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@edistoislandopenlandtrust

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Our Mission: To preserve the rural quality of life on Edisto by protecting lands, waterways, scenic vistas, and heritage through conservation and education.

### STAFF

John Girault  
*Executive Director*

Melinda Hester  
*Administrator*

Tom Austin  
*Land Protection Specialist*

Melinda Hare  
*Outreach Coordinator*

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## FROM OYSTERS TO AUCTIONS, WE LOVE TO THROW A GREAT PARTY!



**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**I**  **Edisto**  
**PARTY & AUCTION**  
**Saturday, June 20, 2020**

## HOW HOLIDAY HEDGES HELP WILDLIFE

*Tom Austin, Land Protection Specialist*

'Tis the season for fastidiously festive floral arrangements. The holidays are the prime times we bring a bit of our natural world to our homes. Wreaths ring our front doors while mistletoe dangles from their frames. Clippings and cuttings litter the hall leading up to an evergreen smothered in ornaments. Christmas Cacti buds break between the potted citrus cuddling cozily beside the back door.

Whether you purchase a hand wrought wreath or make your own merry mosaics this year, I'll bet you they share something in common - the plants! Lowcountry favorites are Magnolia, Redcedar, and Hollies. These three trees themselves have another thing in common. They're great wildlife habitat. They are all native evergreen, berry bearing bushes that yield a steady and needed supply of fruit every fall for our wintering songbirds to snack upon. From the flattened ruby-red fruits of Southern Magnolia to the squishy little powder-blue cones of Redcedar, all are enjoyed by chilly critters. Redcedar and Yaupon are also coveted cover plants for sparrows, warblers, and wrens as their dense foliage protects from both predators and the elements.

Southern Magnolia, American Holly, and Inkberry Holly are partial to moist hardwood forests near wetlands and rivers. These habitats are thinly distributed on our Island but are the richest pockets of biodiversity. The Southern Redcedar and Yaupon Holly are the more typical sights here on Edisto, especially on hammock islands and maritime forests. Maritime forests are composed of our hardiest plants. Only the most drought, salt, and wind tolerant species can make a living in this harsh habitat. Yet they are another hotspot for biodiversity. These forests are heavily trafficked by wildlife as mammals commute nightly to feed in the marsh and migrating songbirds concentrate into this periphery of plants during migration.

The Edisto Island Open Land Trust works to protect these critical habitats from destruction and overuse by permanently protecting land and guiding the stewardship of that land for the benefit of our community. As we celebrate this holiday season, celebrate your adopted evergreens too. These trees are more than seasonal scenery seasoning. They're important members of our forests and gift givers to our wildlife.

# A NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2019 has been an exciting 25th anniversary year for the Land Trust and we thank you for your continued and loyal support of our mission and work on Edisto. We are only as successful as the strength of our community of passionate members and partners.

As you know, the *Save the Hutchinson House Project* has been an ongoing initiative for the Land Trust since 2017, and we have been inspired by the enthusiasm and community support we've received. This iconic house represents an important piece of shared history for our island and we believe that the legacy of the Hutchinson Family and the story of traditional land uses on Edisto must endure for generations to come. Year to date, we have been able to purchase the house and temporarily stabilize the structure, which is an important first step in the process of permanent preservation and restoration that we are fully committed to completing.

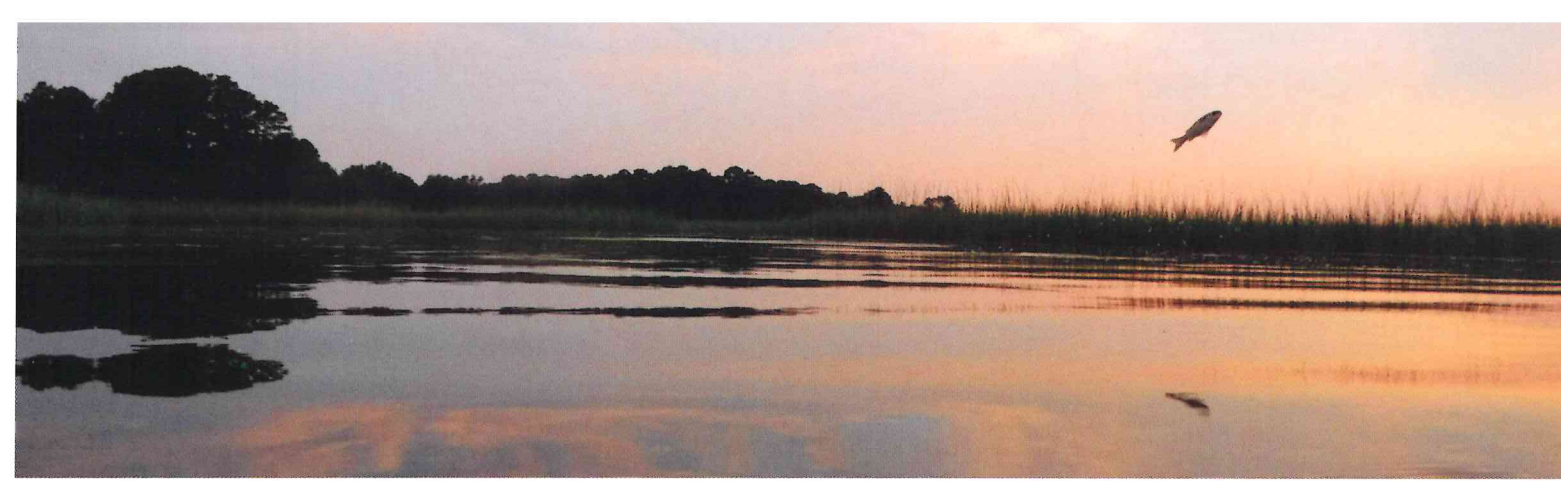
**Moving into 2020, we are preparing for the next critical phase of the restoration of the House, which will be to weatherize permanently and stabilize the structure. In order to complete this work, the Land Trust must raise at least \$50,000 to pair with an \$85,000 grant received from the African American Cultural Heritage Action Fund of the National Trust for Historic Preservation by year-end.**

The good news is we have secured a \$25,000 matching gift for our efforts, but we need your help to reach our goal by December 31. Once the structure is completely stabilized in 2020, we can then focus our efforts on the final fundraising and restoration phase that will enable us to complete the entire project so that the house will remain for many years to come.

Please consider a gift today that will help the Land Trust leverage our generous matching gift and bring us closer to completing the *Save the Hutchinson House Project*. We can all make a difference! You can donate online at [edisto.org](http://edisto.org) or mail a check directly to the Land Trust, using the enclosed envelope (please note Hutchinson House in the memo line of the check).

We look forward to keeping you updated on our progress of the house and our other conservation efforts. Don't forget to follow us on Instagram and Facebook: [@edistoislandopenlandtrust](https://www.instagram.com/edistoislandopenlandtrust). Thank you for your continued dedication to the beauty and heritage of Edisto Island. Enjoy a happy and safe holiday season!

John Girault



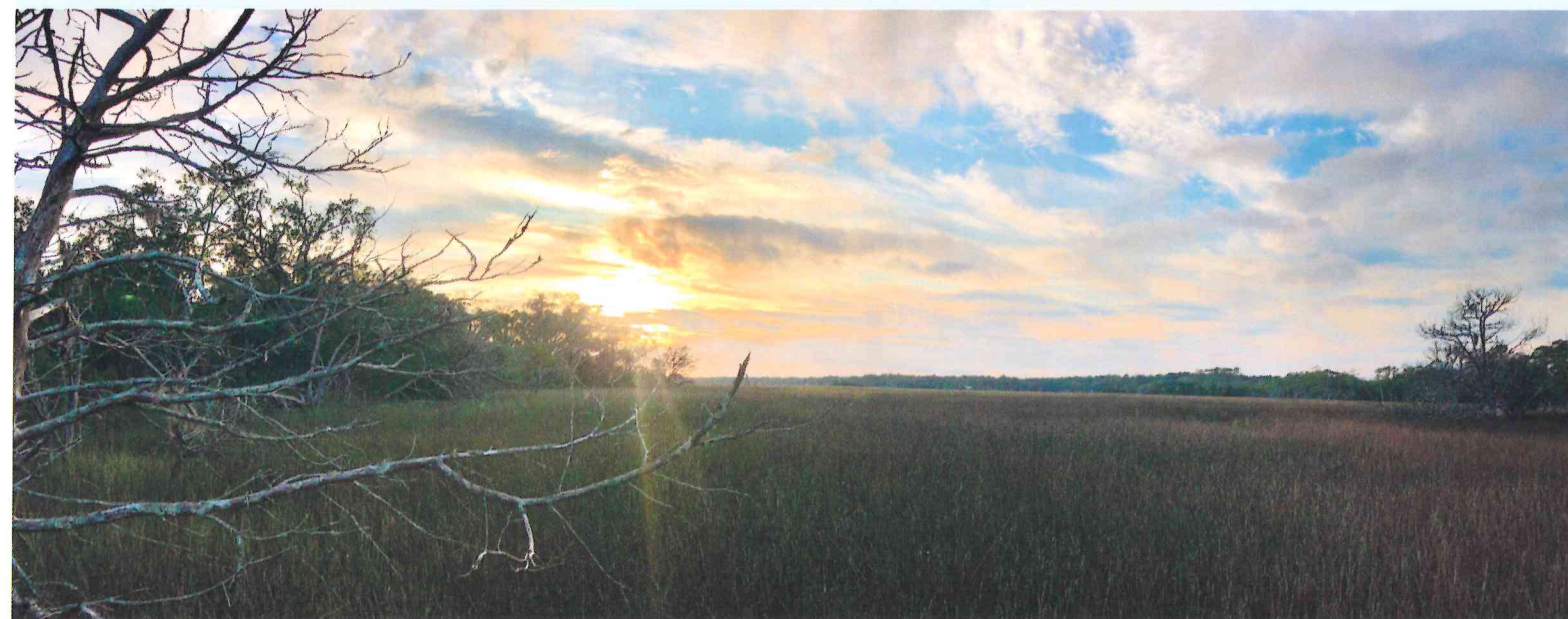
## A NEW NAME FOR PLANNED GIVING DONORS

Leave your legacy and provide future generations an astounding inheritance of all things sacred to Edisto Island by joining a group of passionate visionaries who are leaving Edisto Island Open Land Trust in their will. We are excited to announce we have named our planned giving membership group **the Horizon Circle**. The horizon is the line where the earth meets the sky. It's a universal attraction, one we gaze upon for hours. It evokes memory and emotion and is a source of hope, refuge, and mystery. We thought the name fitting for this extraordinary group of supporters.

**The Horizon Circle** will include people like you who have made a planned gift to the land trust. To thank you during your lifetime, please notify us that you have left EIOLT in your estate plans so we can ensure your inclusion in this special group of donors. Horizon Circle members will be recognized in our annual donor list and will receive invitations to our Saltmarsh Society picnic and outings. In addition, an annual cocktail reception will be held exclusively for Horizon Circle members to celebrate and appreciate their foresight and generosity.

If you would like to find out more about becoming part of the Horizon Circle, call or email John Girault at 843-869-9004 or [john@edisto.org](mailto:john@edisto.org).

We have enclosed a return envelope if you would like to renew your membership or make an additional year end donation.



*EIOLT's Young Naturalist program visited the house in November to explore our past.*