

Odum Award

The Eugene P. Odum Award for Excellence in Ecology Education recognizes an ecologist for outstanding teaching, research, and mentoring activities, and for demonstrated ability in relating basic ecological principles to human affairs.

The winner of the 2011 Odum Award is Dr. John Moore, Professor of Forest, Rangeland, and Watershed Stewardship, and Director of the Natural Resource Ecology Laboratory at Colorado State University.



Since the 1990s, Dr. Moore has been a national leader in developing ecology education programs with several hallmarks: they involve innovative active learning exercises, located in easily accessible habitats such as backyards or schoolyards, local streams, agricultural ecosystems, as well in national parks. They often focus on helping K–12 teachers provide authentic science experiences to their students, with particular emphasis on outreach to minority and low-income populations.

He has used his highly regarded research in soil food webs to generate engaging labs for students and teachers of all educational levels, by focusing on applied research questions of great impact to human society. Thousands of students and teachers in Colorado have benefited from the many ecology, math, and science education pipeline development educational programs that Dr. Moore has started and led over the last 16 years. His projects also often involve graduate students, so that he is also training the next generation of ecological researchers and educators on effective ways to bring ecological science to K–12 teachers and students.

As his many emphatic supporters indicate, John Moore has been a national leading force in “rethinking ecology education in an area of global human impact, working effectively across cultural and disciplinary boundaries, and mentoring young ecologists and others in both ecology and education.” His educational and research work has taken him from Colorado, to Alaska, to Washington, D.C., to Tanzania and back to the United States. Along the way, he has made a difference for many public school students and teachers, college students, and ecology researchers, by developing educationally focused community partnerships, new instructional models, and pathways for integrating hard science into field-based educational experiences for diverse populations. He continues to teach all how to experience ecology in a variety of ways that are hands-on, authentic, and memorable. The sites might be a prairie, a backyard, a local stream, a schoolyard plot, a national park, or an agricultural ecosystem. Dr. Moore’s integration of research and education to focus on soil food web dynamics, impact of climate change on ecosystem processes, and how humans interact with ecosystem function through impact on invasive species distribution, facilitates engaging audiences of varied interests, with the purpose of becoming better environmental stewards.