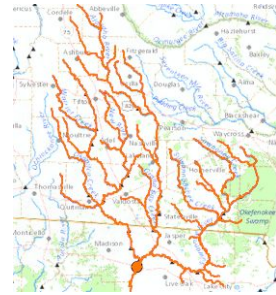


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 the WATERKEEPER® Alliance Affiliate for the
 Suwannee, Withlacoochee, and Alapaha Rivers
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November 2016 Tannin Times

WWALS Biota. Early autumn in the WWALS watersheds brings splashes of purple and yellow to the usual landscape of grey karst, black water, green trees and blue skies. On the October WWALS trip down the Withlacoochee River near the Florida line, paddlers were treated to splashes of these fall colors along the way. In several places, purple plants such as this native purple mistflower, known also as blue mistflower or wild ageratum, *Conoclinium coelestinum*, dotted moist areas along the riverbank. This plant is loved by butterflies and bees. On this particular day, however, the butterflies went to the beach rather than to the mistflowers.



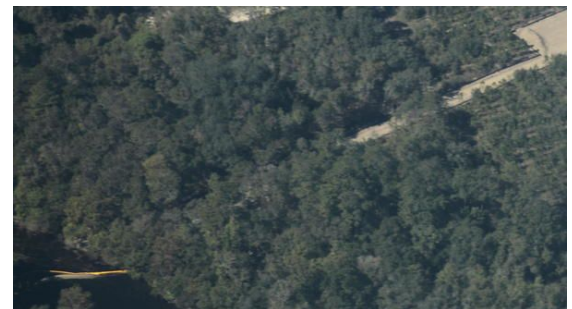
We came upon a group of bright yellow common sulphur butterflies, a species of *Colias*, on a sandy area along the river. These medium-sized creatures spend their caterpillar stage munching on plants in the pea family. The adults feed on the nectar of numerous native plants, including blue mistflowers, goldenrods and asters, helping to pollinate them in the process. They often form groups, as seen here, in moist places, such as puddles or wet sand.



We also encountered many purple aster-like flowers in bloom. I could not positively identify this mystery plant in my plant ID books. It struck me as being closest to a *Vernonia* species, known as ironweed, but the leaves were broader and the plants were fairly short for the usually tall ironweed. Maybe someone reading this newsletter can identify it.

WWALS Working Hard for Your Watershed

What is that yellow thing in the river at US 84 HDD crossing, Sabal Trail? Thanks to Southwings pilot Roy Zimmer and photographer Dominick Gheesling, [WWALS reported to FERC](#) that apparent violation and a possible sinkhole between Quitman and Valdosta, GA. Aerials of red HDD pipe and blue (thin?) pipe from this October 22nd 2016 flight [are appearing online](#), including for the [Santa Fe](#) and Suwannee River crossings and north past Moultrie.



Valdosta Wastewater and Flood Prevention meeting. Thanks to Valdosta Utilities Director, Henry Hicks and Assistant Director of Engineering, Emily Davenport for discussing the \$60 million in fixes already applied to the Valdosta wastewater treatment plant, further work to prevent future spills, and flood prediction and prevention using LiDAR, an interactive online flooding map. City Councilman Tim Carroll talked about current solar installations and improvements, and Valdosta City Public Information Officer Sementha Mathews discussed how to become more involved in our community. WWALS video to come.

Hunting Harvest Limits in WMAs. A hunter asked about bag limits at the new Alapaha River Wildlife Management Area (WMA) on the Alapaha River in Irwin County between Tifton and Ocilla. It depends on whether you **sign in** or you **check in**. The answer is not in the [approved hunting season dates for](#)

the Alapaha WMA, found in [other Alapaha WMA information](#). That's because it's in the general [July 2016-June 2017 hunting regulations for Georgia](#), on page 34. Note the phrase at the end of "Check-In Hunt": "***and should not be recorded on your Harvest Record.***"

Community Outreach and Education

Suwannee Roots Revival Festival. WWALS members talked about our watershed advocacy at the WWALS table at the Suwannee Roots Revival Festival at the Spirit of the Suwannee River Music Park. We welcomed new members and generous donations.



Reed Bingham Trunk or Treat. It was a fun afternoon at Reed Bingham State park. We had been told to expect 1,000 children, and they weren't kidding. Hundreds of families enjoyed the park, games, and treats and the WWALS booth was a hit with our toss the frog to the lilly pad game.



Outings. Seventeen kayakers enjoyed the October outing on a near perfect day to enjoy the Withlacoochee River between the GA-FL line and Sullivan Launch in Florida. Three sets of brief shoals helped us introduce a few new folks to the joy of the river. We collected two bags of debris while waiting to complete the shuttle. We strive to beautify the rivers of our watershed and properly disposed of the bags. You will not want to miss the next outing on November 6th as we explore the wonders of the Dead River on the hike to the Alapaha Dead River Sink. This guided tour will enlighten you about the porous plateau of karst limestone of north Florida.

Water Trails. Discussions continue with county 911 centers and sheriffs' offices about names and addresses for all the landings on the Withlacoochee and Little River Water Trail (WLRWT) and the Alapaha River Water Trail (ARWT). Thanks to Berrien County Commission for granting permission for landing signs and kiosks. WWALS president John S. Quarterman asked the Cook County Commission on Oct. 3rd for support for road signs and kiosks at WLRWT landings. He also asked the Valdosta-Lowndes Development Authority on Sept. 20th and asked for a letter of support for the WLRWT like the one they wrote for the ARWT.

Updating our Membership List

We are in the process of updating our membership list. If you've paid your dues in the past 12 months, we thank you! If you aren't sure of your membership status, please contact us at wwalswatershed@gmail.com and we'll let you know. In January, we will remove from our e-mail list and Facebook group those who are not currently up to date. Your memberships and generous donations (*got a canoe, kayak, or power boat you don't need?*) make WWALS projects possible. You can donate or join here: <http://www.wwals.net/donations/> And please remember us with your year-end giving and gifts for those "hard to buy for" friends and family. Your donations are tax deductible as allowable by law for WWALS, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charity.

Upcoming Outings and Events

Sunday Nov. 6, 10 AM	Alapaha River: Dead River Sink Hike near Jennings, FL
Saturday Nov. 12	Alapaha Station Celebration Festival Booth: Alapaha, GA
Saturday Nov. 19	Okefenokee Pioneer Days: Folkston GA (with Satilla Riverkeeper)
Saturday Dec. 10, 10 AM	Okefenokee Swamp, Suwannee River, near Fargo, GA
January 14 or 15	TBD

Check out the [WWALS Calendar](#) for more details.

