You are cordially invited to attend the Georgia Botanical Society’s 51st Annual Spring Wildflower Pilgrimage April 3-5, 2020 in the Savannah area. Our hub will be in Port Wentworth, just north of Savannah. That location makes it easier to execute our field trips by avoiding most of the traffic in downtown Savannah. Most field trips will be in Georgia with a few trips in adjacent South Carolina. We had our 1996 Pilgrimage in the Coastal Empire, a term which is more or less synonymous with the Low Country. A few of the field trip sites will be the same. As noted in recent newsletters, though we have chosen a coastal theme, some of our trips will be to inland sites like Ft. Stewart and Ft. Barrington which were in the 1996 line up.

Our headquarters will be the Wingate by Wyndham hotel in Port Wentworth, with 50 blocked rooms. This hotel hub is the centerpiece for all our activities. This means our Friday night social and our Saturday evening banquet will also be here. And as usual, there will be our terrific field trips to some very special places located in the region.

**PILGRIMAGE SCHEDULE**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 3**

8:00 am - 5:00 pm  
Field trips will meet at various times and places. Please consult the description for your particular trip.

6:00 pm - 8:00 pm  
Registration and social at the banquet/meeting room in the building at the rear of the hotel. **Note:** this event is only two hours.

**SATURDAY, APRIL 4**

7:30 am - 8:00 am  
Early registration in the hotel lobby.

8:00 am  
Morning and full day field trips assemble at the hotel parking are unless otherwise noted in field trip description.

1:00 pm  
Afternoon field trips assemble at their respective times and locations as described in each description.

5:00 pm  
Field trips return (unless otherwise specified in the trip description).

7:00 pm - 9:30 pm  
Banquet dinner and evening presentation at the banquet/meeting room in the building at the rear of the hotel.

**SUNDAY, APRIL 5**

8:00 am  
Field trips will meet at various times and places. Please consult the description for your particular trip.
Background

This year the Botanical Society will aim to explore the backwaters and wilds of southeast Georgia's historic Chatham County and environs, including adjacent South Carolina while based on the outskirts of the historic city of Savannah. In keeping with the varied ecological nature of the Coastal Empire, trips this year highlight the unique blend of natural and historic areas. These include the vast river swamps, maritime hammocks, bottomland forests, sandhills, relics of early settlements like Wormsloe Plantation, pristine Ossabaw Island, the old growth tupelo and cypress of Ebenezer, oddities on ancient dunes, and other amazing natural wonders including all four of Georgia's native palms.


An informative book to read in advance is our own Charles Seabrook’s *The World of the Salt Marsh: Appreciating and Protecting the Tidal Marshes of the Southeastern Atlantic Coast*.

Pilgrimage Overview

A total of 18 field trips have been organized for the 2020 low country pilgrimage. Most of them will be in Georgia, with a few in the low country of adjoining South Carolina. We encourage you to review all of the material in the brochure, to choose those field trips of interest, and then submit your registration form. On that form, be sure to include field trip numbers for 1st and 2nd choices for the field trips as some trips may fill up prior to receiving your registration form. (Most trips have limits and you will be given your second choice if available when your first choice trip is full.) NOTE: Because of pre-registration, participants in the full-day Ossabaw Island trip #7 on Saturday should know that they are approved and enter only #7 for Saturday. No alternate is required.

Registration and the Friday evening social will be behind the hotel in the banquet/meeting facility. Note: as last year, this event is only two hours (6-8PM). Late registration, if you need it, will be at 7:30AM Saturday morning in or near the hotel lobby.

Field trips will assemble in the hotel parking area, unless otherwise noted in the descriptions for each field trip.
Pilgrimage Information

Location:

This year we only have one hotel for all our activities. This is the Wingate by Wyndham, 7210 GA Hwy 21 Port Wentworth, GA. Arrangements have been made with this hotel to provide a block of 50 rooms for members during the pilgrimage at reasonable rates. The blocked rate is $114 + tax for Georgia Botanical Society attendees; be sure to ask for the special rate. That rate will no longer be available after March 3rd, 2020. Other hotels are nearby, but this is spring break season so all rates may be higher.

Wingate by Wyndham ($114 + tax)
7210 GA Hwy 21
Port Wentworth, GA
912-964-8900

Remember, hotel reservations are separate from pilgrimage registration and must be made directly with the hotel itself.

What to Bring:

As with all BotSoc field trips, please bring enough water for your whole trip, also lunch or snacks, as appropriate. Bug spray, camera, hand lens, binoculars, field guides, comfortable shoes, and sunscreen are suggested. A hiking pole is a good idea though hardly any trips this year qualify as strenuous. You may also wish to bring a jacket or rain gear, depending on the weather. The coastal climate can be cool in the early spring.

Friday Evening Social

Join us for the Friday Night Social that will be held on Friday, April 3rd from 6PM to 8PM in the banquet/meeting room building at the rear of the hotel. A registration table, staffed by our veteran registrars, Elizabeth and Barrett King, will be available for your convenience.

Botanical books will be on display, with some for sale. Book signings may be held by authors. Bring your own favorite field guides and reference books for others to examine.

No alcohol is allowed on the premises. If you can bring hors d’oeuvres or a dish or dessert to share for the Friday social, please contact JoAnne Romfh at (678-461-4466) or joannromfh@aol.com. Please be certain to provide serving dishes and utensils for your item. Tea, Sweet Tea and Lemonade will be provided. If you wish water or soft drinks, please bring your own.
Saturday Evening Program

The Saturday Pilgrimage Banquet will be held in the banquet/meeting room building at the rear of the hotel. A catered meal will be provided with options for meat or vegetarian selections. The dinner will also include a salad, vegetables, rolls and a dessert. Tea (sweet & unsweet) and water will be served with the meal. **NOTE:** if you sign up for a non-veggie meal, you are expected to stick to that option and it will be annotated on your name tag. No last minute switcheroos, please! (We are stressing this again because last year, at least a couple of people were apparently surprised despite this reminder.)

The evening program will begin immediately after dinner with a presentation by Jacob Thompson, Georgia Wildlife Conservation Section Ecologist. His presentation will be on coastal/Altamaha land conservation and habitat mapping as well as coastal rare plant management.

_Jacob Thompson is an ecologist with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Conservation Section. He has served with Georgia DNR for over 12 years, helping lead many conservation projects including coastal habitat mapping, vegetation monitoring, rare plant management, and land protection efforts. Jacob serves on the Little Saint Simons Ecological Advisory Council and the Cannon’s Point Preserve Conservation Task Force and plays an active role in the Georgia Plant Conservation Alliance. Jacob resides in St. Marys, Georgia with his wife and two children._

General Information

Pilgrimage packets will be available at the Friday night Social. The packet will contain name tags, a field trip schedule and other important information about the pilgrimage. Also, pick up your t-shirts then. If you are unable to attend the Social, the packets will be available on Saturday morning at the hotel before 8:00 am.

We encourage you to carpool as much as possible on all field trips although we realize that may be impractical on Sunday morning. Some venues have limited parking spaces and may have other visitors. In addition, we always try to limit the number of cars we bring to sensitive locations. If you have made arrangements to go with different carpools for morning and afternoon trips, be sure you can get to the rendezvous spot in time for the afternoon trip. BotSoc cannot arrange shuttles if you are stranded.

It is important for Friday's field trips, especially for those that do not originate in the hotel parking lot, to pay close attention to the start times and locations so that you arrive at the right place at the right time.
BotSoc Pilgrimage T-shirts

We will have t-shirts and sweatshirts for sale once again, with a unique design for the 2020 Pilgrimage. All profits from the sales of the t-shirts are designated for the Marie Mellinger Field Botany Research Grant Fund. This is a special “limited edition” shirt. Be sure to place your order with your registration no later than March 3rd. Shirts are produced based on the orders received only. If you want to receive your shirt prior to the Pilgrimage or will be unable to attend the Pilgrimage, there is a shipping charge of $5.00 for the first shirt and $1.50 for each additional. Women’s style is not offered this year. Prices, styles, and sizes are shown below and on the registration form.

Jenneke Somerville, who has designed so many beautiful Pilgrimage shirts over the years, is passing the torch this year. The art for the 2020 Pilgrimage was created and designed by Dani Davis, a student at Georgia State University and naturalist at the Newman Wetlands Center in Hampton, GA.

This year’s shirt features a trio of plants: bearded grass-pink orchid (*Calopogon barbatus*), white lance-leaved violet (*Viola lanceolata*), and orange candyroot (*Polygala lutea*).

**Short sleeve** T shirt (unisex)
- Color - Natural
- sizes S, M, L, XL are $18.00
- size XXL is $20.00
- size XXXL is $21.00

**Long sleeve** T shirt (unisex only)
- Color - Natural
- sizes S, M, L, XL are $20.50
- size XXL is $22.50
- size XXXL is $23.50

**Long sleeve** Sweatshirt (unisex only)
- Color - Natural
- sizes S, M, L, XL are $21.00
- size XXL is $23.00
- size XXXL is $24.00
### Field Trips At A Glance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fri AM</th>
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<td>9. Rist Tract</td>
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<td>17. Savannah NWR</td>
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**Caveat on Hunters for #5 and especially #17:** Since there is the possibility that turkey hunters might be present (at least Sunday AM), hikers are encouraged to wear hunter orange or some other bright colored clothing for this hike. The Refuge people said that hunters are not supposed to be near the trails anyway and they had never been any issues before. Though likely a non-issue, we wanted to let folks know. Trip leaders may bring extra vests.

As GA Dept. of Natural Resources-Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) is a partner in this event it is not necessary to have a license or pass to visit the Wildlife Management Areas (WMA) included in the Pilgrimage.

That said, **please do consider supporting WRD.** A purchase of a Hunting or Fishing License or a Lands Pass provides important funds to the stewardship of Georgia Conservation Lands and will allow access to all WMA locations for a full year.
Field Trip Map

Note: all symbols for field trip locations are approximate.

1. Fort Stewart
2. Fort Barrington
3. <cancelled>
4. Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Nature Center
5. Savannah NWR
6. Rist Tract
7. Ossabaw Island
8. Ebenezer Creek
9. Rist Tract
10. Sandpiper Trail
11. Sandpiper Trail
12. Wormsloe State Historic Site
13. Wormsloe State Historic Site
14. Cay Creek Wetland
15. Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Nature Center
16. Canoochee Sandhills
17. Savannah NWR
18. Cay Creek Wetland
19. Pinckney Island NWR
Trip 1: Fort Stewart Military Installation

Date: Friday full day, 9 am to 3 pm (Note: Limit is 20)
Location: Meet at 9 am at the unpaved parking area located at the intersection of Hwy 119 and Hwy 144 W (31.898629, -81.634095). Directions are provided as if you were starting from 7210 GA HWY 21 Port Wentworth, GA 31407 (allow for an hour from this point).

Take left off of Coldbrooke Station Circle onto Augusta Rd. (Hwy 21) S to I-95 (0.1 mi.). Merge onto I-95 South and travel 18 miles to exit 90 (GA-144 Fort Stewart/Richmond Hill. Take right onto GA-144. Travel 20 miles to GA-119. Take right onto GA-119 (North) for 0.5 miles to the intersection of GA-119 and GA-144 W.

Description: Fort Stewart is a mosaic of many habitats including longleaf pine-wiregrass sandhill, and longleaf, loblolly, and slash pine flatwoods communities. There are hardwood/cypress/gum drains, swamp forest, seeps, bogs, and bottomland. At more than a quarter-million acres, Ft. Stewart manages the largest remaining acreage of the longleaf-wiregrass ecosystem in Georgia. We cannot guarantee they all will be in flower, but we will see an abundance of rare, native, and coastal plain endemic species as well as their habitats. This includes: silky camellia (Stewartia malacodendron), hooded pitcherplant (Sarracenia minor), shiny coneflower (Rudbeckia nitida), trailing krameria (Krameria lanceolata), fever-tree (Pinckneya bracteata), snowy orchid (Platanthera nivea), dwarf witch-alder (Fothergilla gardenii), and smooth coneflower (Echinacea laevigata). This hike is easy to moderate. There are no bathroom facilities.

Leaders: Larry Carlile Lawrence.d.carlile.civ@mail.mil 912-767-8241
Dee Mincey Henry.d.mincey2.civ@mail.mil 912-531-2124

Fever-tree (Pinckneya bracteata)
Trip 2: Fort Barrington on the Altamaha

Date: Friday full day, 8 am to 3 pm (Note: Limit is 20, carpooling is encouraged); weather conditions will dictate exact return time.

Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot. We will travel I-95 south to Exit No. 58. Bear right off interstate, meet at intersection for head count, we will then travel west to Cox. More detailed instructions will be given upon our departure.

Description: This is a hardwood habitat, wetland areas, lots of Gordonia lasianthus, three species of bay, bay habitat. If we are lucky maybe an early Pinckneya bracteata bloom. We will travel the majestic sand dunes that roll steeply around narrow sloughs of cypress. We will travel near the area where John & William Bartram discovered Franklinia alatamaha and William’s first description of Gordonia lasianthus, now private property and locked up. We will end up at the Ft. Barrington boat ramp on the Altamaha River where the ferry used to operate and the site of Ft. Barrington, once a Revolutionary earthen Fort.

Mostly easy walking but we will be in the floodplain. Bring hiking foot wear (able to withstand some water). No facilities on site.

Leader: Elliott O. Edwards Jr., Member of Bartram Trail Conference (Past Chairman) and Georgia Botanical Society, 912-224-7316 (cell, day of trip only).

Loblolly bay (Gordonia lasianthus)

Trip 4: Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Nature Center

Date: Friday Half day, 1 pm to 5 pm

Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot in Port Wentworth.

Description: There is a $3.00 per person admission fee. The canal opened in 1831 but despite many years of human disturbance, the site has a diverse array of plant species (ca. 200) most of which are native. There will be some spring wildflowers, but most of what we will see will be trees, shrubs and vines (i.e., the woody flora). The seldom seen Swamp Jessamine (Gelsemium rankinii) is there and may be in bloom. It is related to the common Yellow Jessamine. We’ll walk down the old Tow Path for about a half mile to a gazebo on the bank of the Ogeechee River. Then we’ll return via an old road that served the workers on the canal. About two-thirds of the way back, we’ll leave this Alluvial River Swamp community, hiking on the Laurel Ridge Trail through what might be called Pine Flatwoods to what has been dubbed Sandhill. Today the used-to-be sandhill it is more like Oak Scrub habitat.

Total hike will be less than 2 miles and none of it is strenuous. There are some boardwalks in the swamp (and they could be slippery if wet). We’ll be stopping whenever we find something interesting to examine. This place is holly heaven as we could see 7 species of Holly (Ilex), but there are a lot of other species of plants, most of which are woody. We should see needle palm (Rhapidophyllum hystrix). Total acreage of site is 185 acres. Facilities on site.

Leader: Bobby Hattaway, Botanist, 912-481-3011 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).
Trip 5: Savannah National Wildlife Refuge

Date: Friday Half day, 1 pm to 5 pm  (Note: Limit is 20 and carpooling is recommended)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot in Port Wentworth. We will carpool and caravan to the site.

Description: We will visit some upland hardwood forests and then descend into a coastal bottomland forest. These plant communities are natural resources often overlooked on this NWR. The uplands along the edge of the floodplain mostly closely approximate what NatureServe has called Southern Coastal Plain Mesic Slope Forest. Within the floodplain itself, a majestic version of what might be called elsewhere a Bottomland Hardwood Forest, best matches what NatureServe calls a South Atlantic Swamp Island.

We will start in an oak dominated mesic deciduous forest near Kingfisher Pond and work our way to a more hydric plant community. Our path will take us through the mesic slope forest mentioned above with an overstory of American beech (Fagus grandifolia), pignut hickory (Carya glabra) and several oaks including southern red oak in drier parts to swamp laurel oak (Quercus laurifolia) and live oak in wetter places. Drier parts of the understory have horse sugar (Symplocos tinctoria) and American holly (Ilex opaca) and more mesic areas have a lot of hop hornbeam (Ostrya virginiana). Spruce pine (Pinus glabra) is scattered about.

The trail eventually leads to the wetter bottomlands covered with dwarf or blue palmetto (Sabal minor) and scattered needle palm (Rhapidophyllum hystrix). If we stay on the Tupelo Trail, this will lead to a nice upland island with a lot of needle palm, and dense pinkroot (Spigelia marilandica) and pipevine (Endodeca serpentaria). The Tupelo Trail eventually goes into some tupelo swamps, with a boardwalk crossing and follows a levee through a freshwater tidal swamp. We'll see plenty of bark lichens on our trip too.

No facilities on site but NWR visitors' center is a few miles away.

Leader: Malcolm Hodges, TNC Ecologist, 770-776-9194 (Pilgrimage Weekend only)

Pipevine or Virginia snakeroot (Endodeca serpentaria)
F. Schuyler Mathews Field Book of American Wild Flowers (1902)

Trip 6: Rist Tract, Townsend WMA

Date: Friday Half day, 1 pm to 5 pm  (Note: Limit is 20 and carpooling is recommended)
Location: Meet the hotel parking lot in Port Wentworth. Directions from hotel: From Augusta Road, take I-95 South for 49.3 miles. Take exit 58 and turn right to get on GA Hwy 57 West. Stay on Hwy 57 West for 4.8 miles, then take a left on Steel Bridge Road. In 4.5 miles Steel Bridge Road will dead end into Cox Road. Take a right on Cox Road, then drive approximately 375 feet and take a left on Plum Orchard Cemetery Road. Drive on Plum Orchard Cemetery Road for about 0.4 miles until the road starts to curve to the right. We will meet at the curve and park cars on the sides of the road.

Description: The 1,200 acre Rist Tract contains some of the highest quality wet pine flatwoods habitats remaining on the Lower Altamaha River Corridor. Protected in 2018 and now part of Townsend WMA, the Rist Tract has mostly intact native groundcover including hooded pitcherplants and the rare night-blooming wild petunia (Ruellia noctiflora). We will walk through the graminoid-rich flatwoods and encounter embedded pond-cypress depressions. The Rist Tract presents an excellent opportunity to restore some of the rarest habitats on the Georgia coast!

Conditions are mostly easy, but bring waterproof boots and be prepared to walk through wet environments. No facilities on site.

Leader: Jacob Thompson, DNR Biologist, 912-481-7944

Pond cypress (Taxodium ascendens)
Trip 7: Ossabaw Island

**Date:** Saturday Full day, 8 am to 5 pm  *(Pre-registered attendees only, include $60 per person on registration)*

**Location:** Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot. Boat transport to Ossabaw will leave promptly at 9 AM from the Rodney J. Hall boat ramp at Butter Bean Beach, 30 miles from the Wingate. From the hotel, travel on I-95 south 1+2 miles to Exit 94 to Hwy 204. Travel East on Hwy 204 for 9 miles. Hwy 204 will become Harry S Truman Parkway; continue 2 more miles. Take the 204 Spur/Whitfield Ave Exit Hwy 204. Continue about 3 miles to Butter Bean Beach. You will see signs for Moon River Kayak Tours.

**Description:** Ossabaw Island will showcase mature maritime forest with iconic live oak tree archways; 600-year old live oak *(Quercus virginiana)* have been documented here. We will traverse the island from the north to south end making stops at habitat highlights such as freshwater wetlands and expansive salt marshes. Human influence can be observed at shell middens from Native Americans and dikes from colonial plantations. At the south end maritime forest transitions into beach dunes; effects of salt spray on the oaks bring unique character to the forest. The 1-hour boat trip is a guided historic tour by Bull River Cruises and will follow an historic trading route and pass Pin Point, a Gulla-Geechee community.

**Bring:** water, food, insect repellent, sun protection, sturdy footwear, seat cushion/stadium seat, hand lens, binoculars

**Facilities:** Restrooms at boat docks including the dock on the island. Boat is a covered pontoon boat that holds 40. Transport on the island will be trucks pulling flat-bed trailers with wooden bench seats; a seat cushion/stadium seat is recommended. A step-ramp is provided to assist with getting on and off the trailer. Walking will be mostly easy but there will be some walking in the sand.

**Leader:** Lisa Kruse, DNR Senior Botanist, 706-318-3287 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).

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Trip 8: Ebenezer Creek

**Date:** Saturday Half day, 8:30 am to 11:30 am *(Limit is 15)*

**Location:** Meet the trip leader at the Tommy Long Boat Ramp, 158 Tommy Long Rd., Rincon, GA, at 8:30 a.m.

**Description:** Ebenezer Creek (Effingham County) is a beautiful blackwater creek fed mostly by natural artesian springs, and emptying into the Savannah River. It has very slow flow, so is ideal for gentle kayaking or canoeing. It overflows its banks when the Savannah River is high, usually in spring. In April, we will probably be able to paddle over the creek banks among the spectacular giant water tupelo *(Nyssa aquatica)* and bald cypress *(Taxodium distichum)*. Some are said to be over a thousand years old. Cypress knees can be over 6 ft tall, although they may not look so, if the water levels are as high as we expect. There are a few plants among the trees that may be in bloom, such as Oconee azalea *(Rhododendron flammeum)*; however, this field trip will not be one of high plant diversity. It will be a lovely paddle through blackwater giant trees of unusual and sometimes “spooky” character and shapes.

We will proceed downstream for about an hour, then turn around and head back. Probably back at the cars by 11:30 a.m. Minimal paddling skills are required, although it is best if you have at least been in a kayak before.

Backwater Expeditions will supply kayaks or canoes at $45 each. If you bring your own, there will be a $10 livery fee. There are facilities (outhouses) at the landing.

For those wanting to help out the parks department, and having some time, we will bring several large garbage bags and a recycle container. Sadly, there is always trash to be picked up in heavily used landings along our creeks and rivers. We can do our share.

**Leader:** Lynn Hodgson 808-282-5218 hodgson.lynn@aol.com
### Trip 9: Rist Tract, Townsend WMA

| Date:          | Saturday Half day, 8 am to 12 pm  (Limit is 20 and carpooling will be encouraged) |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| Location:     | Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot.                                  |
| Description:  | See description for #6                                                          |
| Leader:       | Garett Anderson 912- 322-0738 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed). |

### Trip 10: Sandpiper Trail, Skidaway Island State Park

| Date:          | Saturday Half day, 8:30 am to 12 pm  (Limit is 20 and carpooling will be encouraged) |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| Location:     | Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot. Directions from hotel listed in Trip #11 if needed. State Parks Pass or $5 parking fee per vehicle required. |
| Description:  | This one-mile, scenic loop trail will take us across a typical salt marsh dominated by *Spartina* grass and rushes, and over a salt flat where Glassworts and other succulents grow. The salt marsh is a harsh environment for plants. Learn how various salt marsh plants must adapt to varying degrees of salinity to live here. At the edge of the marsh we will find Saltbushes/Groundsels, Marsh Elder and other salt-tolerant and wind resistant shrubs. Some Sea Ox-eye Daisies (*Borrichia frutescens*) may be in early bloom. The trail also will take us onto a marsh hammock with a maritime forest of Live Oak, Red Cedar, Slash Pine, Saw Palmetto, Cabbage Palm, Yaupon Holly, Swamp Bay, Red Bay and other maritime hammock species. Facilities at the park’s visitors’ center. |
| Leader:       | Charles Seabrook, 678-362-4527; seabrk@comcast.net (email during Pilgrimage weekend) |

Cabbage palm (*Sabal palmetto*)

### Trip 11: Sandpiper Trail, Skidaway Island State Park

| Date:          | Saturday Half day, 1 pm to 5pm  (Limit is 20 and carpooling will be encouraged) |
|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------
| Location:     | Meet the trip leader at the Park Entrance Pay Station. Leave the hotel parking lot without the leader NLT 12:15pm. Directions from hotel: From the Wingate Wyndham Hotel turn left onto Ga. 21 (Augusta Hwy.) and get on I-95 south. Go on I-95 for about 13.9 miles and take Exit #94 (Ga. 204/Abercorn St.). Go east on Ga. 204/ Abercorn for 8.8 miles and then take a slight right onto Harry Truman Parkway and go 1.7 miles. Take the Ga. Spur 204/Whitefield Road exit. Get onto Spur 204 east for 4.9 miles and you will be on Skidaway. Turn left at the first traffic light on Skidaway Island to enter the park. Note that some GPS devices will miss this important turn. Total approximate one-way travel distance: 31 miles. State Parks Pass or $5 parking fee per vehicle required. |
| Description:  | See description for Trip 10 |
| Leader:       | Charles Seabrook, 678-362-4527; seabrk@comcast.net (email during Pilgrimage weekend) |
Trip 12: Wormsloe State Historic Site

Date: Saturday Half day, 9 am to 12 pm (Limit is 20, and carpooling is recommended)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the parking lot for Wormsloe museum/theater. Enter the park at 7601 Skidaway Road and pay the park entrance fee (allow extra time for this step). Drive one mile, under the Live Oak canopy, to the white fence, turn right, and park in the museum lot.

Directions: From Wingate Wyndham Hotel, 7210 GA Hwy 21, Port Wentworth, you will drive a total of 26 miles to Wormsloe at 7601 Skidaway Road, Savannah. Turn left onto Augusta Rd, and drive south for about ¾ mile. Merge right onto I-95 South (toward Brunswick). Drive 20 miles on I-95, then take Exit 99A to merge onto I-16 East (toward Savannah). Drive 7 miles then take Exit 164A for I-516 East towards Lynes Parkway. Drive 4 miles then turn onto Truman Parkway. Drive about 3 miles and take the Eisenhower Drive exit. Drive 1.5 miles and turn onto Skidaway Road. Drive 2 miles and turn right into the Wormsloe gate. GPS Coordinates: N 31.98369 | W -081.07179

Description: This easy hike winds along a salt marsh and through a second- or third-growth maritime forest that occupies what was once one of the earliest plantations on Georgia’s coast, established in the 1730s. Hundreds of years of Native American, colonial, and modern occupation have greatly altered the natural communities on the site but there is still a surprising plant diversity, with more than 200 species documented on 822 acres, including all four of Georgia’s native palms. Wildflowers will be few, so we will focus on learning the shrubs, vines, and trees that are typical of Georgia’s coast. Spring migration will be underway–birders especially welcome!

The trail is wide, flat, sandy, and shaded. Insect repellent recommended. Bring money for park entrance. Facilities at parking lot.

Leader: Linda Chafin, Botanist, 706-548-1697 (C) Pilgrimage weekend only

Trip 13: Wormsloe State Historic Site

Date: Saturday, Half day 1pm to 5 pm (Limit is 20 and carpooling is recommended)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the parking lot for Wormsloe museum/theater (see #12 for directions)

Description: See description for #12

Leader: Stella Osborn, Senior Forestry/Wildlife Technician (retired), 912-604-3916 (Pilgrimage weekend only)

Trip 14: Cay Creek Wetland

Date: Saturday Half day, 1pm to 5 pm (Limit is 20)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot.

Description: Cay Creek provides a journey through fresh and salt water ecosystems. Enjoy seeing and learning about the park’s natural communities with an easy stroll along and elevated 1,600ft long boardwalk. There is interpretive signage along the boardwalk and a canopy tower. The uplands at the entrance have been planted in a native plant pollinator garden. Just down slope a demonstration wetland garden was installed. The park is owned by the City of Midway and has worked with partners including Coastal WildScapes to increase the educational content of the park. This walk will be most easy but the boardwalk can be slippery if wet.

No facilities on site.

Leader: Steve Bowling, Botanist, 404-317-2817 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).
Trip 15: Savannah-Ogeechee Canal Nature Center

Date: Sunday, Half day, 8 am to 12 pm (Limit is 20)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot.
Description: See description for #4
Leader: Bobby Hattaway, Botanist, 912-481-5011 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).

Trip 16: Canoochee Sandhills

Date: Sunday, Half day 8am to 12 pm (Limit is 20)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot. Directions: From the hotel, enter onto I-95 south and go approx. 8 miles. Take exit 99B onto I-16 west. In 30 miles take exit 127 and turn left (south) onto GA-67. Passing under I-16, travel south on 67 for ½ miles. Then right onto Old Groveland Rd. Travel approx. 6 miles. Then right onto Old Groveland Rd. The entrance to the WMA is at the intersection of Old Groveland Rd. and Nevils Groveland Rd. Entrance to Canoochee Sandhills WMA: 32.1898438, -81.7671335
Description: We will explore portions of the Canoochee Sandhills Wildlife Management Area, one of the state’s newest protected lands and an important location for the threatened Gopher Tortoise. We will walk through xeric and sub-xeric sandhill habitat in multiple stages of restoration to longleaf-wiregrass forest, and we will see an open landscape that supports a diverse array of flora. We’ll find many grasses characteristic of sandhills such as little bluestem (Schizachyrium scoparium) and several threeawned grasses (Aristida spp.). Scattering the landscape with color will be wildflowers like sandhill lupines (Lupinus spp.), catbells (Baptisia perfoliata), and at least four species of wild blueberries. At the edges of this habitat we will find drainages and bay-swatch heads that support many evergreen broadleaved shrubs, some of which will be in bloom, such as devilwood (Cartrema americanum, formerly Osmanthus americanus) and spring-flowering titi (Cliftonia monophylla). Weather and water levels permitting, we may get the chance to see an isolated pond cypress wetland, a unique coastal plain habitat that is critical to many types of wildlife.
Conditions: The sandhills are relatively open and flat, but we will be off-trail and walking through low shrubs. We will drive to two or three separate locations, at which we will take short (less than half-mile) excursions.
Bring: Water, boots or closed-toed shoes, long pants, hat, sunscreen and insect repellent.
No facilities on site.
Leader: Morgan Bettcher, DNR Wildlife Technician (BotanyTech.), 404-947-1948

Trip 17: Savannah National Wildlife Refuge

Date: Sunday, 8am to 12 pm (Limit is 20)
Location: Meet the trip leader at the hotel parking lot in Port Wentworth.
Description: See description for Trip #5
Leader: Malcolm Hodges, TNC Ecologist, 770-776-9194 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).

Caveat on Hunters: Since there is the possibility that turkey hunters might be present (at least Sunday AM), hikers are encouraged to wear hunter orange or some other bright colored clothing for this hike. The Refuge people said that hunters are not supposed to be near the trails anyway and they had never been any issues before. Though likely a non-issue, we wanted to let folks know.
Trip 18: Cay’s Creek Wetland

**Date:** Sunday, Half day, 9am to 12 pm (Limit 20)
**Location:** Meet the trip leader at 189 Charlie Butler Rd, Midway, GA 31320
Directions: It is 34 miles to the trailhead. Allow 30-40 minutes. So leave hotel parking lot NLT 8:30AM. From the hotel, take I-95 South to exit 76 (Midway), go west on the exit for 1.6 miles. You will see the sign for Cay Creek on your left (Charlie Butler Rd). The entrance will be on your right. Drive back into the Park till you get to the parking area.

**Description:** Cay Creek provides a journey through fresh and salt water ecosystems. Enjoy seeing and learning about the park’s natural communities with an easy stroll along and elevated 1,600ft long boardwalk. There is interpretive signage along the boardwalk and a canopy tower. The uplands at the entrance have been planted in a native plant pollinator garden. Just down slope a demonstration wetland garden was installed. The park is owed by the City of Midway and has worked with partners including Coastal WildScapes to increase the educational content of the park. This walk will be most easy but the boardwalk can be slippery if wet.

**Leader:** Eamonn Leonard, DNR Plant Biologist, 912-506-1920 (Pilgrimage Weekend only and coverage not guaranteed).

Trip 19: Pinckney Island NWR

**Date:** Sunday, Half day, 9am to 12 pm (Limit 20)
**Location:** Meet the trip leader at the parking lot at Pinckney Island NWR.
Directions: 1.0 mi south on Augusta Road to I-95. Turn left onto I-95 northbound and continue 11 miles to Exit 8 at US-278. Turn right (east) and follow US-287 towards Beaufort/Hilton Head Island 18.5 miles. Turn left into Refuge (this is the only entrance, and it is well marked). Follow the road 0.5 mile to the parking lot.

**Description:** This easy, approximately 2-mile-round-trip walk will take us “island hopping” along a road that crosses maritime forest dominated uplands with scenic tidal marshes in between. We’ll visit two ponds with diverse wildlife including wading birds and alligators, and of course a diverse assemblage of wetland plants. Along the way we can observe the flora of upland forests, shell ridges, and tidal marshes, and visit a butterfly garden, and see remnants of 10,000 years of human occupation here. Neat plants we should see: *Quercus austrina* (Bluff oak), a rare SE Coastal Plain endemic and *Clematis catesbyana*, Coastal Virgin'sbower or Satin-curls, an uncommon member of the Buttercup family.

**Leader:** Keith Bradley, Botanist, 305-878-8661, day of Pilgrimage only; reception not guaranteed. linaceae@gmail.com
For all field trips, please note: Contact the trip leader if you plan to meet onsite instead of at the designated meeting place. Because of driving distance, some trips involve a combination of two sites. Be sure to check times and meeting locations before you register for trips.