



Friends of Congaree Swamp News

Save the date

Adopt-a-trail workday

For our Paw Paw Workday on **Saturday, Aug. 23**, we will be clearing our adopted trails (Boardwalk Loop, Weston Lake Loop Trail, Oakridge Trail and Sims Trail) prior to Labor Day weekend.

Though the weather will be warm, trail-clearing duties will focus on lighter activities that have been overlooked in cleaning up from this year's ice storm, including cutting back switch cane. There are always some ripe paw paws to sample as a trail snack too.

We will meet at the Visitor Center at 9 a.m. and will finish about 1:30 p.m. Insect repellent, work gloves, light hiking boots, plenty of water, and a snack are recommended. If you have loppers, long-handled shears (good for switch cane)

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Potter's art combines love of history and nature

History and nature have fascinated Paul Moore since he was growing up in Hopkins. Making pottery is his way of combining the two while leaving his own legacy.

His early inspiration came from his grandmother's kitchen. Among her many pieces of crockery, he particularly remembers a blue glazed jar she kept salt in. That was the beginning.

Moore retired in 2001 after 28 years in state government.

"If you don't enjoy what you're doing, you need to change," Moore said. "There were many things I wanted to do after I retired—pottery was one."

So he took a class, one night a week for three weeks, and then struck out on his own. He discovered Newcomb College Pottery, a brand of American Arts & Crafts pottery produced from 1895 to 1940. The company grew out of the pottery program at Newcomb College, the women's college now associated with Tulane University in New Orleans, La.

Early Newcomb wares were uniquely a Southern American product. "The pots were to be well-designed, one of a kind, hand-thrown and hand-decorated utilitarian pieces," according to the Newcomb College Pottery website.

Moore had found his niche.



This vase is one of Moore's Congaree Swamp series.

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President's Corner

Dr. John Grego

Membership and Website Volunteers

We are looking for volunteers for a couple critical organizational tasks—to work on our website and maintain our membership database.

The membership database requires knowledge of Microsoft Access and document-merging in Microsoft Word. Among other tasks, the database manager prepares and mails quarterly membership renewal letters, prepares mailing labels for newsletters, and provides updated email files.

Our website does not need to have constantly updated content, but does need to be redesigned, in part to accept donations, membership renewals and event registration. The website volunteer(s) should have experience with either website design or content management.

Please contact me via email (jrgrego@sc.rr.com) and I'll be happy to discuss details with you and put you in contact with our current database manager and website manager, who are anxiously standing by to assist in the transition.

Foundation Statement

The park's General Management Plan, its guiding policy document, dates from 1988. In our Spring 2010 newsletter, then-superintendent Tracy Swartout wrote an article describing the process to create a new General Management

Plan. In recent years, the park service has found the process to develop General Management Plans too burdensome, and instead has encouraged the development of Foundation Documents.

Though streamlined, the Foundation Document still serves as the basis for the park's planning and management, and protection of its resources. Congaree staff has been developing a draft Foundation Document and recently shared the draft with advocacy groups prior to releasing it for public comment. The park recently released the revised draft and we encourage independent comments from our members while we coordinate official Friends of Congaree Swamp comments with those of other groups involved with the park.

The draft document discusses the park's Mission, Purpose and Significance, its Fundamental Resources and Values, its Interpretive Themes, and includes an analysis of each of the Fundamental Resources and Values.

In the draft, the Fundamental Resources and Values are:

- Bottomland Hardwood Forest
- Big Trees
- Floodplain
- Cedar Creek
- Biodiversity
- Wilderness
- Historic and Prehistoric Sites
- Human Interaction with the Land (listed as Other Important Resource or Value)

In our comments, we shared some ideas on the above list and provided feedback on the analysis of each resource, which included an itemization of Current Conditions, Trends, Threats and Opportunities. In general, we felt the Current Conditions and Trends were under-developed, and that the document's focus was too often on local rather than regional significance of the Fundamental Resources and Values.

This document will guide management and planning decisions at the park for years to come, and we look forward to the next steps in its development.

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Friends of Congaree Swamp advocates for Congaree National Park and its unique environment.

Dr. John Grego, President

Sharon H. Kelly, Editor

Potter

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His natural creativity has taken him through Asian and contemporary phases to the Palmetto maritime forest and now the Congaree Swamp influences. In fact, he sometimes makes pots from river mud. His pieces reflect the care and love of subject he instills in them.

His Scotch-Irish ancestors settled in Lower Richland in the mid-1700s and he was brought up there, about 12 miles from the Congaree Swamp.

“I’ve always loved the woods,” he said. “The forest provides so much. It’s the sanctuary of our Creator. There’s something holy about the woods.”

He’s keenly aware of the eternity of the forest, the

history it contains and the people it has sheltered.

“I wanted that connectivity, to preserve something of nature,” he said. “Pottery has been a part of every civilization. Hopefully, something I make will survive and people will look at it and know who made it.”

He’s done pottery exhibits at the State Museum, throwing pots in the same room where pottery by Dave, the slave potter from Edgefield, is displayed. He also does presentations at schools, teaches pottery classes and participates in Swamp Fest.

“It’s good to excite people about something they might want to try,” he said. “Pottery



Moore works on his next creation

is a communal thing. This is the venue to have that. It’s the best thing I could have ever done after retirement.”

Moore’s works are for sale at Southern Pottery on Devine Street and the gift shop at Congaree National Park.



Moore also enjoys creating bits of whimsy



Another of the Congaree Swamp series

Volunteers document 31 butterfly species

Dr. David Shelley
Education Coordinator
Congaree National Park

On Saturday, June 21, the Carolina Butterfly Society and the Old-growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center at Congaree National Park were hosts for the 2014 summer butterfly count program.

It was a wonderful day to be out in the park, and we would like to sincerely thank all those who helped out in the park and in Calhoun County.

This citizen science program enlists volunteers to help spot, identify, and count butterflies. We forward the day's data to the North American Butterfly Association (www.naba.org) where scientists will combine our data with hundreds of other lists to monitor ongoing changes in butterfly populations across the country.

A total of 14 volunteers contributed 84 hours as they scoured more than half a dozen sites in and around the park. Together these volunteers documented 209 individual butterflies of 31 species.

Numbers are noticeably lower this year than in the past. Observers aren't quite sure why, but there is some speculation that last winter's deep freeze and some of the early warming

(followed by freezing) may have reduced the populations.

One year of low numbers by itself is not a concern, but certainly we will watch future counts (including one planned at Congaree National Park for September!) to see if and when the numbers rebound. Scientifically speaking, it is important to document these low numbers so we have some real data to compare to past and future numbers.

The most exciting spot this year was a Harvester butterfly, whose larvae are the only strictly carnivorous caterpillars in the United States. It is listed in our official entomology collection, but this is the first time it has ever been actively documented on a butterfly count program.

A composite record of all the butterflies and numbers is listed below by common name:

Common Buckeye - 33
American Snout - 31
Pearl Crescent - 31
Sleepy Orange - 17



A Lace-winged Roadside Skipper nectaring on a Swamp Milkweed.

Hackberry Emperor - 14
Carolina Satyr - 11
Fiery Skipper - 6
White Checkered-Skipper - 6
Tawny Emperor - 6
Horace's Duskywing - 5
Eastern Tiger Swallowtail - 4
Lace-Winged Roadside Skipper - 3
Red-Banded Hairstreak - 3
Variegated Fritillary - 3
Question Mark - 3
Zebra Swallowtail - 3
Cloudless Sulphur - 3
Silver-spotted Skipper - 2
Gulf Fritillary - 2
Southern Pearly-Eye - 2
Red-spotted Purple - 2
American Lady - 2
Cabbage White - 2
Sachem - 1
Clouded Skipper - 1
Harvester - 1
Summer Azure - 1
Mourning Cloak - 1
Red Admiral - 1
Little Yellow - 1

Proposed permits endanger Toms Branch

Toms Branch, not to be confused with Toms Creek in Richland County that drains into the park, is a Lexington County stream that enters the Congaree River 1.5 miles downstream from Gills Creek.

Since the start of the year, two different permits have been posted for public comment that affect Tom's Branch—a 404 permit (i.e., a federal permit to fill wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act) by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and a NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) permit for wastewater discharge.

The 404 permit is needed as part of a plan to extend 12th Street farther east to connect with I-26. Currently, the 12th Street Extension ends at Old Wire Road, just west of Toms Branch. At the proposed crossing, floodplain wetlands extend a few hundred feet on either side of Toms Branch.

Rather than bridging a substantive portion of these wetlands, the crossing would construct 700 feet of embankment through the wetlands, and cross Toms Branch itself with a narrow bridge.

The project includes mitigation for wetlands impact, but the calculation of wetlands impact includes only the filled wetlands, and not wetlands upstream of the project that would be affected by the construction of an embankment that blocks 90 percent of the Toms Branch floodplain, and



Map shows Twelfth Street Extension, top right, and Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park, bottom left.

would impede movement of the Congaree River's floodwaters through the floodplain.

Friends suggested that the road alignment could be modified to substantially reduce the amount of embankment, and that a larger portion of the floodplain should be bridged. We also noted that the project lies entirely in the Congaree River floodplain and impacts on both floodplains should

be considered, rather than narrowly focusing on the effects on Toms Branch.

The NPDES permit renewal would allow Rolling Meadows Mobile Home Park to continue operation of its small private wastewater system, which discharges treated water into Toms Branch immediately upstream of the U.S. 21/176

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or bow saws, bring them along. Friends members and park staff will provide gear if you do not have any.

Contact John Grego, jrgrego@sc.rr.com or 803-331-3366, if interested.

Migratory bird hike

Join us **Sunday, September 28**, for a fall hike to look for migratory birds making their way back to the Caribbean, Central America and South America. This is also a good opportunity for final looks at some of our summer resident bird species.

During the hike, we will have the opportunity to practice audio identification skills, mostly of resident and summer species, and will be able to observe several species up close.

The hike will be part of the North American Migration Count for Congaree National Park, and our observations will be part of a statewide compilation. We plan to cover other areas of the park both preceding and following the hike and welcome additional volunteers.

The hike will begin at 8:30 a.m. and last until noon, following portions of the Sims Trail, Boardwalk Loop Trail and Bluff Trail. Meet at the Harry Hampton Visitor Center and bring water, insect repellent and binoculars.

Contact John Grego, jrgrego@sc.rr.com or

(803) 331-3366. Kathleen O'Grady will be co-leader.

Appreciate aquatic critters

The Aquatic Critters Appreciation Hike has been rescheduled for **Saturday, Oct. 4**, from 8:30 a.m. until noon. It's a rare opportunity to discover Congaree National Park's wide variety of aquatic life.

Dr. Jim Bulak, research coordinator at the S.C. Department of Natural Resources Fisheries Research Lab in Eastover, will lead the tour beginning at the South Cedar Creek Landing parking lot.

Bulak will organize a team to electrofish Cedar Creek at the canoe/kayak landing, and we will also visit sites along the Kingsnake Trail that encompass a number of other aquatic habitats. We will bring gear to stop at these sites and collect and discuss the fish, crayfish, insects, salamanders and other critters that live in them. A macroinvertebrate specialist will be along to assist with identification.

Inspection of the specimens at Cedar Creek will take about an hour. The rest of the hike will be mostly on-trail, but we will stop at aquatic sites along the way and enjoy other fall sights and sounds along the Kingsnake Trail, including fall migratory birds.

Participants should be in moderate physical shape. Bring water and insect repellent; long pants are recommended. Jogging shoes or light hiking boots are appropriate. If participants wish to assist with sampling, wading shoes or

boots would be helpful.

This hike is limited to 25 people. We will meet at the parking lot for the South Cedar Creek Landing and Kingsnake Trail off South Cedar Creek Road, and then join researchers collecting samples in Cedar Creek. To sign up, contact John Grego, jrgrego@sc.rr.com or (803) 331-3366.

Annual meeting

Friends of Congaree Swamp will hold its annual Oyster Roast and Business Meeting on **Sunday, October 26**, at Congaree Bluffs Heritage Preserve near Fort Motte in Calhoun County.

In addition to sharing sights overlooking Congaree National Park from the observation platform high above the Congaree River, there will be tours along the preserve's trail system, including visits to the regenerating longleaf pine forest, steep wooded ravines, and the river levee forest at the base of the bluff.

Roasted South Carolina oysters will be prepared by Bryan Tayara of Our Local Catch and Friends of Congaree Swamp members will prepare our usual DIY feast of chili, roast chicken, vegetarian selections, beverages and desserts. Look for registration materials soon.

Big tree hike

Visit some of Congaree National Park's signature big trees on **Saturday, November 8**, and check on the ongoing efforts to update the park's Champion Tree database.

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The research is coordinated by the park's Old-growth Bottomland Forest Research and Education Center and John Kupfer, a University of South Carolina geography professor. The park has been divided into more than 50 search areas and volunteers have been selected to search.

We will hike along the Weston Lake Loop Trail and Oakridge Trail with off-trail forays to see some familiar trees, including the National Champion Laurel Oak. We will also visit—and search for—potential champions of less conspicuous species. There's always an eligible paw paw tree out there waiting to be discovered.

In addition to tape measures and clinometers, we will have a laser range finder to demonstrate some of the measurement techniques used during the study.

Meet at the Visitor Center at 9 a.m. The hike will last until 2 p.m., so bring lunch and something to drink. Participants should be in good physical condition with sturdy foot wear. Total walking distance will be about seven miles, most of which will be on maintained trails. The hike will be limited to 30 people.

Contact John Cely at 803-782-7450 or jecely@sc.rr.com to sign up. Preference will be given to members of Friends of Congaree Swamp.

Spring burns benefit wildlife

Congaree National Park completed its controlled burn in early May, the second consecutive controlled burn it has conducted in late spring.

In both instances, private citizens have raised concerns about



Yellow star grass has been found blooming just two weeks after a burn.

conducting burns during the height of the nesting season for songbirds and game birds. However, increased scrutiny in the wildland fire research community during the past couple of decades indicates that burns late in the spring may not be as harmful as one might think, and such fires have tangible benefits as well.

Southeastern longleaf pine ecosystems are adapted to fire, and the

original source of these fires—lightning strikes—are more frequent in late spring and summer. Species such as Wild Turkey, Northern Bobwhite, Bachman's Sparrow and others are well adapted to fires during the lightning season.

Research has shown that fewer nests are lost than anticipated, even among ground-nesting species. And some species, including Brown-headed Nuthatch, nest early in spring, and hence are less likely to be affected by a controlled burn in late spring.

Long-term effects can include better habitat and improved food sources for both nesting species and wintering species. Further, these effects persist into the next year, including better nesting habitat for birds whose nesting cycle may have been disrupted by the current year's fire.

Toms Branch

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crossing. Rolling Meadows has not complied with its NPDES permit for 10 of the last 12 quarters, according to the Environmental Protection Agency's website. The facility has faced four informal enforcement actions over the last five years. Violations of the Safe Drinking Water Act are

similarly chronic.

Rather than focusing on the monitoring regime, our comments cited the 208 plan's goal to phase out small private wastewater treatment plants that are often chronic polluters, and suggested that the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control's enforcement actions move toward a schedule for retiring this private treatment system.



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Join Friends of Congaree Swamp today!

Yes, I want to support conservation of Congaree Swamp for future generations. Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of \$ _____ . (Please make checks payable to Friends of Congaree Swamp.)

_____ Individual \$15	Name(s) _____
_____ Family \$35 *	Mailing address _____
_____ Advocate \$50	City _____ State _____ Zip _____
_____ Partner \$100 **	Phone _____ Email _____
_____ Benefactor \$500	
_____ Patron \$1000	
_____ Nonprofit \$50	
_____ Corporate \$1000	

Please keep your information current to receive special notices about field trips, events, scheduling changes and acknowledgements in addition to a quarterly newsletter.

*For a contribution of \$35 or more, you may choose one:

Baseball cap maroon _____ tan _____

Tan visor _____

Bandana with map of Congaree National Park gold _____ yellow _____ red _____

**For a contribution of \$100 or more you will receive a copy of "The Natural History of Congaree Swamp."

In addition, I would like to donate \$ _____ as a gift.

Thank you for supporting Friends of Congaree Swamp!

Friends of Congaree Swamp, P.O. Box 7748, Columbia, SC 29202-7748
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