

Our Shared Forests

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Students in Georgia and in the Choco Andean Corridor of South America caring for their forests and for the birds they share in common.

Our Shared Forests (OSF) is a multi-cultural, environmental education project featuring PTA-sponsored science nights, standards-based instructional units, service learning projects and fundraising opportunities with organic, shade-grown coffee. OSF provides tools and training for parents, teachers and youth leaders. In Georgia schools, these educators will guide 2nd – 6th grade students in activities that address state education standards, encourage critical thinking skills and foster an understanding of the people, plants and animals in their communities. Students will 'Dig In' as they develop bird habitats on their school sites and will 'Fly High' as they investigate migratory birds! Our Shared Forests is connecting local education to global conservation!

SCHOOL RESOURCES - COMPONENTS INCLUDE:

- **Our Shared Forests Lesson Plans** Teachers will introduce students to the forest in their own 'backyard' and its similarities and differences to the forests of Ecuador, with particular focus on 10 birds that migrate between Georgia and Ecuador. Lesson plans are correlated to the Georgia Performance Standards in science and social studies. *(available 2007 -2008 school year)*
- **Our Shared Forests Science Night Kits** Kits include supplies and posters for conducting 25 interactive stations. Local units of Parent Teacher Association can plan and sponsor an Our Shared Forests Science Night at their school. The kit includes a booklet of activity descriptions and a variety of other suggestions for making the event a success.
- **Workshops** Regional trainings for teachers and PTA leaders will be held in Georgia beginning in the Fall of 2007.
- **Website** A website will include OSF Lesson Plans, Science Night activities and more. *(coming 2007- 2008 school year)*
- **Service Learning Opportunities** Opportunities for student-driven service learning projects, as well as PTA- or teacher- sponsored projects can include:
 - ✓ **Safeguarding Bird Habitat in Our Own Backyard** Children in both Georgia and Ecuador can plant bird- friendly plants to provide food and shelter for our feathered friends.
 - ✓ **Purchase Acres of Rainforest** The Choco Andean corridor in South America has been listed as one of the top ten biodiversity hotspots in the world. Funds can support the purchase of acres of rainforest in this important forest area. See www.maqui.org for more information.
 - ✓ **Aide for Georgia Forest and Bird Organizations** Numerous organizations work to preserve Georgia's birds and forests. School fundraising and service learning efforts can support their conservation projects. Research your favorite Georgia conservation organization.

A dynamic partnership between: The State Botanical Garden of Georgia, Georgia Parent Teacher Association (PTA), Maquipucuna Foundation of Ecuador, The University of Georgia and several Environmental Education Centers in Georgia

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OUR SHARED FORESTS FAMILY SCIENCE NIGHTS

Students and their parents will understand:

1. What is meant by the term 'Our Shared Forests'.
2. What the term 'neotropical migrant' means.
3. Similarities and differences between Georgia and Ecuador forests and the importance of these forests to neotropical migrants.
4. Amazing facts about fauna as well as flora of these forests.
5. The importance of biodiversity in forest ecosystems.
6. The dependence of native cultures (in Georgia and Ecuador) on the forest for food, medicines, and a variety of life-support services.
7. Why forests in the Americas are vital to our daily existence.
8. Threats to Georgian and Ecuadorian forests.
9. How they can serve as wise stewards of our shared forests.