



December 2011

The November fieldtrip to Lynches River County Park on a beautiful fall day was filled with delights unexpected in a local operation. The park has the only canopy walkway in South Carolina, a series of safe but bouncy wooden walks that led from tree to tree, all accessible without having to climb up to the start. This afforded us views at tree-level well above the ground below. In the Environmental Discovery Center we appreciated the attractive display of natural items that tempted young and old to touch and learn, including a set of furs from most of our native mammals that we could feel and try to guess their source. SCAN members enjoyed scrambling down the bluff and prowling among cypress knees, a few taller than people, in the dry floodplain by the lovely Lynches River. There we found a branch covered with Velvet Blue Spread, a brilliant royal-blue fungus covering one side of a decaying branch, and Claudia found a dead snake curled up in a hole in the bottom of a tree. The park has several well-tended level walking trails in the upland region, and the undergrowth was sparse enough to encourage wandering off the trails. After lunch overlooking the river, we drove to the far end of the park to the sandy region where longleaf pines are being planted in hopes of providing habitat for Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. Among the pines and oaks were a “specimen plant” of bluestem grass with pappus sparking in the sun, Parsley Hawthorn, and a black ground beetle running over Tom’s foot. Later we assembled at the Schoolhouse Bar-be-cue in Scranton for food that included a fine array of side dishes. We thank Claudia Rainey for planning this interesting trip.

Please note that the December trip will be on the second Saturday, December 10, so as not to interfere with the holiday season.

Jan Ciegler, Vice-president

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Unfortunately, I was not able to attend the trip to Lynches River County Park and I’d like to thank Jan for providing a summary of the trip for us.

CHANGE IN THE DECEMBER VENUE! Once again we have run into a problem with scheduling our December trip to a Wildlife Management Area. Wayne recently found out that Bear Island will be closed to visitors, except for one viewing platform. However, Donnelley WMA, also located in the ACE Basin, will be open on December 10th, so we will be visiting Donnelley instead. We last visited Donnelley in December 2009, but hopefully the weather will be nicer this time. Also, bear in mind that US Highway 17 through the ACE Basin is currently being widened, so you may want to follow Wayne’s directions through Green Pond to avoid potential delays.

Gordon

**DONNELLEY WMA
COLLETON COUNTY (GREEN POND)
DECEMBER 10, 2011; 10:30 AM**

We will meet at the WMA Office just off US Highway 17 in Green Pond. Bring your binoculars as there is good birding over the extensive freshwater marsh. There is a 1.5 mile loop trail here. You should see many green orchids also. On the down side are Popcorn Trees.

Later we will move to a chain of 4 depression wetlands off Pineland Road were we should see a diverse habitat including *Ilex cassine*, *Sarracenia minor*, and maybe some *Rynchospora*. Some of the folks who saw this area in 2009 on a very rainy day were taken with the beauty of the wetlands.

Don't be surprised if you jump some deer in the high grass. The surrounding pine savannah offers much room for exploring.

After a stop at the Deer Check Station for the restrooms we'll drive on down Blocker Road to the restored Irrigation Trunks and Old Rice Fields for some more spectacular birding.

At the end of our day we'll meet at Dukes BBQ at 949 Robertson Road in Walterboro which is straight back up SC Route 303 through Walterboro and then turn right at the Walgreens and look for Dukes on the left just a short ways after your turn. As usual bring bug dope, water, snacks, a hand lens, and binoculars. The walking should be easy.

Take I-95 to Walterboro, follow SC Route 64 and US Highway 15 (Jeffries Blvd), then turn south on SC Route 303 to Green Pond, zig to the left over US Highway 17, and zag back to the right following the signs to Donnelly WMA..... Or pick up US#17 anywhere on the southside of Charleston and follow it down to Green Pond.