

SOUTH CAROLINA'S NRCS CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

South Carolina
Helping People Help the Land

USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service

SUMMER 2009

From the office of
State Conservationist
Niles Glasgow



In this issue....

- 🦋 **St. Helena Island Farmer Sold on Conservation**
.....pgs. 2-3
- 🦋 **Partners for Trout Hooks into Middle Saluda**
.....pgs. 3-4
- 🦋 **Edgefield County Outdoor Classroom**
.....pg. 5
- 🦋 **SC's 2009 Envirothon**
.....pg. 6
- 🦋 **SC NRCS Employee Serves on National Civil Rights Committee**
.....pgs. 6-7
- 🦋 **News from SC's Soil Scientists--Past & Present**.....pgs. 8-9
- 🦋 **USC's Herbarium**
.....pg. 10
- 🦋 **Planting Diversity, Harvesting Understanding--Cultural Awareness Day is Coming**.....pg. 11
- 🦋 **Photo Contest Winners**
.....pgs. 12-13
- 🦋 **Personnel News**
.....pg. 14
- 🦋 **Lessons from a Giraffe**.....pg. 14

Greetings!

I am pleased to announce a new employee recognition program--the **Above and Beyond Giraffe Award**. This token of appreciation will recognize and celebrate the efforts of employees who go above and beyond, who stick their necks out to get the job done and rise to the occasion to meet the needs of customers and help people help the land.

The **Giraffe Award** can only go to one employee at a time, and the award presentation includes a traveling giraffe (*not a real one--this one just sits on your desk*) which the employee will then pass on to the next recipient. I was inspired to create this award after learning of a Nelson study which assessed employee recognition programs. Out of 800 employees surveyed, the number one most valued and appreciated recognition from a manager was *praise*, as opposed to perks or gifts. I believe it is vital that we continue to let our employees know when they have accomplished great things. I hope that the **Above and Beyond Giraffe Award** will be a fun and creative way to bring attention to the extraordinary efforts and talents of our employees.

On the last page of this newsletter is a parable that creatively illustrates the theme of this award, and explores the common thread which runs through the lives of exceptional people. Sometimes, the most successful people we know have met with extreme adversity. But, they get back up, they persevere, and as a result, they are role models. I see these star qualities in many of you, and that is why I wanted to create this recognition program. Thanks for going above and beyond for NRCS. We could not accomplish our mission without each and every one of you.

Niles

Above and Beyond
NRCS
South Carolina

State Conservationist Giraffe Award
presented to

Standing the tallest of all, giraffes see obstacles and opportunities while they are still far off.

They are so peacefully hard-working in fact, that we sometimes forget how powerful they are, how swiftly they can move.

Thanks for looking out for all of us.

You make SC NRCS a great place to work, and thanks for all you do to *help people help the land.*

Notes from the Field



St. Helena Small Farmer Sold on Conservation

by Amy O. Maxwell, SC NRCS Public Affairs and Outreach Specialist

When Ben Johnson left his childhood home on St. Helena Island, South Carolina, in 1956 at the age of 18, he vowed that he would not be coming back, would never again drink milk, and wouldn't be going to church on Sundays. He laughs about this now, and although he didn't stay away from the church for long after setting out on his own, he confirms, "I did stay true to my promise to not drink milk—at least for twenty years." Johnson was asserting his independence from his parents, from life on the farm, and from the chores he dutifully performed during his childhood which included milking the cows on his family's farm each and every morning. From the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Johnson set out on a journey that would take him to a much different place. He wound up in New York City; he says because, "That's where the jobs were, so that's where I went." He worked as a welder, got married (and is still married after 47 years), and had his first son in 1968. It was then that he realized that New York City was not the ideal place to raise a child, and his aging parents needed his assistance, so Johnson made his way back South. Still not ready for farm life, he worked for the government, until one day his father asked him to tend to some of the idle farmland on their property. Johnson reluctantly gave in and purchased a tractor just to, "do a little tidying up around the farm." But, he admits he started to enjoy working on that tractor,

and next thing he knew, he was buying horses. "I always loved horses, so I purchased one, and here I am today, working a farm again." Johnson farms primarily to feed family and friends, but he is committed to protecting soil and water quality, and does all that he can to ensure he farms with conservation in mind.

Johnson worked with both his local NRCS and SWCD to apply for financial and technical assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). He praised former Small Farmer Liaison Wilfred Pace for helping him understand the program application process, and the benefits that would result from his participation. He says, "The conservationists that I worked with were very motivating, and their hearts are in their work, and so it inspired me to do the right thing." He also worked with Soil Conservationist Antron Williams, District Conservationist Diane Leone, Grassland Specialist David Findley, and Beaufort SWCD Director Shelby Berry. He also thanked the Penn Center for their outreach efforts to small and underserved farmers.



left to right: Small farmer Ben Johnson, NRCS District Conservationist Diane Leone, and Beaufort SWCD Director Shelby Berry.

Johnson's conservation plan included fencing, micro irrigation installation, planting cover crops, and implementing record keeping into his routine. He says, "At first, I was very reluctant to keep records, and did not really understand why I should." However, Johnson is now a fan of recordkeeping, and admits he does not know how he would be

successful without it. In fact, Johnson has been a great advocate for conservation and EQIP and is spreading the word about the benefits to other small farmers in the Lowcountry. "It's farmers like Ben that are our best advertising, because they talk to their friends, sell the programs, and really are the best ambassadors we could ask for," explained Leone.

Johnson surveys his pastures with great pride, and smiles as he talks about watching his grandkids and how much they enjoy the farm. "If you get kids interested in farming at an early age, it gets into their blood, and they have a true appreciation." He also swears that farming keeps

him young, as Johnson doesn't look a day over 60. "This is the good life!" he exclaims. "It will keep you young." When asked about a typical day, he proudly reports, "I stay here on my farm, and I don't waste money on gas driving from home to work. I grow all my own food and provide for my family and friends." Johnson has it all figured out in terms of the good life and what makes him happy, but he admits, "It took me 47 years to figure out this is where I wanted to be." Now, the young man who left this farm back in 1956, determined not to return, loves the place with a passion and is proud to call it home.



Johnson's conservation plan includes fencing, micro-irrigation installation, planting cover crops, and implementing record keeping into his routine.



NRCS National Wetland Team Leader Norman Melvin (center) taught workshop participants from the SC Conservation Partnership about plant identification .

Partners for Trout Hooks into Greenville County Along Middle Saluda River

By Amy O. Maxwell, USDA-NRCS SC

Partners for Trout (PFT) is an Upstate South Carolina cooperative conservation success story. It all began in 1997 when a coalition of federal, state, non-governmental entities, and private landowners joined forces to improve and protect rare trout waters in the upper corner of the Palmetto State, and since that time, they accomplished much, and have been recognized with several awards. Garnering nearly \$1.5 million to restore, improve and protect critical trout habitat, PFT has restored eight miles of streambank in South Carolina, with future restoration projects in the planning stages. While all the project sites have previously been in Pickens County, the project has now cast its restoration efforts into Greenville County, and is improving a 1,500-foot stretch of stream on private property. This latest site is located on the Middle Saluda River, and thanks to brothers Brett and Shay Tankersley of Cleveland, SC, their streambank property is now part of PFT. As the eighth generation family of Tankersley's to make Greenville County home, the brothers know the Middle Saluda as their childhood playground, and fondly reminisce about growing up along the banks of the meandering waterbody. They can fully appreciate the beauty and benefits that outdoor recreation can bring, and Brett says, "We fished, swam, and played in this river growing up, and now we want to be able to see our kids enjoy it in the same way." With the help of PFT, they are doing their part to protect

SC NRCS Host Plant Id Sessions in May

South Carolina NRCS hosted two plant identification training sessions May 4-7, 2009. Tour sites included Pacolet River Heritage Preserve and Croft State Natural Area in Spartanburg County, and Woods Bay Heritage Preserve in Sumter County and Lynchburg Savannah Heritage Preserve in Lee County.

Dr. Norman Melvin of the NRCS Central National Technical Support Center and Agronomist Gene Hardee of the East National Technology Support Center instructed twenty-five students from NRCS, DNR and SWCD.

Each group was afforded the opportunity to observe a diversity of plants, including the Piedmont forested hardwoods, wetland dependant species along the fringe of a pond, and a cypress dominated Carolina Bay.

In addition, the training sessions allowed participants to visit an intensively managed longleaf pine savannah where they saw Pitcher Plants, Sundews and the American chaffseed, federally listed as an endangered species in 1992.

SC Natural Resources Conservation Service

and improve water quality, repair and prevent streambank erosion, and provide habitat for trout. The family made a decision to share this pristine spot with nature lovers and anglers. The placement of a sturdy foot bridge now enables handicapped access and ensures that anybody who wants to enjoy the peace and quiet of the Middle Saluda can do just that. Foothills RC&D Coordinator Dave Demarest said, "A common theme that emerged from public hearings we hosted as part of the Partners for Trout project development was the issue of public and handicap accessibility to these restoration sites. We were hearing over and over that folks wanted to make these areas accessible to all, and that's why we made this a priority in landowner negotiations, and in the initial engineering designs." Tankersley says it feels good to see folks enjoying the river which he's protecting and making available to those who will appreciate it. "It's not as easy as it used to be to find publically accessible fishing areas, so this is one of those unique spots where people can get away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life, and get back to nature."

USDA-NRCS Greenville District Conservationist Lynne Newton said that conservation practices installed include a riparian buffer,

live stakes, boulder fields (which provide cover for trout), and in-stream structures such as whole tree revetments, cross vanes, and J-hooks. "These are practices that are constructed using natural materials that blend in with the natural landscape," said Newton. "The SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) recently conducted fish sampling in the area, and found that

the keys to the success of this project was constructing cover logs on land *before* submerging them in the river. This is the best way to ensure a



left to right: NRCS District Conservationist Lynne Newton, landowner Brett Tankersley, and Foothills RC&D Coordinator Dave Demarest review the streambank restoration plan.

stable and functional structure," he explained. Gene Dobbins, an environmental engineer with the Greenville Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), designed the practices installed on the Tankersley property, and also designed the construction of a footbridge to enable access to the stream. Additional practices included a riparian buffer alongside the stream to provide

shade to cool water temperatures to a suitable environment for trout. Once established, the native hardwoods will naturally lower water temperature and provide vegetation and cover for wildlife. "This restoration work will convert the stream back to the conditions that originally existed in the area and will support a healthy environment for trout," said Demarest. Other improvements included placement of bottom water release structures which circulate cold water back into the receiving stream, thus providing immediately cooler stream temperatures. Installation of structures such as the cross-vane and j-hook (which decrease stream power and reduce streambank erosion) help dissipate energy and provide excellent fish habitat. Other techniques included whole-tree revetments which use bundles of cabled trees to stabilize curves within the stream and protect the streambank from excessive erosion.

Brett Tankersley beams like a proud father when he talks about his newly restored streambank. "It is nice to know that this area will be here many years from now, and I hope that the future generations of my family will find as much joy in this area as my brother and I have." The restoration work that was installed is providing so much for so many—recreation, fish habitat, and a place for anybody who seeks the comfort of a river alongside a mountain road.



conducted fish sampling in the area, and found that

Center for Interactive Science Field Studies Opens in Edgefield County

by Neil Bartley, DNR Program Coordinator,
Edgefield County

The Edgefield SWCD partnered with the Edgefield School District to design and fund a new learning tool for JET Middle School and Strom Thurmond High School. Building on an existing partnership the SWCD teamed up with USDA-NRCS, SC DNR, and the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service to fund the *Center for Interactive Science Field Studies*. Based on a previously existing nature trail that was many years old, the new Center combines the best of old school nature trail use with new hands-on techniques which bring science learning to life.

The SWCD worked closely with the school's Agricultural Education Department to actively engage the teachers and students in creating the Center. They worked together to clear and install trails, build classroom areas, and establish wildlife habitat. The funding was secured with a grant from the Edgefield SWCD, who worked to secure funding from a variety of sources, including Clemson University and the local Farm-City Week Committee.

One unique feature of the project is the design and construction of raised beds with micro-irrigation which the students and teachers can use to study plant growth. The students in the Agriculture program built the beds and installed the irrigation systems, and once fully functional, the system will help teachers at the middle school educate students about plant growth and management.

The Center is an on-going project of the Edgefield SWCD and the schools Agricultural program at the high school. For more information, call (803) 637-3220, extension 104.



Student and teachers from JET Middle School and Strom Thurmond High School worked with the Edgefield Conservation Partnership to clear and install trails, build outdoor classrooms, and establish wildlife habitat at the new **Center for Interactive Science Field Studies**.

SC NRCS Welcomes Summer Student Interns



Summer 2009 Interns visited the SC NRCS State Office in May and met State Conservationist Niles Glasgow (second from left).

The interns, their duty stations, and where they are pursuing degrees: (left to right) Jamie Keith, Bishopville, Tuskegee Environmental Science Major; Jolie Brown, Greenville, Clemson Ag Ed.; Taylor Ammons, State Office GIS staff, USC Arts and Sciences major, and Joshua Boatwright, Anderson, Clemson Ag Mech.

Welcome to NRCS!

Spartanburg High School Team Takes Top Prize at 2009 SC Envirothon

The 2009 SC Envirothon competition was held May 1 at the Clemson Institute for Economic and Community Development. With a special focus on the topic of biodiversity, teams also competed against each other in the areas of soils, aquatics forestry, and wildlife.

Twenty-three teams participated and represented counties from Charleston to Spartanburg, and Horry to Abbeville. The event even included an unexpected downpour (the first ever in thirteen years of this event!) just in time for lunch.

SC 2009 Envirothon Results

Honorable Mention: Chapin High School

Third Place: Pinewood Preparatory School
(Dorchester County)

Second Place: Spartanburg High School Team B

First Place: Spartanburg High School Team A

Future Farmers of America High Scoring Teams:

-FFA # 1: Loris High School FFA

-FFA # 2: Indian Land High School FFA

-FFA # 3: Calhoun Falls Charter FFA

Scholarships and cash prizes totaling more than \$6,000 were presented to the winning teams. These were made possible through the generous donations of: SC's Soil and Water Conservation Districts, the SC Association of Conservation Districts (SCACD), the SC Conservation District Employees Association (SCCDEA), the Environmental Education Association of SC, the SC Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society (SWCS), the Lowcountry RC&D Council, the Harry Hampton Memorial Wildlife Fund, the Canon Envirothon Committee, and personal donations made by the *Friends of Envirothon*.



left to right: NRCS employees Kellee Melton, Tibor Horvath, and Al McNeill, along with Richland SWCD employee Hugh Caldwell, Fort Jackson conservationist and SWCS member Doyle Allen, and NRCSer Ayana Brown helped grade test scores throughout the day.

SC's winning team, Spartanburg Team A, will compete at the Canon Envirothon in August at the University of North Carolina-Asheville. Find out more about SC's annual Envirothon at www.dnr.sc.gov/education/Envirothon.



The winning team from Spartanburgh High School left to right: Coach Vaughn Vick, Hazel Lever, Marquan Jones, William Weir, David Stevens, and Coach Rob Wilder.

SC NRCS District Conservationist Attends National Civil Rights Advisory Committee Meeting in Puerto Rico

By LaKeisha R. Hill, District Conservationist, York County

As the black female representative on the National Civil Rights Advisory Committee (NCRAC), I traveled to San Juan, Puerto Rico, May 4-8, 2009, to meet with the group. The committee consists of a female and male representative of the following groups: African American, American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian/Pacific Islander, People with Disabilities, Hispanic, and White.

The committee objectives include: to serve as an advisory body to the NRCS Chief; to promote and assist in meaningful and effective affirmative action consistent with the goals and objectives set forth by management; to provide feedback on agency performance in equal opportunity and civil rights compliance, identify areas of weakness, and make recommendations for improvement; to identify emergency areas needing special attention by the Chief and NRCS top management; to make recommendations to the Chief regarding policies, prac-

tices, and procedures as they affect equal opportunity NRCS-wide.

While in Puerto Rico, we received reports from committee advisors including Joseph Hairston, Director of the Civil Rights Division; Larry Holmes, Outreach Branch Chief; Russell Mader, Natural Resources Specialist with the Strategic and Performance Planning Division; and Eloris Speight, Acting Director of the Human Resources Management Division. Newly appointed NCRAC Chair Jon Hall (Maryland State Conservationist) and Assistant to the Chair Lydia Donovan were welcomed to the committee, and a fond farewell and gratitude for service were expressed to outgoing Chair Joyce Swartzendruber (Montana State Conservationist) and Coleen Churchill, Assistant to the Chair.

The committee also met with Puerto Rico NRCS staff and visited two farming operations situated in the steep mountain country south of Arecibo. Our first stop was the Luis E. Alcover Colon family-owned and operated coffee plantation near Lares. Their facilities take the coffee from bean to bag, right on their farm, giving them a value-added product—Loreño Coffee. The family also grows bananas and plantains, and EQIP has helped them control erosion and practice crop rotation, and they installed roof runoff and waste water collection systems and an irrigation system. The committee was treated to samples of their coffee and other goodies made from the fruit produced on their farm.

The second tour stop was at the first female-owned and operated dairy farm in Puerto Rico. The landowners, sisters Ada N. Velez and Iris Delia Velez, are beginning farmers who have utilized EQIP to install a waste storage

facility, watering facilities, nutrient and pest management, and a prescribed grazing plan. Javier Medina, Arecibo District Conservationist, worked closely with Ada and her son, Ramon Juan Ramos,

to install practices to protect water quality on the farm due to the extreme topography in the area. The sisters milk about 160 cows. They treated our committee to products made from their milk including fresh whole and chocolate milk and local cheeses and yogurts. The NCRAC meets three times a year and has four positions opening in 2010, including American Indian/Alaska Native Female, Asian Pacific Islander Female, Hispanic Female, and Male. A national bulletin announcing this opportunity and explaining the application process

is forthcoming, so if you or someone you know is interested in applying, stay tuned. More information about the committee is available on [my.NRCS](#) under *Employee Resources*.



LaKeisha Hill, York County District Conservationist, traveled to Puerto Rico this May as a member of the National Civil Rights Advisory Committee. She had the chance to visit a farming operation that produces coffee, and sampled some of their delicious products. Photo by Cara Clark, Illinois NRCS, Visual Information Specialist.



The National Civil Rights Advisory Committee visited a family owned and operated coffee plantation. The conservation friendly operation utilized EQIP to control erosion and protect water quality, and the owners also installed roof runoff and waste water collection systems and an irrigation system.

SC NRCS Soil Scientists Verify Spartanburg Soil Series

by Lance Brewington, Piedmont MLRA Soil Survey Leader, Laurens County

During the week of March 23-27, 2009, the MLRA Soils Office in Laurens, SC, invited Wes Tuttle of the USDA-NRCS National Soil Survey Center in Wilkesboro, NC, to visit Spartanburg County to complete a second depth to bedrock study within the Piedmont MLRA. The study was conducted to add supporting data and clarify transect data that had already been collected.

The study focused mainly on Cecil and Cecil-like soils. The primary difference between the soils viewed is the depth to soft bedrock, and this property can be identified easier by using the ground penetrating radar (GPR) device as opposed to a soils auger. Transect data previously recorded was analyzed and indicated three soil types: no soft bedrock contact before 60 inches (Cecil), soft bedrock contact between 20-40 inches (Bethlehem), and soft bedrock contact between 40-60 inches (Spartanburg). Spartanburg soil is a new series, and the type for which we desired more information. series.

The study employed a GPR system to measure the time it takes for electromagnetic energy to travel from the antenna to a soil horizon (or stratigraphic layer) and back to the antenna. Data was collected by establishing transect lines across several sites and using 33 ft. to 49 ft. intervals as reference points. In some map units, the depth to bedrock varied from approximately 12 in to 69 inches. In others, the depth to bedrock was consistently over 60 inches. The GPR antenna was calibrated by burying a metal reflector to a known depth. The results were then verified with soil borings along the transects.

This study was conducted in an effort to verify bedrock depths which are important in updating the soil survey and naming various map units. The data collected will help the MLRA office determine where certain map units should be combined, and where they should be mapped as separate units.

Accompanying Tuttle were SC NRCS Soil Scientists Lance Brewington, Emory Holsonback, Myra Jones, Corry Calderone, Pam

Thomas, Charlie Ogg, and retired SC NRCS Soil Scientist Dennis DeFrancesco, and NRCS Soil Data Quality Specialist from Raleigh, NC, Debbie Anderson.

Thanks to Tuttle, the group was able to verify the data, and determine and name a third component known as the Spartanburg series.



left to right: Lance Brewington, Piedmont MLRA Soil Survey Leader, Laurens County, and Wes Tuttle of the National Soil Survey Center, completed a soil study in Spartanburg County.

Retired SC NRCS Soil Scientists Included in Million-Acre-Mapper Hall of Fame

by Pam Thomas, SC NRCS State Soil Scientist

The State of Rhode Island. Yosemite National Park. Florida citrus groves. And King Cattle Ranch in Texas. What do these places have in common? Each is about 1 million acres in size – the acreage mapped by each of seven former South Carolina NRCS soil scientists during their careers.



The National Cooperative Soil Survey is nearing completion of mapping all the soils in the United States, and NRCS is recognizing over 350 soil scientists from across the country who have mapped one million or more acres. These soil scientists will be presented with a certificate and lapel pin.

continued...

The seven South Carolina soil scientists are (name/years mapped/states mapped):

- ◆ Wallace Camp; 1946-76; South Carolina, Alaska
- ◆ W.H. "Crip" Fleming; 1946-76; South Carolina
- ◆ Carl Lawrence; 1950-82; South Carolina, New York
- ◆ Ed Herren; 1964-98; South Carolina, Alaska
- ◆ Ben Stuckey; 1966-88; South Carolina
- ◆ Dennis DeFrancesco; 1974-2000; South Carolina, Florida, Montana, North Dakota
- ◆ Bob Eppinette; 1975-2000; South Carolina

These seven soil scientists worked in 33 of South Carolina's 46 counties. In conjunction with other field soil scientists, they mapped about 70% of the land area in South Carolina. By 1998, South Carolina had completed the initial soil survey inventory and for the past 11 years worked to update older soil surveys. The data collected by these groundbreaking soil scientists is invaluable for current soil scientists. These data provide new and updated soils information to our customers for land uses not even imagined in 1950, such as suitability for military vehicles and ability to sequester radioactive materials.



1978



1974

left to right: Former SC NRCSers Ben Stuckey and Dennis DeFrancesco in the 1970's. No really, it is them :)

Sumter SWCD Goes Green at Earth Day Celebration

On April 25, 2009, the City of Sumter hosted the 1st Sustainable Sumter Earth Day celebration. The Sumter SWCD participated in the **Go Green** event at Swan Lake-Iris Gardens and agencies and vendors exhibited information and products relating to conservation and the importance of environmental protection.

Sumter SWCD Office Manager Kimberly Arrington participated by creating an exhibit highlighting the importance of water quality protection.



*The City of Sumter hosted its 1st **GoGreen** event in April. The Sumter SWCD participated by distributing information on the importance of water quality protection.*

**2009 Carolina Coastal Adventure
October 9-11th**

Plans are already underway for the **2009 Carolina Coastal Adventure (CCA)**, which will take place October 9-11, 2009. The annual event is hosted by the SC Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) and Berkeley Soil and Water Conservation District.

This unique environmental education experience offers rising ninth and tenth graders the opportunity to discover the SC Lowcountry's coastal water resources, and learn more about watershed dynamics, and the importance of conservation, particularly in regard to aquatic resources.

Students from all over the Palmetto State are encouraged to attend, and can do so with sponsorship by their local SWCD.

Students stay on Lake Moultrie and take field trips to Cypress Gardens, Old Santee Canal State Park, Jeffries Steam Plant, and the Charleston Harbor.

For more information and an application, contact your local SWCD, or visit <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/lwc/conservation/carolinacoastaladventure.htm>.

To find contact information for your local District, visit <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/conservation/index.html>.

University of SC Herbarium Offers Free Plant ID

by John Nelson, USC Herbarium Curator

The University of South Carolina Herbarium is an important part of the College of Arts and Sciences at USC (Columbia Campus). Founded in 1907 by Dr. Andrew Charles Moore, the original collection of dried, pressed plant specimens is now part of an ever growing collection. Total holdings are just over 106,000 specimens, making the current collection the largest of its kind in the state of South Carolina. Researchers and visitors will find a diverse collection of vascular and nonvascular plant material primarily from the Southeastern United States and more specifically from South Carolina—although our holdings include material from Japan, central Europe, and the South Pacific. Our herbarium web site features an on-line plant Atlas, including maps and images, of all the plant species known for South Carolina. For convenience, the holdings of the collection are easily searchable from the web site. Among the dried specimens are historic collections of South Carolina plants from the Civil War era, part of the H. W. Ravenel Collection of Converse College. As a public resource, the Herbarium is an outstanding modern reference collection for identifying local species, including weeds that have been recently introduced into our state, as well as uncommon or threatened species. Now over 100 years old, the University of South Carolina Herbarium continues to be an indispensable resource for botanical knowledge, through teaching, research and public service.

The collections of the USC Herbarium serve as an important research tool for scientists around the world. Often material may be loaned to partner institutions for review. This sort of exchange program improves the quality of the collection by ensuring that all specimens are correctly identified by botanical specialists. Additionally, requesting institutions benefit by having the use of a more comprehensive data set. Researchers may find it more advantageous to

Just ask USC Herbarium's PLANTMAN! The public is invited to take advantage of the Herbarium's free plant identification service.



visit the herbarium if a particularly high number of specimens must be consulted. For preliminary research, the online search feature provides a widely accessible, condensed set of specimen information.

The public is invited to take advantage of the Herbarium's free plant identification service. Unknown or otherwise interesting plants (including weeds, houseplants, garden ornamentals, trees, shrubs aquatic plants, etc.) may be sent to us directly through the mail. A leafy branch with flowers and/or fruits is best for identification—as much as can go into a baggy without being too crowded. Add a damp paper towel to the contents, and poke one or two small holes in the bag. Mail it to us at:

PLANTMAN, USC Herbarium, Department of Biological Sciences, University of South Carolina, Columbia SC 29208.

Or, send an image (jpg format) via email to the Curator, John Nelson, at nelson@sc.edu, or to Plantman himself, at plantman@herbarium.org. Plant samples may also be brought to the Herbarium, in the Coker Life Sciences Building, Room 208, at 715 Sumter Street, Columbia. Call first to let someone know you are coming, or just leave them by the door with a note. Details on preparing specimens may be found at our website, www.herbarium.org or call 803-777-8196.



A USC Herbarium Botany class studies plant life in a Calhoun County wetland.

The Face Behind the Name

Getting to Know Your SC NRCS Coworkers

Natalie Bowyer was on active duty in the U.S. Navy for 7 ½ years. She was stationed at two Naval Air Bases--one in the San Francisco Bay area and the other in New Orleans. The last duty station was a shore command in Watertown, New York. In each of the commands, she was assigned to the budgeting side of Aviation Storekeeping.



*Natalie Bowyer
Financial Technician
State Office*

After completing her second tour, she left the military to complete her degree in Financial Management, and upon graduation in August 2008 joined the crew at SC NRCS. Welcome Natalie!



*Will Faulkner
Soil Conservationist
Career Intern
St. Matthews*

Will Faulkner is a Soil Conservationist Career Intern in the St. Matthews (Calhoun County) office, working with District Conservationist Mike Sigmon. He was born and raised in Lexington, SC, and graduated from Clemson in May 2009 with a Bachelors of Science Degree in Environment and Natural Resources (with a concentration in conservation biology).

ogy).

He currently resides in Summerville with his wife Jordan. Faulkner loves camping and hiking as well as playing golf and other sports. He is an avid follower of Clemson sports. Faulkner says, "I'm very excited about the opportunity to work for NRCS, and can't wait to meet everyone!" Welcome Will!

Cultural Awareness Day '09

*14th Annual Cultural Awareness Day
is August 27th*

South Carolina Archives and History Center

8301 Parkland Road, Columbia, SC

Need directions?

<http://scdah.sc.gov/location.htm>

Event is 9:00-3:30
and
registration opens at 8:15 a.m.

Highlights Include:

- Hungarian Culture and Music
- Native American Storytelling
- Exploring Japanese Culture
- Puerto Rican Dance
- Life in Uganda

****NOTE: You must pre-register with the form that was mailed to all employees the week of June 15th. If you have not sent in the form and indicated your vest size, please do so by July 1st. Or, if you need the form, contact Amy Maxwell as soon as possible.





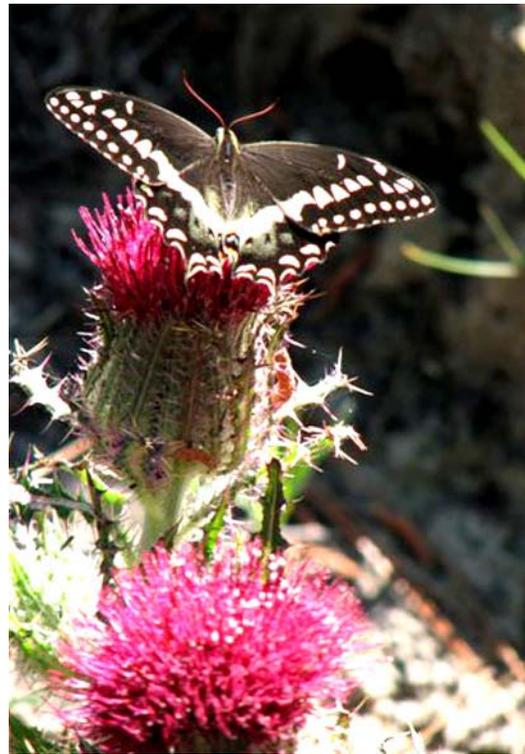
Conservation Photo Contest Winners



*"Rodeo," by Sue Griggs,
NRCS, Chesterfield, SC.
The roper pictured is Ben Brigman.*



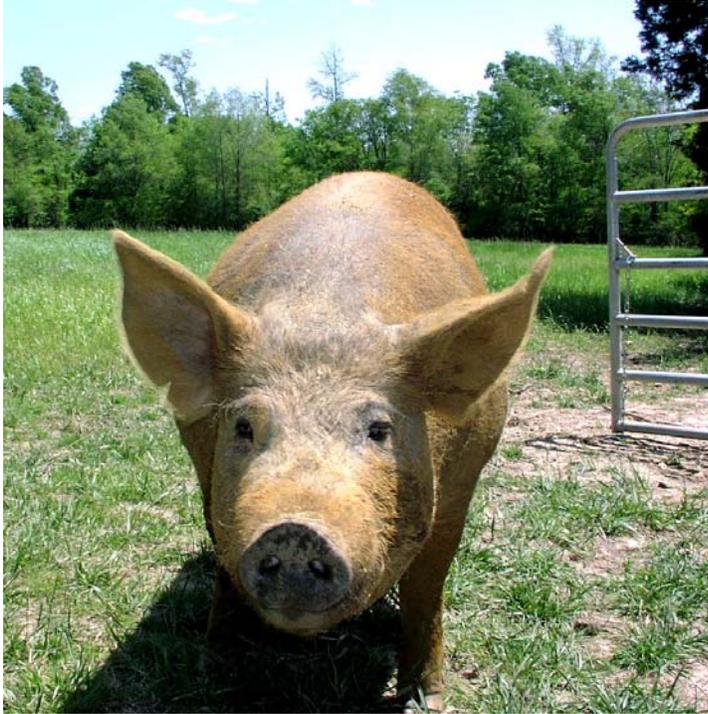
*"Wings of Winter," by Sue Griggs,
NRCS, Chesterfield, SC.*



*"Butterfly," by Ann Bentley,
NRCS, Charleston, SC*



*"Goodbye Sun," by Trinetta Vereen,
NRCS, Williamsburg, SC.*



"My, what big ears you have," by Hugh Smith, NRCS, Saluda, SC.



"Thai, Chicken," by Elyse Benson, Greenwood, SC. Benson creates art made from recycled materials, like this creature made entirely of ties.



"Red-shouldered Hawk," by Terasa M. Young, Supervisor, Lynches River Environmental Discovery Center, Coward, SC.



"Belted Galloway, Driftwood Plantation, Awendaw, SC," by Joe Cockrell, Wildlife Biologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Charleston, SC.

Personnel News

New Employees

Daniel Cabaniss was converted and promoted from career intern to career conditional, GS-0457-07, in the Greenwood Field Office, effective January 4, 2009.

William Faulkner was selected as a Career Intern Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-07, in the St Matthews Field Office, effective June 07, 2009.

Promotions

Beverly Alexander was promoted to Administrative Assistant, GS-0326-06, in the State Office, effective January 18, 2009.

Corry Calderone, Career Intern, was promoted to Soil Scientist (MLRA), GS-0470-09, in the Laurens Field Office, effective January 18, 2009.

Jennifer Sarvis was promoted to Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-09, in the Bishopville Field Office, effective January 18, 2009.

Ray Dotson was promoted to District Conservationist, GS-0457-11, in the Hampton Field Office, effective March 15, 2009.

Tria Yang was promoted to Soil Conservationist, GS-0457-07, in the Saluda Field Office, effective June 07, 2009.

Resignation

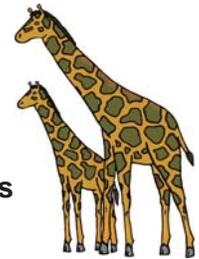
Steven Maness, Program Assistant in the State Office, resigned effective February 11, 2009.

Retirements

John Bennett, Soil Conservationist Technician, GS-0458-07, in the Darlington Field Office, retired effective January 3, 2009.

Luke Nance, Civil Engineer, GS-0810-12, in the State Office, retired effective January 3, 2009. He is currently serving as an Earth Team Volunteer with the State Office Engineering Staff.

Lessons from a Giraffe



In his book, *A View from the Zoo*, Gary Richmond describes how a newborn giraffe learns its first lesson...

“The mother giraffe lowers her head long enough to take a quick look. Then she positions herself directly over her calf. She waits for about a minute, and then she does the most unreasonable thing. She swings her long, pendulous leg outward and kicks her baby, so that it is sent sprawling head over heels. When it doesn’t get up, the process is repeated over and over again. The struggle to rise is momentous. As the baby calf grows tired, the mother kicks it again to stimulate its efforts. Finally, the calf stands for the first time on its wobbly legs.

Then, she kicks it off its feet again. Why? She wants it to remember how it got up. In the wild, baby giraffes must be able to get up as quickly as possible to stay with the herd, where there is safety. Lions, hyenas, leopards, and wild hunting dogs all enjoy young giraffes.”

The late author Irving Stone understood this. He spent a lifetime studying greatness, writing biographies of such men as Michelangelo, Vincent van Gogh, Winston Churchill, Sigmund Freud, and Charles Darwin. He said, “I write about people who sometime in their life have a vision or dream of something that should be accomplished and they go to work. They are beaten over the head, knocked down, vilified, and for years they get nowhere. But every time they’re knocked down they stand up. You cannot destroy these people. Every time they are knocked down, they stand up.”

Look for a story in the next edition of *Current Developments* about the first recipient of **SC NRCS’ Above and Beyond Giraffe Award**.