

Miriam Wood
Pinellas
1st 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
2nd 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
3rd 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.