"Citizens Working Together For A Healthy Coast"

Coastal Review

Winter 2005

A Publication of the North Carolina Coastal Federation Volume 23 Number 1





New Year's Resolutions

Dear Friend of the Coast,

It's a New Year. Like everyone, the federation has made resolutions. Here are ten top priorities:

- Pursue laws to safeguard coastal waters: Water quality where we swim and shellfish is getting polluted. This dirty fact will be kept in front of lawmakers, and common sense proposals that target specific ways to turn the tide on this pollution will be proposed.
- Stop Stormwater Pollution: Stormwater is polluting our coast. "New" rules to implement federal stormwater standards are about to be adopted by the state. These measures repackage existing failed regulations. In 2005, the federation will challenge programs that perpetuate a facade of protecting the environment. Storm drains will be monitored, and we plan to challenge permits that allow pollution.
- Protect and Restore Oysters: Our work with dozens of government agencies and citizen organizations so that oysters are healthy and safe to eat will continue. We want oysters restored to the fabric of coastal life in North Carolina. We will buy land to protect sensitive watersheds, restore wetlands to keep growing areas clean, remove pipes polluting oyster beds, build new oyster reefs, and recycle oyster shells.
- Promote Living Shorelines: Replanting native plants, and where necessary, installing a speed bump called a rock sill, allows salt marsh to root and hold shorelines in place. Science shows "green" shorelines are alive with sea life while shores with bulkheads are biological deserts. Big demonstrations of living shorelines will be constructed at Carteret County Community College and at Morris Landing in Onslow County. We'll also work with government agencies to reduce regulatory disincentives that make it easier to build bulkheads than to use living shorelines to control erosion.
- Restore Wetlands and Forest Habitats: Work in the water and on the land on thousands of acres will put wetlands and native forests back where they belong to protect water quality. This work will focus on North River, White Oak River, and Stump Sound. Dramatic improvements to water quality should result.
- Pursue Environmental Law and Order: Our three Coastkeepers and dozens of volunteers will watch to make sure people and agencies abide by environmental standards. The proper authorities will be alerted to problems. We will also watch to make sure that regulatory agencies do their jobs – applauding when they do and crying foul when they don't. This year dozens of volunteers will be trained as watchdogs to help this effort along.

Keep the "Crystal" in Coastal Beaches: Mud and silt isn't beach quality material, and it should not be pumped on ocean beaches. Towns

on Bogue Banks learned this lesson when the US Army Corps of Engineers pumped mud and silt on its Crystal Coast. Instead of building up 12 miles of sandy beach, the slimy slippery mud wouldn't stick to the beach. Now about 3 miles of Atlantic Beach looks like the lunar landscape. We'll continue to push for the adoption of an enforceable sand compatibility standard for beach renourish projects to make sure beach renourishment projects don't destroy our native sands.

- Educate and Cultivate Environmental Stewards: School children and their teachers, as well as community organizations, will be the focus of our environmental educator. We'll increase our student salt marsh plant nursery program from seven to nine middle schools, include two schools in oyster restoration activities, participate in educational festivals, advocate the use of native plants in landscaping, and involve fishing clubs and community groups in environmental cleanups and restoration projects.
- Expand our Volunteer Network: Coastkeepers will each recruit another 25 volunteers to work with them in the three coastal regions. The restoration and education team will engage dozens of volunteers in hands-on restoration projects. Our volunteer coordinator will work to keep our office flush in volunteer administrative help. She'll also engage citizens in helping to clean up and maintain our properties and nature trails, plant 30,000 trees at North River Farms, staff community festivals and the State Fair, and thank all our volunteers for their contributions to the
- Diversify and expand our Steward and Funding Base: We will be stronger advocates for the coast by extending our outreach through our cable show and other media, and we will grow our membership base. We'll ask existing members to help us by simply getting one additional friend to join our ranks. It takes tenacious persistence to solve environmental problems – and we're building the staff and volunteer talent to be here for the long term to get the job done.

If you agree with me that these ten resolutions are good ideas, please help us carry them out. It's easy to think up good ideas – doing them is the hard part. Pledging to collaborate so as to solve environmental problems is ultimately the most productive New Year's Resolution any of us can make. We here at the federation are ready to expand our partnerships and look forward to making new friends and allies in 2005.

> Best Wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year,

Executive Director

VOLUME 23 NUMBER 1

Coastal Review

Coastal Review is the quarterly newsletter of the North Carolina Coastal Federation (NCCP). NCCF is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization dedicated to involving citizens in decisions about managing coastal resources. Its aim is to share technical information and resources to better represent current and long-term economic, social and environmental interests of the North Carolina Coast.

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VOLUNTEER MANAGER

coastkeeper-cf@nccoast.org Rachael Wagaman



NCCF Headquarters: Newport, NC 28570
Phone: 252-393-8185 • Fax: 252-393-7508
E-Mail: nccf@nccoast.org
www.nccoast.org

n The North Carolina Coastal Federation is located on Highway 24 in Ocean, NC, between Swansboro and Morehead City, Our offices, nature library and shop are open Monday through Friday, 8:30 am to 5 pm.



LAYOUT/DESIGN: Anita Lancaster, Jacksonville, NC

Volunteers Make 2004 Successful and Fun!

BY RACHAEL WAGAMAN Volunteer Coordinator

NCCF VOLUNTEERS DONATED THOUSANDS OF HOURS in 2004, helping the NC Coastal Federation meet its ambitious objectives. Our energetic corps participated in 31 events and projects last year, including clean-ups, festivals, mailings, living shoreline plantings, oyster restoration, newsletter delivery, and trail maintenance, as well as helping with office filing, reception, painting and landscaping.

Tip of the Sunvisor

The following volunteers donated their time, talent and enthusiasm to the Coastal Federation in 2004:

Jerry Allred; Charlie Andrews; Sally Anger; Kelsey Baker; Martha Barbee; Rick Barreuther; Jenn Beck; Dottie Belding; Deb and Randy Bettini; Patrick Biber; Sam Bland; Elizabeth Brant; John Brink; Greg, Mike and Sheila Brodnick; Carolyn Bulla; Andrew Bunting; Christine Burgess; Sarah Carr; Stuart Carrington; Anne and Bucky Carter; Katie Cartwright; Scott Chappell; Kelly Clinger; David Collins; Ellen Colodney; Don Cooke; McCabe Coolidge; Kimberly Crane; Billy Ray Creech; Elisabeth and Vance Creech; Holly Crist; Craig and Wanda Custer; John Davis; John U. Davis; Barbara Dietsch; Suzanne Dillon; Don Dixon; Wendy Donaldson; Dave Dunham; Paul Dunn; Kent Eanes; Susan Edwards; Sydney Edwards; Richard Ehrenkaufer; David Ellis; John Eslinger; Jim Felder; Tim Finch; Charles Flournoy; Al Fox; Mary Katherine Frantz; Charlie Freeman; Buzz Frey; Conrad Frey Jr.; Eyvonne Fritter; John Fussell; James Barrie Gaskill; Mary Lou Glennon; Taylor Godsey; Katy Grey; Carole and Jean Green; Massie Green; Katie Greganti; Roberta Gunnett; Steve Gurganus; Nancy Gustaveson; Mary H., Andy and Rebeccah Haines; Bob Hall; Jodee Hall; Sarah Hamilton; Carolyn and Henry Hammond; Evelyn Harder; John Hardwick; Bill Hart; Judy Hassler; Olivia Holding; Jimmy Holland; Lamar Hudgens; Penny Hooper; Pamela Hoovler; Margaret Husni; Francis Inglis; Oli Inglis; Jamey Jefferson; Mike Jenkins; Alex Jennings; Bob Johnson; Bonnie and Lee Jones; Eric Kellon; Phil and Ruth Kemp; Skip Kemp; Greg Knabel; Kim Kobrin; Doc Kuntz; John Ladd; Amanda Lail; Josephine Langley; Maggie Lawrence; Andrea Levine; Jo Ann Lewis; Jordon Lewis; Lynn Lewis; Mary Lockhart; Norma and Ray Longo; Wayne Lowery; Jackie Mardan; Rebecca Marks; Carl and Jo Ann Marsh; Mary Hunter Martin; Andrea Mason; Randy Mason; Diana and Jeff Mazza; Jeff McBane; Beau and Eddie McCaffray; Ron McCord; Sean McElhone; Dot and Larry McGee; Marty

McGuire; Lee Messner; Aileen Molloy; Christine Moore; Davis and Nancy Moore; Beth Moulton; Nick and Paul Nelson; Frank Nesmith; Tom Nugent; Anna Olivier; Rachel Ott; Carol Patrick; Matthew Penny; Lewis Piner; Will Poats; John Preyer; Buddy Putman; Phillip Radford; Bill and Meg Rawls; Dot Reist; Nancy Reynolds; Stacy Rhymer; Amanda Riggs; Graham and Lena Ritter; Matt Roberts; Jordon and Susan Robinson; Peggy Rochelle; Karen Rooney; Louise Rotchford; Erin Rountree; Blake Rouse; John Runkle; Marshall and Patrick Salmon; Beth Sanders; Kate Sandmeyer-Swails; Dana Schmidt; Susan Schmidt; Howard Schnabolk; Joe and Sharon Seigler; Michael Shelby; Dale Shew; Carter Shields; Bland Simpson; Steve and Ryan Skrabal; Gilbert, Mary, Julie, Laura, Jacob and Matthew Smith: Jeff Smith: Donna Snead: Caitlin Snyder: Brad Spires: Jack Spruill; Payne and Toinette Staley; Herb and Jan Stanford; Lee Taylor; Carrie Ulery; Vickie Poole; Lily Voth; Amanda Wade; Doug Wakeman; Mark Walker; Jim Wann; Ann White; Harry Wigmore; Kelly Williams; Erin Wilson; John Wingfield; Jane and Steve Wolfe; Katie Wolff; Ken Wood; Ben Wunderly; Mary Wyatt; James Wylie; Maggie

A Special Thanks to ...

Ellen Colodney for donating the native plants for the volunteer appreciation luncheon and oyster roast; Bernice Rice for the wonderful location for the oyster roast; Jim and Bonnie Swartzenberg for three bushels of oysters; and Ron Jones for cooking the oysters. Our Coastkeeper volunteers also deserve special thanks for donating hundreds of hours monitoring our coast; and the Carteret County Light Tackle and Saltwater Fishing Club for providing fish for the Coastkeepers' mercury study.

A++ for Effort ...

Then, there are those who go beyond the normal call of duty. They are:

- Vickie Poole, who came from Ireland to volunteer at the State Fair.
- *Christine Moore*, who participated in six NCCF volunteer events.
- Harry Wigmore, Beth Moulton and Lynn Lewis, who donated more than 300 hours at the reception desk in Ocean.
- Dot Reist, Ann White, Sarah Hamilton, and Carol Patrick, who donated more than 250 hours to keep the Daland Nature Library well-organized and stocked with delightful reading.

VOLUNTEER CALENDAR

- February 15: Spring Review. Meet NCCF staff, mingle with fellow volunteers and learn about the year's volunteer opportunities and the 2005 calendar of events. NCCF headquarters, Ocean.
- March 5: Hoop Pole Clean up, Atlantic Beach
- April 22-23: Native Plant Sale, NCCF headquarters

Call Rachael Wagaman at 252-393-8185 or email her at <u>rachaelw@nccoast.org</u> to inquire about helping out at these or other NCCF events.



Yes, I would like to be a Volunteer!

Name:	
Address:	
City:	
State & Zip:	
Phone:	
Email:	
I am interested in the following activities:	
Oyster RestorationMarsh Grass PlantingsCoastkeeper	☐ Festival Staffing☐ Clean-Up Events☐ Lobbying
☐ Other (please list)	

Please complete this form and mail to:

North Carolina Coastal Federation
3609 Hwy 24 (Ocean) • Newport, NC 28570
or contact the NCCF office at 252-393-8185 or
nccf@nccoast.org to sign up for an event
or to learn more about our volunteer opportunities

2005 COASTKEEPER OBJECTIVES

- Promote better enforcement of environmental laws.
- Begin long-term monitoring of at least five stormwater outfalls in each Coastkeeper region.
- Identify bacterial pollution sources in lower White Oak River and devise control strategies.
- Organize and hold at least six community meetings on important issues in each Coastkeeper region.
- Hold second annual Native Plant Sale.
- Train at least 10 volunteers in each region in environmental protection.
- Recruit at least 25 volunteers per region.
- Implement Oyster Plan.
- Recruit at least 100 new members.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL COASTKEEPERS

Frank Tursi Cape Lookout Coastkeeper

3609 Highway 24 (Ocean) Newport, NC 28570 lookoutkeeper@nccoast.org 252-393-8185 (office) 252-241-3505 (cell)

Jan DeBlieu Cape Hatteras Coastkeeper

PO Box 475 Manteo, NC 27954 hatteraskeeper@nccoast.org 252-473-1607 (office) 252-480-5361 (cell)

Ted Wilgis Cape Fear Coastkeeper

University Corporate Center II
131 Racine Drive • Suite 101
Wilmington, NC 28403
coastkeeper-cf@nccoast.org
910-790-3275 (office)
910-231-6605 (cell)

MEMBER



Training Program for Volunteers Will Be Offered This Winter

BY FRANK TURSI Cape Lookout Coastkeeper

THE NC COASTAL FEDERATION'S

three Coastkeepers will offer an intensive training course to volunteers who want to help the Coastkeepers enforce environmental regulations.

At least 10 volunteers in each of the Coastkeepers' regions will take part in the training, which will begin in March. The courses will educate participants about state and federal rules and laws meant to protect the coastal environment and the workings of various agencies that carry out those directives. Other courses will delve into the major environmental issues, such as stormwater and erosion-control, that the Coastkeepers face each day.

The exact syllabus is still being determined, but it's expected that participants will have to commit spending a couple of hours a week for about a month to complete the training. The courses will

be free, but participants may be required to pay a nominal fee for training materials. Those who complete the course will get a certificate and a decal for their boats to signify that they are trained Coastkeeper volunteers. It's expected that they then will assist the Coastkeepers in assessing and rectifying potential pollution problems.

If you're interested in participating in the training, contact the Coastkeeper in your region.

A Hearty Aye-Aye to ...

... An anonymous donor, who recently gave the Coastkeepers \$36,500 for equipment. The money will be used for laptop computers, digital cameras, GPS units and other equipment needed by the Coastkeepers.

... the Cemala Foundation, which gave the Coastkeepers \$18,500 for a new boat. The 22-foot Jones Brothers bateau has been purchased and will be used by Ted Wilgis, our Cape Fear Coastkeeper.

... Dr. William Kelly, NCCF member, who donated a 1997 Toyota 4-Runner to the Coastkeeper program.

... Edmund "Beau" McCaffray, a NCCF board member from Wilmington, who donated stock that will be used to equip Ted's new boat.

NORTHERN COAST

This 'Dinosaur' Needs to Go

A new oceanfront bulkhead? It shouldn't be possible, given state rules and the law passed by the NC General Assembly in 2003 that ban seawalls on the beach. But Sterling Webster of Kitty Hawk in November rebuilt most of an oceanfront bulkhead that had been in place since the 1940s.



Oyster Plan Gets Boost with \$100,000 Grant

A state agency that pays for innovative solutions to water-pollution problems recently gave NCCF \$100,000 to implement one of the key objectives of our Oyster Plan.

The grant from the NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund will allow the three regional workgroups established under the Oyster Plan to prioritize and target projects to protect water quality and restore oyster habitat.

Headed by Ted Wilgis, NCCF's Cape Fear Coastkeeper, the Oyster Plan is a multi-phased planning project that will allow NCCF and its partners to design and implement regional plans that will target high-quality shellfish waters and their watersheds. University researchers, fishermen and state agencies are working with the Federation on the plan.

The state grant will allow each of the three regional committees to develop comprehensive watershed plans that will ultimately restore and protect high-priority shellfish growing areas and their watersheds.

Helping the state develop a program to recycle oyster shells is an important part of the Oyster Plan. The shells are used by the NC Division of Marine Fisheries to build oyster reefs.

Ted has been working with the division along the Southeast coast to promote the program and the new shell drop off bins in Wrightsville and Carolina Beach. He's also been taking the NCCF trailer to oyster roasts and festivals to collect shells.

The statewide program is getting more popular. About 700 bushels of oysters have been collected so far. The program should get a boost this year. Grants from the FishAmerica Foundation and NOAA Restore America's Estuaries will allow NCCF to add more trailers and drop off bins and publicize the program.



Non-conforming structures like sea walls are supposed to be torn down when they wear out. When Webster applied for a permit to rebuild the bulkhead in September, a local permitting officer told him he could only spend 50 percent of the structure's assessed value to make repairs. But when a northeaster threatened to wash away most of the bulkhead in late October, Webster rebuilt 298 feet of it — without a permit. He told local authorities that he had received permission from an NC Division of Coastal Management field inspector to do the work.

Jan DeBlieu, our Cape Hatteras Coastkeeper has asked division officials to require that the bulkhead be torn down, except for the 130 feet that could have been legally shored up. "It's a dinosaur from an era when we didn't understand coastal processes," she said. "It needs to go."

Egg-Laying Factory Gets State's Blessing

NC Division of Water Quality gave the green light to a 4-million-bird egg-laying factory proposed by Rose Acre Farms for Hyde County.

The division in November gave the plant, which will include 14 high-rise laying houses near Ponzer, sewage and stormwater permits. The permit includes provisions for monitoring nutrients in the waters near the plant, and it requires the company to maintain 100-foot-wide vegetated buffers along creeks, canals, and wetlands. It also calls for the company to control ammonia emissions.

Based on data from other egg-laying factories, federal biologists have estimated that the facility will emit 4.8 million pounds of ammonia a year. Ammonia is converted into nitrates in the atmosphere and falls into local waterways with rain, but

federal law currently does not regulate it.

Jan had lobbied Hyde County fishermen to ask that specific controls be placed on ammonia emissions from the plant. But, she said, "Residents were afraid they'd scare the company away if they asked for any concessions. If a lot of nitrates start showing up in the waters after the chicken factory starts operating, you can bet we'll be letting people know about it."

CENTRAL COAST

'A Little Mud Never Hurt'

That was the headline on an editorial in a Carteret County newspaper that took
Frank Tursi, our Cape Lookout
Coastkeeper, to task for complaining that
the "sand" being dumped on the beach at
Atlantic Beach contained too much mud. A
few days after the editorial appeared, beach
officials fretted publicly that they wouldn't
come close to completing the 12-mile
project because the new "sand" was
quickly washing into the ocean. Why? Too
much mud, they said.

Frank first raised the alarm in mid-November when he took a TV reporter to Atlantic Beach to film the sea of mud balls that littered the beach. He asked the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the NC Division of Coastal Management to temporarily stop the pumping until officials figured out where the mud was coming from. They never replied, and the pumping continued.

Corps officials publicly admitted weeks later that the "sand" contained an unexpectedly high mud content – so high, in fact, that the fine material was washing off the beach and would run out well before reaching the end of the project. Beach officials wrung their hands, and the Corps promised to get to the muddy bottom of it all. All the while, the pumping continued.

"No one seemed very concerned about the quality of the sand," Frank said. "They worried about quantity. The state and federal agencies that should have been the guardians of the beach were strangely quiet. We jumped up and down in the mud but no one really listened. The mud of Atlantic Beach offers a lesson to all North Carolinians who value their beaches: No one who matters is watching."

Proposed Surf City Subdivision Busted

After more than a year of prodding by Lauren Kolodij, NCCF Program Manager and Frank Tursi, NCCF Cape Lookout Coastkeeper, the NC Division of Water Quality (DWQ) in August notified the owners of an eight-acre peninsula in Surf City that they had violated their state permit by not protecting the remaining wetlands on the property.

The violation didn't deter the town's planning board in December from reluctantly recommending that Surf City's town council approve the plans for the proposed 37-house subdivision on the property. Council members are scheduled to hear the controversial case in January.

NCCF fears that runoff from the subdivision will pollute the adjacent waters of Topsail Sound, forcing the state to close shellfish waters.

Red Apple Group, a limited liability corporation consisting of a couple from Virginia and another from Shallotte, recently purchased the property. DWQ notified them and the former owner that they had violated their permit by failing to place conservations easements on the wetlands within the required 30 days after their permit was issued in December 1999. DWQ gave the new owners 20 days to get a new survey of the wetlands by the Army Corps of Engineers and to provide evidence that they had protected those that

remained after a road was built several years ago.

Frank and Lauren have been working with local residents opposed to the project for more than a year. Frank notified state officials last year that a deed search found no evidence that the permit conditions were met. Frank also uncovered discrepancies in the deed that the former owner submitted with his permit application. A lawyer hired by opposing landowners later raised similar questions about ownership.

SOUTHERN COAST

Illegal Dredging Stopped in Stump Sound

Denied a permit to dredge a boating channel through the high-value fishery habitats and outstanding resource waters of Stump Sound, a group of homeowners decided to dig a channel anyway. They staked out a channel and used their own boats and paid a shrimper to dredge the channel with their engines and prop wash. Concerned citizens notified Ted Wilgis, NCCF's Cape Fear Coastkeeper. He alerted state officials, who The NC Division of Coastal Management followed up with notices of violation and fines.

Wetland Fill Halted in Wilmington

Ted worked with a concerned citizen who reported a wetland being filled along Riley's Branch in the Hewlett's Creek watershed in Wilmington. Ted contacted the NC Division of Water Quality, which investigated. The City of Wilmington was dumping fill material into the small wetland site that was on a private lot with the owner's permission. The illegal activity was halted, all the fill was removed and the site restored.

A POPULAR PERENNIAL:

Go Native Plant Sale

BY FRANK TURSI, Cape Lookout Coastkeeper

THE COASTKEEPERS' GO NATIVE PLANT SALE HAS BECOME as popular as a springtime perennial. Demand was so great at the first sale last year that our Coastkeepers will do it again.

This year's sale is scheduled for the Earth Day weekend, April 22 and 23, at NCCF headquarters in Ocean. Plan on coming early to get the best selection, advised Frank Tursi, the Cape Lookout Coastkeeper and the leader of our keeper program.

"We were a bit surprised by the crowds last year," he said. "Many of the popular plants sold out in minutes, others in a few hours. We had to scramble to place an order for more plants so people who came the second day wouldn't be disappointed."

To prevent a repeat, Frank and Randy Mason, a NCCF board member and avid gardener who conceived of the idea for the sale, plan to have more of the popular plants available and less of those that didn't sell well.

"It seems that native bushes, like blueberry and coastal azalea, and flowering perennials, like cardinal flowers and marsh rose, were very popular," Frank said. "Some of the hardwood trees, on the other hand, didn't sell well."

Tree lovers take heart, though. Frank and Randy plan to

bring back the most popular species – bays, cedars, black cherry, wild plum, persimmon and others.

They will join the estimated 3,000 plants that will be for sale. All will be native to the coastal plain. Each plant once again will come with a fact sheet that describes it, gives planting instructions and lists its landscape uses and wildlife benefits.

"Using natives for landscaping is a celebration of our natural heritage," Frank said. "They're hardy, have adapted to the coastal environment and attract birds, butterflies and other wildlife."

Frank and Randy plan something new this year: native water plants. "Many people have water gardens and ponds in their yards," Frank said. "We found a nursery that grows submerged natives and thought we'd try a few this year."

The purpose of the Go Native Plant Sale is to educate people about using natives for home landscaping and to raise a little money for the Coastkeeper program. Once again, experts will be on hand for free workshops throughout the day on April 23. Workshop topics will be decided in the next few weeks and will be posted on our website, www.nccoast.org, as will the plant catalog.

Most of the plants at the sale aren't available at

commercial nurseries, Randy noted. "They can be very hard to find if you want to landscape with natives," Randy said. "If you can find them, they tend to be expensive."

The Coastkeepers will sell most of their plants for \$10 or less.

All of the shrubs and flowering plants come from nurseries in North Carolina that specialize in coastal natives. The NC Division of Forestry Resources grew the tree seedlings at its nurseries.

Frank and Randy will again offer plants to suit most types of habitat and uses, from that boggy place in the back to the sunny spot on the side of the house. People with a boggy spot in their yards, for instance, may want to check out the red chokeberry, which are found naturally along stream banks or a swamp's edge. Planted in masses, they will turn that mushy place into a bright corner in the fall when the leaves turn a deep purple.

More interested in a shade tree? Come by and pick a nice white oak. Are puddings and jams more your style? We'll have a persimmon tree waiting for you. Want a tree that is becoming increasingly rare because of heavy logging in the past? Atlantic white cedar may be for you.







SALE HOURS

9 AM to 6 PM • Friday and Saturday, April 22-23, 2005



BLUE FLAG IRIS

Iris virginica (Also known as Southern Blue Flag Iris)

Description: Perennial from bulbs, corms, rhizomes, or fibrous roots. Can form a mat in established areas. Flower is violet-blue, blooming in

May-August with green foliage.

- Natural Habitat:
 Marshes, wetlands and swamps of the Southeast.
- Ornamental Value:
 Violet flowers
- throughout the summer.

 Landscape Usage: At waters edge of ponds, in naturalized water areas.

HIGHBUSH BLUEBERRY

Vaccinium corymbosum

Edible blueberries and a nice fall display of red leaves make this plant a favorite. Also known as whortleberry, swamp blueberry.



- Description: An upright medium to large shrub with several main stems and red or green twigs with an open crown. Bark is gray brown to reddish brown. Flowers are small, white, bell-shaped, in clusters, appearing in spring. Fruit is a dark blue berry that ripens May-June.
 Natural Habitat: Grows in bogs,
- Natural Habitat: Grows in bogs pocosins and pine barrens throughout the Eastern US and

along the Gulf coast.

- Ornamental Value: An attractive autumn display of bright red leaves. Flowers from March to May, bearing small, white urn-shaped flowers with fused petals.
- Landscape Usage: Useful in a shrub border, naturalized plantings along the edges of ponds and waterways. The density of the branches makes it a good screen or hedge as well as a specimen plant in the garden.
- Commercial/Traditional Uses: Often used in jelly and pies. Native Americans and English settlers boiled them with sugar for sauce to eat with their meat
- Wildlife Benefits: Birds and many small mammals enjoy the fruit. Deer and rabbits browse on the twigs and foliage.



CAROLINA MARSH ROSE

Sabatia kennedyana

One of the rarest plants in North Carolina. It has a gorgeous pink to purple daisy-like flower. Also known as Plymouth gentian, Plymouth pink, Plymouth rose gentian.

> Description: A perennial, herbaceous plant with

vertical, few-branched stems with leaves that are narrow and arrayed oppositely along the stem. The fragrant flowers, which appear from July to mid-September, are showy and large with 9 to 11 pink petals surrounding a yellow center bordered with red.

Natural Habitat: Once common in the Atlantic

coastal plain. Now found along marshes and ponds in the coastal plain in only five states – Virginia, the Carolinas, Rhode Island and Massachusetts.

- Landscape Usage: Along pond edges and bog gardens where it can withstand periods of flooding.
- **Wildlife Benefits:** Attracts bees.



RED BAY

Persea borbonia

Its leaves can be substituted for the common spice, bay leaf. Also called shore bay and Carolina bay.

Description: A graceful native evergreen that develops a dense, pyramidal crown with gently drooping

branches. It has a multi-stemmed growing habit similar to a live oak, but it can be pruned to a single, short central leader trunk. Its bright green, aromatic leaves are simple and oblong. Bears small bright blue to shiny black drupe fruit that matures in fall. It has slender twigs and reddish-brown scaly bark.

- Natural Habitat: Found in moist sites along streams and swamps.
- Ornamental Value: Occasionally used as an ornamental because of the evergreen leaves and its fruit but this tree is best suited when planted in combination with other wet woodland trees and shrubs in groves or as a specimen.
- Landscape Usage: Great for wide tree lawns and useful in buffer strips around parking lots or for median strip plantings in the highway.
 Commercial/Traditional Uses: Red bay has very
- Commercial/Traditional Uses: Red bay has very aromatic leaves and can be substituted for the common spice, bay leaf.
- Wildlife Benefits: Red bay is of significant importance to wildlife. Several species of songbirds, squirrel and wild turkey eat its fruit, and its leaves are the larval plant for spicebush swallowtails.



WILD PLUM

Prunus americana

An easily grown tree or shrub that thrives with neglect. Produces edible fruit that can be eaten fresh or used in jams and pies. Flowers attract butterflies.

Description: Short tree often grown as a shrub with thicket-forming branches. White, fragrant flowers in early

forming branches. White, fragrant flowers in early spring; rounded 1-inch red or yellow, edible fruit in mid-summer.

- Natural Habitat: Found throughout much of northeastern Canada and a major portion of the United States
- Ornamental Value: Fragrant flowers, showy fruit, yellow fall flowers.
- Landscape Usage: Specimen, shrub border, hedgerow or screen.
- **Commercial/Traditional Uses:** Fruits are edible when ripe, and can be eaten fresh or used for jams and pies. A thick juice can be extracted from ripe fruits, and used fresh or fermented into wine.
- Wildlife Benefits: The fruits are an important food for songbirds. The flowers attract butterflies.

Why Natives?

Landscaping with native plants celebrates our natural heritage. It helps restore regional character and put us a little closer to nature. The natural processes from which coastal natives evolved over thousands of years represent the cog and wheel of a healthy ecosystem sustained by a complex web of biological diversity.

What Are Natives?

Native plants, also called indigenous plants, are plants that have evolved over thousands of years in a particular region. Coastal natives, for instance, have adapted to the geography, hydrology, and climate of the region.

Native plants grow in "communities," that is, they have evolved together with other plants. A community of native plants provides habitat for a variety of native wildlife species such as songbirds and butterflies.

Landscaping Benefits of Natives

Native plants provide a beautiful, hardy, droughtresistant, low-maintenance landscape while benefitting the environment. Once established, they save time and money by eliminating or significantly reducing the need for fertilizers, pesticides, and water and lawn maintenance equipment.

- Native plants do not require fertilizers. Vast amounts of fertilizers are applied to lawns. Excess phosphorus and nitrogen -- the main components of fertilizers -- run off into coastal waters causing excess algae growth. This depletes oxygen in our waters, harms aquatic life and interferes with recreational uses.
- Native plants require fewer pesticides than lawns. Nationally, over 70 million pounds of pesticides are applied to lawns each year. Pesticides run off lawns and can contaminate rivers and sounds.
- Native plants require less water than lawns. The modern lawn requires significant amounts of water to thrive. In urban areas, lawn irrigation uses as much as 30 percent of the water consumption on the East Coast. The deep root systems of many native plants increase the soil's capacity to store water. Native plants can significantly reduce water runoff and, consequently, flooding.
- Native plants help reduce air pollution. Natural landscapes do not require mowing. Lawns, however, must be mowed regularly. Gas powered garden tools emit 5 percent of the nation's air pollution. Forty million lawnmowers consume 200 million gallons of gasoline a year. One gas-powered lawnmower emits 11 times the air pollution of a new car for each hour of operation. Excessive carbon from the burning of fossil fuels contributes to global warming. Native plants sequester, or remove, carbon from the air.
- Native plants provide shelter and food for wildlife. They attract a variety of birds, butterflies, and other wildlife by providing diverse habitats and food sources. Closely mowed lawns are of little use to most wildlife.
- Native plants promote biodiversity and stewardship of our natural heritage. In the U.S., approximately 20 million acres of lawn are cultivated, covering more land than any single crop. Native plants are a part of our natural heritage. Natural landscaping is an opportunity to reestablish diverse native plants, thereby inviting the birds and butterflies back home.
- Native plants save money. Studies of larger properties estimate that over a 20-year period, the cumulative cost of maintaining a wetland totals \$3,000 an acre versus \$20,000 an acre for non-native turf grasses.

2005 PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- Implement a legislative strategy that enhances protection and restoration of coastal waters by working with other environmental groups, state leaders, media and citizens.
- Obtain full implementation of EPA Phase II Stormwater Program.
- Identify and report pollution sources by working with Shellfish Sanitation Section to develop and refine shoreline surveys.
- Make CAMA Land Use Plans more effective in addressing stormwater by providing reviews and recommendations to local governments.
- Implement strategy to deal with impacts from sewer plants.
- Increase active volunteers from 300 to 400.
- Recruit at least 100 new members.

STATE OF THE COAST FOCUSED ON CLIMATE CHANGE



NCCF held its annual conference and release of the 2004 State of the Coast Report on October 1. The conference, Global Climate Change: Here and Now, attracted 200 people to see presentations from top climate-change experts in North Carolina.

The 10th annual State of the Coast Report was released with much fanfare. The report taps into the vast store of current research on global warming and paints a realistic picture of coastal North Carolina by the end of this century.

The report was mailed to members and to the media and was inserted in several coastal newspapers. It's

also available on our website, www.nccoast.org.

Stormwater Permit Called "Prescription for Pollution"

BY JIM STEPHENSON Program Analyst

at a Dec. 14 public hearing in Wilmington urging the NC Division of Water Quality not to issue a proposed general permit for stormwater discharges in the coastal region.

The division held hearings in four cities around the state to get comments on draft general permits to control stormwater. The National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permits set standardized measures for stormwater management. Towns and counties could apply for the NPDES general permits to meet the new federal stormwater requirements for rapidly growing places.

"The permit as written must be denied because it will not protect the quality of shellfishing waters — in fact it will authorize and legalize excessive stormwater discharges that cause and contribute to violations of water quality standards," Dr. Michael Mallin, research professor with the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, said at the hearing.

He cited research in New Hanover County and Charleston, SC that shows that bacteria contamination of coastal waters increases with the amount of development in a watershed, referred to as built-upon area in the draft permit.

The draft NPDES general permit would allow development of up to 24 percent of a tract without using infiltration or detention ponds or other types of systems to control stormwater. Mallin's research shows that allowing that much development within a half mile of shellfish waters is inadequate to protect water quality. Built-upon area, Mallin said, should be set at 12 percent within a half mile of shellfish waters and 18 percent beyond that area.

Stormwater is almost always polluted with high bacteria that make it unsafe for harvesting shellfish and for swimming. Rain quickly runs over impervious surfaces such as sidewalks, roofs of buildings and parking



lots, picking up bacteria and other pollutants before washing into rivers, creeks and sounds. Built-upon areas also reduce natural vegetation where stormwater can be absorbed into the ground.

The proposed draft permit will do little to protect water quality, Don Ellson, the president of PenderWatch, said at the hearing. "We urge the Division of Water Quality to either abandon the General Permit in favor of more effective individual permits or find a way to produce a general permit that would meet Clean Water Act standards."

The NC General Assembly passed a law in 2004 requiring the Division of Water Cuality to develop a NPDES general permit for stormwater management. The legislature tied the division's hands by not allowing it to "impose any requirement on the permittee that exceeds the standards in the Stormwater Management Rule," which

allows developers to avoid engineered stormwater management systems if they keep the built upon area at or below 24 percent.

"The legislature has required the Division of Water Quality to create a general permit, but prevented it from setting standards that would protect sensitive waters," said Jim Stephenson, policy analyst for the NC Coastal Federation. "The draft general permit is a prescription for pollution for shellfish and recreational swimming waters and would violate the federal Clean Water Act."

Towns and counties would still be able to gain coverage under NPDES individual permits if the general permit for coastal counties is denied. The Division of Water Quality is currently reviewing individual permits for Jacksonville, Wilmington, Wrightsville Beach, Kure Beach, Carolina Beach, New Hanover County, Brunswick County and Onslow County.



NCCF Gets Grants to Preserve White Oak River Land

State and federal agencies gave the NC Coastal Federation more than \$1.4 million in December to preserve one of the most important tracts of waterfront property on the White Oak River.

The NC Clean Water Management Trust Fund gave NCCF and its partner, the NC Coastal Land Trust, \$1,038,000 to buy 1,443 acres along the river in Onslow County. The US Fish & Wildlife Service gave the Federation and the land trust \$461,842 as a match to complete the purchase of the property. NCCF will place conservation easements on the property, known as the Quaternary tract, and transfer it the NC Wildlife Resources Commission, which will use it as public game lands.

"This is a nice Christmas present to the people of Eastern North Carolina," said Todd Miller, NCCF's executive director. "The preservation of this key piece of property will ensure that it will never be developed and become a source of water pollution."

Curtis Estes, owner of Estes Homebuilders in Cedar Point and one of the tract's owners, could have built quite a few waterfront houses on the property. "There's enough upland that we could have built something there and maybe put some land in a conservation easement, but we always wanted to see that piece preserved," he said. "I'm tickled to death that it is."

The Quaternary tract includes almost nine miles or 723 acres of riparian buffers along the western bank of the river and borders two creeks north of Stella. Here, the river flows back through time. Threatened alligators along the river outnumber the houses. Wild turkey abound. So do a breeding population of the purple gallinule, a significantly rare water bird whose hen-like cackle competes with the contemplative cooing of mourning doves or the piercing screech of redtail hawks. American shad, Blueback herring and alewife come here to spawn.

The size and location of the Quaternary tract in the middle of a largely undeveloped section of river, and extensive fringe of exceptional wetlands made it the critical ingredient to protect water quality and preserve the ecological integrity of the river basin. The Croatan National Forest is across the White Oak River from the property. The trust fund had previously given the Coastal Federation money to buy the Huggins Farm and to secure a conservation easement on the Thompson Tract, both on the White Oak River.

After the Federation transfers the land to the Wildlife Resources Commission, portions of the land will be replanted in native longleaf pine. The tract is located upstream of the White Oak River Impoundment Game Land

managed by the Wildlife Resources Commission.

The Clean Water Management Trust Fund was created in 1996 at the urging of Marc Basnight, D-Dare, and president of the state Senate. The trust fund supports projects by private nonprofit and public entities to enhance or restore degraded waters, protect unpolluted waters, and contribute toward a network of riparian buffers and greenways for environmental, educational, and recreational benefits.

Since its creation, the trust fund has awarded 407 grants, totaling \$320.7 million. Those grants have leveraged at least \$533.7 million in private and other public funds. The agency received \$62 million from the NC General Assembly last year and will be reviewing \$170 million in proposals this spring. The trust fund's board of directors plans to ask Gov. Mike Easley and the legislature to include \$100 million for the CWMTF this year.

CHPP Plan Finally Passes Muster

It's official. After six years of toil, the Coastal Habitat Protection Plan (CHPP) was approved in December. The Coastal Resources Commission, the Environmental Management Commission and the Marine Fisheries Commission gave their approval to a document that will guide public policymaking for years to come.

The NC General Assembly in 1997 directed the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR)) to prepare a plan for protecting critical fisheries habitat as a way to help the recovery of slumping fish stocks. DENR held 10 public meetings in 2003 to find out what people wanted in the CHPP. Ten more public meetings in 2004 got feedback from the public on recommendations.

The CHPP outlines four general goals: Improve the effectiveness of existing rules and programs to protect coastal fish habitats; identify, designate and protect Strategic

Habitat Areas; enhance and protect critical habitats; and enhance and protect water quality.

Reaching the CHPP goals won't always require new rules, according to Bill Ross, DENR secretary. To demonstrate the point, Ross developed a list of 23 actions that agencies within DENR can begin taking right away that do not require new legislation or rulemaking. The three commissions will spend the first six months of 2005 developing plans to implement the list of actions.

Enhancing enforcement of existing rules protecting fish habitat, developing indicators of habitat health and reporting on trends, working to restore oyster shellbottoms and educating the public about the importance of these habitats are some of the things on the list.

To review the CHPP list of actions, go to: www.enr.state.nc.us/docs CHPPDENRLIST.doc

Make Plans for Clean Water Lobby Day

Join with the NC Coastal Federation and citizens from throughout the state for the 4th Annual Clean Water Lobby Day April 6. The lobby day will be an opportunity for citizens to talk with their legislators in Raleigh about the importance of water quality and quantity. Last year more than 150 citizens participated. For more information, please contact Jim Stephenson at *jims@nccoast.org.*

Stephenson Appointed to Beach Commission

The Carteret County Board of Commissions appointed Jim Stephenson, NCCF's policy analyst, to serve a four-year term on the Carteret County Beach Commission. The beach commission meets monthly and is charged with advising the board on strategies for beach re-nourishment and on how to spend the portion of the room occupancy tax proceeds dedicated to beach nourishment.



Coastal Review/Winter 2005

2005 RESTORATION/ EDUCATION OBJECTIVES

- Expand use of "Living Shorelines" as an alternative to hardened shorelines, completing at least 3 model projects.
- Train 75 contractors, permit staff, consultants, and NCCF staff to conduct living shoreline projects.
- Restore at least three acres of oyster habitat.
- Complete two phases of restoration at North River Farm, totaling 350 acres of wetlands, and oversee wetlands restoration projects in Stump Sound and the White Oak River.
- Remove stormwater pipe at Hoop Pole Creek in Carteret County.
- Expand Student Nursery Program to nine schools.
- Provide summer education and restoration opportunities for students and adults.
- Involve two high schools in oyster restoration/ education activities.
- Provide stormwater education for 1,000 students and 3,000 other individuals.
- Recruit 100 new members.

LIVING SHORELINES SPROUT ALONG COAST

Despite several severe storms and glancing blows from last year's hurricanes, several shoreline restoration projects were completed in 2004. NCCF partnered with the staff at the NC Wildlife Resources Commission to replace a failing bulkhead at the Edenhouse Boat Ramp on the Chowan River with a stone sill, and restored freshwater marsh and riparian buffer areas. The site is visible when traveling to Edenton across the US 17 bridge, and provides a great demonstration of alternative approaches to traditional "hard" methods.

During 2004, two shorelines were restored at Harkers Point and along the Straits of Harkers Island in Carteret County. Both sites survived the storm season in great shape, and should grow into healthy marshes by the end of the year. Volunteers

will help to finish the marsh planting at Harkers Point later in May.

Restoration Efforts Create New Habitat

BY TRACY SKRABAL, Senior Scientist

NCCF Creates Five Acres of Oyster Habitat

NCCF's oyster restoration season was very productive last year. We created more than 5.5 acres of oyster habitat in Carteret, Onslow, and New Hanover counties, helping to improve water quality and habitat.

Martin Posey from UNC-W is monitoring the site in New Hanover County, while high school students from Dixon High School in Holly Ridge in Onslow County and Croatan High School in Newport braved chilly temperatures to help monitor the health of our other reef areas. Thanks to all of our many volunteers who made this season our most successful yet

More Than 300 Acres Now Restored At North River

NCCF's plan to restore up to 5,100 acres of wetlands at North River Farm is well underway. During 2003, 250 acres of wetlands in the North River watershed were restored to forested wetlands at the farm, and an additional 87 acres were restored in the Jarrett Bay watershed during 2004.

Through support from US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the state's Ecosystem Enhancement Program, the second phase of the North River watershed restoration will convert 123 acres of farmland back to fresh and salt-water wetlands. When completed, the areas will function as vibrant forested wetlands and freshwater and brackish marshes.

Runoff from a neighboring farm will be diverted through the restored wetlands, effectively pre-treating stormwater before it enters North River and Wards Creek.

Researchers from NC State University have completed the final design of the project and Phase II is currently in the permitting process, with construction scheduled to begin in spring or summer.

Nearly 300 acres of waterfowl and shorebird wetland habitat in the northern reaches of Ward Creek will be completed on the farm by the end of January. The US Fish and Wildlife Service and private partners are completing the construction phase. To complete this restoration, NCCF will plant 30,000 wetland trees in March 2005, with assistance from students from Vanderbilt University.

The NC Solar Center at NC State University is planning on placing a wind tower at North River Farms to investigate the potential for wind power in this region. This anemometer will remain on the farm for 13 months.

Environmental Education

Led by Sarah Phillips, NCCF's education coordinator, the Coastal Federation's Hoop Pole Creek property in Atlantic Beach was used frequently this fall by a number of different school groups, ranging in age from fourth grade to college. The students learned about topics such as global warming, barrier island ecology, and native plants and animals.

The Student Wetland Nurseries are underway for the 2004-2005 school year. All seven schools involved had a fall lesson on estuaries and smooth cord grass, or *spartina alterniflora*, and will start their seed experiments this spring. More than

200 students are part of the Wetland Nursery Program this year, and we plan to add two new schools to the program during 2005.

WOW/POW Workshops at NCCF

The Coastal Federation recently hosted two workshops, the Wonders of Wetlands and the Planning of Wetlands, led by trainers from Maryland-based Environmental Concern. The workshops were well attended by teachers, graduate students and environmental professionals. The WOW/POW courses focus on how to integrate wetlands into community and classroom education, with training in actions such as building a schoolyard wetland or leading outdoor nature learning games.

Come Help NCCF Restore Native Oysters, Marshes

NCCF's success in restoring oyster habitat and coastal marshes is made possible through the efforts of our faithful volunteers. Sign up now to help with our 2005 season. We have jobs for those who like to get muddy, and those who don't! Check out NCCF's restoration and volunteer web pages for more information on how you can help or call us at 252-393-8185.



Things You Can Do to Help NCCF in 2005



Coastal Federation.

Protect Our Coast

Order your Protect our Coast license tag – we only need a few more to start production!



Volunteer – call us to find out how.



Learn more about the coast. Visit www.nccoast.org for information, resources and links.



Let your elected officials know how you feel about coastal protection.

HELP PROTECT AND RESTORE OUR COAST!

Invite A Friend To Join NCCF TODAY!

Individual or Family:

□ \$25 □ \$50 □ \$100 □ \$250 □ \$500 □ \$1000

- While your membership donation is at work, you'll appreciate the following list of member privileges: Quarterly newsletters; discounts on workshops, events and education programs; invitations to NCCF's annual Coastal Celebration and other great events; members' decal; use of the NCCF Nature Library; Action Alerts letting you know about critical coastal issues and meetings; and a copy of the annual **State of the Coast Report**.
- **Tax information:** Membership fees minus the value of benefits received are tax-deductible. ☐ Check here if you wish to waive benefits and receive the maximum tax deduction.
- Matching Gifts: Many companies offer a matching gift program to their employees to encourage support of organizations like NCCF. Double your dollars to the coast by including your matching gift form.

Business, Group or Organization:

 \square \$50 \square \$100 \square \$250 \square \$500 \square \$1000

Name: _____

City:

State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____

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Please make check payable to NCCF and mail with this form to: 3609 Highway 24 (Ocean) Newport, NC 28570 • You can charge your membership by calling toll-free at 800-232-6210 or visit our web site at www.nccoast.org.

Additional applications can be found on our web site at <u>www.nccoast.org</u> or call us at 252-393-8185



North Carolina Coastal Federation 2005 Meetings and Events

February 15

Volunteer Workshop – New recruits welcome! NCCF Headquarters

March 5

Hoop Pole Creek Trail Clean Up, Atlantic Beach

April 6

Clean Water Lobby Day, Raleigh

April 22-23

Native Plant Sale and Workshops, NCCF Headquarters

June 22-25, June 29-July 2, July 6-9

King Mackerel & The Blues Are Running, Morehead City

June 22-August 31

Coastkeeper Beach Walks, Pea Island and Wrightsville Beach, Every Wednesday

June 24

Fishing with Frank, Cape Lookout Coastkeeper, Cape Lookout National Seashore Additional dates: July 4, July 22; Aug 5, Aug 19; Sep 3, Sep 23; Oct 7, Oct 28

June 25

A Day at the Coast for NCCF Members

September 30 - October 2

Seafood Festival, Morehead City

October 1

Big Sweep, Morris Landing

October 14-23

State Fair, Raleigh

December 2-4

Core Sound Weekend, Harkers Island



Coastal Cohorts Jim Wann, Bland Simpson and Don Dixon return to the Crystal Coast this summer with "King Mackerel & The Blues Are Running." Tickets are on sale now. Call 252-728-1500.



NCCF members, donors and foundations were exceptionally generous during 2004. We appreciate all donations and recognize the following gifts made at recognition levels since the last newsletter. Thank you to all our friends who made contributions, enabling us to work with citizens toward a healthier and more beautiful North Carolina Coast.

Honorarium

Lewis Piner and his Family from Carol Barbour
Fred and Alice Stanback from Mr. and Mrs. Arthur S. DeBerry
Bob Hall from Coworkers Democracy NC
Charles and Jean Hunsinger from Rachel and Drew Hunsinger
Micheline Hagan and Peter Sandin from Rosalyn N. MacDonald
Scott Urquhart and Family from Charles and Caroline Neal
Ed Johnson from Todd Miller

Memorials

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Individuals

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Foundations

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Special thanks ...

to photographer Joann Bristol for encouraging support of the NC Coastal Federation through her book Wrightsville Beach. For more information visit www.joanbristol.com.