



July 2017

Hello SCAN.

In June, we made our first visit to one of the newest additions to state's system of preserved lands. We spent the day exploring a few areas at Wateree River Heritage Preserve/Wildlife Management Area. Once again, we had a good turnout of members and guests. Those in attendance included Pat and Jerry Bright, James Wilson, Alice and Jeff Clark, Leslie Coolidge, Alison Smith, Paul Kalbach, Kim McManus, John Cely, Greg Ross, Dave Schuetrum, Edward Fort, Jan Ciegler, Cathy Chandler, Marty and Dave Kastner, Renee Madden, Bill Lewis, and Gordon Murphy.



We all congregated at the first kiosk on Goodwill Road. After signing in and a brief discussion about the day's plans, we caravanned to our first stop of the day. We parked along Mileormore Road and walked down a trail that took us through a mixed forest of pines and hardwoods, native wildflowers and shrubs, as well as a few invasive species, such as Chinese privet and Chinaberry trees, and past a duck pond. The pond was empty but there was a water control structure in an adjacent drainage that apparently allowed the pond to be filled with water or drained. There was lots of butterfly and dragonfly activity at the pond as well some neat birds, such as Mississippi kites, indigo buntings, and blue grosbeaks.



By the time we got back to our vehicles, it was lunchtime. We drove up to the top of Cook's Mountain and ate lunch while looking out over the Wateree River. The view was spectacular and a great lunch spot. What impressed me was that as we left the floodplain of the river and started the climb up the "mountain", the change in elevation brought about a drastic change in the plant communities. We went from the typical mesic bottomland habitat of the floodplain into xeric habitat of the sandhills. Longleaf pine replaced loblolly pine; turkey oaks replaced water oak and swamp chestnut oak; rosinweed replaced Carolina wild petunia; and on the eastern slope of Cook's Mountain, mountain laurel is present.



After lunch we traveled north to a gate on River Road where parked and walked the roadbed to the river. This hike took us through some beautiful bottomland hardwoods and swampy areas. The trees in this portion of the floodplain were large, and it appeared that this area had not been logged for many years. When we returned to the vehicles, we had a little extra time before dinner, so we drove over to a small pond to explore a little more. As we walked toward the pond, Paul



and Kim, who were ahead of the rest of the group, spotted an eastern hognose snake. The snake put on quite a show for us in its attempts to “play dead.” It flipped over onto its back and when flipped back onto its belly, it would immediately flip onto its back again. When picked up, it even let its tongue dangle from its mouth in an attempt to convince us it was dead. We strolled on to the pond where there was a sign that warned of the possible presence of alligators. We surveyed the pond with binoculars in hopes of spotting a gator, but did not see any. By this time the sky was growing dark with clouds and threatening to rain.



After a great day of exploration, we converged on Mr. Bunky’s for dinner, while it poured rain outside. Although she was not able to join us for the trip, thanks go to Caroline Eastman for coordinating with DNR, scouting the site, and providing us with maps.

This month we will be heading to Liberty Hill WMA in Kershaw and Lancaster Counties. This WMA is located on the eastern shore of Lake Wateree, in an area where I have seen bald eagle nests in the past. With a little luck, maybe we will be fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of some eagles.

Please take a look at the attached revised trip schedule for the remainder of the year and mark your calendars so that you do not miss any of the fun. In addition, the August newsletter will include information about a special on August 21<sup>st</sup> to view the solar eclipse from Dick Watkins’ property in Calhoun County.

*Gordon Murphy*



# 2017 SCAN Field Trips - UPDATED

*Locations subject to change. Check the monthly newsletter, website, or Facebook page for trip details.*

## July 22<sup>nd</sup>

Liberty Hill WMA – Kershaw and Lancaster Counties  
Kathy Boyle

## August 12<sup>th</sup> – Regional Director's Special

Pinnacle Falls / Jim and Ceille Welch Property – Henderson County, NC  
Rita Zollinger

## August 26<sup>th</sup>

Eva and Sam Pratt Property – Inman, SC  
Rita Zollinger

## September 23<sup>rd</sup>

Lake Jocassee – Oconee and Pickens Counties  
Kathy Boyle

## October 28<sup>th</sup>

Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center HP, North Island – Georgetown County  
Jeff Kline

## November 18<sup>th</sup>

Caw Caw Interpretive Center – Charleston County  
Paul Kalbach

## December 16<sup>th</sup>

Savannah Wildlife Refuge – Jasper County  
Paul Kalbach