



Salkehatchie * South Carolina

GoSalk.com * info@GoSalk.com
PO Box 617 * Allendale, SC * 29810

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Media Contact: Susan Hancock or Jennifer Abshire Patterson
Abshire Public Relations
912.844.9549 / 912.695.7881
abshirepr@att.net

From Birding to Kayaking, Salkehatchie Provides an Ideal Setting for Outdoor Adventure

ALLEDALE, S.C. – Salkehatchie provides the perfect setting to reconnect with nature by enjoying an unforgettable outdoor adventure.

“You can really get back to nature in Salkehatchie,” said Don Winslow, chief of staff for the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources. “The area has a low density of people and plenty of natural beauty, which is ideal for people who want to enjoy the beauty of the outdoors.”

Visitors can hike along miles of woodland trails, ride horses through emerald green forests, kayak down tranquil black rivers in the ACE Basin or enjoy spectacular birding opportunities at any number of state parks located throughout the area.

“The Salkehatchie region lies within both the ACE Basin and South Lowcountry Focus Areas which are priority coastal watersheds,” said Ashley Demosthenes, associate director of land protection at The Nature Conservancy’s Charleston office. “In both watersheds, there is an active partnership of federal and state agencies, non-profits and private landowners who work together to protect the rural integrity, traditional uses and natural resources of the area.”

The ACE Basin recently celebrates its 20th anniversary and boasts more than 195,000 acres protected to date, most of which are easily accessible by kayak or canoe. More than 127,000 acres have been protected on the South Carolina side of the Savannah River, ensuring that this remarkable natural resource will be treasured by future generations.

The Nature Conservancy reports that the Savannah River supports 110 fish species including the robust redbreast, previously believed to be extinct. The surrounding ecosystem is home to numerous rare orchid species, including wild cocoa and giant spiral ladies-tresses. In addition, wildlife like the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker and the state threatened gopher tortoise reside in the Savannah River area.

“The Savannah River is a significant shared resource between South Carolina and Georgia and is a major water source for both states,” said Demosthenes. “The quality of this river is critical to both people and wildlife.”

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Salkehatchie is also home to one of the most spectacular birding areas in the Southeast. With plenty of wide open spaces and undeveloped rural land, the area provides a wide range of habitats for birds including cypress swamps, tidal marshes and pine forests. The Salkehatchie region is home to a number of Audubon-certified Important Bird Sites and is widely considered to be a birding treasure in the Southeast.

"It's an incredible birding area," said Jeff Mollenhauer, director of bird conservation with the Audubon Society in South Carolina and author of *Birding South Carolina*. "The habitat is ideal for birds in the Salkehatchie region. You can see herons, egrets and wood storks by the coast and then go into a pine forest or a field nearby and see completely different birds. Plus, the ACE Basin is one of the best birding locations in the country. It's well worth the trip."

During the spring and summer, birders can see wood storks, black-bellied whistling ducks, painted buntings, swallow-tail kites and yellow-throated warblers. During migration season in the fall, a variety of shore birds come through the area. In the winter, migrating water fowl and bald eagles can be observed in abundance.

"For birdwatchers, the variety of species is vast, changing with the seasons," said Anne Rice, executive director of the Salkehatchie Leadership Center. "Three rivers – the Salkehatchie, the Edisto and the Savannah – each unique in its own way, offer an abundance of different activities including fishing, floating, canoeing or just enjoying scenery of various unique flora and fauna."

Here is a quick overview of the plentiful outdoor adventure opportunities in Salkehatchie:

ACE Basin

843.844.8957

www.acebasin.net

The Ashepoo, Combahee and South Edisto (ACE) Basin stands apart as one of the largest undeveloped estuaries on the east coast of the United States. The ACE Basin consists of 350,000 acres of diverse habitats including pine and hardwood uplands, forested wetlands, tidal marshes, barrier islands and beaches. The basin's unique estuarine system, the largest of its type in the state, provides key habitat for wildlife and serves as an ideal setting for kayaking or canoeing.

Barnwell State Park

223 State Park Road

Blackville, S.C. 29817

803.284.2212

www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1773.aspx

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This 307-acre state park offers nature trails, camping and cabins, picnicking, playgrounds and a community center favored for meetings and reunions. The ponds are ideal for bream and bass fishing. One of 16 state parks in South Carolina built by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the Great Depression, the park serves as a popular recreational destination.

Bear Island Wildlife Management Area

TiTi Road

Green Pond, S.C. 29446

843.844.8957

www.dnr.sc.gov

Widely considered to be one of the best birding areas in the state, visitors can see a number of rare species including the Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Eurasian Wigeon, Cinnamon Teal, Common Goldeneye, Roseate Spoonbill, Black Rail, American Avocet, Hudsonian Godwit, White-winged Dove, Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Western Tanager and LeConte's Sparrow.

Botany Bay Plantation Wildlife Management Area

Botany Bay Rd.

Edisto Island, S.C. 29438

843.844.8957

www.dnr.sc.gov

This state-owned property features 4,000 acres and ranges from woods to wetlands to fields. The beach ranks second along the South Carolina coast for sea turtle nesting and provides one of the rare nesting areas for Wilson's plovers and the Least Tern, both threatened bird species in South Carolina.

Colleton State Park

147 Wayside Lane

Canadys, S.C. 29433

843.538.8206

www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1876.aspx

This 35-acre park offers a Cypress Swamp Nature Trail, campgrounds, ball field, picnicking and easy access to the Edisto River, one of the longest blackwater rivers in U.S. The park is a headquarters for the Edisto River Canoe and Kayak Trail and is home to the Edisto Riverfest each June, a popular gathering for paddlers and campers alike.

Donnelly Wildlife Management Area

585 Donnelley Dr.

Green Pond, S.C. 29446

843.844.8957

www.dnr.sc.gov

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Recognized by Audubon as an Important Bird Area, the Donnelley Wildlife Management Area is a state-owned, 8,048-acre tract that encompasses a diversity of wetland and upland habitats including managed rice fields, forested wetlands, tidal marsh, agricultural lands and upland forests. The area is managed under a multiple use approach with emphasis on maintaining the natural qualities for both wildlife habitat and hunting opportunities.

Edisto Beach Interpretive Center

8377 State Cabin Rd.
Edisto Island, S.C. 29438
843.869.2756

www.southcarolinaparks.com/product.aspx?productID=26355

This informative center helps promote the wise use of coastal resources. Don't miss interactive displays, including a touch tank, which helps visitors understand the fragile resources of the ACE Basin estuarine reserve, the largest such natural reserve on the East Coast.

Edisto Beach State Park

8377 State Cabin Rd.
Edisto Island, S.C. 29438
843.869.2756

www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/1298.aspx

This 1,255-acre oceanfront haven offers great beaches, maritime forests and excellent shelling, plus campgrounds and cabins. The park features the state's longest system of handicapped-friendly hiking and biking trails, including one leading to a mysterious, 4,000-year-old shell midden alongside a secluded bend on a tidal creek. Plus, don't miss the environmental education center, full of exhibits that highlight the natural history of Edisto Island and the surrounding ACE Basin, one of the nation's largest preserved estuaries.

Fred C. Babcock - Cecil M. Webb Wildlife Management Area

Garnett, S.C.
803.625.3569

This wildlife destination features more than 5,800 acres including a river swamp-hardwood floodplain supporting old growth stands of bald cypress and water tupelo, agricultural land, lakes and streams. Birders can spot the following species: Least Bittern, Swallow-tailed Kite, Mississippi Kite, Purple Gallinule, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-cockaded Woodpecker, Acadian Flycatcher, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Yellow-throated Warbler and many others.

Great Swamp Sanctuary

Walterboro, S.C.
843.549.2545

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South Carolina's newest nature-based attraction, this 842-acre park offers visitors the ultimate Lowcountry nature experience, including a network of boardwalks, hiking, biking and canoe trails provide a perfect vantage point to observe the diversity of wildlife inhabiting the black water bottomland. The most historically significant of these paths follows the Colonial-era Charleston-to-Savannah Stagecoach Road still bearing the cypress remnants of long-fallen bridges.

Lakeview Plantation

875 Cedar Knoll Road
Fairfax, S.C. 29827
803.584.0689

www.lakeviewplantation.com

Enjoy leisurely horseback riding and horse camping all year-round at Lakeview Plantation. This family-owned plantation features more than 60 miles of well-maintained trails that wind through 2,600 acres of spectacular scenery. Specializing in quiet and relaxing retreats for groups of various sizes.

Lake Warren State Park

1079 Lake Warren Rd.
Hampton, S.C. 29924
803.943.5051

www.southcarolinaparks.com/park-finder/state-park/935.aspx

This 440-acre park boasts a floodplain forest that supports four species of pines and other large tracts of wetlands and woodlands that are home to a wide variety of plants and animals including whitetail deer, raccoons, wild turkeys, migratory songbirds, armadillos and American alligators. Other highlights include lakes, ponds, nature trails, playground equipment.

ABOUT THE SALKEHATCHIE REGION:

The Salkehatchie region of South Carolina serves as the heart and soul of the real South. Rich in culture, history, arts and outdoor activities, this five-county area attracts visitors who want to relax and escape the stress of the city. With its laid-back rural atmosphere and gorgeous natural setting, the region serves as an ideal year-round escape for kayakers, birders, golfers, hunter, antiques aficionados, history buffs and anyone with a passion for the outdoors. This family-friendly area serves as ideal daytrip or overnight location, attracting visitors from across the Southeast and around the country. For more information about the Salkehatchie region, please call 803.584.3446 or visit www.gosalk.com online.

ABOUT THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA SALKEHATCHIE LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE:

The University of South Carolina Salkehatchie Leadership Institute was developed to stimulate economic development in Allendale, Bamberg, Barnwell, Colleton and Hampton Counties of South Carolina. The Center, which is part of the University of South Carolina-Salkehatchie, opened in



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1998 as a result of public private initiative including the cooperative efforts of the University of South Carolina, the Allendale County Chamber of Commerce, BellSouth, South Carolina State University, Clemson University, U.S.D.A. Rural Development, S.C. Commission on Minority Affairs, S.C. Department of Commerce, S.C. Downtown Development Association, and Leadership South Carolina. The Institute has continued to build partnerships and coalitions locally, regionally, and on a statewide basis to facilitate leadership development, community development, and economic development. For more information about the Salkehatchie Leadership Institute, please call 803.584.3446 or visit <http://uscsalkehatchie.sc.edu/leadership> online.



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