

# THE BLUE WALL WEEKLY

Your Source for Outdoor Activities

Along the Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment

[Gmail messages are clipped.]

Click link on bottom left corner to view entire newsletter.]

## Greetings!



Welcome to the Blue Wall Weekly, your source for what's going on outside along the Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment. Feel free to share your own photos, videos, and adventures along the Blue Wall by sending them to the email address at the bottom of the page, and we'll do our best to make you (locally) famous!

## Bud Burst

Oh, little bud. I see your hormones have been swirling. You've siphoned sweet warm rain through earth-bound root, swelling harder against protective scales until, now, finally, you have burst free. There is no turning back. Will you be flower? Will you be leaf? Do you understand that youth and tenderness will leave you vulnerable? Will you be snapped clean off by the first good blow of

wind? (Only to be run over by my car tires?) Will there be a ravenous caterpillar born just to devour you, bite by bite? Or will you grow, long, wide, open to sunshine, returning goodness to root throughout the long hot summer to come? I'll be watching. I'll be waiting. I'll see. ~K



**Aralia spinosa,  
aka Devil's walkingstick**

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**SPECIAL EVENTS WITH  
JOCASSEE LAKE TOURS**

**Kids on Jocassee: Spring Break  
Jocassee Wild Child Tour!**  
March 20: 11:00 AM-2:00 PM  
**Book Now!**

**Two Hour Flower Power Tour**  
March 19: 2:30-4:30 PM  
**Book Now!**

**Pink Oconee Bells Hike**  
March 24: 10:00 AM-2:00 PM  
**Book Now!**

**Writing the Wild: Illumination in  
the Dark Corner**  
Workshop w/ Dr. J. Drew Lanham

**WEEKLY EVENTS WITH  
JOCASSEE LAKE TOURS**

**Tues., Thurs., Sat. Lake Tours:**  
11:00 AM-2:00 PM **Book Now**

**Sun. Afternoon Tours:**  
2:00-5:00 PM **Book Now**

**BOOK ONLINE**  
or **CALL**  
**(864) 280-5501**

**PRIVATE TOURS**  
**ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE !**

**FOOTHILLS TRAIL  
HIKING SHUTTLES  
ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE!**



Loon lovers, watching loons.  
Photo by Emily Stone

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## OUTDOOR EVENTS THIS WEEK, MARCH 16, 2026

### STATE PARK EVENTS

#### Devils Fork State Park

March 19: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

#### Oconee Bell Nature Walk

We'll walk along the one-mile-long Oconee Bell Trail through the pre-spring forest and discover the story of the plant that has been the quest of botanists for over 200 years.

#### Oconee Station State Historic Site

March 20: 7:00-8:00 PM

#### Candle Light Tour

Step into the shadows of the past as Oconee Station comes alive by candlelight.

#### Table Rock State Park

March 21: 2:00-10:00 AM

#### Sunrise Hike-Table Rock Trail

After experiencing the nocturnal aspects of the forest, we will enjoy the pre-dawn sky from the outcrop

## THIS WEEK ON LAKE JOCASSEE MARCH 16, 2026

LOON WEEK! What a week. 5 days of near perfect weather at the first of March studying winter loon behavior with loon biologist extraordinaire Dr. Jay Mager, ten very eager loon lovers, and professional staff from three loon conservation organizations from breeding lakes in the northern states. Six long, slow hours each day watching loons in the midst of their winter molt into breeding plumage. The weather was accommodating. Chilly most days but not uncomfortable. Some wind, but not too much. Sound just about perfect? You're right. It was. In another week we'll spend another five days of immersion into the phenomenon of spring loon migration. What a spectacular month March is here around here. ~B

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## NEW EVENTS COMING IN MARCH/APRIL

### STATE PARK EVENTS

#### Oconee State Park

March 27: 10:00-11:30 AM

#### Oconee Bells Hike

#### Oconee Station State Historic Site

March 27: 10:00 AM-1:00 PM

April 3, 5 & 12: 10:00 AM-1:00 PM

#### Wildflower Walk

#### Oconee Station State Historic Site

March 27: 2:00-3:00 PM

as we anticipate the beauty of a new sunrise.

### **Gorges State Park**

March 22: 4:00-4:30 PM

#### **The Bear Facts**

Come join Ranger Hill to learn about the Black Bears at GSP and ~~what role they play in the park's~~



American black bear caught on camera by NC DNCR

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## **OTHER OUTDOOR EVENTS**

### **Oconee History Museum**

March 17: 6:00 PM

#### **Revolutionary Reads: Rough Crossings**

Join us in celebrating America's 250th Birthday at OHM where we'll discuss the book and talk about the history relating to the American Revolution.

### **Conserving Carolina**

March 17: 6:00-7:30 PM

#### **Landrum Library Speaker Series: A Few Stops on a Walk Around the Yard (and beyond) with Dr. Mike Ferro**

This free educational program explores the unexpected world at the edge—where history, fashion, forbidden practices, insects, birds, and blooming plants collide.

### **SCNPS**

March 17: 6:00-9:00 PM

April 3, 5 & 12: 2:00-3:00 PM

#### **Historic Building Tour**

### **Table Rock State Park**

March 28: 3:00-10:00 AM

#### **Sunrise Hike-Stool Mountain**

### **Oconee Station State Historic Site**

March 28: 9:00-11:00 AM

#### **Birds of the Backcountry: A Birding Hike to Station Cove Falls**

### **Oconee State Park**

March 28 & 29: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

#### **Flip the Script: Honoring the Women of the She-She-She Camps**

### **Gorges State Park**

March 29: 10:00-10:30 AM

March 30: 12:00-12:30 PM

#### **Guided Hike to Upper Bearwallow Falls**

### **Sadlers Creek State Park**

March 30: 10:00 AM-12:00 PM

#### **Fox Squirrel 5K**

### **Table Rock State Park**

April 3: 9:30-11:30 AM

#### **In Bloom: A Wildflower Walk Series**

### **Table Rock State Park**

April 4: 12:00-1:00 PM

#### **Table Rock Birthday Party**

### **Table Rock State Park**

April 11: 2:00-6:00 PM

#### **Music on the Mountain**

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## **OTHER OUTDOOR EVENTS**

### **Conserving Carolina**

March 24 & 31: 1:00-3:00 PM

April 7: 1:00-3:00 PM

#### **Pollinator Paradise Partners**

**SCNPS 30th Anniversary.**

### Celebration

Join us as we celebrate our 30th anniversary with a party to share stories, honor the champions who came before us, and envision all we can accomplish together over the next decade. Registration is closed.

### **Sierra Club South Carolina**

March 19: 9:30 AM-3:00 PM

### Foothills Group Hike Oconee Passage

Meeting at Station Cove Falls Trailhead you can (1)- hike the shorter, less strenuous trail to Station Cove Falls (0.75 miles round-trip) or (2)- do a shuttle from the trailhead to Oconee State Park to hike the 3.7-miles Oconee Passage. Both with the definite goal of a stop at Station Cove Falls.

### **Sierra Club South Carolina**

March 19: 6:30-9:00 PM

### Foothills Group: Rick Joye and His Journey of Sustainability and Resiliency

In this quarterly meeting, we'll hear about Rick's 20-year journey of lessons about sustainability and resiliency.

### **Jeanne Malmgren**

March 21

### Silent Hikes S.C. Botanical Garden Clemson, SC

This experience allows you to try out the practice of Noble Silence, while enjoying the healthful effects of fresh air and green, living things .... all in the company of like-minded others.

### **GCBC**

### **Conserving Carolina**

March 25: 2:00-3:30 PM

### Etowah Library Speaker Series: Wildflowers of the Cove Forest: Ecology, Adaptations and Hidden Stories

### **Friends of Lake Keowee Society (FOLKS)**

March 26: 2:30-4:30 PM

### FOLKS Speaker Series with Jocassee Wild Child

### **Conestee Nature Preserve**

March 26: 3:00-4:30 PM

### Nature Discovery After School Club - Elementary School

### **Friends of the Reedy River (FoRR)**

March 27: 6:00-9:30 PM

### The Great Canebrake Affair, a Signature Fundraiser

### **Highlands Biological Station**

March 27-28: 10:00 AM-3:30 PM

### Tree Texture Investigation (Drop-In Station)

### **Hagood Mill Historic Site**

March 28: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

### Wild Plants for Food & Medicine: Making Teas, Tisanes & Infusions

### **GNHA**

March 28: 9:30 AM-4:30 PM

### Virginia Hawkins, Laurel Fork Falls (out and back)

### **GCBC**

March 31: 6:00-9:00 AM

### Loon Migration at Lake Jocassee

### **Oconee History Museum**

March 31: 7:00 PM

### Tavern Talks: Oconee in the Revolution

March 21: 8:00-10:30 AM (Shorter Walk)

March 21: 8:00 AM-12:00 PM (Longer Walk)

### Conestee Nature Preserve

Longer walk- Meet behind the baseball stadium to bird a variety of paved and natural surface trails. Shorter walk- Meet at the Spanco Drive parking area next to the old Conestee Mill and Dam to bird a section of the paved trail.

### **Sierra Club South Carolina**

March 21: 9:00-11:00 AM

### Hike Sassafras Trail at Paris Mtn. State Park

Enjoy a shaded forest hike through a rich variety of flora and fauna—perfect for connecting with Mother Nature.

### **Mushroom Mountain**

March 21: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

### Spring Mushroom Cultivation Workshop

This immersive, hands-on workshop explores the world of fungi and practical mushroom cultivation techniques.

### **Foothills Trail Conservancy**

March 21: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

### BellFest at Devils Fork State Park

We recommend you take part in a 1-mile wildflower walk on the Oconee Bell Trail with markers that identify plants along the trail.

### **Friends of Jocassee (FOJ)**

March 21: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

### 13<sup>th</sup> Annual BellFest

Join us for our 13th annual BellFest at Devils Fork State Park! We'll have local vendors, a silent auction, talks about the Oconee

### **Conestee Nature Preserve**

April 1: 5:30-6:30 PM

### Mindful Walk & Talk for Women at Conestee Nature Preserve

### **Conserving Carolina**

April 9: 5:30-7:00 PM

### Green Drinks: Working with Water: A Smarter Approach to Flood Management

### **Conestee Nature Preserve**

April 10: 6:30-9:00 PM

### Great Blue Gathering and Silent Auction

### **Hagood Mill Historic Site**

April 10-11: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

### Wild Plants for Food & Medicine: Salves & Lotions

### **GNHA**

April 11: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

### Clemson Forest-Issaqueena Area

### **Foothills Trail Conservancy**

April 11: 2:00 PM

### FTC Spring Picnic

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### **SC Botanical Garden Event**

April 3: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

### Spring Herbaceous Plant ID: SC Native Plant Certificate Core Class

April 10: 2:00-6:00 PM

### SCBG Members Plant Sale, Spring 2026

April 11: 9:00 AM-1:00 PM

### SCBG Public Plant Sale, Spring 2026

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**BORROWED GLIMPSES**

Bell, a naturalist hike on the trail, and live music.



Oconee Bells,  
FOJ FB photo

### Hagood Mill Historic Site

March 21: 10:00 AM-4:00 PM

KidsFest- 2026

This family-friendly event features performances from local Young Appalachian Musicians (YAMs) students, a traditional talent show, and interactive games and activities.

### Conserving Carolina

March 21: 10:30 AM-12:00 PM

Walnut Creek Preserve Speaker Series: Finding "Trails of Tears" and Creating a National Historic Trail in Southwestern North Carolina

Join speaker, Dr. Brett Riggs, Sequoyah Distinguished Professor of Cherokee Studies at WCU, as he interprets these archaeological landscapes and the future of the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail that remembers a tragic and shameful episode of the American story.

### Chattooga Conservancy

March 21: 1:00 PM



This little raccoon found itself trapped on the quarry wall this past week. He resisted rescue attempts, so JLT guides kept an eye on the little guy and he hopefully rescued himself!



Jocassee sunrise, 3.14.26  
Photo by Zach Maddox

## Chauga Watershed Plan

Join us for a presentation and discussion of the Watershed Plan initiative at Chau Ram County Park.

## **GNHA**

March 21: 1:00-4:00 PM

GNHA Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Our speaker this year will be Interpretive Ranger/Naturalist Tim Lee from the Mountain Bridge Wilderness Area.

## **Highlands Biological Station**

March 21: 10:00 AM-3:00 PM

March 22: 9:00 AM-4:00 PM

The Lost (and Found!) Shortia: HBS Oconee Bells 2026

Join HBS for a special two-day program honoring this iconic wildflower, (Shortia galacifolia aka Oconee Bells) through natural history, art, and field exploration.

## **SC Botanical Garden Events**

March 21: 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

Basic Horticulture: SC Native Plant Core Class

Discover how and why native plants have the potential to transform traditional horticultural practices with Jon Fritz, owner of Bluestem Landscape Design.



Foggy Jocassee sunrise  
Photo by Meg Little



13th Annual BellFest featuring  
guest speaker Amanda McNulty!



Lake Jocassee Webcam



<https://www.facebook.com/jocasseewild>

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**This Month in Your Garden**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**

Bud burst is a critical phenological event in plants, particularly trees and shrubs, marking the transition from winter dormancy to active growth, characterized by the swelling and opening of buds to release new leaves, shoots, or flowers. ~[gna.it.com](http://gna.it.com)

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**ABOUT THE BLUE WALL**

Spanning three states (North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia) and encompassing 859,000 acres, the Southern Blue Ridge Escarpment, known as the 'Blue Wall' by Native Americans, contains some of the highest natural diversity of rare plants and animals found anywhere in the world.



[www.JocasseeLakeTours.com](http://www.JocasseeLakeTours.com)

info@jocasseelaketours.com

Thanks to Sheryl White for compiling the Blue Wall Weekly,  
and to all JLT GUIDES for photos and continuous inspiration!

Jocassee Lake Tours Depart from the Main Dock  
at Devils Fork State Park, 528 Jocassee Lake Road

**PLEASE CALL 864-280-5501 AT LEAST 24 HOURS IN ADVANCE TO  
RESERVE YOUR SEATS!**

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