



SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF NATURALISTS

SCAN

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SCAN Newsletter - February, 2024

Welcome to a New Year of SCAN!

January saw another SCAN meeting – again in person! So nice to see everyone in attendance at Saluda Shoals. No soodle or womble this year as we were building up our winter rain inches... including some inside the Educational Center! That's all right as we had a number of wonderful speakers on bats (Becky Brown), butterflies (Tom Austin), and herps (Steve Bennett)! We also had a lovely retrospective on Rudy Manke by Jim Welch. Then a short business meeting, and voilà! New officers for this year.

We have a number of great trips scheduled this year and I am hoping to see more SCANners out there! Sadly, we lost both Rudy Mancke (founder) and Paul Kalbach, a major organizer, this past year. So keep them in mind while you are slogging through rain or sweating in the heat or admiring amazing flora and fauna. And to honor them further, let us remember that SCAN is dedicated to the gathering and sharing of natural history information about South Carolina. Let's remember that and share where we can – to social media, iNaturalist and other citizen science projects, and to our own database.

Here's to another year of SCANning South Carolina!

Lee Morris, President

For those who couldn't make it to Saluda Shoals, we have a few updates to shares from the Annual Meeting. We're happy to announce that SCAN's 501(c)(3) charitable status, which was inadvertently allowed to lapse, has officially been reinstated with the IRS! So, SCAN dues and donations are now tax deductible again.

In other news, SCAN recently was able to share access to our database, containing decades of species records from across the state, with Keith Bradley, lead botanist for SCDNR's Heritage Trust Program, to help with rounding out the State's botanical records. SCAN data may also prove valuable for other state and local agencies in informing management decisions and conservation priorities. The data we collect and sightings we make at each outing have the potential to aid in conservation wherever we go across the state of South Carolina. Whether we're filling in county records, resolving species distributions, contributing to local biodiversity studies, uncovering new wildlife populations, or scouting out new parks and conservation properties, SCAN is improving and contributing to natural resource conservation in the Palmetto State, one soodle at a time.

If you missed any of the presentations at the annual meeting, don't fret! Each presentation was recorded and you can watch and listen to them at your own leisure. Links to each individual presentation are listed later on, under the photos of each presenter. Or, you can find them all on the YouTube playlist below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnWcCzViimo&list=PLjfw3VPT0pOqZG4O4Cg64VxnEfV9hUiCM>

Below is your new line-up of SCAN officers for 2024. It's no easy task to run an all-volunteer non-profit, especially one as nomadic and free-ranging as SCAN. So give a big thank you to everyone who stayed on or stepped up into a new position. They've volunteered their time to help keep the gears turning for SCAN!

President	–	Lee Morris
Vice President	–	Kate Hartley
Secretary	–	Tom Austin
Treasurer	–	Gordon Murphy
Historian	–	Gordon Murphy
Database Manager	–	Kim McManus
Northern Regional Director	–	Rita Zollinger
Western Regional Director	–	Ron Ahle
Central Regional Directors	–	Dave and Marty Kastner
Southern Regional Director	–	Tom Austin
Eastern Regional Director	–	Todd Johnston

And now, the moment you've all been waiting for, the line-up of field trips for 2024! We've got a great schedule this year, with several brand-new properties for SCAN to visit and even a couple freshly conserved and soon to be publicly accessible properties.

Date	Region	Location	County
January 27	Central	Saluda Shoals Park	Lexington, SC
February 24	Central	Wateree Passage of the Palmetto Trail	Richland, SC
March 23	Western	Horn Creek Trail	Edgefield, SC
April 27	Central	Arant Property (Audubon)	Calhoun, SC
May 25	Southern	Hampton Plantation / FMNF Hell Hole	Charleston/Berkeley, SC
June 22	Eastern	Vereen Memorial Gardens	Horry, SC
July 27	Southern	Buckfield (future) WMA	Hampton, SC
August 24	Northern	Black Balsam Knob	Haywood, NC
September 28	Eastern	Samworth WMA	Georgetown, SC
October 26	Southern	Deweese Island	Charleston, SC
November 16	Northern	Pleasant Ridge County Park	Greenville, SC
December 14	Western	Clemson Experimental Forest	Pickens, SC

This month, SCAN will be heading back to the Wateree Passage of the Palmetto trail to cover its western side in Richland County. (SCAN covered its eastern side in Sumter County last October of 2023.) Dave Schuetrum will lead. Further details at the end of the newsletter.

Lastly, I just wanted to take a second to say, "Howdy!" As your new Secretary for SCAN, you'll be hearing a lot from me throughout the year via the monthly newsletter and I'll be your new general point person behind the SCAN email address. So, if you have any suggestions for the good of the cause, be they field trip ideas, outreach opportunities, tweaks to the website or newsletter, upcoming local events SCAN members might be interested in, or any other constructive feedback, please feel free to send them my way! I'm still learning the ropes, and there will invariably be some transitional teething issues, but I hope to get into the groove here soon. The Board is planning to start making progress on some much-needed updates for the organization and our long-term projects, so stay tuned for more!

Tom Austin, Secretary



We had a great turnout for the annual meeting, too many familiar faces to name!



Many good conversations were had by all,



And organizational business rekindled between your SCAN officers and nominees.



Steve Bennett, retired herpetologist for SCDNR, let us know about all the cryptic reptiles and amphibians of SC that we all need to be keeping an eye open for:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KCdUMHU6rXY&list=PLjfw3VPT0pOgZG4O4Cg64VxnEfV9hUiCM>



Jim Welch, co-host of the SC-ETV series NatureScene, shared some behind the scenes stories from the making of the beloved series with Rudy Mancke, founder of SCAN who passed away this year:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iigJkAs8RIk&list=PLjfw3VPT0pOgZG4O4Cg64VxnEfV9hUiCM>



Becky Brown, with SCDNR, shared the latest and greatest research into bat habitat in SC and the threats they face, including White Nose Syndrome:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IEoizru9fP8&list=PLjfw3VPT0pOgZG4O4Cg64VxnEfV9hUiCM>

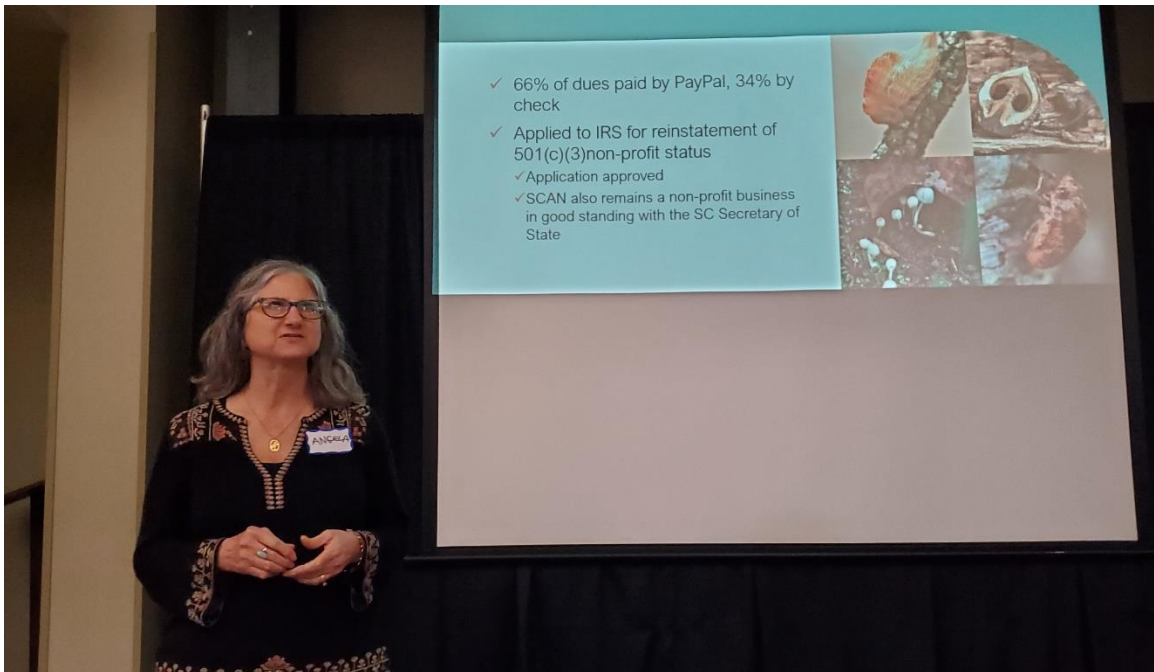


Tom Austin, with the Edisto Island Open Land Trust, gave us a crash course on identifying the cryptic and fairly recently described Intricate Satyr butterfly in SC:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBDHO7ZGkmU&list=PLjfw3VPT0pOgZG4O4Cg64VxnEfV9hUiCM>



Jim brought critter bits for show and tell, which were of course a hit!



It wouldn't be an annual meeting without a business meeting.
Thank you to Angela and everyone who served on the SCAN board in 2023!

Wateree Passage of the Palmetto Trail

Richland County, SC

GPS Coordinates: 33.811156, -80.639013

Parking Lot at the Intersection SC Hwy-48 and US-601

Saturday, February 24, 2024, 10:30 AM to ~4:30 PM

The Wateree Passage is one of the most diverse sections of the Palmetto Trail, traversing a variety of landscapes, from high hills on the east end of the trail down to a magnificent river swamp in the middle section of the trail. The middle section of the trail passes through part of Manchester State Forest, traveling along and on the remnants of an old SC Railroad line that crosses the Wateree River. The full length of the Wateree Passage is 11.4 miles. We will be exploring the western section of the Wateree Passage, which also reaches the river swamp region of Manchester State Forest. (SCAN visited the eastern section in October of 2023.)

From the new fenced parking lot starting area, head east southeast on the trail for about 0.67 miles, passing several planted fields along the way. The biodiversity along this section of the trail is fairly limited. At the end of the last planted field, look for a trail marker where the trail turns into the woods and eventually heads east northeast for about 0.18 miles until you come to railroad tracks. After about 0.85 miles from the starting area, the trail crosses the railroad tracks and continues on the other side atop an old, abandoned section of elevated railroad tracks. Look for where the rails are no longer connected to the main active rail line and follow the trail / old rail line from there in a northeast direction. There is a small trail marker mounted on a tree on the other side of the active rail line. This section of the trail includes the old rails and requires walking on the old railroad ties so be careful of your footing. The rail section (and old railroad ties) will eventually end and the trail continues on a raised section of the old rail bed until it reaches a bridge across the Wateree River.

After about 1.60 miles from the starting area, there are a set of stairs on the "east" (far) side of the Wateree River that will allow access to the land below. Much of the surrounding area is under water or "swampy" but it is possible to explore the small area of dry land at this location. From the stairs to just past the suspension bridge, the trail is actually a boardwalk with no access to the water and swamp below. After about 1.95 miles from the starting area, there is a short suspension bridge. The boardwalk continues for a short distance beyond the suspension bridge until the trail is again back on dry elevated land. There are several benches and birdhouses at the end of the boardwalk. The trail continues for about another 3.50 miles after the end of the boardwalk across the river swamp region of Manchester State Forest. There are 4 bridges and soodlers can walk as far as they want (it is about 5.50 miles from the starting parking lot all the way across the river swamp region) but remember that you will need to backtrack along the same route (and distance) you already traveled to return to the starting parking area.

The boardwalk is one of the best I have seen in the state. The suspension bridge is something different for a bridge. Bird life is incredible. Last time I was there I counted four Bald Eagles at the bridge that crosses the Wateree River. I cannot say enough about this trail, you just gotta see it! One of my favorites and not many people seem to know about it.

~Dave Schuetrum

DIRECTIONS:

We'll meet at the new fenced in trailhead parking lot located on the east side of US 601 where South Carolina Highway 48 (Bluff Road) merges with US 601 (McCords Ferry Rd). There isn't a street address, so **use the GPS coordinates!** One can also park across US 601 in the cleared area if the designated parking lot gets full. After parking, follow the trail about 900 feet south to reach the kiosk.

From Charleston: Hop on I-26 West and exit onto US 601 North. Head up towards the intersection of SC Hwy 48. The parking lot will be on your right at the intersection with SC Hwy 48 (Bluff Rd).

From Columbia: Take I-77 and exit east onto SC Hwy 48 (Bluff Rd). Follow to where Bluff Rd ends on US-601. The parking lot will be in front of you...just on the other side of Hwy 601.

Trip Leader: Dave Schuetrum

The Wateree Passage of the Palmetto Trail

