

Welcome to the South Coast Chapter of the South Carolina Native Plant Society

We're a small Chapter started in 2008, but with strong membership. Our primary focus is the coastal community in which we live. We've had several successful field trips and plant sales since our inception. Our goal is to have at least three events a year. Most of our meetings are held in the field and coincide with our events.

As always with a fledgling organization, there is a need for a few proud officers. The Board is in need of assistance for booking field trips, newsletter writing, and a secretary/treasurer. The work load is minimal as we currently don't have a lot of activities. The more support, the more opportunities we have.

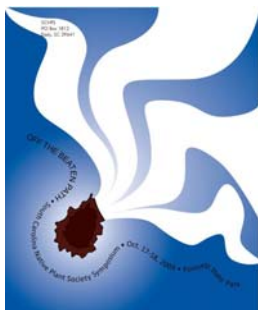
We are lucky to be able to take advantage of our location along the coast and appreciate the value of our native community. The roadsides and utility byways are a great chance for us to spot some hardy locals!

Upcoming Events

October 3 – Mushrooming Event at TCL Bluffton & Altamaha Heritage Preserve 9 – 10 am at TCL Bluffton
10:30 to 12 at Altamaha Heritage Preserve

October 10 – Native Plant Sale – location to be announced.

October 17 -18, 2009 -Native Plant Symposium at Poinsett State Park, near Columbia SC Log onto www.SCNPS.org/symposium.html



The Symposium will start Saturday morning with Dan Tufford who will speak about Carolina seeps and Dr. Pat DeCoursey about the urban forest.

Afternoon activities will be at or near the park. There will be a bog gardening workshop by Mike Creel and a naturoscaping workshop by Jean Woods. Afternoon field trips will investigate the mill pond at Poinsett, seeps at the park and nearby Carolina Bays.

Richard Hager, owner of Monticello Gardens, will be there with a selection of native plants for sale. Monticello Gardens is a midlands nursery in the town of Monticello.

On Sunday morning there will be a field trip to the Congaree National Park to see the big trees, a kayak trip to Sparkleberry Swamp and a field trip to the USC Belser Arboretum in Columbia.

For complete details and a registration form, please see our "Symposium at a Glance" brochure. The registration form can be completed and mailed with payment -OR -this year you can register by credit card online at <http://www.regonline.com/scnps2009>.



Mushrooms & Field Trip at TCL – New River Campus in Bluffton (Directions: http://www.tcl.edu/pdf/TCL_New_River_Map.pdf)

on October 3 from 9am to 10am.

Followed by a field trip the the Altamaha Heritage Preserve

The program will be presented by Tradd Cotter of Mushroom Mountain at TCL in Bluffton on Saturday October 3 at 9am to 10am. He will discuss Following the lecture, we will carpool to Altamaha Heritage Preserve to conduct our field trip. This will prove to be an event that will appeal to a wide audience. Before coming, take a moment to explore the Mushroom Mountain website:

www.mushroommountain.com For pictures of

mushrooms spotted in early September at the site our field trip try this link:
<http://picasaweb.google.com/beaufortphoto/AltamahaTowneHeritagePreserve>

Since space is limited, an RSVP response is required to attend the lecture and the field trip. RSVP by September 24 to southcoastscnps@yahoo.com.

Local DNR sites – Heritage Places –

In keeping with the focus of our Statewide Chapter's newsletter on Heritage Preserves, we are holding our Mushrooming event at the **Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve**
https://www.dnr.sc.gov/mlands/managedland?p_id=25



Named for a Yamasee Indian chief, this 100 acre preserve protects the main town of the Lower Yamasee which was rated 25th on the Heritage Trust Program's priority acquisition list for protection. The preserve's greatest attribute is its ability to provide archaeological data that has direct bearing on interpretation of the effects of European contact on Native Americans. Important questions regarding the effects of acculturation and migration upon late 17th and early 18th Century Native American life ways can be answered from data resting just beneath our feet. For these reasons the site was also listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1994.

Altamaha Towne Heritage Preserve is located off of Old Bailey Rd. in Beaufort County – near Spring Island. Coming from Beaufort, Old Bailey Road is exactly .5 miles on left after traffic light at the intersection of Beaufort Jasper Water Authority's offices and Callawassee. The Preserve is .7 miles down on the left hand side of Old Bailey Road. Map link :
https://www.dnr.sc.gov/mlands/directions?p_id=25

Please Note:

- Bring your own drinking water and a small basket for collecting samples for identification.
- No public facilities
- No natural or cultural material may be taken or disturbed
- Not wheelchair accessible
- Insect repellent is recommended



Fort Freemont Preserve

Use the following link for pictures:

<http://picasaweb.google.com/beaufortphoto/FortFreemont>

Fort Freemont Heritage Preserve is well worth the drive to get to its location on St. Helena Island. Its views near the mouth of the Port Royal Sound, spotted from atop the embankment, or from the beach access show the ideal location for the fort.

The South Coast Chapter has been approached for assistance in restoring some the native habitat. More as this project develops!

To be explored with future field trips and articles:

- **Bay Point Shoal Seabird Sanctuary**
- **Daws Island Heritage Preserve**
- **Fort Fredrick**
- **Greens Shell Enclosure Heritage Preserve**
- **Joiner Bank Seabird Sanctuary**
- **Old Island Heritage Preserve**
- **South Bluff Heritage Preserve**
- **Stoney Creek Battery Heritage Preserve**
- **Victoria Bluff Heritage Preserve**

**Meadow planting (excerpts from Sunsations
Article written by David Bateman
davidandmarilyn@hargray.com)**

Meadows conjure up memories of pleasant experiences to all of us who love nature; historically, they have been primarily used as a reference to a tract of low-lying moist grassland, dominated by various grasses interspersed with forbs (herbaceous flowering plants other than the grasses, sedges and rushes) and some woody plant material. The woody plant material was usually sparse, controlled by fire or mowing. The best examples of meadows in the United States were the Midwest prairies, Southeast Coastal Plain longleaf pine savannahs, and the “hay” meadows associated with 19th and 20th century small farms located in the Midwest and more northern latitudes. The meadow restoration movement that we are now seeing in Europe and to some extent in the United States had as its roots the dissatisfaction with predictable contemporary landscape designs, and the time, expense, and inorganic fertilizer applications that go along with its maintenance. Sections of grass are framed by well ordered sequences of ornamental shrubs and trees, all manicured in a predictable manner, and repeated regardless of region. Often, very little attention was given to the **natural** landscape of the region, the aesthetic needs of residents, and a landscape plan that is sustainable over time.



A typical longleaf pine savannah “meadow”.

Longleaf pine savannahs:

The longleaf pine savannahs of the southeast coastal plain meet the definition of meadows. When western man initially explored this area he found an ecosystem dominated by longleaf pine with an

undergrowth of diverse grasses and herbaceous wildflowers. The diversity of plant material rivaled those of tropical ecosystems. The longleaf pine ecosystems, except for a few remnants, have been eliminated by man’s endeavors. Turpentine production, lumbering, farming, and fire control virtually eliminated the longleaf pine, and its ecosystem. Fire was a critical component in perpetuating the prairie and longleaf ecosystems; fire enabled shorter plants to compete with taller more aggressive plants in trapping sunlight for photosynthesis; in this respect, fire had the same effect as periodic mowing for creating plant diversity. There were many variations of the longleaf ecosystem based upon conditions such as soil composition, water table depth, rainfall, and elevation changes.

Three outstanding longleaf restoration projects were developed at the Wade Tract in Thomasville GA, the Francis Marion National Forest near Awendaw, SC (18 miles north of Charleston), and the Green Swamp in southeast NC. The 200 acre Wade tract in Thomasville had longleaf pines representing 98% of the tree inventory; in addition, over 400 species of grasses and flowering plants were recorded in the undergrowth. A study at the Nature Conservancy’s Green Swamp in southeast North Carolina found an average of approximately 35 plant species per square meter. This is a degree of diversity greater even than the Midwest tall grass prairie. Botanists have determined that of the 1600 plant species restricted to the Southeast, approximately half are endemic to the longleaf pine ecosystem. The richness in plant diversity was also true for the animal kingdom represented in this ecosystem.

Small Scale Garden Project:

By its nature, restoration of a self-reproducing longleaf pine ecosystem would have to be done on a relatively large scale. However, a small plot of land of the size 50’ x 100’ could illustrate the longleaf pine plant community very nicely. The centerpiece, of course, would be the longleaf pine. Growing around it would be a broad representation of native plants associated with the ecosystem. Examples of native grasses that dominate in this ecosystem are: *Aristida stricta* (wiregrass), *Sporoborou*, and *Muhlenbergia*. Approximately 90% of the area in the longleaf community is covered by grasses,

primarily *Aristida*; the remainder is made up of forbs such as various *Aster* species, *Eupatorium* (e.g. joe-pye-weed), *Hypericum* (e.g. St. John's Wort), *Rhexia* (various meadow beauty species), *Solidago odora* (sweet goldenrod), *Polygala lutea* (orange milkwort), *Cleistes bifaria* (spreading pogonia), *Aletris farinose* (colicroot), *Sabatia* (marsh pink species), *Diosera capillaris* (sundews), and *Platanthera* (various orchid species). Woody plants such as *Vaccinium tenellum* (blueberry), *Ilex glabra* (inkberry), and *Myrica cerifera* (bayberry) would appear from time to time.

A small scale garden's main purpose would be to provide an illustration of plants associated with the longleaf ecosystem. Fire management would not be needed as it would not be designed to be self-perpetuating. Young longleaf pine(s) would have to be initially planted, as this tree develops a very long taproot that makes transplanting difficult. One can expect little top growth in the first five years after planting as the first few years of growth are confined to developing the taproot. After this period the tree will experience rapid growth. The garden would require maintenance at a moderate level; irrigation, mowing, periodic weeding, and mulching would have to be provided on a continuing basis. No fertilizer applications would be needed.

Try to visit one of the above mentioned restoration projects if you can! They each have a fantastic story to tell.

Thanks to our speaker for our Annual Meeting in March

Thomas Angell of Verdant Enterprises
<http://www.verdantenterprises.com>.

The meeting was well attended. With his power point presentation, Thomas Angell provided a terrific opportunity to look at naturalizing landscapes. He had some unique approaches to drainage issues and focused on the low maintenance of his designs.

Native plants are a vital component of their designs for many reasons. Basically, there are no plants better suited for any given region than the plants that have evolved here for millennia and adapted to the environmental conditions of a place. Natives require

much less water, pesticides and fertilizers in order to thrive in their home conditions than do most exotic plants. This reduces maintenance and long term costs of upkeep, while providing native habitat for regional wildlife.



Spring Plant Sale May 9th

Our spring plant sale held on Coosaw Island at Naturescapes was again successful. We saw lots of familiar faces and made acquaintances with some new ones.

Sponsoring Sea Oats in the classroom – Second Year

Our chapter has been a sponsor of the Sea Oats seedling program overseen by Daniel Liegey of Ladys Island Middle School. The first seedlings were planted at Hunting Island in September of 2008. The next crop will soon be ready.

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Newsletter

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