

\$2.00

South Carolina Wildlife

September-October 1982



South Carolina Wildlife

September-October 1982 Volume 29, No. 5

Dedicated to the Conservation, Protection, and Restoration of Our Wildlife, And to the Education of Our People to the Value of Our Resources.

Richard W. Riley
Governor of South Carolina

WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES COMMISSION

William M. Webster, III, *Chairman*, 200 Byrd Blvd., Greenville
Calvin Dawson, *Vice-Chairman*, Dawson Lumber Co.,
Charleston Hwy., Georgetown, Rep. R. Linwood Altman, Box
164, Pawley's Island; Charles L. Compton, 330 Church St.,
Laurens; Sen. Rembert C. Dennis, Box 1174, Moncks Corner;
James P. Harrelson, P. O. Drawer 732, Walterboro; Larry C.
Owen, Rt. 8, Box 97-A, Easley; James Quackenbush Jr.,
P. O. Box 11252, Columbia; Archie Stubbs,
405 McDonald Ave., Greenville.

WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

Dr. James A. Timmerman Jr., *Executive Director*

Division of Administrative Services:
John B. Reeves, *Director*; Albert G. Courie, *Personnel*;
Fred Ramage, *Accounting*.

Division of Information and Public Affairs:
Prescott S. Baines, *Director*; John W. Evans, *Public Information*;
Jim Goller, *Support Services*; John E. Davis, *Magazine*.

Division of Law Enforcement and Boating:
Pat Ryan, *Director*; W.K. Chastain, *Law Enforcement*; T.C.
Welch Jr., *Boating*.

Division of Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries:
Jefferson C. Fuller Jr., *Director*; Brock Conrad, *Game
Management*; H.J. Logan, *Fisheries*; Jack Bayless, Dennis Wildlife
Center.

Division of Marine Resources:
Dr. Edwin B. Joseph, *Director*; Charles M. Bearden, *Marine
Conservation and Management*; Dr. V.G. Burrell, *Marine
Laboratory*.

MAGAZINE

Published by the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources
Department, Division of Information and Public Affairs,
Prescott S. Baines, *Division Director*.

Editorial:

John E. Davis, *editor*; Nancy Ann Coleman, *associate editor*;
Bob Campbell, *Roundtable*; Dennis Gunter, *Field Trip*;
Mike Creel, Pete Laurie, Tom Poland.

Art & Photography:

Kay Jackson, *art director*; Linda Laffitte, Carl Turner,
Ted Borg, *chief photographer*; Robert Clark, Phillip Jones.

Promotions & Administration:

Jim Goller, *promotions director*; Ginger Butner,
Carole Hedrick-Collins, *finance*.
Rose McManus, *circulation*.

South Carolina Wildlife (ISSN-0038-3198) is published bi-monthly by the Information and Public Affairs Division of the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, 1000 Assembly St., Dennis Building, Columbia, S.C., 29201. Subscription rate is \$7.95 per year. Second-class postage is paid at Columbia, S.C., and additional mailing offices. Copyright ©1982 by the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources

Department. No part of the contents of this magazine may be reproduced by any means without the written consent of *South Carolina Wildlife*. POSTMASTER: Send address change and inquiries to SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE, Circulation Department, P. O. Box 167, Columbia, S.C. 29202.

2 Biosphere 4 Readers' Forum
6 Natural History: Marsh Hawk 11 Books And Events

12 Superstition: The Age-Old Power by Wilbert Nathan Savage
At one time or another, people have attached odd notions to just about everything from dragonflies to elephants.

18 Pocalla: The Killing of a Swamp by Jacki Reeser
Swamps have special sounds all their own—noises from unseen creatures, wind stirring, water gurgling. But Pocalla is strangely silent.

24 Dr. B by Nancy Ann Coleman
Though he retired this year, Wade Batson will always lead South Carolina in the field of botany.

28 Carolina Fall pictorial

36 Year of the Eagle by Bob Campbell
South Carolina's small eagle population seems to be holding its own, but the future of our national symbol is uncertain.

38 A Portrait of Poaching by Tom Poland
There's a sharp distinction between poachers and those tempted to go over the limit for one stray bird or a big bass. Neither is acceptable, but the former are especially deplorable.

44 The Very Essence of the Hunt by Chip Campsen
Warm fellowship amid unspoiled beauty has made the annual Bulls Island Archery Hunt the best of hunting adventure.

46 The Uncertain Threat of Acid Rain by Julie Lumpkin
While no one has blamed acid rain for any specific damage in South Carolina, state experts can't look at the facts from other regions and ignore our pH levels.

50 Field Trip 54 Roundtable 62 Ramblings

The Cover by Robert Clark

Fallen Leaves of a Red Maple—One of our most splendid autumn trees, the red maple colors South Carolina forests from the Lowcountry to the mountains.



Contents



by Nancy Ann Coleman

Dr. B

Though he officially retired this year, Wade Batson will always lead South Carolina in the field of botany. His enthusiasm for the beauty and diversity of the outdoors is passed along every day in biology classrooms across the state.

"Whoop!"

The governor's eyes widened at the sudden yelp of the young man at the podium. Again, seconds later, he was startled by the crowd's responding "Whoop!"

It was a muggy May afternoon in Boyleston Garden, across the street from the governor's mansion. The black-tied orchestra was quiet, the oyster and shrimp hors d'oeuvres picked over, and the bar had momentarily closed. The young man chanted: "Summer flora/Hasting triplet lenses/Nyssa—three dots/Diosporns—a smile."

And the crowd, in their floral prints and pastel suits, baby's breathed buns and gray toupeés, did smile and turned to see the reaction of Dr. Wade Thomas Batson Jr., whose "Whoop!" they had answered as a signal across the woods and fields of South Carolina for thirty years. That afternoon, a broad sampling of the state's environmental expertise had shed their muddy boots and levis and gathered to honor the daddy of them all—"Dr. B"—on the occasion of his official retirement after three decades as a University of South Carolina botany professor.

The speaker, Dr. W. Michael Dennis, now an environmental consultant in Gainesville, Florida, had only to say these buzz words to take them back to school days spent chasing Dr. B up Table Rock or plunging after him into the mire of Congaree Swamp to study vines climbing cypresses on the other side. Even as Dr. Batson sat there, complete with suit and carnation boutonniere, between his wife Josephine and Governor Dick Riley, those former students saw him in blue navy cap, bowtie, work shirt, khakis, and hushpuppy shoes, rounding up a motley crew for his legendary Friday afternoon field trip, pacing up and down the aisle of the bus, thrusting a bedraggled weed in someone's face: "What's this, Etheredge?"

Rain, snow, sleet, hail, Dr. Batson didn't rest until he brought them all out, sometimes sixty at once—geisha sorority sisters, introverted lab freaks, gangly jocks, pig-tailed nature-lovers, non-students he met last week at the Fort Jackson Officer's Club.

That day, years later, many of them biology teachers or environmental consultants of various sorts, they recalled Batson, joking, laughing, running from a patch of trilliums to a lone wild lily, plucking violets and poking them in his mouth, jumping back in the creek to carry a frightened student—45 years younger—from the end of a log to the bank, tapping the trunk or stem of this or that as the source of tea, dye, brooms, or baseball bats.

Back to campus they would go, bringing with them bits and pieces of Mrs. Feagle's pond, Wolfe Lake, the Congaree Bottoms,

breathless, flushed, dripping mud. And at the end of the semester, the class reached its pinnacle with the legendary all-nighter at Table Rock.

"It was a wonderful way to end your week," says Dr. Doug Rayner, former Batson graduate assistant. "Winding down on Friday afternoon. People who'd never been in the field before suddenly found themselves up to their armpits in swamp or lake, trying to keep up with him. You'd go with a bunch of people you came to know very well on this strange expedition, get dirty, scratched up, and afterwards drink a beer, eat a pizza, and you felt like a new person. Raring to go. It was fun. It was always fun."

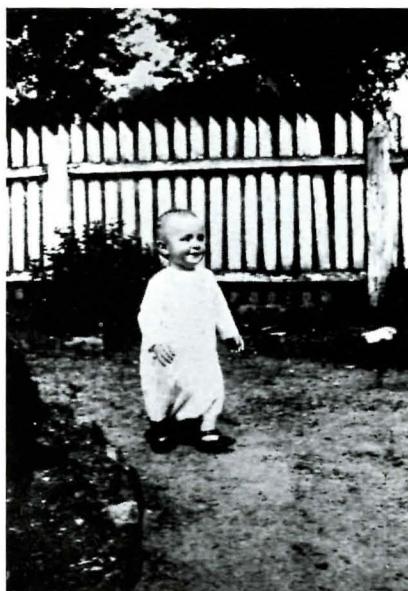
Batson's genuine interest in the students and his approach to botany through the genus rather than the species have made freshman biology and Biology 528 (his flora course) the seedling patch for South Carolina's ecologists. "I've taught the flora course ninety times," Batson reflects. "When the beginning student is required to know both the genus and the species, it's so much detail that you're probably gonna end up making an English major out of him. There are ten species of pine in this state, forty asters, thirty oaks. You can get acquainted with 500 to 600 genera just right around this campus. If you at least know the genus, you can always go back to a big manual and very tediously find the species."

Batson has relieved botanists nationally of the burden of that big textbook in the field. Designed specifically to fit the back pocket of a pair of levis, his three field guides—"Genera of Southeastern Plants," "Genera of Eastern Plants," and "Genera of Western Plants"—at last count were used by biology classes in fifty-five American colleges and universities. Unique among pocket field guides, Batson's books allow anyone familiar with basic biological terms to determine the genus of any plant by its floral and/or vegetative characteristics. To the general public, Batson is perhaps better known for his coffee-table book, "Wildflowers of South Carolina," put together from the slide presentation he had presented to countless garden and civic club meetings.

According to Batson, this approach (learning genus only) can be applied to all of teaching. "Help the person learn the general, and then work down to the specific—to encourage them early on, and to give them a base to work from."

"I like to think that what helps general students is probably the sort of information that can be taken home and discussed in everyday conversation. Something they would naturally remember because it involves everyday life. Some teachers have disagreed with this approach, and they believe in getting very specific, and thus they specialize, and to me it seems that they begin to talk more and more about less and less."

Batson's scrapbook reveals a lifetime of involvement with the outdoors and service to the community: (page 24) leading a PRT Wildflower Weekend field trip; (page 26-7, from left) at age two; with little sister Helen; the one-room Allison School; a proud Furman graduate; 1946 in Seattle as a civil adjustment officer; and the Batson family during the mid-fifties.



Testimony to Batson's ability and method are the former students who credit him with their present leadership role in the area of natural resources. Dr. Jackie Jacobs, executive director of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation: "It's hard to tell you how much that man has meant in my life. I was older when I started back to school. I was teaching high school biology and had a husband in law school and school-age children. My life was like a three-ring circus. He encouraged me when there weren't very many people encouraging older women to pursue careers. He kept telling me: 'It's your university as much as anyone's. You can do as well or better than any of these younger people' . . . If he had not been there, I really couldn't have done it."

John Reid Clonts, former state parks naturalist, recently named head of the Governor's Beautification and Community Improvement Board: "We met first in the spring of 1973. I was a senior pre-med biology major. Everybody talked about his class. I took the spring flora class and it turned my whole life around. Every one of his students develops a close relationship with him . . . He wanted to know all about his students. He had pop quizzes on their names."

Joe Pinson, biology professor at Coastal Carolina: "The definition of biology is 'the study of living things,' but that's not accurate anymore. It's the study of dead things in bottles. Dr. Batson broke away from that . . . Also, if you came to him for a favor, such as a letter of reference, he made you feel like it would be an honor for him to write it."

Doug Rayner, botanist with the Heritage Trust program: "I was a pre-med student, having majored in zoology, totally ignorant of the outdoors, not field-oriented at all, a lab person—before I took his course. I enjoyed it so much I decided to major instead in botany. So this was the course that determined my future."

Cindy Aulbach-Smith, curator of the USC herbarium: "I came here as a transient student in summer school and was talked into staying through fall and taking his flora course. I needed another three hours of botany, but I thought botany was the worst thing in the world. I stayed—and I'm still here—nine years later. He turned my whole world around."

Listing the teachers and others now in the field of biology who began under Batson's tutelage would be impossible, but some of them are: Dr. Richard Porcher at The Citadel; Dr. John E. Fairey III and Caroline C. Douglass at Clemson University; Dr. L.H. Buff at Spartanburg Methodist College; Dr. George Sawyer at Coker College; Dr. Lawrence Sweils at Francis Marion; Dr. John Logue at USC-Sumter; Rick Harrison at Appalachian State College; Dr. Dick Stalter at St. John's University; Dr. Steve Dial, department chairman at Pfeiffer College; Janice D. Coffey, chairman of the science department at St. Mary's College in Raleigh; Jim Elder, Washington lobbyist for the Sierra Club; and Rudy Mancke, producer of ETV's "Naturescene" and natural history curator with the South Carolina Museum Commission.

With the keen eye required of a botanist, Batson also studies his students, noting traits overlooked by others. As a student, Dr. John Barry, city-county coordinator for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg area and author of "Natural Vegetation of South Carolina," was "eager to learn, but having a terribly difficult time," another former student recalls. "Nobody could understand what was wrong, but Dr. Batson realized his vision was impaired, encouraged him to seek medical help, and it made all the difference in the world."

In a 1967 letter to Dr. Jacobs from John B. Logue, then a doctoral student of botany at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Logue credits Batson's experience and concern

with his change in major to taxonomy and the resulting improvement in his grades at USC. Later, as a graduate student, Logue became ill and had two-thirds of his stomach removed; Batson took over his lab and came up with money to help him and his wife through the ordeal.

Born May 7, 1912, in Marietta, South Carolina, between Travelers' Rest and Pumpkintown, Wade Batson attended a one-room schoolhouse whose sole teacher of grades 1 through 7 was Mary Lenora (Nora) Hendricks Batson, his mother. W.T. (Tom) Sr. ran a general store and a cotton-corn-cattle farm and Wade worked for both. "Back then farm life greatly affected the school year," Batson recalls. "The students were not needed at home when the crop was laid by. Then school opened and ran six weeks straight. During fall harvest, they closed again for them to pick cotton, corn, etc. Because we spent so much time in the fields, even the schoolchildren appreciated the food plant. A child today knows that the Jolly Green giant plants come in either cans or frozen—and that's about it."

"When I was a senior in high school, I sat down with the bulletins of forty colleges in front of me and none of them offered a degree as a naturalist but McGill University in Canada. So I decided to go to Furman, where a brief interest in mammalogy gave way to one in botany."

After getting that degree in 1934, Batson returned to teach at his alma mater, Slater-Marietta High School, and after three years of teaching, Batson was made principal and served three more years before he volunteered for the U.S. Navy in 1944. Meanwhile, he married fellow teacher and former high school chum, Josephine Elizabeth McDaniel.

From 1944 to 1952 the Batsons were human



perpetual motion machines. Following the war, Batson was set up as a separations officer at Lido Beach on Long Island, then in New London, Connecticut, and finally in Seattle, Washington. The Batson's daughter was born there, but named "Marietta" for home and her grandmother. Batson then enrolled in graduate school back East at Duke University. In 1949, nine months after he enrolled, he received his Masters, bought a Coleman stove and lantern, and drove his family to Circle City, Alaska, saw the Indians, ate salmon, camped, and bought groceries and gas at the milepost camps.

While at Duke for more study, a son, Wade III, was born. Two years later, in 1952 with a Ph.D. in botany, Batson came to USC to inquire about a job.

Once settled in Columbia, the Batsons designed their own modern split-level home in the midst of a wooded part of the old Guignard property in Cayce. Not a tree was scratched in its construction, and Indigo Creek still runs through the forest that is their front yard. The front walls are glass, allowing them to see the diversity of shrubs, trees, vines, and boulders outside; the lower level floors are brick, tile, and slate to allow the dog and Dr. B to track in mud from the field. Kitchen decor consists of rattlesnake skin, elk horns, and rifles.

For breakfast, Batson prepares his own "Batkakes," an "all natural" version of pancakes, and sometimes munches on raw turnips or sardines. He collects guns, knives, cars, and clocks. He's never worn a watch. Rather than drive, he likes to walk or ride his ten-speed bike, frequently in its "tree-climbing" gear. At the university he meets former and current students for soup at the Russell House and tests them on the scientific names of their vegetables. Several times a year he brings the whole class home, where "Mrs. B." assumes her "hostess with the mostest" role. Dead birds or unusual plants might be found in his

refrigerator. On a trip back to Marietta, Mrs. Batson remembers standing by the highway, refusing to get back in the car after a hognosed snake had climbed up her leg, giving up only when Marietta promised to hold it.

Botanical finds are brought back to the USC herbarium, turned over to the museum commission, or simply planted along the road. But Dr. Batson's contribution to the state has extended far beyond a collection of plant specimens and thirty years of teaching. He's directed science fairs, advised outdoor dramas, counseled high school teachers, and planted petunias every year in front of the Cayce City Hall. He has served on the boards of the South Carolina Wildlife Federation, the Keep South Carolina Beautiful program, the South Carolina Association of Biology Teachers, and numerous other organizations.

Long ago and before the bandwagons rolled by, Batson pushed for Columbia's current riverfront park idea and tried to persuade USC to buy Peachtree Rock, now owned and protected by the Nature Conservancy. He led Wildflower Weekends for Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; produced a show on plant succession for SC-ETV; and served as a lieutenant commander with the Navy Reserve. He belongs to Cayce Methodist Church and says the blessing ("cause he says it short and loud") for the Acres Club, a unique couples group formed around the memory of Senator James Hammond.

Of course, such positive contributions haven't gone unrewarded. Among official recognitions are the USC student vote naming him one of three outstanding professors in 1966, the Association of Southeastern Biologists' 1968 Meritorious Award for Teaching and USC's Distinguished Teaching Award. Most meaningful among his laurels, however, have been the constant stream of postcards and visits from former students

expressing their love and gratitude.

In 1977, Batson was 65, the university's official retirement age. Students voiced their protest with visits to administration and letters to the newspaper; one from a foreign student compared him to the Koh-i-noor, that "precious gem you care for and dare not throw away." Batson and another professor eventually went to court and won their case as the University was found to be without authority to alter or vary a state law in any way.

This year he is 70, and the state requires him to retire. With his unmatched knowledge about the outdoors and physical health superior to many students, actual retirement is inconceivable. He has now been named a professor emeritus, and will occupy regularly the same office at USC. Dr. David H. Rembert Jr., a former student and a colleague in the USC biology department, will pick up the Batson flora course, but expects Dr. B to go with him on the field trips. Batson has said he would like to write another book too, and had no plans to leave USC, where he has spent over half of his adult life.

At the retirement reception, Batson spoke with characteristic modesty: "I can't repay the university for the opportunity to teach and be with these students . . . You all know where to find me if you need me."

Apparently they do. Later, on a sunny day in June, a group of solemn dark-suited dignitaries followed the president of the university out of the Faculty House and into a chauffeured black car. Suddenly the stilted atmosphere was shaken by a seventy-year-old man racing three young women for a bowl of soup, through the sprinklers along the Horseshoe.

"Wade!" a colleague stopped him to shake his hand, "We're gonna miss you, ol' buddy—come July."

"Not if I can help it," Batson smiled, and hurried on.