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UPSTATE happenings

JAN 2014

Upcoming Events

Saturday, Jan 4, 10:30 am DNR Workday at Stevens Creek HP in McCormick County

SC DNR's Mary Bunch invites us to a volunteer workday — "Our volunteer workday at Stevens Creek Heritage Preserve will be Jan 4, 2014 (a Saturday). We will continue our war on invasive exotics (mostly privet and Japanese honeysuckle) and we'll do some trail maintenance. Please wear appropriate work clothes and bring your lunch. I'll bring some drinks and extra gloves.

"Let's meet at the parking area on Garrett Rd at 10:30 am. Plan on two hours of work (we won't stop you from working longer). If it is raining hard or snowing or sleeting on the 4th please consider coming on our alternate rain date, Jan 25 (same time, same place).

"Jan 4 is a youth deer hunting day so please wear visible colors.

"Note that we are seeking some volunteers to help us replace the small footbridge on the trail (the one at the bottom of the hill on the left). We'd prefer to do that work prior to the regular workday. I have ordered a footbridge kit (8' length) to simplify the process. If you are interested in helping please let us know and we'll set a date.

"Thanks, and I look forward to seeing you!" — Mary Bunch, (864) 654-6738 x 15, bunchm@dnr.sc.gov

Stevens Creek Heritage Preserve is in the southern tip of McCormick County. From the town of McCormick go south on US 221/SC 28. After US 221 leaves SC 28 at Clarks Hill, go south on SC 28 for .2 miles and turn left onto the first paved road. After crossing a railroad, turn left onto secondary road 88 and go 1.2 miles to the parking area on the left.

**Tuesday, Jan 21, 7:00 pm
On Science, Species, and Spirit –
Exploring the Value of Wild Places**
See story at right.

... continued on page 2

On Science, Species, and Spirit – Exploring the Value of Wild Places

What do soil, snails, and spirituality have to do with each other? Our January speaker will enlighten us on those topics, in a talk that promises to be both earthy and ethereal.

Rocky Nation, Professor of Biology and Environmental Studies Program Coordinator at Southern Wesleyan University, has done extensive research on soil chemistry and interspecies community structures in the southern Blue Ridge Escarpment. Much of his work focused on land snails and the insects and birds that eat them, an interrelationship that is correlated with high soil-calcium levels.

But Nation's research interests also extend to the esoteric. He's interested in the ways that being outdoors can benefit humans on many levels – emotional, mental, and spiritual.

"Nature is much more than what can be measured and seen and touched," he says. "So when we're looking for reasons to preserve and conserve the natural world, there are not only scientific, ecological, and economic justifications. The spiritual and therapeutic reasons (for conservation) are right up there, too."

Nation points out that this is not a new idea; the human-nature connection is a common thread among many of the world's

major religions, as well as Native American spirituality. And with authors such as Richard Louv and Joseph Cornell writing about the importance of providing children with nature experiences to offset our increasingly electronic culture, the idea has even more relevance.

... continued on page 2



Dr. Rocky Nation

Southern Wesleyan University

Tuesday, Jan 21, 7:00 pm

Founders Hall in Dining Commons, Southern Wesleyan University, Central

For a map and more information, visit <http://www.scnps.org>

**South Carolina
Native Plant Society**
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Upstate Chapter

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Upcoming Events

... continued from page 1

Tuesday, Feb 18, 7:00 pm

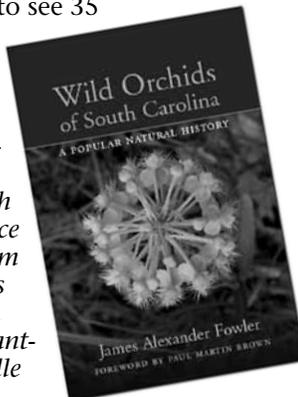
Wild Orchids of Newfoundland

Newfoundland, Canada, is home to more than 40 species of native orchids. These include many of the orchid species found farther south, even in the Carolinas, but due to the harsh local environment, they have a very different appearance.

With an abundance of rainfall, the bogs and fens in this eastern-most province of Canada provide an excellent habitat for orchids. Much of Newfoundland is underlain by limestone, which makes up the basic soil that many orchid species prefer. Newfoundland is actually the northern extension of the Appalachian Mountain range, so there is a geographic connection to the Carolinas.

Photographer, orchid specialist and author of the book *Wild Orchids of South Carolina* Jim Fowler made a two-week visit in early July 2013 and (thanks to the networking and connections made before leaving Greenville) managed to see 35 orchid species and hybrids in full bloom. So prepare for a treat at our February meeting!

J Verne Smith
Technical Resource
Center Auditorium
on Main Campus
of Greenville Tec,
620 South Pleasant-
burg Dr, Greenville



On Science, Species, and Spirit – Exploring the Value of Wild Places ... continued from page 1

Nation has been teaching at SWU for 12 years. He holds a B.S. in Biology from Furman University, an M.Ed. in Natural Sciences from Converse College, and a Ph.D. in Zoology from Clemson University. He has taught a wide range of science courses, from botany to birding. This semester, he introduced a new course at SWU titled “Wilderness Spirituality.” Students explored the history of using the natural world as a vehicle for spiritual formation, and were required to spend solo time in the field, thinking and journaling.

Nation also writes and speaks about the spiritual value of wild places in a variety of publications and venues, most recently at the annual meeting of the Foothills Trail Conference. “My take-home message,” he says, “is that natural areas do have value, not only scientific and aesthetic, but also spiritual and therapeutic.”

So come to our January meeting, and prepare to be inspired on many levels – from the scientific to the celestial.

— *Jeanne Malmgren*



Five volunteers took advantage of a balmy, spring-like and dry(!) Saturday morning to enjoy the out-of-doors and rescue a few sun-loving perennials. Photo by Cathy Foster.