

the *Nature* of things

AT THE GEORGIA MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

A Newsletter for Friends of the Georgia Museum of Natural History

THEY'RE BACK by **Rick Hoebeke** Associate Curator

BROWN MARMORATED STINK BUGS A THREAT TO AGRICULTURE, A NUISANCE FOR HOMEOWNERS

Actually they never left since their arrival in Georgia about 5-6 years ago. The brown marmorated stink bug (*Halyomorpha halys*), an Asian immigrant, was first detected in eastern Pennsylvania in the late 1990s. It is native to China, Japan, and Taiwan. Since its discovery in the U.S., it has been found in at least 40 states since 2012, including the far West (California, Oregon, and Washington).

The brown marmorated stink bug is considered to be a nuisance pest in the fall and winter months, entering houses and structures when evenings become colder, often in the thousands. These stink bugs gain entry from under siding, through soffits, cracks or openings in or around window and door frames, chimneys, or any space with openings big enough to crawl through. Once inside the house,



Stinkbugs, continued on page three

NATURE RAMBLERS

AT THE STATE BOTANICAL GARDEN OF GEORGIA

Board member Dale Hoyt leads walks through the State Botanical Garden on Thursday mornings this summer. He invites members of the Friends of the Museum to join him for a ramble (not a hike!) to view interesting plants, insects, mushrooms, and others along the way. Meet at the Shade Garden Arbor at 8:00 a.m. (free; donations accepted).

Dale alternates leadership with Hugh Norse, the noted nature photographer. Check out the Nature Rambler's Blog at: <http://naturerambling.blogspot.com>.

Questions? Contact Dale (706-543-3592) or the Botanical Garden of Georgia at (706-542-6156) or botgarden.uga.edu.

SAVE THE DATE

2015 FRIENDS CELEBRATION

Saturday, October 24, at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia. We'll have our usual silent auction, music, libations and a program by Dr. James Porter. Dinner will be provided by Trumps Catering.

Questions or comments? Please contact Committee Chair Paige Cummings at (706-340-0322) or paigecummngs@charter.net.

GEORGIA MUSEUM OF

NATURAL HISTORY

FROM THE DIRECTOR

by
Bud Freeman
GMNH

When summer is fully on us with all the usual heat punctuated by our retreat into air conditioned spaces. But imagine traveling through Georgia in the summer heat of 1765, which is exactly what the Bartrams, John and William did back then! The Hargrett Library, part of the University of Georgia Special Collections Libraries will host an exhibit with lectures entitled "Set Off for Georgia. . . Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of John and William Bartram's Natural History Expedition in Colonial Georgia".

The Museum is co-sponsoring this event and I've had the pleasure of working with Ms. Dorinda Dallmeyer, one of the organizers and Friends member, to locate specimens for the exhibit. First we looked through the holdings of Pocket Gophers (*Geomys pinetis*) which John Bartram referred to as a 'pocket mole', for inclusion in the exhibition. The Joshua Laerm mammalogy collection fortunately has a rather large collection of *Geomys* and we were able to locate suitable specimens along with impressive skulls for the exhibit. Loaning materials for scientific studies and controlled public exhibits is a standard practice of natural history collections, much like the loaning of books from a public library, and we are glad to be of service for this exhibit. I was also able to provide specimens of the extinct Eocene oyster (*Crassostrea gigantissima*) which was noted by the Bartrams during their visit to Shell Bluff on the Savannah River.

So for those wondering about John Bartram—follow this link <http://www.libs.uga.edu/hargrett/bartram/> to learn more about the exhibit and lectures. There will be 4 lectures at the Special Collections Library Auditorium beginning August 22, on the 3rd and 17th of September and 1st of October. A

final all day closing event on the 10th of October will be held during the day at the State Botanical Garden of Georgia, finishing with an evening lecture at the Hargrett. This is a wonderful opportunity to visit the Special Collections Library, see several paintings by Friends Board member Phillip Juras, and mingle with folks passionate about Natural History in Georgia.

So for those still asking the question Who was John Bartram? Here's a brief sketch from the library website "John Bartram (1699-1777) was a third-generation Pennsylvania Quaker imbued with a curiosity and reverence for nature as well as a passion for scientific inquiry. His travels—by boat, on horseback, and on foot—took him to New England, as far south as Florida, and west to Lake Ontario. He collected seeds and plant specimens, and established a trans-Atlantic hub of plant exploration through his exchanges with prominent patrons and scholars in Europe who sought out plants from Bartram's Garden. In 1765, Bartram was appointed the "Royal Botanist" by King George III and, with his son William, set out for South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida on a collecting trip that would last two years."



SUMMER HOURS AT THE MUSEUM

The Gallery is open Monday-Friday, 10:00 am - 4:00 pm. No Saturday hours until January. Go Dogs!

A new exhibit is currently under construction in the Gallery. Stay tuned for more details coming soon. Bring the kiddies before school starts and enjoy the wonderful exhibit.

Note that our parking lot is monitored by UGA Parking Services and is subject to ticketing. Visitor spaces are available for 45 minutes and are marked in green.

If visitor parking is full, please come to the Museum office and ask for a complimentary parking permit to use while you visit the Museum.

Museum phone number: (706) 542-1663.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

by
Dac Crossley
President
Friends of the GMNH

I am Dac Crossley, newly-elected President of the Friends. I'm retired from the Department of Entomology and the Institute of Ecology here at UGA. I serve the Museum as Curator Emeritus of mites and ticks.

My keyword for the Friends of the Museum is "AWARE." I believe that the Friends can best help the Museum by helping to make Georgians aware of the significant biological collects it maintains. These collections are the evidence of Georgia's environmental heritage. We've been made aware that the earth is undergoing a major extinction event. Species of birds, mammals, amphibians, reptiles and even insects are disappearing from our planet at unprecedented rates. The Georgia Museum of Natural History maintains the record of our native flora and fauna. We want Georgians to become aware of our important collections, and their role in scientific research and education. That's our task as Friends of the Museum.

Where do we start? As a Friend of the Museum, are you aware of the extent of our collections? I intend to organize

some "friends only" visits to the Museum. Visits that will offer groups the opportunity for one-on-one contacts with curatorial staff. Stay tuned!

Organize your own group of visitors. Call Kim (706-542-1663) and arrange a private tour for your neighborhood, your service club or your church. Help spread the word. Your suggestions are most welcome. E-mail me (soilmite@earthlink.net) or call (706-543-0639) anytime.

Let's make it a banner year for the Museum of Natural History.



Stinkbugs, continued from page one

they will attempt to find a cool and dry space, enter into a state of hibernation, and wait for winter to pass. However, the warmth inside the house causes them to become active. During the summer months and the height of the growing season, it is a serious agricultural pest, causing widespread damage to fruit and vegetable crops and even ornamental trees and shrubs.

Associate curator of the Collection of Arthropods, E. Richard Hoebeke, has noticed, here in Athens in early July, that late-instar nymphs are transforming into the new generation adults. The bugs have been observed on various trees and shrubs on campus, showing a strong preference for the Kentucky or American yellowwood trees (*Cladrastis kentukea*) and Paulownia or empress trees (*Paulownia tomentosa*). At this time of year, the bugs are not that obvious unless you are a grower noticing feeding damage to fruits and crops. But, before long, as in past years, these stink bugs will again start their annual journal from the field into houses and other structures. Local populations this year appear to be much larger than in past seasons, so expect a possible bumper crop of bugs this year in and around your homes this autumn.



Photo credit: Jennifer Parrilli, GMNH intern

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FRIENDS TRIP TO ST. CATHERINE'S ISLAND

by
Robert Wyatt
Board Member

Of all the Georgia Sea Islands, perhaps the most difficult one to add to a life list is St. Catherine's, which is privately owned by the St. Catherine's Island Foundation and access to which is strictly limited. From 24-26 April 2015, 21 Friends had the pleasure of visiting the island as guests of the Foundation hosted by Royce and Christa Frangiamore Hayes. Many of us already knew Christa from her time at UGA, where she obtained a master's degree in Conservation Ecology.

We traveled around the entire island in style, riding on modified truck or van bodies in the open air beneath an impressive canopy of live oak trees. Royce, who has lived on the island for almost all of his adult life, and Christa were excellent guides, showing us the best the island has to offer. Of course the ultimate prize on St. Catherine's is the opportunity to see free-ranging troops of ring-tailed lemurs, which otherwise would require a trip to Madagascar! And see them we did, including some newly born infants.

Royce also treated our group to a review of the archaeology of the island, focusing on the early establishment of a Spanish mission even older than St. Augustine and other sites in Florida. We saw remains of structures and other evidence of human occupation including shell middens on which unusual lime-loving plants occur. And we stayed in tabby cottages like those used to house slaves during the age of Sea Island cotton (updated for our comfort). Because of its association with the American Museum of Natural History in New York, much of the archaeological research on the island was truly path breaking.

In addition to the dolphins that greeted us upon our arrival by boat from the mainland, we visited the beach and saw many beautiful shells and sea creatures that Amy Edwards pointed out, including crabs of various sorts, jellyfish, horseshoe crabs, starfish, and sea lettuce. The "ghost forest" of trees that had dropped into the sand as the

beach eroded was a particularly impressive demonstration of how these islands are constantly changing.

Among the birds that we saw was a bald eagle nesting near the dock where we arrived. Associated with several small freshwater ponds, some created by Royce, were rookeries that included hundreds of nesting wood storks and various egrets and herons. But the most impressive sighting was of a sandhill crane, which we learned had imprinted on an excavator and now remains in the area year-round. We saw alligators in the ponds as well as on dry land. While driving on the south end of the island, we spotted a wild hog and her many offspring.

The closest we came to a snake sighting was a legless Island Glass Lizard. Jared Bailey roused out several large Broadhead Skinks from a tabby building they shared with a small herd of tiny white-tailed deer. We observed many butterflies and benefited from two brochures that Christa had produced for Coastal Wildscapes with wonderful photos accompanying a checklist of the butterflies and a complete listing of their food plants. By night we learned how to spot spiders by holding a flashlight above your eyes and seeing the light reflected in their many eyes. The abundance of spiders was impressive (unless you suffer from arachnophobia!).

Some of the most interesting plants we saw were in the sandhills areas of the island dominated by longleaf pines, including Sandhill Milkweed (*Asclepias humistrata*) and Tread Softly or Stinging Nettle (*Cnidocolus stimulosus*).

We enjoyed wonderful meals, including farm-fresh eggs provided by Beth Lewis, lasagna of several sorts (including gluten-free) prepared by Gisela Gresham, and authentic Louisiana-style gumbo prepared by Steve Hilliard. I had bought enough beer and wine, I thought, to ensure that I would have some to take home, but this group proved more than up to the task of consuming mass quantities!



FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING

On the last Saturday in May, Seventy-Five Members and guests assembled at the Museum Annex for a mix of fellowship and business. We viewed the collections at the annex, nicely reorganized by Nicole and her assistants. New Board members elected were Carolyn Hally, James Porter, and Robert Wyatt who returns to the Board. Dale Hoyt declined to continue as President; Dac Crossley was elected to succeed him.

Dr. James Porter offered a recorded program about the importance of natural history collections, which included an interview with Dr. Peter Raven, President Emeritus of the Missouri Botanical Garden. Jim agreed to a follow-up

presentation at this year's Celebration (October 24 – mark your calendar!).

On behalf of the Friends of the Museum, President Dale Hoyt presented a check for \$ 15,000 to Museum Director Bud Freeman, continuing our strong support of the Museum and its activities.

We enjoyed a flavorsome selection of snacks and beverages from HomeMade, and were entertained by the traditional musical renderings of Curtis Pernice and Pat Shields. Thanks to our Treasurer, Paige Cummings, for organizing this Annual Meeting.

NEW BOARD MEMBERS

JAMES W. PORTER

Jim Porter started his career in museum science with a 4-year undergraduate job as an entomological preparatory in Yale's Peabody Museum of Natural History. He continued with a Pre-Doctoral Fellowship at the Smithsonian working on tropical marine invertebrates. Jim is currently Meigs Professor of Ecology at UGA and a Curator of Invertebrates in the Georgia Museum of Natural History. Jim has a diverse interest in museum activities. He has donated his collection of reef-building corals to the GMNH, and is currently working on a systematic treatment of the "Butterflies of the Cloud-Shadow Forests of Costa Rica," where UGA has its Costa Rica campus. Jim is a marine biologist, and although there are no marine insects, Jim chalks up his continued interest with bugs to his entomological scientific 'roots.' Jim also collects books in his area of specialty.

CAROLYN HALLY

Carolyn is a native of Memphis, Tennessee and lived there through high school. She received her undergraduate degree in history from Randolph-Macon Woman's College and masters degree in clinical social work and doctorate in counseling psychology from the University of Georgia. Her dissertation was on the natural history of sexual attraction in the human species. She has been a practicing psychotherapist in Athens for forty years. Carolyn has no formal education or training in the field of natural history. However, she lives on two acres of mature hardwoods in Athens and daily enjoy seeing the birds, deer, raccoons, foxes, opossums, scorpions, and copperheads that inhabit it. Carolyn recognizes the mental health of our species is greatly enhanced by physical activity in the out-of-doors.

Join the Friends and support the Georgia Museum of Natural History

Membership includes: a subscription to *The Nature of Things* newsletter, invitations to museum events, Friends programs, and field trips. Membership and donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

\$5,000	Life _____	Name: _____
\$2,500	Benefactor _____	Address: _____
\$1,500	Sustaining _____	City/State/Zip (9-digit): _____
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Unless directed otherwise, we will email your full-color newsletter.

Please make your check payable to Friends of the GMNH and mail to:
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