

SOUTH CAROLINA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY

FALL 2017

LOWCOUNTRY CHAPTER NEWSLETTER, VOL. 20, Issue 1, Charleston, SC



I hope your summer has proven fun and restorative! In case we have not had a chance to meet, my name is Kim Morganello, and I am your new Lowcountry Chapter President of the South Carolina Native Plants Society. I have been involved with the organization since 2008, serving on both the state and local boards. In my professional life, I work as a Water Resources Extension Agent for the Clemson Extension Service. I am based in Charleston with a focus on low-impact landscape design and best management practices that can help the built environment and our local ecology be more compatible. Outside of work, I spend as much time as possible enjoying our lowcountry waterways, my garden, and my 1.5-year-old daughter. We have an exciting lineup of lectures and field trips this fall; I look forward to seeing you there!

Thanks to our friends at Audubon South Carolina, we now have a South Carolina General Assembly-designated Native Plant Week in South Carolina: the week of October 16-20! As a chapter, we will celebrate with our Fall Native Plant Sale and a special event for our October lecture. Keep reading for additional information. Also stay tuned for announcements on events across the state in celebration of Native Plant Week.

Please encourage a school or other worthy organization to apply for the SCNPS Community Project Grant. Community projects must be directed at protecting, preserving, restoring, and/or educating the public about native plants or plant communities in the Lowcountry of South Carolina. Individual award amounts will not exceed \$1,000. **The deadline for Fall 2017 applications is October 1**, with the money being awarded by November 1. Please check <http://scnps.org/lowcountry-2017-2018-community-project-grant-application-info> for details.

Kim Morganello
Lowcountry President

Fall Native Plant Sale!

Saturday, October 21, 9 am - 12 noon

SCNPS Members can start shopping at 8:30! Volunteers can shop at 8:00!

**Charles Towne Landing parking lot
1500 Old Towne Road, Charleston 29407**

We have a great selection of native plants with many hard-to-find species... colorful perennials, shrubs, trees, grasses, ferns and edibles. Cash, check, or credit card accepted. A plant list will be available before the sale on the SCNPS website. Admission to the plant sale is free. If you wish to explore Charles Towne Landing State Historic Site, please pay admission in the visitor center. For more information, or to volunteer, please contact Eddie Bernard at edbernard@aol.com or 843-270-1112 or visit scnps.org.

LECTURE SERIES

Unless noted otherwise, monthly meetings for our lecture series are typically held on the **third Tuesday of the month** at **6:30 pm** at the **Biology Auditorium, 101 Duckett Hall, at The Citadel**. See map at <http://www.citadel.edu/root/visitor-parking> Yellow indicates visitor parking. Attendees may also park in the lot just below the Hagood Gate. ***Please join us after each lecture for a reception, including hors d'oeuvres and wine, plus native plant giveaways!***

Tuesday, September 19: Tidal Wetlands of the Ashley & Cooper Rivers

Norm Shea and Sharleen Johnson, South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR)

To accommodate larger container ships, the Charleston Harbor Deepening Project plans to increase channel depths, from the existing 47 ft to up to 54 ft, and to extend the entrance channel 3 miles seaward. Predicted changes to the environment resulting from the deepening were modeled under a range of scenarios, and these models identified potentially significant changes to salinity in certain wetland habitats. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wetland Impact Assessment concluded that tidal freshwater marshes (< 0.5 ppt) would experience a shift toward species more commonly found in oligohaline (0.5-5.0 ppt) marshes. SCDNR was contracted by USACE to document the plant communities present along a salinity-elevation gradient in the Cooper and Ashley river systems prior to the start of the harbor deepening project, to serve as a baseline for evaluating changes in these plant communities that may result from the deepening. Norm and Sharleen, biologists with SCDNR, will share photos and stories of their experiences visiting 120 wetland sites in the two river systems during the Fall of 2016 and Spring of 2017.

Tuesday, October 17: Rediscovering the Lowcountry Landscape in the Footsteps of Our Forebears

Dr. Richard Porcher, Author/Historian and Celie Dailey, Author/Artist

NOTE: This lecture will take place at Charles Towne Landing's Founders Hall, 1500 Old Towne Road, in honor of South Carolina Native Plant Week. Doors will open at 5:30 pm, with the program to begin at 6:30 pm, with a reception to follow. This event is free for SC Native Plant Society and Audubon members and sponsors. Guests are welcome for a \$5 donation.

Man and nature have shaped the Lowcountry landscape ever since Native Americans arrived eleven thousand years ago. Native Americans created calcium-rich shell middens, where a rare community, the maritime shell forest, developed. Beginning in the late 1700s, enslaved Africans banked, then cleared, 150,000 acres of tidal freshwater swamp where rice was planted. The abandoned fields today are mostly marsh communities, supporting a plethora of wildlife and wildflowers. Many acres of uplands that were cleared for agriculture today support diverse secondary forests, a community unknown before first contact, but nonetheless rich in wildlife. Coastal rivers and uplands were mined for phosphate, leaving the landscape not unlike a bomb-scarred battlefield, but with a beauty of its own. Introduced invasive species, like Chinese tallow tree, have altered the native landscape. Prescribed fire today, replacing for the most part natural fires, has maintained the longleaf forests in their natural state, treasures for wildlife lovers. Man and nature have worked together to produce today's Lowcountry landscape, a rich and diverse landscape that offers much for the naturalist to behold and enjoy.

Tuesday, November 14: Seabeach Amaranth

Mike Walker, SC Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Seabeach amaranth is an annual plant that lives fast and dies young; no other vascular plant grows closer to the ocean waves. Eliminated from two thirds of its historic range, it is now federally listed as a threatened species. Mike Walker, interpretive ranger at Huntington Beach State Park, will speak on how the park has worked with a variety of public and private partners over the years, including the SC Department of Natural Resources, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Coastal Ecoscapes, Brookgreen Gardens, and local school students, to restore populations by transplanting greenhouse-raised plants back to the beach, helping to ensure a future for this fugitive species.

FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, September 23, 11:00am – 3:00pm

Ashley River Paddle to View Native Wetland Plants

Leader: Nature Adventures Outfitters, Norm Shea, Sharleen Johnson

We'll meet at the Herbert Jessen public boat landing on the Ashley River, at the end of Ladson Road in Summerville. By kayak, we'll explore the flora and fauna that call tidal freshwater marshes home, visit at least one of the SCDNR wetland plant monitoring transects, and paddle past the Colonial Dorchester State Historic Site. Pack a lunch or hearty snack for eating on the way. Contact Katie Ellis at kathryn.k.ellis@gmail.com or 843-906-9916 to sign up and receive carpool info. Note: You MUST CALL NAO directly at 843-568-3222 to register and pay for the guided trip. Fee includes a 4-hour paddle with Nature Adventures guides (but does not include gratuities). Bring your own boat + guide fee: \$20, Rent a kayak + guide fee: \$50.

Saturday, October 21, 9:00am – 12:00pm

Fall Native Plant Sale!

Charles Towne Landing (see front page for details)

Saturday, November 18, 10:00am – 2:00pm

Huntington Beach State Park

Leader: Mike Walker, SC State Parks

Located on the lower end of the Grand Strand, Huntington Beach State Park contains 2,500 acres of coastal preserve that supports a diverse assemblage of flora and fauna. Take a guided tour with a park ranger through some of the habitats found within the park, including sand beaches and sand dunes, maritime forest communities, and salt, brackish, and freshwater marsh ecosystems. We will also learn about the park's efforts to restore degraded habitats like Sandpiper Pond and Mallard Pond, and recent pollinator garden initiatives with the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Admission fee to the park is \$5 per person OR free with your SC State Parks Pass. There is no group size limit; however, please RSVP to Katie Ellis (especially if you are interested in carpool information) at kathryn.k.ellis@gmail.com or 843-906-9916.

Tuesday, December 12, 6:30 pm, location TBD

SCNPS Lowcountry Chapter Holiday Party

This event is sure to be a good time! Each year around the holidays, we gather as a chapter to share merriment, good cheer and, of course, delicious food! As the time nears, we will announce the event location and additional details. Please stay tuned for updates to this and other events, which will be announced via our website, email, Facebook and postcards.

Lowcountry Chapter Board Members

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