



# SCAN *South Carolina Association of Naturalists*

Post Office Box 5651, Columbia, South Carolina 29250-5651

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July 2012

Hello fellow SCANers,

We returned from Panama just in time to write the newsletter. We had a great time and many experiences that can only be told, as the newsletter is not a place to write a book.

Pat and I saw the long trip to Ashmore as an opportunity to go early and camp at the wonderful Pisgah Campgrounds. We arrived on Thursday and returned Monday. It was a great experience. We interacted with other campers and shared stories. We attended 2 campfire meetings. The first was a talk on the monarch butterfly. The other was a wonderful interactive discussion about edible flora. The kids were totally involved with similar plants that were poisonous that look like similar edible plants. I encourage you all to consider coming early to an area where the drive from home to the outing site is a long one.

I enjoyed the tutelage of Janie Marlow and Charlie Williams (AKA Michaux) on this outing. Of significance to me was the difference between spike and raceme blooming. A spike blooms from the top to the bottom and a raceme blooms from the bottom to the top. Every SCAN outing is a new learning experience.

Janie asked if she could be a speaker at our annual meeting to discuss her "Name that Plant" website. [www.NameThatPlant.net](http://www.NameThatPlant.net) Take a look. Below is what she wrote to me:

You asked if that is something that I would want to do, and yes, I would. I would because the site has features that people don't seem to know that it has, that I would like to demonstrate. NameThatPlant is better than it used to be, and it will be even better by January. If I were to speak, it would not be the Powerpoint presentation that I've done for groups in the past - I don't think that would be appropriate for SCAN. I think I'd probably work live off the site (I can do this with or without wifi).

I am looking forward to Janie's presentation at the meeting.

Some highlights from the outing:

- A wide variety of odonates.
- A turkey nest with 11 eggs. The turkey flew away.
- Waterfall
- Linda Lee and Wayne Grooms taking a swim.
- Some of the group made it to Chandler HP but I didn't so I have no report on their findings.
- BBQ diner.

Our favorite Yankee transplants, Bob and Marsha Hamlin, will be leading our next outing to Parson's Mountain. Their description follows. Be sure to bring the \$3 admission fee.

Jerry Bright

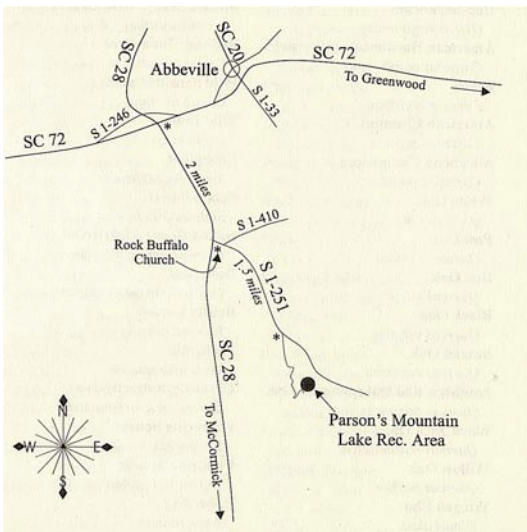


*Turkey eggs*

July 28, 2012 Parson's Mountain Lake Recreation Area in Abbeville County



**Directions to Parson's Mountain Lake Recreation Area:** From Abbeville, drive southwest on SC 72 for approximately two miles, then turn left (south) onto SC 28. Drive for approximately two miles and turn left onto Abbeville County S-1-251. The entrance to Parson's Mountain Recreation Area is 1.5 miles ahead on the right.



**Meet at 10:30** at the parking lot at the lake. There are restrooms and picnic tables at that location. Before you get to the parking area there is a day use fee box. There is no agent to collect the fee or make change. Be sure to **bring \$3.00 in exact change**.

**What to wear. What to Bring**  
Sturdy footwear (trail is rocky in some places), insect repellent, trail lunch/snacks, water, \$3.00 exact change, pen to fill out the parking form. A towel if you're going to swim.

**Other Considerations**  
There are picnic tables near the tower and at the parking area. The lake has a designated swim area and bathhouse with flush toilets and showers.

**Where we'll eat afterwards**  
**Maria's Mexican Restaurant**  
125 Court Square  
Abbeville, SC 29620  
(864) 366-6394

**Directions to Maria's from Parsons Mountain Lake Recreation Area**  
Return to Parson's Mountain Rd and turn left. Drive to Hwy 28 and turn right. Keep right on Hwy 28-Conn N Drive 2 miles to S Main St. and turn left. In 1/2 mile turn left on Hwy 20. Almost immediately turn left on Court Square. **Maria's** is on the right.  
**There is ample parking around the square.**



## Our April Visit to Parson's Mountain Lake Recreation Area

It was around 11 am on a sunny, cool (low 60s), and very windy day in April when we started walking around Parson's Mountain Lake. The easy 1.1 mile loop trail around the lake is relaxing and offers an exciting variety of flora along the route.

For those who want a little more difficulty and excitement in their day, a spur of moderate difficulty branches off the western side of the loop trail and goes to the top of Parson's Mountain. The spur takes hikers past abandoned gold mines from the Civil War era, and up to the fire tower on the top of Parson's Mountain. The abandoned gold mines are fenced off to keep anyone from falling into the mines.

The fire tower is also fenced off, but the gate was open. The trip up the steep, narrow, winding, creaky stairs of the tower is a way to add daring and scariness to your day. A windy day is guaranteed to increase daring and scariness. There are 2 picnic tables at the fire tower.

The OHV trail shown on the map stands for Off Highway Vehicle and is 12.6 miles of trail blazed in blue and maintained for all-terrain vehicles and dirt bikes. We did not use this trail. In taking The Parson's Lake Trail and its spur, we did encounter several places where the trail intersects or branches into other trails not shown on the map. This was a little confusing, but could offer additional trail length to distance seekers.

Before we went to Parson's Mountain, we consulted the SCAN book of 1999. Because we went in April, we saw many plants (*Chamaelirium luteum*, *Spigelia marilandica*, *Trillium discolor* and others) not included on the flora list which was compiled from a previous SCAN visit in July, 1994. We will not see those plants on this trip either, because we are going there in July again. This observation leads us to suggest an addition to the current policy of putting a certain number of years between visiting a given area. That addition might include that when we revisit a given area we put emphasis on going during a different month.

The plant highlight of the trip was American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) with its large leaves and showy display of catkins still tightly closed but beautiful. We even found 1 chestnut leftover from last year. For fauna it was the larval Lappet Moth (*Phyllodesma americana*). It is an unusual looking caterpillar and not often encountered.

Join us in July; you never know what you'll see.