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GFWC Environment Community Connection Initiative:
Sparkling seeds, brilliant butterflies, glamorous garden gloves
with Community Gardens

**The GFWC Environment Community Service Program
encourages us to be stewards of the earth by:**

- 1) Preserving resources
- 2) Protecting wildlife & domesticated animals
- 3) Living sustainably
- 4) Beautifying our communities and enjoying nature

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Preserve Resources:

- Join the Arbor Day Foundation & receive 10 free trees to plant or donate
- Strategize ways to reduce energy consumption & create a program to track the success of members
- Coordinate with local leaders to celebrate Earth Day (April)
- Save trees by initiating a "Go Paperless" campaign, encouraging club & community members to opt out of junk mail lists, sign up for e-statements, pay bills online, & online newspaper subscriptions
- Promote water conservation indoors and outdoors
- Hold a beach sweep for International Coastal Cleanup Day (Sept 20)
- Participate in National Public Lands Day (4th Sat. in Sept)
- Organize a household hazardous waste collection
- Schedule outings to remove invasive plants from community parks & other public areas
- Support community gardening by establishing or maintaining a garden in your community

Protect Wildlife & Domesticated Animals:

- Share information with club & community members about the impact of wildlife gardens
- Establish a butterfly garden in the community & offer on-site programs that provide information about the lifecycle of these beautiful insects
- Invite a speaker from the Audubon Society to give a program on birds, become a member, or join the Christmas Bird Count annually
- Provide local animal shelters & sanctuaries needed items for animal rehabilitation and well-being or volunteer your time
- Learn about ocean wildlife in peril, such as sea turtles and manatees
- Educate club & community members about the importance of pollinators
- Celebrate World Penguin Day (April 25)
- Explore National Wildlife Refuges near you
- Offer a workshop on building birdhouses or build them at a club meeting
- Build recycling bins for monofilament fishing line which is hazardous to all areas of marine life (BoatUS)

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Live Sustainably:

- Chart a path toward zero waste in your community
- Commemorate America Recycles Day by organizing a special event (Nov 15th)
- Participate in Nike's Reuse-A-Shoe Program
- Donate gently used shoes to Soles4Souls
- Collect used materials from club/community members & hold a sewing party that produces cloth bags
- Hold a club or community workshop on sustainable gardening
- Create a community garden that promotes self-sufficiency
- Advocate for locally grown food & farmer's markets to serve the community (and get your club name out there)
- Explore renewable energy sources in your community
- Encourage club/community to take one day a week or month to reduce energy consumption by adjusting thermostats, shutting off lights, televisions, computers, optional appliances & other electronics
- Hold a club yard sale to repurpose gently-used items and donate proceeds to an environment charity
- Host an "upcycling" event and get local artists involved

Beautify Communities & Enjoy Nature:

- Ensure clean drinking water along hiking trails or donate safe water to communities through www.Water.org
- Participate in the Adopt-a-Highway or Stream program
- Organize a trash pick-up after a sporting event, community fair or festival
- Work with children to teach them to enjoy and understand nature through simple projects
- Collect or purchase children's books about nature and other environmental issues & donate them to schools, libraries shelters or family centers
- Sponsor a "Yard of the Month" beautification contest and work with various groups (Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, 4H clubs)
- Organize a local garden tour
- Invite a Master Gardener or other local expert to give a program on plants that grow best in your area
- Plan a program on US National Parks & take advantage of free entrance days
- Establish a hiking or biking trail in your community or maintain an existing one
- Implement beautification projects at parks, cemeteries, hospitals, government buildings, schools and shelters
- Establish a weekly or monthly walk or hike to enjoy nature...make it a competition with prizes

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Projects:

- Participate in hands-on volunteer opportunities or projects to improve the trails of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail (MST)
- Sponsor a local trail(s) or park(s) cleanup day or coordinate with another club
- Sponsor a project or program at a local trail to celebrate Earth Day
- Have a speaker from the local park or trail come talk about environmental issues along the trail(s) and find out if there are any needs



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GFWC-NC DIRECTOR OF JUNIOR CLUB'S SPECIAL PROJECTS

NC CARES – Climate Advocacy, Resiliency, Education and Sustainability



**North Carolina
Conservation
Network**

North Carolina Conservation Network (ncconservationnetwork.org) is a network of over 60 conservation, environmental justice and community groups to improve North Carolina's capacity for effective advocacy. This organization will help GFWC-NC join many across the state advocating for protection of our states natural resources, fostering environmental justice and ensuring healthy and sustainable communities.

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TAKE ACTION ON NC ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

- **Tell State Leaders: Protect Our Communities From Forever Chemicals**
 - Sign their petition urging Governor Cooper and NC Dept. of Environmental Quality to protect communities from toxic chemical pollution by taking bold, statewide action against it.
- **Thank Gov. Cooper: Executive Order 246**
 - Help us thank Governor Cooper for his recent executive order that takes action to cut North Carolina's greenhouse pollution and begins the work needed to protect our most threatened communities.
- **Ban Forever Chemicals from Food Packaging**
 - Tell your U.S. Senator to support a bill that would ban toxic forever chemicals (PFAS) in our food packaging materials.
- **Tell Congress: Support clean energy**
 - Tell your member of Congress to push for the passage of the Build Back Better plan and take bold action on climate and clean energy.

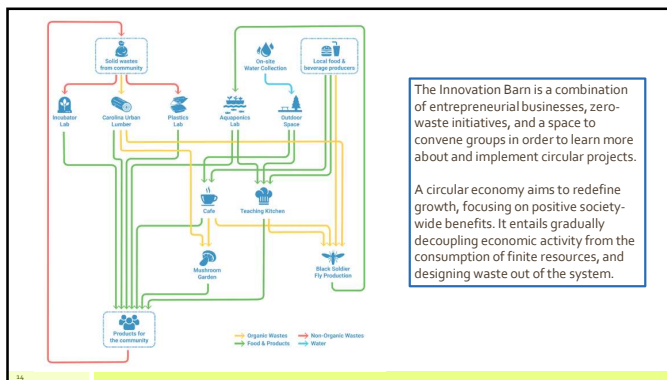


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<https://envisioncharlotte.com/innovation-barn>

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Under this initiative some ways you can help support are:

- Recycling or sustainability would support the efforts of the project. For example, collect takeout containers to bring to GFWC-NC meetings for special recycling since they aren't recycled curbside
- Fundraise for the Innovation Barn's teaching kitchen
- Tour the Innovation Barn in Charlotte

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What is an Invasive Plant?

Invasive (exotic) plants are transported outside their home ranges and cause harm and damage their new location.

- Can carry exotic pests such as insects and pathogens
- Displace or kill natural vegetation

Recognized as one of the top leading threats to biodiversity (the variety of animals, plants, fungi, and microorganisms that make-up Earth)

Biggest contribution is global trade and use of non-native plants for horticultural and landscaping needs



Kudzu: <https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/pueraria-montana-var-lobata/>

NC Forest Service - Invasive Plants: https://www.ncforestservice.gov/forest_health/invasives.htm

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Answers – Part 2 Invasive Pests



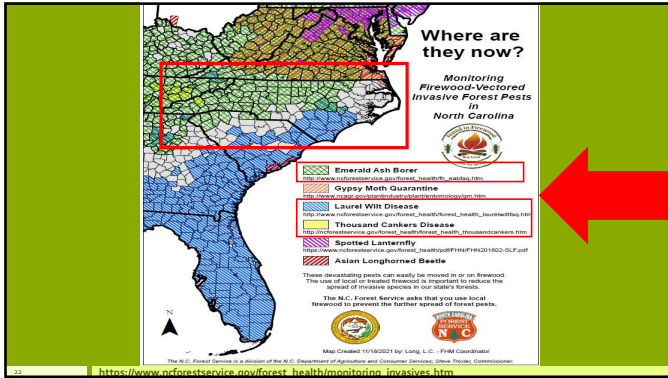
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Invasive Pests

- A pest doesn't have to be non-native to be invasive – though the most important in NC come from other regions of the World.
- Overcome a tree or forest's defenses and cause mortality
- Introduced through infected nursery plants, wood packaging material, and firewood.



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How Can I Help?


- Utilize native plants in your landscapes, gardens, and forests.
 - Resources at the NC Forest Service
https://www.ncforestservice.gov/forest_health/forest_health.htm
- Local Parks and Recreation have trail restorations and eradicating invasive species events (or create your own!)
- Use local firewood
 - Burn wood not from NC as soon as possible
- Never leave unused firewood behind at a burn site.

Rule of thumb is to burn wood within a 50 mile radius of its origin!

NC Forest Service - Monitoring Invasive Forest Pests: https://www.ncforestservice.gov/forest_health/monitoring_invasives.htm
NC Forest Service - Use Local Firewood: https://www.ncforestservice.gov/forest_health/forest_health_firewood.htm

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DEADLINE:
Midnight
February 1st



**NO
Cross
Reporting**

Award Entry Instructions:

- Choose and list up to 5 top projects
- For the Club Creativity Entry, choose 1 of these projects. One club will be chosen to represent GFWC-NC in the GFWC contest
- Narratives: Include any facts you consider vital to the reader's understanding and tells your club's story and answers: Who? What? Where? Why? How?
- Include statistics and info about the community impact of your projects
- List community organizations, businesses other GFWC clubs and Affiliate Organizations involved
- Include the number of members participating in each project but do not exceed total # of club members
- Project narratives should be 300-500 words each on a maximum of (3) pages along with the Award Entry Form

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Some Award Winning Projects

- Bags to Bench Recycling Project-Collected 500 pounds of plastics over a six-month period. The TREX company made a 48" bench from the recycled plastics
- Sea Biscuit Wildlife Shelter-Wild bird rehabilitation organization. Collected towels crates, cleaning supplies, pill bottles and printer paper
- Recycling to Help Small Business-Due to COVID, 2 small businesses experienced supply chain issues. The club stepped up to collect cardboard boxes, plastic bubble wrap, newspapers, and plastic and paper bags
- Main Street Community Garden-Club maintains a plot in the garden where they planted vegetables throughout the year. They also decorated the garden to various holidays and had events the community could attend
- Wine Cork Collection-Collected wine corks and shipped them to Cork Club, an initiative which recycles corks and donates toward ocean and forest conservation
- Necktie Collection-Collected neckties that were shipped to a quilt company, which in turn were made into quilts and donated them to worthy charities to be auctioned to raise money.
- The Tiny House Community, a local non-profit collects styrofoam to be compacted, sold and made into picture frames and other projects
- Get re-usable bags with club information and logo and handed out to teachers

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Award Winning Projects (continued)

- Grazing Goats-Goats were rented, permission was obtained from the city and electric fences were put up. The goats ate the ivy and briars and beautified the property. Members feed and gave the goats water on a daily basis. When the goats left they had a Goat Party.
- Held Earth Day Events-Organized a litter pick up, held a social media photo party about Earth Day in-person and virtually
- Shred and Share Event-Community members disposed and recycled confidential documents
- Pollinator Garden-Created a garden and maintained it by thinning plants and potting them for sale at an HerbFest to raise funds for plants in the garden
- Collecting bra fasteners for Carolina Waterfowl Rescue-The bra hook and eye closers are attached to turtles' injured shells and remain in place until the shell is healed
- Adopted a lemur who lives at the Duke Lemur Center who is part of the breeding program there and participates in research on Alzheimer's Disease to see how aging affects them
- Bottle Cap Collection for a Child Development Center to use for art projects, counting and identifying colors
- Made Braided Dog Pull Toys made from donated t-shirts and donated them to the local animal shelter
- Members participated in the Audubon Society/Cornell Lab of Ornithology Great American Backyard Bird Count where they identified species of birds and submitted them to Cornell for research

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DO YOU HAVE ANY
CREATIVE PROJECT
IDEAS YOU WOULD
LIKE TO SHARE?

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