

# Footnotes

Newsletter for the Foothills Trail Conference . [www.foothillstrail.org](http://www.foothillstrail.org)

## 2011 ANNUAL MEETING A WONDERFUL TIME FOR ALL

Great fall weather greeted the 140 attendees of the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Foothills Trail Conference held at Table Rock State Park Nov 3 – 5, 2011. A varied slate of hikes took members to the top of Table Rock as well as bushwhacking to hidden waterfalls in Gorges State Park, and also provided an opportunity to perform needed maintenance on the Trail itself. As usual, there was lots of delicious food for everyone, interesting and entertaining talks both Friday and Saturday night, and a special announcement was made that would recognize individuals who have hiked the entire Foothills Trail.

Lots of thanks for the success of the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting are due to Board member, **Bill Baskin**, who was largely responsible for the planning and execution of the meeting along with other Board members and helpful volunteers.

### FRIDAY HIKES

For those members coming to the meeting early on Friday there were two hikes available. The new viewing platform at the Narrows of Eastatoe Creek was the focus of a hike led by DNR employee **Richard Cain**. In addition, Richard showed the group one of the new bat roosting structures recently built by DNR located near Chimney Top Gap. Outstanding views and wonderful fall colors were what greeted the members who accompanied **Heyward Douglass** to the top of Table Rock. The crisp, clear air allowed views of buildings in downtown Greenville, and Heyward pointed out hawks, vultures, and other birds as they soared by the edge of the mountain.

### FRIDAY NIGHT SOCIAL

Those who came Friday afternoon and evening also partook of various potluck dishes and enjoyed conversation with other FTC members. Several folks felt like this was one of the most enjoyable parts of the entire meeting because it is so relaxed. Another entertaining aspect of the evening social was getting to hear long-time FTC member, **Don Arthur**, talk about some of the many hikes and experiences he and his wife, Jean, have had over the years. His talk was accompanied by a great slide presentation that illustrated their adventures.

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## SATURDAY ACTIVITIES

Breakfast: **Steve Pagano**, Superintendent of Gorges State Park and FTC Board member, enlisted his family (including his parents) to put on a fabulous pancake breakfast, kicking off Saturday's full slate of activities. Pan after pan of delicious cakes were served, providing hikers with enough energy for the day.

Hikes: Whatever your taste in traipsing through the woods, there was a hike for you on Saturday. **Greg Lucas**, DNR Public Relations coordinator and Board member, worked hard putting together a varied and fun group of hikes. Master Naturalist **Dan Whitten** took a group along the SC/NC border on a portion of the Caesars Head Spur Trail. Master Naturalist **Ette Ruppert** showed off the new overlook at Sassafras Mt. before leading her group on a relatively easy trek on the path down to Chimney Top Gap, stopping to look at Balancing Rock. Fall colors and lots of natural history highlighted the Carrick Creek hike led by **Manella Calhoun** and **Bill Beckwith**, both Master Naturalists. For those with enough stamina, **Scott Stegenga**, Park Naturalist at Table Rock and Board member, went up Pinnacle Mountain to take in the superb view at Bald Rock. **Steve Pagano**, who also served the breakfast, took his hikers on



a strenuous, off-trail adventure to see three hidden waterfalls in the interior of Gorges State Park. Maintenance is top priority for the FTC, and **Les Storm**, Board member coordinating Conference Trail work, led a hard-working group from the Whitewater River bridge to Round Mt. Gap. They cleared blowdowns, lopped branches, and did "housecleaning" at the designated campsite below Round Mt. **Greg Borgen**, USFS and Board member, took several volunteers up the Chattooga River to remove blowdowns.

Saturday Evening Program: Following the days activities, the membership gathered in the Pavilion to socialize and see old acquaintances before sitting down to a scrumptious BBQ supper.

The Annual Meeting has had programs in the past on butterflies and bats, but, for the first time the evening speaker gave a presentation on birds. **Jim Kelly**, who owns a Wild Birds Unlimited store in Columbia, has hosted a live radio program on birds, and has done birding in many countries, gave a fascinating and informative talk about a number of birds found in South Carolina. His talk was accompanied by excellent photographs, taken by him personally over the years.

The business meeting, a necessary part of our annual get-together which keeps members informed of how the Conference is doing, was kicked off by **John Park**, Chairman of the FTC. He had the current Board members come forward to be introduced and to give reports on finances, outings, maintenance, membership, and shuttles.

Following the reports John asked Heyward Douglass to remain at the front. Heyward was then surprised with the announcement of the new Peregrine Award (see article) for hiking all the Foothills Trail. To close the evening activities door prizes were handed out to those in attendance. These eagerly awaited items were handed out by **Bill Baskins** and **Cathy Foster**, both Board members.

## SUNDAY ACTIVITIES

After breakfast on Sunday morning, two hikes took place to close out the 37<sup>th</sup> FTC Annual Meeting. **Cathy Foster** led a 5-mile, roundtrip hike to see the petroglyph site just off the Foothills Trail on Pinnacle Mountain. The participants saw spectacular views along the way. An easy 2-mile hike to picturesque Virginia Hawkins Falls was led by **Greg Lucas**. The hikers were accompanied by Virginia Hawkins herself.

# PEREGRINE HIKING AWARD

## New hiking award announced!



The FTC Annual Meeting brought quite a surprise to Heyward Douglass as the new Peregrine Hiking Award was announced to honor Heyward and his dedication to the Foothills Trail. The Peregrine Award is available to those who hike all 77 miles of the Foothills Trail between Oconee State Park and Table Rock State Park. The Peregrine Award was started in 2011 in honor of Heyward who through-hiked the Appalachian Trail under the trail name “Peregrine.” Heyward began his work with the FTC in 1986, began serving on the board in 1989, and was board chair from 1999-2005. He has spent countless days on the Foothills Trail building new trail bed, maintaining the trail, taking pictures, tracking GPS coordinates, and greeting hikers. Few people have Heyward’s passion for the Foothills Trail or have served as such a dedicated ambassador as has Heyward. He has also been instrumental in the development and publication of the Foothills Trail Guidebook and Map, which he continues to update as Trail conditions change. The Peregrine Award honors Heyward for his service and dedication. Heyward chose the trail name “Peregrine” because it is one of his favorite birds, and he was instrumental in the re-introduction of the Peregrine Falcon to the mountains of Upstate South Carolina. Also, the word peregrine comes from the Spanish word peregrino, which means pilgrim, befitting of Heyward’s hiking personality.

Application can be made on-line at the FTC web site, [www.foothillstrail.org](http://www.foothillstrail.org). Accepted applicants will receive a completion certificate and Peregrine Award patch.



The requirements for the award are:

- Hike all 77 miles of the Foothills Trail. The completion of the distance may be in a single through-hike or multiple section hikes over a period of time.
- Be a member of the Foothills Trail Conference at the time of award application.
- Submit an application with a report of your hike(s) describing your experience, best moments, etc.

# FOOTHILLS TRAIL CONFERENCE MEMBER

Participants must be members of the Foothills Trail Conference. Notifications will be sent through the FTC's online registration system. Please sign up to receive outing notification by providing your e-mail address to the Foothills Trail Conference mailing list on our Web site [www.foothillstrail.org](http://www.foothillstrail.org). The number of registrants per hike is at the discretion of the hike leader and will be limited. Registration is available on a first-come, first-served basis. You will be asked to sign out an Acknowledgement of Risk form prior to your hike. The Foothills Trail Conference does not permit dogs on group hikes.

Saturday, February 18—**Winter Views Hike**. While the leaves are off the trees, drink in the beautiful views on the Foothills Trail from Sloan Bridge to Upper Whitewater Falls on a one-way, moderate 5.5-mile hike with trip leader Heyward Douglass, FTC board member. Meet 9 a.m. at Upper Whitewater Falls parking lot on NC 281. (U.S. Forest Service parking fee required.) Bring lunch, snacks, water and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Friday, March 16—**Dusk to Dark Night Sounds Walk**. Join John Garton, Ben Sill and Heyward Douglass on an exploration of night sounds in the Clemson Forest, including frogs, owls and who knows what else?! Bring a flashlight and shoes that may get damp. If the weather is good, this outing will last about three hours and include a small amount of easy walking. Meet at the Clemson DNR office, 311 Natural Resources Drive, Clemson, SC 29631, at 4:30 p.m. Bring binoculars, snacks, water and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, April 7—**Nature Through The Eyes of An Herbalist: Everywhere I Look I See Medicine**. Join us for a plant identification walk led by herbalist Robin McGee at the George Aull Natural Area in Pendleton. Learn how many of our abundant "weeds" and trees can be used for food and medicine. We'll explore the fields and woods on an easy walk, paying special attention to the "edgy" plants growing in the transition zones. Meet at 10 a.m., and this outing should last until 1 p.m. From Clemson take SC 28/US 76 toward Anderson. Turn right onto SC Highway 187 in Pendleton at the old Milliken Plant. As soon as you pass the Milliken entrance road on the right, Dalton Drive, you will see a dirt road on the right. That's where we're going. Boscobel Road is directly across the street from the dirt road. If you pass Pendleton High School on your left you've gone too far. Robin's cell number is 864-245-0837 in case anyone gets lost. Drive down the dirt road as far as you can and park along the edge of the road. Bring water, snacks and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, April 14—**Whitewater Falls Wildflower Walk**. Led by Steve Hill, former Clemson University herbarium curator and currently a botanist with the Illinois Natural History Survey, this annual rite of spring will get your spring season started off right with a lovely display of wildflowers. Hill, who returns frequently to the South Carolina mountains, is also the plant identification expert for the S.C. Native Plant Society. This will be about a 3-mile walk to the Bad Creek Hydro Project parking lot, mostly easy and much of it along the Whitewater River, although if hikers need to return to the Whitewater Falls parking area, remember that it is a steep climb back to the top!. Meet at 10 a.m. at the Upper Whitewater Falls parking lot on NC 281. (U.S. Forest Service parking fee required.) Bring lunch, snacks, water and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, May 12—**Birds of Pray!** Join Master Naturalist Tom Pray as we look and listen at Eastatoe Creek Heritage Preserve for neotropical migratory birds arriving here from Central and South America. This outing will begin earlier than most FTC outings, to take advantage of early bird songs. Meet 7:30 a.m. at the Foothills Trail parking lot on Horsepasture Road, off US 178 at Laurel Valley. Bring binoculars, bird field guides, snacks, water, and appropriate clothing and footwear. This field trip will last until around 10 a.m. There will be a very small amount of easy walking, as this is a birding trip, NOT a hike.

Saturday, May 19—**Pantherstown Adventure**. Join Cathy Foster, geologist and Foothills Trail Conference board member, as she leads another exploration of the "Yosemite of the East." Pantherstown is a 6,300-acre bowl perched at an elevation of 3,600 feet in North Carolina's Nantahala National Forest. It is, arguably, one of the East's most unusual wild treasures. A collection of rounded granitic domes rim the valley where the rugged Tuckasegee River

# RS - 2012 HIKES AND OUTINGS FOR YOU!!

is born amid a blend of waterfalls and high-elevation bogs. This is also prime bloom time for pink lady's slippers! A strenuous hike of about 11 miles from the Cold Mountain trailhead, the Panthertown outing will include spectacular waterfalls, mountain vistas, and forests. Meet at 9 a.m. at Upper Whitewater Falls parking lot on NC 281 (U.S. Forest Service parking fee required), and carpool from there. Driving time from Upper Whitewater Falls to the trailhead is about 45 minutes. Bring lunch, snacks, water, binoculars and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, May 26—**Bat Foray**. Join Mary Bunch, DNR biologist and former Foothills Trail Conference board member, for a look at the newly erected bat roost on Abner Creek near Sassafras Mountain. This 16-foot-tall concrete bat roost was designed to help the state-endangered Rafinesque's big-eared bat but may also be providing habitat for some other uncommon bats as well as chimney swifts. Rafinesque's big-eared bats, a state endangered species, require large open structures for roosts, and natural roosts tend to be massive hollow trees now in short supply. There will be a small amount of easy walking. Meet 10 a.m. at Holly Springs Country Store at intersection of SC 11 and US 178 in Pickens County. Park in the upper parking lot closest to the volunteer fire department. Bring lunch, snacks, water and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, June 2—**Bald Knob Overlook**. Take a hike on National Trails Day with Table Rock State Park Naturalist (and FTC board member) Scott Stegenga up Pinnacle Mountain Trail to take in a stunning view from Bald Knob of the landscape as it unfolds below. This route along one end of the Foothills Trail is strenuous at the upper section and will be about 7 miles round trip. Meet 10 a.m. at the Carrick Creek Nature Center deck at Table Rock State Park. Bring lunch, snacks, water, binoculars and appropriate clothing and footwear.

Saturday, June 9—**Lower Bearwallow Falls Adventure**. This adventure will start at 9 a.m. from the Grassy Ridge Parking area of Gorges State Park near Sapphire, N.C. Beginning with a 5-mile 4x4 ride to the heart of Gorges State park, this trek will be followed by a short but extremely strenuous hike to Lower Bearwallow Falls. Limited to 12 participants, this is a rain or shine event! Everyone will want to remember their cameras, snacks, water and appropriate gear for weather conditions. For more information, contact Gorges State Park Superintendent Steve Pagano at (828) 966-9099.

Friday, July 6—**Wintergreen Falls Trek**. This trek begins at 9 a.m. from the Frozen Creek Parking area of Gorges State Park off of Frozen Creek Road outside of Rosman, N.C. The outing will begin with a 4-mile 4x4 ride to the heart of Gorges State Park, followed by a 3-mile moderate to strenuous hike to Wintergreen Falls on the Toxaway River. This adventure is limited to 12 participants and is a rain or shine event! Everyone will want to remember their cameras, snacks, water and appropriate gear for weather conditions. For more information, contact Gorges State Park Superintendent Steve Pagano at (828) 966-9099.

Friday, October 12—**Bearwallow Bushwhack**. This hike, crawl and wade adventure will start at 9 a.m. from the Grassy Ridge Parking area of Gorges State Park near Sapphire, N.C. The adventure will head to the interior of Gorges State Park, along Bearwallow Creek, and then a moderate to strenuous hike will take participants OFF TRAIL to several falls along the Bearwallow Creek. This bushwhack is limited to 12 participants and is a rain or shine event! Everyone will want to pack light and remember their cameras, snacks, water and appropriate gear for the weather. For more information, contact Gorges State Park Superintendent Steve Pagano at (828) 966-9099.

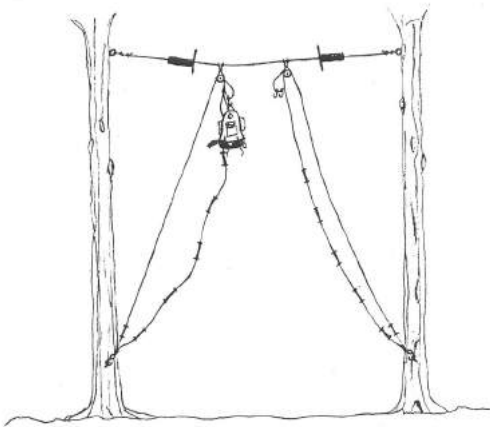
Saturday, October 13—**Hemlock woolly adelgid field trip**. Join LayLa Burgess from Clemson's School of Agricultural, Forest, and Environmental Sciences as we walk to Virginia Hawkins Falls in Laurel Fork Heritage Preserve and learn about the hemlock woolly adelgid and what it means for the future of Eastern and Carolina hemlocks in the Jocassee Gorges region. This hike will be about 2.5 miles round trip, easy to moderate. Meet 10 a.m. at Holly Springs Country Store at intersection of SC 11 and US 178 in Pickens County. Park in the upper parking lot closest to volunteer fire department. Bring lunch, snacks, water and appropriate clothing and footwear.

# FOREST SERVICE CAMPGROUND AT BURRELL'S FORD GETS REFURBISHED

If you have not visited the USFS campground at Burrell's Ford recently, or you intend to camp there anytime soon, you will find that there are many notable improvements that have taken place, thanks to the work of the US Forest Service. The campground, part of the Andrew Pickens District, and located beside the very picturesque Chattooga River, was originally built in the 1960's, and has received heavy use over the years by campers, backpackers, and fishermen. This has resulted in erosion of camping spots, loss and deterioration of equipment, and eroded places on the trail along the Chattooga. In addition, a lack of facilities for food storage occasionally put campers and hungry bears at odds.

After all the required biological and archaeological surveys and assessments were completed, construction on the project began in October of 2010. At the most heavily used campsites they leveled the areas, added edging, and hardened the sites with small-sized gravel. Campsites near the river that had eroded were stabilized with retaining walls and had steps added. Additionally, eroded places on the trail along the Chattooga were also stabilized. New equipment was added at sites where tables, lamp posts, or grills were in poor condition or missing.

Several years ago bear-proof trash receptacles were added in the campground because garbage is one of the main things that cause conflicts between man and bear. Because of "problem" bears the campground occasionally had to be closed. These sturdy containers have been effective in reducing these bear/man conflicts. On the other hand there has not been any system in the campground for storing or protecting campers' food items – the other main attractant for bears. With the addition of "bear wires" throughout the campsites the potential for conflicts should be reduced even further.



If you are not familiar with a "bear wire" system, here is it is. Two telephone poles are set in the ground about 20 feet apart, and a cable is installed between them about 18 -20 feet off the ground. This takes the place of searching through the woods for a proper limb for hanging a "bear bag" to protect your food items (and other "smellable" things such as gum or deodorant). You simply toss a rope over the cable and pull your bag up high enough to keep a bear from reaching it. What the Forest Service has done at some of the wires is to add additional loops of cable with a pulley to which the bear bag can be clipped and then raised above the ground to thwart the bear. These have been very effective in areas such as the Great Smokey Mountains National Park. When more funding becomes available, these additional cables will be installed on each "bear wire" system.

In order to keep up with more recent environmental standards, the toilet facility at the parking area on Burrell's Ford Rd. was also replaced as part of the overall project, and the maintenance road used to service the campground was improved as well. Because of these construction activities the campground was closed to the public for some months, but officially reopened in May of 2011, with a new and improved appearance, and is a safer place for man and bear !

# TRAIL MAINTENANCE ALWAYS WORK, BUT ALWAYS FUN!

Trail maintenance along the Foothills Trail is a never ending task. But, thanks to great FTC members and volunteers, the job gets done and hikers get to experience one of the best maintained trails in the country. Be sure your email is registered with the FTC at our web site so you can receive announcements of maintenance work days.



Trail maintenance along the Whitewater River below the falls

Furman University freshman student trail crew. This is the second year Dr. Bill Ranson's class, "To Walk The Land" has helped on the Foothills Trail. Included as part of the course was a discussion on Leave No Trace principles and wilderness land protection led by FTC board member Cathy Foster, protecting water resources and the Saluda River led by FTC member Dianne Anastos, and trail maintenance and erosion control led by FTC board member Heyward Douglass. Trail work was conducted on the Foothills Trail from hwy 178 up to Chimney Top Gap and along Eastatoe Creek.



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## DATES TO REMEMBER



FTC Spring Picnic - Saturday, April 21

FTC Annual Meeting  
Oconee State Park

Friday, November 2 - Sunday November 4

## SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to Footnotes contributors  
Heyward Douglass, Jerry Harvey, Greg Lucas,  
Cathy Foster, and John Park

