



**Youth Environmental Action Summit
February 28, 2026**

**Presented by Jane Goodall's Roots & Shoots, the University
of Tampa, and the Tampa Bay Roots & Shoots Alliance**



**Jane Goodall's
Roots & Shoots
USA**



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Youth Environmental Action Summit Agenda

8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m. Check-In

Location: Plant Hall Lobby

Students and guardians should check-in with Roots & Shoots staff at the check-in table located to the right of the East Entrance of Plant Hall Lobby. Please be prepared to choose which Inspiration Stations you will attend to secure your spot.

9:00 a.m. – 9:20 a.m. Welcoming Remarks & Keynote Speaker

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Welcome by Bonnie Eaton, Tampa Bay Basecamp Coordinator, Roots & Shoots, Jane Goodall Institute USA, followed by Keynote by Julie C. Henry and Tasman Henry, authors of “Wisdom from the Wild for Youth: Leadership Tales with Tails.” Julie and Tasman will sign their book afterwards!

9:30 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. Inspiration Station Session #1

Location: Fletcher Lounge, Grand Salon, Music Room

What’s happening with our local environment and how can you make a difference? Hear from local environmental experts who will take you on a journey of discovery through our local ecosystems. Learn what it takes to have living shorelines, sustainable cities, and clean water, including examples of projects you can undertake to make a positive impact. Select one Inspiration Station for each session (see choices starting on page 4).

10:15 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. Inspiration Stations Session #2

Location: Fletcher Lounge, Grand Salon, Music Room

Select one Inspiration Station for each session (see choices starting on page 4).

11:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m. Tribute to Dr. Jane Goodall

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Join us to reflect on and celebrate the life and work of Dr. Goodall with a brief video tribute.

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Environmental Expo Hall Open

Location: Plant Hall Lobby and East Veranda

Visit with local environmental organizations to learn about opportunities to get involved and make a difference. Meet animals up close, make some art, or just chill out! Feeling hungry? There are lunch options in the Vaughan Center & Morsani Hall (see maps on pages 10-11).

2:00 – 3:45 p.m. Screening of Disney and Pixar’s “Hoppers”

Location: Fletcher Lounge

Join animal lover Mabel, who seizes an opportunity to use a new technology to ‘hop’ her consciousness into a life-like robotic beaver and communicate directly with animals. The film will be released on March 6.

Before you leave, be sure to sign up for [Environmental Action Days](#) next weekend, March 7-8. There are several opportunities across the Tampa Bay area to protect and improve our natural environment!

Inspiration Stations Descriptions

Select two Inspirations Stations from the list below. Each Inspiration Station is 30 minutes long. Please remain at your chosen Station for the length of the presentation and rotate when time is up! To guarantee your spot, please choose your sessions at the check-in table.

The following Inspiration Stations are only available during Session #1 (9:30 - 10:00 a.m.):

Florida Native Plant Inspiration Station (Location: Music Room-B)

Nicole Marino with Suncoast Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society

Step into the world of Florida's native plants! Using a dissecting microscope connected to a large screen, students will watch live magnified views of leaves, seeds, flowers, and plant adaptations that help native species thrive. Together we'll explore how these plants support wildlife, protect water, and shape Florida's ecosystems—all through interactive discussion and close-up observation.

Explore Wild Careers Working in the Animal World (Location: Music Room-A)

CS Wurzberger with Awesome Animal Academy

This engaging, hands-on session takes young people on an eye-opening adventure into the animal world, far beyond the familiar roles of a veterinarian or a zookeeper. Through interactive activities, fun-filled field guides, and lively discussions, learners will discover how real people have transformed their love for wildlife into purpose-driven professions. Participants will gain insights into a variety of conservation, research, animal care, and environmental careers while connecting their own interests and strengths to exciting real-world opportunities.

Walk Away with a Wild Win!

Participants will leave inspired with a personalized Wild Work Dream List that highlights careers that align with their love for animals.

All About Watersheds (Location: Grand Salon-A)

Jaya Brizendine with Keep Pinellas Beautiful

What kinds of pollution do you find in watersheds? And for that matter, what even is a watershed? Well, in this activity using a watershed model (and some delicious representations of pollution) not only will you learn all about watersheds, you'll also learn how pollution in coastal zone watersheds eventually end up in the ocean. Most importantly, you'll learn what YOU can do to help limit pollution in YOUR watershed!

What To Do When You Find a Wild Animal (Location: Music Room-C)

Caroline Merriman with Owl's Nest Sanctuary

Have you ever found a cute baby squirrel or bird and wondered, "Can I keep it?" In this exciting session, Owl's Nest Sanctuary for Wildlife shows students what REALLY happens when young animals need help. Through fun stories, species slides, and quick decision tips, kids learn why wild animals need special diets, can carry dangerous diseases, and are protected by law. We explore common animals they might find—squirrels, raccoons, opossums, fledglings, and bats—and teach when to help, when to leave them alone, and how to reunite babies with their moms. Fast, interactive, and full of "aha!" moments!

Inspiration Stations Descriptions (Continued)

The following Inspiration Stations are only available during Session #2 (10:15 - 10:45 a.m.):

Guardians of the Seagrass Realm: A D&D Eco-Adventure (Location: Music Room-C)

Shane White with the University of Florida-Plant City

Dive into an underwater mini-adventure where you become a heroic sea creature defending your seagrass home! In this fast-paced, family-friendly Dungeons & Dragons encounter, players team up as a party of sea creatures to stop a runaway rusty boat propeller from scarring the fragile seagrass meadow. Along the way, you'll discover why seagrass is one of Florida's most important underwater habitats, how boat scars form, and what we can do to protect these vibrant ecosystems. Join us, roll some dice, and help restore balance to the Seagrass Realm - because every choice you make helps keep our waters healthy!

Florida Native Plants Inspiration Station (Location: Music Room-B)

Led by local student leaders and Roots & Shoots members from Indi-ED

Get ready for a hands-on adventure that shows how YOU can help protect the health of our watershed! Join us as we guide you through a fun, interactive exploration of Florida Native Plants and the powerful role they play in keeping our environment strong. At this Inspiration Station, you'll meet student experts who will teach you what they've learned and inspire you to take action. You will also: * Discover plants that are superheroes for our local ecosystems with a fun hands-on game. *Get your hands dirty while making your very own seed ball to take home. This is a quick way to get started protecting and restoring the watershed right in your own backyard. *Walk away with a clear understanding of how native plants clean water, prevent erosion, and support wildlife. Whether you're a curious 4th grader, a budding middle-school scientist, or a parent who loves seeing kids light up with meaningful learning experiences, this station is packed with excitement, creativity, and real-world impact. Come explore, create, and be inspired to make a difference—one native plant at a time!

Bats Unveiled: The Mysteries of our Nocturnal Neighbors (Location: Music Room-A)

Hannah Rollins with Lube Bat Conservancy

Join Lube Bat Conservancy as we discuss the fascinating world of bats. Discover the incredible diversity of bat species, their unique adaptations for life in the dark, and the crucial role they play in balancing the delicate nature of our ecosystems. We'll find out what different species of bats eat, adaptations they have, and more! Students will walk away with a better understanding and appreciation of one of the world's most misunderstood animals

Litter Prevention & Microplastics! (Location: Grand Salon A)

Devon Francke with Keep Pinellas Beautiful

Join Keep Pinellas Beautiful as we learn all about the difference between trash and litter and how littering impacts the environment. We'll talk about how single-use plastic has become the most littered material on the planet and how this is extra dangerous as it breaks down into smaller pieces called microplastics. You'll then get the opportunity to participate in a fun activity where you'll get to pretend to be a seabird and find out just how easy it is for our seabird friends to find healthy, scrumptious meals. Most importantly, you'll learn what you can do to make a difference to prevent litter in the first place!

Inspiration Stations Descriptions (continued)

All other workshops below will be repeated during Workshops Sessions #1 & #2

Crabitats! (Location: Fletcher Lounge-B)

Lexie Kemp and Alexandria Bishop with Suncoast Youth Conservation Center

The Suncoast Youth Conservation Center (SYCC) has developed a mobile 'Crabitat' – a 3D model of a fiddler crab habitat in the wild! Join SYCC to see the Crabitat and participate in a fiddler crab lesson... and meet live fiddler crabs!. See a short, interactive presentation on why fiddler crabs are so important to salt marsh and mangrove habitats, and go on a 'scavenger hunt' to find *faux* fiddler crabs around the classroom to sample their population.

The Rice's Whale Youth Artivism Station (Location: Fletcher Lounge-C)

Madison Wurthner with Rice's Whale Coalition

Be engaged and empowered through the intersection of art and environmental activism to protect the critically endangered Rice's whale – one of the rarest marine mammals on Earth, endemic to the Gulf of Mexico. Through education and creating postcards geared towards saving the Rice Whales, you will become informed environmental stewards and active voices for marine conservation.

From Micro Good Guys to Macro Wiggles (Location: Grand Salon-C)

Betsy Barbour with 15th Street Farm

Come explore the soil world with us - and meet some amazing critters who live there. Did you know that in a handful of soil there are more teeny tiny Microorganisms (mostly good guys!) than all the people in the whole world? We'll dig in together and have some fun learning about how healthy soil makes healthy plants!

Squirm and Learn: Explore the Magic of Worm Farming (Location: Grand Salon-B)

Ana Maria Quintero with Laica Worms & Vermicast LLC

Did you know that tiny red wiggler worms are some of nature's best recyclers? You'll meet these amazing creatures up close and learn how they turn everyday food scraps into rich, healthy soil! See the worms in action inside their bin, explore what they love to eat (and what they don't), and touch the finished "black gold" soil they help create. You'll discover how worm composting, or vermicomposting, helps reduce waste, grow stronger plants, and protect our planet—all powered by worms! Come get inspired to start your own mini worm farm and become part of the soil-saving movement.

Inspiration Stations Descriptions (continued)

Manatee Rescue! (Location: Fletcher Lounge-A)

Amy Dachino with ZooTampa at Lowry Park

ZooTampa is a leader in the rescue, rehabilitation, and release of Florida manatees. Join our educators to find out what happens when a manatee needs our help. Participate in a case study to learn how professionals rescue sick or injured manatees, and then diagnose, treat, and release them back to their natural habitats!

All About Oysters (Location: Fletcher Lounge-D)

Alexia Stewart with Tampa Bay Watch

Oysters play a vital role in transforming the health of our estuaries, from filtering water to promoting biodiversity. Join Tampa Bay Watch to discover the incredible benefits of oyster populations in the bay and how we are using oyster reef balls to restore their numbers. Learn how these structures support water quality and marine life, and participate in a hands-on activity exploring the fascinating creatures that call oyster reef balls home!

Bee the Change (Location: Fletcher Lounge-E)

Erin Catlin & Roberto Hernandez with the City of Tampa Green Team

Calling all young explorers! At this station you'll dig into what makes Florida's ecosystems special. Through games, trivia, and a hands-on activity, you'll uncover the secrets of native plants and trees, find out which species are invaders, and see how you can help protect the environment every day. Together we'll discover how you can "Be the Change" our planet needs!

Mangrove Planting Inspiration Station (Location: West Veranda)

Veonica Morejon with Breach the Surface

Become an ocean hero and help protect Florida's coast! At this Inspiration Station, you'll get to pot your very own mangrove seedling and help it begin its journey to becoming a coastal protector. You'll learn why mangroves are nature's superheroes — they protect our shorelines, create homes for marine life, and keep our oceans healthy. These mangroves will later be planted during Environmental Action Day on March 8, 2026 (stay tuned at breachthesurface.org for location details) — so what you do at the station will make a real impact for the future! Come get your hands a little dirty, learn something new, and help restore Tampa Bay's coastline — one mangrove at a time!

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Environmental Expo

Plant Hall Lobby

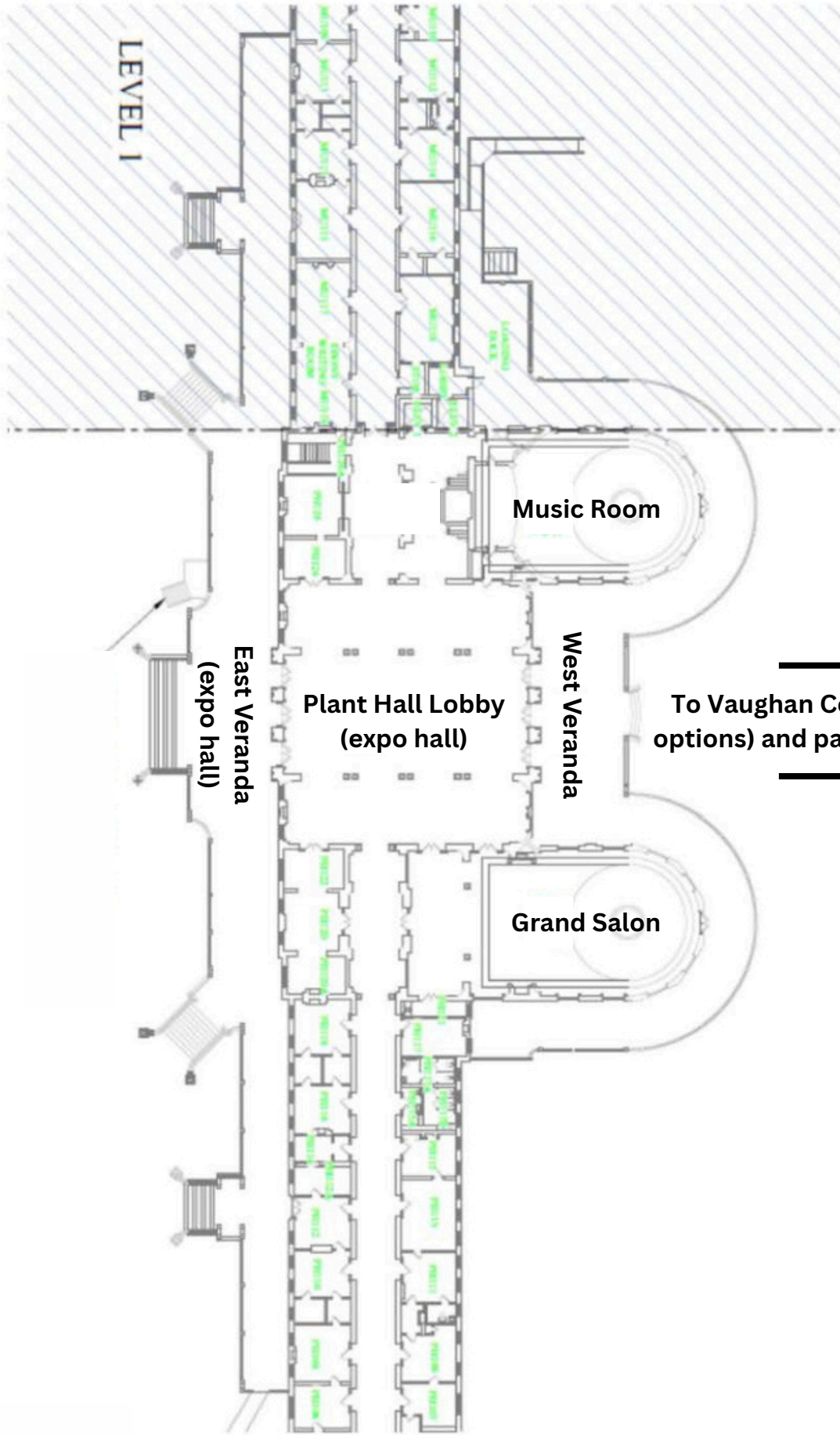
- St. Petersburg College
- Ecosphere Restoration Institute
- University of Tampa Roots & Shoots
- Roots & Shoots
- Tampa Bay Watch
- The Art of Science, LLC
- Ocean Rescue Alliance
- Ecosphere Restoration Institute
- 15th Street Farm
- City of Tampa Green Team
- Coastal Crusaders
- Tampa Bay Butterfly Foundation
- Ocean Conservancy
- University of Tampa
- Clearwater Marine Aquarium
- Florida Botanical Gardens
- Keep Pinellas Beautiful
- Birds in Helping Hands

East Veranda

- Owl's Nest Sanctuary for Wildlife
- Water Warrior Alliance
- Tampa Bay Waterkeeper
- Tampa Audubon
- Suncoast Native Plant Society
- Lubee Bat Conservancy
- Awesome Animal Academy
- ZooTampa
- Hillsborough County Waste Reduction & Recycling Program
- Philanthrolab Science Shop
- Tampa Bay Aquatic Preserves
- FL Dept of Environmental Protection R.O.A.R program
- UF/IFAS Hillsborough County
- Youth Environmental Alliance
- Nature's Classroom EE
- The Fishes Wishes
- Cap Cycle Creations
- Rosebud Continuum Sustainability Education and Research Center
- Girl Scouts of West Central Florida
- Girl Scouts Gold Award Project: The S.H.E.A. Project
- Girl Scouts Gold Award Project: Erosion Education

Links to all of the organizations presenting or exhibiting in the expo can be found on the next page. Please visit them to learn more about their programs and volunteer opportunities!





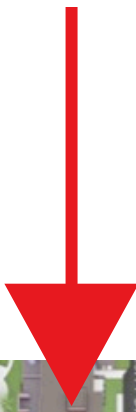
To Vaughan Center (lunch options) and parking garages

5 FEET

Continue down hallway to reach Fletcher Lounge

Morsani Hall Lunch Options:

- Pandinis
- Pressed
- Salsa Rico



**Thomas
Parking
Garage**

**Vaughan Center
Lunch Options:**

- Ultimate Dining
- Einstein's Bagels

Plant Hall