



Volume 4
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GREEN WOOD

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Dataw Island Conservancy



Fall 2019

Tallow Tree Removal Program Enters Its Second Phase . . . GUY APICELLA

In July 2019, the DIOA Board passed a rule that requires all property owners with one or more tallow trees on their property to remove it/them. This action elevated the Conservancy's **Tallow Tree Removal Program** from a voluntary to a mandatory campaign. The scientific basis for banning the tallow tree was well documented in the Conservancy's White Paper in 2014 (can be found on the Conservancy's web pages under **Dataw.com**) as well as in low-country studies. A multi-year federal government study (**U.S. Forest Service**) of the infestation of tallow trees on nearby Parris Island tested different types of remedial treatment and found some reduction in the number of trees but no control of new recruits (saplings). The resiliency of these trees necessitates a sustained and long-term effort to remove and control new growth.

In Phase 1 (2014-2018), the Tallow Tree Terminators (volunteers managed by the Board of the Conservancy) surveyed virtually the entire island to identify and map tallow trees and then remove them along with the Landscape Maintenance and the Golf Course Maintenance Departments. Experience has shown that tallow tree infestation is not a static condition but rather a dynamic one. For example, after trees were removed following Hurricane Matthew, tallow trees sprouted from seeds that were already on the ground and then were exposed to sunlight in moist soil. This outbreak was within several weeks.

The realization, that this problem is not going away due to our efforts thus far, is prompting the Conservancy to step up its program by further educating residents, particularly new property owners, to identify the tallow tree (*see photo and caption below*) and either remove them from their property or report the sited tallow tree to the Conservancy for treatment (*herbicide application known as "hack and spray"*) and/or cutting down. In addition, the DIOA and DIC Boards now understand that this prolonged environmental threat will necessitate continuing work by the landscaping and golf department staffs as well as tree service contractors.

The Conservancy appreciates the compliance of more than 100 property owners who consented to have tallow trees on their property killed and removed. We are offering a monetary incentive (\$250) to all residents (developed property owners) who have a tallow tree that they value for their own reason (e.g., shade, appearance) and who remove the tallow tree and, with ARB approval, plant a replacement tree that is native to the Lowcountry.



The tallow tree has broadly ovate leaves that are heart-shaped. There are small clusters of three-lobed capsules, which are dark green. These small "balls" turn black and split to reveal three white-wax coated seeds resembling popcorn (as the tree is also called the popcorn tree).

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Dataw Island Conservancy's 7TH DATAW ELECTRONICS RECYCLING DAY!

Saturday, December 7, 2019

8:30-10:30 AM

Marina Parking Lot

Out with the old, in with the new!
Recycle those old computers, e-readers,
TVs, and other electronics. That should
make it evident what you really want/
need for Christmas!

Your old items will be loaded into trucks
provided by the Dataw Island Conservancy.
No charge for this community service.

The Conservancy encourages all Dataw
residents to recycle and to take advantage
of services provided by Beaufort County.
We will provide free transport of your used
electronics. Just bring them to the
Marina Parking lot between
8:30-10:30 AM on **Saturday, December 7.**

The Conservancy will also provide
transportation of used electronics on Saturday,
May 16, 2020. So mark your calendars, collect
the old stuff, and let the Conservancy help you
recycle your old electronics.

Questions? Want to volunteer? (We need a few
pick-up trucks!) Contact George Cartledge
at george.cartledge@gmail.com.

The President's Corner

... GUY APICELLA



This is the Dataw Island Conservancy's last issue of *Green Wood* that will be distributed as hardcopy. Yes, we are going digital, starting next spring. The change is primarily to reduce use of resources (paper and ink) so that we are helping in our way to be more sustainable.

The next newsletter will be posted on the Conservancy's web pages (*as it currently is*) and an e-mail will be sent with a link to each new issue. If anyone does not have access to the Internet and wants a printed copy in the future, notify me at 843-838-0965 so *Green Wood* can be provided accordingly.

Overall, this seems like the right thing to do. We welcome your feedback on the articles in this issue.

Habitat Management Plan in the Works ... GUY APICELLA

Woods, ponds, wetlands and thickets interspersed throughout the island provide native habitat for desirable species. The Conservancy Board will be identifying and mapping the primary areas that need protection to maintain Dataw's low-country ecosystem. Our approach is designed to show the essential areas on the island and their basic function for wildlife habitat. The habitat map will be a keystone of the HPM, which will guide land use planning decisions.

OH DEER! Two young bucks messing around in a Dataw driveway this fall.



Photo by
George
Cartledge

The Trees of Dataw ... GEORGE CARTLEDGE

On June 21, Christi Henry (*Director of Landscape Maintenance*) coordinated with the Conservancy to offer a tour of "iconic trees" that are located on Dataw Island. Christi developed a list of several trees with a description of their attributes and importance to the environment. About 30 people hopped on golf carts and were led around Dataw by Christi. At selected trees, Christi provided information and shared her knowledge of the tree and, in many cases, how the tree came to be growing there.

At the end of the tour, we stopped on Cotton Dike #9 to admire a large green ash tree. This green ash had previously been observed by Chris Marsh of the Lowcountry Institute while working with the Conservancy on its strategy to develop a habitat management program. Chris suggested that the green ash could be one of the largest in Beaufort County. With Christi providing initial measurements of the green ash, it was decided to find out if it really was a "champion tree."

The Conservancy learned that Clemson University maintains a list of Champion Trees for South Carolina. What is a Champion Tree? On its website (www.clemson.edu/champtree) it states: A Champion (Big) Tree is the largest of its species according to a standard measuring formula based on trunk circumference, tree height, and average crown spread. To be eligible, a tree must be native to or naturalized in the continental United States, including Alaska (not Hawaii). Upon contacting Clemson, we discovered that there are no individual county records maintained. Clemson encouraged us to submit measurements.

With the help of Paul Vista, a certified arborist, measurements were taken. The Dataw green ash had a trunk circumference of 123 inches, a tree height of 87 feet, and an average crown spread of 63.5 feet. The measurements were submitted.

According to Clemson, the Dataw green ash is the second largest green ash tree in its database. While this does not mean there are not larger green ash trees in South Carolina, it does mean that until someone submits a larger green ash, Dataw has bragging rights. And, if the existing champion green ash dies, Dataw would then have the South Carolina champion tree.

With a championship within reach in the next 5, 10 or 50 years, the Conservancy decided to protect Dataw's green ash. The tree has been pruned to improve light and air penetration through the crown and lightning protection was installed. Two fertilizations are scheduled to be performed. With care and some luck, the Dataw green ash will flourish and still be standing when the time comes to be the champion.

Watch your e-mail for notification of the next iconic tree tour. The Conservancy thanks all its supporters for their donations that allow us to share knowledge of the Dataw environment and to determine projects to protect and preserve what makes Dataw special.



Christi Henry and George Cartledge on the tree tour.



With the help of the Dataw Island Conservancy, our beautiful green ash tree on Cotton Dike #9 will someday be a Champion Tree!



Birding at Dataw! From the Christmas Bird Count to the Great Backyard Bird Count

... CHARLES HOLBROOK



With the 2019 **Christmas Bird Count** rapidly approaching and the **Great Backyard Bird Count** to follow shortly in February, here are some helpful hints to make your birding experiences on Dataw better. Many people think that birding is difficult or they don't have the confidence or expertise to correctly identify many of the birds they see. Actually, most birds that are seen on Dataw are easily identified and those that are difficult can be identified if certain traits or colors are observed or if you are able to take a photo. Below are four examples of birds that are common on Dataw but can prove, at times, a bit challenging to identify.

The first instance involves herons and large wading birds. Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, Woodstorks, and Snowy Egrets are year-round residents on Dataw. Their numbers could fluctuate with the seasons but you are almost guaranteed to see these species. However, there are some species of herons that can be tricky. The Little Blue Heron comes to mind. Immature Little Blue Herons are white not the slate blue color they display as an adult. Often times, immature and adult Blue Herons are seen together and you might think the immature Blue Heron is a Snowy Egret. It is a common mistake but don't get discouraged.

Another example is the Double-crested Cormorant and the Anhinga. Double-crested Cormorants are seen on most of our ponds and lagoons throughout the year. However, during our Christmas Counts there have been as many as 200+ on some of our lagoons. The Anhinga, at first glance, resembles the Double-crested Cormorant but its thin snake-like neck is a distinctive characteristic. Additionally, you will not see the Anhinga congregating in great numbers. Usually there will be no more than 4-6 Anhingas at a roosting location.

A third example is the difference between the Fish Crow and the American Crow. Both are seen frequently on Dataw and, at times, in substantial numbers. The American Crow is more common than the Fish Crow but the diagnostic difference is their individual calls. The American Crow's caw-caw-caw is familiar to all of us. However, when we hear a Crow call that sounds like a quack-quack it is a Fish Crow. So with crows we need to pay attention to the call that we hear. If a Crow call sounds like a duck it is a Fish Crow!

A final example involves the Hawks that inhabit Dataw. The Red-tailed Hawk can be seen circling our golf course fairways and the russet tail is diagnostic. It is a large hawk and fairly easy to identify with the naked eye. There are two other hawks that live on Dataw that are common but can give birders a bit of a challenge to identify. The Sharp-shinned Hawk and Cooper's Hawk are similar in appearance and are ambush artists in terms of attacking their prey. These are the hawks that are likely seen darting through your backyard chasing down another bird. But how do you distinguish the Sharp-shinned Hawk from Cooper's Hawk? Unless you have a picture it is difficult. Cooper's is a bit larger and has a rounded tail. The Sharp-shinned Hawk has a characteristic flight pattern of two beats and a glide and its tail

is squared rather than rounded. If you see these hawks and are confused you are not alone. Don't be frustrated, sometimes you just have to make the best call you can based on your observation. Obviously, a picture would be probably definitive but you don't always have time to snap a photo.

All of the birds mentioned will be reported on our bird counts. The most important thing about birding is to keep it fun! Most birds you will be able to positively identify and for those that give you pause do the best you can. Remember, even the most experienced birders are not always positive about their sightings. Photos help but even a photo, depending on its quality, can still leave some doubt.

The 2019 Audubon Christmas Count will run from December 14, 2019 through January 5, 2020. Dataw is scheduled for **Saturday, December 14**. In years past, I along with a few hearty souls have braved whatever the elements have thrown at us to capture the feathered beauty that surrounds us. This year, Larry Haskell and I are attempting to increase our bird count numbers. To do this we are actively recruiting volunteers to join the Bird Count. We are dividing Dataw into three segments: North Island, Mid-Island and South Island. These areas have distinct habitats that support a variety of species. We will provide a skilled birder to join each group and we will keep radio contact to share important and/or intriguing sightings. Larry and I are seeking three teams of six people each to help us conduct a thorough Christmas Count. Besides the fun of counting birds and socializing with other birders, you will help to more accurately identify and record the bird life of Dataw. This will be a fun and enjoyable morning followed by lunch and the recording of the "official" numbers up to this point. Obviously there still will be results coming in during the day by those not at the lunch. So the final tally of birds will not be known until later Saturday evening.

To prepare for this expanded Christmas Count, the Conservancy is organizing a meeting for early December to review the Count details, provide an overview of the birds of Dataw, organize teams and map out the sites to be visited. The meeting will take place at the Community Center Multipurpose Room from 9:00-10:00 AM, on Saturday, December 7. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity or have a general interest in birding, please e-mail me at chlholbrook1998@gmail.com and I will add you to our Christmas Count list of participants.

GREENWOOD

FALL 2019

Green Wood is a publication of the Dataw Island Conservancy, Dataw Island, SC
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Water Used for Irrigation of Common Grounds and Golf Courses

... DAVE DOLAN

Most of the people who live on Dataw are aware that the water used for irrigation of non-private, landscaped property on our island is taken from ponds that are fed using a system of drains on the roadways and in certain low areas and then carried by buried pipes to our ponds. This was done intentionally to keep us from paying for water from Beaufort Jasper Water and Sewer Authority (BJWSA), as well as reducing stormwater runoff to Jenkins Creek and Morgan River. These ponds are inter-connected so that water can be moved from one to another. Some ponds have weir dams that are designed to overflow to the estuary during very heavy rain.

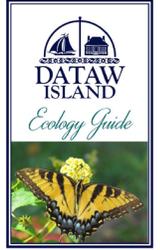
This natural water is supplemented by treated wastewater effluent from BJWSA through an agreement we made with them when Alcoa was managing the island. Our ponds are man-made and have clay linings to help retain the water in them. Two things have happened since the island's infrastructure was constructed. The first is that the ponds and the piping system have aged and are not as efficient as they once were. For example, the pond on CD 16 has been dredged to remove silt deposits and other ponds have had some similar filling and even dredging. Also, some of the clay linings have weakened so that some water is lost by leakage. Secondly, as development has increased dramatically throughout Beaufort County, BJWSA has been producing more treated effluent than we can use in non-drought periods. We have renegotiated our arrangement with BJWSA so that we do not take all their effluent but only a certain amount of it. This treated effluent is disinfected and therefore safe for spray irrigation. If we return to severe drought conditions, we may need to purchase other water from BJWSA which would be a cost burden to our budgets. During dry periods, we do reduce irrigation to non-critical areas and during wet periods, we irrigate areas such as golf course rough to get rid of some of the excess. The ponds are generally quite shallow and require treatment to control unwanted algal growth. We also have stocked certain species of fish in the ponds that help with water clarity. We monitor the fish and adjust them as needed.

Further, the collection of water on the island reduces our runoff to the estuary and this reduces our pollution of these waters from pesticides and fertilizers that we use on our private and communal properties. This is currently a critical issue with population growth and has led to some laws and regulations to reduce such pollution. We are mindful of this and are vigilant about complying with these measures. We will need to keep an eye on our stormwater collection system and ponds as they age so that we can correct any deficiencies that may arise.

Dataw Ecology Guide!

... JOHN COLGAN

The DI Conservancy Ecology Guide is nearly ready for publication. The final draft is being proofed now. The board expects to release it to the public early next Spring. We hope this colorful 60-page booklet will unlock the wonders of Dataw's natural beauty for you and your guests. Subjects range from ants and alligators to zinnias and zebra-striped skinks!



Oktoberfest a BIG Success!

... LARRY HASKELL



On a beautiful autumn evening the members and supporters of the Dataw Island Conservancy gathered at the gazebo for the 6th annual Oktoberfest. 120 people came to enjoy the wine, German beer, and delicious food prepared by caterer Harold Merrill.

The lucky winner of the raffle for the lovely quilt made and donated by Holly Dolan was Scott Drury. \$1,200 in raffle tickets were sold with all proceeds going to fund the Dataw Island Conservancy projects.

Got Electronics?

The Conservancy's 7th Electronics Recycling Day is on Saturday, December 7!
See page 1 for more information.



One of the trucks packed with electronics at the May 2019 Dataw Electronics Day. It's time to clean up and recycle at the 7th Dataw Electronics Day on December 7! Don't miss this one — the next one won't be until May 2020.

KEEP UP WITH THE DATAW ISLAND CONSERVANCY!

Our website is located on the Dataw website, under the "CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS" tab (located under SPORTS & REC). You will find past newsletters and information about the Tallow Tree Removal Project, a key area being worked on by the Conservancy.

Please support the DI Conservancy and our efforts to make our beautiful island even more beautiful!

Our mission is to assist in the preservation of Dataw Island's environmental character by attempting to permanently conserve, maintain and manage the natural areas and habitats of the Island and its surrounds; and encourage an appreciation of, and interest in, the Island's natural resources by the residents of Dataw Island.

If you already are a 2019 supporter, we thank you! Your support allows our band of volunteers to expand programs to enhance this special place we call home.
Not a supporter? Why don't you join us and become a supporter?

YES, I want to become a supporter! Enclosed is a check for \$50 (made out to the DATAW ISLAND CONSERVANCY). All donations are tax-deductible.

Want to help us more? Check here! **YES, I am interested in joining you.** Call me and we can talk about possible ways I can help.

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____ ADDRESS _____ E-MAIL _____

Drop Membership form off to George Cartledge's message box at 1048 Curisha Point South.