



# Scotch Bonnet

*What we are hearing from the sea.*

North Carolina Sea Grant

[www.ncseagrant.org](http://www.ncseagrant.org)

Fall 2006

## Greetings!

Fall is my favorite time for wandering along the seashore. The sky is clear. You hear gulls cry and waves crash. And you never know what you might find washed up on the beach!

And, speaking of combing the beaches . . . there is an incredible resource in Nags Head that few people get to enjoy. Read on to learn more about this treasure of the Outer Banks!



NMP Beachcomber Museum

Nellie Myrtle Pridgen was a long-time beachcomber in Nags Head. Born in 1918, she grew up on the sound side of Nags Head. After a hurricane in 1933, when she was 15, Nell's parents rolled the

store across the island on timbers and settled beside what would become the Beach Road. Living ocean side, Nell walked the beach daily, at dawn and again at dusk, for nearly 60 years. And she kept almost everything she ever found, storing the treasures in bags underneath her house.

In the mid 1970s, her parents died, the store closed, and Nell began arranging her collections and cataloging the items. Very few people were invited to see her treasures, because Nell really didn't like people (or progress) very much. But she loved the ocean and her Outer Banks!

When she passed away in 1992, Nell's collection was left as it was, displayed in boxes and on tables and shelves in the old Mattie Midgette Store that was built in 1914. Rare shells, gorgeous beach glass, fulgurites (sand that has been fused by lightning), war memorabilia, dolls, toys, and more from Nell's daily beachcombing forays are on view for others to see.

The Nellie Myrtle Pridgen collection is located in Mattie Midgette's store (recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places) in Nags Head at 4008 S. Virginia Dare Trail. Information can be found at [www.oldnagshead.org](http://www.oldnagshead.org).

The NMP Beachcomber Museum is open on select days during the year. It is an amazing place — there is so much to see that it's overwhelming! If you ever have a chance to visit this fantastic collection, please do. You'll be amazed at what Nell found on our beaches during her lifetime!

## Nature Essays

[www.uncw.edu/writers/publab-pubs.html](http://www.uncw.edu/writers/publab-pubs.html)

Andy Wood, education director for Audubon North Carolina, has recently written a book, *Backyard Carolina: Two Decades of Public Radio Commentary*.

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For over 18 years, Andy has written and aired weekly interpretations of his observations and thoughts about the natural world in southeastern North Carolina on WHQR-FM, the Wilmington public radio station. He took a one-year sabbatical to whittle down the collection of more than 800 essays and hone those selected vignettes into a nice, enjoyable book that will entertain and amuse all ages.

Here's what others are saying about Andy's book:

"Andy Wood is so clear, so concise, so inspirational, you'll think you are sitting across a table listening to him talk. And he's funny, too. This book will literally change the way you understand your backyard — and thus will literally change your life."

— **Clyde Edgerton, Author, *Solo: My Adventures In the Air*.**

"Like the good naturalist he is, Andy Wood celebrates the little things that often go unobserved in a world full of hurry and haste. In these quiet and deeply felt essays, Andy helps all of us understand the variety and vulnerabilities of nature's creatures, large and small."

— **Lawrence S. Earley, Author, *Looking for Longleaf: The Fall and Rise Of An American Forest*.**

"Not having heard his radio broadcasts, I got to know Andy Wood through his sentences on the page. But I can still hear his voice: good-natured, curious, amused and amazed. What a pleasure to stop and listen to that voice and take its invitation to notice the world so many of us go rushing by. A world of turtles and wasps and cardinals, a world we often refer to as 'smaller' but that has the curious effect, if we actually take the time to notice it, of enlarging us."

— **David Gessner, Author, *Return of the Osprey***

Currently, *Backyard Carolina* can be found at local bookstores in southeastern North Carolina. It's not available on amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com yet, but I expect you will be able to find it there soon! For those of you who are dying for a copy, please see the Web site listed above for ordering information.

## Sea-Bean Update

[www.seabean.com](http://www.seabean.com)

Just an update for those of you who have been captured by the sea-bean bug! Yes, there have been some sea-beans found on North Carolina beaches recently. Last November, a hamburger bean was found

on the research pier at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Field Research Facility in Duck.

We're assuming that a bird picked it up somewhere offshore — perhaps in the Gulf Stream — and dropped it onto the pier!

Linda and Daryl Anderson from Greensboro have been finding all kinds of sea-beans on the beaches of Cape Lookout National Seashore. This summer, they found the following seeds: hamburger beans, sea hearts, cohune palms, prickly palms, candlenuts, star nut palms, sea purses, porcupine seeds, and soapberry. In July, Linda also reported finding her first Mary's bean, a rare find indeed!

As you read this newsletter, we're getting ready to head to Cocoa Beach, Fla., for the 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Sea-Bean Symposium. JoAnne Powell and I are leading a group of educators to the symposium for an educational (and fun) time. We'll be combing the beaches for sea-beans, enjoying the lectures and displays at the symposium, and comparing Fla. beaches to our N.C. beaches. We'll give you a full report of our adventures when we return!

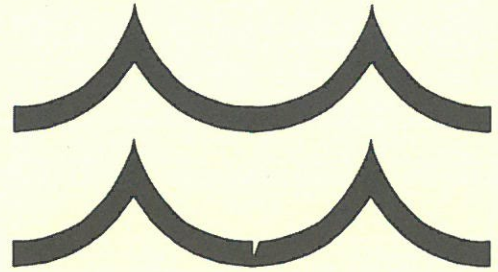
## Spence Wins National Award

[www.marine-ed.org](http://www.marine-ed.org)

Lundie Spence, director of the Center for Ocean Sciences Education Excellence Southeast, was presented with the National Marine Educators Association's Honorary Member Award for 2006. She was recognized for a career of leadership and outstanding performance as a marine science educator in the classroom and in the community.

Lundie was honored on July 17 at a ceremony during the National Marine Educators Association's annual conference, hosted by the New York Marine Education Association at Long Island University in Brooklyn, N.Y. NMEA is a national professional

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organization founded in 1976 for all educators of marine and aquatic science.

Lundie served as marine education specialist for North Carolina Sea Grant for more than 20 years. She influenced the teaching styles and content of many North Carolina educators during her tenure here. In addition, Lundie began this modest newsletter as *Conch Shell* early in her career. The newsletter lives on as *Scotch Bonnet*!

### Dare County Teacher Honored

Cape Hatteras National Seashore volunteer Beverly Henson has recently received the Volunteer of the Year award for the Southeast Region of the National Park Service. This prestigious award is given annually to one outstanding volunteer in the region whose contributions further the mission of the Park Service.

Beverly, a former classroom teacher at Cape Hatteras Elementary, was nominated for her outstanding work in involving students as Park Service volunteers.

She personally volunteered over 300 hours to the seashore in 2005 and led a special group of 30 students from Cape Hatteras Elementary and Secondary Schools. The students donated more than 880 hours of work to the park. They were involved in a wide variety of projects, including: participating in the annual beach cleanup, cleaning the lighthouse, aiding in turtle patrol and marine mammal strandings, maintaining the Buxton Woods trail, and many minor maintenance projects such as painting fences.

Beverly also was active in the SouthEast Phytoplankton Monitoring Network (SEPMN), a program of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA). She and her students collected phytoplankton samples from the Pamlico Sound biweekly. Then they identified and quantified what they observed and reported their results to the SEPMN Web site: [www.chbr.noaa.gov/PMN/](http://www.chbr.noaa.gov/PMN/).

"Cape Hatteras National Seashore has truly benefited from Beverly's service," stated National Park Superintendent Mike Murray. "Not only has she given of herself, but she has also encouraged children to learn from the experience of volunteering. Beverly is very deserving of this award."

Congratulations to Beverly who is now teaching in Guilford County!

### ROV 101

[csi.northcarolina.edu/](http://csi.northcarolina.edu/)

Scientists often use remotely operated vehicles (ROVs) in environments too dangerous for humans. Are you interested in learning more about ROVs? Join us from 1-5 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 18, for ROV 101 at the N.C. Aquarium on Roanoke Island, as we explore the world of ROV technology and its applications for ocean studies.

Hosted by the Aquarium on Roanoke Island and cosponsored by the UNC Coastal Studies Institute and the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration, ROV 101 will offer teachers the opportunity to build their own ROV in a standards-based, hands-on workshop. Participants will also learn how they can form student teams to compete in a regional ROV competition.

For more information, contact John McCord, education programs coordinator, UNC Coastal Studies Institute, [jmccord@csi.northcarolina.edu](mailto:jmccord@csi.northcarolina.edu). Information also be found on the Coastal Studies Institute Web site above.

### NCCAT at Ocracoke

[www.nccat.org](http://www.nccat.org)

Attending a seminar at the North Carolina Center for the Advancement of Teaching (NCCAT) will give you a renewed passion for your profession. The experience will strengthen your classroom expertise by exposing you to new ideas and activities to use with your students.

You will enjoy five days immersed in a hands-on study and learning adventure with colleagues from all over the state. Seminar topics range from the humanities and arts and sciences to technology, health, and communication.

All programs complement and support the North Carolina Standard Course of Study. Best of all, this one-of-a-kind professional development opportunity comes at no cost to you or your school.

Your travel, lodging, meals, seminar materials, even compensation for a substitute teacher while you are attending, are paid for by NCCAT.

The eastern NCCAT campus in the former Ocracoke U.S. Coast Guard Station is expected to open in early 2007. When fully operational, the new facility will host up to 40 seminars a year for visiting teachers,

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as well as a variety of programs for educators.

Teachers, media specialists and school counselors (pre-K through 12th grade) can register today for courses by calling Teacher Services at 800/922-0482. Teachers must have been employed full time in N.C. public schools for at least three years. For a complete description of all NCCAT seminars, please visit the Web site.

Below are some upcoming topics to be offered on the Ocracoke campus:

Jan. 29-Feb. 2 – “Is There a Children’s Book in You?”

March 19-23 – “Red Wolf, Red Tide: The Changing Face of the Outer Banks”

March 26-30 – “Tears of the Blue and Gray: History of the Civil War on the Outer Banks”

April 9-13 – “Island People, Island Culture”

April 30-May 4 – “Emotional Intelligence and Wellness in the Classroom”

May 7-11 – “I Must Go Down to the Sea Again: Poetry by the Sea”

## To Contact Me

My mailing address is: North Carolina Sea Grant, P.O. Box 699, Manteo, NC 27954. To reach me by phone, call 252/475-3663; fax: 252/475-3545; e-mail: [terrikh@csi.northcarolina.edu](mailto:terrikh@csi.northcarolina.edu).

Please check your mailing label — if we need to make changes to your address, or if you’re getting more than one copy of *Scotch Bonnet*, let me know! Don’t forget to recycle this newsletter after sharing it with friends and colleagues. If others are interesting in subscribing, please have them drop me an e-mail.

Best Fishes!

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