



March 2015

Hello everyone,

Our first trip of 2015 found us at the Santee National Wildlife Refuge. It was sunny most of the day with highs in the low 50s and a steady breeze that made it feel much cooler. Once again we had a great turnout that included Caroline Eastman, Shannon Edwards, Mary Douglass, Tom Jones, Pat and Jerry Bright, Wayne Grooms, Claire and Dave Schuetrum, Kathy Boyle, Bill Hamel, Kitty Beverly, Virginia Winn, Kim McManus, Paul Kalbach, and Gordon Murphy. We were joined by Paul Thomas and Katie Rittenhouse. Paul is conducting herptile surveys and Katie is performing bird counts at the refuge.



Initially we were to explore the Pine Island Unit but with all of the rain that has fallen recently, it was too wet, so we decided to explore the Cuddo East Unit. While gathered at the visitor center for our introductory meeting, Paul told us that sandhill cranes had recently been seen in the Bluff Unit, so of course we had to go check this area out first. The one-mile long Wrights Bluff Nature Trail that leads to the observation tower passes through an area that was once dominated by mature pine trees, prior to hurricane Hugo. Now early successional hardwoods are dominant. There are two boardwalks over flooded wetlands and the trail loops around by a part of Lake Marion. Unfortunately we did not see the sandhill cranes but we did see quite a few other birds including meadow larks, a northern harrier, and a couple of bald eagles.



Following a quick lunch in the visitor center parking lot, we drove over to the Cuddo Unit. Some drove straight to the Otter Trail while others took a leisurely drive stopping along the way to look for sparrows in the fields and exploring the wetland areas along the way. Even with the cooler temperatures, we did see at least one alligator sunning in the Alligator Alley area. The group hiked the North Loop of Otter Trail. There was a great blue heron rookery in a flooded area next



to the trail. The Cuddo East Unit has a variety of habitats including open fields, upland pine forest, wet pine flatwoods, bottomland hardwoods, wooded swamp, freshwater marsh wetlands, and open water (Lake Marion).

We ended the day with good food at Lonestar Barbecue and Mercantile. Thanks go to Caroline Eastman for scouting and hosting the trip!

This month we have two trips scheduled, one to Devils Fork State Park and one to the Woodbury Tract, in Marion County. The trip to Devils Fork State Park is a Regional Director's Special and will be led by Rita Zollinger. Originally we were going to spend the weekend at Ark Lodge, an outparcel of the Woodbury Tract, for our regular outing. The Lodge will not be available that weekend, but we will still explore the Woodbury Tract where we should see pondspice and pondberry in bloom. I will schedule a President's Special in either April or May for an overnigher to Ark Lodge.





In search of the Oconee Bells, *Shortia Galacifolia*

Devils Fork State Park on Lake Jocassee - We will meet Saturday March 14, 2015 at the Marina's upper parking lot at 10:30. Restrooms are available.

Devils Fork State Park is one of the few spots to find the rare Oconee Bells. Mid-March is the best time to observe this rare flower in bloom. We will walk through a predominantly hardwood forest. The trail meanders alongside a creek which hosts the perfect habitat for the *Shortia*.

Wild ginger hiding their little brown jugs and the spicy scents of the Monotrophs can also be found. Further along the trail we will encounter a secluded pond to explore. Bald eagles are regularly seen at the lake.

Directions:

34.951568, -82.948214 - 161 Holcombe Circle, Salem, SC 29676

<https://www.google.com/maps/dir/34.9201587,-82.951141/34.9519624,-82.9452972/@34.9515482,-82.9431668,15z/data=!4m2!4m1!3e0>

From I-85 at the NC line:

Travel south to Hwy 11 exit at Gaffney and proceed on Hwy 11 for approximately 90 miles
Turn right on Boone Creek Road. Keowee Towne service station is on the right. Go 0.9 miles
Turn Right on Lake Jocassee Rd. Travel 2.7 miles.

From I-26 Asheville, NC or Spartanburg:

Take exit 5 onto Hwy 11 to Campobello. Travel for approximately 60 mi.
Turn right on Boone Creek Road. Keowee Towne service station is on the right. Go 0.9 miles
Turn Right on Lake Jocassee Rd. Travel 2.7 miles.

From Columbia:

Follow I-26 W
After Exit 52, take left fork onto to I-385 N E N St in Greenville.
Take SC-183, Shady Grove Rd, SC-133, SC-11 S
Turn right at Keowee Towne onto Boone Creek Road 0.9 mile.
Turn right onto Jocassee Lake Road/State Rd S-37-25 2.7 miles.

The Devils Fork State Park entrance fee is \$2 for adult, \$1.25 for Seniors and free for children under 15 years of age.

Good Eats at **Aunt Sues** after a day of exploring. Aunt Sue's is 6 miles from Devil's Fork State Park on Hwy 11. 107 Country Creek Drive, Pickens SC 29671. Phone: (864) 878-4366

Rita Zollinger (864) 706- 6548 See you at Devils Fork State Park!

Woodbury WMA
Marion County, March 28, 2015
(Meet at the Kiosk at 10:30)

This month we will be exploring habitats at the Woodbury Wildlife Management Area. Woodbury is an over 25,000 acre finger of land bounded by the Great Pee Dee River to the west, the Little Pee Dee River to the east, and US 378 to the north. SCAN has visited here before and as mentioned earlier, this will not be an overnight trip as originally planned because Ark Lodge will not be available. However, I have been in touch with Francis Ervin and we are trying to schedule another weekend trip in either April or May. If we go in May we should see the *Mcbridea* blooming along the road to the Lodge.

For those who have not been to Woodbury before, there are many habitats present including Carolina bays, wooded swamp, wet pine flatwoods, oxbow lakes, bottomland hardwoods, xeric pine habitat, depression wetlands, and of course, the rivers. Attached is a false-color infrared aerial photograph of Woodbury (courtesy of SCDNR). The dark “signatures” are wetland areas dominated by deciduous vegetation and red signifies evergreen vegetation. With a little practice you can learn to distinguish between upland pine forest and wetland areas dominated by evergreen vegetation such as gallberry, *Lyonia*, *Gordonia*, and pond pine.

Two specific areas that we will be exploring on the 28th are a depression wetland where we should see pondspice and pondberry blooming, and a xeric pine area located on a high ridge. We have visited this depression wetland before but it was during the fruiting season for the pondberry. I took a group from the Native Plant Society to the xeric pine area but SCAN has not been there before.

Restroom facilities are not available and you will have to bring drinking water. We will be returning to our vehicles around lunch time so no need to pack food in to the wetland. SCDNR does a good job of maintaining the roads at Woodbury, however with all of the rain we’ve gotten lately they may be a little rough so I recommend driving vehicles with decent ground clearance.

Cell phone coverage is spotty, but if you get lost, give me a call at 803-447-0547.

I haven’t decided where we’ll be having dinner so it will be a surprise.

DIRECTIONS TO WOODBURY

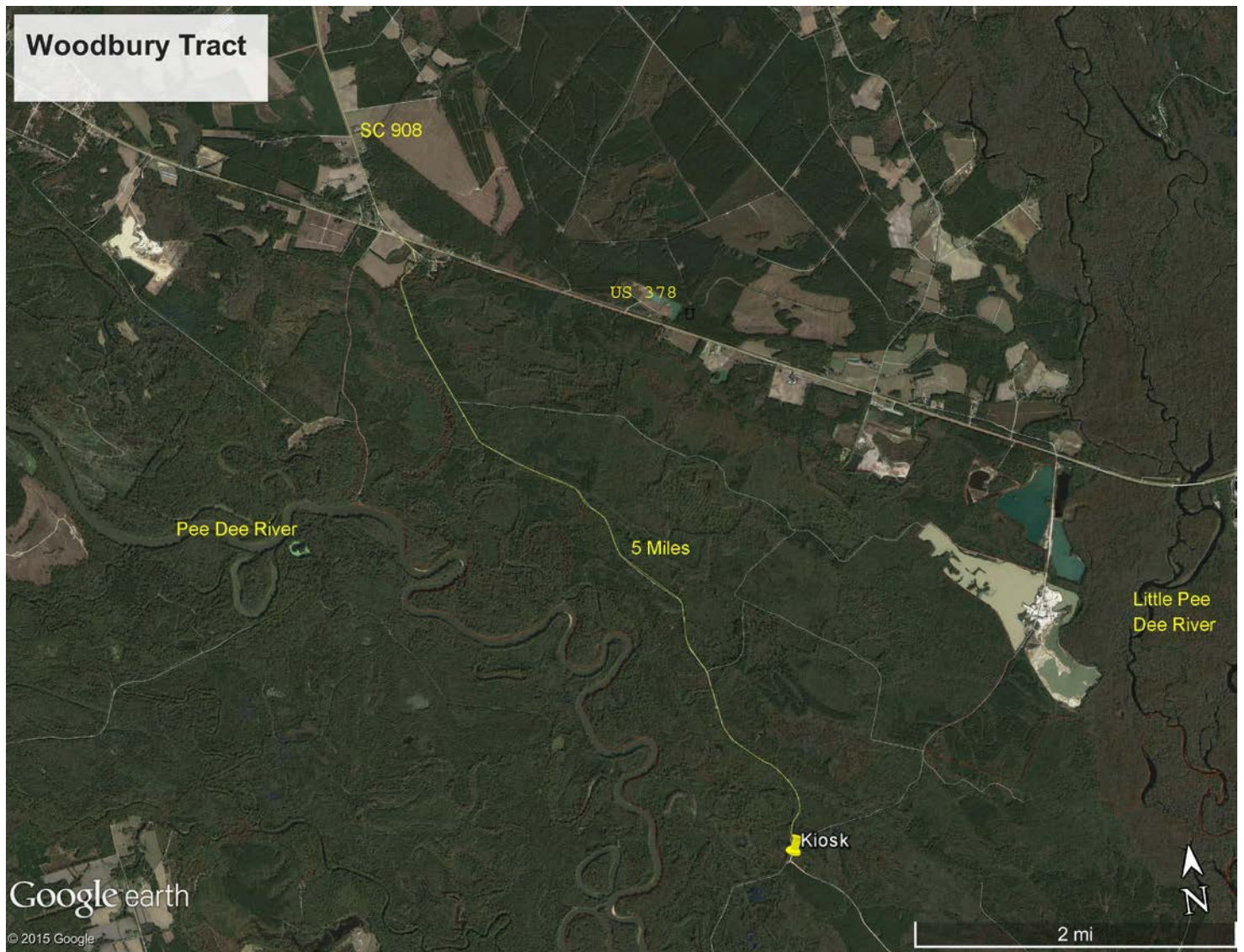
From Marion (US 76/US 501 Business intersection): Take US 501 Business south for approximately 2.4 miles then turn right onto SC 41 ALT. Follow SC 41 ALT approximately 12.5 miles then turn left onto SC 908. Travel approximately 7.5 miles to the intersection of US 378/SC 908 and go straight across US 378 onto Old Neck Cemetery Road/Woodberry Road. Follow Woodberry Road approximately 5 miles to the Kiosk.

From Lake City (US 378/US 52 intersection): Take US 378 east for approximately 28.3 miles and turn right onto Old Neck Cemetery Road/Woodberry Road at the US 378/SC 908 intersection. Follow Woodberry Road approximately 5 miles to the Kiosk.

From Conway (US 378/US 501 Intersection): Take US 378 west approximately 16.5 miles and turn left onto Old Neck Cemetery Road/Woodberry Road at the US 378/SC 908 intersection. Follow Woodberry Road approximately 5 miles to the Kiosk.

Woodberry Road/US 378 intersection coordinates are 33.865385, -79.332551

Kiosk coordinates are 33.805725, -79.299822



Woodbury WMA

