

2 0 0 9 J U N E I S S U E

the CONSERVANCY *connection*

🦉 Mission 🦉

Provide for the identification, preservation and appropriate management of the critical natural habitat needed to maintain a healthy, balanced and diverse population of native flora and fauna on Kiawah Island and its environs.

In the Spotlight

submitted by Tina Schell



Share

Click here to share with the Kiawah Conservancy your Kiawah Island nature experiences including: photographs, artwork or poetry. This is your chance to be featured in the next Conservancy Connection.

As a passionate photographer, I didn't think twice after hearing about owllets nesting over Willet Pond. I packed up my Nikon, its longest lens and a tripod and was off. Two adorable, fuzzy Great Horned owllets posed beautifully for me! According to the naturalists at Heron Park



Nature Center, they are quite rare. So if you have a chance, check them out! And listen for their distinctive hooting at dawn and dusk.

Click here to see more of Tina's owl photographs!



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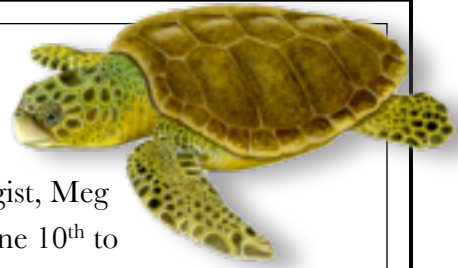
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In the Wild

by Jennifer Barbour, Heron Park Nature Center Nature Departmental Trainer

Interested in learning more about Kiawah's loggerhead sea turtles? Join biologist, Meg Hoyle, for a complimentary Turtle Talk every Wednesday at 5:30 p.m. from June 10th to August 26th at the Night Heron Park Pavilion. Meg is the director of *Learning through Loggerheads*, a non-profit organization that provides hands on science learning for students through a turtle nest protection project. She is also photo editor of *Sea Turtles of the Atlantic & Golf Coasts*, an educational tabletop book on the plight of these incredible animals. Meg has worked with loggerhead and hawksbill sea turtles in the Caribbean, and participated in the longest running loggerhead sea turtle tagging project in the United States.



Seasonal Birding

by Sarah Ernst, Heron Park Nature Center Exhibit and Education Coordinator

Kiawah is excited to welcome some annual summer guests. Painted Buntings, Orchard Orioles, and Northern Parulas are some of the most colorful birds that breed in Kiawah's maritime forest. Meanwhile, Least Terns and Wilson's Plovers nest on the Island's eastern beaches. The Kiawah Island Nature Program conducts weekly birding excursions, sighting 40 plus species of birds on every trip. To find out about the most recent sightings check out *Feather Reports* at www.kiawahwildlife.com.

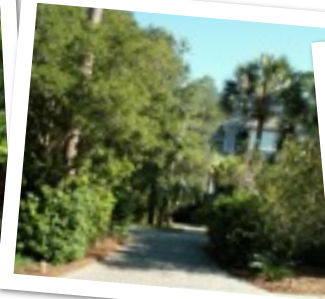


Not Just A Vacationer's Paradise

by Sarah Latshaw

Not only do vacationers come to Kiawah Island for its beautiful beaches and bountiful marshes, but so does one of our most spectacular looking birds, the Painted Bunting. Sometimes referred to as a "rainbow bird" because of its blue head, red belly, and green back, the Painted Bunting enjoys Kiawah's lush habitat during their nesting season. Unfortunately, their population is in decline. Breeding Bird Surveys show a decline of over half their population in 40 years, mostly due to habitat loss and fragmentation. Because of this decline, the Kiawah Conservancy has lead efforts to understand preferences and restore habitat for these island treasures. They begin traveling to their wintering ground in southern Florida and the Caribbean in September – so don't miss your opportunity to see this one of a kind bird before it heads south for the winter!





Gardening for Nature

by Justin Core, Kiawah Conservancy Habitat Preservation Coordinator

As we progress further into spring and summer, Kiawah will be visited by a variety of migratory songbirds (including the ever-popular painted bunting). Property owners can ensure that these birds have necessary habitat by applying proper maintenance practices

in their homes' landscapes. One of the most important things a property owner can do is maintain shrubs in a manner that allows them to take on a more "natural" look. Quite simply, this can be done by pruning with hand-held shears instead of larger devices. In contrast, the "formal"

landscape with boxed hedges and heavily shaped shrubs will do little to provide habitat for songbirds – as plants maintained in this manner are difficult for birds to penetrate and can even be viewed as obstacles because of their rigid styling. By allowing your shrubs to take on a more natural

appearance, they will offer songbirds increased cover and protection. As birds move around the Island and seek out nesting habitat, these areas of cover will prove to be very important!



Now that commercial shrimping season is upon us, many restaurants will be serving our local crustaceans. The Sustainable Seafood Initiative, operated by the South Carolina

Going Green!

by Scott Fister, Kiawah Island Golf Resort Sustainability Coordinator

Aquarium, helps to ensure that consumers have fish for the future by teaching partner chefs about sustainable and local seafood, assessing their menus, and encouraging consumers to dine at the partner restaurants. In 2008, the Kiawah Island Golf Resort successfully accomplished the goal of having all fine dining establishments participate in the Sustainable Seafood Initiative. To sample the Resort's

sustainable seafood visit: The Atlantic Room, Jasmine Porch, The Ocean Room, Osprey Point Clubhouse, Shrimper's, and Tomasso's at Turtle Point.



Sixth Annual Bobcat Ball

The Kiawah Conservancy held its Sixth Annual Bobcat Ball at the Sandcastle on Thursday, April 23, 2009. Affectionately known as Kiawah Island's "Event of the Season," the Bobcat Ball is the Conservancy's only annual fundraising event.

This year's Bobcat Ball drew over 300 guests to celebrate and raise awareness of the Conservancy's habitat preservation efforts on Kiawah Island. The evening began with cocktails and music by Mike and The Mixers, followed by a family style, sustainable dinner prepared by Duvall Catering and Event Design. The festivities concluded with an exciting live auction and the introduction of the Hip to Be Square Challenge. Read more about the Hip to be Square Challenge on page 4.

We hope *you* will join us for the Seventh Annual Bobcat Ball in 2010!



DID YOU KNOW?

- The Conservancy has preserved many of Kiawah's recent wildlife and habitat talks on DVD. They are now available for check out from the Conservancy office and the Sandcastle Media Center. **Click here** for a list of topics available on DVD.
- The Conservancy provides its printed biannual magazine, *Naturally Kiawah*, free to the community! **Click here** to be added to the *Naturally Kiawah* mailing list.
- The Conservancy is always looking for new habitat and wildlife photographs and writers for our publications. **Click here** if you are interested in submitting your work.
- Island guests and residents should report injured wildlife sightings to KICA Security (843-768-5566) so that the information can be directed to the appropriate island entity.

Conservation Matters

*by Justin Core, Kiawah Conservancy
Habitat Preservation Coordinator*

The Conservancy had another successful year of *Conservation Matters* presentations in 2008-09. We heard from local and regional speakers about a range of topics: native landscaping, diamondback terrapins and alligators, just to name a few! Many of the presentations are available on DVD at the Conservancy office.

The *Conservation Matters* series will resume in November and December of 2009 and February through April of 2010. Presentations are given the first Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. at the Sandcastle. Please join us and our expert guest speakers as we learn more about Kiawah's natural environment. Join the Conservancy's email list at www.kiawahconservancy.org to be kept up to date on all *Conservation Matters* details.

It's Hip to Be Square

With great success, the Kiawah Conservancy's *Hip to Be Square* challenge was announced and kicked off in April of this year! Guests of the Sixth Annual Bobcat Ball were asked to be a square and help preserve Kiawah Island with the purchase of virtual property for preservation. They rose to the challenge by preserving nearly 600 squares of virtual property at the event!

The Conservancy hopes to continue the success of the *Hip to Be Square* challenge throughout the year. By purchasing one or more squares of virtual property at \$25 each, you can "be a square" and help preserve Kiawah's pristine habitat! Buy square(s) for birthdays, anniversaries or other special occasions. All proceeds benefit the Conservancy's mission of habitat preservation on Kiawah Island. To make a donation online, visit us at www.kiawahconservancy.org. Click on the Donate link and type Hip to Be Square and/or other notations in the memo line on the second page of the donation process.

** Purchase of Squares are of virtual land.*

Sweetgrass Awards

The following Kiawah Island properties have recently been recognized with Sweetgrass Awards:

- 46 Kiawah Island Club Drive - Alma & Greg Brown
- 412 Snowy Egret Lane - Avril Fenwick
- 149 Blue Heron Pond Road - Rich & Maureen Dabruzzi
- 8 Sundown Bend - Paula Feldman & Peter Mugglestone
- 45 River Marsh Lane - Chet & Sharon Osborn
- 531 Bufflehead Drive - John & Cecily Ward
- 164 Marsh Island Drive - Lynn & Art Morgenstern
- 749 Glossy Ibis Lane - John & Linda Wilson
- 66 New Settlement Road - Valerie & John Luther
- 234 Fish Hawk Lane - Dee & Bob Schaffer
- 128 Spartina Court - Mary Jo & Frank Murphy
- 24 Marsh Edge Lane - Jim Broadus
- 9 Avocet Lane - Corcoran
- 54 Goldenrod Court - Quentin & Sue Jackson
- 194 Sanderling Court - Joan Collar & Glenn Brown
- 109 Goldeneye Drive - Joyce & Gerry Gherlein
- 189 Ballyunion Court - John & Dianne Culhane
- 35 Salt Cedar Lane - Iwan
- 87 Dungannon Hall - Eleanor & Alastair Harris

The objective of the Habitat Improvement Initiative is to significantly improve habitat value of developed property on Kiawah Island for our bobcats, painted bunting and many other species. The Initiative will also help maintain the natural beauty of Kiawah.

Sweetgrass Awards honor property owners who maintain good to excellent levels of habitat quality in their landscapes.

For more information on the Habitat Improvement Initiative and Sweetgrass Awards, and to view all of the award-winning landscapes, please visit www.sweetgrassaward.org.



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www.sweetgrassaward.org

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