



South Carolina Wildlife Federation

# DONOR IMPACT REPORT

2016








Photo contest winner  
First Place - Scenes of South Carolina  
*Sunrise at Hunting Island*  
by Stan Greenburg

**SCWF STAFF**

Ben Gregg, Executive Director  
Sara Green, Director of Education  
Harley Carpenter, Director of Development  
Laura Blake-Orr, Wildlife Habitat Manager  
Steve Gilbert, Special Projects Manager  
Trip King, Government Relations Manager

South Carolina Wildlife Federation  
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[www.SCWF.org](http://www.SCWF.org)

Front Cover  
*Prothonotary Warbler* by Lynn Long

## Dear SCWF Team Member:



2016 marks 85 years since a handful of sportsman, alarmed at the impending demise of the Whitetail Deer and the Wild Turkey, crisscrossed the state and recruited fellow outdoor enthusiasts to form the South Carolina Wildlife Federation. SCWF is the oldest conservation organization in our state, and I am honored to Chair our Board of Directors.

I became involved with SCWF because I liked that we didn't focus on one species alone. I was intrigued about the diversity of our members and supporters: tree-huggers and sportsmen, liberals and conservatives, country-boys and city-folks all coming together for the common good of our state's wildlife and outdoor traditions.

We've accomplished a lot over the past 85 years. As I think about how we can build upon our great heritage, I recognize the high standards that were set by those who have donated their wisdom, time and financial resources towards our Federation. We must continue this legacy so our children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy South Carolina's natural heritage and opportunities for outdoor recreation. But, we must also make it a priority to ensure future generations are educated and come to love and appreciate our state's great outdoors as we do.

Teddy Roosevelt, speaking at the 1908 Conference on the Conservation of Natural Resources, reflected about the need to preserve the natural world around us: "We have become great because of the lavish use of our resources and we have just reason to be proud of our growth. But the time has come to inquire seriously what will happen when our forests are gone, when the coal, the iron, the oil and the gas are exhausted, when the soils have been still further impoverished and washed into the streams, polluting the rivers, denuding the fields, and obstructing navigation. These questions do not relate only to the next century or to the next generation. It is time for us now as a nation to exercise the same reasonable foresight in dealing with our great natural resources that would be shown by any prudent man in conserving and wisely using the property which contains the assurance of well-being for himself and his children."

These words still ring true today, and I look forward to working with you to continue our legacy. Enjoy your outdoors in 2016.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jason Burbage". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Jason Burbage became Board Chairman in February 2016. A native of Sheldon, SC, he currently resides in Columbia and is the Executive Vice President of National Land Realty.



*Deer at Sunrise by Tarina Weese*



# Thank you for all you do to support wildlife!

Harley Carpenter, Director of Development



## YOUR GIFT. YOUR IMPACT.

SCWF is celebrating 85 years of promoting effective habitat conservation and respect for outdoor traditions. We were founded in 1931 by hunters and fisherman – they were the first ones who noticed the impact humans were having on populations of wildlife. They realized then they would need to take steps to preserve wildlife habitat and conserve natural resources if they wanted their children and grandchildren to be able to enjoy the great outdoors. This still holds true today, and our accomplishments are a direct result of your generous support every year for the last 85 years. Carrying out the mission of SCWF would not be possible without your dedication.

Your gift to SCWF supports education, advocacy and habitat programs including:

- **Connecting People with Nature** - SCWF engages people of all ages in learning about the flora and fauna of South Carolina and enjoying the outdoors.
- **Advocating for Healthy Wildlife Populations**- SCWF lobbies for vital wildlife issues at the State House, protecting unique lands, waterways and essential songbird habitats.
- **Promoting and Creating Habitat** - South Carolina is a leader in the NATION in number of backyards certified per capita for the **Backyard Wildlife Habitat™** program! SCWF also assists businesses in managing their lands to enhance wildlife.

We hope you will continue your generous giving in the years to come. If you would like to donate to SCWF, please contact the SCWF Director of Development, Harley Carpenter, at (803) 256-0670 or by email at [harley@scwf.org](mailto:harley@scwf.org). Your assistance will be much appreciated and put to good conservation use. **We promise!**

## PLEASE DONATE FOR 2016!

### We Need YOUR Support!

To make a donation please visit [www.SCWF.org](http://www.SCWF.org), contact us, or complete the enclosed envelope.

The Mission of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation is to conserve and restore South Carolina's wildlife and wildlife habitat through education and advocacy.

*On the Wings* by Brooks Metts

# Wildlife And Industry Together Program:

## Partners Working for Habitat

The Wildlife And Industry Together (W.A.I.T.) program recognizes industries who are dedicated to protecting the environment and who keep wildlife needs in mind when making their land management decisions. The program assists corporations, employees and community groups who desire to develop environmental projects in partnership with each other. We have 27 certified sites across the state and are proud to report 100% renewal rate for 2016!

Contact Laura Blake-Orr (803) 256-0670 or [laura@scwf.org](mailto:laura@scwf.org) for information on becoming a W.A.I.T. partner. **Thank you to the following companies for their ongoing support of this program!**



**Did you know - Buying a hunting license (whether you hunt or not) is an investment in wildlife habitat conservation in our state.**

South Carolina state-owned lands, such as the Bear Island & Donnelley Wildlife Management Areas in the ACE Basin and Jocassee Gorges Wildlife Management Area in the upstate, are managed for wildlife by the SC Department of Natural Resources. DNR depends on the sale of hunting licenses and the Federal match for the majority of funds needed to manage wildlife habitat on these lands. The excise tax on firearms and ammunition goes into a federal fund which is then apportioned back to the states dependent on the number of hunting licenses sold.



At a recent Palmetto Pro Birder module in the ACE Basin, birders learned the importance of hunting license sales to manage the habitat areas that are so crucial to the birds they were there to see. One class participant, Judith Kramer, said, "As birders, we do not have to pay to enjoy the use of these public lands, but it is perhaps our responsibility to do so."

To find out more about making your personal investment in wildlife habitat conservation by buying a hunting license, visit [www.dnr.sc.gov/licensing](http://www.dnr.sc.gov/licensing).



# Outdoor Academy & Education Programs

Sara Green, Director of Education



SCWF donors have been so supportive of our education programs that we are expanding! **Nearly all of our education events sold out again last year - over 1100 people attended our education classes & events during 2015** and were introduced to the wondrous flora and fauna of the Palmetto State as well as the varied outdoor recreation opportunities that abound here.

We are excited that Laura Blake-Orr has joined us to fill our new education staff position. Laura will focus on growing our habitat education programs, which you can read about on the next page. SCWF is dedicated to also expanding our classes and events offered through the Palmetto Outdoor Academy.



One component of the Outdoor Academy is the very popular **Midlands Master Naturalist** program. The course is led by SCWF Board Member, Austin Jenkins, who leads the participants through 12 sessions consisting of classroom and field work at natural places all across the Midlands. Certification is

presented jointly from Clemson University and SCWF at the end of the course. We have considerable demand for this class, and registration filled quickly for our spring 2016 class.

After graduation, Master Naturalists are required to complete 30 hours of volunteer service and advanced training. The **Midlands Master Naturalist Association** was formed by graduates to provide such opportunities. These well-trained volunteers have proven to be invaluable for SCWF, as well as other agencies and

organizations. MMNA volunteers have participated in bird and mammal surveys, bird-banding at Fort Jackson, educational talks, and park maintenance projects at Congaree National Park, Sesquicentennial State Park, and USC's Belser Arboretum, to name just a few.



MMNA also partners with SCWF to offer the **Junior Naturalist Program** to teach kids about nature and the importance of conservation. In 2015, we again partnered with Camp Discovery in Blythewood to host a Creek Critters class, as well as the ever-popular New Year's Day Hike. This spring's outing will focus on native pollinators, and kids will get the chance to build a nest for native bees.



SCWF offered several other educational opportunities which were opened to the public, but could also count as advanced training hours for Master Naturalists from around the state. Naturalist Austin Jenkins led classes which focused on Sandhills natural history, spring wildflowers, venus flytraps, and dragonflies.



Modeled after the Master Naturalist program, the **Palmetto Pro Birder program** focuses on bird identification and conservation. Created by renowned ornithologist Dr. Drew Lanham, this program strives to build a core of SCWF Citizen Scientists who are equipped with field ornithology skills to be competent in identifying birds by sight, sound and behavior in the field. Our expert instructors lead several 2-day modules each year, at different locations around the state. Each module holds a maximum of 20 people, and participants who complete four modules are certified as Pro Birders.

To date, nearly 170 people have been trained through this program, and 39 have been certified! Two more modules are already on the calendar for 2016, with more to come!

Another very popular component of the Academy is the **Women's Outdoor Retreat (WOR)**. **OVER 200 ladies from around the Southeast** attended the 2015 weekend retreat designed for women to experience nature and outdoor recreation non-competitive environment. Ladies participated in classes varying from archery & skeet shooting to kudzu basket-making & kayaking. Expert instructors volunteered their time

and equipment to teach hands-on classes in the field. This year's WOR will be held on **September 9-11, 2016** at Hickory Knob State Park in McCormick, SC. We expect registration to fill quickly again this year, so stay tuned to our website and emails for the announcement!

More information about all of these programs can be found on our website at [www.scwf.org](http://www.scwf.org) or by contacting Sara Green at [sara@scwf.org](mailto:sara@scwf.org) or (803) 609-4778.

**Thank you to the following EDUCATION PARTNERS who have made SCWF's education programs a success:**

- Adventure Carolina
- Audubon South Carolina
- Camp Discovery
- Carolina Sandhills National Wildlife Refuge
- Clemson Extension
- Earth Connection Outfitters
- Garden Clubs of South Carolina
- Get Your Gear On
- Heyward Technology & Career Center
- Irmo Middle School
- Lake Thurmond Sail & Power Squadron
- Lexington Wildlife Chapter
- Little River Blueways
- Midlands Master Naturalist Association
- Palmetto Conservation Foundation
- Palmetto Living History Association
- Palmetto Paddlers
- River Runner Outdoor Center
- Savannah Lakes Village
- Savannah River Ecology Lab
- SC Department of Natural Resources
- SC State Park Service
- Stone Point Archery





# SCWF Conserves & Restores Wildlife



Laura Blake-Orr, Wildlife Habitat Manager

2015 was a successful year for the SCWF's Certified Wildlife Habitat Programs. Thanks to the generous support of our corporate and individual donors, the board approved hiring a new position to focus on expanding the number of certified wildlife habitats in South Carolina. SCWF named

me as Wildlife Habitat Manager. In this role I will plan, coordinate, implement and oversee all Habitat Programs of the SCWF including the Backyard, Community, Schoolyard and Wildlife and Industry Together (WAIT) Habitat Programs.

Backyard includes more than you and your neighbors' properties – businesses, places of worship, libraries, government offices, parks, and other places throughout the community have been certified as well. These sites provide food, water, cover and places to raise young for wildlife, and are certified through the National Wildlife Federation (NWF). The **SCWF has close to 7,000 Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitats** in South Carolina making it a leader in the nation in the number of sites per capita.



With 31 years of environmental experience working for industry, I have a special interest in expanding the WAIT program. WAIT is designed to encourage corporate landowners to integrate wildlife habitat needs into land management decisions. As South Carolina becomes increasingly developed, there is less land available for wildlife. Corporate landowners can offset habitat loss by devoting their under-utilized lands to wildlife. WAIT projects across the state include food plots for deer & turkey, meadows for ground-nesting birds, bluebird boxes on security fences, nature/fitness trails, wetlands protection



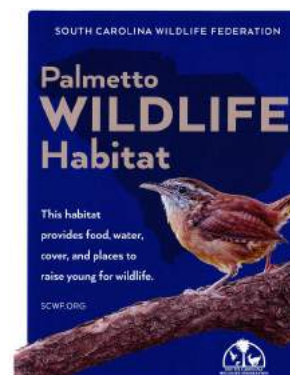
projects, riparian buffers, osprey nesting platforms, planting of native fruit trees, wood duck boxes, butterfly gardens, and much more!

These industries are providing valuable wildlife habitat on their properties, and have also made a commitment to environmental education for their employees and to partnering with groups in their communities. Currently **27 sites are certified** with a goal to significantly increase that number over the next three years.

SCWF staff and volunteers regularly exhibit and present to civic organizations. Help us to increase the number of certified sites by allowing us to share the benefits of gardening for wildlife at your workplace, neighborhood association, garden club, or other community group meeting.

Learn more about these programs, submit an application to have your yard certified or purchase a sign by visiting our website, [www.scwf.org](http://www.scwf.org) or contact Laura at the office, (803) 206-6220 or [laura@scwf.org](mailto:laura@scwf.org).

*Display a SCWF Habitat Sign in your garden and help spread the word about the needs of wildlife!  
Buying signs from SCWF keeps the money in SC to be used for conserving and restoring wildlife and wildlife habitat in our state!*





# & Wildlife Habitat



**Steve Gilbert, Special Projects Manager**

Through a grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, SCWF has been working for several years to enhance habitat for wildlife by assisting landowners in Charleston, Berkeley and Dorchester counties who are working to convert lands back to Longleaf Pine forests.

Over the last 18 months, SCWF has facilitated the planting of 184 acres and prescribed burning for 2,385 acres of Longleaf Pine. For the upcoming season, we have signed agreements with land-owners for an additional 250 acres of planting and 2,426 acres of prescribed fire. This program fosters sustainable forestry practices and re-establishes valuable habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, as well as important habitat for deer, turkey, and quail.

For questions or additional information on the program, contact Steve at (843) 795-9005 or [SteveG@scwf.org](mailto:SteveG@scwf.org).



**Red-cockaded Woodpecker**

## Milkweed for Monarchs

The Monarch butterfly, once common across the United States, could soon end up on the Endangered Species List. In 2014, SCWF began an initiative through our habitat programs to distribute packets of native milkweed seeds to re-establish habitat for Monarchs through planting of this crucial food source for the caterpillars and nectar for the adult butterflies. Last year, we distributed 2,000 packets of seed, and plan to distribute at least that many in 2016. Please contact our office if you have a small plot for milkweed in your garden!



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# Conservation and Advocacy

Ben Gregg, Executive Director

When it comes to conservation advocacy, SCWF cannot rest on either defense or offense. Protecting the gains we have made over the decades requires constant vigilance, while

pushing through new measures for protecting healthy wildlife and human populations requires a special blend of teamwork, dedication and timing. Here are a few summaries of priority issues:

**Seismic blast exploration and offshore oil drilling** – We have just received the wonderful news that the US Department of Interior has taken out all of the South Atlantic states for exploration and drilling for offshore oil and gas. SCWF was part of an ever-expanding coalition of regional, statewide and local groups as well as every city and town along the SC coast who all said NO to bringing heavy industry, chronic spills and filth to our treasured beaches and marshes. Enjoy your wonderful beaches this summer!

**SC Conservation Bank** – The Bank was funded at increased levels by the 2015 state legislature. We are working hard in 2016 to make permanent funding a reality so our natural heritage can be protected for future generations.

**Science-Based Conservation** – We are continuing SCWF's legacy of insisting that science, not politics, remain at the forefront in decisions affecting our wildlife. We work to empower the skilled & dedicated conservation officers and biologists at the SC Department of Natural Resources.

**Clean and Abundant Water** – Scientists say variability and unpredictability of conditions will continue – which means we must insist that the state legislature pass laws that better prepare us for both

droughts and floods. It is about wildlife and fish survival, but it is also about human health and safety.

**Public Lands**—National parks, US forests, national wildlife refuges and other federal lands are owned by ALL citizens of the nation, regardless of where you live and what your station is in life. Your stake is equal to that of the Western rancher who grazes his cattle on federal property. Public opinion surveys in every section of the country consistently show overwhelming support for keeping public lands just where they are.



First, without federal and state lands, many of our best and most memorable outdoor opportunities right here in SC would be lost. Second, public lands are a legacy that was left to us by our ancestors, and we can hopefully leave this legacy to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Third, and I say this as a South Carolinian who has been blessed to enjoy many natural treasures out West, national parks, refuges and forests uplift and enrich the souls of millions of Americans and are the envy of people around the globe.

The struggle to keep and maintain our common treasures will have to continue. Under the SCWF banner, generations of South Carolinians have fought for citizen ownership and good stewardship of our shared legacy. National Wildlife Federation and many of our partner affiliates in other states are taking the lead as we prepare for future attempts to take away the natural legacy we all own in common. Thanks to your support, our advocacy continues.







# Legislative Issues at the Statehouse

Trip King, Government Relations Manager

It is a pleasure to be your representative at the State House. I will be your point person on legislation while also taking on the same role for Audubon South Carolina, SCWF's conservation partner. Here is a quick wrap up on a

few of the bills we are monitoring:

**Deer Management Legislation** – House bill 4943 is designed to help boost the state's declining deer population. The SCWF strongly supports this legislation along with our Camo Coalition partner, The Quality Deer Management Association (QDMA) and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources.



NWF Board Member, Dave Hargett; SCWF Executive Director, Ben Gregg; NWF President & CEO, Colin O'Mara and NWF Regional Representative, Ron Warnken at Congaree National Park.



**Lake Conestee Nature Park Wildlife Sanctuary** – This important bill will give the Lake Conestee Foundation, along with SCDNR, more tools at their disposal to stop unwanted and unauthorized hunting in the nature park, protecting both visitors and wildlife from harm.

**Pipeline/Eminent Domain Legislation** – SCWF is working with our Conservation Coalition partners to ensure passage of legislation to prohibit non-regulated, for-profit petroleum pipeline companies from using our state's eminent domain laws to acquire property for construction of a pipeline. This law would prevent disruption to wildlife habitat and potential environmental devastation should a leak occur.

**Coal Ash Disposal** – SC-based utilities must dispose of coal ash in environmentally safer Class 3 landfills. A recently-passed law puts those same restrictions on out-of-state generated coal ash. SCWF worked hand-in-hand with other conservation partners to ensure passage of this legislation. This bill has recently become law!

For more information about all of these issues, contact:  
Ben Gregg at [ben@scwf.org](mailto:ben@scwf.org) or  
Trip King at [tripksck@aol.com](mailto:tripksck@aol.com)

More details also on our website at [www.scwf.org](http://www.scwf.org)

# THANK YOU to our 2015 Donors!

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