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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.

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Executive Director

Melinda Hester
Administrator

Tom Austin
Land Protection Associate

Melinda Hare
Outreach Coordinator

Kathy Miller
Membership and Events Coordinator

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WELCOME NEW TEAM MEMBER KATHY MILLER!



"I am very excited to join this wonderful organization and to help further the great work that EIOLT does to keep Edisto the amazing haven that everyone loves."

We are beyond happy to welcome Kathy Miller as EIOLT's new Membership and Events Coordinator. Kathy is originally from Columbia and is a graduate of The College of Charleston. She married her college sweetheart, a Citadel graduate, and raised two children, Eliza and Will, in the Northern Virginia suburbs of Fairfax County. Many vacations to this gorgeous island led to buying property and building a home here. She retired after 30 years as an educator in both public and independent schools and moved to Edisto this past summer.

A NOTE FROM OUR BOARD PRESIDENT

As I write this brief note, I am observing the stay-at-home strategy to prevent the corona virus from spreading, and I hope every one of you reading this is healthy and managing well. We are all aware of the negative effects this health crisis has created for individuals and businesses and our hearts go out to each of you. Although EIOLT will be impacted by these events also, I want to assure our supporters that we are taking the necessary steps to ensure we are able to continue pursuing our organization's mission.

if there is anything we can do for you at this time, or if there is any need you may have with which we might be able to help you right now, you may email or call us and we will do everything we can to help. We also sincerely hope that if you are in a position to continue your support of our work, you will help EIOLT continue preserving and protecting our island's natural resources and heritage. I look forward to getting together at future events once this crisis has passed. In the meantime, I wish good health to each of you and your families.

Our office is closed until further notice, and staff members are working from home. Given the current situation, we are rescheduling our June Auction and Party fundraiser to August 15. Our events are not only an enjoyable way to celebrate with you, but are also critically important to the economics of EIOLT. If all goes well over the next two months, we will be able to stay on track to bring you all the wonderful programs and activities that your support helps us offer to our youth and adults each year.

Sidney Gauthreaux, President

I know you are also likely feeling financial, physical or emotional impacts and we want you to know



QUICK HIGHLIGHTS FOR HUTCHINSON HOUSE



Watercolor rendering of the Hutchinson House by Ralph Muldrow

Thanks to you, the Hutchinson House Project has moved forward with many significant events. We raised our challenge match fundraising goal in December, we have been awarded a number of grants, and we have completed an archaeological survey of the site. We have also just put out a bid package to contractors for completion of PHASE 2, stabilization and weatherization of the structure over the next year!

Two exciting highlights include the discovery of significant artifacts found during an 'Archaeological Survey conducted by New South Associates, and an historic title search that shows the Hutchinson House property was part of the 1,590 acres of the original land grant to Paul Grimball. That would make this site part of the first property to be deeded by the Lords Proprietors in 1683 on Edisto Island. Stay tuned for much more!

PLANTING SEEDS OF STEWARDSHIP

Rachel Carson said it best. "If a child is to keep his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement and mystery of the world we live in." This is the underlying premise for our Education Outreach programs for children and adults. Thanks to you, we have been able to offer some wonderful opportunities this past year to all of our learners.

One of our favorite sessions of the year occurred in January. Different generations with the same mission shared time together planting spartina/sporobolus seedlings with SCDNR's SCORE team. Michael Hodges and his staff brought the seedlings and our Young Naturalists and adults spent time together planting them for the future. Together, we learned about the Seeds to Shorelines project and its impact on our local marshes. This intergenerational project was an example of stewardship at its finest!

As we practice social distancing, the big question is what's next for Education Outreach? We still want to bring you some interesting and informative ways to continue your environmental education. Our team will be working on some online opportunities for our Young Naturalists to continue to experience the nature around them. Adults learners will also be offered some of these "virtual local field trips" as we pivot to a different type of learning experience.

As spring moves into summer, we are also exploring a new idea we are calling Summer Science Saturdays. Our hope is to get our island children back to the beaches and salt marshes of Edisto to rediscover the joy and excitement of being outside and learning together!



Students and volunteers planting spartina/ sporobolus seedlings with SCDNR's SCORE Team as part of the Seeds to Shorelines project.

Please follow our Facebook and Instagram posts as well as our emails and website to find out what's ahead for Education Outreach.

YOUR BACKYARD WILDERNESS

Article and Photos by Tom Austin, Land Protection Specialist



Male Green Anole

With the national emergency of the COVID-19 pandemic, many of us have found ourselves stuck at home more than we may like. You might be getting stir-crazy and looking for something to take your mind off the world at hand. Well, I have just the solution for you! Now is the perfect time to explore your backyard wilderness and find those easily accessible facets of nature that shine out from the corners. Our backyards, especially those in our rural and well-preserved Edisto, are brimming with nature. You only need to look to see them.

An easy place to start is with the plants growing about your lawn. Spring has sprung and wildflowers are cropping up everywhere. Tiny bursts of color flecked across the turf grass are easy to pick out. Clover, Oxalis, Toadflax, Bluet, Dwarf Dandelion, Vetch, and Dewberry are all common in lawns and weedy alcoves. While you're combing through the grass for flowers, keep an eye open for pollinators. Our native

bees and butterflies have begun to stir and they will be frequenting any flowers they can find nearby. Bumblebees, Carpenter Bees, and Honeybees are buzzing about and Cloudless Sulphurs, Red-banded Hairstreaks, and Juvenal's Duskywings are fluttering around. As you gaze around into the whirling world of winged insects, stay apprised of any of our cold-blooded locals sure to be nearby. Lurking under and inside potted plants are Green Tree frogs, Southern Toads, and Green Anoles, happy cohabitators of human creation. The Anole patrols for insects by day and it is by night for our Tree Frogs and Toads.

Of course, no backyard nature outing is complete without taking note of our abundant and diverse birds. Bringing birds to your backyard is as easy as hanging up a bird feeder. A handful of millet and sunflower seeds scattered on a sidewalk or across a patio will accomplish the same goal and might bring in birds of a different feather, along with any neighborhood squirrels. Putting out a block of suet or a sprinkling of mealworms will attract ever more yard birds. A cup of grape jelly may net you an Oriole. Now is the perfect time to try your hand at birding. Birds are beginning to sing and build nests, making them easier than normal to see, hear, and attract with feeders. You can keep a list of all these birds to upload to the eBird app. Cornell University, who manages eBird, has tons of online resources for identifying and attracting birds.

If you encounter anything you can't identify, break out any field guides you have or upload the photo to the iNaturalist app. Using iNaturalist is a great way to find a name for common species and to get answers for more difficult ones from expert naturalists. Observations submitted to eBird and iNaturalist can help biologists from around the country with their research. So what are you waiting for? Step outside and learn what you've been missing this whole time!



Male Eastern Bluebird



American Bumblebee pollinating Yellow Thistle