale in ELC's The Nature Nook Gift Shop

September/October 2009

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

www.DiscoverELC.org

772-589-5050
Vero Beach, Florida 32963
255 Live Oak Drive
A Nature Center on Wabasso Island along
the Indian River Lagoon Scenic Highway

ENVIRONMENTAL
LEARNING CENTER



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