



The Midlands Naturalist

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Elf orpine (*Diamorpha smallii*)



photo: Amy Lacoste at Forty Acre Rock HP

Message from our MMNA Chair

Happy Spring!

The temperature is climbing, the wind is yellow, and green is becoming the prominent color of the vegetation. Everyone seems to be out and about, enjoying the birds and the spring flowers. There have been many outings to look at Spring ephemerals, and there is a wonderful collection of member photographs of spring flowers in this issue. Please enjoy!

While I know these two harbingers of Spring, the birds and the flowers, are odds-on people's favorites, I would like to remind you of another group of organisms that are just now awakening, feasting, and mating: our arthropods. The vast majority of terrestrial arthropods are insects, and they are out, pollinating the flowers and becoming food for the birds. However, unless it is a bee, butterfly, or mosquito, these invertebrates are often overlooked or ignored, but without them, those spring flowers and birds would no longer be around. Thus, I try hard to find and appreciate them.

A few days ago I sat in the sun and peered intently into a little patch of greenery in my backyard. Luckily I had my camera with me, because I saw many wee fascinating critters. There were two species of true bug, one an adult and the other a bright red nymph. There were also two species of spiders, one of which was a happy little jumping spider wandering around with a fly almost her size clasped in her jaws. There were other flies, including the blue-green long-legged flies. And there were a large number of ladybird beetle (ladybug) larvae! These larvae are as voracious as their adult forms, and also wear the same colors – red and black. I suspect there will be very few aphids on those plants in the coming months.

Another spring favorite are dragonflies, and it's easy to forget that these incredible predators started their lives as aquatic predators. Healthy waterways are important for all ecosystems, and these critters can help scientists assess the health of our environment. The Association is considering Adopting a Stream or two – if you are interested in volunteering, let us know.

Have a great season, and use bug spray to ward away our insects, not kill them!

Lee





Upcoming Quarterly Meeting – May 4, 2019, 10AM – Saluda Shoals Park

Our MMNA Quarterly Meeting will be held Saturday May 4, 10AM at Saluda Shoals Park in the Environmental Center. You do not have to pay the normal admission fee to the park. Just tell them you are joining the Midlands Master Naturalist meeting in the Center.

The first hour will be about association business. For the second half of the meeting, our speaker will be **Karen Jackson**, Water Resources Agent with Clemson Extension, focusing on stormwater issues in the Midlands.

Originally from Illinois, Karen received an undergraduate degree in biology and a graduate degree in zoology. Following the completion of her graduate degree, she worked with the California State Water Resources Control Board in the Division of Water Rights on water use issues related to agriculture. In her free time she enjoys doing anything outside with her dog, Behr.

Karen will present on aquatic macroinvertebrates and how they can be used to estimate stream health. She will also describe a variety of morphological adaptations of the macroinvertebrates and have some live critters to view.

Midlands Master Naturalist Association

Lee Morris	Chair
Ed Siggelko	Vice-Chair
Alice Clark	Recorder
Ellen Blundy	Treasurer
Anne Palyok	Activities Committee Co-Chair
Dee Dee Williams	Activities Committee Co-Chair
Sara Green - SCWF	Advisor
David Groh	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

Our Website:

<http://www.midlandsmasternaturalist.org>



mark your Calendar

- ☒ Quarterly Meeting:
May 4, 2019 at 10AM
See details above.
- ☒ Steering Committee Meetings:
April 20, 2019 at 3PM
June 22, 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!
- ☒ Peachtree Rock Heritage Preserve Day
April 27, 10AM – 2PM
(more details on p.3)
- ☒ Fireflies Festival
May 10-27, 6-10PM
Congaree National Park
(more details on p.3)



Volunteer Opportunity

Peachtree Rock Heritage Preserve Day

April 27; 10 AM – 2 PM

The Nature Conservancy is having an event at Peachtree Rock Preserve on Saturday April 27th to celebrate their 50th anniversary in South Carolina and to highlight this property. The event will run from 10 AM - 2 PM.

We'll need volunteers there around 9 AM to help out. We can use some volunteers to help with set-up and parking coordination, 4 - 5 people would be great.

Dr. John Nelson will be leading a couple of nature walks along with David Bishop from TNC, and Dee Dee Williams has offered to help them out as well. The tables will be set up in the waterfall area, so we'll need to carry 5 - 6 folded tables along with some chairs and other supplies down there and then back out afterwards.

Anyone interested in helping please contact Ed Siggelko at esiggelko@sc.rr.com.

For more info about the event: [TNC Peachtree Rock web page](#).

Volunteer Opportunity

Fireflies Festival

May 10 - 27; 6PM – 10PM each night

Congaree National Park



Can you volunteer for the Fireflies Festival at Congaree National Park?

We have need for 15 - 20 volunteers each and every night (6pm-10pm) from May 10 through May 27. We are expecting many thousands of visitors during this time and we need all the help we can get.

If you would like to assist, please let us know what day(s) and if you have a preferred activity out of the following: Visitor Center, Fireflies Trail, Traffic, and Maintenance.

Also, please spread the word that we need more volunteers and let them know to contact us via this email account: cong_volunteer@nps.gov

For more info: <https://www.nps.gov/cong/fireflies.htm>



Volunteer Opportunity

Bluebird Box Monitoring

Spring and Summer 2019 (ongoing)

Saluda Shoals Park

Saluda Shoals Park has a trail of 19 bluebird houses that have been recently refurbished. Ranger Rachel Kennerly will be trying to monitor the boxes weekly this Spring and Summer to document if the houses are used, how many eggs, chicks, etc.

She needs volunteers to help her and is hoping to get at least 3. She says if 3 people show up together, each could monitor 6 or 7 boxes in 30 minutes and be done for the week. You would get free admission to the park that day. Checks are done between noon and 5pm.

She will train folks on how to do the monitoring. Nest boxes are on unpaved trail and some are close to blackberry bushes. Otherwise, Rachel will provide all the equipment and input all the data.

For more information or to sign up, contact Rachel at ikennerly@icrc.net

To learn about other volunteer opportunities at Irmo-Chapin Parks:
<https://www.icrc.net/about/human-resources/volunteer>



Advanced Training Opportunity

SCWF Gardening for Wildlife Workshop

Sat. April 27, 2019, 10AM – 12PM

Wingard's Market 1403 N. Lake Dr. Lexington SC

Come learn about the South Carolina Wildlife Federation's Garden for Wildlife Program, which helps people restore habitat and wildlife populations in our cities, towns, and neighborhoods.

The cost is \$10. You will receive a \$5 coupon to use at Wingard's, and \$5 will go to support SCWF. Space is limited, and advance registration is required. Register online or call 803-359-9091.

You must register for this event online:

<https://wingardsmarket.com/product/gardening-for-wildlife-workshop>

or by calling 803-359-9091.

Green Mantisfly (*Zeugomantispa minuta*)

Ginny Holt spotted this unusual insect emerging from a writing spider (*Argiope aurantia*) egg case on her house recently. Apparently, the mantisfly larva fed on the spider eggs, pupated, and then emerged as an adult.

She showed her photos to Rudy Mancke during a hike and inspired this edition of his NatureNotes series on S.C. Public Radio. Check it out!

<https://www.southcarolinapublicradio.org/post/mantis-fly-1>



photos: Ginny Holt



More info for the curious naturalist:

Eric Eaton writes in the [Kaufman Field Guide to Insects of North America](#):

“Mantisflies (or Mantispids) resemble a science experiment gone horribly wrong. Imagine shrinking a praying mantis, then attaching its front end to the hind end of a lacewing, and you have a mantispid.”

From the **Insect Identification** website:

Adult Green Mantisflies eat insects and use their front pair of legs to capture a meal. The small larvae of Mantisflies are parasitic predators, sneaking a ride on an adult spider immediately after hatching. If it's a male spider, the larva waits until it can move over to a female during mating. Once the female spider begins laying fertilized eggs in a silken egg sac, the Mantisfly larva makes its move, hiding among the freshly laid eggs. It gets sealed inside the egg sac where it will feast on the spider eggs until it is ready to pupate. It emerges as a winged adult.

<https://www.insectidentification.org/insect-description.asp?identification=Green-Mantisfly>

Spring Wildflowers: Some photos from your fellow Master Naturalists.

This page from **Stevens Creek H.P.** in McCormick County.

Shooting star (*Dodecatheon meadia*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams



Miccosukee gooseberry (*Ribes echinellum*)

photo: Ed Siggelko

Spring beauty (*Claytonia virginica*)



photo: David Groh

Dutchman's breeches (*Dicentra cucullaria*)

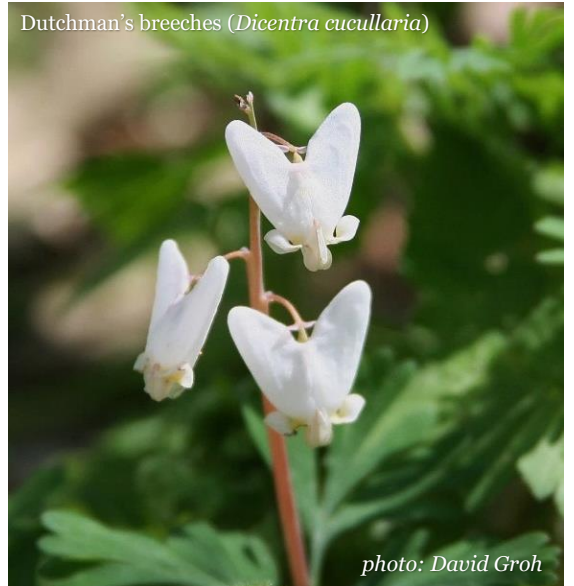


photo: David Groh

Common blue violet (*Viola sororia*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams

May-apple (*Podophyllum peltatum*)



photo: David Groh

More Spring Wildflowers:

This page from **Forty Acre Rock H.P.**

Dimpled trout lily (*Erythronium umbilicatum*)



photo: Tara Boone

Halberd-leaved violet (*Viola hastata*)



photo: Tara Boone

Arrowleaf (*Hexastylis arifolia*)



photo: Tara Boone

Chickasaw plum (*Prunus angustifolia*)



photo: Amy Lacoste

Bloodroot (*Sanguinaria canadensis*)



photo: Tara Boone

More Spring Wildflowers! Locations as labeled:

Little sweet Betsy (*Trillium cuneatum*)



photo: Ed Siggelko at Station Cove Falls

Butterweed (*Senecio glabellus*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams
at Congaree NP

Common foamflower (*Tiarella cordifolia*)



photo: Amy Lacoste at
Jones Gap SP

Yellow trumpet pitcher-plant
(*Sarracenia flava*)



photo: Amy Lacoste at
Carolina Sandhills NWR

Oconee bells (*Shortia galacifolia*)

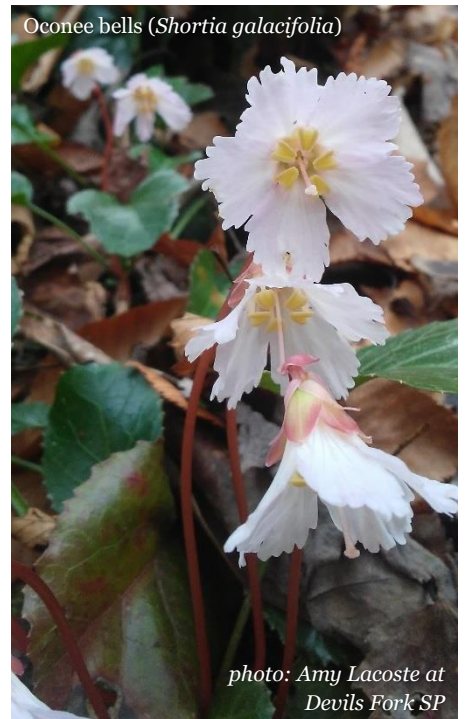


photo: Amy Lacoste at
Devils Fork SP

Catesby's Trillium (*Trillium catesbaei*)



photo: Amy Lacoste at Jones Gap SP

More Spring Wildflowers! Locations as labeled:

Yellow-fringed Orchid (*Platanthera ciliaris*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams near Walhalla SC

Bee balm (*Monarda didyma*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams in Brevard NC

New York ironweed (*Vernonia noveboracensis*)



photo: Amy Lacoste at
Cayce Riverwalk

Sand myrtle (*Leiophyllum buxifolium*)



photo: Ed Siggelko at Peachtree Rock HP

Golden-club (*Orontium aquaticum*)



photo: Dee Dee Williams at Aiken SP