

2017 Summary & Accomplishments

Overview

The Ossabaw Island Foundation (TOIF) provided coordination and facilitation on Ossabaw Island to 1,100 learners from twenty-eight states and a dozen different countries in FY 2017. TOIF hosted 160 program days and 84 nights on Ossabaw Island. Of the 63 total groups who visited, 24 groups were first-timers. Groups included 43 cultural study trips, 12 student/teacher trips (totaling 280 student/teachers), and 8 science related trips.

Education

Augusta University's Barrier Island Ecology class spent a week on Ossabaw. Using baseline data from a 1993 study of the island, the class compared current and former island conditions including temperature, pH and salinity of tidal creeks and fresh water systems; soil chemistry; and the diversity and density of plant communities.

Georgia State University's American Architectural History class field trip to Ossabaw focused on how history is revealed through architecture. **Savannah Technical College's** Historic Preservation Department field trip examined lessons learned from two decades of historic preservation projects completed by the Ossabaw Island Foundation.



Photo by: Julian Buckmaster

Dr. Paul M. Pressly was named **Director Emeritus of the Ossabaw Island Education Alliance**. Pressly's first project as Director Emeritus is co-editing *Coastal Nature, Coastal Culture: Environmental Histories of the Georgia Coast*, (UGA Press, 2018) a book based on the 2016 symposium hosted by the Ossabaw Island Foundation and Education Alliance.

Georgia Historical Society's National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute, *Recognizing an Imperfect Past: History, Memory and the American People*, engaged university professors from across the U.S. in an exploration of how controversial events in the American past are remembered. The Ossabaw day trip and lectures by Paul Pressly and Elizabeth DuBose, Executive Director, focused on the history of enslaved and free African American people on Ossabaw.



Photo by: Julian Buckmaster

Science

Hurricane Research

A **Georgia State University** team traveled to Ossabaw Island for paleotempestology pre-grant data collection. The project uses geological data to determine variations in hurricane activity for several millennia on Georgia's coast, and their relationship to global and regional climate changes. [Source: Kiage]

Sea Turtle Nesting

TOIF hosted two turtle-hatching weekend trips, with participants assisting the **Georgia DNR's Sea Turtle Conservation Program** interns in documenting some of the 316 turtle nests occurring on Ossabaw Island's beaches in 2017. Nearly 17,000 turtle eggs hatched from Ossabaw's nests.

History and Culture

The Art of Indigo Dyeing

During three indigo workshops, taught by Donna Hardy of Sea Island Indigo, participants created fresh-leaf indigo dye using the naturalized indigo plants growing on Ossabaw's North End for the past 270 years. Participants dyed natural fiber items in the just-created Ossabaw Indigo blue dye. Fiber art students from **Savannah College of Art and Design**, were filmed during one workshop for an educational short scheduled for release in 2018.

Fee-Free Trips

Ossabaw Island participated in **Lift Every Voice: Savannah's African American Historic Sites Free Day**, in partnership with six other local sites that offer programming highlighting the roles and histories of African-Americans. Lift Every Voice was held to mark the opening of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC). This is one of two "fee-free" trips TOIF offered in 2017, along with Super Museum Sunday in February.

Governance

Friends of Ossabaw

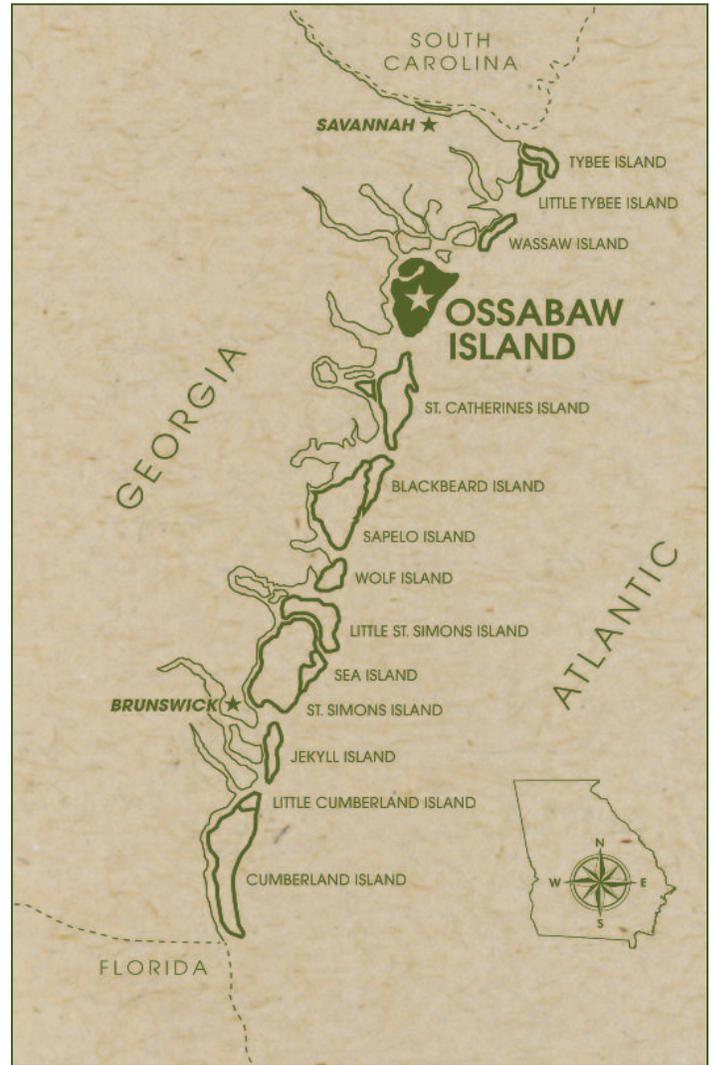
69% of our friends are from the Georgia coast and Carolina lowcountry. 14% are from the non-coastal regions of Georgia, especially the Atlanta area, Athens, and south-central Georgia. 17% of our supporters come from outside Georgia and represent a national constituency.

Stewardship

FY 2016/2017. Gross revenue at the end of the TOIF fiscal year (July 31, 2017) was \$344,000, including donations, grants and island use fees. TOIF expenses for the year were \$309,000. For the fourteenth consecutive year we conducted an audit of financial statements. About 80 volunteers contributed time, energy, and expertise working on events and projects throughout the year.

Partnerships

Collaboration and support throughout the year is provided by the Department of Natural Resources, the Board of Regents of the State of Georgia, and Georgia Southern University's Coastal Georgia Center in Savannah. Other partnerships in 2017 included Emory University's Center for Digital Scholarship, Moon River District, Georgia Conservancy, Georgia Historical Society, Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation, Ossabaw Island Writers' Retreat, UGA's Center for Archaeological Sciences, UGA's Skidaway Institute of Oceanography, UGA's Marine Extension Center & Aquarium, and Wesley Gardens Retreat Center.



Ossabaw Island is a 26,000-acre barrier island owned by the State of Georgia. The state's first Heritage Preserve is undeveloped and set aside by an Executive Order for natural, scientific and cultural study, research and education; and for environmentally sound preservation, conservation and management of the island's ecosystem.

The Ossabaw Island Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3. Through a partnership with the State of Georgia, TOIF inspires, promotes, and manages exceptional educational, cultural, and scientific programs that are designed to maximize the experience of Ossabaw Island, while minimizing the impact on the island's resources.