



# The Midlands Naturalist

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American Goldfinch (*Spinus tristis*)



Photo: Dan Garber - Carolina Bird Club

<https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/gallery/Garber/>

## Message from our MMNA Chair

Welcome to 2019! I am looking forward to an exciting year of naturalist activities in the Midlands and beyond.

I hope everyone has been able to get out a little bit this winter despite the crazy weather. I have seen a number of dark-eyed juncos out feeding with a young red-shouldered watching them attentively, heard a chorus of frogs out on the Palmetto trail, and marveled at the number of mushrooms that grow in the dampness of this winter, seemingly not bothered by the temperature.

The New Year is a time of resolutions, and a couple of mine are to get outside and see more nature, and to use the iNaturalist app more. For those of you are not familiar with iNaturalist, it is a citizen science app/website that collects observations of organisms from anyone, anywhere in the world. The data is collected into biodiversity repositories and used by scientists. Citizen science is one of the many types of activities the South Carolina Master Naturalists engage in. Hopefully some of you are out there participating and reporting your hours!

New resolutions for MMNA? I'm thinking more field trips, more participation, and more hours reported. Let's all work on these resolutions, even if it is adding just one more volunteer activity or outing.

We have some exciting volunteer, advanced training, and field trip ideas for this year. Please consider spending time with your fellow naturalists this year, and contributing to this great program.

Happy New Year! I hope to see everyone at the February Quarterly meeting.

**Lee**





## Upcoming Quarterly Meeting – February 2, 2019 – Arsenal Hill Park

Our MMNA Quarterly Meeting will be held Saturday, February 2 at 10AM at Arsenal Hill Park, at the the corner of Laurel and Lincoln, across from the Governor's Mansion.

The first hour will be about association business. During this hour, Cindy Hekking will share information about the SC Adopt-a-Stream program and what it is like to monitor a stream. We'll discuss if we, as an association, want to adopt a stream.

For the second half of the meeting, our speaker will be **David Jenkins**, Entomologist/Forest Health Specialist at the South Carolina Forestry Commission. He works with private and public landowners to maintain healthy forests and trees for the state of South Carolina.

David's presentation will focus on how SC forests have changed. Those of us who spend a lot of time in the woods think we know, but forests are dynamic. We will look at forests of the past, our current forests, and make some predictions about our future forests.

### Midlands Master Naturalist Association

<b>Lee Morris</b>	Chair
<b>Ed Siggelko</b>	Vice-Chair
<b>Alice Clark</b>	Recorder
<b>Ellen Blundy</b>	Treasurer
<b>Anne Palyok</b>	Activities Committee Chair
<b>Sara Green - SCWF</b>	Advisor
<b>David Groh</b>	Newsletter Editor

We welcome your submissions to this newsletter! Send your: photos, trip/hike reports, citizen science reports, book or website reviews, or anything you think will interest your fellow naturalists to:

[mmna.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:mmna.newsletter@gmail.com)

#### Our Website:

<http://www.midlandsmasternaturalist.org>



## mark your Calendar

- ☒ Quarterly Meeting:  
February 2, 2019 at 10AM.  
*See details above.*
- ☒ Steering Committee Meeting:  
January 19, 2019 at 3PM.  
215 Pickens Street, Columbia, SC.  
  
All members welcome to attend.  
Attendance counts as program service.  
We work on ideas for upcoming activities or various initiatives. We would love to have your attendance and input!
- ☒ MLK Day Service Project  
January 21, 2019 from 10AM-1PM  
Wannamaker Nature Preserve.  
*(more details on p.5)*
- ☒ Great Backyard Bird Count  
February 16, 2019, 8:30AM-12PM  
Congaree Creek HP.  
*(more details on p.6)*





## MMNA Membership Renewals for 2019

The MMNA Steering Committee decided to keep membership dues at \$15 for 2019.

Your continued support of our association is greatly appreciated!

The renewal form was emailed to our membership in December and is available on our website here:

<http://www.midlandsmasternaturalist.org/about-mmn-association/join-us>

Bring your check and form to our Quarterly Meeting on February 2, or mail to:

**Midlands Master Naturalist Association**  
c/o SCWF  
215 Pickens Street  
Columbia, SC 29205



## Volunteer Hours

Master Naturalist volunteer service hours are critically important to the SC Master Naturalist program and its many affiliated organizations. The educational, environmental, and other volunteer services you provide help demonstrate the value of the program to the state of South Carolina.

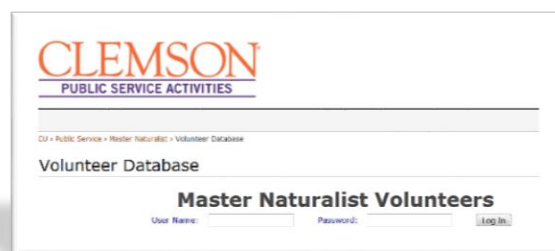
Please keep us aware of the benefits that you provide by reporting your hours via the [Online Volunteer Hour Reporting System](#). At the same time, this information will keep your certification active and allow you to qualify for the amethyst that goes in your nametag for yearly service.

Go here for more details:

<https://www.clemson.edu/extension/mn/volunteering.html>

And here for a tutorial on how to use the database (it's easy!):

<http://www.midlandsmasternaturalist.org/about-mmn-association/volunteer-links>





## I Don't Hunt or Fish. Why Would I Buy a License?

by Dee Dee Williams

MEMBER  
ARTICLE

**Answer:** The Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act, more commonly known as the Pittman-Robertson Act, enacted July 1, 1938 by Franklin Roosevelt.

The purpose of this Act was to provide funding for selection, restoration and management of wildlife habitat for hunting. In 1970, the Act was amended to include funding for hunter training programs and the development, operation and maintenance of public shooting ranges.

Funds come from an 11% federal excise tax on sporting arms, ammunition, and archery equipment, and a 10% tax on handguns. Funds are collected from the manufacturers by the Department of the Treasury, put in trust, and then apportioned to states by the Department of the Interior. *Each state's proportion is based on formulas that look at the number of licenses sold, and the total land and water area.*

Approved state projects receive 75% federal funding and the state must match 25% from a non-federal source, *which can be provided by hunting and fishing license fees.*

*Common uses of Pittman-Robertson Funds:*

- Acquire desirable habitat land for management, habitat improvement
- Operate and maintain Wildlife Management Areas (WMA's)
- Survey, inventory, monitor and conduct research for wildlife species
- Introduce wildlife into suitable habitat to help species populations
- Improve public access and facilities of wildlife areas
- Manage hunter education and safety programs, and facilities for shooting or archery ranges.

*SC Pittman-Robertson Trivia, but not Trivial:*

- 1st major purchase in SC using funds – 1941 purchase of Belmont Plantation, Now Webb Wildlife Center
- SC has built and maintained 425 boating access sites
- SCDNR operates 85 WMA's, funds 5 fish hatcheries, built 146 fish habitat structures in 12 different lakes across the state, began the first state sponsored public fish tagging program on the East Coast
- Since 1939, more than \$140 million dollars have come back to SC
- In 2017, SC Wildlife Funds received \$13,391,017.

If you visit a WMA (Wildlife Management Area), you are probably benefitting from the Pittman Robinson Act. Although, hunters fund the act, hunting is seasonal and the rest of the year the areas are available for other non-hunter activities. Some estimates say that 70 % of the people using Pittman Robinson land are not hunters. We as Naturalists, all benefit, from Pittman-Robertson funds, *so buying a hunting or fishing license makes sense.*

*Where to Purchase:*

- SCDNR online, or designated DNR office locations <http://www.dnr.sc.gov/purchase.html>
- Many retail stores such as Walmart, Dick's, Academy Sports, various outdoor vendors, etc.



### *Volunteer Opportunity*

### **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – Service Project**

January 21, 2019, 10AM-1PM

### **Wannamaker Nature Preserve**

For our MLK Day service project this year, Dave Schuetrum suggested a clean-up at Wannamaker Nature Preserve. This beautiful preserve is managed by Audubon with the intent to use it for education and research in the future. It is not generally open to the public, so this is a special opportunity to see the property.

There is a pavilion with picnic tables that needs a general spruce up – clean pine needles from the roof and underneath. Bring rakes, brooms, and leaf blowers. We may prune/pull some invasive species or do some trail maintenance. Bring gloves and loppers.

Members of Columbia Audubon and the South Carolina Association of Naturalists will also be invited. We can all eat lunch and walk the trails after cleaning up around the pavilion. You may want to bring water, snacks/lunch, sunscreen, hat, binoculars and identification books. There is no restroom on site. You can stop in St. Matthews on the way for facilities.

Directions: From St. Matthews, take SC 6 southeast for approximately four miles. The preserve is past Beacon Light Road on the left side. There will be signs by the entrance gate.

Additional information about the preserve is here:

[http://web4.audubon.org/states/sc/sc/Chapters\\_Sanctuaries\\_Wannamaker.html](http://web4.audubon.org/states/sc/sc/Chapters_Sanctuaries_Wannamaker.html)

### *Volunteer Opportunity (Citizen Science)*

### **Audubon Climate Watch**

Winter observation period: January 15 - February 15

Summer observation period: May 15 - June 15.



Climate Watch is a National Audubon Society community science program that explores how birds are responding to the changing climate. The winter observation period for Climate Watch runs from January 15 thru February 15.

Monitoring for Eastern Bluebirds during this time counts as Volunteer Service, Citizen Science hours.

To get more information, go to this link:

<https://www.audubon.org/conservation/climate-watch>

To sign up for a square in the Midlands, contact the local coordinator - Hilda Flamholtz at:

[hwflamholtz@gmail.com](mailto:hwflamholtz@gmail.com)



*Volunteer Opportunity (Citizen Science)*

## **Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC)**

February 16, 2019 8:30AM – 12 PM

**Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve**

For the 2019 GBBC, we will bird at Congaree Creek Heritage Preserve in Cayce, SC. This is a beautiful 2.7-mile trail in Cayce, built in and around an old clay quarry with the old clay pits now filled with water. The habitat is great for birds, frogs, deer, and an occasional alligator. You can even find Jack-in-the-Pulpit there at the right time of year.

Congaree Creek passes near the trail. It is mostly flat but there are inclines in a few places. The ground can be uneven where there are a lot of roots. It may be wet, so choose footwear with that in mind. Meet at 8:30am in the parking lot accessed from Old State Road in Cayce. There are no restroom facilities but there are plenty of trees.

This will count as volunteer service (citizen science) hours.

Please let Hilda Flamholtz know if you can join so she can stay in touch if there are last minute changes due to weather: [hwflamholtz@gmail.com](mailto:hwflamholtz@gmail.com).

For more information on the GBBC: <http://gbbc.birdcount.org/>



*Advanced Training Opportunity  
(leading to Citizen Science)*

## **Frogwatch USA**

February 12, 6-8 PM @ **Saluda Shoals Park**

OR

March 2, 1-3 PM @ **Riverbanks Zoo**

Riverbanks Zoo & Garden coordinates the local Frogwatch USA program. Training will be offered in advance of the 2019 survey season.

Two sessions are planned: February 12, from 6-8 PM at Saluda Shoals Park or March 2nd from 1-3 PM at Riverbanks Zoo.

More information about Frogwatch is available here: <https://www.aza.org/become-a-frogwatch-volunteer/>

The training counts as Advanced Training. Frog Surveys count as volunteer service. For questions, contact Grace Fields, [gfields@riverbanks.org](mailto:gfields@riverbanks.org)



## The Fungus Amongus

Fascinating fungi spotted recently by your fellow Master Naturalists

(Humble apologies for any misidentifications - - Editor)



photo: Ed Siggelko at Peachtree Rock HP

### Coral Fungus

(*Ramaria* sp.)

Coral mushrooms are distinctive and beautiful--if you can catch them early in their development, before their colors have lost their glory.

Most *Ramaria* species are thought to be mycorrhizal, which means they live in a symbiotic (mutually beneficial) relationship with the tiny rootlets of plants—usually trees.

<https://www.inaturalist.org/taxa/48707-Ramaria>

### Cauliflower Mushroom

(*Sparassis* sp.)

These large, unmistakable "cauliflower mushrooms" can be found growing from the bases or roots of trees in eastern North America's hardwood forests.

Pathogenic (parasite) and saprobic (decomposer); growing from the roots or bases of trees; found primarily under hardwoods--especially oaks--but occasionally reported under conifers; often recurring yearly in the same location.

[https://www.mushroomexpert.com/sparassis\\_spathulata.html](https://www.mushroomexpert.com/sparassis_spathulata.html)



photo: David Groh at Gibson Pond Park



## Snow Fungus (*Tremella fuciformis*)

A tropical and subtropical jelly fungus found on hardwood logs after heavy rains. It is whitish or nearly transparent, and fairly large (up to about 7 cm across)--and it features gelatinous lobes rather than the glob-like blobs that typify so many other jelly fungi.

Possibly parasitic on the mycelium of another fungus (*Hypoxylon archeri*) and closely related species, or potentially saprobic on the dead wood of hardwoods.

[https://www.mushroomexpert.com/tremella\\_fuciformis.html](https://www.mushroomexpert.com/tremella_fuciformis.html)



photo: Sharon Watson at Congaree NP



photo: David Groh at Gibson Pond Park

## Lion's Mane Mushroom (*Hericium erinaceus*)

In theory, this species of *Hericium* is easy to identify: it is the only species that forms a single clump of dangling spines, rather than hanging its spines from a branched structure.

Additional identifying features include the fact that it typically appears on the wounds of living or very recently cut hardwoods, and the fact that its spines are mostly more than 1 cm in length.

Saprobic and parasitic; usually growing alone or in pairs; fruiting from the wounds of living hardwoods - especially oaks (in this case, a Water Oak).

[https://www.mushroomexpert.com/hericium\\_erinaceus.html](https://www.mushroomexpert.com/hericium_erinaceus.html)



## Rusty-gilled Polypore (*Gloeophyllum sepiarium*)

Decomposing the deadwood of conifers across North America, *Gloeophyllum sepiarium* is fairly easily recognized.

When fresh and very young, its cap is more or less orange, but as it matures, brown colors replace the orange from the center outwards.

The underside of this polypore features gills--which is a bit odd, since polypores have pores rather than gills!

[https://www.mushroomexpert.com/gloeophyllum\\_sepiarium.html](https://www.mushroomexpert.com/gloeophyllum_sepiarium.html)



photo: Lee Morris on the Palmetto Trail, Peak to Prosperity Passage



photos: Gina Elliott in Calhoun County

## Earthstar Mushroom (*Myriostoma coliforme*)

The fruit body of this fungus, initially shaped like a puffball, is encased within an outer covering that splits open from the top to form rays. These rays curve down to expose an inner papery spore case, which contains the fertile spore-bearing tissue.

This Earthstar is unique in having a spore case that is perforated by several small holes suggestive of its common names salt-shaker earthstar and pepperpot. The spores are dispersed when falling water hits the outer wall of the spore sac, creating puffs of air that force the spores through the holes.

<https://alchetron.com/Myriostoma#Habitat-and-distribution>





photo: Gina Elliott in Calhoun County

### Crested Coral Fungus (*Clavulina cristata*)

Also known as *Clavulina coralloides*, this distinctive coral mushroom can be recognized in the field by its white colors and "cristate" branch tips, which are flattened and feature several tiny points.

Presumed to be mycorrhizal with conifers and perhaps with hardwoods; growing alone, gregariously, or in clusters; summer and fall (over winter in warm climates).

[http://www.mushroomexpert.com/clavulina\\_cristata.html](http://www.mushroomexpert.com/clavulina_cristata.html)

### Violet Coral Fungus (*Clavaria zollingeri*)

This is one cool little fungus. It looks like a tiny set of purple antlers, cast aside under oaks and hickories in eastern North America.

There are not many mushrooms that look like *Clavaria zollingeri* in North America. *Alloclavaria purpurea* is only superficially similar, but it is duller and lacks the antler-like branches.

Saprobic; often found in moss under hardwoods; growing alone or in groups; summer and fall.

[https://www.mushroomexpert.com/clavaria\\_zollingeri.html](https://www.mushroomexpert.com/clavaria_zollingeri.html)



photo: Sharon Watson in Traveler's Rest