



November 2011

Hello Everyone,

We had our first frost last night here on Cedar Creek and a few of Lori's flowers are not looking too happy today. The yard has really come alive with hungry birds jockeying for a position at the feeders. This morning, as I was mentally preparing myself to get out in the cold and cut more firewood, I looked out the window of the study and one of our dogwood trees had four northern flickers and two pileated woodpeckers gorging themselves on the fruits. Now that the weather has cooled down, I am offering peanut butter to the birds again and the "butter board" has been visited quite frequently by hairy woodpeckers, chickadees, and titmice.

We are nearing the end of another year and we will soon be electing SCAN officers for 2012. Jan Ciegler has pulled together the nominating committee and they have talked with several of you about volunteering for next year. If you are interested in serving and have not been asked, or if you want to recommend a good candidate, please contact Jan and let her know. SCAN does not run all by itself. It takes a handful of dedicated people to keep things running, and we need folks that can donate a few hours each year to this effort.

We will also be having our planning meeting in early December to decide on our 2012 trip schedule. The meeting is tentatively scheduled for December 3rd and will be held in one of the conference rooms at my office. I'll send out an email notice with details and directions prior to the meeting. If you would like to suggest a place to visit next year, but cannot attend the planning meeting, please share your ideas with one of our Regional Directors prior to the meeting.

SCAN is making plans to take another out of country trip next year. Several members have shown an interest in visiting La MICA Biological Station, in Panama. Dr. Julie Ray, who gave us a great presentation on the Center at our annual meeting in January, has provided me with information about the accommodations and costs associated with the trip. The packet of information is too large to print and mail out to everyone, but I will follow up with an email to everyone after this newsletter goes out and will place the file on our Yahoo Groups site (go to <http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/SCNaturalists/?prop=eupdate> and click on the "Join This Group" button). You can also visit the La MICA website at <http://www.lamica.org/>. If you do not get the newsletter via email and think you might be interested in going along, please let me know and I will get the information to you. The cost per person for the trip depends on the number of folks that are going, so if you think you might be interested in making the trip, please let me know so that I can accurately generate a cost. I am in the preliminary stages of organizing the trip so a date and length of stay has not been arranged yet.

Our October fieldtrip took us to Lee State Natural Area in Lee County. This park is truly one of the jewels in South Carolina. Only about an hour drive from Columbia, it is situated on the banks of the Lynches River and has a combination of floodplain forest and sandhills habitats. We started our visit with a hike on the boardwalk out into the swamp located behind the visitor center. The boardwalk allows for a close-up look at the vegetation and animal life that occurs in an inundated/saturated forested wetland system. The canopy is now open, but prior to Hurricane Hugo, it had a closed canopy. We were fortunate to see a spotted turtle, which is a state listed species of concern. After the boardwalk, we hiked around the small ponds near the visitor center. Laura Kirk (Park Naturalist and new SCAN member) explained that one was originally a mill pond while the others were once used to raise fish. We saw a banded water snake sunning itself on the bank and spotted a rough green snake in the shrubs close by. Claudia found what looked like a young green frog at an artesian well that feeds one of the ponds, Ben found a slimy salamander, and Marsha caught a squirrel treefrog in the ladies restroom.

After a quick lunch, we drove down the loop road that passes through inundated forested wetlands and bottomland hardwoods and leads to the Lynches River. We made a couple of stops to explore the river banks and enjoyed some refreshing groundwater from one of the many artesian wells at the park. Jerry Bright was our leader for the day, so it should be no surprise that barbeque was on the menu for dinner. Thanks for a great trip Jerry! Members have posted pictures from this and other trips on SCAN's Facebook page. If you haven't checked it out yet, enter SCAN in Facebook's search window to the page.

This month our fieldtrip will occur earlier than normal due to the Thanksgiving Holiday. On November 19th we will be visiting Lynches River County Park in Florence County.

I hope to see you all soon!

Gordon

Lynches River County Park

Florence County, November 19, 2011

Meet in the Environmental Discovery Center at 10:00 AM

Lynches River County Park, in Florence County, boasts three distinct habitat types all within a small area: sandhills, swamp and river. The swamp/river edge area is very low right now so we should be able to walk through there easily, and there are plenty of longleaf pines that might be of interest in the sandhills portion. (I'm thinking maybe red-cockaded woodpeckers?)

Directions

Directions: From Florence: Take US 52 south for 11.1 miles, take the first right past the Lynches River Bridge onto Old Number 4. Go 2 miles and turn right onto County Park Road.

From a southerly direction, go to Kingtree and take hwy. 52 North through Lake City (cross Hwy. 378) and Coward, (5.5 miles from the intersection of Hwy. 541 and Hwy. 52) and turn left onto Old Number 4 Just before the Lynches River Bridge. Go 2 miles and turn right onto County Park Road.

There are a lot of back roads in this area that seldom have adequate signage, so sticking to the main roads is recommended.

Afterwards

Jerry recommended eating at Schoolhouse BBQ in Scranton. I've eaten there too, it's really good and they serve a lot of locally grown food. This schoolhouse was built in 1930's by the WPA Work Program. It served the black community as their school for 30 years. After that, it was purchased by Myers Furniture Company and used as a warehouse. Restoration began in 1982. Schoolhouse BBQ opened on May 26, 1994. Once again these rooms are filled with laughter, talking and even learning. Feel free to walk around and 'Remember when'.