



SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF NATURALISTS

SCAN

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## June 2024

### **The Prez Says:**

We had great trips with some great sightings this May. There is a lot to say this month!

If you were at Hell Hole and haven't had time to send in your species list, we're giving you another month to turn in your homework! Some of the photo junkies (I think you know who we are) have not finished identifying everything photographed. Meaning, **we'll be sending out the June species lists next month**. That gives everyone plenty of time to work through their backlog of photos, upload observations to iNaturalist, and get species lists over to the Database Manager. It's always cool when SCAN gets to add new species to our database – get those species lists in!

We are slowly trying to bring outreach into our regular list of events. Not only is our mission to gather information on the natural history of SC but also to share that information! On Saturday, June 8th, SCAN had a table at Cypress Garden's Conservation Day. The SCAN table was manned by myself, Greg Ross, a super-friendly box turtle named "Postie", and a shy young gator. SCAN's Secretary and Southern Regional Director, Tom Austin, manned the Carolina Butterfly Society table (which shares a good number of members with SCAN). Tom also gave an interesting presentation, "Pollinator Gardening for Butterflies in the SC Lowcountry." Gabe Schuler, fellow SCANNER and on staff naturalist at Cypress Gardens was manning the table for ARC (the Amphibian and Reptile Conservancy). Clemson Extension was there as well to get the word out about the Asian Longhorn Beetle infestation in Hollywood, SC and other new invasive insect threats species. Truthfully, Tom, Greg, Gabe, and I floated between all of our tables and educated Cypress Gardens visitors about all things nature!

Please consider attending June's trip to Vereen Memorial Gardens in Horry County. SCAN has not visited Horry County all that often over the years and I think it's time to see what they offer beyond Myrtle Beach. Let's hope for a relatively cool summer's day!

*Lee Morris, President*

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### **Last Month: Hampton Plantation State Historic Site**

This May, eight folks made it out to Hampton Plantation State Historic Site in Charleston County for our Saturday soodle and we had a great time exploring the ecologically diverse and history rich site. The birds were singing, the flowers were blooming, the bees a buzzing, the butterflies flying, and the weather was wonderful! Then when we wrapped up and headed for Hell Hole, the skies let loose with hail. Yet, it was bone dry back at camp. (Typical Charleston weather.) Back at camp, we reconvened with the main group for food, fellowship, and festivities.

*Tom Austin, Secretary & Southern Regional Director*

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### **Last Month: Hell Hole**

Our annual camping trip to Hell Hole Swamp was a resounding success this year! The weather was in the mid to high eighties with occasional showers. The roads were repaired, so we were able to cruise many of the roads that were impassible last year. We didn't see very many snakes but we certainly had fun looking for them! Both the trumpet and hooded pitcher plants were in bloom in Florida Bay. The light traps provided nightly entertainment, with campers gathering around to see who came to visit. Surprisingly, we didn't hear as many Chuck-will's-widows around the campsite as we usually do.

The Forest Service was clearing the roadside on Hell Hole Road, so the verges were disturbed. A night walk with Parker Gibbons proved that the Water Moccasins were still in the ditches, though! We're very excited to see how the habitat rebounds next year.

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the potluck dinner Saturday night. The food was fantastic and the conversation entertaining, as always.

*Kim McManus, Database Manager*

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### **June's Outing: Vereen Memorial Gardens**

For our June outing, we're heading east to Vereen Memorial Gardens in Horry County, just a stone's throw from the North Carolina border. We are going to be joining the masses and head for the coast just a couple days after the summer solstice. We will meet there in the upper parking lot, immediately on the right once you get off of the main road, at our normal time of 10:30am on Saturday June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024.

We'll be close to Myrtle Beach and Calabash, NC. So, there will be plenty of food options for the group and we can discuss where we all want to eat in person prior to departure.

*Todd Johnston, Eastern Regional Director*

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### **Conservation Day 2024 at Cypress Gardens**

Special thanks to Greg Ross and Lee Morris for volunteering on 6/8/2024 to help represent SCAN at Cypress Gardens' Conservation Days event. This is the second year in a row SCAN has had a presence at this event. We had a good time providing outreach to the public and spreading the good word of SCAN. Tom (me) also gave a presentation to attendees on "Pollinator Gardening for Butterflies in the SC Lowcountry." My slides, handouts, and a recording of the presentation are available at: <https://edisto.org/butterfly/>

If you know of any upcoming conservation events or nature festivals in your neck of the woods, and you'd like to represent SCAN or need friends to help you volunteer, please reach out to Tom Austin at [scnaturalists76@gmail.com](mailto:scnaturalists76@gmail.com). SCAN can provide you with outreach materials for tabling and other public events.

*Tom Austin, Secretary & Southern Regional Director*

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## Hell Hole Campground



**Attendees:** Kim McManus, Randy McManus, Lee Morris, Barbara Foster, Frank Fleming, Kate Fleming, Patrick Hade, Ty Hade, Eddie Hade, Andrew Lazenby, Paul Baker, Parker Gibbons, Eric Bitler, Stephen Prior, Paul Wightman, Mary Wightman, Oliver Wightman, Lauren Nagy, Rachel Kalbach, Amanda Kalbach, Tess Moody, Sharon Watson, Alison Smith, Dave Kastner, Marty Kastner, Tom Austin, Jennifer Fill, Gloria Wu, Rick Busch, Andrea Busch, Mandy Johnson, Sharon Yomtob, Stephen Crofts, Greg Ross, Maddie Prickett, Sara McAllister, Ken Pott, Cynthia Giles, and Hal Giles. *Apologies if we missed your name, it's a big list!*

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## Hampton Plantation State Historic Site



**Attendees:** Ron Ahle, Angela Valvasori, Tom Austin, Bill Twomey, Dave Schuetrum, Alison Smith, and Marty & Dave Kastner

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## Hampton Plantation State Historic Site



Decisions decisions! The number of ecosystems at Hampton Plantation was surprisingly diverse. (Photo: Tom A.)



The Big House. (Tom A.)



Mississippi Kite *Ictinia mississippiensis* (Tom A.)



Broad-winged Skipper *Poanes viator* (Ron A.)



Burnt Orange Bolete *Tylopilus balloui* (Tom A.)



Clubbed Mydas Fly *Mydas clavatus* (Ron A.)

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## Francis Marion National Forest – Hell Hole



The turnout at Hell Hole Campground on Saturday evening was stupendous! (Tom A.)



And, after a multi-year hiatus, we all enjoyed the return of the Hell Hole potluck dinner. (Tom A.)



Eastern Glass Lizard *Ophisaurus ventralis* (Tom A.)



Southern Black Widow *Latrodectus mactans* (Tom A.)



Lee Morris and Sharon Watson at the blacklight. (Kim M.)



A fluorescent Millipede. So much of the world shines in UV, hidden from our eyes. (Kim M.)



Eastern Box Turtle *Terrapene carolina carolina* (Kim M.)



Yellow Rat Snake *Pantherophis alleghaniensis* (Kim M.)



Prothonotary Warbler *Protonotaria citrea* (Kim M.)



Round-headed Katydid *Amblycorypha* sp. (Kim M.)



Georgia Satyr *Neonympha areolatus* (Kim M.)

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## Cypress Gardens' Conservation Day 2024



Greg Ross, Lee Morris, and Tom Austin represented SCAN at Cypress Gardens' Conservation Day event. *(Tom A.)*



Thank you, Gabe Shuler, for the invite to attend! *(Lee M.)*



Greg, Lee, & Tom all bounced between the SCAN, CBS, and SCPARC tables interpreting. *(Lee M.)*



Live reptiles always help with engagement! *(Lee M.)*



Tom gave a presentation on butterfly gardening. *(Lee M.)*



Apparently, Butternut Squash is a good emergency host plant substitute for Monarch caterpillars, weird! *(Tom A.)*

# Vereen Memorial Gardens

HORRY COUNTY, SC

2250 Highway 179, Little River, SC 29566

[ 33.8844, -78.5980 ]

*June 22, 2024 - 10:30am to 4:00pm*

Originally a 400-acre plantation started by descendants of French Huguenots, 114 acres were donated to the Horry County Historical Commission by Jack Vereen in 1972, which became Vereen Memorial Gardens. The historical significance of the property starts with its cemetery where several Revolutionary War soldiers were buried. Further, the original post road between Boston and Charleston, The King's Highway, passed through the preserved acreage. Read more about The King's Highway [HERE](#).

The gardens start on a slightly elevated mixed forest on sandy soil. It slopes down towards the Intracoastal Waterway and the salt marsh. On one side of the property is a pond that adds some variety to the hike back up to the parking lot.

There is a trail that loops around the perimeter of the property and is under 3 miles long. The trail surface is made up of packed sand, pine straw, or boardwalks. There are many spurs that break off and return to the trail at various points. It's pretty shaded along most of the trail until you traverse the boardwalks, so be sure to bring along sunscreen for protection. There are benches at several places along the trail. Portable toilets are in the lower parking lot close to the boardwalks. There are also porch swings, a gazebo, and several pavilions. They allow dogs and you can also ride bicycles everywhere but the boardwalks.

Unless you live in North Carolina, most everyone will be traveling north on Highway 17 from the greater Myrtle Beach area. You will see signs for a very nice South Carolina Welcome Center that will be on the opposite side of HWY-17 (I highly recommend stopping at the welcome center instead of the *rustic* facilities at the gardens if you need a restroom break). After the sign for the visitor center, veer right onto SC-179. There will also be a sign that says "Calabash" which will be the direction you want to go for SC-179 and the gardens. Immediately on the right will be a turning lane once you turn off of HWY-17. Use that lane to enter the gardens and turn right again into the parking lot. The entry road is paved but the parking lot is unpaved. We will meet near the kiosk or nearest shady spot adjacent to the parking area. The GPS location of the garden is 33.8844, -78.5980.

Since this is the coast and its summer, I would recommend bringing bug spray and wearing long loose-fitting clothing. Dress for hot weather. Although I didn't encounter any insect issues, it pays to be prepared. There are also a lot of shells along the edge of the waterway, so please be aware if you plan to wear sandals.

Despite the encroaching developments that can be seen on all sides of the garden, there is a variety of species that can be found over the varied habitats, as shown in iNaturalist. (Check out those observations here: [INAT](#).) Hopefully we can contribute something new to the biodiversity total during our outing!

If you have questions or are in need of assistance, please contact:

Todd Johnston, *Eastern Regional Director*



