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Rural Educator Network Newsletter

Connecting Educators and
Sharing Resources

NASA SciAct



Hello Educators!

This Newsletter is dedicated to providing:

1. NASA resources modified to the needs of rural audiences
2. Upcoming NASA events, webinars, and opportunities
3. Partnership highlights
4. Expressing your current needs and successes

Opportunities to Connect and Contribute

Help to Grow the Network: Share this sign-up link with friends: <http://eepurl.com/h1xxQ9>

Submit a Spotlight for Your Program: fill in [this form to submit a quick spotlight](#) that we can share in a future newsletter edition.

What are Your "Go-To" Resources? Help us expand by sharing resources that Rural educators would love: <https://forms.gle/SUaFnCGmAuLS5V7A6>



Did you know there are two solar eclipses crossing the United States in 2023 and 2024? On October 14, 2023, there will be an annular solar eclipse, and on **April 8, 2024, there will be a total solar eclipse!**

Check out this [informational video](#) and some fun [STEM activities](#) about solar eclipses from NASA.

Image credit: NASA/Scientific Visualization Studio/Michala Garrison; eclipse calculations by Ernie Wright, NASA Goddard Space Flight Center

Join [NASA's Science Mission Directorate for a monthly series](#) that connects rural educators to resources, networking, and professional development opportunities.

On May 4th at 8 pm EST, learn from astronomers Dr. Marc Buie and Dr. John Keller about the science of occultations and how this work is supporting the [NASA Lucy mission](#). They will also introduce the unique citizen science network known as [RECON](#) (the Research and Education Collaborative

Through Shadows” will include flat screen and full dome videos on the science of eclipses, occultations, and transits for use in classrooms, libraries, and planetariums around the country.

Register for the May 4 webinar here: <https://forms.gle/Uig6arQDBMJChQnU9>

Image credit: NASA SMD/SciAct



The NASA-funded program Place-Based Learning to Advance Connections, Education, and Stewardship ([PLACES](#)) is seeking formal and informal educators who teach Earth Systems topics to youth in grades 6-12 to participate in professional learning and research activities in person July 11-13, 2023, and virtually through March 2024. **Apply by mid-April.**

If you are interested in applying and want more information, [take a look at this flyer.](#)



Science-Technology Activities &
Resources For Libraries

FREE STAR Net Webinar for Libraries: Summer Programming with ‘We are Water’

Get some last minute planning ideas connected to the 2023 Collaborative Summer Library Program theme: "All Together Now." The We are Water project celebrates our connections through water. In this webinar you will learn how to inspire community conversations, explore hands-on activities, and recognize our shared values around water and what it means to us.

Register Today <https://www.starnetlibraries.org/event/summer-programming-with-we-are-water/>



2023 Rural STEM Convening

August 29-31st at 8:00 am Mountain Time at Little America, Flagstaff, AZ

If you're a STEM Producer, STEM Learning Consumer, STEM and Education Policy Maker, and/or a STEM Learning Thinker, then join us at the 2023 Rural STEM Convening in Flagstaff, AZ.

This conference is the direct result of networking and relationships built through the Rural Activation and Innovation Network (RAIN, NSF dnl#1612555). The RAIN project sought to understand the perspective on STEM in rural and remote communities and build a roadmap to shift perceptions and self-efficacy. This conference will bring together partners that helped make the RAIN project a success to share, learn, and develop additional pathways to supporting rural learners across the generations. Current support is being provided by the Arizona Science Center, SciTech Institute, Arizona State University's Center for innovation in Informal STEM Learning, NASA SciAct Broadening Participation



Learning Ecosystems Northeast

Maine Vernal Pool Field Experiences

For adults working with youth in Hancock County, and Midcoast Maine, Aroostook County, and Washington County, Maine, the following events are part of the Spring 2023 Vernal Pool Community Science Challenge. Join us for in-person vernal pool experiences for educators. The events are hosted by the Hancock/Midcoast County Connected Learning Ecosystem. Email Molly Auclair, mauclair@gmri.org for more information. Learn about more vernal pool offerings in Maine here -

<https://gmri.org/projects/vernal-pools/>

Hancock County/Midcoast Maine Vernal Pool Field Experience

April 13 at 4:30 - 6:30 pm Eastern Time

Location: Bucksport, ME

Aroostook County Maine Vernal Pool Field Experience

April 26 at 4:00 - 6:00 pm Eastern Time

Location: Limestone, Maine

Washington County Maine Vernal Pool Field Experience

May 4 at 4:30 - 6:30 pm Eastern Time

Location: Moosehorn National Wildlife - Edmunds Division (Maine)

Lesson Plans and Opportunities

1. Check out the 2023 NASA eClipse Winter Newsletter, where you can find information and lessons on life, Earth, and space topics related to growing plants on and beyond Earth. the newsletter includes:

- new NASA eClips video: Our World: Systems to Grow Plants in Space;
- revised NASA eClips educator guide: The Light Plants Need

2. Spring into science with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), where you can learn about what happens in the ocean during springtime and about meteorological vs. astronomical spring with infographics! [Click here to access the website page.](#)

3. April is Citizen's Science Month! There are so many opportunities to engage with science, learn new things, and use and collect real data! Check out some of these websites below for more information and free, online or in-person events.

- [SciStarter](#): Science we can do together
- [Arizona Science Center](#)
- [NASA Citizen Science Projects](#)



Individual and Program Spotlights

Growing Beyond Earth and Space Chili Challenge

A team of students at Northridge High School in Greeley, Colorado collaborated with Growing Beyond Earth, a classroom-based citizen science project sponsored by Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden, to encourage students to conduct scientific

foster NASA research on growing plants in space. Students at Northridge High School in Greeley, Colorado became curious thinkers by engineering, crafting, and developing their own growth chamber using white light to conduct a series of experiments for the Space Chile Challenge created by Jacob Torres and the Kennedy Space Center.

To participate in the Growing Beyond Earth citizen science project, visit www.fairchildgarden.org/gbe for more details.



Systems to Grow Plants on Earth and Beyond Presentations for Families at The Commodity Classic

Dozens of families from the farming community visited the NASA booth at the 2023 Commodity Classic March 9-11, in Orlando, Florida. At the exhibit table, kits with baked clay chips substrate and colored cellophane pieces were available to take so learners can experiment on their own the activity from the NASA eClips Educator Guide: The Light Plants Need. Joan Harper-Neely, STEM Education Specialist from the National Institute of Aerospace Center for Integrative STEM Education, facilitated demonstration sessions, Systems to Grow Plants on Earth and Beyond. The activities were selected to compliment the theme for the 2023 Commodity Classic

solve as they grow plants in space. Several NASA eClips resources were shared with the group including the newest video, Our World: Systems to Grow Plants in Space.

The Commodity Classic is an agriculture trade showcase started in 1996 highlighting the latest in farming practices and agriculture technology. It is the largest farmer-led, farmer-focused agricultural and educational experience. Members from NASA's Earth Science and NASA's Applied Science teams, Karen St. Germain, the Director of NASA Earth Science Division, Brad Doorn, the Program Manager of NASA's Agriculture and Water Resources Program Areas, and Alyssa Whitcraft, the Director of NASA Acres, shared the long history of NASA providing satellite data to the agriculture community, AI-informed agricultural sustainability, and satellite-enabled plant disease detection. NASA's Acres Consortium applies satellite information and other earth science data to the most pressing agricultural and food security challenges.

Resources Shared:

- NASA eClips Our World: Systems to Plants in Space
- NASA eClips Real World: Food Security - Monitoring Crops From Space
- NASA eClips Launchpad: Space Age Technologies Measure Soil Moisture
- NASA eClips Our World: Where Do Crops Grow?
- NASA eClips Ask SME: Program Director -- Dr. Inbal Becker-Reshef
- NASA eClips Ask SME: U.S. Domestic Co-Lead & AI Lead -- Dr. Hannah Kerner

To view the collection of NASA eClips resources, please visit

<https://nasaclips.arc.nasa.gov/>.



Cochise County (AZ) Professionals and Educators Around Cochise (PEAC) Convening

Rural, remote, and a lot of distance, that is Cochise County. The PEAC Convening was held on April 7th and brought together elected officials, economic development directors, educators, university program leads, students, and non-profits to create an intentional multisector working group. The idea is to create opportunities for collaboration and development of STEM focused events to highlight regional assets. Fifty-five people showed up, shared their ideas over lunch, and were able to talk to folks they would never have found an opportunity to meet. Data collected will be collated and coded to look at concept trends and then shared out with participants. It's a first step to building a region wide STEM Learning Ecosystem.

Smokey Mountain Elementary School takes the ROADS Challenge!

ROADS takes inspiration from real NASA projects and guides students on a space-related mission. This year two teachers at Smokey Mountain Elementary School in North Carolina have registered 26 teams of middle school students to take the challenge and complete the course on May 12th. The day-long event includes engineering design challenges culminating in the final mission where they will use a robotic rover to descend into a simulated Shackleton Crater on the Moon to take



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The Rural Education Network team serves as volunteer representatives from NASA Partner projects funded through SciAct. We are aiming to amplify and elevate the voice of rural educators while providing access to resources that support educators in engaging youth in planetary science and STEM.

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