

# TREASURE FOREST TAG FUNDS PLANT SEEDS OF EDUCATION FOR TOMORROW

By Boyd Christenberry,  
Alabama TREASURE Forest Association

I'd Rather Be in the Woods." Wouldn't you? This is a phrase all can relate to and that likely crosses minds on a daily basis. Whether it be roaming pastures, tilling the earth, clearing brush, or just sitting and enjoying the stillness, there is something special about spending time exploring God's creation. If everyone were able to experience this tranquility, the world would be a better place. One of our goals is to help people achieve this right here in their own backyard, and we can do this by spreading the word to everyone in the state!

As many know, the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association (ATFA) boasts its own specialized license plate. What you may not be aware of are the unseen benefits that this tag brings to the citizens of our state. Aside from advertising our organization, it also funds field trips for Alabama's youth so they can have a day in the great outdoors. The program is called "Forest in the Classroom, Classroom in the Forest" (CIF) and many of you have probably had the pleasure of attending one. CIF is a two-day program designed to educate fifth-grade students from Alabama about the value of our forests. On the first day, lessons are delivered in a classroom setting; while on the second day, the children are bussed to a local landowner's property to get a more hands-on experience. This is possible through parents, teachers, and volunteers from all walks of life, working together.

Billy Joe Johnson and his wife, Jan, have hosted six Classroom in the Forest events on their property in Piedmont, with more than 1,000 fifth-graders. Most recently they hosted nearly 140 students from Center Middle School and Spring Garden High School. During the day, the students rotated between five stations that included education on water oxygen levels, "skins and skulls," tree thinning, and more. "We most



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Tag money goes toward educational programs such as "Classroom in the Forest" and other events sponsored and hosted by the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association throughout the year. It all goes to educate kids, the general public, and forest landowners about the importance of forestry and how to better manage their land.

enjoy seeing the excitement and the wonder in the kids' eyes as they visit the different stations and learn about private land ownership, conservation, water quality, gun safety, the environment, and wildlife," Billy Joe Johnson said. "In our opinion, this activity is probably the most important part of ATFA since it touches the lives of our young people and makes them hands-on aware of the goals the landowners are trying to accomplish."

If you haven't had the opportunity to participate in a Classroom in the Forest, look at the "Upcoming Events" page at [www.TreasureForest.org](http://www.TreasureForest.org) for details on the next event. Also, look for our ad in the upcoming edition of Alabama Hunting and Fishing Digest. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt once said, "We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future." So, buy your plate today and help us to strengthen the youth of Alabama for their future! Remember . . . we'll pay you back the \$50 for the first year, too! For more details, go to [TreasureForest.org](http://TreasureForest.org). 🌲