

2010 Conservation Educator of the Year

Diane DeYonker has been involved in Environmental Education for over 35 years, starting as a camp counselor and outdoor education staff member for the Camp Fire Organization in Michigan, the Westfield, Mass., Public Schools, the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge. She first came to Toledo in 1977 to work as an Outdoor Educator for Toledo Public Schools at Camp Storer for 2 years. She became a Natural Resource Instructor in the Toledo Public Schools high school career tech program, teaching for 28 years. She taught high school juniors and seniors preparing for careers in Wildlife Management, Nature Interpretation, Forestry, Outdoor Recreation, Park Management and Soil and Water Conservation.



While with TPS, she and her students put in rain gardens around Toledo, participated in the Envirothon, monitored Hill Ditch water quality with the Student Watershed Watch, and assisted in distributing trees for the Free Trees for Student's project run by the Lucas County SWCD. Other projects she and her students have been involved in include doing pond studies for local pond owners, leading nature hikes for elementary students, monitoring bluebird boxes, participating in raptor censuses, and running a wildlife rehabilitation center.

During the past 10 summers, she and her husband have worked for the Toledo Zoo leading week-long summer canoe trips for children. Having retired from TPS this year, she can now spend more time in the vegetable garden, bird watching, canoeing, camping, cross-country skiing, monitoring rare and endangered plants for the Metroparks, and working on the house she and her husband built by hand.