

Bulls Bay Nature Festival - From the Forest to the Sea

Coming Saturday May 21, 2016



A Look Back at the Third Annual Community Nature Festival May 16, 2015

The mission of the Bulls Bay Nature Festival - From the Forest to the Sea is to increase awareness, promote engagement and foster lasting connections with our unique natural places and wildlife in the Bulls Bay community.

Get outside! Bulls Bay community agencies, organizations, businesses, and churches came together once again to bring the 3rd annual Bulls Bay Nature Festival - From the Forest to the Sea to the community. Festival events happened throughout the day in the Francis Marion National Forest, on Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, Hampton Plantation State Historic Site, the Sewee Visitor Center and Bishop Jerden Conference Center.

Dr. Richard Porcher Delivers the Keynote

In closing the Festival, Dr. Richard Porcher delivered the festival Keynote, an intriguing presentation on the botanical diversity in the Lowcountry and the significance of the human footprint. Dr. Porcher discussed the ever-changing landscape, noting those rare, beautiful wildflowers and plants and the importance of landscape conservation, both now and for future generations. Dr. Porcher is a noted field biologist, former professor of biology at The Citadel and an adjunct professor of biology at Clemson University. He is the founder of The Citadel Herbarium and established the Wade T. Batson Endowment in Field Botany at Clemson University to assist students in studies of South Carolina's plant ecology. Dr. Porcher authored *Wildflowers of the Carolina Lowcountry*



Dr. Porcher leads a walk in a Carolina Bay, Francis Marion NF.

and the Lower Pee Dee and co-authored Lowcountry: The Natural Landscape, A Guide to the Wildflowers of South Carolina and, The Story of Sea Island Cotton. A native of Berkeley County, Dr. Porcher received his MS and PhD in Biology from the University of South Carolina.

Festival Highlights

The festival was a day packed full of fun for everyone! Activities included bird, wildflower, edible plants and ecology walks in the forest and on the refuge. We had our first family bike trip in the Francis Marion NF, kayak paddles and paddleboarding, historic tours and live wolf, reptile and raptor demonstrations as well as a sweet grass basketry and photography workshop. Kids of all ages enjoyed archery, fishing, exploring a salt marsh, nature art and face painting. The little tots went home with wolf masks, turtle hats and plaster animal tracks!

The Wildlife Art Contest was a hit with grades 3-12 students from Cape Romain Environmental Education Charter School (CREECS), St. James Santee Elementary and Lincoln Middle-High School. Students showcased their creativity and talents in the exposition and competition. Winners will see their work displayed in a 2016 wildlife art calendar which will be available for purchase in the Bulls Bay community. All proceeds from the sale of calendars will benefit the art programs in the schools.

The Sewee Center Grounds was filled throughout the day with various genres of music, provided by local musicians Kathie Livingston, Rene Russell, Rut Leland and Friends, Wendy Fisk and Commitment, the Awendaw Community Singers and the Graham Crolley Band. Many thanks to the musicians and Awendaw Green for providing the soundstage.

Local photographers, artisans and native plant vendors were on hand , displaying and selling their artwork and the many varieties of our native plants. And, everyone at the Sewee Center enjoyed the tasty fare served up by Building Hope Missions and the Awendaw Fire Department - delicious chicken gumbo, shrimp creole, hot dogs and desserts.

We thank the volunteers, musicians, vendors, Awendaw Fire Department, community businesses and individuals for their amazing support for another great Festival in the Bulls Bay Community!

Be sure to visit the Bulls Bay Nature Festival website and Facebook page – www.bullsbaynaturefestival.org

Partners

Awendaw Green
Hampton Plantation State Historic Site
The Center for Birds of Prey
Bishop Jerden Conference Center
Nature Adventures Outfitters
Town of Awendaw
Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge
Friends of Coastal SC

Sewee Outpost
Town of McClellanville
Coastal Expeditions
Sewee to Santee Community Development Corporation
Francis Marion National Forest
SC Department of Natural Resources
SC Forestry Commission