



# FRESPACE Findings

Fall Winter 2019

## President's Report

The past six months have been an exciting period for the Park. Certainly, the most dramatic events have been our sea turtle nesting season and Hurricane Dorian. Many activities and enhancements have taken place at the Environmental Learning Center.



*Don't miss "What's on the Menu" at the ELC.*

The Park recorded 351 nests shattering the previous record of 240 in 2016 and more than tripled last year's activity. Fortunately, a majority of our nests had hatched by the time Dorian came calling, burying some of our remaining nests in over a foot of sand. We know we lost 6 nests, and possibly more. As of this writing, 5 are nearing hatching and 12 may have hatched before or during the storm and remain to be inventoried. Successful hatch rates for these are doubtful. However, the good news is that to date, 26,040 eggs have hatched compared to 8,709 last year and 17,276 in our record year. Our Sea Turtle Specialist, Leah

Schwartzentruber, and our two interns, Cadey and Chloe, did yeoman's duty, caring for the turtles through morning and evening patrols and educating the public at nightwalks and nest inventories. The June and July Nightwalks nearly sold out, and the success rate for seeing nesting turtles was high.



*Leah awards a prize at the Turtle Fest.*

FRESPACE volunteers provided support to the sea turtle project and assisted with another well-attended and fun Turtle Fest. The Blowhards helped maintain the Park trails, faithfully blowing them off every two weeks. Volunteers again sold "I Survived the Sea Turtle Nightwalk" T-shirts selling a total of 215 shirts for a net profit of \$1,765, both records. Thanks to all who sold and to those who purchased shirts. As more volunteer opportunities arise, we will publicize them through our website, Facebook, and email blasts. Your support will be appreciated.

Website: [www.frespace.org](http://www.frespace.org); email: [edistofrespace@gmail.com](mailto:edistofrespace@gmail.com); like us on Facebook



*Volunteers were essential to the T-Shirt project.*

FRESPACE funded several projects for the Park including the purchase of supplies for the turtle project, feed for the ELC bird sanctuary, and membership for FRESPACE/EBSP in the Edisto Chamber of Commerce. We anticipate more funding opportunities to replace the Bache Monument fencing and additions to ELC exhibits.

Our ongoing emphasis on local recruitment, solicitation of memberships, and the promotion of FRESPACE by the staff at the ELC are paying dividends. Currently, we have 527 members, an increase of 153 over last year and 271 more than two years ago. We also have 13 corporate sponsors: Charleston Fossil Adventures, Edisto Kennels, Edisto Saltwater Tours, Edisto Watersports and Tackle, The Edistonian, Green Boat Discount Liquors, Home Advantage Realty, The Joggle Factory, Kennerty Surveying, Lowcountry River Rats, McConkey's Jungle Shack, Mueller Electric Corporation, and Russ Hewitt State Farm Insurance. Please patronize them and thank them for their support of FRESPACE. We have developed a new hangtag that is more durable and easier for Park attendants to read. Please check your hangtag for the expiration date of your membership.

As a reminder, here are some of the benefits of membership (still only \$25/year!):

- Free entry to State Park (excluding camping)

- Free boat ramp privileges at Live Oak Landing
- Free use of picnic shelters, tables and grills
- Use of beach parking and restroom facilities
- Free admission to the Environmental Learning Center (ELC)
- Use of Park trails for hiking and biking
- Membership in an organization making a difference in preserving the natural beauty of Edisto

We are also seeing growth in our Communications. We now have 4,289 followers on Facebook, a substantial increase over last year. Our email list continues to grow, and the Edisto Chamber is helping communicate Park activities to our membership and the community. Please check out our frequently updated website at [www.frespace.org](http://www.frespace.org), and "like" us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/frespace](http://www.facebook.com/frespace). You can contact us at [edistofrespace@gmail.com](mailto:edistofrespace@gmail.com).

Sam, Lucas, and Pat comprise an effective and friendly ELC staff. They do great work developing programs that inform and entertain on low-country ecology, fauna, and flora. Come visit an Edisto treasure and check out the enhanced displays. They are open Tuesday through Saturday.

Thanks to each of you for your support. Together, we are making a difference.

*Bill Andrews, FRESPACE President*

### **Park Manager's Report**

Greetings FRESPACE Members,

It has been a good season. The weather was mostly cooperative, and the park has been full. We have an additional staff member, Alexander Kellner, who is our Ranger I. Previously, he was an assistant ranger at Kings Mountain State Park.

This past turtle season was a busy one! The Turtle Patrol had over 350 nests, which is a record and

quite an accomplishment for our 1.5 miles of beach. A big thanks to our turtle patrol volunteers and FRESPACE members for supporting this program.

The Volvo volunteer group came back out and performed a community service day helping park staff spread pine straw and replacing the dune rope barriers. The park has re-opened an additional retail outlet down by the main office. The “Camp Exchange” has been a big hit. The park staff did a great job working on this project. Kaley Foley, our assistant manager, led the project and did an outstanding job bringing our theme to light. The name, “Camp Exchange”, is inspired by our CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) roots. That was the name of the store located in the camp where members could purchase items.

We dodged a bullet with Hurricane Dorian. The park was evacuated on Labor Day and then assessed for damage after the evacuation order was lifted. No major structural damage was inflicted, but we had numerous trees, debris, and limbs down throughout the park. Thanks to staff, we were able to reopen the boat ramp ahead of schedule and open the Environmental Learning Center on its normal days of operation. The Park Service brought folks in from the Lakes and Mountain regions to assist with clean up. Thanks to their hard work and diligence, we were able to reopen the beachfront campground and day-use area with three days of work. We reopened the Live Oak and Cabin area after four days, making the park fully operational by the end of the week.

This upcoming fall/winter we will work on projects to enhance park amenities. One project will be installing the perimeter fence at the Bache Monument Trail. Trail work will continue as park staff perform annual removal of hazardous trees.

As always, thank y'all for your continued support. We look forward to seeing you out in our great community and the park.

*Kyle Bullock, Park Manager*

## **Interpretive Ranger's Report**

Hey FRESPACE,

There are some exciting updates since the last newsletter! For the first time since I started here last summer, all our tanks are fully stocked! Our touch tank has a horseshoe crab, butterfly ray, and hogchokers along with hermit crabs. We have a pair of warmouth in our freshwater tank and red drum in our main tank. If you haven't visited us recently, then definitely come check out our newest additions. Also, we will have a new tank in the front room, which will be a rotation tank. Any cool critters we may get in, we'll feature in that tank. Be on the lookout for that the next time you visit!

Our former program specialist, Brendan, moved in April to pursue a ranger career. We miss him at EBSP but are proud of him. Our new program specialist, Lucas, started in May after he graduated with a bachelor's degree in Public History. He started as our educational intern last summer and was a great help with animal care and tank maintenance. He does a fantastic job with programs and day to day operations. He plans on creating programs that highlight the historical aspects of our area, so look for those in the future.

This summer, our visitor and program attendance increased. The combined efforts of FRESPACE and EBSP to get word out about the ELC are working! This made time fly by this summer. With a busy season, we were glad to have help from our summer interns. Hannah, Chloe, and Cadey were a big help at the ELC and with the turtles. It was sad to see them go but I know they have bright futures ahead of them!

*Sam Pettit, Interpretive Ranger*

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**Thank you for your support!**

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**We are a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization.**

**Please mail application to:**

**FRESPACE**

**8377 State Cabin Road**

**Edisto Island, SC 29438**

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