

# The Traveller

"The attention of a traveller, should be particularly attuned, in the first place, to the Various works of Nature .... "

Newsletter of the Bartram Trail Conference  
[www.bartramtrail.org](http://www.bartramtrail.org)

Winter 2003

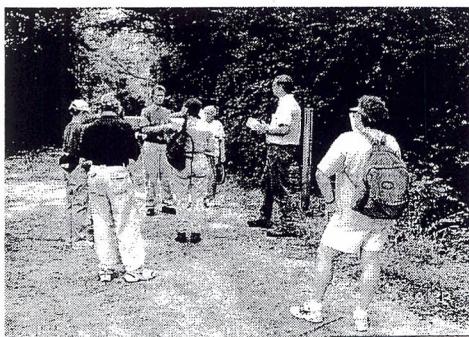
## President's Notes

Dear Friends:

As we enter a new year, the BTC is making plans! Our Fothergill Research Award Committee has received applications from scholars across the country. Our web site is growing in content and we have incredible numbers of "hits" from people all around the world who are curious about William Bartram. Our newsletter is flourishing under the able editorship of Tom Hallock. Members are involved in numerous activities, from writing books to planning museum exhibits.

And the BTC is preparing for our next conference, tentatively set for October in Alabama. For virtually all of these things—supporting scholarship, keeping our web page in cyberspace, sending our newsletter out—we need financing. We don't need much ... but we do need your dues. A membership form is on the outside of your newsletter. Please take the time now to return it with your dues.

As Bartram began his trip into the Creek nation, he joined with a "company of adventurers." I often think that the BTC is just that: a company of adventurers who explore the past as well as the natural world through the lens of William Bartram's writings. Through the years, I've come to know many BTC members. Like Bartram, you all tend to have a sense of curiosity and wonder and a love of adventure. I think that the adventure for all of us lies in the future.



BTC webmaster Brad Sanders joins a "company of adventurers" on the Old Quaker Road outside Augusta, Georgia.

Help keep our organization viable and thriving by your dues payment and your donations. More importantly ... we need your active participation in our activities. Mark your calendars now for the upcoming 2003 conference; more details will follow in the Spring newsletter. Contact our newsletter editor if you've walked a bit of the Bartram trail, read a good book about Bartram, or would like to organize an adventure with fellow BTC members. Because, like Bartram, I believe that the best part of adventure happens in the company of Friends.

- Kathryn H. Braund, BTC President

## Fothergill Award

The Bartram Trail Conference is now pleased to be offering the Fothergill Award. One or more fellowships of \$300 will be awarded annually to an advanced graduate student or recent Ph.D. whose research promises to lead to publication, book, article, dissertation, or other substantive product in studies related to William Bartram.

Appropriate areas of scholarship include, but are not limited to, the natural sciences, history of science, literary studies, journalism, history, biography, archaeology, art, photography and ethnography.

Recipients are asked to make an informal report on work to be published in the BTC newsletter, *The Traveller*, and/or make a presentation at the BTC's biennial meeting (at the discretion of the program committee). The application deadline is in December, with the award for use in the following year.

For more information, contact Dr. Kathryn H. Braund, Dept. of History, 310 Thach Hall, Auburn University, AL 36849 (334-844-4690; [braunkh@auburn.edu](mailto:braunkh@auburn.edu)). More information about the award, as well as an application, can be found at [www.bartramtrail.org](http://www.bartramtrail.org).

## Editor's Notes: A Place for the BTC, A Place for William Bartram

This current issue of the *Traveller*, alas, has me thinking about cycles and seasons. The newsletter you hold in your hands was slated for Fall 2002, but I'm on an academic calendar, November turned to December—and here we are, in 2003. Then a certain floppy disc labeled "BTC Newsletter" went into the pocket of a shirt that went through the laundry. It was that regrettable cycle—wash, rinse, spin—which further delayed my editorial tasks.

But the frustration of reconstructing lost files got me thinking why we need a newsletter, why we need the BTC, why the South needs William Bartram. For answers, look no further than your local newspaper. Over the Thanksgiving holiday (spent with inlaws in Alabama) I followed a five-part series by Taylor Bright of the *Birmingham Post-Herald*. The title was "Losing Our Legacy: Alabama's Disappearing Species." Bright tells a depressing story.

Alabama has more species of flora and fauna than any state in the continental U.S., yet it leads the nation in extinctions. Dammed rivers jeopardize the future of many mollusks and fish; suburban sprawl, lack of fire, and herbicides have caused the decline of rare plants; caves that are home to the endangered gray bat get vandalized. Worse still, the loss is being met by something between indifference and fatalism. A spokesman for Alabama Power responded to the environmental cost of damming a river saying, "it was going to be done whether we did it or the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers did it."

A second story is closer to home for me. This month, one thousand concerned individuals gathered in Jacksonville to discuss the future of the St. Johns River. The St. Johns, a major artery chronicled in Part Two of *Travels*, has suffered mightily since William Bartram described it two hundred years ago. Fish now die under mats of mud from construction sites, and from algae fed by chemical run off and sewage. Pollution is destroying the habitat. According to the *St. Petersburg Times*, the "hormones of some fish and alligators are so badly skewed they can't reproduce. Some turtles have been born sexless."

Yuck.

Conference participants hope that the Jacksonville gathering will lead to a massive, Everglades-style recovery plan. And the BTC can do its own small part to help protect these same endangered landscapes. As Kathryn urges in her column, plan to

attend next October's biennial meeting in Alabama. Pay your membership dues (the form is included with your newsletter).

And contribute to *The Traveller*. Now in its second full year, our newsletter is finally finding a shape. We are looking for book reviews; short articles on the people, places, flora and fauna that William Bartram described; news about members; newspaper items on key environmental issues. Without being partisan, *The Traveller* might serve as a collecting point for education and advocacy. The South needs the Quakerly vision defined by William Bartram. You can help by bringing your talents to the BTC!

-Thomas Hallock, BTC Newsletter Editor



The Rock House (built 1784) in Wrightsborough, Georgia. Photograph by Brad Sanders.

## Green Ink

Taylor Bright's "Losing Our Legacy: Alabama's Disappearing Species" appeared Thanksgiving weekend in the *Birmingham Post-Herald*. The five-part series can be read in full at [www.postherald.com/legacy.shtml](http://www.postherald.com/legacy.shtml).

More on the St. Johns River Cleanup (with wallpaper photos, a map, and several feature stories) can be found on an excellent web page by the *Florida Times-Union*, <http://www.jacksonville.com/learningcenter/riverseries/>.

## Bartram and the Florida Scrub-Jay

Of all the birds that William Bartram observed on his journeys through the American Southeast, the one we know today as the Florida scrub-jay must not have seemed the least bit special. Here is all he saw fit to record in his *Travels*: "In such clumps and coverts are to be seen several kinds of birds, particularly a species of jay ... they are generally of an azure blue colour, have no crest or tuft of feathers on the head, nor are they so large as the great crested blue jay of Virginia, but are equally clamorous."

To paraphrase Bartram, scrub jays are sort of pretty, although not as big and handsome as the ordinary blue jay. Why, they don't even sing; they just sort of make noises, presumably annoying ones at that. Then he turned his attention to lizards and snakes.

What a pity!

If Bartram had hung out with scrub jay families for even a few months, he might have discovered what makes Florida scrub-jays special indeed: their "family values" (so we say), their amazing memory, and how they help preserve their own habitat. Besides, the Florida scrub-jay (*coeruleuscens coerulescens*) is the only species of bird found only in the state of Florida.

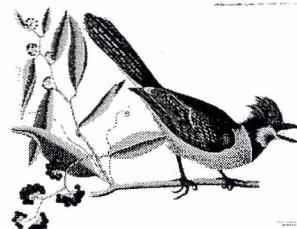
Let's start with scrub-jays and the "nuclear family." Certainly Bartram was predisposed to find the pattern. Animals, he wrote, have "attachments as active and faithful, as those observed in human nature." Mating for life is a strong scrub jay trait, for instance, although one that's not unique among birds. What does set these Florida jays apart is the behavior of the young: instead of flying off and living independently as soon as they're able, they stick around to help their parents raise the next generation. For a year or maybe several years, they help their parents defend the territory and forage for food.

Why are they such homebodies? Could it be that it's mainly due to a chronic "housing shortage?" Each family normally needs 20 to 25 acres of scrub territory. Lack of scrub has most always been a constraint on the species' population. And over the last century, some 90 percent of Florida's scrub has disappeared, mainly into development and citrus groves. So young scrub jays hang out with the folks until a territory opens up, due to another family dying out or moving away, and until they find a suitable mate, too. The eldest male offspring has a special reason to wait around—under the avian equivalent of the law of pri-

mogeniture, he inherits the territory when his father dies.

The young singles spend a lot of their daylight hours on sentry duty, sounding the alarm if a predator approaches. If you walk along any of the trails that meander through the scrubby flatwoods in a setting like Oscar Scherer State Park (U.S. 41 in Osprey, between Sarasota and Venice), keep an eye out for the tallest pines around. If you spot a small (12-inch length) blue-and-gray figure at the very top, it's almost surely a scrub jay sentinel.

Stay put for a while and the sentry may come progressively closer, eventually peering at you from a low pine bough or a scrub-oak branch only a few feet away. Feel free to converse with a companion, or with the scrub jay—they're used to it. Then, assuming you avoid loud noises, sudden movements and white shirts (blue recommended), you may well be rewarded by a scrub jay landing on your outstretched arm, your hand (palm down, for reassurance), your hat, or even your bare head (not recommended).



Mark Catesby's "Crested Jay"

Why are scrub jays so amiable with strangers? Jon Thaxton, who logged 13,000 volunteer hours studying them in Oscar Scherer before he was elected a Sarasota County Commissioner, suggests that it's based on ancestral experience: for thousands of years, the only humans that Florida Scrub-Jays would have known were natives, who entered the scrub to gather nuts and berries. (While "scrubbies" would eat out of your hand today, of course, feeding any wildlife in state parks is strongly discouraged and can be hazardous.)

Scrub jays have an eclectic diet, consuming everything from insects and lizards to snakes and acorns. Lots and lots of acorns. Scientists find that one jay buries more than 6,000 acorns (the bite-size kind, from scrub oaks) each autumn. Amazingly, the birds not only remember where they put each one, but they sense which acorns have the longest "shelf-life" and leave them until last (it apparently has to do with

an ability to sense varying amounts of tannin, a natural preservative).

Fortunately, scrub-jays don't dig up all their acorns. The ones they leave are their legacy, the seeds of new scrub oaks that are vital to perpetuating their habitat. Unfortunately their plantings can't make up for the human-caused loss of habitat, which sent their population plummeting proportionately and reduced them to a threatened species.

Florida scrub-jays are believed to have been in Florida at least as long as the first humans, around the end of the last Ice Age some 11,000 years ago. But there aren't many places left where residents and visitors can enjoy sharing the state with these bold and pesky critters. Among them are Ocala National Forest, the Cape Canaveral area, the Archbold Biological Station near Lake Placid, and Oscar Scherer State Park.

Thanks to land acquisition and an aggressive program of prescribed burns to preserve and restore some 450 acres of scrubby flatwoods, Oscar Scherer has become the most important home for scrub jays in Southwest Florida. While the count can fluctuate, perhaps along with the supply of edible insects, it has been at least 23 or 24 nesting pairs for several years, reports district biologist Terry Hingtgen. We're leveling off, Hingtgen says, and at close to the "minimum viable production" needed to guarantee their presence a century from now. Somehow, I think Billy Bartram would be pleased to hear that.

*To learn more, contact Richard F. Janssen, Secretary of Friends of Oscar Scherer Park, Osprey, FL 34229 (dickjanssen@comcast.net).*

## Franklinia Alatamaha Reintroduced in the Wild

If Bartram enthusiasts had to choose an emblem for their passion, it might be that cousin of the camellia and member of the tea family, the Franklinia Alatamaha. First described by John and William during their famous father-son outing in the 1760s, the Franklinia was never again reported to be seen in the wild after 1803. The specimens that survive today come from a sample preserved in their Kingsessing garden. William of course made a beautiful sketch of the flowering tree in 1788, and the image was used on everyone's favorite postage stamp.

Which leads to our story .... Last April, the Nature Conservancy of Georgia and the Atlanta Botanical Garden replanted ten Franklinias near the Alta-

maha river, where the Bartrams discovered a Franklinia grove two hundred years ago. The move was not without controversy. As Terry Dickson of Jacksonville's *Florida Times-Union* reports, locals had long since embarked upon quests of their own for a Franklinia in the wild. These locals regretted the loss of "mystique" that came with reintroduction, and argued that the cultivated variety might "contaminate the native stock."

John R. Bozeman, a retired plant ecologist at Georgia Southern University, has "been looking through the woods" for "forty years now," searching for a Franklinia. To him, putting a garden specimen by the Altamaha smacks of cheating. "What if some poor fool stumbles upon it and thinks he's found something," Bozeman asks. "He hasn't found anything but some nursery plant." Carol Helton of the Atlanta Botanical Garden obviously disagrees: "We're just going to put back a plant that should be there," she says.

But Bozeman might have a point. When the Bartrams first identified the Franklinia, it had been severely limited in its range by logging, and botanists note that the Franklinia was probably a relic of the Ice Age—in other words, on its way out even before the European invasion. Bartram would hint as such back in the eighteenth century when he called the discovery "a very singular and unaccountable circumstance." So that leaves the followers of his trail with an interesting question: does the Franklinia belong in these same woods today? Hmmmm ... What do you think?

*For more on this story, check out Terry Dickson's fine reporting in the 4/17/02 and 4/23/02 Florida Times-Union.*

## New Guidebooks to the Bartram Trail

*A Guide to William Bartram's Travels: Following the Trail of America's First Great Naturalist*, by BTC webmaster Brad Sanders, is now available at Fevertree Press. Order this comprehensive guide, priced at \$19.95, from [www.fevertreepress.com](http://www.fevertreepress.com), or at 189 Hidden Hills Lane, Athens, GA 30605-4203. Chuck Spornick, Alan Cattier and Bob Greene are authoring a guide as well, which is due out shortly from the University of Georgia Press. More on these two books will be in the Spring newsletter.

## Bartram in Butler County, Alabama

In the summer of 1775, William Bartram passed through the northwestern part of Butler County, Alabama. He was on his way from Tallahassee to Mobile, and followed a trading path that is marked today by Interstate 65 between Montgomery and Mobile. Though no permanent white settlements or forts existed in Butler County at the time, Bartram's route passed by what would become Fort Deposit in Lowndes County and Fort Dale in Butler County. His path continued in a southwesterly direction slightly east of the future village of Manningham, past the site of Fort Bibb at Pine Flat and down the present-day county line between Conecuh and Monroe Counties. Parts of Highway 185 and Sherling Lake Road (County Road 44) follow Bartram's route through the county.

For the formal dedication of the Bartram Trail in Butler County in 1976, historian Myra Ware Crenshaw wrote, "Approximately 30 miles of the Bartram Trail lie in Butler County. It follows the path of the Old Federal Road which runs from Milledgeville, Georgia, to the Tensas settlements north of Mobile. The Trail enters the northern boundary of Butler County at the Lowndes County line and follows State Highway 185 southward for about six miles. At the site of Fort Dale, the Trail leaves Hwy. 195, taking a westerly turn, and follows county roads, all paved, leaving Butler County along the Butler-Monroe line. All of the trail in Butler County is along paved roads with the exception of one two-mile stretch, where there is no road at all anymore. The most historic section of the Trail is a four-mile stretch extending from the site of Fort Dale to Poplar spring, where the Ogly Massacre [an 1818 Creek raid] occurred."

Plants and landscape features described by Bartram are still found in Butler County. He noted that the soil in this region had a deep bed of white limestone, shell-filled rock. Bartram wrote: "The upper stratum or vegetable mould of these plains ... lies on a deep bed of white, testaceous, limestone rocks, which in some places resemble chalk, and in other places are strata or subterranean banks of various kinds of sea shells, as *ostrea*, &c." John B. Little described the same geological feature over one hundred years later in his 1885 history of Butler County, and Cretaceous Period limestone is visible in rock outcroppings in the northwestern part of the county today.

Bartram and his fellow travelers were impressed with a remarkable, dense grove of dogwood trees that grew for nine or ten miles on a flat section of land beneath huge magnolias and pines. "We now entered a very remarkable grove of Dog wood trees (*Cornus Florida*), which continued nine or ten miles unalterable, except here and there a towering *Magnolia grandiflora*; the land on which they stand is an exact level ... These trees were about twelve feet high, spreading horizontally; their limbs meeting and interlocking with each other, formed one vast, shady, cool grove, so dense and humid as to exclude the sunbeams ... This admirable grove by way of eminence has acquired the name of the Dog woods."

In 1975, in response to a growing interest in William Bartram and his historic contributions, Governor George Wallace enlisted the cooperation of the governors of North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee to formally commemorate the paths that Bartram traveled, and the trail was dedicated one year later. Bartram's route is still traceable through northwestern Butler County. The scenic pathway provides an excellent source for education. A museum, botanical garden, and recreational trail would be an appropriate way to mark the naturalist's monumental southern journey and preserve an interesting part of our country's early heritage.

*To learn more, contact Annie Crenshaw at anniecrenshaw@mindspring.com.*

## Book Reviews

Edward J. Cashin. *William Bartram and the American Revolution on the Southern Frontier*. Columbia: U. of South Carolina P., 2000. 448 pp., \$39.95.

This reviewer often has occasion to think of William Bartram. As owner of a barren sand ridge along the Alapaha River in south Georgia, he frequently sees growing there a species of *annona* first described by Bartram as he traveled along the road from Fort Barrington, toward Florida and his famous encounter with the hostile Seminole. Relatively few early travelers entered the wilds of southern Georgia and wrote accounts of their visit. None wrote an account so poetic and moving as Bartram. His descriptions inspired many nature lovers from his time until today to retrace his steps. Coming to public attention at the commencement of the Romantic Era,

Bartram's description of an idyllic American wilderness fueled the Romantic vision of unspoiled nature and the "natural man."

Edward J. Cashin has shown that the idyllic paradise in Bartram's pages existed mainly in the author's imagination rather than in reality. The southern wilderness that Bartram traversed swarmed with scoundrels, renegades of all colors, and it was seething with the coming of the revolution. Through all this dangerous chaos "Poor Billy Bartram" wandered like a "holy fool" of legend, protected apparently by his own innocence and luck more than the goodness he imagined that he found among the shady traders, outlaws red and white, and assorted knaves and varlets which swarmed in any "new country."

Bartram apparently possessed a genuine goodness, which seems to have disposed some unlikely parties to like and assist him. Part of his optimism about human nature may have stemmed from his own ability to bring out the best in the people he met, from aristocrats scheming to foment or present revolution, through Creek and Cherokee chieftains, to overworked slaves.

Cashin has carefully retraced Bartram's route, often relying on similar earlier notes by *Travels* admirer Francis Harper (himself beloved in south Georgia not only as a naturalist, but also as a folklorist who preserved much of the culture of the Okefenokee region). Bartram's excellent book, annotated by Harper and judiciously critiqued and supplemented by Cashin, provides a feast of information about the southern frontier on the eve of the Revolution.

Cashin has discovered numerous occasions where Bartram encountered or witnessed treachery, cruelty, and political machinations, none of which ever found their way onto his pages. In his book, Bartram described the America that he wished to see coming into being, where the rights of native and African Americans would be respected, and where the pioneers were all frugal, moral semi-Quakers. With few exceptions, matters that were not in harmony with this vision simply found no place in Bartram's published book. Bartram himself betrayed a pro-American bias, at one point apparently acting as a scout for an American military operation. His famous *Travels* give little or no indication of this.

Cashin's book is the fruit of profound scholarship and indefatigable research, and it casts an entirely new light on a figure many would think well known. The notes and bibliography alone are

immensely valuable. One might wish some of the maps a bit more detailed, but on the whole this book is beyond reproach, and invaluable to any study of this region during the Revolutionary era.

- John Crowley, Valdosta State University

Johnny Molloy. *Long Trails of the Southeast*. Birmingham, AL: Menasha Ridge Press, 2002. 256 pp., \$15.95.

A native Tennessean, Johnny Molloy was motivated to write this book because the Appalachian Trail, as a result of its popularity, had become "more about community in the outdoors than a remote and solitary adventure." His search for "other quality long trails in the southeast" resulted in a compilation of information about seven challenging and rewarding trails in eight states. These include the Wild Azalea Trail (Louisiana, 26 miles); Pinhoti Trail (Alabama, 103 miles); the Foothills Trail (South/North Carolina, 86 miles); Florida Trail (3 sections: Big Cypress National Preserve, 42 miles; Ocala National Forest, 60 miles; and Apalachicola National Forest, 66 miles); Black Creek Trail (Mississippi, 41 miles); Benton Mackaye Trail (Georgia/Tennessee, 93 miles); and the Bartram Trail (Georgia/North Carolina, 110 miles). The Bartram Trail "roughly follows Bartram's journey through the mountains of north Georgia and western North Carolina, attempting to offer a wilderness opportunity reminiscent of Bartram's experience...." Molloy notes that it "offers the consummate Southern Appalachian experience."

The author provides a detailed description of each trail that encompasses trail conditions, level of difficulty, highs and lows, and tips on camp sites, resupplies, and lodging availability. Trail and topographical maps are provided for each route, as well as detailed mile-by-mile logs. I took the book with me while hiking about 40 miles of Alabama's Pinhoti trail and found the author's descriptions of water sources, road crossings, views, etc. to be very accurate. I recommend that this excellent book be included in the backpacks of all hikers trekking through the Southeast.

- Kyle G. Braund, Dadeville, Alabama

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Patricia Tyson Stroud. *The Emperor of Nature: Charles Lucien Bonaparte and His World*. Philadelphia: U. of Pennsylvania P., 2000. 371 pp., \$34.95.

Historians of every stripe will welcome this accessible biography, and hopefully Stroud's handsomely produced volume will recruit other scholars to continue her endeavor, begun by the late Erwin Stresemann in 1951. Time has not dimmed the achievements of this scientific scion of an imperial family. Charles Lucien-Jules-Laurent Bonaparte (1803-1857), Napoleon's nephew, was a pivotal figure in nineteenth-century natural history. Surmounting the interruptions of recurrent political exiles, he made important contributions to his favorite study, ornithology, and he was a truly international participant in the study of vertebrate animals.

As a young man in exile in Bordentown, New Jersey, Bonaparte worked on western expedition collections of birds with the circle of naturalists associated with the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia. At the academy, Bonaparte learned the value of collaboration, and he also absorbed the republican sentiments of Alexander Wilson, the wit of John James Audubon, and the disciplined vision of Thomas Say (whose biography Stroud also has written). Not an artist, Bonaparte, returning to Europe, left his collections for illustration with Alexander Lawson, and in Europe, he maintained contacts with naturalists, such as Charles-Alexandre LeSueur and Audubon, whom he had first met in the United States. Like many others, he later had a falling out with Audubon, who accused "Charley" of "going the rounds, and trying to pump each, and every one" for knowledge of birds.

In 1828, Bonaparte took up residence in Rome with his wife Zenaide at the Palazzo Verospi until 1836, when they moved to the Bonaparte palace on the Piazza Venezia. Somewhat surprisingly, he did not know German, and his wife Zenaide, who had lived in Frankfort, translated and prepared his German correspondence. Having inherited the title of Prince of Canino at his father's death, Bonaparte announced his idea of assembling conventions of scientific scholars in Italy. Despite political suspicion, these congresses in fact did meet from 1839 to 1847. The congresses enabled Bonaparte to interact with the great Swiss scientist, Louis Agassiz, who planned a "prolonged" trip to the United States, in large part to study with Bonaparte. Exile to France, travels to museums in northern Europe, visits with experts, and serious leg

ailments consumed his later years. Although Bonaparte remained highly productive, he was unable to bring to completion his global *Conspectus generum avium*.

The author was indeed a citizen of the world, which was for him a world in large part defined by sophistication, communication, and scientific endeavor. In his own words, God had made him a long-suffering Job without giving him the patience. Would that Bonaparte had had, if not more money and power, more time. He died in his fifty-fourth year.  
-Charlotte M. Porter, Florida Museum of Natural History

Gail Fishman. *Journeys through Paradise: Pioneering Naturalists in the Southeast*. Gainesville: U. P. of Florida, 2002. 336 pp., \$24.95.

Historians of natural history and conservation in the United States and general readers will enjoy this nicely written book by Gail Fishman, a freelance writer committed to wildlife conservation. The pioneering naturalists of the title are Mark Catesby, John and William Bartram, André Michaux, John Abbot, Alexander Wilson, John James Audubon, Hardy Bryan Croom, Alvan Wentworth Chapman, John Muir, John Kindel Small, and Roland and Francis Harper. This is a distinguished group, whose lives spanned three centuries, and many, especially the first seven on the list, already have attracted serious scholarly attention. Less well known in the same annals is Croom (1797-1837), a wealthy planter and attorney from North Carolina with botanical interests in north Florida. The group includes collectors, taxonomists, nature philosophers, editors, and leaders of the twentieth-century conservation movement.

Fishman, too, is a traveler. Making good use of her knowledge of the Southeast, she sometimes interjects herself into the narrative, blending biography, itinerary, and accomplishment. Readers hear about the Southeast wilds through older words, but see the places traveled through Fishman's eyes. This pleasant use of anachronism works because Fishman has chosen men who might have shaped our present vision of nature. Had she added a thirteenth chapter, her pioneers might have included women like Marjory Stoneman Douglas and Marjory Carr.

Taken as a whole, Fishman's book suggests four good points that the author might have developed in an explicit way in opening and closing chapters to her book. First, Fishman's selections show the impor-

tance of Florida in the development of U.S. nature thought and conservation action from William Bartram to Francis Harper. This had been in large part a political process, and at this time, the Everglades remains a subject of national debate. Second, Fishman's focus on travel routes marks out wilderness areas (some now parks) as scientific spaces, as well as recreational destinations and tourist sites. These scientific spaces encouraged thought and response sustained today by management, which in Florida uses historical documentation to establish a horizon line for restoration. In this sense, these spaces, as wild as they might be, become a form of landscape, an intellectual and natural product. Third, the tradition of travel demonstrates the role of imitation in natural history. The men of these chapters retraced each other's routes as best they could, and the author, too, is part of this tradition. Competition, such as Audubon's rivalry with fellow bird painter Wilson and dismissal of William Bartram's flowery sayings, is one aspect of this imitation. Travelers looked to find the common or unusual things noted by their predecessors. As he traveled, Small for example recognized with horror the consequences of human demands upon the Florida water table. Francis Harper literally recreated William Bartram's travels of 2,400 odd miles and annotated Bartram's earlier findings with more recent reports. Lastly, Fishman's narrative approach shows the asset of field trips to the historical approach to natural history. Again, the twenty-first century experience cannot duplicate Muir's Florida trek of 1867, but it can provide welcome insight to bookish pursuits.

Fishman needs to rethink the implications of her title. I hope that she will continue her work in a second volume devoted to twentieth-century leaders, and yes, many of them will be Floridians. Besides Douglass and Carr, some of the pioneers will be Archie Carr, Howard Zinn, and Larry Harris. Some of the concepts will be a river of grass, sea turtle nesting sites, Golden Books nature guides (color on every page), controlled burns, and wildlife corridors—progressive ideas built upon the notes and achievements of earlier naturalists presented in this book as travelers, journeymen of nature.

-Charlotte M. Porter

Lester D. Stephens. *Science, Race, and Religion in the American South: John Bachman and the Charleston Circle of Naturalists, 1815-1895*. Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2000. 338 pp., \$45.00

This is an important book with ambitious goals set out in the rather long title and met to large degree in the skillfully written text. Using John Bachman, a collaborator of John James Audubon, as a central figure, Lester D. Stephens introduces the leading naturalists in the Charleston circle—Edmund Ravenel, John Edwards Holbrook, Louis Reeve Gibbes, Francis Simmons Holmes, and John McGrady—through interlocking biographies. These South Carolina naturalists all had active northern connections by virtue of family, education, and in-laws, and they enjoyed scientific connections as well. Outside their own circle of rewards, they exchanged specimens with distant colleagues, traveled to study other collections, and published in scholarly journals, many based in northern cities. Their cardinal points were North, South, and abroad, although (notably for men of their era) none traveled to the Far West.

What held this group together was a way of life that permitted their activities in the natural history—as Stephens put it, the "queen" of the sciences—in Charleston. The quality of the collections attracted the attention of Louis Agassiz, who cultivated his considerable authority among the Charleston circle at the time of impending confederacy sentiments and sectional crises. The Charleston circle remained loyal to the South, serving in different capacities. McGrady, for example, joined active combat; Bachman, a clergyman, concerned himself with the implications of secession for organized religion. Although the Civil War destroyed the lifestyle sustaining the Charleston circle and the museum, McGrady, believing that he was Agassiz's chosen successor, accepted a short-lived teaching position at Harvard University.

Stephens gives much room to the issues of slavery and racism, and here the reader would be well-advised to review William Stanton's *The Leopard's Spots: Scientific Attitudes Toward Race in America, 1814-1859*, Robert V. Bruce's more recent *The Launching of Modern American Science, 1846-1876*, and Mary P. Winsor's insightful writings on Louis Agassiz. Members of the Charleston circle did not endorse the ideas of Charles Darwin, and they did not support President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation. Their reasons were scientific, in that they sought to support their views about the human

species, the human races, and civilization with principles of natural history ranging from embryology, classification, and the domestication of animals. The central problem became the definition—not the origin of species—and this problem jeopardized the fundamentals of their science. Definitions that suited their descriptions of new species of living and fossil plants and animals did work well at the human level.

Authorities, old and new, conflicted from Aristotle and the Bible, to Richard Owen, Louis Agassiz, and Charles Darwin. The existence of human races as permanent variations became confounded with the history of civilization and prejudice, and some members of the Charleston circle believed in slavery as a responsible form of stewardship.

Said another way, the Charleston circle maintained that slavery was an aspect of conservation and part of a larger good. Can we conclude, then, that despite protestations to the contrary, their natural history, too was a belief system, more akin to doctrinal promulgation than to scientific inquiry? In the aftermath of the Civil War, the deaths, debilitation, and impoverishment of the participants left race issues unresolved by scientific arguments, theirs' or others.

Stephens's book builds on an interesting bibliography of sources frequently overlooked by historians of science. Bachman, Ravenel, Gibbes, Holbrook, Holmes, and their associates all made lasting contributions to the taxonomic sciences, museum collections, and scientific education. The scientific names and descriptions of a host of organisms institutionalize and normalize their efforts.

The deep question remains, however: is knowledge of nature dependent upon the economics of slavery and the belief in slavery true science? We more frequently ask a similar question: are science and religion compatible? The Charleston circle, Christians all and good classicists, looked to ancient Athens for an example. Thanks to Lester D. Stephens, we can look closer to home—to antebellum Charleston—for like it or not, the legacy of the Charleston circle has become our own.

-Charlotte M. Porter

Lars Anderson. *Paynes Prairie*. Sarasota: Pineapple Press, 2001. 176 pp., \$14.95.

Now in addition to *Travels*, Florida's great Alachua Savanna may claim to have inspired at least one other book. Lars Anderson (who offers tours of the natural and cultural history of central Florida) has written *Paynes Prairie*, a concise guide to an important and still underappreciated area. The site was a transformative one for William Bartram, as well as for BTC members who recently gathered in Gainesville, and with Anderson's help, readers may better view the country through Puc Puggy's eyes.

Anderson explores the remarkable ecology of the great "Alachua Savanna," and takes readers at a brisk pace from the pre-contact world of Native Americans, through imperial dealings and machinations under Spanish, British, and United States rule, to the current designation of Paynes Prairie as a state park. Expect a good read more than original scholarship here; the slim volume is for casual readers, not experts. But those seeking the "Real Florida" without having to bury themselves in an academic tome should enjoy Anderson's lively little book. Certainly it should give motorists cause to explore the state beyond Orlando.

-Thomas Hallock

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## Newsletter Needs Submissions

Interested in contributing to *The Traveller*? Contact Tom Hallock, the newsletter editor, at [tbhallock@cs.com](mailto:tbhallock@cs.com).

Possible items for submission include profiles of the people, places, flora and fauna that William Bartram described ... book reviews ... gossip and goings-ons ... summaries of recent items in the news. The next issue will be put together in May. Drop him a line with your ideas!

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