Georgia ForestWatch

FOREST NEWS

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"Buying shade-grown coffee is the easiest and perhaps most important action that a North American conservationist can do to protect wildlife habitat in the tropics."
-*Rainforest Alliance*

photo of Barred Owl by Charles Seifried from the *GFW 2002 Last Wild Places Calendar*

Georgia ForestWatch
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GFW Editorial

by Brent Martin, GFW Executive Director

On the morning of September 11, I was camping at the Hoopa Reservation in northern California. I was there on a scholarship to attend the National Network of Forest Practicioners Annual Meeting, one of my favorite organizations, and had spent three days with community foresters from Japan, Guatemala, Sri Lanka, and lots of rural American communities. It was inspiring, as always, and I awoke that morning early to go down to the Trinity river to help out with the salmon harvest that the Hoopas were then engaged in. It was a beautiful morning, with clear skies, and the Hoopa who had set up gill nets the night before had a great catch of Chinook and King salmon, and had already started the cleaning process, throwing the enormous fillets in to the back of a beat up late model Chevy pickup. The United States as we know it was being changed during that time and I had no idea, and didn't find out until almost three hours later.

We were all dumbfounded, and it was impossible to go on with the meeting. I immediately packed up and headed for my brother's house in south San Francisco. It was my first trip to northern California and I had planned on stopping in Humboldt State Park to see the magnificent Redwoods on my way home. Though I was devastated by the tragedy, I felt the need stronger than ever to go on with my plans. It was a chilly, rainy day at Humboldt and the damp forest floor was utterly silent. I had never seen such trees. Many of us have had feelings like this since the tragedies, but I couldn't help but experience pangs of guilt over my being in such a magical place in such a time of national despair. But I was there, and there was nothing I could do but wander in this timeless place, amazed at both the beauty and terror of which our world is so seemingly capable of unleashing.

I had spent four days with a group of people in a hopeful place where one of our great native American peoples, the Hoopa, were returning tribal forestry and tribal fisheries to the forefront of their lives. It was a testimony to me of the power of community and the power that nature has to infuse our lives with meaning and respect – and in my case making the most horrific of acts more poignant, and more suffused with awe at our distance from one another as fellow citizens of planet earth. As I left the redwoods and walked back towards my car, I looked at several of my fellow Americans as they entered the same grove that I was leaving. Their faces were pained, and silent, and it seemed odd that we couldn't really express anything to one another in that time of horror and confusion.

Perhaps we just didn't know what to say or do, or we didn't know how to act in this situation because it was something we had never experienced before. One of them asked me if this was the grove that had the champion Redwood in it, and I said that I didn't know – but that the largest and most beautiful tree I had ever seen in my life was just ahead. They moved on without comment, but I could tell that our thoughts were the same. Our silence on the matter spoke volumes. They walked on into the misty Redwoods and I moved south towards family. The Redwoods remained as they had for two thousand years – silent, enduring testimonials to the grandeur of life when all in our human world has gone awry.

If you're interested in how some of the best nature writers in America are responding to the attacks, visit www.oriononline.org and click on the "Thoughts on America: Writers Respond to Crisis" button. Here you will find essays by Wendell Berry, Patti Ann Rogers, Scott Russell Sanders and more!

ARMUCHEE UPDATE: *Is the National Forest the best place for communications towers?* *by Angela Faye Martin*

The Armuchee Ranger District could be home to two additional cell towers: Mack White Gap & Dug Gap. These towers are exempt from the ordinary scoping process. However, Forest Service staff has been kind enough to approach the issue with the staff of Georgia Forestwatch, allowing input and concerns to be shared.

The issue of cell towers is complicated and the detriment to birds varies from site to site. The recent Armuchee proposals include rather prudent and sensitive measures such as limited height (150'), less bird-attractive lighting and cluster siting to avoid the proliferation of additional sites. A misconception is that signals from the towers arrest the birds navigation when, in fact, it is the lighting (particularly when fog is present) and the presence of guy-wires; wires that extend from the ground to the tower that are so deadly to migrating birds. Some birds simply fly to exhaustion in the refracted light caused by the lights on foggy nights. "There is no way to determine what routes migrants will use from year to year and their paths can be swaths several miles wide." said one US Fish & Wildlife ornithologist.

However, the threat to birds, light pollution and the reduction of visual quality, must be taken into account. The question begs of whether tower proposals will simply revert to adjacent landowners if rejected by the Forest Service. Private landowners may not research the impacts to birds and could be acquiescent to the communications industry. Ideally, the same standards for communications towers should be applied regardless of federal, state or private ownership. The Georgia Forestwatch vision would put the needs of our feathered, avian friends above that of increased, unchecked, competing cell companies. We must begin looking for ways in which to change the way cell towers are applied to our landscape. Thankfully, officials within the USFWS are hard at work to institute strict guidelines on unbridled construction. Unfortunately, High-Definition-Television (HDTV) is already causing the proliferation of towers over a thousand feet to be built. The Federal Communication Commission must be accountable for this and U.S. citizens need to get off the couch and tell them that it is utterly unacceptable for these unnecessary bird-killing probes to be built at all. I urge you to become a vocal participant in FCC decision making by contacting:

Chairman Michael K. Powell,
Federal Communications
Commission
445 12th St. S.W.
Washington DC 20554

Log on to http://www.fcc.gov/

Based on my conversations with top US Fish & Wildlife Service ornithologists, threats to songbirds are on equal footing with cars, planes and house cats. But I offer that cell towers seem to be one that we can address within the scope of Georgia Forestwatch. Additionally, the USFWS says that Section 7 consultation with the Endangered Species Act must be done regarding towers on Federal Land.

(continued on page 4)

Key Contacts

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706-782-3320

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USFS Toccoa Ranger District
6050 Appalachian Highway
Blue Ridge, GA 30513
706-632-3031

GFW Welcomes
Katherine Groves

I am a native of Knoxville Tennessee and grew up with the inspiration of the Southern Appalachian Mountains all around me. At a very early age I knew that I wanted to dedicate my life to their preservation and protection. I attended Maryville College in Maryville TN, where I received my degree in biology. There I choose to do my undergraduate thesis project on the Pigeon River, which is impacted by Champion International Pulp and Paper Mill. It was during this project that I fell in love with the organisms that I encountered in the streams. Bright, ornately patterned stoneflies, delicate mayflies, and industrious caddisflies that build intricate cases all captivated my interest.

After receiving my undergraduate degree in a course of study that was very broad based, I decided to get my master's degree specializing in aquatic ecosystems. I attended Eastern Kentucky University where I studied under Guenter Schuster Ph.D.. who has been a wonderful mentor to me. I did my master's thesis on a small stream in the Daniel Boone National Forest called Sinking Creek. Sinking Creek contains two federally endangered species of mussels, the Cumberland Pearly Bean mussel and the Cumberland Elktoe. In addition to doing a survey of the mussel community, I did a complete bioassessment of the fish and invertebrates on Sinking Creek, and assessed the impacts to the watershed. After I graduated, I had the opportunity to go back to Maryville College and teach biology for a semester and then briefly worked as a contractor for the Tennessee Valley Authority doing stream assessments. I have moved to Ellijay with my high school sweetheart , Trey Medlock, and our two hyper but loving dogs. Georgia Forest Watch is a truly wonderful organization and I am so excited about working with everyone involved. My e-mail address is katherineg@ellijay.com

Katherine Groves
Georgia ForestWatch
Staff Ecologist

(Armuchee Update continued from pg. 3)

Aside from the Armuchee proposal, no other ranger districts are entertaining new cell tower additions at this time. To stay posted on this issue go to: www.gafw.org current issues section.

To affect decisions regarding towers on public land contact key decision makers in the adjacent Key Contacts/ FS section.

For more info talk to the fine folks at Audubon Atlanta and check out the October issue of Audubon magazine and read the article, *Faulty Towers*. The web addresses: www.towerkill.com and http://migratorybirds.fws.gov/issues/tblcont.html will get you briefed on more facts, too.

Limited Edition GFW Darter T-shirts are on SALE Now!

Cherokee darter courtesy of S.A.R.I, Thomas A. Tarpley

As before, they are 100% organic cotton and sport the GFW Colorful logo on the back

But unlike any other t-shirt the GFW Limited Edition Darter T-shirt pays homage to the Cherokee darter which you can see above!

This delightful darter is prominently displayed on the front of the t-shirt and under it is the Georgia Forestwatch new and improved visitor friendly website!

So when you purchase a GFW Limited Edition Darter t-shirt, not only are you making a great investment by contributing to GFW's efforts to continue protecting and preserving the National Forests of North Georgia, not only are you making a great investment for yourself by purchasing a great long-sleeved t-shirt for the fall and winter months, you are showing your support for GFW and helping people learn about the Cherokee darter.

Please order your t-shirt today if you have not already done so! Just fill out the form at the back of this newsletter and order as many as you like, they come in Small, Medium, Large and X-Large

Thank you so much for your Generous Support!

Goldenrods of the Southern Appalachians and the Spiders that love them

Misumena vatia: The Flower Queen

by Oscar S. Cisneros

Her arms are long, for the purpose
She weaves no web but lies in wait
Like a shark beneath the surface
Who waits for divers to make mistakes

She is pretty, through and through,
At home in petals and morning dew
But insects fear the deadly repose
Of this spider colored yellow like the rose

A strong embrace, a many-eyed face.
Let her get closer, just for a taste.
You chose the plant, the flower too,
And now Misumena is devouring you.

Poetically said, these are the feeding habits of a very creative spider that inhabits the Southern Appalachians. It's name, as the poem's title mentions, is Misumena vatia, otherwise known as the Goldenrod Spider. Southeastern Outdoors (www.southeasternoudoors.com) lets us know that this particular spider belongs to the "Thomsidae family, they do not spin webs to capture prey, but ambush prey instead. This female would just sit on the marigold and wait for an insect to land, then it would grab it with it's crab like grip." Misumena vatia is exceptional for many reasons. One is it's ability to camouflage, it can attain a bright goldenrod coloration but it can also be white. The color change can take several days. One of it's favorite plants is the topic of much controversy: Solidago, the goldenrod.

There are several aspects of Solidago that are intriguing to its admirers. One is it's falsely accused of being responsible for hay fever. This is untrue, as Laura C. Martin explains in Wildflower Folklore, in reality only 1 to 2% of the pollen in the air is from goldenrod. It's pollen is sticky so that it will adhere to insects. It is ragweed that causes allergies because it's wind pollinated.

Solidago has many species, too many to list here, but one of particular interest is the Blue Ridge Goldenrod due to its threatened status. It has been federally listed since march 1985. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the division of endangered species mentions that "the greatest damage to Blue Ridge Goldenrod came from the commercial development of the open mountain summits where it occurs." It also mentions contruction of "roads, parking lots" and other development.

Although there are regulations against destroying, or damaging endangered, threatened, rare or unique plants, the US Fish and Wildlife Service confesses, "its extremely hard to enforce" them. There are 3 populations of Solidago spithamaea, or Blue Ridge goldenrod, two are in North Carolina and one on the border of North Carolina and Tennessee. How could you identify such a special flower? It is described by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as an erect perennial herb with stems 4 to 16 inches tall arising from a short, stout rhizome. The yellow flowers are borne in heads arranged into a corymbiform inflorescence."

Other species of Goldenrod are equally interesting, for example Laura C. Martin mentions Sweet Goldenrod, Solidago odora, whose leaves exude a pleasant "anise" fragarance. James W. Smith from Georgia Native Plants Society mentions that "a number of species make excellent garden plants: S. bicolor (White Goldenrod); S. caesia (Blue-Stemmed goldenrod); S. ulmifolia (Elm-leaved Goldenrod)". He also estimates there to be "probably 40 or more" species of goldenrod in Georgia.

The variety and diversity of Solidago is just one aspect of the biodiversity we find in flora and fauna in the Southern Appalachians, so as autumn continues to permeate from deep within the national forest, into our gardens and yards at home, let us bid welcome to Solidago, in all its incarnations, and the avid little crab spider that carries its name also.

by: Jennifer Rodriguez, GFW Office Manager. Jennifer has worked for GFW over a year and is interested in the great biodiversity of the Southern Appalachians.

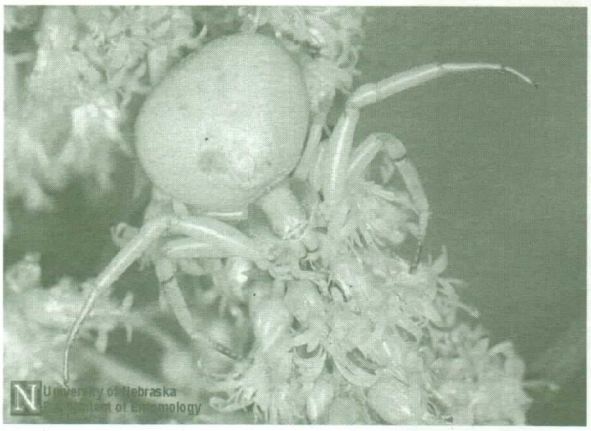


Photo of Misumena vatia on Goldenrod, courtesy of Jim Kalisch, UN Entomology Dept.

DAWSON FOREST NEEDS A DISTRICT LEADER!

Georgia Forestwatch wants to build a Dawson Forestwatch and we need your help. What would your duties include? Learning the ins and outs of the management of this 10,000 acre tract, monitoring Georgia Forestry commission timber sales (no more pine plantations) and road building/ management, monitoring and documenting ORV impacts, making sure the City of Atlanta doesn't sell the land off to developers, and any other thing related to protecting and restoring the biodiversity of this valuable public resource. This is an excellent opportunity for anyone wanting to get more involved in protecting Georgia's forests. If you're interested, please give us a call or email us.

Why our Feathered Friends Are Crazy for Caffeine.

For centuries, North Americans have relied on the songs of mi grant birds to signal the coming of spring. In fact, 61 million people count themselves as birdwatchers in the United States. As tropical forests are cleared, the habitat of birds that migrate between North and South America is disappearing. This fantastic spectacle - the return of the song - could be lost forever.

In regions of the tropics most heavily used by migrant birds, coffee plantations cover almost half the permanent cropland. The methods under which coffee is grown have an enormous impact on bird populations and their survival rate.

Coffee is traditionally grown under the shade of canopy trees. The shade trees protect the understory coffee plants and help maintain the soil quality. Shade reduces the need for weeding and aids in pest control. In contrast, new varieties of coffee have been widely introduced which are sun tolerant and grown with no shade canopy at all. This poses a major habitat change for migratory birds.

Grown under shade, coffee supports both a high density and diversity of migratory birds and other plants and animals. One study in Columbia recorded 150 to 200 species of birds in shaded coffee plots and only 5 to 10 species in sun grown coffee. Another study in southeaster Mexico found more than 190 species of birds in traditional coffee plots while only 6 to 12 bird species in a sun plantation.

To order shade grown coffee contact Cafe Campesino at
www.cafecampesino.com
302 W. Lamar St.
Americus, GA 31709
(229)924-2468
(888)532-4728
info@cafecampesino.com

Limited quantities of the new Georgia ForestWatch 2002 Desk Calendar *available now!!*

Order today and keep the GFW staff sane and working on issues during the seasonal rush for calendars and t-shirts. Our traditional direct outreach postcards are a great way for you to keep the decision makers aware that you are concerned with our forests future. With a slightly larger format, the GFW 2002 Desk Calendar offers you a companionable forest ally though out the entire year. They are $12 each. If you wish to order, just fill out the form below and mail it to the GFW office in Ellijay or you can purchase them at our website www.gafw.org

GFW 2002 Calendar Form

Name: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip code _____
Phone: _____
Email _____
Quantity of Calendars: _____
Do you wish to make an additional Donation to GFW? _____
Total amount you are contributing: _____
Please make your check out to GFW or Pay with CC
Please Circle one: Visa MC AMEX CC# _____
Expiration Date _____

North Burton Proposed Powerline

by Katherine Groves

Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC) has identified an increased electrical demand in Southwestern Rabun County. They first proposed an 115kV transmission line on private property. After meeting public resistance, they have applied for a special use permit with the Forest Service In order to build the line on National Forest land. The proposed line, called Alternative line "D" would be located on a 7.5 mile stretch of land beside Glassy mountain through the Worley Ridge Mountain Treasures Area. They are still meeting public resistance because the people of Rabun Co. are not sure that the transmission line is necessary at all, and would like the option of exploring alternative energy sources. Georgia Forest Watch is against the construction of the North Burton powerline and is supporting the "No Action" alternative. The Forest Service is now asking for public comment on this issue. If you would like more information on this issue you can check the GFW web site or contact the Forest Service via e-mail: powerlineissue@yahoo.com, by phone: (706)782-3320, or by mail: U.S. Forest Service, Highway 441 South, Clayton, GA 30525.

New Internal Rule on Forest Planning Threatens New Forest Plans

By Brent Martin

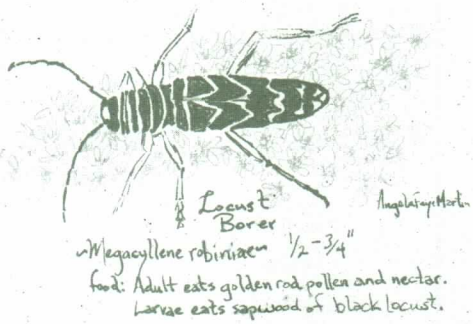
For those of us who are getting old together while waiting on the new Chattahoochee/Oconee Forest Management Plan, here is some bad news: the new planning regulations that an independent Committee of Scientists worked on for over three years have been gutted. These new planning regulations gave broad direction for watershed protection, ecosystem health, identifying protecting unroaded areas (not to be confused with Roadless areas – these were small areas, 1000 acres for example, that remain unfragmented), strengthening viability requirements, and more. However, much like the Roadless policy, these new regulations (which hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars have been spent on), were replaced with a new Bush Administration internal planning rule that effectively guts them. It remains to be seen how these will be implemented in our new forest management plan for the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests.

Among the highlights of the Internal Draft Rule: reducing public comment periods on forest plans along with the possibility of eliminating Environmental Impact Statements (EIS) for new forest plans, eliminating more than 80 percent of the scientific review provisions on new forest plans, returning "economic sustainability" as a priority in forest plans, eliminating unroaded area review, and returning Roadless area management to local planners. Remember, we had 179,000 acres of Roadless areas at the end of the last plan revision in 1985 – today we have 63,500. The result of local planning. Perhaps the good news is that the Forest Service has to have a draft EIS out on our new forest management plan by September 2002, as that is when the money runs dry, and that they will not have enough time to do too much damage. However, at a public meeting on the forest plan this September, the FS announced that the "Rolling Alternative," the one that we have participated in planning on for the last several years, was now simply one of several alternatives, and would carry equal weight with the others. We'll keep you posted on how this works out and when you can weigh in.

GFW Fundraiser Gala – November 10, 2001 With the Glenn Phillips Band!

Mark your calendar, because you don't want to miss it! Come to Ellijay and meet your GFW friends for a fun filled evening of live music with the Glenn Phillips band, food, and beverages of your choice. A silent auction will also be part of the evening as we have numerous talented artists/ GFW members who will be contributing. The event will be held at the Mountain Light UU Church (formerly the Walnut Mountain Clubhouse) on top of Walnut Mountain. Look for an invitation soon, and we'll see you there!

Critter Corner



We want to extend a sincere Thank You to all the members that contributed to the Special Appeal to hire Katherine Groves!

Thank You so Much, you helped make this happen with your generosity and support!

(the first half of this list can be found in the GFW Summer 2001 newsletter)

David and Jean Bergmark
Jay Bolas
Emily Calhoun
Mike and Roberta Crittenden
Terrence and Merry Croft
Jo Faddis
John and Barbara Fitzharris
Suzan and Jon Gant
Edna Garst
Jane Gatley
Charles and Helen Huguley
Christine and David James
Peter Kirby
Milton and Davee Kuniansky
Richard Kuniansky
Wayne Langford
Annel Martin
Samuel and Nancy Obenschain
Carol Pittman
Deborah Obenschain
David Studtman
Tom and Rita Thrasher
Barbara and Corbett Turner
William Pulgram
Sallie Purvis
Louis and Kathy Sawyer
John C. Watson
Valerie Warden
Virginia Wills
Nancy Wylie

In December, Georgia Forestwatch will host it's annual banquet to honor our generous Volunteers. If you donated time this past year to GFW be on the look out for that special invitation and come join us once again as Georgia Forestwatch honors the numerous members that help our mission continue.

Volunteer of the Year Awards Recipients

GFW's Annual Retreat in August at the Center for New Beginnings was a great success. Part of this years retreat, as with every year's retreat, was spent honoring the volunteers who made the greatest contribution to GFW's work and mission over the past year. George and Betty Lee, two of our most dedicated office volunteers, won a Volunteer of the Year award for their outstanding commitment to our smooth functioning office. Joe Gatins, Tallulah Ranger district Activist Extraordinaire, won Volunteer of the Year for his forest protection efforts in the Tallulah district. Shirl Parsons, (do we need to say anything about Shirl Parsons?) was given an Outstanding Contribution Award for her decade plus commitment to the work of Georgia Forestwatch. So - to get in the running for your award next year, call GFW and get involved as a volunteer. We have lots of office and field work you can be involved in.

Please cut below dotted line

GEORGIA FORESTWATCH MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

MEMBERSHIP CATAGORIES

	Individual	Joint
Regular	☐ $20	☐$30
Student	☐ $10	☐$15
Generous	☐$50	☐$75
Extra Generous	☐$100	☐$150
Gilded	☐$200	☐$300
Life *	☐$350	☐$500

All are tax deductible

Georgia's Last Wild Places 2002 Calendars are on sale. Members can get them for $12 each
_____ # of calendars ordered $ _____ amount

GFW Limited Edition Darter T-Shirts on sale for $20 Quantity _____ Size _____

Checks should be payable to Georgia ForestWatch, 4 River St., Ste. C, Ellijay, GA 30540 or pay with Credit Card # _____
Expiration _____ Circle One: MC Visa AMEX.