



Volume #24 Issue #1  
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## Current in the Creek

2019 Creek Camps

Session I: June 23-28

Session II: July 7-12

Check it out and apply here:

<https://sites.allegheny.edu/creekconnections/creek-camp/>

## Teacher Training

By Wendy Kedzierski, Creek Connections

Regional STEM educators joined some Creek Connections teachers at Allegheny College on August 15 to learn from a powerhouse lineup of experts about earth sciences and water resources in the French Creek Watershed. The workshop was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Water Resources Research Center, Creek Connections, and Pennsylvania Sea Grant.

The jam-packed day started off with a welcome and overview from Wendy Kedzierski, Creek Connections, and Beth Boyer, Penn State University. Participants then learned about teaching resources from Marti Martz, PA Sea Grant, Laura Branby, Creek Connections, and Rob Ross, Paleontological Research Institution.

Don Haas, also of the Paleontological Research Institution, led a discussion about innovations in science education and the Next Generation Science Standards as well as demonstrations of useful technology tools including digital imaging and virtual field experiences. These demonstrations moved from the classroom to the field when the participants visited French Creek.



Above: Educators explore French Creek in Meadville.

But first, Sara Stahlman, PA Sea Grant, gave everyone an overview of aquatic ecology and invasive species in the French Creek Watershed. Once at the creek, Brenda Costa, French Creek Valley Conservancy, gave an overview of the history, biology and general importance of French Creek. Creek Connections provided sampling equipment to explore French Creek. All participants were excited to get in the famous waterway.

After dinner, some people continued the long day with a visit back to French Creek to meet up with a French Creek Ichthyology class, which was being taught by Jay Stauffer, Penn State University, Casey Bradshaw-Wilson, Allegheny College and Sarah Mueller, Penn State University. Participants also sampled the fish of French Creek by boat electrofishing. It was amazing to see all the fish!

Creek Connections thanks all the presenters and participants for coming together to make a wonderful day of learning, networking and fun.



Above: Some of the fish caught from French Creek the evening of the workshop.

# 2018 French Creek Cleanup

By: Grace O'Malley, Allegheny College Student



This year's cleanup on September 8 was one for the books! Over 750 people came together to clean up this community treasure. Even though it was a dreary day, many volunteers came out to the Cochranon Fair Grounds for food and fun following their trash pickup! We found a vacuum cleaner, a five iron, and as always, some baby dolls. We also removed lots of old tires. Good riddance!

31,965 pounds of trash were removed from the watershed this year. Our top company in the corporate competition for the coveted hellbender trophy was the Brockman Agency, which brought in over 1,600 pounds, and the non-corporate group with the most trash was Nickelplate Pickers with over 5,800 pounds! We also had about 100 students from local elementary, middle, and high schools become land stewards for the day. Each and every year, we are humbled by the amount of people

who spend their day taking care of their community. Thank you to everyone who joined us!



Above: Members of Alpha Chi Omega sorority from Allegheny College pick up trash along the creek.

## Testing Tip

By: Gretchen Barbera, Allegheny College Student

### Reading the Directions

It is easy to be overwhelmed when first looking at all the glassware, chemicals, and testing equipment within each test kit, which can be potentially disheartening, but don't fret! The best way to tackle your test is by first reading the directions before



**Ever wish  
you'd read the  
instructions?**

doing anything else. Reading the directions before acting breaks down a hard task and helps prevent potential mistakes that might be made. After reading the directions, it's very important to move one step at a time to ensure perfect execution. The directions should be clear enough to follow, but it is encouraged to ask questions if any may arise. Good luck and HAVE FUN!

# Feature Creature

By: Grace O'Malley, Allegheny College Student

I am a relatively new resident of the French Creek watershed. I am considered to be invasive; I am native to southern Europe. It is believed that I came over to the Americas, Lake Erie specifically, in the ballast water of ships, much like the invasive zebra mussel. Most fish in the French Creek watershed do not like me very much because I eat their favorite foods such, as mayflies, stoneflies, and mussels. My go-to meal is eating the eggs of other fish! Many experts are worried that I will outcompete native and endangered fishes, such as the sand darter.

I have some pretty specific adaptations that have allowed me to invade the watershed. Unlike other fish, my pelvic fins are fused and act like a suction cup. This allows me to climb up barriers in streams, such as waterfalls, that other fish can't get past. Males of my species exhibit extreme parental care. When the eggs are laid, the males defend and continually clean them. This leads to a higher reproductive success rate than native fishes.



I am a member of the Gobiidae family.  
Who am I? *See last page of newsletter for answer.*

# Meet A Module

By: Bella Petitta, Allegheny College Student

The Wetlands Module is packed full of fun activities to teach students about wetlands! The module contains 12 educational activities for students to complete. Students can begin learning about wetlands by participating in Wetland Metaphors, which allows students to compare wetlands to everyday objects. Wetland Animals will teach students about wetland animals through the use of clue cards. Students can compete in Temporary Wetland Survivor for shelter, food, and water just like animals that live in wetlands. Web of Life will allow students to make a wetland



food web and show how energy and toxins are passed through the food web. To use this module and learn more about the wetlands, check its availability on the Creek Connections website and then complete the online request form.



Above: 2018-2019 Creek Connections staff at the French Creek Watershed Cleanup Weigh-in Station. Front row: Bri Oneil-Hankle, Wendy Kedzierski, Kala Mahen; Middle Row: Robin Forsha, Bella Petitta, Gretchen Barbera, Madi Sherman, Mimi Zipparo; Back row: Grace O'Malley, Matt Hutchinson. Missing from photo: Laura Branby.

Feature Creature Answer from page 3:  
 Round Goby (*Neogobius melanostomus*)

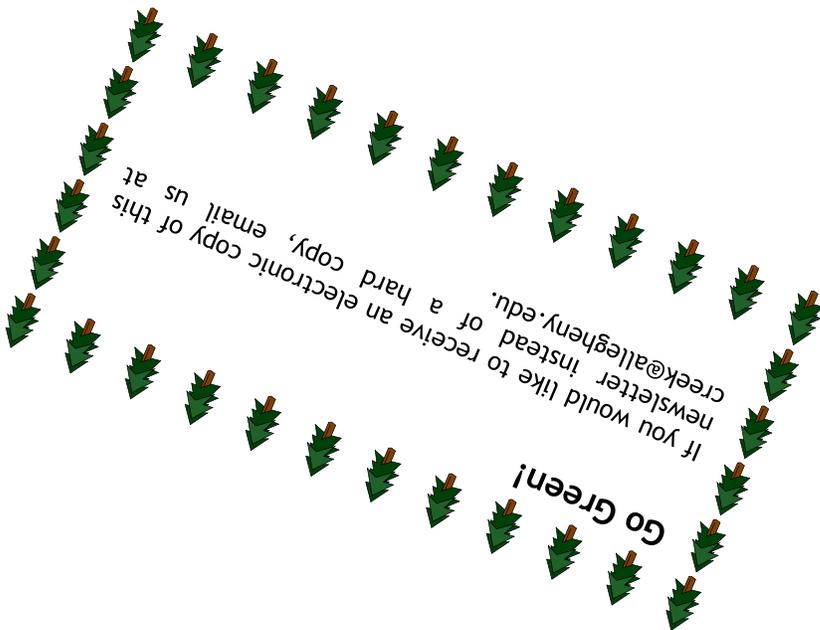
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