



North Carolina
**WILDLIFE
FEDERATION**

Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Summer 2023

THIS LAND

North Carolina's trove of public lands is a treasure to explore—and protect.

PROTECTING TROUT STREAMS

CONSERVATION ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS WINNERS





The American Legacy

BY TIM GESTWICKI, NCWF CEO

In his famous folk song, "This Land is Your Land," Woody Guthrie proudly sings of his love and respect for America's preserved public lands. The opening verse provides his hallmark testimonial to the natural resources we each own.

*This land is your land and this land is my land.
From California to the New York island.
From the redwood forest to the Gulf Stream waters
This land was made for you and me.*

The words are simple. Patriotic. Encompassing. Uniting. Our national and state public lands are one of the defining features of America. They include our national and state parks, national forests, national wildlife refuges, gamelands, and federally designated monuments and wilderness areas. Collectively, these lands comprise "America's big backyard," where people of all social, economic, political, racial, and ethnic backgrounds can enjoy and receive benefits. Our public lands and waters are an incomparable birth-right, landscapes where we connect with America's history, hunt and fish with our friends, camp with our families, and enjoy the solitude and natural beauty of our country and state.

Public lands come in all shapes and sizes, from large iconic sites to local community parks and greenways. They provide each of us, as public landowners, collective ownership of places we hold as treasures. I take great pride in being part of a country with the foresight to preserve these natural assets. Not only do these lands afford each of us opportunities to hike, camp, hunt, fish, paddle, bird, and recreate; the lands also make up a mosaic of meaningful ecological services that benefit us all. Regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnicity, gender, age, or interests, we all own and can enjoy public lands while reaping the benefits. Public lands are critical to our natural infrastructure.

Public lands were a part of my upbringing. From learning to swim, to playing baseball, camping, and hiking near and far, public parks were a constant in my youth. I remember more than once my father receiving a salvage timber permit, so we'd pack a picnic lunch and caravan with a pickup truck and couple of station wagons to Uwharrie National Forest to get dead wood to bring home for firewood. I learned to identify many bird calls with my dad on wilderness walks, and caught many a fish with him on these lands, too.

North Carolina is blessed with an abundance of natural resources, and we are equally fortunate to have many of these areas protected for the public good. Across the state is a mosaic of public lands which belong to each one of us. We know people flock here to enjoy our resources. With the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, we have the most visited national park in the nation. Our Cape Hatteras National Seashore is the envy of the Eastern seaboard. And North Carolina has a history of pioneering conservationists rooted in our public lands. Our U.S. national forests trace back to the first school of forestry in North America, founded in 1886 on the Biltmore Estate grounds. Now a designated national historic site as the Cradle of Forestry, this 6,500-acre tract in Pisgah National Forest near Brevard commemorates the beginning of forest conservation in the country. Paying homage to those who championed public lands for us all is valuable. For me and for many others, the list of conservation lions begins with President Theodore Roosevelt, often referred to as "America's conservation president" and for good reason. Roosevelt championed public lands, elevating and shepherding a national park system, leading the charge for the Antiquities Act to allow the designations of historic monuments, and establishing our National Wildlife Refuge System.

Protecting American public lands and waters is a patriotic endeavor. These lands bind us together as Americans, as we are all "public land owners." We all have a right to enjoy sustainable and responsible outdoor recreation including hunting, fishing, camping, birding, wildlife watching, hiking, climbing, swimming, boating, and gardening. We pay, through our taxes, for government agencies to manage these lands on our behalf. Some for production. Some for outdoor recreation. Some for species protection. Some to save unique treasures.

As you explore this issue of the *NCWF Journal* dedicated to our public lands, I hope you are convinced of the need to support, advocate for, partner with, and even remind agencies and elected officials of their responsibilities to fund and manage these lands for us per their charge. We embrace the responsibility to conserve wildlife and wild places. Government has a sacred duty to conserve and steward these public trust resources for all, including future generations, using the best available science, and providing robust financial resources. As Guthrie sang, "This land was made for you and me." But it's up to you and me to pass it along to the next generation in better shape than we found it. **NCWF**

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DESIGN/PRINTING

Designed by: Kimberly KC Schott, Red Gate Design
Printed by: Progress Printing, Lynchburg, VA
Published by: North Carolina Wildlife Federation

ABOUT THE COVER

Cover photograph Whether you get there by paddle, hiking boot, chest waders, or bike, public lands in North Carolina are open to all. Photo by Jared Webb. Other photos, unless noted, courtesy of NCWF.

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North Carolina WILDLIFE FEDERATION *Journal*

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES Summer 2023

Official publication, North Carolina Wildlife Federation (Affiliate of National Wildlife Federation)

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PHOTO CONTEST
Highlight

BALD EAGLE
Nancy Arehart

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

MISSION To protect, conserve, and restore North Carolina wildlife and habitat for all.

VISION A North Carolina with healthy and diverse habitats and wildlife valued by all people and sustained for future generations.

VALUES Science-based decision making
Non-partisan approach to policy
Inclusive of broad interests and perspectives
Collaborative with diverse organizations and individuals
Committed to solutions and impact

America's ★ Backyard



North Carolina's public lands are a legacy from the past.
And a promise to the future.



PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST / ISTOCK.COM / JOEL CARILLET

The North Carolina Wildlife Federation has a long and storied history of working for public lands. NCWF has sought ongoing funding for lands protection, management, and access. The Federation has been a critical player in the effort to have national wildlife refuges, state parks, and state gamelands established across North Carolina. We've defended these lands from degradation and commercialization. Public lands have long been and remain today a core value to NCWF's wildlife and habitat conservation efforts, and underpin the organization's work to provide resource-based recreation for all.

Each of us, individually and collectively own our public lands and waters. They are landscapes that allow us to connect with America's history, hunt and fish with our friends, camp with our families, and enjoy the solitude and natural beauty that enriches the nation. Public lands are the foundation of the growing outdoor economy and are a critical underpinning for the travel and tourism industry that keeps North Carolina's economy strong.

Public lands are one of the defining features of America, and they come in many forms. There are national parks, national forests, national grasslands, national seashores, national wildlife refuges, federally designated monuments and wilderness areas, national wild and scenic rivers, and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. Each state adds its own public lands to the total. Collectively, this is "America's big backyard," where people of all social, economic, political, racial, and ethnic backgrounds are and deserve to be welcome.

National Forests

America's national forests and national grasslands comprise 193 million acres managed by the U.S. Forest Service, which is at 51 percent of the total the largest public land holdings of all federal land ownership. About 20 percent of the nation's water originates on these public lands, with 180 million people in more than 68,000 communities reliant on forest lands to capture and filter drinking water.

North Carolina is known for our public land forests. It is the fourth most-forested state in the country. Publicly-owned forests provide habitat conservation, beauty, carbon storage, air quality benefits, support for local and regional economies, and outdoor recreation opportunities. Of North Carolina's nearly 18 million forested acres, more than one million acres lie within national forests. There are four in North Carolina. The Nantahala and Pisgah in the western part of the state, Uwharrie in the Piedmont, and Croatan in eastern North Carolina. Pisgah National Forest is the second busiest in the country, with an estimated 6 million yearly visitors.

National forests in North Carolina have a rich history of working with partners to accomplish cross-boundary landscape level restoration and conservation objectives. NCWF is proud to be one of those partners, as we are undertaking a leading stakeholder role in working for a Nantahala-Pisgah forest management plan that will meet the many various management needs for a diversity of wildlife, habitats and uses.



JUST THE FACTS Outdoor recreation is a significant economic driver across the state of North Carolina. According to the U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of Economic Analysis, outdoor recreation in North Carolina contributed over \$11.8 billion to the state's GDP.

Need a place to hunt, fish, watch wildlife, or enjoy some other outdoor activity? Look no further than the 93 game lands that make up approximately 2.1 million acres of public land across the state. Managed by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission, these lands are an astonishing trove in the state. North Carolina has more acreage of managed game lands than all states east of the Mississippi, with the exceptions of Florida and Michigan, both of which include lake and ocean frontage as managed land. There is overwhelming public endorsement for conserving these lands, supported by documentation of the economic benefits provided by landscape conservation.

A study of wildlife-associated recreationists in North Carolina conducted by the Wildlife Commission in 2022 estimated the total economic impact of inland fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching to North Carolina's economy. This includes both the direct and indirect economic impacts from public expenditures related to these activities. The study found the total economic impact of inland fishing to be \$5.83 billion, the total economic impact of hunting to be \$1 billion, and the total economic impact of wildlife watching to be \$7.52 billion. Bird and wildlife watching, hiking, and field trials for dogs are some of the other popular outdoor activities that occur on game lands.

And while game lands provide excellent opportunities for hunting, fishing, birding, and other wildlife associated recreation, many of these areas are actively managed and play a key role in habitat conservation, especially for threatened or endangered species. A few examples include:

- Sandhills Game Land, which is managed for the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.
- Voice of America Game Land has a population of Bachman's sparrows.
- Holly Shelter Game Land harbors three carnivorous plants, including sundews, pitcher plants and Venus flytraps, and is managed to enhance habitat for these populations.

Funding for game lands acquisition comes from a variety of sources including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife Restoration Funds, funds from the State's Land and Water Fund, monies from land trust partners, and from generous private donors. Funding for land management comes, in a large part, from Wildlife Restoration Funds, also known as Pittman-Robertson funds, which are derived from an excise tax on guns, ammunition, and archery equipment.

"The Wildlife Commission is committed to safeguarding public lands for the wildlife resources that depend upon them and to providing outdoor opportunities for the citizens of North Carolina," said the Commission's Land and Water Access Division chief Daron Barnes. "We will continue to seek opportunities to expand game lands."

NC GAME LANDS ALSO ENCOMPASS:

- The largest intact and least disturbed bottomland forest ecosystem in the mid-Atlantic Region and some of the oldest cypress-tupelo trees on the East Coast, many at least 800 years old.
- One of the largest, most intact remnants of longleaf pine ecosystems in North Carolina, a high-priority wildlife habitat. Among the species dependent upon this type of habitat are bobwhite quail, a variety of songbirds, fox squirrels and the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.
- The densest populations of black bear, white-tailed deer and wild turkey, and the highest density of nesting birds in the state.
- A system of waterfowl impoundments opportunities for disabled hunters and anglers, and wildlife viewing platforms.

BY THE NUMBERS

\$7.2 billion

the value of all waters flowing from national forest lands

440 million

the number of visitors hosted annually by lands managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior

\$45 billion

the economic output produced by visitors to lands managed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, which supported some 396,000 jobs

\$646 billion

the amount of consumer spending from outdoor recreation, much of which occurs on public lands

6.1 million

the number of jobs related to U.S. outdoor recreation



National Wildlife Refuges

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is “to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and, where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.” Nothing could mirror NCWF’s mission more closely than that of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

In North Carolina there 10 refuges headquartered in the state: Alligator River (this is the largest, at 158,000 acres), Pea Island, Pocosin Lakes, Mackay Island, Currituck, Mattamuskeet, Swanquarter, Cedar Island, Roanoke River, and Pee Dee. Additionally, Mountain Bogs and Great Dismal Swamp refuges have lands in North Carolina, but their administrative headquarters are based in adjacent states.



STEVE HILLEBRAND / USFWS

WILDLIFE VIEWING, PEA ISLAND NWR

WILDLIFE REFUGE HIGHLIGHT

NCWF, in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Coastal Program, is working to improve habitat for the Eastern black rail, a bird species federally listed as threatened. The project will also restore Atlantic white cedar, a threatened forest ecosystem, to portions of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. In its initial effort, a two-stage ditch system will be installed to improve water quality and provide early breeding habitat for Eastern black rails. Management of hummocks and shallow water will encourage the growth of early successional emergent wetland habitat. Creation of this 43-acre wetland habitat will also benefit wintering migratory waterfowl and forest birds.

At a separate site, 30 acres of cropland will be converted to Atlantic white cedar to help restore this tree within its historic range and to provide natural space for public use. The newly planted Atlantic white cedar will be located adjacent to the Red Wolf Center in Columbia and will improve upon a previous restoration project. Walking trails and informational panels on the benefits of habitat restoration will be installed within the area. Both projects will serve as demonstration sites to educate community members, including local school children and landowners.

HOWLING WITH THE WOLVES, ALLIGATOR RIVER NWR



STEVE HILLEBRAND / USFWS

CATTLE EGRET, MATTAMUSKEET NWR



ALLIE STEWART / USFWS

BOARDWALK, PEE DEE NWR



WIKIMEDIA COMMONS



JUST THE FACTS The federal government owns roughly 640 million acres, about 28 percent of the 2.27 billion acres of land in the United States.

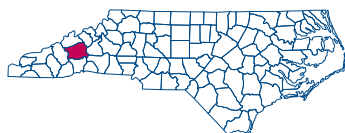


WILDERNESS GATEWAY STATE TRAIL

State Parks

The North Carolina Division of Parks and Recreation is a division of the N.C. Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, and manages more than 256,000 acres of iconic landscapes within North Carolina's state parks, state recreation areas, and state natural areas. It administers the N.C. Parks and Recreation Trust Fund, including its local grants program, as well as a state trails program, North Carolina Natural and Scenic Rivers and more, all with a mission dedicated to conservation, recreation, and education. The state parks system welcomes more than 19.8 million visitors annually at 35 state parks, four recreation areas, and dozens of state trails and natural areas.

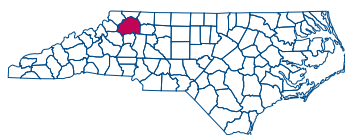
State Park: PISGAH VIEW



Location: Buncombe County
Acres: 1,387 (to date)
Cost: \$13.3 million (to date)
Year: Authorized 2019

Located in Buncombe County 18 miles southwest of downtown Asheville, Pisgah View State Park rests in the shade of Mount Pisgah, one of the many beautiful sights of the Blue Ridge seen from the Blue Ridge Parkway. Small spring-fed waterfalls nourish the rich mountain coves that brim with spring wildflowers. Mammals, migratory birds, and amphibians all find a home here. For years, humans thrived in this mountain valley, finding food, clean water, and shelter, culminating in the development of the Pisgah View Ranch as a place to explore nature and replenish the spirit. Today, the land still provides a retreat for all living things. For people, it offers a recommitment to life in harmony with nature. The park is expected to open to the public in 2025.

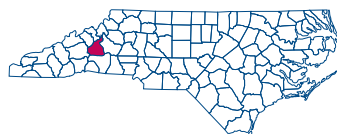
Satellite Park: RENDEZVOUS MOUNTAIN



Location: Wilkes County
Acres: 1,845
Cost: \$0 (Transferred from N.C. Forest Service)
Year: Authorized 2021

Located 30 miles east of Boone, Rendezvous Mountain provides a unique, educational outdoors experience in a mountain forest environment. This forest in the Blue Ridge Mountains showcases magnificent mountain hardwoods in one of North Carolina's most scenic settings. Visitors can explore its features on a series of well-marked trails and learn about the ecology of the mountain through exhibits and displays along their way.

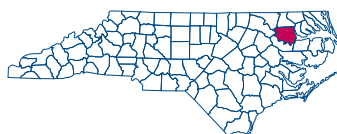
Park: BOB'S CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA



Location: McDowell County
Acres: 6,076
Cost: \$8.8 million
Year: Authorized 2017

Located in McDowell County 42 miles east of Asheville, Bob's Creek State Natural Area includes sheltered coves and ravines, unique rock formations, and diverse natural ecosystems in the foothills. Conservation and low-impact recreation are paramount for the protection of numerous streams in the river basins of the Broad and the Catawba, and the preservation of rare species that have been documented by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program.

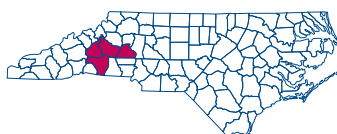
Park: SALMON CREEK STATE NATURAL AREA



Location: Bertie County
Acres: 1,331
Cost: \$2.4 million
Year: Authorized in 2017

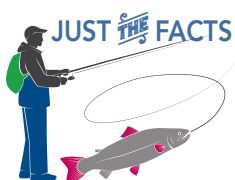
This natural area along Salmon Creek hosts a variety of significant archaeological resources and is the subject of archaeological research by The First Colony Foundation. Algonkian Indian artifacts have been found on the site, as well as English artifacts indicative of settlement by the Roanoke colonists. Some researchers theorize the artifacts could provide evidence that a group of survivors from The Lost Colony relocated to this area after leaving Roanoke Island in the late 1580s. The property features three and a half miles of beautiful frontage along Salmon Creek, floodplain forests of cypress-gum swamp and bottomland hardwood forest. It also contains tidal freshwater marsh recognized as ecologically significant by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program.

State Trail: WILDERNESS GATEWAY



Location: South Mountains range; McDowell, Rutherford, Burke and Catawba counties
Anticipated Total Length: 150 miles
Year: Authorized in 2019

The trail will protect and conserve riparian and other important habitats and serve as an ecological corridor between larger tracts of natural lands. It will create pathways and walkable downtowns in more urban areas to provide safe and pleasant recreation and exercise opportunities where people live and work. Finally, by creating recreational opportunities with access to scenic wilderness and connections to multiple downtown areas, the trail will attract visitors from all areas of North Carolina and beyond.



The most-visited national park in the entire country is Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with more than triple the visitation of Grand Canyon National Park.



★ *What I Believe* ★

I grew up being outdoors. It's a natural thing to me to be outside, either in personal reflection, or even better, in enjoyment with my family. I fully ascribe to the belief that being outdoors in nature is an essential health benefit, for mind, body, and soul. I get recharged when I spend time outdoors and those feelings stay with me when I have rich outdoor experiences.

My family and I are blessed with the ability to have our own outside space, surrounded by a variety of natural habitats. My state and nation are further blessed with having the foresight and stewardship of those in the past who set aside lands across the country for the public good.

These Public Lands I refer to are not just a natural resource. They are a National Resource. Public is us. You, me, and all the citizens of this great country. Our band sings these words in concert regularly: "These lands are your lands, these lands are my land." This is what I firmly believe.

Scott Avett is a North Carolina native son whose band, The Avett Brothers, is world renowned. Scott and his family live on a family farm and enjoy hiking in North Carolina's Uwharrie National Forest and exploring the state's mountain and coastal regions. ^{NC}WF



Governor's Conservation Achievement Award Winners

Each year, NCWF is honored to celebrate the accomplishments of conservation heroes across the state, individuals and groups who have gone above and beyond to protect, conserve, and connect others to wildlife and habitat throughout the state.

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION
19 45
ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

You're invited to the
59th ANNUAL
Governor's
Conservation Achievement
Awards Banquet

Saturday, September 9, 2023 at 5:45 p.m.
EMBASSY SUITES-RTP IN CARY

Reserve your seats today by scanning the
QR code or registering online at
WWW.NCWF.ORG/RSVP.
Call 919-833-1923 if you need further assistance.

Conservation Hall of Fame
Derb S. Carter, Jr. • Chapel Hill

Conservationist of the Year
Louis Bacon • Wilmington

Wildlife Conservationist of the Year
Joe Madison • Manteo

Sportsman of the Year
Joel McDaniel • Belhaven

Land Conservationist of the Year
Haywood Rankin • Gastonia

Water Conservationist of the Year
Pat Donovan-Brandenburg • Jacksonville

Forest Conservationist of the Year
Mavis Gragg • Durham

Environmental Educator of the Year
Terri McLeod • Cary

Young Conservationist of the Year
Lauren Pharr • Raleigh

Conservation Organization of the Year
EcoForesters • Asheville

Legislator of the Year
Kyle Hall • King

Business Conservationist of the Year
Atlantic Packaging • Wilmington

Natural Resources Scientist of the Year
Travis Wilson • Creedmoor

Wildlife Volunteer of the Year
Monty Morée • Holly Springs

Public Lands Conservationist of the Year
Brandon Jones • Fontana Dam

NCWF Chapter of the Year
MARSH (Marvin Area for the Restoration and Sustainability of Wildlife Habitat)
• Marvin

NCWF Affiliate of the Year
Wake County Wildlife Club • Durham

Wildlife Enforcement Officer of the Year
Ryan Biggerstaff • La Grange

Marine Patrol Officer of the Year
TBD



NCWF's Great Outdoors University: Inspiring Wonder and Empowering the Future

Since 2013, NCWF's Great Outdoors University (GoU) has been working to connect children and families with nature, directly confronting the growing "nature deficit" that distances them from the outdoors and our natural heritage.

Whether through nature walks, fishing, studying insects, or field trips to wildlife facilities, GoU participants leave with a profound appreciation for the animals and plants with which they share this world. We know smiling faces tell the story fully, but here's what our partners say about the experiences.

"Every time we take children on one of the GoU trips, somebody remarks on how peaceful they felt out in nature," said Dana F. Carpenter, operations director at Boys & Girls Clubs of the Carolinas. "Someone has their interest sparked by some aspect of an activity. Everyone comes back knowing a little more about the environment in which they live and fearing the outdoors a little less. It has been an amazing partnership for us, and our children's lives are so much richer for their experiences."



For GoU participants, the experience of engaging with wildlife and the outdoors goes beyond the fun of the moment. The real impact comes from what they take home with them.



"Many families do not venture outdoors because of cultural barriers," said Learning Help Centers of Charlotte executive director Brent Morris. "Hence—through GoU—our children are encouraged to get an education, have fun, and do some outdoor activities on a regular basis."

GoU partners with North Carolina schools, Boys & Girls Clubs, and Boy Scout and Girl Scout groups, but also offers opportunities for families who would like to tag along with events in their area. Kids outside exploring nature, what could be better?

To sign up for a Great Outdoors University excursion, learn more, or partner with GoU, email GoU Director, Mary Bures at mary@ncwf.org.

GET OUTDOORS

NC Wildlife Federation in the Limelight

THE FEDERATION WON a number of accolades for recent marketing work. The Hermes Creative Awards recognizes individuals and companies using their creativity and technology to bring ideas to life through traditional and digital platforms. The Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals (AMCP) conducts the competition and has judged over 300,000 entries since 1994. Judges evaluate various forms of creative work, such as publications, branding collateral, websites, videos, advertising, marketing, and communication programs. The competition attracts entries from individuals to Fortune 500 companies and media conglomerates, making it one of the world's oldest and largest creative competitions. Here are the winners from NCWF.

PLATINUM WINNER

Web Writing/Content

Hiking for Habitat: One Man's
Mountains-to-Sea Journey

<https://ncwf.org/blog/hiking-for-habitat/>

GOLD WINNER

Publication Article

"Worn Shoes, Full Heart: Highlights
from a 1,175-Mile Hike Across
North Carolina"

(from Summer 2022 NCWF Journal)

GOLD WINNER

News Release

"NC Wildlife Federation's Live
Webcam Offers Bird's-Eye View of
Nesting Osprey on Lake Norman"

HONORABLE MENTION

E-Newsletter/E-Zine

"May is for Moms, nominations,
milkweed and monarchs"

(May 2022 *Wildlife Wire*)

HONORABLE MENTION

E-Mail Communication

"The Love Story Behind the Birth of
Critically Endangered Red Wolf Pups"

HONORABLE MENTION

Blog Single Post

"Red Wolf Webcams Offer 24/7
Peek Inside Den of World's Most
Endangered Wolf"

<https://ncwf.org/blog/red-wolf-webcams/>



High Honors

Liz Rutledge Ph.D, NCWF director of wildlife resources, accepts award on behalf of National Wildlife Federation's Resilient Schools Consortium Program at the Association of State Floodplain Managers Conference in Raleigh.

Red Wolf Rebound



RED WOLF PUPS / DJ SHARP / USFWS

THIS PAST SPRING the Milltail pack of red wolves on Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge welcomed a new litter to the wild. For the second year in a row, female 2225 and male 2323 added to the pack. The newest litter, born during the second week of April, consisted of three females and two males. Because of this red wolf pair's proven ability to care for and nurture a lively bunch of pups, the Red Wolf Recovery Program fostered a male pup born at Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium in Tacoma, Washington, into this wild litter a few weeks after their birth, bringing this brood to a total of six pups. The five siblings from the 2022 litter will help the parents with the raising and bonding of this new group of red wolves.

There are currently 35-37 red wolves in the wild in northeastern North Carolina, compared to as few as 12 in recent years. NCWF has been a large factor in this significant progress, with the Federation highlighted for significant contributions in these areas:

- Red Wolf Center
- Prey for the Pack
- Canid trapping reimbursement for collaring and coyote sterilization
- Teacher Ambassador education partnership
- Mobile bear-proof electric enclosures
- Mobile electronic signage
- Providing specially designed/fabricated, long 'Y' poles for FWS staff to safely administer collaring
- Live streaming red wolf cameras

Conservation Supported by Science Protects Trout Streams

North Carolina benefits from an abundance of fertile farmland and some of the best trout water in the eastern United States. But ensuring these resources are available for future generations requires responsible, common-sense management. In 2021, a local landowner cleared hundreds of acres of mountainside forest in Surry County, resulting in significant water quality problems in Ramey Creek, an important stronghold for the Southern Appalachian brook trout, the official freshwater fish of North Carolina, and our only native trout species.

This nearly eradicated the local trout population, leading the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission to stage a rare rescue effort to capture and relocate trout in an attempt to preserve their genetic lineage.

The sedimentation problems were enabled by the agricultural exemption under North Carolina's Sedimentation Pollution Control Act which exempts agricultural operations from basic water quality protections—like leaving small vegetative buffers on streams—applicable to virtually all other land-disturbing activities.

To prevent similar catastrophes while continuing to meet the needs of farmers, NCWF proposed amending the Sediment Pollution Control Act to require agricultural operations to leave a 25-foot buffer along DEQ-designated trout streams while leaving the remainder of the agricultural exemption intact.

This minimal safeguard will help prevent the loss of farmland from stream erosion as well as protect trout fishing in North Carolina, which had an economic impact of \$383 million and supported an estimated 3,593 jobs in 2014. The legislation passed the N.C. Senate unanimously. At the printing of this there was not yet a vote in the House.



NC City Among Tops in the Nation



BARRED OWL / NCWF

National Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife™ 50th year celebration recognizes cities with the highest wildlife gardening activity. The top five cities were selected based on the total number of registered Certified Wildlife Habitats® per city. These are properties whose owners have committed to providing wildlife with food, water, cover, and places to raise young through sustainable gardening practices. Approximately 90 percent of these certifications are residential, with others at schools, campuses, places of worship, parks, and businesses. These concentrations of habitats help connect fragmented habitat in highly developed areas in backyards, balconies, at schools, and across communities.

Charlotte ranked #2 in the entire country with 1,561 certifications, a natural result of the Federation's community network of chapters spearheaded by Charlotte Wildlife Stewards, which succeeded in making the city a certified Community Wildlife Habitat in 2015. An additional six other Community Wildlife Habitats in communities including Lake Norman, Concord, Matthews, and Marvin helped the Charlotte metro area reach 4,843 certifications in total. As part of that figure, 167 Schoolyard Habitats engage youth and educators in providing wildlife habitat in Charlotte. Charlotte's certifications are essential in supporting the native flora and fauna of the Piedmont ecoregion, such as the Carolina wren, barred owl, and Eastern box turtle.

NCWF CHAPTERS POUR ON THE PUBLIC LOVE

Public lands provide great opportunities for NCWF chapters to partner and restore habitat throughout the year.



Wake County Parks & Rec teamed up with students from NCSU College of Natural Resources and members of South Wake Conservationists to put a dent in a heaping pile of garbage and kick off what will soon be a new Wake County public park. The crew of 18 removed 15,000 pounds of trash that included tires, scrap metal, old furniture, a sofa, pipes, metal canisters, old housing materials and more.



Birders united to enjoy a guided bird walk around Greenfield Lake in Wilmington, hosted by the Island Wildlife chapter in partnership with Cape Fear Bird Observatory.



NCWF partnered with Wake County Parks, Recreation & Open Space to plant 75 shortleaf pine trees at Turnipseed Nature Preserve, thanks to the help of 32 volunteers. Afterwards, the crew helped tackle the invasive periwinkle that has been running rampant throughout the preserve.



Marvin Area for the Restoration and Sustainability of Wildlife Habitat (MARSH) brought together over 30 volunteers to remove and recycle 19,450 pounds of tires from the McBride Branch wetlands, an area full of wildlife and natural beauty.



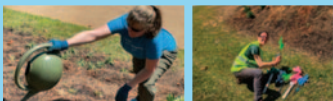
The Lake James Area Wildlife and Nature Society gathered for its annual trash cleanup where 172 participants of all ages removed over 8,000 pounds from both shorelines and roadways near Lake James State Park.



South Wake Conservationists installed new, custom-branded bluebird houses at Wake County's Crowder Park in Apex.



South Wake Conservationists and NCWF, partnering with Hemlock Bluffs Nature Preserve in Cary, hosted volunteers from Xylem/Sensus for a native plant workday. A large hillside facing the road at the park entrance was transformed into a native plants haven, with approximately 500 plants planted. These included little bluestem, pink muhly, beautyberry, coreopsis, purple coneflower, and stokes aster, obedient plant and swamp sunflowers.



Charlotte Wildlife Stewards partnered to remove invasive plants such as English ivy, privet, Italian arum, Japanese knotweed, honeysuckle, and Japanese hops from Chantilly Ecological Sanctuary.



CHECK OUT OUR CHAPTERS!

For more information on how you can participate, contact Tara Moore at tara@ncwf.org.



ALBEMARLE CONSERVATION
AND WILDLIFE CHAPTER
(Elizabeth City)



CATAWBA RIVER
WILDLIFE COALITION
(Valdese)



CHARLOTTE
WILDLIFE STEWARDS



CONCORD WILDLIFE
ALLIANCE



HAWK (HABITAT AND
WILDLIFE KEEPERS)
(Matthews)



INNER BANKS
WILDLIFE
(Washington)



ISLAND WILDLIFE
(Cape Fear Region)



LAKE JAMES AREA WILDLIFE
AND NATURE SOCIETY
(Nebo)



LAKE NORMAN WILDLIFE
CONSERVATIONISTS



MARSH (MARVIN AREA
FOR THE RESTORATION
AND SUSTAINABILITY
OF WILDLIFE HABITAT)



MOUNTAIN WILD!
(Asheville)



NEUSE RIVER HAWKS
(Wake Forest)



NEW BERN
WILDLIFE CHAPTER



PAWS (GASTON COUNTY
PIEDMONT AREA
WILDLIFE STEWARDS)



SOUTH WAKE
CONSERVATIONISTS
(Fuquay-Varina, Raleigh)



TRIAD WILD
(Greensboro)



UNION COUNTY
WILDLIFE CHAPTER

Conserving Land Can Be a *Profound Experience*



Is it surprising when your childhood serves as a compass for the direction you will go in life? Dave Cable, Davidson Lands Conservancy executive director and NCWF Charlie Shaw Society donor and board member, always felt a strong connection to the land, but he was surprised at how affirming it was to find a paper he wrote in 8th grade about farmland near his home and his idea to turn it into a park. The path to becoming a stalwart advocate for conservation wasn't always noticeably marked, however.

With two degrees – a BA in Geology and Environmental Studies from Bowdoin College, and an MS in Natural Resources from the University of Vermont – Dave worked for a bit with the state of Vermont on water resources and then “wandered into real estate,” specializing in conservation land. About 25 years ago, Dave moved to Charlotte with his family to be closer to his aging mother following his father's death. He ended up working in capital markets for banks and loved the intellectual part of it but

felt it wasn't really for him. In 2004, he took a leadership position with the Catawba Lands Conservancy and helped launch the Carolina Thread Trail in 2007. He quickly got interested in urban forestry and was presented with the opportunity to kick start and lead TreesCharlotte in 2011. “I agonized over leaving the Conservancy,” he said, “but felt it was time.”

Dave is grateful for the relationships and things he learned in the banking industry, and it solidified that conservation was more his calling. Dave recalled an influential geology professor who expanded the notion that 4.5 billion years since earth's beginning, man has managed to destroy much of its biodiversity and creation, in the blink of an eye. This inspires him to make a difference.

Seeing the impact of restoration efforts becomes a spiritual experience for Dave. “I'm not a religious guy but I am spiritual,” he says, “and I get a great sense of community and place at my core given the permanence and impact of our work; it is profoundly aligning. I will keep doing this for as long as I can.”

Dave is concerned about the impacts of a growing population and the risk we run of “trampling over everything.” There needs to be more emphasis on the importance of taking the long view of our natural lands and of sustainability.” Dave believes growth and climate change will put increasing demands on NCWF and is one reason why he strengthened his investment by joining the Charlies Shaw Society in 2019, after 20 years supporting the organization.

“NCWF's statewide footprint, the talent of the NCWF team, and its policy focus loyal to science, makes NCWF one of the best investments to address biodiversity loss and impacts of climate change in North Carolina,” he says.

Dave knows the value of protecting, conserving, and restoring habitat for wildlife and people alike. It means improved water quality in our rivers, lakes, and streams and cleaner air to breathe and soil for growing food. This work happens most effectively at the federal and state legislation levels as well as on-the-ground, in community.

Dave's advice to others who want to make a difference is to “identify organizations that will give you the greatest return on investment locally. It is great to save the Amazon but for someone interested in making a real difference close to home, we have high impact groups in North Carolina, including NCWF.” He also stresses the importance of getting out in the field to “study the magical and specialized relationships within nature. Walk on conserved land and really understand what it means to conserve property or restore habitat.”

Biodiversity loss and climate change are two of the most pressing problems of our time and to address them effectively, Dave would like to see a greater unleashing of capital for conservation both privately and publicly and “that we drive toward a cultural shift to looking at our habitats and natural lands with a longer-term lens.”

You can join Dave and other NCWF donors in the Shaw Society by donating \$1,000 or more in a calendar year. Some people prefer to give a single gift in a year, others like to give monthly, and some give through stock, their IRA, donor advised fund, or estate plan. To learn about all the ways you can join the Shaw Society and support wildlife and habitat in North Carolina today and for future generations, contact NCWF VP of Philanthropy Kate Greiner at kate@ncwf.org.



KAREN LORENZO / BLACK BEAR CUB

CREATE A BETTER FUTURE FOR WILDLIFE.

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Make a gift that lasts longer. Many people like to leave a gift to charity in their will because they care about causes that are important to their lives. A gift to NCWF in your will, retirement funds or life insurance ensures future generations can enjoy the wildlife and habitat that you care about in North Carolina.

www.ncwf.org/legacy



Interested?

Kate Greiner, CFRE
VP of Philanthropy
P: 704/332-5696
E: Kate@ncwf.org

THE Season

Jeff Beane's GUIDE TO
NATURAL NORTH CAROLINA

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SEPTEMBER

September 1: It's hurricane season—a good time of year to watch for unusual seabirds driven inland by storms, as well as late-season-breeding amphibians (and to stay safe).

September 2: Bull elk are bugling in Cataloochee Valley. That impressive and unmistakable sound, absent from North Carolina for many years but now returned, should be heard by everyone.

September 4: Peak birthing time for the copperhead, our most common and widely distributed venomous snake.

September 5: Stick insects (walkingsticks) are mating. Kidneyleaf grass-of-Parnassus is blooming.

September 6: Hellbenders are breeding in our Mountain rivers. Unlike most salamanders, these increasingly rare Appalachian giants spawn in the same fashion as most fishes. A male prepares a breeding chamber under a large rock and defends it against rival males. If he can convince a female to deposit her eggs beneath his rock, he will fertilize them externally and guard them until they hatch. Never move large rocks in hellbender streams; it damages their homes and breeding habitat!

September 7: Peak abundance for the little metalmark, an uncommon butterfly of our southeastern Coastal Plain.

September 9: Wild muscadine grapes are ripening. Summer farewell is in bloom.

September 10: Peak flight periods for several common and uncommon butterflies, including cloudless sulphur; Gulf fritillary; little yellow; and Aaron's, Dion, long-tailed, and Yehl skippers.

September 11: American beautyberry is fruiting—don't miss its uniquely beautiful color display.

September 12: Slender scratch-daisy is in bloom.

September 13: Whip-poor-wills and chuck-will's-widows have begun to depart for their wintering grounds. Most will overwinter in Mexico and Central America, but a few may spend winter along the Gulf Coast.

September 14: September is usually excellent for butterfly watching. Monarchs have declined in recent years, but their migrations can still sometimes be spectacular. The Blue Ridge Parkway is a good place to watch for monarchs, with Tunnel Gap at milepost 415.6 being an especially good spot.

September 15: Balsam Mountain gentian—a North Carolina endemic occurring in only a few counties in our southwestern Mountains—is in bloom.

September 16: BugFest, a huge annual educational expo, celebrating insects and other arthropods, will be held at the Museum of Natural Sciences in downtown Raleigh. This year's theme will be spiders! For more information, visit www.natural.sciences.org. Possumhaw berries are ripe and will persist through the winter. Blue-winged teal are returning.

September 17: The Diana fritillary—a rare butterfly found only in our Mountains and Foothills—is flying, after its summer diapause.

September 18: Tickseed sunflower and showy rattlebox are in bloom.

September 19: Neptune will be at its closest approach to Earth. Fully illuminated by the Sun, it will be brighter than any other time of the year and will be visible all night long. This is the best time to view and photograph the giant blue planet.

September 20: Flowering dogwood berries are ripe. Watch trees for migrating scarlet tanagers, rose-breasted grosbeaks, and other birds that relish these berries. Threadleaf false foxglove is in bloom.

September 21: Hawk migration is peaking. Thousands of broad-winged hawks and other species may be seen in migration at this time of year. Mahogany Rock in Doughton Park along the Blue Ridge Parkway is an especially good spot to witness this spectacle.

September 22: In the Sandhills, pine snake nests are hatching and Sandhills blazing-star is in bloom. The planet Mercury reaches its greatest western elongation from the Sun. This is the best time to view the swift planet, since it will be at its highest point above the horizon in the morning sky. Look for it low in the east just before sunrise.

September 23: It's fall, all y'all (officially, that is). Autumnal equinox is at 2:50 a.m. EDT (06:50 Universal Coordinated Time). It's also National Hunting and Fishing Day and National Public Lands Day. Visit your favorite public lands, and/or take a kid (or grown-up) hunting or fishing.

September 24: Cottonleaf golden-aster is in bloom.

September 25: Bog turtle nests are hatching in the Mountains and Foothills. Fern-leaf false foxglove is in bloom in the Coastal Plain.

September 26: Most white-tailed deer fawns have lost their spots. Marbled salamanders have begun moving to their breeding sites on rainy nights. Males usually move in first. This boldly patterned salamander was adopted as North Carolina's official state salamander in 2013.

September 27: In the Mountains, most wildflowers are nearly finished for the season, but a few golden-rods and asters, New York ironweed, and yellow ironweed are still in bloom. Carolina mantids are depositing their oothecae (egg clusters).

September 28: Fall warblers and other migrants are moving through. Watch the trees for an exercise in challenging birding.

September 28-October 1: The Carolina Bird Club will hold its annual fall meeting in Litchfield Beach, SC. For information, visit www.carolinabirdclub.org.

September 29: The first frosts can be expected any time now in the Mountains.

September 30: The nests of most turtle species will have hatched, but in some species, including sliders, cooters, painted turtles, and box turtles, hatchlings may overwinter in the nest, emerging in spring.

OCTOBER

October 1: In the Coastal Plain and eastern Piedmont, Brunner's mantids (aka walkingstick mantids) are active and depositing their oothecae. These unusual flightless native mantids occur only as females, reproducing by parthenogenesis.

October 2: The last of the season's loggerhead sea turtle nests are hatching. Nodding ladies' tresses are in bloom.

October 3: Autumn tiger beetles are mating. This rare, typically bright blue-green species is known from only a few sites in our Sandhills region. Our other tiger beetle species breed in spring.

October 4: Surface activity peaks for our two hognose snake species—eastern and southern.

October 5: Pine Barrens gentian is in bloom. Fall runs of bluefish and red drum can provide good surf-fishing opportunities.

October 6-8: The 37th annual North Carolina Seafood Festival will be held in Morehead City this weekend. For more information, call 252-726-6273 or email: fun@ncseafoodfestival.org.