

# Inland Sea Chronicle



LNWC.org

FALL 2017

## NCWF Chapter of the Year!

Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists is proud to announce that we were tapped as the North Carolina Wildlife Federation's *Chapter of the Year* at the federation's annual Governor's Conservation Achievement Awards held Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Cary.

"Building community for conservation is the hallmark of this wildlife chapter. Over the last year, the group has built and deployed nesting boxes, heron rookeries, and osprey nesting platforms while stabilizing shoreline habitat and establishing fish habitat in and around the largest aquatic ecosystem in the state. The chapter coordinates an island habitat program and provides a robust community education effort via its popular programs, wildlife boat tours and events," proclaimed the federation's banquet brochure.



Among those LNWC volunteers accepting the award at the banquet and reception were officers **Billy Wilson, Don West** and **Julie Higgin**; directors **Volkmar Dirksen, Don Higgin, John Crutchfield, Ken Conrad** and **Kristen Stark**; and committee leaders **Pam Lewis, Robin Shea** and **Patrick Stark**.



**Wildlife Oyster & Shrimp Fest** volunteers (L-R) Tara Moore, Kristen Stark, Patrick Stark, and David Toro enjoy a supper break during LNWC's annual fundraising event held Sept. 16<sup>th</sup> at LangTree Lake Norman. This year, thanks to our marina partners and other faithful sponsors, we raised approximately \$31,000 for wildlife conservation around the Lake Norman region and the state. Lake Norman's wildlife and wild places also will benefit from **Laktoberfest**, scheduled for 4-9 p.m. Oct. 21<sup>st</sup> at Bailey Road Park, 11536 Bailey Road, Cornelius. Everyone is invited to visit us at the park to enjoy food, drink and music! For a complete list of our sponsors, visit [www.LNWC.org](http://www.LNWC.org).

# LNWC's Fall 2017 Certified Wildlife Habitat!

By **Kristen Stark**, LNWC Habitat Steward

**C**ongratulations to LNWC's Fall 2017 Certified Wildlife Habitat owners **Sid** and **Carol Smith** of Cornelius!

Sid and Carol have committed to making their backyard an inviting place for the wildlife in our area. They also realize that every habitat garden is a step toward replenishing resources for declining bees, butterflies, birds, bats and amphibians that need our help.

The Smith's property is filled with the essential elements of a Wildlife Habitat: Food, Water, Cover, Places to Raise Young, and Sustainable Gardening Practices...and Love! Here are some key points that make their habitat a unique one:

**Food:** In addition to bird feeders, the Smith's backyard is home to several different fruit trees, including a gorgeous Fig Tree that keeps the birds busy all day.

**Water:** Not only do they have Lake Norman in their

backyard, they also built a man-made water feature from scratch.

**Cover & Raising Young:** Lush vegetation from mature trees, to water plants and nesting boxes, offer safe spaces for all.

**Sustainability:** Commitment to non-chemical forms of weed control.

The Smiths also have a large, natural area with many native plants that serves as a busy pollinator garden, making this habitat also a part of North Carolina Wildlife Federation's Butterfly Highway. Want to certify YOUR property as a Wildlife Habitat? It's easy and fun! Visit [www.NWF.org/garden](http://www.NWF.org/garden) to access a habitat certification form. It can either be printed out and mailed in or conveniently completed on-line. Also, LNWC has forms available to the public at our monthly library programs, as well as a Habitat Steward or two to offer advice. Go Native!



## Project & Field Trip Report

**T**his fall and winter will bring several fun projects out on Lake Norman and its islands for LNWC volunteers. In the past year, we built next boxes for Prothonotary Warblers, Tree Swallows and Brown-headed Nuthatches, but for next year we will construct Chimney Swift towers. According to LNWC volunteer scientist Gene Vaughan, Chimney Swifts resemble "flying cigars." These birds spend nearly all their daylight hours on the wing consuming the likes of moths, mosquitoes and beetles, and come down to rest only at night. An interesting fact about these swifts is that they are unable to perch like songbirds, so they must spiral into their nesting and roosting sites at night.

Scott Fletcher, Duke Energy's natural resources manager and a trained ornithologist, will provide us with construction drawings of the specific style of Chimney Swift tower we will use. A volunteer signup link will be emailed to people in our database when project time draws near. Another project on the near horizon is the Island Habitat Buttonbush Planting day set for Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>. Buttonbushes provide great erosion control and they also provide food and cover for wildlife. Last year's Buttonbush Planting was a big success, with the plants having achieved remarkable growth during the summer after water levels went down.

As for Field Trips, we will again schedule times to go out and see loons when they migrate to Lake Norman from their northern nesting grounds this winter. One has already been spotted, but it might have been blown here by a storm, Gene said. Stay tuned!

Finally, LNWC volunteer anglers will work on the Fish'n With a Mission project slated for Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> in Statesville. This effort is headed by Ken Conrad, LNWC at-large director. See you out on the lake!

