

The Resource

A Publication of the City of North Augusta
Stormwater Management Department

Brick Pond Park – A Nature Park with a Purpose



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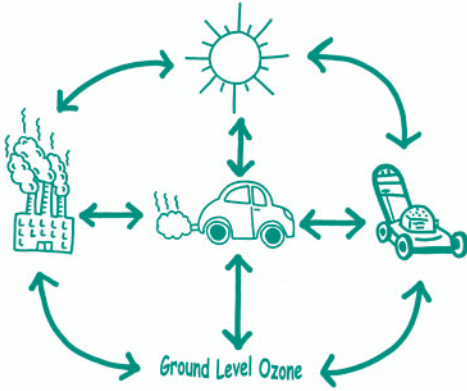
Have you had the opportunity to visit Brick Pond Park? If not, the park is blooming with flowers and wildlife this month and it is a perfect time to visit. The park trails, boardwalks and wildlife viewing stations at the park are a must see stop during a stroll or bike ride along the North Augusta Greenway trail. There you can see graceful wading birds, fearless hawks, deer, foxes, baby alligators and occasionally river otter acrobatics at West Pond. There are signs located throughout the park that explain how the constructed wetlands clean the water, the history of the area, and about the wildlife that lives there.

The primary function of the wetlands is stormwater treatment. Stormwater enters nearest Georgia Avenue in the constructed and perched wetlands. After a storm

event, these areas of the wetlands may become discolored and you may see trash there. This is the way the system was set up to work. The treatment wetlands filter and remove pollutants from stormwater to keep the larger ponds (East & West Pond) healthy. The circulation from the new waterfalls help to add dissolved oxygen (air) and continued treatment by passing the water through the planted vegetation repeatedly. Over a few days, the water clears and city crews will remove trash that collects near the inlet pipes. Trash blown out of truck beds or cars, overspread fertilizers, pesticides and leaking vehicle engines can cause many problems in our waterways. We can all help to keep Brick Pond Park and other city streams clean by helping to prevent trash and pollutants from entering the city's stormwater system.

Brick Pond Park is open dawn to dusk and has picnic tables, many benches, a pavilion and dock for wildlife viewing. There are several areas for parking including one at the North Augusta Greenway entrance off of Riverside Boulevard (located beside the Municipal Building on Buena Vista Avenue). Two additional parking lots are accessible further down Riverside Boulevard near the traffic circle. Just enter the dirt road off of the circle heading under the 13th Street Bridge. From there, one parking lot is located near the bridge and another is located farther down before you reach Hammonds Ferry. For technical questions about the park, email stormwater@northaugusta.net or call (803) 441-4246. Maps of the park are available at www.northaugusta.net or at the Municipal Building Utility Payment Center and Riverview Park Activity Center.

Summer-time Air Pollution



Summer not only brings brilliantly colored flowers, elegant butterflies, musical songbirds, and opportunities for picnics and strolls on the North Augusta Greenway; it also brings “summer-time” air pollution called ground level ozone. It is a type of air pollution that forms on hot sunny days when sunlight and heat cause nitrogen oxides (NO_x) and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) to react. In South Carolina, the chemicals that create the ozone come mostly from motor vehicles and equipment. Motor vehicle emissions are the single greatest contributor to ground level ozone pollution.

Everyone has some sensitivity to ground level ozone, but children and people with pre-existing lung disease such as chronic bronchitis, emphysema, and asthma are especially sensitive. It also can cause these problems. Exposure to ozone can cause shortness of breath, wheezing, and coughing.

Symptoms may come and go but long term damage can occur. Ozone formation is lowest in the morning and highest in the hottest part of the day, late afternoon. Ozone breaks down quickly after the sun sets.

The EPA created a scale to make understanding and reporting of ozone levels easier called the Air Quality Index (AQI) as shown below. During the summer, local television and radio stations describe conditions using the index to alert residents. Also, the

SC Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) include ozone forecasts on an hour by hour basis for cities across the state. Protect you and your family’s health by paying attention to ground-level ozone forecasts, particularly if you have health problems, are elderly, or have small children. There are many simple steps citizens can take to help decrease the production of compounds that create ground-level ozone. You can also avoid contributing to the ozone problem.

AIR QUALITY INDEX		
Index Values	Descriptors	Cautionary Statements for Ozone
0 to 50	Good (Green)	None.
51 to 100	Moderate (Yellow)	Unusually sensitive people should consider limiting prolonged outdoor exertion.
101 to 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups (Orange)	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
151 to 200	Unhealthy (Red)	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid prolonged outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit prolonged outdoor exertion.
201 to 300	Very Unhealthy (Purple)	Active children and adults, and people with respiratory disease, such as asthma, should avoid all outdoor exertion; everyone else, especially children, should limit outdoor exertion.

Ways to help Improve Air Quality

- Conserve energy — at home, at work, everywhere. In the long term, it helps to reduce the emissions associated with energy production.
- Pick one day a week to leave your car at home (more if possible) and catch a ride with a friend or the Best Friends Express bus service. *Then, apply for cash and prizes with the CSRA Air Quality Alliance Commuter Rewards Program!* <http://www.logyourcommute.com/csraaq>
- Consider manual or electric-powered lawn and garden maintenance equipment when replacing a gasoline-powered mower. If that is not feasible, cut your lawn in the evening after the danger of ground level ozone has passed.
- Don’t sit in your car with it running or “idling”. Turn it off while you wait.
- Don’t burn debris or yard waste! Open burning requires a permit from North Augusta Public Safety.

North Augusta's Clean Air Initiative – Lawn Mower Exchange Program Offered to Residents

North Augusta is a member of the CSRA Air Quality Alliance. Members are working hard to promote programs that result in cleaner air for the protection of public health and to improve

environmental quality in our area. Beginning May 10, 2009, the city is kicking off a new clean air initiative and introducing a lawn mower exchange program. The city has teamed with SCDHEC to offer a discount on the purchase of a new cordless electric lawn mower. If you are in the market for a new lawn mower, consider a cordless electric mower. They are great for small yards (less than ¼ acre) and have an optional second battery to extend the operating time if needed. The city and its partners are offering coupons to save \$140.00 for the mowers with free shipping. With the coupon you can purchase a 14 inch cut cordless electric mower for \$289.00 (retail price \$399) or a 19 inch cut model for \$389.00 (retail price \$499).

other metal waste for recycling. To learn more about the program and how to receive a coupon, visit our website www.northaugusta.net and click on "Lawn Mower Exchange" or call (803) 441-4246.

Projections of Pollutants from Lawn Mowers - Aiken County in 2009

There are approximately 22,564 gas lawnmowers in residential use in Aiken County. The 2009 emission projections from these mowers are:

• Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	2.41 tons
• Carbon oxides (CO)	537.57 tons
• Particulate Matter - <25 micron size (PM _{2.5})	0.18 tons
• Sulfur dioxide (SO ₂)	0.20 tons
• Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs)	57.85 tons
• Total Pollutants	598.23 tons
• Carbon dioxide (CO ₂)	950.87 tons
Total Emissions	1,549.10 tons

Source: EPA's 2005 NONROAD Emissions Modeling Tool predictions for 2009 emissions from lawn mowers in Aiken County. The numbers reflect use of walk-behind gas lawn mowers used in a residential setting having a 4.1 average horsepower for about 25 hours a year.

Facts about Lawn Mower Use in the United States

- Lawn mowers use 800 million gallons of gas per year.
- Each year, more than 17 million gallons of fuel are spilled during the refueling of power lawn and garden equipment. That fuel seeps into our soil and groundwater.
- Gas-powered lawn equipment produces as much as one-tenth of the smog-forming pollutants from all mobile sources.
- The average gas mower produces as much air pollution in one year as 43 new cars driving 12,000 miles each.
- Today's small engines emit high levels of carbon monoxide, a colorless, odorless, poisonous gas. They also emit hydrocarbons and nitrogen oxides, pollutants that contribute to the formation of ozone.

You can order a mower on line or by phone and it will be delivered free to your home. If you would like to dispose of your gas powered mower, place it on curbside with

EPA's Rachel Carson "Sense of Wonder" Contest

Rachel Carson was an American biologist who cared deeply about the natural world around her. She was instrumental in alerting the world to the devastating impacts of the overuse of pesticides in our environment through publication of her book "Silent Spring" in 1962.

In honor of her life, the EPA is hosting its third annual Rachel Carson "A Sense of Wonder" contest. The EPA invites you to submit your photo, essay, poetry or dance video "that best expresses the sense of wonder that you feel for the sea, the night sky, forests, birds, wildlife, and all that is beautiful to your eyes."

Entries must involve persons from different generations enjoying nature in some way. Submissions are due by **Wednesday, June 10, 2009**. Winners will receive recognition by having

their work posted on the EPA website. To learn more and to enter the contest, visit the contest website at: <http://www.epa.gov/aging/resources/thesenseofwonder>.

Thank You North Augusta

Thank you North Augusta residents for bringing over 100 computers and monitors, 38 telephones, 29 printers, 20 televisions, 22 boxes of electronics, and over 100 other items to our March 14th Electronics Recycling Event for proper disposal! Our next event will be held September 12, 2009.

Species Profile:

Barred Owl (*Strix varia*)

The Barred Owl (*Strix varia*) is a large owl that inhabits forested areas near swamps, wetlands and in uplands near rivers across much of the eastern part of the United States and Canada. Recently a pair of Barred Owls was seen in Brick Pond Park. The large brownish gray owls have round heads, no ear tufts, and a long tail. They have a white chest with brown bar-like stripes running downward giving them their name. They roost in forested areas during the day and are nocturnal creatures that do most of their activity at night. The Barred Owl is most well known for its loud distinctive call that sounds like a slow question to the world, “Who, who cooks for you? Who, who cooks for you all?” Often, early in the evening, several of the owls will begin calling out together a variety of low noted calls and the forest seems to come alive as if an urgent meeting were taking place. And then as quickly as the loud chattering began, it will end.

These large birds can have a wing span of almost 3 ½ feet wide and stand up to 19 inches tall. They eat mostly small mammals and rodents such as voles, mice, shrews and larger prey including squirrels, rats, rabbits, and opossums. They also eat insects, amphibians, reptiles, fish, and birds. Barred Owls are monogamous creatures who keep the same mate for life. The pair will defend their territory all year long. They nest in tree hollows or abandoned squirrel or crow nests. They have been known to use man-made nest boxes as well. They don’t add any material to their nests and the female will lay two or three eggs that she takes care of while the male brings her and the newly hatched young food. The female will leave the nest for food after four or five weeks when the young owls are moving about the nest and branches. The male and female will then feed the young until they begin to fly at ten to twelve weeks. Barred Owls have been known to live up to 23 years.

The biggest threat to these wonderful night birds is loss of



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nesting habitat. The Barred Owl is an indicator species meaning that scientist can watch their populations to determine the health of the overall environment. The Barred Owl is common in our state and a welcomed sight at Brick Pond Park. Its presence is one more indicator that North Augusta is successfully conserving vital habitat through conservation of sensitive areas, such as Brick Pond Park.

Upcoming Events:

- Lawn and Garden Workshop – Creating a Rain Garden Monday, June 8th 6:00 to 8:30 p.m. at North Augusta Community Center. Registration is required. Please send an email to stormwater@northaugusta.net (put Rain Gardens in the subject line) giving number of persons attending or call 803-441-4246.
- Wings & Wetlands Event – July 24, 25, & 26 North Augusta Community Center. The event will be a fun filled family weekend to explore local wetlands and wildlife. To learn more about it, go to the Wings & Wetlands link at www.northaugusta.net



For additional information contact:

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