



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cumberland Island National Seashore  
101 Wheeler Street  
St. Marys, GA 31558



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

## Deputy Director Visits Seashore

By FRED BOYLES

National Park Service Deputy Director, Dan Wenk, visited Cumberland Island on October 5, 2010. As the Deputy Director for Operations, Dan's responsibilities run the gamut of Congressional issues, major incident management and oversight of all 394 National Park Service units in seven regions. This was Dan's first visit to Cumberland Island. In his short two day visit he visited with park staff and volunteers both on the Island and on the mainland. He took a wide range of questions from the staff ranging from ways to continue our high level of services with leaner budgets to various resource protection issues.

The main purpose of Dan's visit was to become familiar with the expiring retrained rights on the Island in light of the planning process on how the park will utilize those structures. He toured the Grange and met with members of the Graves family. He

was shown those other structures where the retained rights have expired or will do so before May 2011. Dan offered a service-wide perspective on the issues since these have been a management concern at a number of other parks. As a follow-up to his visit, Dan arranged for a briefing with NPS Director Jon Jarvis in late November on the issue.

Dan also toured other resources on the Island and was able to view the route of the planned North end tours and visited the Settlement. Not long before leaving he commented, "I was overcome by a sense of peace and serenity at this special place."

On a side note, news of Dan's appointment as Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park was released on the same day as his visit to Cumberland. His blackberry was constantly buzzing throughout his visit from friends wanting to congratulate and newspapers wanting to call him for a comment.



Deputy Director Dan Wenk addresses employees at an All Employee Meeting during his visit to Cumberland Island. From left to right: Dan Wenk, Fred Boyles and Rene Noe.

Park News

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# The Mullet Wrapper

The official newsletter of  
Cumberland Island National Seashore

September through November 2010

The leaves begin to change on "Grand Avenue" towards the north end of Cumberland Island. (NPS Photo)

## Letter From The Superintendent

By FRED BOYLES

Many National Parks with historical themes have a position of a staff Historian. Many years ago, I was a park historian and it was a great job. Often I was charged with completing research studies and working with historians outside the Service on projects that were of mutual benefit to both the park and an academic institution. Unfortunately, Cumberland Island does not have a Historian position on staff. But perhaps we do in a roundabout way.

Mary Bullard is a remarkable historical scholar. The work she has completed about Cumberland Island is extensive and widely known. She has been published extensively and has penned the consummate history of our beloved Island and its many interesting inhabitants. Her most recent work is well worth reading for anyone who has an interest in the Island's complex history and more specifically the African American story on Cumberland. Mary recently published an amazing article entitled A Thatched Cabin on Cumberland Island, Georgia through the on-line journal, the African Diaspora Archeology Newsletter in the September issue. Anyone with internet access can read this work on line (<http://www.diaspora.uiuc.edu/newsletter.html>). The article relates the fascinating story of life for those formerly enslaved families that lived on Cumberland following the emancipation. The principal resource of the article is a photograph Mary discovered in 1987 in the collections of the New York Historical Society. Through

Mary's meticulous research she is able to give readers a new understanding of life for those who lived on the Island in the humblest of circumstances.

So who is our Park Historian? It has to be Mary Bullard. Her work over the years has proven her to be the preeminent researcher on all things Cumberland. Even if you have never read any of her work, take the time and read the story about the Thatched Cabin and I am sure you will agree with me that she deserves the Park Historian title. More importantly, Mary opens up a wonderful glimpse into Cumberland Island's past thanks to her wonderful writing and careful research.



Fred Boyles  
Superintendent

# Volunteer Spotlight

By GINGER HOLLINGSWORTH-COX

Thanks to all of our volunteers who support the seashore through their activities. We would like to highlight the following:

Plum Orchard Volunteers **Cindy Mills** and **Ricky Patterson** spent hours cleaning floors, dusting furniture, repairing items, donating exhibits and materials, assisting with education groups, and providing quality tours for island residents and visitors. During their four month volunteer duty, they opened Plum Orchard to nearly 700 visitors. Without volunteers these visitors would only be able to access the house during the currently scheduled tours on the second and fourth sunday of the month. We received many letters and phone calls from visitors and island residents reflecting appreciation for their efforts.

**Nell Nunn** followed in their footsteps and continued working in the basement and other areas of the house. She put great effort in cleaning and organizing, assisting with the holiday program and providing numerous daily tours.

**Bonnie Lee** and **Dale Bulmer** have been volunteering at Sea Camp and have assisted with Sea Camp check-in, putting carts together, moving mattresses and furniture, volunteer logistics, cleaning and providing improvement in volunteer housing, and

numerous other tasks.

Thirty eight seniors from **Epworth by the Sea** participated in a Volontourism Event on Cumberland Island on Nov. 13th; they did a beach clean-up, moved furniture in dorms, and cleared vegetation on River Trail

**Warren Wilson**, a perenial fall group put together dozens of bedframes in the dorms, **Clean Coast** facilitated a beach clean up from the south end to South Cut road and collected 1700 pounds of garbage, **Georgia Trailblazers**, and numerous **Scout Groups** have worked on backcountry trails. **Beta Club** from **Camden High School** assisted with clean-up of Plum Orchard and dorms. **Rick Gibbs** has assisted with the managed hunts, and other island tasks. **Ed** and **Diane Torgerson** have decorated buildings and along with numerous other volunteers have kept the Mainland Museum open. **Ralph Morgan**, **Jim Ekstrom**, **Merwyn Borders**, **Don Williams**, **Chuck** and **Judy Molnar** - many thanks to all of you. We appreciate the contributions of time and talent that you give in support of Cumberland Island National Seashore.

# Increased Exposure

By CARL DAVID

A new Cumberland Island sign has been installed at the Georgia Welcome Center at Exit 1 in St. Marys. The sign was designed by Justin Helton, with the assistance of Debbie Britt. Mickey Bosworth, Brian Wentworth and Dale Bulmer, a park volunteer, removed the old sign, painted the existing wood structure and mounted the new sign. The new sign will undoubtedly catch the eyes of the many travelers that stop at the Georgia Welcome Center and in turn will increase the number of visitors to Cumberland Island. Great job to all involved!



From left to right: Dale Bulmer, Brian Wentworth, Justin Helton and Mickey Bosworth



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Cumberland Island National Seashore  
101 Wheeler Street  
St. Marys, Georgia 31558  
www.nps.gov/cuis  
cuis\_superintendent@nps.gov

**Park Visitor Center:**  
(912) 882-4336 ext.254  
1-877-860-6787 (Reservations)

**Park Headquarters:**  
(912) 882-4336

**Graphic Designer:**  
Justin Helton  
Administrative Support Assistant

**Editorial Consultant:**  
Julie Meeks  
Administrative Officer

# Farewell

By FRED BOYLES

After 25+ years of dedicated federal service, long time park Administrative Officer Julie Meeks is retiring at the end of December. Julie's career began at Everglades National Park, where she first worked in the Administrative Offices and then for the Research Division providing administrative support. She came to Cumberland Island as Administrative Officer in January of 1990. Of course, since that time she has experienced countless changes in the park. She looks forward to spending more time with her children and grandsons, traveling and will be pursuing an offer working in the private sector. As the Administrative Officer at Cumberland Island, she has been involved in all levels of park operations because procurement, personnel, property management, budget and housing touch all divisions of the park. Julie's contributions to the park will be missed, we wish her well and sincerely hope that she enjoys her new life in retirement.

# Quote Corner

"One should never forbid what one lacks the power to prevent."

-Napoleon Bonaparte

# Welcome!

By MAGGIE TYLER

Maggie Tyler is Cumberland Island's newest staff member. Joining us in Novemember, she will fill the new position of Chief of Interpretation and Education. She comes to the Seashore from Olympic National Park where she served as the Volunteer and Youth Program Manager overseeing an average program of 1200 annual volunteers who donated 70,000 hours of yearly service. Before working at Olympic, she also worked for the Outer Banks Group which included the three parks of Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Fort Raleigh National Historic Site and Wright Brothers National Memorial. While working for the Outer Banks Group, she wore many hats including volunteer coordinator, acting district interpreter, and public information and community relations coordinator. She also has a strong background in cultural resources having spent



Maggie Tyler

time at Richmond National Battlefield and Appomattox Courthouse helping map cultural landscapes and performing archaeological assessments. Maggie graduated from the University of Cincinnati with a Bachelors Degree in Anthropology. She followed up by spending time at University of South Carolina where she earned a Masters Degree in Anthropology as well with a concentration in Archaeology of the African Diaspora.

Maggie is married to Matt Laricos who is joining her in St Marys after working at Olympic as well. Matt's background is structural firefighting and he has served as both a paid and volunteer firefighter for several fire departments on both the east and west coasts. Both Matt and Maggie have a strong public service background serving as fire, rescue and EMT's in their paid and free time as well as instructors.

# Upcoming TELnet Courses

For more information, go to [www.nps.gov/training/tel/](http://www.nps.gov/training/tel/)

January 12th  
12:30am-4:30pm ET  
Search Catalog: Legal Update  
Last Day to Register: January 12th  
"Legal Update"  
Four hours of Legal Update training presented by NPS and FLETC staff. This training is for any Law Enforcement Officer in the the NPS.

January 25th  
1:00-3:00pm ET  
Search Catalog: Retirement Planning  
Last Day to Register: January 25th  
"Retirement Planning for New Employees"

This training is designed to enable employees who are just beginning their careers to plan prudently for their retirement. Discussion includes the importance of planning for retirement from the beginning of a career. Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) options, and pitfalls to avoid when investing for retirement. This course is most appropriate for employees enrolled in FERS. This course is part of the NPS Fundamentals III: Taking Charge of Your Future. The online course, "Retirement Planning" in the NPS Fundamentals III should, ideally, be completed before participating in the TEL class.

# THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON



Fred Boyles and Justin Helton slice "Fred's Infamous Hams".

Wayne Lagasse receives his length of service certificate for 20 years of service from Fred Boyles.

## Y.E.S.S

By GINGER HOLLINGSWORTH-COX

Thanks to the generous funding of The National Park Foundation, Cumberland Island NS and the Camden County School District formed a new partnership program targeting youth as they transition from middle school to high school. The program is called Y.E.S.S, which stands for Youth Engaged in Stewardship and Service. The goals of the program are providing opportunities for youth to be engaged in service learning activities at the park and in the community, supporting the mission of the National Park Service in building stewardship for our nation's treasures, and exposing students to career opportunities in our agency. Students have already enjoyed the first field trip to the island. In 2011 the students will conduct a week long Junior Ranger Day Camp for children visiting the island. They will participate in summer volunteer projects. These students will then be the ambassadors for the program during their first year of high school, where they have exposure to and opportunities for being involved through a number of volunteer and employment programs such as Youth Conservation Corps, Student Conservation Corps, Student Employment Programs, as well as programs/degrees related to career paths. Nikki Walker, a social studies teacher at Camden County Middle School, provides the groups leadership and is the liaison with the Park Service staff.

## Plum Orchard Painting

By CARL DAVID

The exterior of the Plum Orchard Mansion was entirely washed down and the south, east and west sides were scraped and painted. This included all exterior windows, doors, shutters and benches. There were some minor repairs done to the hand railings and metal flashing on the floor of the balcony.



## Salt Marsh Monitoring

By TONY CURTIS

The Southeast Coast Network recently completed a multi-day effort to identify five long-term salt marsh community monitoring sites at Cumberland Island National Seashore. Thirty four potential sites were assessed to determine whether they met criteria such as accessibility, visibility, and their ability to support three small monitoring platforms from which to monitor elevation change, soil pore water and vegetation health. Ultimately, five sites will be selected where the Network will install permanent elevation benchmarks, and platforms to measure changes in vegetation communities and soil elevation, moisture, and salinity. These sites will provide information on salt marsh health and monitor the effects of relative sea level rise on local waters adjacent wetlands, and installation of the sites is scheduled to occur next summer.

Site assessment was conducted by Jenny Asper, the Network's new Coastal Tech, along with MaryLou Moore and Casey Harris, both Student Conservation Association Interns in October and November 2010. Operating from eighteen foot aluminum hulled jet boat, Jenny and crew navigated to each of the 34 sites from Christmas Creek and Shell Creek in the north, to Beach Creek on the south end of Cumberland Island. At each site, the crew took a series of photographs, documented vegetation species, measured the percent of ground cover, and installed a GPS survey point. For those sites not selected for future monitoring, these data will be archived to document current conditions. In addition to conducting this work at Cumberland Island, the Network is also assessing and installing sites at Timucuan Ecological and Historic Preserve in Jacksonville, and Fort Frederica National Monument on Saint Simons later this year. Other parks included in this project are Fort Pulaski National Monument, Fort Matanzas National Monument, Canaveral National Seashore, Cape Lookout National Seashore, and Cape Hatteras National Seashore.



Jennifer Asper

## Long-term Amphibian and Reptile Monitoring

By MICHAEL W. BYRNE

Amphibian communities of Southeast Coast Network (SECN) parks are monitored because of their global importance as ecological indicators, documented population declines and extinctions, and their high level of diversity in the Southeast. With an estimated 140 amphibian species, the Southeast accounts for about half of the total number of amphibians in the U.S. The SECN has 61 known amphibian species: 26 in Caudata (salamanders, newts, amphiumas, sirens), and 35 in Anura (frogs and toads). Because of their complex life histories, habitat requirements, anatomy, and physiology, amphibians are considered to be good indicators of changes in ecosystem conditions as they are affected by climate change, land use development and conversion, contaminants, and changes in hydrology.

The Southeast Coast Network of the National Park Service's Inventory and Monitoring Program began our long-term monitoring program on amphibians and reptiles at Cumberland Island National Seashore in 2009. Although the monitoring protocol focuses on amphibians, reptiles are also detected and this information is also used to improve our understanding of herpetofauna at the Seashore. Significant findings of our monitoring efforts included adding two new amphibian species, Cope's gray treefrog and Southern chorus frog, and three new reptiles, pine woods snake, Southern water snake, and banded water snake, to the Park's species list. During our monitoring efforts, we did not detect any non-native amphibian or reptile species, which is very exciting given the prevalence of several species on the mainland. Green treefrog and squirrel treefrog were the most widely distributed amphibians at the park. Amphibian species richness was 11, and over 1200 individuals were detected. We detected 10 reptile species and over 450 individuals.

J.D. Willison Photo



Cope's gray treefrog

J.D. Willison Photo



Southern chorus frog

J.D. Willison Photo



pine woods snake

J.D. Willison Photo



Southern water snake



banded water snake

# RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

## 2010 Sea Turtle Season Comes to a Close

By DOUG HOFFMAN



Cumberland Island's last sea turtle nest of the season finally hatched on November 9th, bringing an end to the long and productive summer. We confirmed 486 nests this year, which is over twice the island's annual average of 225 nests. The second highest year was 2008 with 336 nests. Multiple turtle species visited Cumberland's beach this summer, including loggerheads (483 nests, 283 false crawls), leatherbacks (3 false crawls), and green sea turtles (3 nests, 5 false crawls). Data from nest inventories shows that 38,274 hatchlings emerged on Cumberland's beach this year to make their way to the ocean.

## CUIS Participates in Gulf Oil Spill Research

By DOUG HOFFMAN

Cumberland Island is part of a research project to assess impacts of the Gulf Oil Spill on the Piping Plover, a federally endangered shorebird. NOAA's Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) program has provided funding for research relative to impacts of the spill. While the plover project is mainly evaluating birds along the Gulf coast, several populations in unaffected areas of the Atlantic coast are needed for comparison. Cumberland Island and Little St. Simons Island, both in Georgia, are participating in the study. Cumberland's 18-mile undeveloped beach is an important wintering ground for piping plovers, which normally begin arriving in August and stay through the following March. Most of CUIS' wintering plovers return to the Great Lakes region to nest in the spring. Funding for the project was awarded to researchers from Virginia Polytechnic Institute. Weekly activities on CUIS include surveying total number of plovers using the beach; recording information on any banded birds; and occasional efforts to trap and band new birds.



Piping Plover

## Hunt Camp

By CARL DAVID



The Hunt Camp Ranger Station was converted into an ADA accessible bathroom. There are now four bathrooms with a toilet, shower and sink in each one. This project allowed the park to decrease the footprint in the area by eliminating the shower trailer that was a separate structure.

# Maintenance Division

By CARL DAVID

## Mainland Ferry Dock Extension

The mainland ferry dock was extended on the east side to provide a safer and more accommodating space for the new maintenance crew boat that required a larger docking space. The project was completed in less than a week and included the installation of two new concrete floats, concrete pilings with all associated whaler boards and hardware. There were also five timber pilings placed on the inside of the dock to allow the boat to be easily and safely docked during inclement weather.



## YCC Kitchen



The YCC Kitchen Restroom project will convert an unused room on the Southwest side to an ADA compliant restroom and also include building ADA compliant ramps. The material has been purchased and we are in the process of hiring temporary employees to assist with the construction.

## ADA Door Installation

In an effort to make the park more accessible and accommodating to visitors with special needs, we installed American Disability Act (ADA) accessible doors at both the Mainland Visitor Center and Mainland Museum. These doors are operated by a push pad, mounted on both the interior and exterior of the building.



New doors at the Visitor Center.



New doors at the Museum.

## New Cabinets

The Visitor Center had one of its cabinets replaced with a lower version on December 9th. The cabinets were built and installed by a local company in Kingsland called *Better Built Cabinets*. The cabinets look great and should help significantly in assisting visitors, as well as adding more counter top to work on.

