

Miriam Wood  
Pinellas  
1<sup>st</sup> Place Senior

## **Pet Peeves**

There once was a gopher named Lloyd  
Who was prone to getting annoyed  
The chewing of nails  
And the grooming of scales  
Made him hope for a second asteroid

His wife was a 'dillo named Jen  
And she wouldn't get out of her den  
All day she would sleep  
And though it would beep  
She'd snooze her alarm once again.

He was vexed as he suffered through traffic  
Delayed by a daft demographic  
The sloths didn't care  
For the others' despair  
Lloyd's response was admittedly graphic

He worked with Bob, the cicada  
Whose job was inputting data  
The clicking and clacking  
Made Lloyd dream of whacking  
His friend just like Periplaneta

He hoped to experience healing  
And break through emotional ceilings  
His therapist tried  
But gophers have pride  
So he couldn't help burying his feelings

Benjamin Wolking  
Alachua  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place Senior

### Swamp Sonnet

Standing water on saturated soil  
Nature's kidneys recharge aquifer's boil  
Plants and animals adapt, often toil  
Not a marsh nor a bog, swamps are well-oiled

Freshwater swamps, untrue serenity  
Water floods the land with intensity  
Astonishing habitat density  
Mysterious land is no enemy

Loblolly bay and titi are not foiled  
Pond cypress and swamp tupelo embroiled  
In a struggle for life that is unspoiled  
Water moccasins are often uncoiled

Freshwater swamps add to economy  
Ecotourism, not gastronomy!

Ashton Caudill  
Highlands  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place Senior

Foggy mornin', sun breaks across  
Longleaf pines and the  
Osceola turkeys fly down from their  
Roost,  
Indigo snake slithers  
Down the beaten cattle trail,  
Ancient lighter stumps hide in the wiregrass  
Forever ago they stood tall,  
Larks merrily sing their song,  
As the sun tilts toward the west  
Tortoise, the gopher old as dirt  
Wanders back to his hole,  
Opossums awake and foxes stir,  
Orange paints the evening sky  
Down goes the sun,  
Skeeters thicken the air

Lily Joyce Byrnes  
Clay  
Honorable Mention Senior

A little seed for me to sew  
A little earth to let it grow  
A little hole  
A little pat  
A little wish and that is that  
A little sun  
A little shower  
And in a while a little flower  
A coreopsis for us to see  
A beautiful bloom for you and me

Brayden Clarke  
Escambia  
Honorable Mention Senior

## **Day By Day**

Key deer, once abundant  
Still hunted  
Close to disappearing forever.

American alligator  
Ferocious and fierce  
Threatened by chemicals.

Our stout manatee  
Slow in the water  
Propellers are faster.

Beautiful sea turtles  
Jellyfish devourers  
Or is it plastic?

Gopher tortoise  
Tawny and lumbering  
Losing their homes.

Lone red wolf  
Smaller than most  
Killed for our safety.

Florida's endangered  
Disappearing day by day  
They need OUR help.