

the NATURALIST CORNER

Brought to you by Peggy Potts
Coastal Master Naturalist

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As a graduate of the Coastal Master Naturalist Program offered through the Clemson University Cooperative Extension, I would like to share my excitement and enthusiasm about the many wonders of nature that can be enjoyed and experienced in the lowcountry. Through this monthly column, I will share my observations, sightings, and characteristics about a variety of nature topics, such as common insects, migrating birds and butterflies, wildflowers and plants and more. Basically, anything in nature is fair game to learn about and explore.

I also encourage you to share your observations and experiences so that we can learn about our natural world together. Please feel free to send in pictures and/or information of anything you find interesting by emailing me, Peggy Potts, at ppotts@charlestoncounty.org.

Sustainable Seafood By: Peggy Potts



What is Sustainable Seafood? Wikipedia describes it as seafood that is either caught or farmed in ways that consider the long-term vitality of harvested species and

the well-being of the oceans, as well as the livelihoods of fisheries-dependent communities.

Basically, the bounty of fish in the ocean has its limits so it is imperative we adhere to responsible fishing practices or the world's fisheries will be pushed to the brink and many species will be depleted. The problem comes when seafood is obtained through negligent fishing practices that lead to overfishing and destruction of the marine environment. Thriving ocean ecosystems are important for the health of the entire planet!

Sustainable seafood helps to replenish our oceans and manage resources into the future. Educating ourselves and becoming informed consumers can make a huge difference! When purchasing seafood, find out where it came from and if it was produced sustainably. This will

help you make a responsible choice.

Seafood guides are also available to help you make informed decisions of which species are best to eat, which should be avoided based on availability and abundance, and if they have been caught or farmed in sustainable ways. Many restaurants will include this information on their menus. If it is not designated on the menu, you can always ask your server.



The South Carolina Aquarium's Good Catch program partners with local restaurants that go above and beyond the basic guidelines and assess each seafood item on the menu to ensure it is a sustainable option. Shelley Dearhart is the "Good Catch" expert at the Aquarium and she can answer

questions and provide you with additional information such as seafood guides, sustainable seafood partners, and how to protect ocean life by choosing to eat seafood responsibly.

According to National Geographic, it is critically important for our own well-being and that of the oceans that we understand the impacts of our seafood choices. Our choices offer a daily opportunity for each of us to contribute to the oceans' restoration.

Charleston County Greenbelt Program

The following properties allow water access for fishing: The Town of Hollywood's Wide Awake Park - www.townofhollywood.org; City of Folly Beach's ADA Compliant Walkover - www.cityoffollybeach.com; the Town of Kiawah's Beachwalker Fishing Pier - www.kiawahisland.org; City of Charleston's Cummings Point/Morris Island (accessible by boat only) - www.charleston-sc.gov; and, US Fish and Wildlife's Dupre Island (accessible by boat only) - www.fws.gov. The Greenbelt Program provided funding for these sites. For additional information, visit the Greenbelt Program website at <http://charlestoncountygreenbelt.org> and follow us on Instagram and the County's Facebook page. Don't forget you can earn "Lifestyle Loot" through the Wellness Program when you visit a Greenbelt site and post pictures using #ccgreenbelt.