



North Carolina  
**WILDLIFE  
FEDERATION**

# Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Summer 2017



## SUMMER MEMORIES

What we recall from  
childhood shapes our  
lifelong passions.

### Tragedy at Sea



### Taking It to the Creeks



### Legislative Wrap-up





## This Way of Life

BY TIM GESTWICKI, NCWF CEO

*The Andy Griffith* show was, and still is, for me the epitome of a great television show. Full of good down-home humor, and with life lessons taught each episode, the show featured North Carolina native son Griffith, and opened with that famous whistling theme music played over film of Andy and son Opie strolling down a path with fishing rods over their shoulders. They're on the way to the fishing hole, and Opie intermittently skips a few stones.

I wouldn't paint my childhood as idyllic as this iconic show, but in retrospect, it was pretty darn close. Nor would I be naïve enough to believe we all can live today like they did in the show's fictitious town of Mayberry. But I'd like to think that the show's underlying theme of connecting to nature and enjoying the simple things nature has to offer are worthy of emulating and striving for even in today's modern era.

That leads me to explaining one of the features in this *Journal*, our highlighting efforts to connect kids and families to nature. We're not holding anything back, as you can tell on page 7. Yep—that's me in a 1978 article I wrote for *Ranger Rick* magazine about hiking the Appalachian Trail with my family. I might get some good-natured ribbing from that old photo of a much younger me. But I couldn't be prouder that I play a role in this issue's theme of connecting to nature at an early age. That's the key to conservation.

For someone who abhors attention and is well-practiced at the art of deflection, agreeing to dredge up this piece from my childhood goes a bit against my grain. I've always valued highlighting and recognizing collaboration and teamwork behind success. However, I had asked some of our folks to jot out their early childhood memories, so I couldn't shirk being a team player, even at my own expense.

But I still recall that adventure. The heavily weighted pack on my slight frame. The camp food. Being dead-dog tired after all-day hiking. But I also remember many more early childhood outdoors memories like the first fish I caught, early morning hikes, paddling trips and building tree forts. My memories are likely not a surprise to those of you who support conservation and who grew up similarly. In fact, at many conferences and symposiums I have attended over the years, an oft-played icebreaker in introductions is the question: Why did you get into the conservation field? And the answers are invariably along the lines of growing up with outdoors experiences that shaped a love for conservation.

Some may say that it only makes sense that a fellow who grew up loving the outdoors now works for conservation interests. But there are more ways to work, and work effectively, for wildlife and wild places than going full-time in the field. We all need to re-build a conservation ethic—a conservation creed—and embrace conservation as the most normal and typical way of life.

Decades of research have shown that the single and most common influence on adult attitudes towards conservation is early and frequent connections to nature during childhood. We highlight this in our piece on childhood memories, and the hurdles kids face these days that limit access to unstructured time outdoors. The data is clear and convincing: Children must have the opportunity to enjoy, learn, and become connected to nature if we are to have conservation champions in the future. As you will read in our legislative update, this is more and more clear and ever more critical. In fact, I don't want to consider how much worse off we will be if we don't figure out how to make those natural connections. The second influencer leading to conservation ethics is an encouraging mentor, whether a parent, relative, or organization volunteer, to share their passion and love for nature.

I'm lucky to have been brought up outdoors with a foundation for conservation. And I'm lucky to steer our plans and programs to do the same for others now. I hope you enjoy the stories of how we are actively getting kids and families outdoors in this issue through our Great Outdoors University and through our chapters' natural resource expeditions and events.

You see, there's a little-known fact about *The Andy Griffith Show* that only hardcore fans know. That whistling opening song actually is a real tune, with lyrics, and a couple of the lines speak to me even today, years since that old black-and-white era: *Come on, take down your fishin' pole and meet me at The Fisbin' Hole. We may not get a bite all day, but don't you rush away. I can't think of a better way to pass the time o' day.*

Neither can I, Andy. Neither can I. **NC  
WF**



## STAFF

Tom Bean, *Director of Government Affairs*  
Mary Bures, *Manager, Great Outdoors University*  
Dom Canavaro, *Development & Operations Director*  
Sarah Hollis, *Membership & Volunteer Coordinator*  
Tim Gestwicki, *Chief Executive Officer*  
Angelique Hjarding, Ph.D., *Director, Pollinators and Wildlife Habitat Programs*  
Richard B. Hamilton, *Camouflage Coalition Coordinator*  
Dan Harris, *Marketing Manager*  
Fred Harris, *Natural Resource Specialist*  
T. Edward Nickens, *Communications Editor*  
David Knight, *Policy Consultant*  
Chris North, *Conservation Coordinator*  
Liz Rutledge Ph.D., *Wildlife Specialist*  
Greta Salem, *Office Manager*  
Jennifer Mihills, *NWF Regional Representative*

## OFFICERS AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Dr. Bob Brown, *Chair*, Cary  
Billy Wilson, *Vice Chair*, Mooresville  
Scott Fletcher, *Vice Chair*, Huntersville  
Pinkney Bynum, *Treasurer*, Charlotte  
Ann B. Somers, *Secretary*, Greensboro  
G. Richard Mode, *NWF Affiliate Representative*, Morganton  
John Robbins, *Immediate Past Chair*, Concord

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jennifer Alligood, *Pantego*  
Carol Buie-Jackson, *Matthews*  
John Crumpler, *Raleigh*  
Kelly Darden, *Greenville*  
Sterling Freeman, *Durham*  
John Fuller, *Hickory*  
John Hairr, *Charlotte*  
Phil Hinton, *Sunbury*  
John Hislop, *Hubert*  
Steve Jester, *Charlotte*  
Joyce Shepherd, *Charlotte*  
Erin Singer McCombs, *Asheville*  
Lloyd 'Jock' Tate, *Southern Pines*  
Norwood West, *Warsaw*

## PRESIDENTS EMERITUS

Alan D. Baker, *Huntersville*  
Dr. John Benbow, *Concord*  
C.B. Brown, *Burlington*  
John Crutchfield, *Huntersville*  
Bill Kane, *Cullowhee*  
Dale Mosteller, *Lincolnton*  
Terry Pratt, *Merry Hill*  
Gary Shull, *Vale*  
Bryan Upchurch, *Raleigh*  
Harry Wilfong, *Newton*

## DIRECTOR EMERITUS

Mike Thomas, *Crouse*

## GENERAL CORPORATE COUNSEL

Robinson Bradshaw & Hinson

## MARKETING / COMMUNICATIONS

Walker Marketing, Inc.

## 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 photographs* A panfish in hand can help jumpstart a lifetime of caring for the wild. Cover and contents images from © Can Stock Photo: panfish, dcwcreations / fishing trawler, PiLens / solar panels, MeisterPhotos / luna moth, CarolinaSmith. Kids in creek, NCWF. All other photos, unless noted, are courtesy of NCWF.

## CONTACT

NCWF Raleigh office: (919) 833-1923  
1024 Washington Street, Raleigh, NC 27605  
NCWF Charlotte office: (704) 332-5696  
1346 St. Julien Street, Charlotte, NC 28205.



# North Carolina WILDLIFE Journal

WILD LIVES □ WILD PLACES

Summer 2017

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

## FEATURES

### 2 THE 20-YEAR-OLD FISH STORY

Efforts to stem the decline in NC fisheries are a two-decade disaster.

### 4 NURTURE NATURE

NCWF staff recall how days gone by led to the future.

### 11 ONE FEDERATION

NCWF and National Wildlife Federation march forward together.

## DEPARTMENTS

**INSIDE FRONT COVER** / Pathways

**PAGE 8** / Federation News

**PAGE 10** / Legislative Update

**BACK COVER** / The Season



## NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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

**VISION** Our stewardship will result in a North Carolina with bountiful and diverse wildlife, including all species of wild flora and fauna, that is valued by its citizens and elected officials, and sustainably managed for future generations.

Our strength is derived from values driven leadership – science-based decision making; non-partisan approach to policy; stewardship of North Carolina's natural resources; inclusivity of broad wildlife interests and perspectives; and partnering with organizations and individuals who share our vision and our passion for wildlife.

**GOALS** Toward that vision, we will:

**POLICY AND PROTECTION** – Strongly influence state and federal policy that affects wildlife and habitat in North Carolina using established conservation models to guide our positions.

**NETWORK OF IMPACT AND INVOLVEMENT** – Foster a diverse, robust network of chapters, members, affiliates and partners; a network fortified by a variety of wildlife and outdoor interests.

**EXPERIENCE AND LEARN** – Enhance and expand opportunities for youth and adults that foster awareness and appreciation of wildlife and the important role healthy habitat plays in sustaining wildlife and humanity.

**SIGNATURE PROGRAMS** – Sponsor and support programs for the enjoyment and conservation of wildlife and habitat, including ethical and sustainable outdoor recreation pursuits.



# A Tragedy of the Commons

This year, North Carolina's Fisheries Reform Act (FRA) legislation turns 20 years old. The original intent of the legislation was to develop plans to restore critical habitats and rebuild fish stocks. Secondly, it created a license and management structure through the Marine Fisheries Commission to allow for feedback from the public and provide equity among user groups.

While the FRA had great potential, it has failed due to a lack of reliance on science and weighty political influence from all sides. Current bills are designed to curtail action on specific fisheries until specific studies are done or require the MFC to explain their decisions to advisors, and will allow our marine resources to continue to decline. These declines, along with the apathy of our citizens and elected officials, have progressed steadily since 1997. Today, the General Assembly consists of few, if any, members who voted on the original FRA, and fewer still who know or understand the history behind this legislation. It is more critical than ever to explore ways to improve understanding of these complex natural resources issues in the legislature, and to consider ideas that are best for the resources as opposed to falling back to partisan positions.

The potential economic impact of an overall healthy fishery to all North Carolinians is more distant today than ever in our history. The herring are gone and weakfish and southern flounder are collapsing, Atlantic sturgeon are now on the Endangered Species List, and many other species so important to our coastal economy are depressed or declining, such as spot, croaker, blue crab, oysters, and others. These are the species that made North Carolina a fishing powerhouse. Unfortunately, there are few positive examples of fisheries management as a result of the FRA in North Carolina. In fact, most positive examples cited are often the result of mandated actions by the federal Councils or the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, actions we often reluctantly implement.

**UNCOMMON CONCERNS** In 2017, fish stocks and critical habitat may actually be in worse shape than they were in 1997. Clearly, the FRA has not accomplished its goals. Simply put, too

many people are trying to catch too few fish and management decisions are based more on politics than science. The term for this phenomenon is the "Tragedy of the Commons."

North Carolina fisheries are a classic illustration of the Tragedy of the Commons. The general theory is that individual users (for example, fishermen) of a shared, public trust or resource (fishes) act on their own best interests, contrary to the common good for all fishermen and citizens. Benefits from maximum harvest accrues to the individual, knowing that rebuilding will be a burden shared by all, therefore mitigating the personal impacts of their actions.

The concept has been written about extensively and illustrates the "commons" collapse as a result of overuse or overfishing. Some claim that North Carolina is the most regulated fishery in the United States, but this is not true. The mostly unlimited and open access of North Carolina fisheries has resulted in a classic case of a Tragedy of the Commons.

Vocal proponents on both sides of the issue, commercial and recreational fishermen, blame the other and their unwillingness to negotiate to find common ground. The only true common ground is the fact that both sides depend on healthy, abundant resources to realize their maximum potential. Any effort to reduce harvest and attempt to rebuild fisheries is met with criticism of the data, the scientists, the managers, and the process. It has been this way for more than the 20 years since the FRA. We have learned very little.

A legislative proposal was submitted to the General Assembly during the 2017 session that aimed at addressing these various problems. One side touted the proposed bill as a positive approach while the other deemed it demonic. One side said the process was broken and fish stocks were collapsing while the other said the process was just fine, as were the fish stocks.

Someone is wrong. One problem is the shifting baseline of perspective. Many fishermen today see a great day on the water as one that may have been average or even poor a generation ago. Making a living at commercial or recreational fishing for hire is much more difficult today than 20 or 30 years ago. Catching a "mess" of fish on local beaches and piers, or even private boats, is more the exception than the rule.

But, there are plenty of fish, some insist. Again, it depends on your perspective. A simple review of the basic science behind the status of many of our most valued fisheries resources indicate problems, from declining harvest, declining catch rates, and declining size structure of the fish.

Much of the science associated with these issues rests in the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) building in Morehead City. Yet the DMF and its scientists and professional managers have been conspicuously absent from the debate in Raleigh or elsewhere. Politics takes a side based on the rhetoric of one side over the other, with discrepancies in the positions apparently ignored.

Who is right in this debate? No one truly knows for sure. Both sides take an extreme view, pro or con, because each bets that political negotiation will enter the debate and either water it down or go too far. Much of this political debate is by folks who have no training in natural resources management or fisheries biology but have constituents who catch fish. From our conservation viewpoint, the science points to overharvest, waste from excessive bycatch, and benchmarks for success that are set far too low for healthy fisheries. We believe these to be the true facts of the matter. If we continue to rely on partisan opinions and not the science, the tragedy will continue.

To avert the continued Tragedy of the Commons in North Carolina, we must ultimately decide that management in the best interest of the resource is our only common goal. Managing for abundance and allowing a smaller yield is the only way to rebuild our precarious stocks.

In the short-term, there may be difficult consequences. Some commercial fishing interests may not make the transition. Others may elect to stay at home rather than pursue too few fish. But this much is certain: As fish stocks continue to decline, without a working plan in place, all will be in search of something different to do. House Bill 867 was a starting point for negotiations. Unfortunately, one side was unwilling to negotiate and politics ruled the day..

The status of marine fisheries in North Carolina is a true Tragedy of the Commons. Too many people are pursuing too few resources to the point those resources can no longer fulfill human demands, much less the needs of our fragile marine ecosystems. The only way to avert this tragedy is to take action to curtail harvest, reduce effort, minimize bycatch, and protect nursery and other critical habitats.

Unfortunately, we are no closer to averting the tragedy today than we were in 1997. In fact, the FRA is expressly antithetical to several management options that have proven successful in many jurisdictions such as limited entry and responsible catch targets or quotas. Politics has stymied these important options due to partisan concerns on both sides.

**A POSSIBLE SOLUTION** The North Carolina Wildlife Federation has worked on numerous programs to help turn the tide of fisheries management. One initiative, the Sound Solutions campaign, has entered a new phase with the recently completed legislative session. A platform for moving public policy forward that can help solve North Carolina's coastal habitat and marine

resources problems, the campaign had until this year shied away from attempting to implement substantive public policy through the General Assembly, for various reasons.


This year, however, the Federation, through the Sound Solutions campaign, decided to join a coalition of organizations that is attempting to comprehensively modernize and update the way that North Carolina manages its marine fisheries stocks. The main goal of the coalition is to make science the determining factor in all management decisions, not politics or even socio-economic factors. The coalition is named the NC Sound Economy (NCSE).

This coalition is a combination of natural resource conservation organizations and business associations, including the N.C. Chamber of Commerce, that came together because of a shared position that if science drives management decisions, then the economic benefits for all stakeholders would be significant and continue to increase. The results from other states' management decisions, and from an economic study the coalition had requested, showed overwhelmingly that a science-driven, conservation approach to fisheries management would be good for the economy of not only the coast, but all of North Carolina.

Over the course of months and with much feedback, the coalition created language for legislation that would comprehensively reform the current marine fisheries management system. As discussed, the Fisheries Reform Act of 1997 has been a failure. After 20 years, North Carolina's fish stocks are overwhelmingly in decline, and some precipitously so.

While many in the commercial fishing industry want to remain at status quo, most of the citizens of North Carolina want this public resource to be managed for all the citizens, not just the few who make money from it. This legislation became House Bill 867, and the bill had bi-partisan support including support from House leadership.

NCSE realized that the idea behind the bill was controversial, because the North Carolina commercial fishing industry had long enjoyed the least restrictive regulatory oversight of all the states on the East and Gulf coasts. The coalition had lined up backing from many legislators, as well as grass-roots support. HB 867 did get a hearing in the House Wildlife Resource Committee, but no vote was taken. There was an effort to amend the bill to make it more appealing to the commercial industry, but in the end, the alternative language would have been even more detrimental to our fisheries than status quo. While the coalition decided to stay with the original bill with the support of some legislators realizing the problems, the promised support from House leadership did not materialize in the waning days of the legislative session which ended without a vote on the bill leaving the resource in status quo.

This idea of reform of North Carolina's marine fisheries management system will not go away. There is too much momentum to stop it. It is just a matter of time, but the longer it takes, the more damage will be done to our fisheries, and the harder it will be to bring the stocks back to sustainable levels. The Federation and Sound Solutions, however, will not give up telling the story and providing the science and facts as to why the time is now for North Carolina to save its fish for all the people of the state. 





*If you are reading this,* we bet you have your own fond memories of spending time outdoors as a child, of unstructured and unfettered hours to explore. Perhaps your favorite outdoor memories involve mucking around in a backyard creek, climbing trees, catching fireflies, hunting with a parent, tending a fall garden, watching the birds at grandma's feeder, or camping and swimming. You probably have a deep commitment to conservation in your personal life, whether through work, volunteering, or your favorite outdoors recreation pursuits—which you support with your hard-earned dollars. You're most likely a North Carolina Wildlife Federation supporter, and we thank you for that. And your passion and commitment to conservation gave us an idea: We wanted to examine some of our team's memories, and the ways they led to a caring and commitment for conservation.

Research shows that the sooner we have strong experiences with nature, the more engrained those experiences become. And it's no surprise that it then becomes more likely that a strong bond and commitment to conservation is instilled. Children need and deserve the adventure and wonder of nature to foster healthy lives and healthy development. There's a great payback for this: Children raised to appreciate nature will become the stewards of our outdoor heritage and its future.

NCWF realizes that to sustain conservation efforts, an emotional connection to nature for many more people is in order. Unfortunately, this comes at a time when many trends of our society seem to be working directly against that goal. This task takes on its greatest urgency with our children. There are numerous hurdles to a more nature-centric childhood, among them urban life, organized sports and school activities, a high level of single-parent households, and technology. Richard Louv, a noted author on children's health and nature, writes, "The natural world's benefits to our condition and health will be irrelevant if we continue to destroy the nature around us. But that destruction is assured without a human reconnection to nature."

Think back to your memories—to those times you enjoyed a connection to nature. And while you recall the best of some of those times, we'll do the same thing.





“I was six years old when my dad took me squirrel hunting for the first time. We took my dog, Ringo. The smell of autumn leaves in the air, Ringo treeing a squirrel, downing my first squirrel and bringing those first squirrels home for my mom to fix for dinner are still vivid in my mind after 60 years. Best times, best dad, best dog and still an opportunity for kids today. I love having squirrels in my yard and watching them make their living.”

—Alen Baker, NCWF board chair emeritus

“My early memories were of hunting with my dad and grandfather on family land.”

—Bob Brown, NCWF board chairman



“I remember discovering the creek and the creatures inhabiting it behind our house at 7 years old. On summer days, barefoot, and using a bucket, I captured crayfish, salamanders, tadpoles, snails, dragonfly nymphs, and scuds. I had unlocked a world that I would pursue as both a profession and passion.”

—John Crutchfield, NCWF board chair emeritus

## *It seemed like this forest was mine...*

“Surprise discovery: There, on the woodland path was a box turtle. She paused and looked at my 7-year-old self curiously. I squatted down, fascinated by the subtle colors that moments earlier had concealed this splendid creature in the leaves. With a delight that has lasted a lifetime, I looked into her eyes and will never forget the warm feeling I experienced with this unexpected discovery. It seemed like a gift, and still does every time I find a box turtle.”

—Ann Somers, NCWF board secretary



“At the end of our street were about 25 acres of woods that became my backyard for 10 years until a school was built there. Exploring, taking in the sights, sounds, and smells, connecting with nature—it all made an impression on me in ways that continue to influence me today. The incredible silence and calmness of climbing a tall tree, hearing the gentle wind in the leaves which sounded different from the wind through the needles of a pine tree. Being eye level to the crows, hearing screech owls at night and seeing scat along my trails—it seemed like this forest was mine. The natural learning processes, and the curiosity and explorations provided, are beyond measure.”

—Ernie McClaney, president, CROWN chapter





# Making Memories

Two NCWF programs provide a direct connection between kids (and adults!) and nature: The Great Outdoors University and our statewide network of chapters.



**YOUNG CONSERVATIONISTS WITH THE ALBEMARLE CONSERVATION AND WILDLIFE CHAPTER HELPING PLANT TREES AT DISMAL SWAMP STATE PARK**



**YOUTH DAY WITH GASTON PAWS CHAPTER**



**CROWN CHAPTER LEADING THEIR ONGOING 'EYE-SPY' EXPEDITIONS**



**HIKE ON THE WILD SIDE WITH GOU**



**BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS OF GREATER GASTON DOING A STREAM EXPLORATION AT SOUTH MOUNTAIN STATE PARK**



**FISHING IS ONE OF THE FAVORITE ACTIVITY OF GREAT OUTDOORS UNIVERSITY**





“When I was 10 years old, I got thrilling news: An article I’d written on my recent adventure along the Appalachian Trail was going to be published in *Ranger Rick* magazine. For a kid who loved the outdoors as much as I did, that was huge. My trip was a 5-day hike through the Shenandoah Valley with my family. I wrote about washing dishes and carrying water from the streams. The photos showed off the old-fashioned gear. We had external frame backpacks with sleeping bags tied on with twine. I look at those old photos now, of my dad looking through binoculars and me bundled up in a flannel shirt, and the years just seem to fall away. I remember listening to insects and birds, and looking out for bears. But one of my most detailed memories from that trip was looking down from the tops of the mountains at distant Virginia towns miles and miles away, and thinking how strange it was that people were going about their busy lives while we were up in the green mountains, with singing birds and wildlife. Maybe that helped lead me to do what I do today, which is try to bring people and nature together, and close the gap between us.”

—Tim Gestwicki, CEO, NCWF

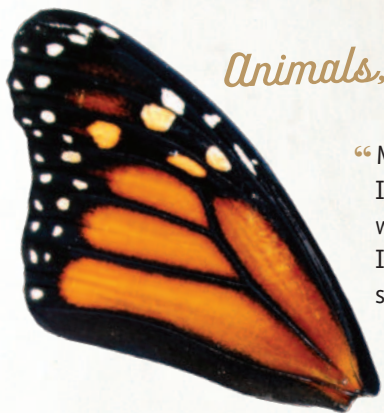
“When I was young, I would go hiking with my family, propped up on my dad’s shoulders. Not only did I get to see the outdoors from “new heights” as a young girl, but I remember being in awe of the nature around me while feeling as tall at the trees we passed by. More than a decade later, I feel I owe a lot of the love I have for nature to those hiking trips growing up.”

—Sarah Fletcher, intern

“From the time I was very little my parents and big brother took me fishing. I was more of an ants-in-my-pants kind of child. I was very bored sitting there waiting for the fish to bite, but I became fascinated by the dragonflies that landed on my pole. To this day I love dragonflies and have a cool collection of dragonfly jewelry, paintings, and yard art.”

—Debbie Ludas, president, River Hawks chapter

*Animals, rocks and trees welcome children without expectations.*



“My family and I lived on a military base in Missouri when I was in my early teens. Woven throughout base housing was a large wooded area with a meandering stream where I spent many hours exploring nature. To this day, that sense of calm and wonder is always with me.”

—Sala Faruq, president, Community Alliance for Wildlife

“As a child, I was not allowed to ‘go far,’ but I admit that most of my afternoons and weekends were spent tromping deep in the woods, often coming home with tell-tale muddy shoes. There was something new every day, a fresh trove of mysteries to discover. Animals, rocks, and trees welcome children without expectations—there are no rooms or clothes to straighten, no hair to brush or test to take. There’s only a great, ripe unknown. Watching the forest change and adapt as the seasons and days passed taught me that change is constant, but not unusual. It showed me the value of collaboration and resourcefulness. Memories of those long-developed hillocks and distant old trees continue to lift my spirit. I am happy to make way for other kids to have the privilege of a lifelong friend in nature. I still turn to the woods to reconnect with what matters—though now I am responsible for my own muddy shoes!”

—Sarah Hollis, membership coordinator



IMAGES FROM © CAN STOCK PHOTO: NOTEBOOK PAGES / DABOOST; CHILD WITH BINOCULARS / LUNAMARINA; FEATHER / EPANTHA; SQUIRREL / JGORZYNIK; OAK LEAVES & ACORNS / VALZAN; OWL / LEEKROB; BUTTERFLY WING / SPANISHALEX





# Exciting Little T Projects

The Little Tennessee River Native Fish Conservation Project, a NCWF conservation priority, is working on a number of conservation objectives. This summer is the second season of offering snorkeling experiences for children and adults. The typically clear waters of the upper Little Tennessee system provide unique opportunities to see close-up a diverse assemblage of relatively unknown and unappreciated native fishes in their natural habitats.

Several partners are engaged in stream restoration projects on Tessentee and Cartoogechaye creeks, tributaries of the Little Tennessee River, and Savannah Creek, which flows into Fontana Reservoir. These projects will restore or enhance the habitats for native fishes and other organisms.

A grant from Duke Energy Water Resources Fund is supporting the production of short videos illustrating important resources supported by the river and its tributaries. The videos will emphasize the basin's aquatic diversity, need for riparian stewardship, and important recreational values. Filming is being completed this summer and the videos will be revealed early in 2018. This grant also supports development of a web-based map of the

basin and an interactive story map. Agencies and organizations working to conserve aquatic resources within the basin will use the mapping function to organize and store data and to identify critical areas for conservation actions. The story map will provide citizens and other interested parties a more thorough and interactive overview of the resources within the basin and conservation priorities. These maps should be completed by this fall.

Sampling this spring by WRC staff and other partners confirmed that the reach of the Tuckasegee River upstream from the former Dillsboro Dam site to the Cullowhee Dam is well populated with a combination of sicklefin redhorse that were stocked and some that have moved upstream over the cascade at the former dam site since it was removed. This part of the project is complete and stocking of fry will cease in that reach. There is a current proposal to remove the Cullowhee Dam as American Rivers and the dam owner, Western Carolina University, are in the scoping and planning phases. If the dam is removed, this native redhorse species will be able to disperse upstream as far as habitat is suitable.



Bank stabilization project at Tessentee Creek Preserve. The rock vane protects the bank from shear stress. The banks were sloped to create a bench, matted with biodegradable coir fabric, live-staked and planted with native seedlings and a native riparian mixture. The stone steps allow boaters to access the creek.



## NCWF APPLAUDS ALLIGATOR MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2016, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation opposed setting a hunting season for American alligators proposed by the state Wildlife Resources Commission on the basis that no management plan for the species existed and no scientifically valid information about alligators in North Carolina was available to substantiate that alligators could sustain any harvest. Also, the proposed season was scheduled for September, a time when baby alligators are hatching and alligator mothers are guiding them in their earliest attempts at survival.

NCWRC has now undertaken development of an Alligator Management Plan to address the particular situation of alligators in North Carolina, including collection of distribution, life history, reproductive, and survival data. Our review of the Alligator Management Plan indicated a very professional and comprehensive product, which NCWF endorses in principle. However, we emphasized to NCWRC its duty to adequately demonstrate that any potential recreational harvest of this species in North Carolina would be sustainable and have no adverse effect on the current population structure, given the slow growth rates and late maturing traits of alligators in North Carolina. It has taken 30 years of protection for alligator populations to recover to today's levels, so extra caution should be exercised to ensure that these recent gains are not lost and that alligators successfully resume their ecological role throughout their distribution.

We strongly agree with the educational goals contained in the Alligator Management Plan. NCWRC should give high priority to public education and enforcement now rather than later. Along with an educational campaign and proper permitting, site assessments by biologists, data collection, and enforcement, the NCWRC will be able to ensure the continued success of the American alligator in North Carolina.





## TROUT FISHING PAYS THE BILLS

A recent report by the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission summarized mountain trout anglers' contribution to North Carolina's economy. *Mountain Trout Fishing: Economic Impacts on and Contributions to North Carolina's Economy 2015* study revealed that in 2014, 18.5 percent of North Carolina freshwater fishing license holders fished for trout. During that year trout anglers (resident and nonresident) spent \$239.8 million in North Carolina. Of those expenditures, more than \$210 million was spent in the mostly rural mountain counties, supporting nearly 3,200 jobs. Expenditures also generated more than \$26 million in state and local taxes.

Anglers living outside of North Carolina spent \$58.9 million or about 25 percent of the total expenditures by trout anglers. Nonresident anglers also were responsible for almost a quarter of the tax revenues. Without the allure of trout fishing, nonresident expenditures would likely have occurred elsewhere and not contributed to the economy of the region or the state. Likewise, without trout fishing, North Carolina residents would have had to pay almost \$6 million more in taxes or give up an equivalent amount of government services, furthering evidence of the economic engine that outdoor activities affords the state.



*You're Invited!*  
*to attend the*

NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE FEDERATION'S  
**54th Annual  
Governor's Conservation  
Achievement Awards**

*Reception & Banquet*

6:00 P.M. Saturday Evening,  
September 9, 2017  
Embassy Suites RTP, Cary, NC

Please join us in celebrating 54 years of conservation excellence while we honor the winners of the Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards.

**Pre-registration required.** Register online at [www.ncwf.org/programs/awards](http://www.ncwf.org/programs/awards). To register by phone, call (919) 833-1923.

These prestigious awards honor individuals, governmental bodies, organizations, and others who have exhibited an unwavering commitment to conservation in North Carolina. These are the highest natural resource honors given in the state. By recognizing, publicizing, and honoring conservation leaders—young and old, professional and volunteer—NCWF hopes to inspire all North Carolinians to take an active role in protecting the natural resources of our state.

**CHECK OUT OUR CHAPTERS!** For more information on how you can participate, contact Christopher North at [chris@ncwf.org](mailto:chris@ncwf.org).



Capital Chapter



Community Alliance for Wildlife



Concord Wildlife Alliance



CROWN (Charlotte Reconnecting Ourselves With Nature)



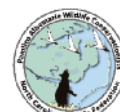
HAWK (Habitat and Wildlife Keepers)



Lake James Area Wildlife and Nature Society



Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists



PAWC (Pamlico Albemarle Wildlife Conservationists)



PAWS (Gaston County Piedmont Area Wildlife Stewards)



River Hawks (Wake Forest)



South Wake Conservationists



The Albemarle Conservation and Wildlife Chapter





## 2017 LEGISLATIVE LONG SESSION WRAP-UP

After convening in January, the North Carolina General Assembly “finished” its 2017 long session around 3 a.m. on July 1. Legislators could be back for special sessions three times before reconvening for the regular short session next May. Confused? Don’t feel bad. Even professional lobbyists aren’t sure what business the General Assembly may choose to take up during these special sessions, since many issues and bills could come back to life.

What is not confusing is that there are grave concerns about the General Assembly’s workings when it comes to environmental issues.

Of greatest concern in the 2017-2019 biennial budget are the Department of Environmental Quality funding cuts. While notably better than the Senate budget proposal, the final budget significantly underfunds environmental protection and conservation. It makes additional large tax cuts, at a cost of \$521 million in 2018-2019 and rising above \$1 billion—that’s with a “b”—annually thereafter. If allowed to take effect, these cuts will translate directly to an inability to fund basic environmental protections. In the current biennium, the final budget slashes the Department of Environmental Quality, which has already suffered in recent years. It imposes a “management flexibility” cut of \$828,000 in the first year, rising to \$1 million in the second year.

Among other cuts, it eliminates administrative positions which will make the agency less responsive to permittees and citizens with concerns about pollution and habitat destruction. It fails to fund positions needed to keep up with permit issuance demand and enforcement inspections in stormwater control, sediment control, and water pollution permit programs. The budget reduced funding to the Clean Water Management Trust Fund by 18 percent and to the Parks & Recreation Trust Fund by 13 percent. In total, the budget allocates 1/18th of 1 percent towards funding water, game lands, parks, and farmland preservation. The impact of these cuts will be exacerbated by the severe cuts proposed in EPA and other agency funding at the federal level.

On the plus side, one exciting component of the budget is the inclusion of an Office of Outdoor Recreation, which includes full-time Outdoor Recreation Recruitment Director to promote North Carolina’s outdoor recreation economy.

With regards to fisheries protections, after having failed to take action on H867, legislation that would have strengthened the Marine Fisheries Commission’s authority and obligation to take more effective action to rebuild North Carolina’s saltwater fish stocks, the General Assembly could still consider provisions to undercut the MFC’s ability to take action! During the special sessions the General Assembly can take action on any bills that were in negotiation between the House and Senate when the long session adjourned on July 1. This includes multiple bills that are titled

innocuously “Regulatory Reform” or “Environmental Amendments.”

Section 20 of H56 as it came back from the Senate would drastically weaken the MFC’s ability to manage North Carolina’s saltwater fish stocks by requiring a super-majority of the Commission to take any action. It would do further damage by shrinking the MFC, and by changing its make-up by removing two at-large seats. This would not only deprive the citizens of North Carolina of at-large representation, but the lack of representatives of the general public would exacerbate the polarization of the Commission between recreational and commercial interests that already undermines its effectiveness.

Other important protections that are potentially vulnerable to rollbacks include the following: citizens ability to appeal lax permits to pollute, the ban on the use of state funds to build terminal groins, riparian buffer requirements that protect water quality and control flooding, and others.

Alternative energy issues took hits, as well. H589—Competitive Energy Solutions as it passed the House was an imperfect, but important, comprehensive energy bill negotiated over almost a year by a diverse group of stakeholders, including Duke Energy, clean energy businesses and advocates, energy consumers, and others. It provided for continuing additional deployment of utility-scale solar projects over four years; a Green Source Rider Program that would allow large energy consumers like data-farms and universities to pay a premium to offset their energy use by underwriting the building of additional renewable-energy generation; a solar-leasing program that would allow consumers to use clean energy by leasing solar arrays to avoid the prohibitive up-front cost of purchasing solar equipment for their homes or businesses; community solar and rooftop solar rebate programs.

Unfortunately, the Senate insisted on inserting an unnecessary 18-month moratorium on wind projects, stopping two projects that together would have resulted in \$1 billion in investment in eastern North Carolina in counties that have a critical need for economic development that will provide jobs and significantly increase their tax base. The justification for this moratorium is that time is needed to study how to avoid conflicts between wind project development and military operations. This moratorium was not requested by the military or communities that host military bases. And the state and federal governments already have permitting programs in place that specifically review projects and require changes to development plans that ensure military operations will not be disrupted by wind-power projects when they are in operation. This bill is now on the Governor’s desk for him to decide what action to take on a bill that now contains important positive next steps for clean energy and an unnecessary attack on the promising wind power sector. **NCWF**





## NEWS FROM THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION ANNUAL MEETING

At its recent annual meeting in Stevens, Washington, the National Wildlife Federation, unanimously supported by its more than 50 state and territorial affiliates, including the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, established a shared vision for uniting all Americans to ensure that, within a generation, wildlife populations are thriving, not declining, in a rapidly changing world.

From the start, it has been clear that the support of the nation's NWF affiliates, including NCWF, will be essential to achieve the vision. To gain that support, the six affiliate members of the NWF strategic planning team drafted a "We Commit" statement that teams NWF and the affiliates to pursue achievement of the vision and supporting strategic plan, utilizing a One Federation concept.

The We Commit statement was unanimously adopted by the affiliates at the 2017 NWF annual meeting. The affiliates thereby have embraced the strategic plan, including the prerogative to adopt portions of the plan as it makes sense for them. They have also embraced the One Federation concept as part of their commitment.

The affiliate members of the NWF strategic planning team included NCWF, as represented by John Robbins, immediate past chair and recently elected NWF Director. According to Robbins, "the Strategic Vision adopted by the National Wildlife Federation is comparable to the dramatic goal set in the early 1960s to get to the moon by the end of the decade. Comparatively, our 'moonshot' goal to restore wildlife populations so that they are thriving within a generation is more difficult, but without equal as a moral imperative. NWF leadership, together with the affiliates, recognizes this imperative, and the need to work together to accomplish the vision. That is the power in One Federation, the power of what a conservation army can attain through our mobilization efforts. And that is what NCWF and its chapters, members, supporters and its own affiliates must do in the coming years—not just to do our part, but to recognize the moral imperative. It becomes increasingly clear that what is good for wildlife and its habitat is, without question or exception, essential for the well-being of human-kind."

### North Carolina Conservation Champion Honored

Love of the outdoors and an unwavering commitment to conservation of our natural resources is part of Richard Mode's DNA. He has dedicated his life to advocating for strong conservation policies, organizing networks, and growing and developing organizations. For that and more, he was recognized with the National Wildlife Federation Conservation Leadership Award at NWF's annual meeting.

Mode has spent the last three decades mobilizing outdoors-loving people into a powerful force that has impacted local, state



*NCWF leader Richard Mode called "one of America's great conservationists"*

and federal resource management decisions and legislation. He founded his local Table Rock Trout Unlimited (TU) chapter and served as an active TU volunteer in various capacities, including national president and chairman of the board. As a board member of North Carolina Wildlife Federation, Mode has served as the affiliate representative to the National Wildlife Federation for more than two decades.

"Everyone who loves North Carolina's woods and waters should be grateful for the lifetime work of Richard Mode," said Collin O'Mara, president and CEO of the National Wildlife Federation. "For the past half century, Richard has worked tirelessly to mobilize hunters and anglers to protect rivers, defend public lands, and advocate for effective air and water protections. He's one of America's great conservationists."

Mode's commitment to conservation goes far beyond championing a single issue. His work on behalf of clean water, high-quality trout habitat, and vital, vibrant public forests has made a major and measurable impact on the wildlife resources of the Southeast. His work spans a lifetime of wildlife habitat advocacy and organizational development. He has volunteered thousands of hours to positively impact public policy, resource management, and legislation as they relate to wildlife, water quality, air quality, and the public's access to wildlife resources. Through his years in NCWF, NWF, and TU, Mode has been heavily involved in fights to save rivers, to completely overhaul hydropower management decisions so they take into account wildlife and fishery resources, in getting federal and state agencies to manage timber and mining operations to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife, and in advocacy for effective water quality and air quality legislation.

On behalf of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation:  
Congratulations, Richard Mode, for many jobs well done. **NWF**





# URBAN POLLINATOR PROJECTS TAKING WING

by Angel Hjarding, Ph.D.

Pollinators such as bumblebees, butterflies, and other insects are critical to North Carolina's biological diversity and agricultural economy. Our native pollinators face numerous threats, including an alarming loss of native plant habitat that provides vital nectar and pollen resources. NCWF is working to help protect these habitats through our statewide program, the Butterfly Highway. The goal of the Butterfly Highway is to bring together a coalition of public and private land owners committed to protecting and conserving habitat for pollinators and wildlife across North Carolina.



VOLUNTEERS FROM WELLS FARGO AND MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION AT MALLARD CREEK RECREATION CENTER.

A key partner and early adopter of the Butterfly Highway is Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation. The Central Carolina Master Naturalist Program adopted the Butterfly Highway as an official volunteer program, and the group built 20 Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstops at recreation and senior centers in Mecklenburg County. The Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation horticulture team quickly jumped on board and helped expand the Butterfly Highway to several parks including Romare Bearden, First Ward, and Fourth Ward Parks in uptown Charlotte.

The partnership between NCWF and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation has also resulted in successfully obtaining a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. This funding has been used to train Mecklenburg County staff as National Wildlife Federation Habitat Stewards and certify three recreation centers and one senior center as Certified Wildlife Habitats. Funding from the

grant was also used to convert a 1,000-square-foot bed in Fourth Ward Park to a native plant Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstop. Through a Catawba Waterree Habitat Enhancement Program grant we partnered with the Natural Resources Division to supply seed for a 2-acre restoration of a utility right-of-way located at Cowan's Ford Nature Preserve.

NCWF is a member of Earthshare NC and through their Charlotte Corporate Challenge we partnered with volunteers from Wells Fargo and Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation for a habitat build day at Mallard Creek Recreation Center. More than 50 volunteers helped with the construction of nest boxes, building a nature trail, spreading mulch, and installing a Butterfly Highway garden.



FIRST WARD PARK, 7TH STREET CHARLOTTE, BUTTERFLY HIGHWAY GARDEN. MECKLENBURG COUNTY PARK AND RECREATION.

The City of Charlotte is also making great strides in pollinator and wildlife conservation. Charlotte's mayor signed the National Wildlife Federation Mayors Monarch Pledge and committed to several initiatives. The first Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstops on city-owned property were installed at Government Plaza and Old City Hall. The departments of Landscape Management and Housing & Neighborhood Services have been instrumental in creating these and additional opportunities to increase native plants and wildlife habitats in the city. Other projects being discussed include adding Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstops at city-owned cemeteries and a workshop on using the Housing & Neighborhood Services Neighborhood Matching Grant program to fund Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstops in Charlotte neighborhoods.

The city of Concord is actively engaged, as well. Concord's mayor has taken the NWF Mayor's Monarch Pledge and committed to many initiatives as a part of the

pledge. The Concord City Council recently agreed to support a public-private partnership that would establish a Butterfly Highway pollinator pitstop on a Duke Energy utility right-of-way located on land owned by Bob and Carolyn Tucker. The Tuckers have agreed to purchase seed for the 1.5-acre tract and the city of Concord will handle site preparation, installation, and maintenance.

Municipal partners like Mecklenburg County Park and Recreation and the cities of Charlotte and Concord are essential to creating long-lasting change for pollinators and wildlife in North Carolina. If your city, town, or county is ready to join our growing group of municipal partners, our NCWF staff and our local chapters are able to provide guidance and resources to help get you started. **NCWF**



## Wild Lives, Wild Places Legacy Society: *A message from the Chair*



*Where There's a Will, There's a Way.*

John Fuller has practiced law in Hickory since 1982 and has extensive experience in Estate Planning and Administration. He is an avid outdoor enthusiast and is the current Chair of the Wild Lives, Wild Places Legacy Society. He encourages others to support NCWF with a provision in their will or estate plan.

"When I take my sons fishing, rafting, or hiking in the beautiful mountains or rivers of North Carolina, it reminds me why I have supported North Carolina Wildlife Federation for so many years. Whether it's protecting a stretch of trout stream or guarding the Cape Fear River, NCWF is constantly pursuing ways to keep the environment healthy. That's why, when I last updated my will and estate plan, I included a provision for NCWF.

Below is the Standard Bequest Language for including NCWF in your will or revocable trust. I hope you will save this page with your important documents. Then, the next time you revise your estate documents, please consider including a provision for NCWF." –JOHN FULLER

### STANDARD BEQUEST LANGUAGE FOR NCWF

I give and devise to North Carolina Wildlife Federation, Tax I.D. #56-1564376, located in Raleigh, NC, or to its legal successor organization, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_% of the remainder of my estate to be used for its general support.

If you are so inclined, we have numerous Endowed Fund opportunities which afford you the chance to permanently link your name to NCWF and provide income from your named fund—in perpetuity—for a specific program or project.

To discuss creating a Named Endowment, call Dom Canavarro in our Development Office at (919)-833-1923 or e-mail Dom at [dom@ncwf.org](mailto:dom@ncwf.org).

## Charlie Shaw Society: *A message from the Chair*

"Members in the Charlie Shaw Society are our most dedicated supporters—generous members who have made a minimum annual commitment of \$1,000 to the work and programs of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation. We are so very grateful.

With the year half over, I am asking our Shaw Society members—and everyone else—to begin thinking about a year-end (or sooner) gift. If you've always made cash gifts to NCWF, why not consider a gift of appreciated stock this year? With the various stock indices at or near all-time highs, it's a great time to think about a stock gift. As most know, when you contribute appreciated securities, you receive a tax deduction for the fair market value and you avoid tax on long-term capital gain you would otherwise incur on a sale of those assets. It's the most tax efficient donation approach there is, and a win-win for you and for NCWF.

If this tax efficient approach to giving appeals to you, our Development Director, Dom Canavarro, can assist you with a stock gift to NCWF. Phone: (919) 833-1923 or e-mail Dom at [dom@ncwf.org](mailto:dom@ncwf.org).

And, as always, my deepest thanks." –JOHN ROBBINS

John Robbins, Owner of Greathorn Properties in Concord and committed philanthropist and sportsman, is the current Chair of the Charlie Shaw Society. He encourages others to join him in support of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation.





# THE Season

Jeff Beane's GUIDE TO  
NATURAL NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Wildlife Federation  
1024 Washington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27605

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
PPCO

## AUGUST

**August 16:** Turtlehead, bellflower, both jewelweed species, nodding ladies' tresses, and several milkweed species are in bloom.

**August 17:** Migration is peaking for many of our shorebird species along the coast.

**August 20:** Timber rattlesnakes are bearing litters.

**August 21:** Some late summer wildflowers in bloom in the Mountains include mountain angelica, virgin's bower, and Blue Ridge catchfly.

**August 22:** Peak hatching for loggerhead sea turtles.

**August 25:** The eggs of many snake and lizard species are hatching.

**August 26:** The third and last luna moth broods of the season are emerging.

**August 27:** Orange-tipped oakworm moths are mating.

**August 28:** Eastern gray squirrels are bearing their fall litters.

**August 29:** Most deer have completed their antler growth, although many bucks are still in velvet.

**August 30:** Green salamander nests are beginning to hatch. These rare amphibians inhabit shaded quartzite and limestone rock outcrops in a few of our southwest mountain counties.

**August 31:** Late summer wildflowers in bloom over most of the state include goldenrods, asters, ironweeds, blazing star, and Joe-pye weed.

## SEPTEMBER

**September 1:** Peak hurricane season is beginning. While watching the weather, keep an eye out for unusual seabirds driven inland by storms.

**September 4:** Copperheads, our most common and widely distributed venomous snake, are bearing their litters.

**September 5:** Stick insects (also known as walkingsticks) are mating.

**September 6:** Hellbenders are breeding in our Mountain rivers. Most salamanders reproduce via a sperm capsule called a spermatophore that is produced by the male and picked up by the female, but hellbender spawning is similar to that of most fishes, with males externally fertilizing the eggs.

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

**September 9:** Muscadine grapes are ripe.

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

**September 11:** The beautiful purple fruit clusters of American beauty-berry are ripe.

**September 12:** Whip-poor-wills and chuck-will's widows are beginning to depart for their wintering grounds.

**September 14:** Butterfly watching is getting good. Migrating monarchs can be particularly spectacular this time of year. The Blue Ridge Parkway is a good place for monarch watching, with Tunnel Gap at milepost 415.6 often being an especially good spot.

**September 16:** BugFest, a huge annual educational expo featuring insects and other arthropods, will be held at the North Carolina State Museum of Natural Sciences in downtown Raleigh. This year's theme is dragonflies! For more information, visit [www.natural.sciences.org](http://www.natural.sciences.org).

**September 17:** Peak flight period for several skipper species, including clouded, Leonard's, Meske's, and Ocola skippers.

**September 20:** The Diana fritillary a—rare butterfly found only in our Mountains and Foothills—is flying after its summer diapause.

**September 21:** Hawk migration peaks. Thousands of broad-winged hawks and other species may be seen in migration. Mahogany Rock in Doughton Park along the Blue Ridge Parkway is an especially good spot to witness this spectacle. Pine snake nests are hatching in the Sandhills.

**September 22:** Autumnal equinox at 4:02 p.m. EDT. (20:02 UTC). It's fall, y'all.

**September 23:** National Hunting and Fishing Day. Take a kid hunting or fishing. Or a grownup will do.

**September 24:** Bog turtle nests are hatching.

**September 25:** Most whitetail fawns have lost their spots.

**September 26:** Marbled salamanders begin moving to their breeding sites on rainy nights. Males usually move first. This handsome salamander was adopted as North Carolina's official State Salamander in 2013.

**September 27:** In the Mountains, most wildflowers are nearly done for the season, but yellow ironweed and a few goldenrods and asters are still in bloom.

**September 28:** Expect the first frosts in the Mountains. Carolina mantids—one of our two native mantid species—are depositing their oothecae (egg clusters).

**September 29:** The nests of most turtle species will have hatched by now, but in some species, including sliders, cooters, painted turtles, and box turtles, hatchlings may overwinter in the nest and not emerge until spring.

**September 29-30:** The Carolina Bird Club will hold its fall meeting in Litchfield Beach, SC. For more information, visit [www.carolinabirdclub.org](http://www.carolinabirdclub.org).

**September 30:** National Public Lands Day. Visit your favorite public land tract and be glad you have access to it.

## OCTOBER

**October 1:** In the Coastal Plain and eastern Piedmont, walkingstick mantids are active and depositing their oothecae (egg clusters). These unusual native mantids occur only as females and reproduce parthenogenetically.

**October 2:** The last of the season's loggerhead sea turtle nests are hatching.

**October 4:** Peak surface activity for both our hognose snake species—the rare southern hognose snake and the more common and widely distributed eastern hognose snake.

**October 5:** Fall runs of bluefish and red drum provide good surf fishing.

**October 6-8:** October is seafood month. The 30th annual North Carolina Seafood Festival will be held on the Morehead City waterfront. For information, call 252-726-6273 or visit [www.ncseafoodfestival.org](http://www.ncseafoodfestival.org).