



SCAN

SOUTH CAROLINA
ASSOCIATION OF
NATURALISTS



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PO Box 24911, Columbia, SC 29224

August 2026

Hi, SCAN Folks!

This past month, in lieu of an outdoor soodle in the heat of July, SCAN members and guests attended the 50th Anniversary Gala! It was held at SC State Museum where Rudy Mancke got his start, and it was quite a good time.

Some attendees went on a Behind-the-Scenes Tour with Dr. Scott Persons, the Museum's Natural History Curator, and saw sacred areas of the Museum. These included the exhibit storage and preparation rooms. We saw a 14-foot 'gator, a huge baleen whale skull, saber-toothed tiger and giant ground sloth bits and parts (including huge tiger teeth!). We ALSO saw insect collections – butterflies and dragonflies collected by Rudy Mancke himself, and a whole cabinet of beetles collected by another of SCAN's own – Jan Ciegler!!

At 2pm, we started the formal part of the Gala programming. I (being President) gave an intro discussing Rudy's start of SCAN – why he started it and what has come out of it. I also asked some trivia questions and the audience used Menti to submit responses in realtime:

- What is your favorite habitat?
- What is the most frequently observed bird?
- How many species have been seen only once?
- What is our second-most observed species?
- What species was seen only in 1976 (and then again in 2026)?

Next, Tom Austin had answers!

- The audience's favorite habitats were pleasantly varied:
 - 17: ocean
 - 12: forest
 - 8: swamp
 - 5: backyard
 - 4: creek, salt marsh
 - 3: coast, lake, sandhills
 - 2: Carolina Bay, piedmont
 - 1: coastal plain, cypress bay, granite outcrop, meadows, mixed piedmont forest, piedmont prairie, pine forest, pine savanna, river, sandhills – longleaf pine
- The crowd overwhelmingly guessed Northern Cardinal as the most frequently observed bird. *buzzer* It's the Carolina Chickadee.
- The question about the number of species seen only once threw everyone. Guesses ranged from 2 to 875. Not even close! We have 2,541 unique species in the database.
- Red Maple is our most observed species. Our second-most observed species is not Scott Wietecha, believe it or not. It's the American Sweetgum. Two folks got it right. *high five!*
- Given the choice of Heller's Rabbit Tobacco, Sessile Reishi, Mole Kingsnake, Rusty Bird Grasshopper, and Catalpa Sphinx as the species seen only in 1976, the audience was pretty divided. The correct answer is the Catalpa Sphinx.

Tom also gave an account of what else is in the last 50 years of SCAN database entries. SCAN has recorded 6,892 different species! Who knew South Carolina has that many? Yet I'm sure it just scratches the surface.

Scott Wietecha discussed SCAN's people (YOU!), who really make SCAN what it is, honored those who have donated their time to keep SCAN going, and remembered some SCANNers who have passed. Gordon Murphy was lauded as the SCAN Officer (past and present) who has selflessly devoted the most years to keeping SCAN's spirit soaring into the future. In his 28 years as an officer, he has served as President, Vice President, Treasurer, Historian and Eastern Regional Director. Eleven others have donated a decade or more in service to SCAN. (Consider volunteering yourself!)

Tom Mancke, Rudy's brother and Naturalist at the Hammond School, gave us a glimpse of the Mancke family childhood; or rather, how Rudy became Rudy. It was an extremely personal and touching account. It also involved a lot of snakes, of course!

Lastly, Josh Arrants talked about "What It Means To Be a Naturalist: Lessons and Legacy". We all follow in the footsteps of Rudy and all other naturalists; Josh passes on some of those responsibilities to Nature to us. Josh passes to us three lessons:

- ❖ Lesson One: Expect the Surprises: Sometimes, the marveling is more important than the studying...
- ❖ Lesson Two: Our Place in the System: we are a part of it, not apart from it
- ❖ Lesson Three: Past, Present, and Future – learn from the Past (extinctions, ecosystems destroyed, naturalists who came before us); face the Challenges of Today (development, teaching and connecting people, calls to action); and keep An Eye Towards the Future (how do we protect? how do we repair?)

Josh also passes to us three of Rudy's Everlasting Gifts:

1. The keys to understanding and interpreting a world many will never really experience.
2. A beacon to follow to be a better naturalist, conservationist, and human being.
3. How to take curiosity, passion, and compassion and utilize them to teach and lead nature walks.

Later, we gathered together in the Museum's Mezzanine for some amazing food by event sponsor Scott Hall Catering, drinks by Ed's Bartending, and great company. Thanks to Tom Austin's efforts, the tables were decorated with take-home native plants on log cookies – perfect for nature-lovers.

This incredible event was made possible by:

[Scott Hall Catering](#)
[Josh Arrants](#)
The Mancke Family
Private Donors

Continue reading below for this month's trip information!

Lee Morris, President

THIS MONTH: Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay

For August, SCAN is being graciously hosted by the [Midlands Chapter of the South Carolina Native Plant Society](#) for a visit to Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay. This privately-owned and managed nature preserve holds a thriving population of the endangered Canby's Dropwort within an intact Carolina Bay in rural Bamberg County. As such, the Bay is not open to the public and may only be visited with special permission by SCNPS. So don't miss this rare opportunity to explore this important conservation property!

As this is a protected private property at a somewhat secret location, with limited parking spaces, we will be meeting offsite at the [Bamberg County Public Library](#) and then carpooling to the site. Attendees must also sign a waiver with SCNPS before being permitted to access the property.

PLEASE RSVP TO TOM AUSTIN IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND. Email Tom at: scnaturalists76@gmail.com

Signed waivers may be emailed in advance or signed in person day of. (Waiver attached to this newsletter.)

Tom Austin, Database Manager & Southern Regional Director

NEXT MONTH: Bio Way Farm

In September, we'll be visiting Laurens County, home of [Bio Way Farm](#). The property is an organic farm with an actively managed landscape and nature preserve.

THE BOOK PROJECT

SCAN is dedicated to the gathering and sharing of natural history information about South Carolina. I think we have the gathering down-pat! The sharing part happens in several different ways: species lists in newsletters, posts on [Facebook](#), entries in the SCAN project on [iNaturalist](#), and through our books. The book committee is wrapping up book four and starting on book five simultaneously. It's a big lift and we need your help. Consider this your call to action!

- Email member memories and memorials to scnaturalists76@gmail.com
- Upload photos for the books [here](#).
 - We are looking for ecotomes, critters, flora, and fun people shots.
 - Name the photo descriptively: year taken, location, who or what it is, and your name.
- Email **ideas** for stories and natural history write-ups to scnaturalists76@gmail.com. If it's a good fit for one of the books and hasn't already been covered, Lee Morris or Tom Austin will give the go-ahead!
 - Articles for the books should be 300-1,200 words
 - Specific topics needed include ecotomes, species/taxa (i.e. "pitcher plants" or "prairie birds"), specific location descriptions, or stories of memorable moments on SCAN trips.
 - All submissions are subject to stylistic changes, and light editing with author permission.
- More of an artistic type? We have room for drawings, sketches, and poems. Inspire people to keep reading! Send us your ideas.

Want some inspiration? You can find digitized copies of the first three books [here](#).

Kim McManus, Secretary and Webkeeper

50TH Anniversary Gala in photos

Check out the gallery of images [here](#).



Thanks to all who attended and made our 50th anniversary gala so special! ~*The Gala Committee*
Todd Johnston, Lee Morris, Scott Wietecha, Julianna Nyikos,
Tom Austin, Marty Kastner, Dave Kastner, Kim McManus



Bespoke Nature Attire!



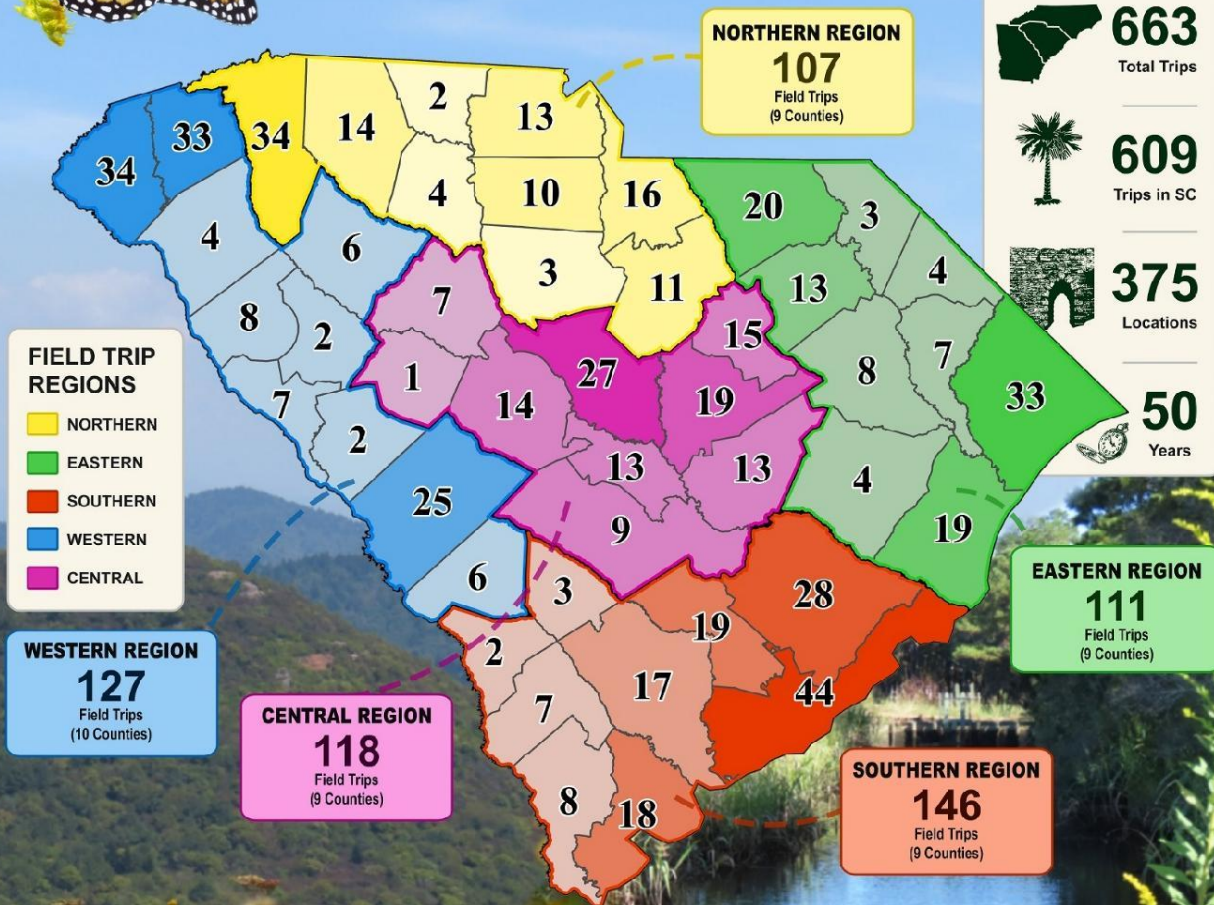
We loved the effort folks put into their outfits! Ellen Fishburne created a corsage with flowers from her garden. Stephanie Gilian built a floral hairpiece. Kevin Curtis adorned his hat with flowing vines of flora. Marsha Hamlin was bedecked with bugs, fish, ferns, antlers, and critical naturalist gear. Julianna Nyikos sported butterflies and birds. Jean Prothro channeled the ocean with her beautiful blue dress. Nancy Adamson built a flower fascinator. Rita Zollinger designed a bracelet of the state animals and plants, along with a hand-painted scarf.

50 Years of Exploring South Carolina

SCAN FIELD TRIPS BY COUNTY

1976 - 2025

*Fifty years of discovering, documenting, and sharing
South Carolina's natural history.*



BY THE NUMBERS

 **663**
Total Trips

 **609**
Trips in SC

 **375**
Locations

 **50**
Years

OUT OF STATE TRIPS (TOTAL: 54)



TOP 9 COUNTIES BY FIELD TRIPS

1 Charleston	44	6 Berkeley	28
2 Oconee	34	7 Richland	27
3 Greenville	34	8 Aiken	25
4 Pickens	33	9 Chesterfield	20
5 Horry	33		

Most Visited Location:
(15x) Francis Marion National Forest



Thank you to our members, volunteers, and hosts
who have made these 50 years of adventure possible!

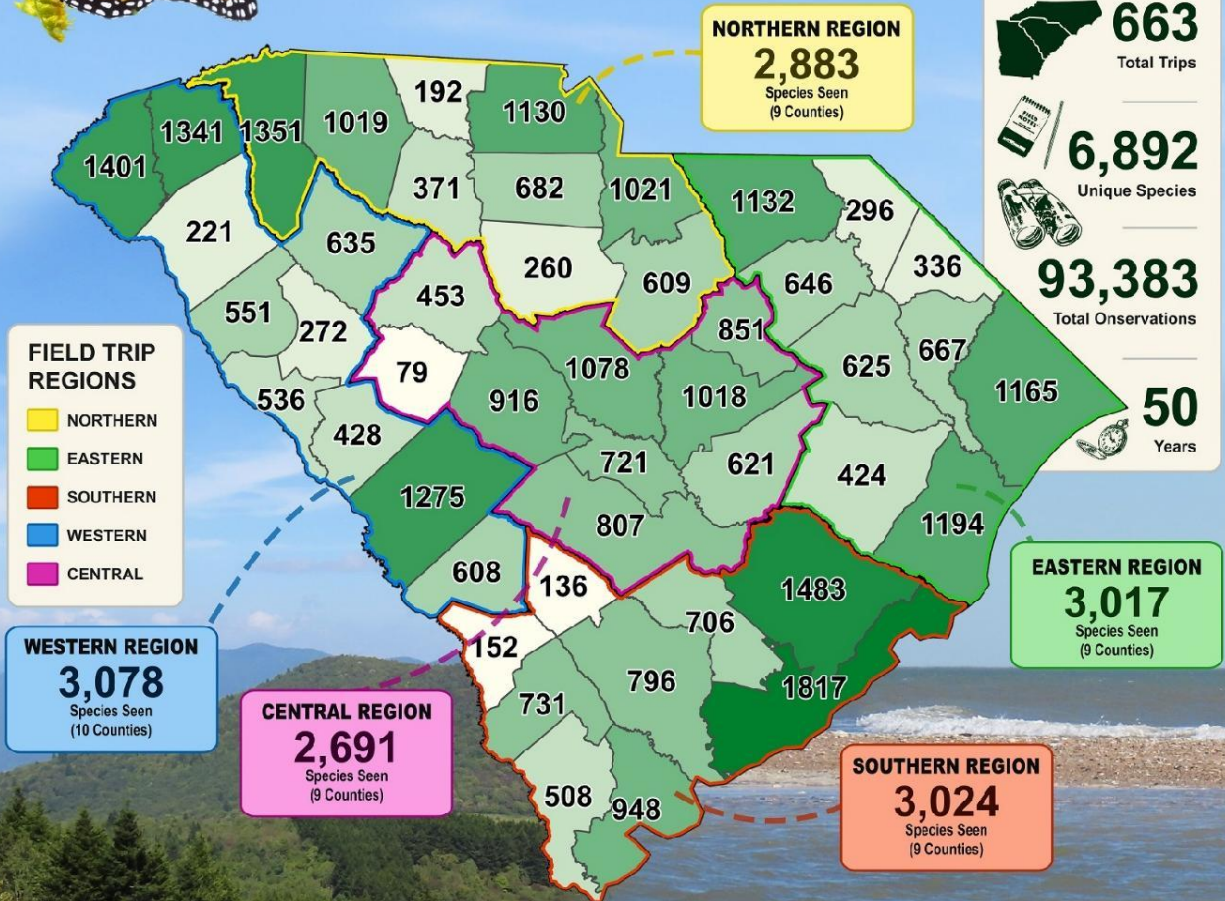
Learn more at:
scnaturalists.org

50 Years of Exploring South Carolina

SPECIES RECORDED BY COUNTY

1976 - 2025

*Fifty years of discovering, documenting, and sharing
South Carolina's natural history.*



OUT OF STATE SPECIES: 2,179

Georgia

1,080 Species
6 Counties



North Carolina

1,724 Species | 13 Counties



SPECIES RICHNESS OF MAJOR GROUPS

Plants	2,279	Birds	272
Fungi	880	Herps	119
Mollusks	384	Mammals	51
Spiders	116	Fish	92
Insects	2,530	Most Common Species: (x479) Red Maple <i>Acer rubrum</i>	



Thank you to our members, volunteers, and hosts
who have made these 50 years of adventure possible!

Learn more at:
scnaturalists.org

Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay

Bamberg County, SC

MEET AT: Bamberg County Public Library

3156 E Railroad Ave, Bamberg, SC 29003

GPS Coordinates: 33.297878, -81.032549

We will carpool to the Bay.

Saturday, August 22, 2026 | 10:30am - 4:00pm

Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay is a 52-acre nature preserve in Bamberg County in the northern reaches of the ACE Basin. The property has been privately-owned by the South Carolina Native Plant Society since 2003. The land was originally donated to and protected by The Nature Conservancy in the 1990s and is named in memory of Lisa Matthews, whose family donated the property for perpetual conservation. The property's central feature is an intact Carolina Bay that holds a thriving population of the federally endangered Canby's Dropwort *Oxypolis canbyi*. Thanks to the careful stewardship and regular management of SCNPS volunteers and the US Fish & Wildlife Service, the Canby's Dropwort population has increased by nearly a thousand-fold! Further information about Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay, including some technical details on its ecology and habitat restoration, can be found on the [SC Native Plant Society website](#).

Since Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay is privately owned and home to a federally endangered plant, its location is deliberately not being shared in this newsletter to prevent it leaking to the wider public. All attendees will need to sign a liability release waiver with SCNPS. This waiver is attached to the newsletter. Please bring your signed waiver with you. We will have blank waivers for the day of. Further, do not share the location of the property publicly. Photos of Canby's Dropwort are not to be posted online to iNaturalist with location data public. (It is highly recommended that you obscure your location for any and all photos uploaded to iNaturalist for the day.) Keeping the location private protects this imperiled plant species from poaching and vandals.

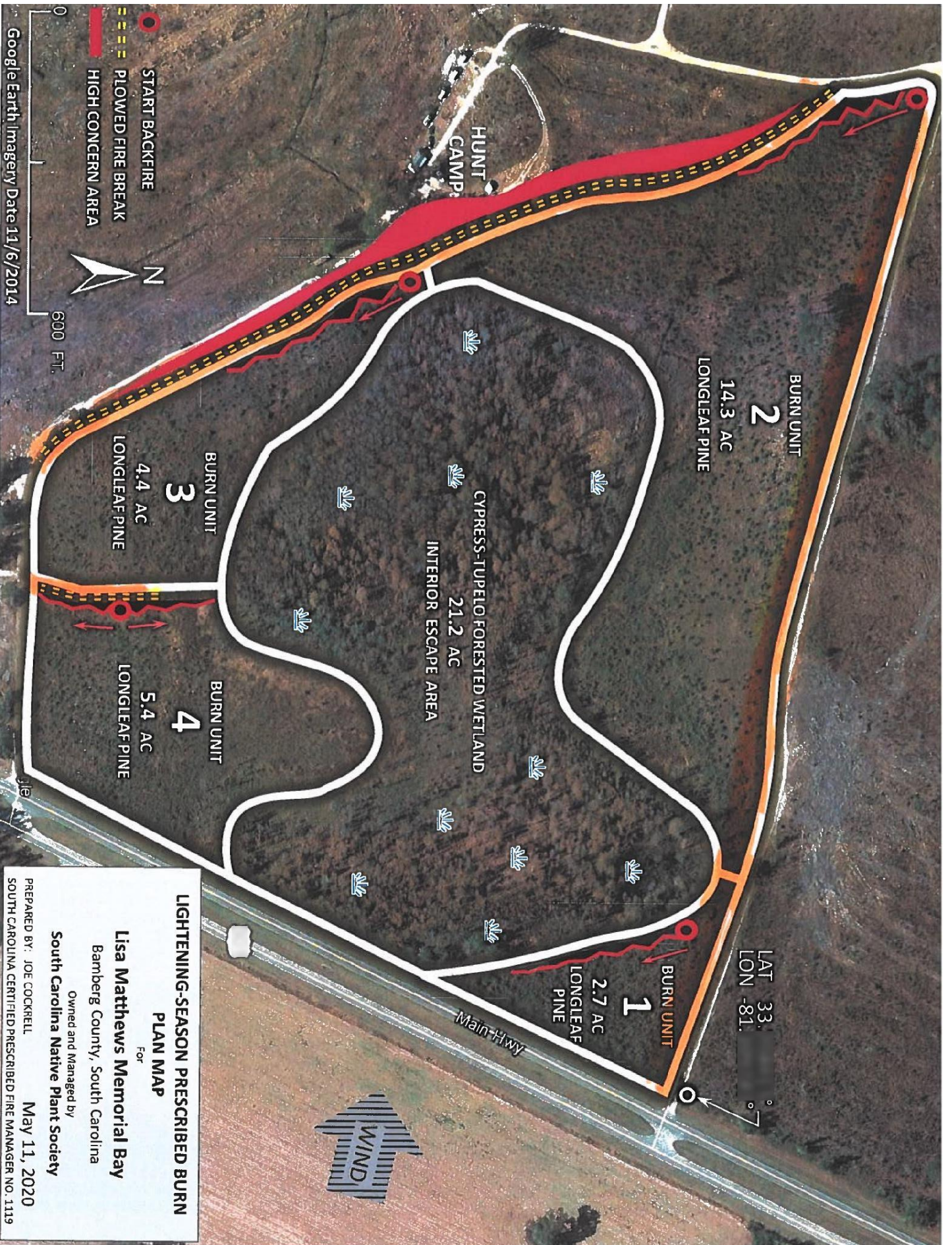
Parking is very limited on the property, so we will meet in Bamberg in the Bamberg County Public Library's parking lot. We will carpool and convoy from the Library to the Bay. Please be prepared to carpool with someone else, or to transport other SCAN members.

MEET AT THE BAMBERG COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY - 33.297878, -81.032549

TO RSVP, PLEASE EMAIL TOM AUSTIN – scnaturalists76@gmail.com

There are no restrooms on site. There are restrooms in the Library at our meeting location. (Library open from 10am to 2pm.) There are no formal trails on the property, but there is a perimeter firebreak, some interior fire breaks, an open savanna, and bounding roads that can be walked and explored. Vegetation may be thick. Snake boots and long pants are recommended for tromping. Please prepare for *intense* August heat, high humidity, and biting insects. There are no shade structures on the property. We will be in the sun all day. Bring plenty of water, your lunch, and everything you need for the day with you when you carpool.

Tom Austin, Southern Regional Director
Email: scnaturalists76@gmail.com



**LIGHTENING-SEASON PRESCRIBED BURN
PLAN MAP**

For
Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay
Bamberg County, South Carolina
Owned and Managed by
South Carolina Native Plant Society

PREPARED BY: JOE COCKRELL
May 11, 2020
SOUTH CAROLINA CERTIFIED PRESCRIBED FIRE MANAGER NO. 1119

SCNPS RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY!

THIS IS A LEGAL DOCUMENT THAT AFFECTS YOUR LEGAL RIGHTS!

This Release and Waiver of Liability (the "Release"), executed on the date indicated below, is in favor of the South Carolina Native Plant Society (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation) and its Midlands Chapter; South Carolina Association of Naturalists (a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation); and their directors, officers, employees, members, trip leaders, and agents (collectively, "the Organizations").

The Participant desires to engage in activities/events (the "Activities") and understands that the Activities may include traveling or being transported, parking, crossing roads, hiking, walking, outdoor recreation, and other outdoor activities and any and all activities involved in visiting Lisa Matthews Memorial Bay, Bamberg, SC.

The Participant hereby freely, voluntarily, and without duress executes this Release under the following terms:

Release and Waiver. Participant does hereby release and forever discharge and hold harmless the Organizations, their heirs, executors, personal representatives, successors and assigns from any and all liability, claims, and demands of whatever kind or nature, either in law or in equity, which arise or may hereafter arise from Participant's Activities with the Organizations.

Participant understands that this Release discharges the Organizations from any liability or claim that the Participant may have against the Organizations with respect to any bodily injury, personal injury, illness, death, or property damage that may result from Participant's Activities with the Organizations, whether caused by the negligence of the Organizations or their officers, directors, employees, members, trip leaders or agents or otherwise. Participant also understands that the Organizations do not assume any responsibility for or obligation to provide financial assistance or other assistance, including but not limited to medical, health, or disability insurance in the event of injury or illness.

Medical Treatment. Participant does hereby release and forever discharge the Organizations, their heirs, executors, personal representatives, successors and assigns from any claim whatsoever which arises or may hereafter arise on account of any first aid, treatment, or service rendered in connection with the Participant's Activities with the Organizations.

Assumption of the Risk. The Participant understands that the Activities that may be hazardous to the Participant, including, but not limited to, traveling, being transported, parking, crossing roads, hiking or other outdoor recreation.

Participant hereby expressly and specifically assumes the risk of injury or harm in the Activities and releases the Organizations, their heirs, executors, personal representatives, successors and assigns from all liability for injury, illness, death, or property damage resulting from the Activities.

Insurance. The Participant understands that the Organizations do not carry or maintain health, medical, or disability insurance coverage for any Participant.

Each Participant is expected and encouraged to obtain his or her own medical or health insurance coverage.

Photographic Release. Participant does hereby grant and convey unto the Organizations all right, title, and interest in any and all photographic images and video or audio recordings made by the Organizations during the Participant's Activities with the Organizations, including, but not limited to, any royalties, proceeds, or other benefits derived from such photographs or recordings.

Other. Participant expressly agrees that this Release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the laws of the State of South Carolina, and that this Release shall be governed by and interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of South Carolina. Participant agrees that in the event that any clause or provision of this Release shall be held to be invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, the invalidity of such clause or provision shall not otherwise affect the remaining provisions of this Release which shall continue to be enforceable.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, Participant has executed this Release as of the _____ of August, 2026.

I _____ acknowledge that I have read and agree to the terms of this Liability Release Waiver.

Signed

Dated