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<http://www.southernenvironment.org/projects/reed-environmental-writing-award>

Alabama's Biodiversity and Tennessee's Environmental Issues Are the Focus of 2014 Reed Writing Award Winners

Charlottesville, VA – SELC is pleased to announce the winners of this year's Reed Environmental Writing Award, given each year to two works that exemplify the best environmental writing in the South. One award went to R. Scot Duncan for his book *Southern Wonder: Alabama's Surprising Biodiversity*. The other award went to *The Tennessean's* Duane W. Gang, for his articles on coal ash and fracking in Tennessee. The authors will each receive a \$1,000 prize.

R. Scot Duncan, a professor of biology at Birmingham-Southern College, taps into his specialties of ecology and conservation biology to share Alabama's incredible biodiversity—and how crucial it is to our lives. Contest judge Rick Montague calls *Southern Wonder* “an amazing and eye-opening book, comprehensive enough to be a field guide as well as a doorway to the natural world.” Duncan takes the reader on a journey through many of the ecosystems found in the state with the highest number of species in the East, and he explains why it is important to protect them.

Duane W. Gang, whose series of articles in *The Tennessean* received this year's journalism award, ties together desperately needed regulatory changes in Tennessee and the personal impacts of environmental dangers in his coverage of coal ash and fracking. Of Gang, contest judge David Haskell (2013 Reed Award) writes, “Gang's work was characterized by depth, by attention to nuance, and by skillful writing aimed at the general public rather than at specialists, all hallmarks of excellence in environmental journalism.” Gang's articles raise awareness by exploring the impacts of regulation, or lack thereof, and he makes them more accessible to the reader who might personally deal with the consequences.

For 20 years, SELC's Philip D. Reed Environmental Writing Award has recognized the authors and journalists who use the power of the pen to capture the South's natural wonders and to raise our awareness of the forces that would destroy them. Educating and engaging the public is central to the award's mission and to SELC's goal of safeguarding the South's environment. The award is named for SELC founding trustee Phil Reed, a talented attorney and committed environmental advocate who deeply believed in the power of writing to change hearts and minds.

SELC will present the awards at its annual Festival of the Book event on Saturday, March 22, in Charlottesville, VA. Keynote speaker Brys Stephens, an author and food writer based in Charleston, SC, will talk about his cookbook, *The New Southern Table*, highlighting the important

connection between our natural environment and southern cuisine.

SELC is grateful to this year's judges, who generously volunteer their time and talent:

Bruz Clark—President and treasurer of the Chattanooga-based Lyndhurst Foundation, Director of its Environmental Grantmaking Program; member of the Society for Conservation Biology, Consultative Group on Biological Diversity, Land Trust Alliance, Southeastern Council of Foundations, and Timber Frame Guild.

Jim Detjen— Director, Knight Center for Environmental Journalism, Michigan State University; founding president of Society of Environmental Journalists; former award-winning reporter for *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Nikki Giovanni—Grammy-nominated poet, activist and author of more than two dozen books including essay collections, illustrated children's books, and poetry, most recently *Bicycles: Love Poems*; University Distinguished Professor at Virginia Tech.

David Haskell—Author of *The Forest Unseen*, 2013 winner of the Reed Award; biology professor at the University of the South.

Janet Lembke— Author of *Chickens: Their Natural and Unnatural Histories*, and almost 20 other nature books; poems and essays have appeared in *Audubon*, *Southern Review*, and *The New York Times Book Review*.

Jay Leutze—Author of *Stand Up That Mountain*, 2013 winner of the Reed Award; trustee for Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy; leading voice for state and federal conservation funding for investment in public lands.

Bill McKibben—Author of *Deep Economy*, *The End of Nature* and several other books, most recently *Eaarth: Making a Life on a Tough New Planet*; contributor to *The New Yorker*, *Orion*, *The Atlantic Monthly* and other publications; co-founder "350.org," an international climate campaign; scholar-in-residence at Middlebury College.

Deaderick Montague—Civic leader, teacher and writer; guiding inspiration behind creation of the Reed Environmental Writing Award; Vice President of SELC Board of Trustees.

Janisse Ray— Poet, activist, teacher and award-winning author of *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood* and four other books of literary non-fiction, including the 2012 *The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food* and a book of poems, *A House of Branches*; founding board member of Altamaha Riverkeeper; Reed Award winner in 2000.

Charles Seabrook—Former veteran environmental reporter for the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*; author of *Cumberland Island* and *The World of the Salt Marsh*, forthcoming from the University of Georgia Press in April 2010; Reed Award winner in 1998.

Paul Sloan—Former Deputy Commissioner Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation; founder Partners in Conservation; co-founder Little Planet Publishing; founding board member Cumberland Region Tomorrow.

Donovan Webster—Author of several books, including most recently *War Stories: The Voyage*

that Changed the Course of the World; former senior editor of *Outside* magazine; a contributor to *New York Times Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Vanity Fair*, *National Geographic* and *Smithsonian*.

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