

**HISTORY**

The Francis Marion National Forest, rich in history and tradition, bears the name of a hero of the American Revolution, General Francis Marion, known as the "Swamp Fox".

Located in the coastal plain north of Charleston, the Forest is in an area once frequented by Indians and Spanish and French explorers. Many of the first settlers were French Huguenots. The English founded the first permanent colony in 1670, at Charleston.

Many skirmishes and battles were fought in this area during the Revolutionary War and the British overran most of South Carolina. With the Continental Army defeated and driven out of South Carolina, the most effective fighting forces in the state were the partisans. General Marion led the "Low Country" partisans who harassed the British so much that their supply lines were almost useless from Charleston to troops fighting in central North Carolina. Marion is considered the father of modern guerrilla warfare and our Special Forces troops still study his tactics.

Military action during the Civil War had little effect on the area. Most of the fighting was around Charleston although Federal troops made sporadic raids along the coast. River fortifications kept Federal boats from coming inland.

A Presidential Proclamation established the Francis Marion National Forest on July 10, 1936.



A re-enactment of a skirmish between British Redcoats and Francis Marion's irregulars at the Swamp Fox Trail dedication.

**POINTS OF INTEREST**

**Guillard Lake Scenic Area**

Map Location D,E-3

A small, finger-shaped lake features this area along the Santee River. A strip of terrace separates the river and lake. Large old cypress grow around the lake and cypress knees up to 8 feet tall are common. An area of a thousand acres has been set aside to preserve these trees in a near-natural condition. Perforated limestone outcroppings along Dutart Creek are unique. There are vistas along the Santee River and a campground on the edge of the area provides a place for a stay of several days.

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**WILDLIFE**

The Francis Marion National Forest is famous for its pure strain of the eastern wild turkey. Flocks of turkey often can be seen feeding along the edges of permanent wildlife openings . . . or moving to roosting areas in the late afternoon.

Other game includes deer, rabbits, raccoon, quail, opossum and squirrel.

The Forest is located on the Atlantic flyway of migratory birds and in winter as many as 250 different bird species have been counted. The creeks, bays, swamps and marshes are favorite spots for bird watchers. They can see the bald and golden eagles, snowy egrets, herons, plovers, gulls, terns, ducks, flycatchers, woodpeckers, hawks, owls, and many other birds.



The American alligator, an endangered wildlife species, is found on the forest.



Many eastern white-tail deer roam in the forest.

**ADJACENT POINTS OF INTEREST**

**U.S. Highway #17**

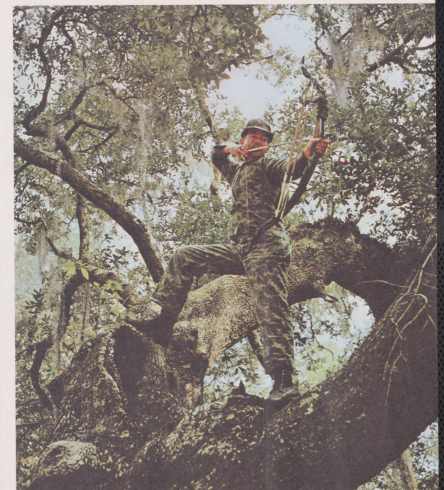
The country paralleling the highway is reminiscent of ancient Indian towns and venturesome Spaniards, Frenchmen and Englishmen who sought to settle and claim Carolina, starting in the late sixteenth century. It is the region of ante bellum plantation grandeur and sites of Revolutionary War battles. There are reminders of the War Between the States and the Reconstruction days. Markers tell of incidents in history and indicate side roads to estates of once prosperous rice and indigo planters, properties now usually owned by Northern sportsmen. Each place has its story - Indian raids, pirates, romantic ladies, "the most beautiful garden in the world," burning of homes, the quiet that came after the storm and the downfall of the economic system on which plantation life was based. Here is the romance that awakens the nostalgia of the Southerner for the country that was his - the life of beauty, ease, culture and chivalry that has passed. It is especially beautiful in March and April, the garden season.



St. James Santee Church was built in 1768 from brick shipped from England.

**CAPE ROMAIN NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**

This sanctuary for migratory birds parallels the coast and lies adjacent to the National Forest. Herons, gulls, plovers, terns, ducks and the big white and American egrets live in the sheltered swamps and marshes. Forest visitors can see many of these birds soar inland over the palmettos and live oaks. Bull Island, accessible only by boat, is well known and visited by many nature enthusiasts. The refuge is managed by the Fish & Wildlife Service of the U. S. Dept. of the Interior.



Archers find ample opportunities to pursue their art.

**HUGER CREEK (Pronounced "Hewgee")**

This colorful waterway is flanked by moss-covered gums and cypress, old rice fields and tall loblolly pines. The creek is part of a system that drains portions of Hell Hole Bay. There's a boat launching ramp at Huger Recreation Area and the bream and bass fishing is fine. Huger Creek flows into the East Branch of the Cooper River at an old Episcopal Church and graveyard which were there before the Revolutionary War. From here, boaters can continue down the river to Charleston Harbor.



The Nicholson Creek Greenreef Reservoir produces timber and serves as a duck hunting area.

**TARPIT RECREATION AREA**

Map Location B-3

This recreation area is built at the site of a pre-Revolutionary tar kiln and tar pit. The kilns were built to extract pitch from pine wood. Pitch was used to caulk the wooden sailing ships of the British Navy and is the forerunner of the present day "Naval Stores" industry.

**WAMBAW CREEK**

Wambaw Creek flows through the Francis Marion National Forest into the Santee River. The dark inky waters are shaded by a dense archway of gums and cypress. Turkey, deer, waterfowl and alligators can be observed from the creek. In the spring, bream and bass fishing is exceptionally good. The banks of the creek, particularly in the lower reaches near the Echaw road, furnish nesting sites for the Eastern swallow-tailed kite.



**BUCK HALL RECREATION AREA**

Map Location E-6

Spreading, moss-draped live oaks and pine overlook the flats of the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge that reaches to the Atlantic Ocean. Cool ocean breezes make this an ideal place to escape the summer heat. Buck Hall is located on U. S. Highway 17 and Intracoastal Waterway. Pleasant hours can be spent watching fishing fleets and pleasure yachts ply this water highway. The waterway is also a flyway for all native and migratory coastal water birds. The Atlantic Ocean breakers on the white beaches can be seen from the fire lookout tower.

**QUINBY BRIDGE**

Map Location C-5

Site of a bitter Revolutionary War battle between the British and American troops commanded by Marion, Sumter and Lighthorse Harry Lee. Bones of hastily buried dead are occasionally unearthed here and ghost riders galloping across the bridge are still heard by local residents during dark moonless nights.

**MEPKIN ESTATE**

Map Location A-5

The old estate of Henry Laurens (1724-92), president of the Continental Congress, is now a Trappist monastery. It was donated to the Trappist Order by Clare Booth Luce. Henry Luce, publisher of Time magazine, was buried here in 1967. Only the handsome gates and mile long avenue of live oaks remain pre-Revolutionary Meekin.

**RUINS OF BIGGIN CHURCH**

Map Location A-4

Built in 1756, this church was used as a garrison post by the British. During the War Between the States the communion service with its gilded silver chalice, brought by Huguenots from La Rochelle, France, was buried nearby and never rediscovered.



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