

Fall 2024

Footnotes

Newsletter for the Foothills Trail Conservancy - - www.foothillstrail.org

Restoration of Corbin Creek bridge made possible by efforts of many volunteers

By Heyward Douglass

In the early 1990s, a log bridge with a single handrail helped hikers cross the substantial Corbin Creek. In the mid-1990s, heavy rains cascading down from Corbin Creek Falls washed away the log bridge and left hikers searching for a way to get across the creek safely—not so easy!

The Nantahala District of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), which owns and manages the section of Foothills Trail on which the Corbin Creek bridge sits, drew up a design for an elevated bridge that would, hopefully, keep it above the occasional really high water after torrential rains. The Foothills Trail Conservancy (FTC) helped with the construction of this bridge, which involved bringing in materials with a USFS fire-fighting helicopter! This included two steel stanchions that would support the bridge on either end. The bases of the stanchions were attached by drilling into rock on either side of the creek. The USFS then cut three locust logs from the nearby hillsides and winched them into place on top of the stanchions - a fairly tricky maneuver. The stairs, handrails, and tread were then added to complete the bridge.

Age, the elements, and falling trees left the bridge in poor shape – despite periodic repairs to keep it safe to cross. Consultations between the USFS and the Conservancy resulted in the decision to completely overhaul the bridge. As plans were being drawn up by the FTC to accomplish this, the Seneca Rotary Club contacted the Conservancy about a possible grant to help with maintenance on the Trail. After plans were completed, and the cost of materials was known, the Rotary Club gave the Conservancy a grant that would essentially cover these costs. In mid-December 2023, most of the needed materials were purchased and stockpiled, awaiting the go-ahead for the construction to begin.



Discussions took place during January and February between the USFS and the FTC about several aspects of the bridge plans concerning strength and weight. Approval was given to go ahead with the construction in mid-February 2024. On February 29, 2024, a portion of the lumber was brought from the stockpile to the home of FTC volunteer Royce Caines, who put the bridge plans together. At that point, FTC “Chief Engineer” Jerry Harvey and I proceeded with cutting the lumber into the lengths needed for various parts of the bridge. The project was finally underway!



A second session of moving the lumber from the stockpile, and sawing it into proper lengths, took place on March 5. On March 7, after a small, select team of volunteers was recruited, the sawn lumber was transported from the Whitewater Falls overlook to the bridge site, and stored under cover. The trail to the site was three-quarters of a mile and included a 600-foot elevation difference – not for the faint-of-heart, especially after multiple trips. Four volunteers began the actual construction on March 11 with the removal of the steps on the north end of the bridge, followed by building a much more substantial set of stairs - including a handrail. This allowed carrying materials to the bridge surface much more safely. During this process a few day-hikers came through and were assisted by the volunteers in getting down to the ground from the head-high bridge.

Many pieces of lumber were 14 feet in length and had to be transported in a longer trailer. This trailer and all of the remaining cut and uncut lumber were taken to the Whitewater Falls overlook on March 14, where a group of 16 volunteers was gathered to carry it all to the bridge site. This enormous operation, involving the movement of thousands of pounds of treated lumber, took place from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, and was accomplished without anyone collapsing or falling off the Foothills Trail - a tremendous effort indeed!

A team of four continued the construction on March 18 by removing the steps on the south end and replacing them with another set of stairs and handrail. Wanting to get a jump on the next stage, this crew went ahead and attached two of the crossbeams that would add strength and provide the support for the handrails. The two new staircases made for a much safer work environment, as materials and tools were carried up on the bridge surface. On March 21 four volunteers added four more crossbeams, and the railings were begun.



During the entire process of planning for the bridge, transporting the lumber, and building the bridge to this point, it was evident that there were several trees, both live and dead, that presented a definite hazard to the bridge. A group of four experienced volunteers came down to the site on March 22 and removed them all - what a huge relief!



On March 25 a group of five volunteers came in to complete the reconstruction. They installed “toppers” on the locust logs, put on tread boards, attached toe boards and railings, cut post tops, attached railing tops, added brackets to step posts, and trimmed all around as needed - a really long day! After packing up tools and covering some leftover lumber, the group made the last climb up to the Whitewater Falls overlook to gaze upon what many volunteer hours had brought forth. Taking the place of an aged, almost decrepit bridge, is a new structure that is far stronger and safer than ever before.

The reconstruction of the Corbin Creek bridge involved a total of 24 hard-working, determined volunteers who expended more than 400 hours of effort during 10 separate work sessions. Thanks to each and every one of them for their efforts to make the Foothills Trail a safer and more enjoyable trail for day-hikers and backpackers alike. A small plaque will be attached to the bridge acknowledging the effort of FTC volunteers and Seneca Rotary for the funding.

(Heyward Douglass is a former executive director and board chair of the Foothills Trail Conservancy and currently serves as the Conservancy’s Special Projects Coordinator.)



It is almost time for our 50th Anniversary Fall Gathering!

Registration Information on Page 17

Event information for 2024

- ◆ Help is always appreciated. Check the JOB BOARD near the sign in table to find what is needed.
- ◆ If you aren't staying at the park, and are just entering for the day, you will need either a South Carolina State Park Pass or to pay the \$5 entry fee, per person.
- ◆ You will get an email with event information and parking instructions upon registration. This is very important. Please help us leave a minimal impact on the Park and the other visitors there. Thank you!

Family Fun Zone

We will have games and activities available for the whole family during our evening events as well as during the day on Saturday.

You are welcome to bring your own activities also.

We thank you for helping us to keep our activity area clean and organized so everyone may have the chance to enjoy them.

FTC STORE

Please remember to stop by our FTC store for great deals on Foothills Trail merchandise. We will have some brand new items to show off! What a wonderful way to get a jump on the holiday shopping!

****Please plan ahead for all purchases.**

We will be able to accept cash or check only.**

FOOTHILLS
TRAIL



Foothills Trail Conservancy Membership Information

Your membership to the Foothills Trail Conservancy is vital to the Foothills Trail, the Southeast's best hiking trail. With the Trail traversing the property of EIGHT different landowners, for 50 years the FTC has been a single voice committed to keeping this foot-path well maintained. In addition, we promote the Trail to the hiking community and we publish the official trail map and guide. Your support gives us the resources and support necessary to continue these efforts. Thank you for your commitments in the past, and we look forward to your continued support.

NOTE: *Our membership year runs January through January.*

You must be a current FTC member to attend the Fall Gathering.

You may renew online at www.foothillstrail.org

Membership forms may also be printed from
our website and mailed to:

**Membership Renewal
PO Box 3041
Greenville, SC 29602**

GEAR SWAP/GIVEAWAY

*Give and Take Used Hiking Items
Fall Gathering Weekend!*



Do you have hiking items in storage that
you're considering donating to a thrift store
or that just don't work for you anymore?



Bring them to the FTC Fall Gathering and place them on the Gear Giveaway table! This can include daypacks, poles, specialty clothing, backpacking gear, and more.

Join us for a great opportunity to share your gently used hiking gear with someone who can put it to good use, or swap for something that better suits your needs!

Check out the table! If you see something you can use, feel free to take it or exchange it for something you don't need. Happy swapping!

Remembering John Garton

Humble, brilliant Duke Energy biologist was the ultimate conservationist

Conservationist, naturalist and author John Stanley Garton, 80, passed away on April 10, 2024. He was preceded in death by his loving wife of 58 years, Kathleen “Kathie” Lynn Garton.

John was a biologist with Duke Energy for three decades and helped fashion the conservation of many iconic Upstate public lands, including Landsford Canal State Park and the Jim Timmerman Natural Resources Area at Jocassee Gorges. He worked closely with S.C. Department of Natural Resources’ (SCDNR) biologists during his 30 years of service, helping to fashion conservation, protection and management of ecologically important Upstate lands. John’s work was always quiet and in the background, and he made sure that others, not himself, received credit. It was often said that John “planted seeds” of conservation projects with his colleagues, then stepped back and watched them grow. He was a board member with the S.C. Wildlife Federation and the Foothills Trail Conservancy and the author of “Quiet Reflections: The Clemson University Forest,” which brought him together in collaboration with another conservation legend - attorney Tommy Wyche of Greenville, who took the photographs for the Clemson Forest book.



The Foothills Trail spur trail to Lower Whitewater Falls is named the “John Garton Trail” in his honor. A bench beside the Whitewater River on the Foothills Trail is also dedicated to John Garton and to his dear friend, retired SCDNR biologist Skip Still. On the bench, the inscription says, “Thank you, John and Skip, for your dedication and effort in preserving this great land, The Jocassee Gorges.” A plaque alongside the bench says, “This bench is given in honor of John S. Garton by the employees of Duke Power Hydro Generation Keowee-Toxaway Area for his magical ability to bring people together for the conservation of the earth. Thank you John! Come and sit with me and all my ‘critters’ – and together – we will watch, listen and learn...September 27, 2002”

When John and Kathie retired to Clemson in the early 2000s, John became active in promoting the long-term protection of the Clemson University Experimental Forest, and he worked as a researcher there. John also helped take care of educational reptiles at the Clemson SCDNR office for nearly two decades.

Following are memories of John from three people who knew him well: Ben Sill, retired engineering professor at Clemson University and an avid proponent of the Clemson Forest; Skip Still, retired bear biologist with the S.C. Department of Natural Resources; and Heyward Douglass, retired Clemson University pilot and former executive director of the Foothills Trail Conservancy.

“It’s the end of an era”

By Ben Sill

I first met John when I was working as an environmental engineer at Duke Power. He was hired about six months (Spring 1974) after I arrived. Over the last 50 years, I spent countless hours following John on amazing treks, all to learn more about the natural world. I could never thank him enough for this. As a naturalist par excellence, he had few peers and always loved sharing this encyclopedic knowledge in a calm, self-assured way.

When leading nature walks, more than once I have seen him react to a person that found an unusual plant, and who immediately identified it incorrectly. John wouldn’t correct the budding naturalist. I asked him later, “Why not?” He said, “It’s more important that they keep an excitement about nature than to know what this particular plant is.” That is so hard to do, particularly since we all want to show how much we know (and John had an immense amount).

On a personal level, I never heard John say a bad word about another human. The closest thing was a comment about a particularly obnoxious biologist that he worked with. John said, “He ain’t so bad.” I also have never heard anyone say something negative about John. He had an almost miraculous way of getting people to work together toward a common end, even if they represented opposing factions. In all this, he never sought credit, but would generate an idea, start the ball rolling and then step back (only steering a bit when needed). John was largely responsible for the Jocassee Gorges acquisition. A recent comment from one of his bosses says this so well. “We would not have the Jocassee Gorges were it not for John.”

After he passed, my wife, Lois, put it best. She said, “It’s the end of an era.”

“John is an environmental legend”

By Skip Still

John was truly a mentor to me and many others. His dedication to merging industry and the environment was second to none. Without John there wouldn’t be a Jocassee Gorges. He also played a major role protecting many scenic and natural areas across North and South Carolina. John Garton is an environmental legend.

John played a role in saving lands that thousands of people will enjoy into perpetuity. He educated thousands of folks on his many hikes through the mountains, foothills and Piedmont of the Carolinas. A one-hour hike might turn into a three-hour saunter, and he would stop and reflect on so many plants and critters. Everyone enjoyed hiking with John. He was that rare biologist who had both the knowledge and people skills to make things happen.

He and his wife Kathie lived a life that made a difference to so many, and the things they did will never be forgotten.

Most people are like a thermometer, and when they walk into a room they become like others in the room. John was a thermostat—when he walked into the room he gently changed the room for the better.

I was with John a lot during his final weeks. He was still talking about how we could make the Clemson Forest and other areas better. I can only hope that there are young people out there that will take up the mantra that John left us.



“A pygmy pipe tale”

By Heyward Douglass

In the early 2000s, when I was doing personal research on the plant pygmy pipe (*Monotropsis odorata*), John invited me to see a population of yellow lady slippers near the Coon Branch Trail along the Whitewater River.

As we hiked along the trail, a slight breeze coming from the river nearby wafted the sweet smell of pygmy pipes in our direction, which caused me to stop abruptly. After determining the wind direction, I began to search for the elusive plant (by sniffing the fragrant pygmy pipe odor), with John watching my every move very closely, and suspiciously. He apparently thought I had already spotted the plant and was trying to fool him! On my hands and knees, and following the smell in a zig-zag path, I again stopped abruptly and indicated to John that I was very close to the plants. He got down next to me, and we carefully lifted leaf litter away from a small area. In several seconds John suddenly exclaimed as he lifted a flattened leaf, exposing a single pygmy pipe stem!

He was obviously surprised that it was there, completely hidden under the leaf litter, but he was the one that uncovered it, so now there was no doubt in his mind how I had detected it! His immediate comment was: “Well, you are one heckuva bird dog!”

John called me “Bird Dog” for years after that!

He was a true naturalist who had an interest in everything in the world around him but was particularly known for his love of and interest in “herps.” (reptiles and amphibians)

After Bad Creek was built, John arranged admittance into the property in order for the Foothills Trail Conservancy to experience a memorable astronomy outing on the newly created, open plateaus formed from spoil. These provided an unobstructed view of the night sky and all the constellations.

Even though he was passionate about various causes, such as the long-term preservation of the Clemson Forest, I remember how John always gave reasonable, well-thought-out solutions to what the issue was, and thus got consensus for it.

I enjoyed very much our sessions in his room at the old Holiday Inn, where we shared ideas on the hikes and outings for the Foothills Trail Conservancy. He impressed me with his knowledge of the local area, trails, and “neat” places to reveal to the Foothills Trail Conservancy members! John, to me, was always a mild-mannered gentleman who had a great sense of humor and surprised me with his knowledge of country music.



Living out a childhood dream

Oconee State Park manager has a passion for introducing public to the outdoors
By Megan Bruce



In June 2023, Oconee State Park welcomed its newest park manager, Bryn Harmer. “I always wanted to be a park ranger, ever since I was a little kid,” said Harmer. His journey towards this lifelong passion began at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale, Illinois, where he received a forestry degree. He furthered his education with a master’s degree in conservation biology from the University of Nebraska at Kearney.

After graduation, Harmer moved to South Carolina and began a career with South Carolina State Parks. During Harmer’s career before his current position, he served as an off-park ranger and park manager at several different parks within the state. However, after working at a special resource park for several years, Oconee State Park piqued Harmer’s interest as an opportunity to return to a more traditional park setting with campgrounds and cabins.

Harmer not only serves as the Oconee State Park manager but also holds the same position for the nearby Oconee Station State Historic Site.

One of Harmer’s favorite parts of his job is interacting with the public and helping visitors find park activities that suit their outdoor interests. One of those activities at Oconee State Park is the lake loop, a short mile-and-a-half trail that takes visitors to almost all the historic cabins on the property. On top of that, visitors experience unique natural features and are also in close proximity to the lake.

Harmer issued a blanket invitation to visitors: “Invite all! There is something for everyone here!”

(Megan Bruce is a Clemson University Honors College student.)

Who is excited about a fun-filled weekend?! Here is what you need to know!

Friday, November 1st — Sunday, November 3rd



Reminder to be Earth Friendly!
Don't forget your reusable cups
and water bottles! If you need a
new one, we will have some FTC
tumblers available at our store.

If you are wondering if this is an event for the whole family, the answer is YES!

We would love to share our love of all things FTC with your kids,
grandkids, and grandparents!

- * Participate in our self-paced scavenger hunt.
- * Enjoy our games and crafts in our "Family Fun" zone.
- * Earn an FTC Explorer Medallion
- * Explore Oconee State Park!



Please bring cash and
checks for your
purchases at our Fall
Gathering. It is easier
for us and helps us
save on credit card
fees! Thank you!!



Don't forget about our amazing SILENT AUCTION!

We will have a variety of unique items
for you again this year. Help us raise
money for the FTC AND take home
something great for yourself or as a gift!
What will you win?!



FRIDAY NIGHT IS MOVIE NIGHT!

Want to see the amazing Foothills Trail Project?

You are in luck! We will be showing the movie after our Friday evening Potluck Dinner. Join us for popcorn and fun from Traveling Panda Media!



Traveling Panda Media is a storytelling venture named after its founder, Preston Bailey. During his Appalachian Trail thru hike in 2017, Preston was given the trail name Panda and began exploring how he could apply his passion for film stories to his love for the outdoors and the conservation of wild spaces. After a few years of travel on America's long trails, Preston now lives and works in his hometown of Greenville where he supports non-profit organizations and small businesses by helping them capture and share their stories. After a 2020 thru-hike of the Foothills Trail, the idea of creating a film devoted to celebrating our local long trail was born. With a tremendous amount of help from the local community and the Foothills Trail Conservancy, the Foothills Trail Project premiered in December of 2023.



The 2025 Foothills Trail Conservancy
Fall Gathering
will be held at Table Rock State Park
November 7-9, 2025
We will see you there!

Saturday Afternoon Activities

We will have family activities and crafts throughout the weekend for you all to enjoy. Join us for these Saturday events as well!

Meet our Partners
Saturday, 3pm-5pm
In front of the Barn

We are celebrating 50 years of community and collaboration on the Foothills Trail! Join us at our partner tabling/information event on Saturday outside the Barn to learn more about our trail and the people and organizations who have helped it grow and prosper.

Trail Talk
Saturday, 4:00 pm.
The Picnic Shelter at the Barn

This year's trail talk will be about the Clemson Experimental Forest! Come learn more!



The Clemson Experimental Forest's 17,500 acres are dedicated to education, research and demonstration in order to better understand and manage forest resources for the benefit of society. These essential resources include clean air, clean water, pleasing aesthetic qualities, abundant wildlife, protection of species and habitat diversity, recreation opportunities, along with commodity products from the forest. As increasing numbers of people seek out the forest as a place to recreate (hiking, trail running, mountain biking, swimming, kayaking, & horseback riding), forest management and faculty researchers are developing a systems-based approach to meet clearly defined and strategic management goals.

Don't forget to pick up your scavenger hunt Friday night or Saturday morning to join in the fun and learn more about OSP and the Foothills Trail!

These can be done at your own pace and turned in Saturday evening. Ask for more information at the check-in table.

Saturday Night Speaker

We welcome Dr. J. Drew Lanham to our 2024 Fall Gathering!

J Drew Lanham, PhD, is a creator; a poet, a writer, a curator, and a librettist. He is a naturalist/bird-adorer/hunter/conservationist /farmer who blends wild ecology into the social context of human being, past, present, and future. Drew is also a Certified Wildlife Biologist and a Distinguished Alumni Professor of cultural and conservation ornithology at Clemson University. He is the Poet Laureate of Edgefield, SC and the author of Sparrow Envy - Field Guide to Birds and Lesser Beasts (Hub City 2021) and the award-winning, The Home Place - Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature (Milkweed Editions 2016). Drew's academic and artistic work centers on ethnic perspectives of wildness and conservation.

Drew's creative work and opinion appears abundantly online and in print in venues such as Orion, Emergence, Vanity Fair, Oxford American, High Country News, Bitter Southerner, Cutthroat, Terrain, Places Journal Literary Hub, Newsweek, Slate, NPR, Story Corps, Audubon, Sierra Magazine, Mud Review, The New York Times, American Bird Conservancy, Leopold Outlook, Flycatcher Journal, Patagonia "This is Love", "Threshold", and "On Being" podcasts. His online presence on YouTube as well as social media is extensive. Drew has been featured in Garden and Gun Magazine and Clemson World. He teaches writing workshops in creative non-fiction for Bread Loaf Environmental Writer's Conference, Northwoods Writer's Conference, Elk River Writer's Conference and Orion. He is an editor for Cutthroat Journal, a contributing editor for Orion Magazine and on the editorial board of Terrain Magazine. He is Co-Director of the online workshop, "Writing the Wild" and his work is repositied in the Sowell Family Archives at Texas Tech University.

Drew is a 2022 MacArthur Fellow living on a 46-acre farm in the Dark Corner of South Carolina, where he claims a mission of "Cultivating words and wildness". Drew's most recent work, Joy is the Justice We Give Ourselves (Hub City 2024), is a lyrical treatment on deep ornithology, redefining wildness, and pushing "good trouble" past narrowed minds while celebrating his intensely southern rural Blackness. Drew's favorite birds are the wild ones with feathers.



2024 FALL GATHERING HIKES AND OUTINGS

All hikes meet at the Barn at the listed time. Hikers should wear appropriate clothing/footwear, bring their own lunch and plenty of water.

HIKES ARE LIMITED TO 15 PEOPLE.

Friday Meet hike leader at the Barn. Hike 1, meet at 9:30 am, Hike 2 meet at 12:45 pm.

#1 -Pigpen Falls & Licklog (Easy to Moderate 4.5 miles round trip)

This hike offers two picturesque cascading waterfalls: 25-foot Pigpen Falls and the two tiered 80-foot Licklog Falls. The trail is fairly easy for the most part, but there's a steep descent at the end to see Licklog Falls. There will be plenty of time to relax, take pictures, enjoy the view of the waterfalls, and take in everything the pristine wilderness of the Chattooga River Gorge has to offer. Leader: Kerry McKenzie (Meet at 9:30am on the Barn Porch)

#2- King Creek Falls & Spoonauger Falls (Easy to Moderate 4 miles round trip)

King Creek and Spoonauger is a loop from Burrell's Ford parking lot to King Creek Falls (75' spectacular falls) through the campground to the Chattooga Trail then past Spoonauger Falls (~45' multi-tiered waterfall) to the connector to the Foothills Trail. These waterfalls are rated superior and excellent! Dan will point out some plants along the way, including a rogue patch of Oconee Bells! Approx. 4 miles. Leader: Dan Whitten (Meet at 12:45 pm at the Barn Porch)

Saturday Meet hike leader at 9:15 am in the Barn, depart 9:30 am.

#3 - Oconee Station to Station Cove Falls, (Easy 1.6 miles out and back)

Starting at Oconee Station Historic Site, this hike goes through a swamp and an old-growth forested area, which looks stunning in the fall. The trail ends at Station Cove Falls, offering close-up access to the 80-foot waterfall. This hike is perfect for families with children or anyone interested in sauntering through history. Wear appropriate shoes. Bring water and a snack. Leader: Willa Gleason

#4 - East Fork Trail – (Moderate 6.25 miles)

The East Fork trail is within the Elliott Rock Wilderness area. Beginning at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery and hiking along the East Fork of the Chattooga River, the hike will continue on the Chattooga Trail to the sandy shore along the river, the state line between SC and GA. The hike has a moderate elevation gain of 550' with a couple of small bridges to cross and one water crossing managed with stepping-stone blocks in place. Return will be a reverse of the route. Leaders: Tricia Kyzer & Cindy Robinson

#5 - Yellow Branch Falls- (Moderate 3.3 mile hike out and back)

The trail passes through a lush hardwood forest and intersects with several meandering creeks. Fall and winter thin the vegetation enough, so you take in more of the beautiful landscape. The trail turns and winds its way up some rugged terrain. Then, the trail snakes down to the canyon shaped area where the crystal waters of Yellow Branch Creek cascade over the jagged rock face. The waterfall is unique because it is wider than it is tall. Come join us for this adventurous out and back hike. Leader: Rodney Bryant

2024 FALL GATHERING HIKES AND OUTINGS

Saturday, continued

#6 - Hilliard Falls- (Strenuous and Fast-paced 11.6 miles) **NOTE: THIS HIKE LEAVES AT 8AM!** Our Board Chairman, Andrew Gleason, will lead this hike to see beautiful Hilliard Falls, named in honor of our founding Chairman and Co-founder of the Trail, Glenn Hilliard. The hike will begin at Bad Creek and follow the Bad Creek spur over the Whitewater River to the FHT. From there, the hike will follow the Trail to the Thompson River and over the ridge before descending into the Bearcamp Creek valley. Andrew will share some history and interesting facts about this section along the way. The hike will pass three designated campsites, including the newest, The Glenn Hilliard campsite, located at the junction with the Hilliard Falls Spur. The hikers will take a 1-hour break at the Falls and campsite. Be sure to bring plenty of water and your favorite trail snacks. **Warning: due to the distance, this hike will be fast paced to allow time to enjoy the falls. This hike is for strong hikers only!**

#7 - Maintenance Hike. Help with projects in support of the Foothills Trail and Oconee State Park. Bring gloves, lunch and plenty of water. Tools will be provided.

#8- Geology Hike (moderate 5-6 miles round trip, depending on hikers' preferences) We will start at Burrell's Ford at the Chattooga River and hike downstream the Foothills trail and then backtrack to the start. As part of this hike, we will take the spur trail to King Creek Falls. This hike traverses schist and gneiss of the Tallulah Falls formation. We will see outcrop-scale folds that reflect the compressional forces that formed the Appalachian Mountains as well as many other interesting geologic features. Hike Leader: Bill Ranson

Sunday meet at 9:15 am. in The Barn, depart 9:30 am.

#9 - Buzzard Roost (moderate to strenuous 2 mile loop) This Sunday Saunter will begin with a 14-mile drive to the Heritage Preserve. Buzzard Roost is 501 acres with a peak altitude of 1769'. Hardwoods such as scarlet oak, black and chestnut oak, as well as mockernut hickory paint the landscape with a kaleidoscope of color. There are also Virginia pines and the less common Table Mountain pine. The property includes some low-grade marble outcrops that harbor unique fern species. Leader: Mike Whitener

#10 - Whitewater Falls to Bad Creek (Mostly easy 3.2 miles) After a quick car shuttle to Bad Creek, the group will hike from Whitewater Falls overlook to Bad Creek parking lot (3.2 miles). There are several major projects that FTC has accomplished since last fall and these can be seen along this hike. These include a trail reroute, a staircase, two white-water bridges, and the Corbin Creek Bridge! Leader: Heyward Douglass



Foothills Trail Conservancy Fall Gathering CELEBRATING 50 YEARS!



Oconee State Park—November 1, 2, and 3, 2024

Deadline for Registration is October 13, 2024

(to see a map of the park, click [HERE.](#))

2024 marks the **50th year** for members of the Foothills Trail Conservancy to gather in the Fall to enjoy a weekend of exciting hikes, great speakers, delicious meals, and fellowship. To reserve a campsite, contact Oconee State Park.

Please note ALL meals are held at The Barn

FTC Fall Gathering Weekend Schedule

Friday, November 1

9:30 am - Hike 1, meet at The Barn front porch

12:45pm- Hike 2, meet at The Barn front porch

5:00 pm - Social Hour in The Barn (BYOB)

6:00 pm - Potluck Dinner (Bring something to share!)

7:00 pm - Business Meeting—Andrew Gleason

Movie Night: The Foothills Trail Project from Traveling Panda Media

Saturday, November 2

8:00 am - Breakfast at the Barn - catered hot meal

9:15 am - Hikers meet hike leaders in The Barn

9:30 am - Hikes Depart

3:00-5:00pm Tabling/information event with our Foothills Trail Partners

4:00 pm - Trail Talk, *The Clemson Experimental Forest (Barn Area Shelter)*

5:00 pm - Social Hour in The Barn (BYOB)

Music by "The Standing Pats"

6:00 pm - Dinner catered by Sherry Lay

7:00 pm - Speaker: J Drew Lanham, PhD

After Speaker - Door Prizes

Silent Auction Concludes (15 minutes after Speaker)

Sunday, November 3

8:00 am - Continental Breakfast at The Barn

9:15 am - Hikers meet hike leaders in The Barn

9:30 am - Hikes Depart

Foothills Trail Conservancy 50th Annual Fall Gathering

Please note that online registration is preferred. You can register online and send a check, if you would prefer to do so.



REGISTER ONLINE BY CLICKING [HERE](#)



Oconee State Park- November 1, 2, and 3, 2024

Deadline for Registration is October 13, 2024

Registration Form (for those who need to register via mail)

Participants: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please indicate the number of people for each category below.

Register for the entire weekend:
(includes all meals and activities)

___ Adults \$55 per person

___ Children (12 and under) \$15

___ Family \$120

I can only attend Saturday Evening:

(includes evening meal and activities)

___ Saturday night only -Adults \$40 per person

___ Saturday night only -Children (12 and under) \$10

___ Saturday night only -Family \$90

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

I/We plan to attend the following. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday Night Dinner/Movie _____

Saturday Breakfast _____

Sunday Breakfast _____

Saturday Dinner _____

Saturday Speaker _____

Does anyone in your party needs a vegetarian option for Saturday night? If so, please tell us how many. _____

I would like to register for the following hikes. Please indicate the number of people:

Friday : Hike 1 _____ Hike 2 _____

Saturday: Hike 3 _____ Hike 4 _____ Hike 5 _____ Hike 6 _____ Hike 7 _____ Hike 8 _____

Sunday : Hike 9 _____ Hike 10 _____

Volunteers are GREATLY appreciated!!

If you would like to volunteer throughout the weekend, please see the “Job Board” posted in the Barn and select the tasks in which you are interested! Thank you!



Please note that setup on Friday will start at noon in the Barn.



Online Registration is preferred and will secure your spot most efficiently.

For registration questions, please email Sarah at info@foothillstrail.org.

If you need to pay by check, please mail your registration and payment to:

Foothills Trail Conservancy– Fall Gathering

PO Box 3041, Greenville SC 29602

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SPECIAL THANKS

Special thanks to all our Trail Captains and hard-working volunteers who ensure the trail stays maintained and in tip-top shape.