Forest News

Georgia ForestWatch Quarterly Newsletter Spring 2019

Around the Forest

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Change is in the air!

by Sue Harmon : Board President

On a rainy Sunday in mid-February, I met Georgia ForestWatch Executive Director (ED), Don Davis, at my local coffee shop for what I thought would be a typical Board President/ED check-in talk. But I quickly learned that Don had a serious health issue and also some family changes that could only be resolved by his resignation.

Don worked hard during his tenure at ForestWatch: building relationships with foundations and donors; managing all grant writing and progress reporting; helping with programmatic issues like the gun range and Cooper Creek; helping to manage event planning, publicity, and endorsements for our *Georgia's Mountain Treasures* rollout; and making presentations in the community about the work we do. Don put a lot of positive energy into our organization and we are very thankful for that. While we hated to see him go, we know that health and family have to come first. We wish him well in all ways and are happy for him to once again be with his wife, Yelena, who is now stationed in Tunisia. We hope to welcome them both back to our conservation community in the future, as Don tells us that relocating to Georgia for retirement is a definite possibility.

With Don's resignation, the ForestWatch Board got to work right away figuring out the best path forward. After more than a few wide-ranging discussions, the Board made a decision to offer our Forest Ecologist, Jess Riddle, the opportunity to lead us forward as our new Executive Director. Jess accepted the promotion, which has been received with much enthusiasm by both the Board and the membership, not to mention our partners and donors. Also, of note, in March Jess received, on behalf of ForestWatch, the 2019 Partner of the Year Award given by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Southern Region.

But that wasn't the end of staffing issues that needed resolution. Don and the Board had begun the process of hiring a part-time Outreach Coordinator. After interviewing numerous candidates, we were pleased to find among them a particularly outstanding applicant with excellent development credentials. We realized this candidate would be a great compliment to Jess's programmatic strengths and sound science background, so we created a new position, Development Director, and offered it to her. She joined the team on March 25.

Janice Eaton comes to us with over 20 years of experience in the non-profit world, where she performed a variety of roles: organizational management, volunteer development, fundraising, grant writing and administration, educational and special event production, project management, partner cultivation, promotions, and social media management. And to round out her skills and interests, she's a published author with a strong love of the outdoors and a passion for the arts. We are pretty excited about the new possibilities that Janice's skills and passions will bring to our mission.

And last, but definitely not least, we have filled the much-needed Outreach Coordinator position. Andrew Linker joined our team on April 5. Andrew's most recent work has been as a part time naturalist at Elachee Nature Science Center. However, many ForestWatch friends may know Andrew from his volunteer work managing the Northeast Georgia Locally Grown market. And during his spare time (what's that?) Andrew pursues his own agrarian dreams via Humble Vine Farm, located in Cleveland, GA. Andrew brings multiple skills to the ForestWatch team: naturalist knowledge, public speaking and outreach, volunteer recruitment and coordination, project oversight, community collaboration and networking, event planning, public relations management, strategic planning, teaching, web site design, video/audio production, social media campaign management, design work, and GIS mapping skills.

So please help us welcome Janice and Andrew by introducing yourselves when you can. And, of course, you can be sure that Jess will appreciate your encouragement as he takes on his new leadership role.

Now it is time to settle in with our new team and move forward with our mission. As always, the support of our members, partners, donors, and volunteers is what keeps us going. Thank you! ■

Development Director Janice Eaton

Outreach Coordinator Andrew Linker

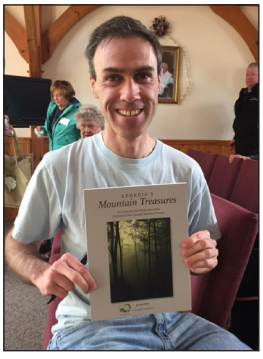
Celebrating *Georgia's Mountain Treasures*

by Melanie Vickers : Board Member

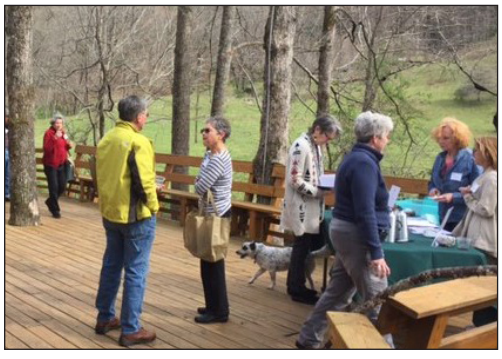
Fifty members and guests gathered at the beautiful Wayfarer Unity Chapel in Dillard, Georgia, on Sunday, March 31, to celebrate the recent publication of *Georgia's Mountain Treasures*. The event was the first of five such celebrations that Georgia ForestWatch is hosting around the state. Wayfarer Unity Chapel is in a gorgeous natural setting, and guests enjoyed drinks and snacks on the deck overlooking Mud Creek, despite the chilly wind that decided to blow in that day.

Board Member Marie Dunkle welcomed everyone and thanked sponsors Tiger Mountain Vineyards for donating wine, the Clayton Hiking Club for beer, and Mr. Stephen DeBlasio for providing music. Brent Martin, a past Executive Director of Georgia ForestWatch, set the tone for the day by reading a poem he composed just for the event entitled "Tresoros de Montanas."

Jess Riddle gave a very informative presentation about our mountain treasures and why they deserve our protection. Jess has devoted a great deal of time over the last few years exploring these special wild places and searching for ancient trees and rare plants and animals. ForestWatch members received a free copy of *Georgia's Mountain Treasures* at the event. ■



Jess is happy that this book is completed!



ForestWatchers connect with friends on the deck

Photo credits: Pamela Martin

Contact Information
Georgia ForestWatch

www.gafw.org

81 Crown Mountain Place, Building C, Suite 200
Dahlonega, GA 30533
706-867-0051

Georgia ForestWatch is a 501(c)3 nonprofit educational corporation.

Forest News edited by Lyn Hopper and Jess Riddle

Layout by Eleanor Thompson

STAFF

Jess Riddle, Executive Director
Lyn Hopper, Bookkeeper/Office Manager
Janice Eaton, Development Director
Andrew Linker, Outreach Coordinator

BOARD MEMBERS

Sue Harmon, President
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Donald Davis
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Charles Seabrook
Brenda Smith
Dennis Stansell
James Sullivan
Mary Topa

GEORGIA FORESTWATCH DISTRICT LEADERS

Chattooga River Ranger District
Marie Dunkle 770-335-0967
(Rabun, Towns and White Counties)
Ben Cash 706-968-3841
(Habersham, Stephens & White counties)

Conasauga Ranger District
Robin Hitner 678-294-3256
(Chattooga, Gordon, Murray, Floyd, Walker & Whitfield counties)
David Govus 706-276-2512
(Fannin & Gilmer counties)

Oconee National Forest
JP Schmidt 706-613-8483
Caleb Walker 706-248-4910
(Greene, Jasper, Jones, Monroe, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe & Putnam counties)
Larry Winslett 404-375-8405
(Greene, Jasper, Jones, Morgan, Oconee, Oglethorpe & Putnam counties)

Blue Ridge Ranger District
Tom & Sally Colkett
770-316-7609
(Dawson & Lumpkin counties)

Cover photo credit: Jess Riddle
Mill Creek flows toward the culvert scheduled for replacement.

High Shoals: A Georgia Mountain Treasure

by Jess Riddle : Executive Director

During a recent winter, I visited High Shoals looking for scenic ice formations. "Polar Vortex" was on people's lips since a deep chill had descended on the eastern United States for the previous week. Rummaging through my mind for which waterfalls would be the most spectacularly frozen, High Shoals popped up as a prime candidate due to its moderately high elevation and north aspect.

A broad, well-trodden trail (currently closed) first passes Blue Hole Falls before descending to the grander High Shoals. I found the whitewater of both falls camouflaged by surrounding ice formations, and the stream at the base of High Shoals turned to slush. Even under temperate conditions, though, the falls are spectacular. That obvious scenic value has led the Forest Service to designate 148 acres around the falls as a scenic area.

Most of the Treasure's old growth lies on the summit and western slopes of Brier Creek Bald, a spur off the higher Tray Mountain, best known as one of Georgia's 4,000-foot elevation summits. While a few large trees reside in the stand, probably more representative is a 17-inch diameter, 300-year-old, white oak that Georgia ForestWatch cored in documenting the old-growth. Forest Service projects as late as 1990 tore chunks out of the unrecognized stand, clear-cutting ancient oaks or converting the forest to wildlife openings. The road used to access the harvests cuts a swath towards the center of the surrounding roadless area.

Brier Creek Bald's remaining 300 acres of old-growth still have more value and lessons locked in them. "Bald" is often interpreted as a treeless summit, but we found 200-year-old white oaks high on the summit. Old tree density was fairly low, and grazing by European livestock likely produced a more open forest in the 1800s, but even the bald still had trees.

Forests five to twenty-five years old are often touted as essential for ruffed grouse, a declining game bird at the southern end of its range in Georgia's Mountains. Indeed, while surveying Brier Creek Bald we ran into a grouse at the edge of a wildlife opening near where old-growth had been cut in 1990. However, we also ran into a grouse on the other side of the mountain as we mapped where the old-growth forest met mature second-growth. This boundary was far from any recent logging and provides an example of how grouse can persist in older forests, which we have seen repeated elsewhere.

Passing through the old growth, we came across a stand of pitch pines, a species good at recording fires. Old, fire-scarred trees are needed to figure out how frequently fires occurred prior to fire suppression, which generally became effective around the 1930s. Scientists use tree rings to determine when fire scarred the trees. Combining many trees and fallen logs in the same area, they can build up a precise history of when fires occurred in the area. For them to do that, though, they need a site with many fire-scarred trees. This need raises the question whether such sites are common and representative of the broader landscape, or whether they are unusual areas that had elevated levels of fire. We examined about a dozen pines in the stand and found no fire scars. This area may have still experienced fires, but likely less frequently than those typically used for scientific studies. The stand essentially would not qualify for study, yet its fire history is no less valid than those that are used for study.

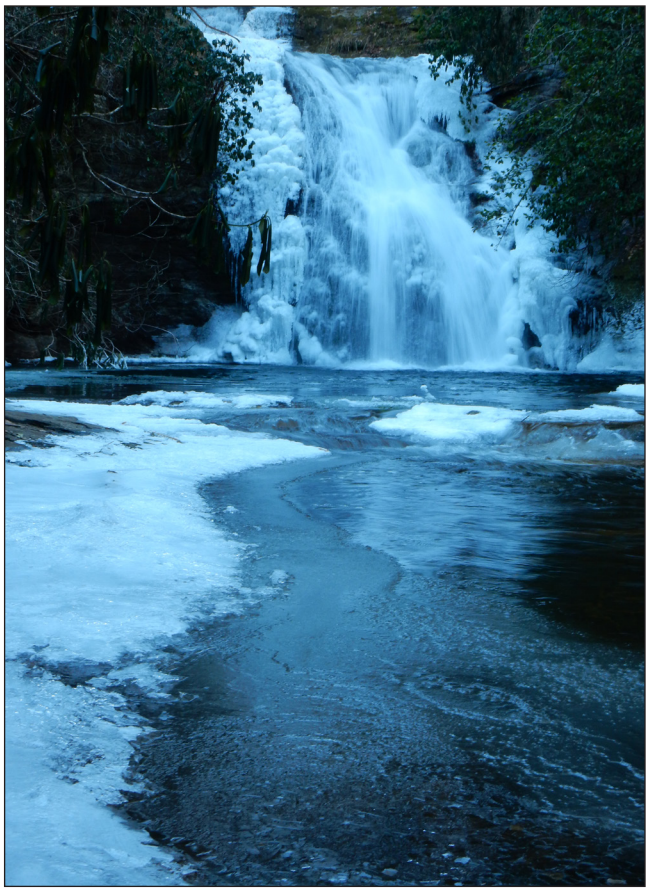

Photo credit: Jess Riddle

Blue Hole Falls tumbles down between ice formations

If values that can be seen are variously enshrined or ignored, how much regard is given to a value that cannot be seen directly? Forty years ago, the High Shoals Roadless Area was part of a larger unbroken blanket of forest that spread from Unicoi Gap to the north end of Lake Burton. Animals, plants, and wildfires could move freely through the entire area. With 36,300 acres, the Tray Mountain Roadless Area was the largest roadless area on the Chattahoochee National Forest. Now roads cleave it into pieces. Desire for "access" and timber pushed the roads through the area, but more recently the two largest remaining pieces have gained recognition for the recreation opportunities and wildlife habitat they provide. An official inventoried roadless area designation offers limited protection to the Kelly Ridge Roadless Area, while 1985 Wilderness legislation granted permanent protection to Tray Mountain. The High Shoals Mountain Treasure has received no such designations, but as we all continue to explore the area and find more old-growth forest, unnamed waterfalls, and other treasures, I hope its value will receive official recognition.

This article is part of a recurring series on Georgia's Mountain Treasures. Mountain treasures are some of the last large wild places in Georgia. But they don't have permanent protection from road building, logging, and other extractive resource use. We've surveyed them to learn more about their special plants, animals, history, and scenic features. We're using that information to update the book Georgia's Mountain Treasures*, and lobby for more protection during the next Forest Plan revision. We hope these articles will inspire people to enjoy and get to know these areas.* ■

UPCOMING OUTINGS

Sunday, June 16
Dr. Bill Witherspoon
Mt. Yonah Geology Hike

Friday, June 28
Sue Harmon & Cliff Shaw
Summer Tree ID at Lake Winfield Scott

Friday, July 12
Sue Harmon & Cliff Shaw
Valley of the Giants Old-growth Hike
at Cooper Creek

Join our email alert program at www.gafw.org to receive notices of outings and registration information.

Please note that Georgia ForestWatch members are given early-bird priority on outings. We do not take reservations in advance of the alert posting.

District Offices of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests

District Ranger, Jeff Gardner
USFS Conasauga Ranger District
3941 Highway 76 • Chatsworth, GA 30705
jeffgardner@fs.fed.us
706-695-6736 ext. 102

District Ranger, Andrew Baker
USFS Blue Ridge Ranger District
2042 Highway 515 West
P.O. Box 9 • Blairsville, GA 30512
albaker@fs.fed.us
706-745-6928

District Ranger, Ryan Foote
USFS Chattooga River Ranger District
9975 Highway 441 South
Lakemont, GA 30552
rfoote@fs.fed.us
706-754-6221

District Ranger, Thomas Dozier
USFS Oconee National Forest
1199 Madison Road
Eatonton, GA 31024
tdozier@fs.fed.us
706-485-7110 ext. 102

Forest Service Contacts

Betty Jewett – Forest Supervisor
USDA Forest Service
Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests
1755 Cleveland Highway
Gainesville, GA 30501
bettymjewett@fs.fed.us • 770-297-3010

Ken Arney – Regional Forester
USDA Forest Service – Region 8
1720 Peachtree St. NW
Atlanta, GA 30309
karney@fs.fed.us • 404-347-7930

Sonny Perdue
Secretary of Agriculture, USDA
Jamie L. Whitten Bldg.
1301 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20250
agsec@usda.gov • 202-720-2791

Around the forest

by Jess Riddle : Executive Director

Forest wide

Since the early 2000s, a metallic-green Asian beetle called emerald ash borer (EAB) has been devastating ash trees across much of eastern North America. Similar to the hemlock woolly adelgid in its lethality, EAB moves even faster, sometimes killing most mature ash trees in an area in just two years. It has just begun killing trees on the Chattahoochee National Forest, and the Forest Service has completed a proposal to protect select ash trees by treating them with chemical insecticides. Most treated trees will be along the Appalachian Trail. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has been treating ash in North Carolina and Tennessee, and they will supply the chemical and most of the labor to treat the trees. Georgia ForestWatch has been assisting in locating appropriate groves for treatment and will be volunteering with the actual treatment. All of the ash trees along the Appalachian Trail are white ash, so we are exploring opportunities with partners to treat at least one grove of each of the area's two other ash species, green and Biltmore.

The Forest Service has recently hired a new project lead for the Foothills Landscape Project, Stephanie Israel, so we anticipate this project will begin moving again soon. Foothills remains by far the most important current project since it covers far more land than any previous project and involves timber harvests, herbicides, trails, roads, and prescribed fire. Sometime this spring, another series of public meetings will be held in towns scattered around the foothills of the mountains. Then the Forest Service will release the environmental assessment and have an official public comment period. Participation by Georgia ForestWatch members – by attending the public meetings and submitting written comments – will be important for getting rid of the worst parts of the project.

Photo credit: Andrew Linker

Georgia ForestWatch records current conditions in a Cooper Creek stand slated for harvest.

ForestWatch has continued to stay engaged with the project. Through the CoTrails process, we participated in recent discussions about how Foothills timber harvests would impact the Willis Knob horse trail system. On March 15th, along with our partners the Southern Environmental Law Center and the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club, we met with the Forest Service to discuss where Foothills has lived up to its billing as a "collaborative process" and where the process needs to be modified to avoid problems. While the process includes several positive elements, we remained concerned about the Forest Service's plans to withhold the specific locations of timber harvests until after the official comment period is closed. Over the years, ForestWatch has found visiting proposed project areas invaluable in assessing their potential impacts. The public deserves that opportunity to make fully informed comments.

Chattooga River Ranger District

More and more people see the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests as a recreation destination. That increased use means more people enjoying and caring about the forest, but also means more strain on the trail system. The Chattooga River Ranger District will complete short reroutes on two trails to increase trail sustainability and safety: the Appalachian Trail about a mile north of Hogpen Gap and the Panther Creek Trail in Habersham County. Georgia ForestWatch helped with this project by completing the required botanical surveys for the reroutes. The new section of the Appalachian Trail should be much less erosion-prone, and the Panther Creek reroutes avoid some potentially dangerous areas.

Conasauga Ranger District

The recently proposed Mill Creek Aquatic Passage Project put ForestWatch in a tricky position. We

supported the main goal of the project, replacing the conventional culverts in a road/trail across Mill Creek with a bottomless or arch culvert. Conventional culverts chop streams into pieces. They block the movement of fish, salamanders, crayfish and other aquatic organisms. Conversely, bottomless culverts allow a continuous streambed underneath the road and permit aquatic organisms to move freely along the stream. Mill Creek is a particularly good location for a culvert replacement because the stream is part of the extraordinarily diverse Conasauga River Watershed, has good water quality, and has a great length of stream upstream of the culvert.

A motorized vehicle trail crosses Mill Creek on an old road bed, and the project proposed to upgrade that trail back into a road without an environmental assessment. Plunging straight into the Grassy Mountain roadless area (see Fall 2017 *Forest News*), the trail cuts across one of the greatest elevation gradients anywhere in north Georgia. Maintaining a road there would threaten to disrupt one of the best opportunities for plants and animals to migrate upslope in response to climate change. Fortunately, the Forest Service decided to proceed with the culvert replacement without upgrading the trail. The public will have a chance to comment on the trail upgrade as part of the Foothills Landscape Project, which will include an environmental assessment.

Maintaining species that are disappearing and restoring ecosystems to natural conditions are noble management goals. Ecosystems are complex, though, which makes these tasks difficult. The Storey Mill Project seeks to restore open woodland and longleaf pine ecosystems in the Ridge and Valley, the western edge of the Chattahoochee National Forest (see Winter 2019 *Forest News*). On March 14th, we visited the project area with the Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy. While ForestWatch has criticized some woodland restoration projects for choosing inappropriate sites, this project involves areas with indications of historic woodland, and the district is restoring ecological processes before attempting any direct manipulation. The presence of some mature longleaf in the area is a positive sign for the longleaf restoration. Unfortunately, restoring longleaf will involve clearing native mature hardwood forests. Longleaf are difficult to grow too, and we are worried that highly intensive management will be necessary to ensure their survival, such that the restoration of the surrounding herbaceous community will be compromised. We urged the Forest Service to look for ways to more holistically restore the longleaf community and minimize impacts on existing forests.

Blue Ridge Ranger District

We are currently reviewing the just-released environmental assessment for constructing a new target range just south of Brasstown Bald in Union County. Hunting is a valid use of national forest land, but that does not mean all sites are appropriate for a target range. There is no need for a range at the proposed site, because there is another Forest Service range just 3.5 miles away. The proposed site will cause noise pollution in the Mark Trail and Brasstown Bald Wilderness areas and is within one mile of the Appalachian Trail. For a more complete description of the project see the Fall 2018 issue of *Forest News*, and please send your thoughts on the project to the Forest Service.

For the past five years Georgia ForestWatch and our partners, the Southern Environmental Law Center and the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club, have been working to protect the magnificent forests, streams, and trails of the Cooper Creek area from the poorly designed Cooper Creek Project. We met with the Forest Service in the office and in the field and offered written suggestions to meet their priorities while adequately protecting the area's forests and streams. Thanks in part to letters from many of you, the plans for herbicide use have been greatly reduced, suspect woodland restoration restricted to the most extreme sites, and old-growth protected. However, major issues remain. On April 18th, Georgia ForestWatch and the Sierra Club filed a lawsuit challenging the Cooper Creek Project. At issue are the commercial timber sales in areas that the Forest Service's own plans call unsuitable for timber production, failure to consider alternative ways to meet the project needs, and lack of analysis of impact on roadless areas. The Forest Service has 60 days to respond to the legal complaint. We will keep you updated as the suit proceeds. ■

Join our new ForestRoots Coalition!

For a third of a century, GFW has pursued our mission to preserve, protect, and restore the CONF, and our organization has continued to evolve and grow. GFW has been pushing back against the gathering storm clouds, but matching the scale of the issues and the political pressure will require allies and informed advocates. With the release of the Foothills environmental assessment and public meetings imminent, now is the time for those who care about our mountain landscape to come together. We need your active participation! To receive notices of training workshops and ongoing developments, please take a moment to sign up as a ForestRoots advocate at www.gafw.org/forestroots.

In Memoriam: Maureen Donohue

by Sue Harmon, Board President

ForestWatch acknowledges with sadness the passing of Maureen Donohue. When Maureen first learned of our organization, she was hearing lots of stories from lots of folks. Maureen decided to find out for herself what ForestWatch was about. She met with our District Leaders and had numerous conversations with our Executive Director, Board members, and staff. She came to understand our mission and the nature of our advocacy work. And once she did, she spread the word throughout the conservation community and helped others become more aware of what we do and why we do it.

ForestWatch was one of many organizations that Maureen gave her time to. Maureen was past President of the Georgia Botanical Society and for many years was the lead volunteer organizer for the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. Maureen also helped to organize and lead native plant sales and rescues with the Georgia Native Plant Society and was an active member of the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance. We will all be missing her, but we are all grateful for the time we had sharing her conservation ethic and turning it into positive action together.

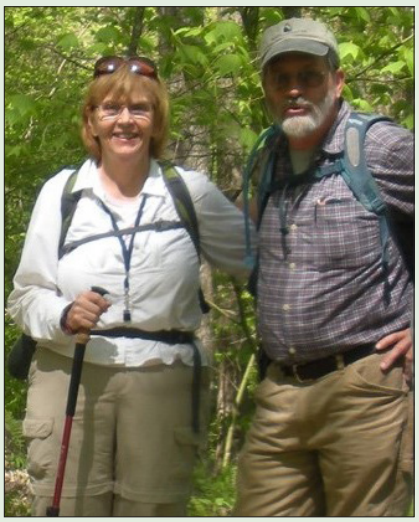

Photo credit: Clayton Webster

Maureen with hike leader Tom Govus on a ForestWatch hike in 2015

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS! (January – April)

Cary Albright & Woody Malot
Gordon & Helen Benson
Dianne Bernier
Carol Binns
Dave Blackley
Darlee Boyee
Kathy Braden
Charles & Kay Brown
Lillie Burnett & Dorothy Owen
Debbie Camp
Laura & Joe Christenberry
Stephan DeBlasio & Pam Martin
Janice Eaton
Elsie & Tim Eckberg
Vickie Elliott
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Sheryl McDaniel
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Marilyn Reed
Dave Rosselle
Sherrie Sabo
Cat Sherlock
Laura Smith
Paul Sperry & Virginia Ammons
Bob Springfield
Elizabeth & Bob St. Jean
Karen Steinberg
Michelle Stephens
Meghan Stipe
Esther Sumartojo
Ron Taylor
Rhonda Thrailkill
Gilbert Treadwell
Carol Tremblay
Alan Trench
Laura Vandewiele & Mark Reffett
Tory Vornholt
Suzanne Wandersee
Priscilla Waters
Faye Williams
Emily Williamson

THANK YOU FOREST GUARDIANS! (January – April)

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EarthShare of Georgia
Robin & Janet Hitner
Nancy Kennell
Bob & Jane Kibler
Sharon Pauli
Thomas & Ann Rhodes
Denny & Lois Rhodes
Margaretta Taylor
Turner Foundation, Inc.

A winter forest

by Esther Sumartojo : New Georgia ForestWatch Member

Esther joined members of Georgia ForestWatch for the hike to the Len Foote Hike Inn on February 5-6, 2019. She was inspired to write the following brief description of her experience.

The path was rough – roots, rocks, wet leaves – treacherous for old bones, and demanding constant attention. A lesson in presence. But at times, I had to stop to see the forest. The day was overcast. I knew there were ridges in the far distance, but they were veiled in a gray fog. The mist and moisture revealed the colors of the forest, colors that might have been overwhelmed by sun and shadows. Most stunning was the moss – Irish green – almost fluorescent. My hiking companion was enchanted by moss, and pointed out the amazing range of varieties of this complex plant. Some cling to rocks, some to trees near the ground. Other green plants cohabit with the moss. Every tiny space was occupied with life--a universe of genetic material in one square foot.

The trees were in their winter garb, giant skeletons that appeared lifeless, but can be trusted to grow green come spring. In some areas, there were many trees, young and healthy-looking growth, with clear bark. Others were blackened, suggesting the effects of a fire in the past. The forest meadows were lovely, with sparsely positioned trees, irregularities of the ground covered with leaves, and misty air filling vast spaces. Here there was stillness, a deep comforting quiet. It was a silence, a kind of deep monotone that permeated everything.

Different vegetation occupied other areas along the trail. Plants knew their healthiest location, and gathered in areas most suited to their needs. We passed through a stand of mountain laurel, low evergreen plants that would show magnificent flowers in the spring, but now enclosed the path, creating a private space, like a tunnel in the forest. Later we noticed tall and very old trees, with gnarly branches, hiding holes for small animals between exposed roots. There were also giant upturned roots of fallen trees, taken down by high winds. Some of these roots formed permanent mounds that will last beyond the time when their trunks and branches have decayed and returned to the soil.

Photo credit: Ted Doll

Esther and Art Wickman explore the winter forest

I wish I could have rested long in the forest, not had a goal or direction for an hour, but had been able to stay with the sounds of the still winter forest and be the better for it. ■

U.S. Senate

Senator David Perdue
Senator David Perdue
455 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-3521
www.perdue.senate.gov/connect/email

-or-

Field Representative Andrew Seaver
3280 Peachtree Road NE, Suite 2640
Atlanta, GA 30305
Phone: 404-807-2510
Fax: 404-816-3435
andrew_seaver@perdue.senate.gov

Senator Johnny Isakson
U.S. Senate, 131 Russell Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: 202-224-3643
Fax: 202-228-0724
E-mail: www.isakson.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-me

-or-

Field Representative Preston Miller
c/o Sen. Johnny Isakson
One Overton Park SE
3625 Cumberland Blvd., Suite 970
Atlanta, Georgia 30339
Phone: 770-661-0999 • Fax: 770-661-0768
Cell: 770-862-2209
E-mail: preston_miller@isakson.senate.gov

U.S. House of Representatives

Representative Jody Hice
100 Court Street
Monroe, GA 30655
Phone: 770-207-1776
Fax: 770-226-6751
http://hice.house.gov/contact/

Representative Austin Scott
127-B N. Central Ave.
Tifton, GA 31794
Phone: 229-396-5175
Fax: 229-396-5179
https://austinscott.house.gov/email-me

Representative Tom Graves
702 South Thornton Ave.
Dalton, GA 30720
Phone: 706-226-5320
Fax: 706-278-0840
http://tomgraves.house.gov/contact/

Representative Doug Collins
210 Washington St. NW
Suite 202
Gainesville, GA 30501
Phone: 770-297-3388
Fax: 770-297-3390
https://dougcollins.house.gov/email-me

Invasive species profile: Chinese Privet *(Ligustrum sinense)*

by Jess Riddle : Executive Director

Kudzu is known as "the vine that ate the South." But it is not the invasive species that covers the most ground in Georgia. That dubious distinction belongs to Chinese privet, an evergreen shrub or small tree. In 2017, Georgia Forestry Commission estimated that privet covers over a million acres in Georgia.

Originally grown as a hedge, Chinese privet is easy to spot while driving around. It forms a green haze along the edge of mountain fields and chokes the understory of Piedmont bottomland forests. In spring, branched clusters of small, creamy flowers stand out against the dark, glossy foliage. The leaves, each an oval the size of a nickel often with crinkly edges, grow in pairs and give each twig a feather-like appearance. Each flower matures into a purple "Tic-Tac" of a berry. Birds that consume the fruits drop the seeds all over the landscape.

All privet needs is for the seed to land in moist soil. Sun or shade does not matter much so long as the soil is moist. Then privet proliferates into a thicket that creates such dense shade that little can survive underneath it. Even trees have trouble regenerating once privet is established.

While privet readily re-sprouts when cut, removal is fairly straightforward. Small stems can be pulled by hand. Larger stems requite cutting and immediate application of herbicide to the stump. Lever-based devices designed for pulling weeds are another option if the stems are not too large, but they must be used carefully since they can leave behind roots, which will re-sprout.

When people remove privet infestations, nature comes back. Forest Service researchers from Athens experimentally removed privet along the Oconee River and are monitoring what grows back. Their initial results show substantial increases in both herbaceous plant abundance and pollinator diversity.

You do not need a formal experiment to see the benefits of removing privet, though. One Georgia ForestWatch member removed the privet from her yard and found a curious little herb she had never seen before. She took it to the State Botanical Garden, and they identified the plant as Virginia snakeroot, a host for pipevine swallowtail. The Garden did not have any of that species, and is considering propagating the species from her plants. ■

Photo credit: Jess Riddle

Chinese privet displays the paired leaves typical of members of the olive family

Reference: Georgia Forestry Commission (2017). 2017 dirty dozen list: top twelve nonnative invasive plants. Georgia Forestry Commission http://www.gfc.state.ga.us/forest-management/forest-health/2017%20Dirty%20Dozen%20Spreadsheet.pdf

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Ted and Lynda Doll: Science and art among the hemlocks of Sautee Nacoochee

by Janice Eaton : Development Director

Members make critical contributions to Georgia ForestWatch and those contributions are as varied as the members themselves. Georgia ForestWatch (GFW) is pleased to introduce our first Donor Spotlight as our way of saying, "Thanks" to our supporters with this new regular feature, and to share their special stories with you.

While investigating human vision and cognitive neuroscience during his career as Principal Research Scientist and Adjunct Professor of Psychology at Georgia Tech, Ted Doll also hit the heights as a leader of Sierra Club national backpack trips in the southwest and Rocky Mountains for 15 years. Passionately involved in environmental issues since the 1980s, Ted has served on the Executive Committee of the Atlanta Group of the Sierra Club, the Board of Directors of Sautee Nacoochee Community Association, and as Past President of the Sautee Nacoochee Conservation Initiative and WaysSouth/Stop I-3.

Art quilter Lynda Doll is also a passionate native plant gardener – maintaining herb, perennial, bog, and woodland plots on the Dolls' five-acre property. Lynda retired from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in 2006, where she was a research psychologist studying HIV prevention strategies and child sexual abuse. While at CDC, she served as the Associate Director for Science in the Injury Center. Since retiring, Lynda has been involved in two community gardens as well as her own – an African-American Heritage Garden and a native plant meditation garden, both at the Sautee Nacoochee Community Association (SNCA) in Sautee. She is also a member of the SNCA History Committee and serves as a docent for the Heritage Garden and cabin. Lynda served as Chair of the Friends of the White County Libraries, and currently heads the Sunday Worship Committee at the Georgia Mountains Unitarian Universalist Church in Dahlonega.

Following Ted's retirement in 2005, the Dolls moved full-time to Hemlock Cottage, their mountain property in Sautee Nacoochee. Ted and Lynda made their first donation to Georgia ForestWatch (GFW) in 2006, contributing $100 toward GFW's support of laboratories developing biological controls against the hemlock woolly adelgid. Since that time, their gifts have grown and the Dolls number among GFW's consistent member-donors, responding to every seasonal appeal, supporting activities as various as wine tastings, plant sales, sponsorship of special events such as GFW's Annual Retreat, and hosting ForestWatch activities on their property. Ted also serves GFW in many volunteer capacities including hike leader, a two-year term as Board President, and as a member of the Fundraising Committee.

Lynda and Ted Doll

Having a variety of revenue sources helps make GFW a stable organization and allows us to maintain the independence of our views. GFW Board and staff have been working hard to diversify our sources of income, and Ted is particularly excited about GFW's Legacy Giving Program, which offers donors various options for making tax-advantaged donations to GFW, including estate planning, insurance beneficiary designation, and other giving options. When a nonprofit has a solid component of projected income based on planned giving commitments from donors, it can better weather the normal ebb and flow of foundation and corporate funding. Ted and Lynda have included Georgia ForestWatch in their estate plans to help continue protecting the wild Georgia mountains they love, and GFW is grateful.

If you'd like to know more about options available through GFW's Legacy Giving Program, please contact GFW at (706) 867-0051, or email Development Director Janice Eaton at jeaton@gafw.org. ■

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