



Tyler Pittman, Ph.D., CWB, Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent, University of Florida, Gilchrist County Extension

Jessica A. Cooper, 4-H Agent/CED, University of Florida, Gilchrist County Extension

Objectives

- Create an educational 4-H program that caters to youth with an interest in hunting and the outdoor.
- Develop curriculum for youth that ranged from age 5 to 18 to teach natural resources, management, environmental stewardship and agricultural principles.
- Increase youth's knowledge of natural resources management, environmental stewardship and agriculture.
- Develop and/or improve life skills through outdoor recreation.

Educational Methods

- We developed a project notebook that would guide youth through the project providing all necessary resources to complete the project.
- We assembled project kits that included a project notebook, seed, rain gauge and soils test used in the project.
- We developed a comprehensive record book to challenge youth while developing a variety of life skills through completion of the record book.
- The project was scored competitively by age division and across the entire project with prize awarded to age division and an overall winner.
- Quality prizes were a major incentive for youth to participate including a lifetime hunting license.

Results and Impacts

- Since 2021, 100 youth have participated in the project with 39 participating in 2023.
- Project evaluations (n=29) indicate that 90% of youth self-reported an increase in:
 - knowledge of natural resources.
 - became better environmental stewards.
 - increase their understanding of the importance of wildlife.
 - learned techniques for improving and creating wildlife habitat.
- Additionally, 79% of youth indicated improving their plant and wildlife identification skills as a result of the project.
- Youth reported improving or developing 26 different life skills with the most reported being record keeping, planning, organizing, decision making, problem solving and goal setting.

