



web of water

Web of Water Webisode 4: In the Coastal Plain

Transcript

Jon Rood, Archaeologist: Now you can really see where the forest type changes. We were talking about the uplands before, and the uplands are dominated by these pine trees here, trees that don't like to be in the water so much. They still need water, but you can see the pines way up there on the bluff edge. So if we are looking over here you see pine, and as you look out here its all hardwoods. So this little area in between, where the pines stop and the hardwoods start is called an ecotone and you get a mix of both kinds of trees in there. So basically two different types of habitats right here...it's actually pretty neat. A lot of animals will come here because there is really where the biodiversity kind of mixes together. And you see a lot of American Beech up there right now, that's all the leaves that you can see that are copper in there.

Jon Rood: Cofitachequi?

Ian Sanchez, Naturalist: Cofitachequi.



Jon Rood: Oh, well when Desoto comes through he talks about this one place where they go and worship, sort of a ceremonial center, and he talks about these two great, wooden statues, these two wooden statues that protected the entrance to one of these mounds. It was a temple that was built on top of this mound. And inside the temple were the bodies of the old rulers of this land and their suits, their burial suits, were made out of freshwater pearls sewn together and Desoto and his men went, “Whoa, hey, look! There’s something we can take home with us.” And they took all those pearls. Well, they didn’t get very far with them. They got to about Alabama, and there was a warrior there named Tuscaloosa...means the Black Warrior. Well they tried to capture Tuscaloosa and he took them to his town and then basically slipped away because people protected him. And to get rid of the Spanish he decided to burn down all the houses that they were staying in and supposedly all the pearls of Cofitachequi are now in Alabama somewhere or they burned up in one of those houses. So they didn’t get very far.

Ian Sanchez: You know we’re talking about how this web of water is connecting, not only connecting wildlife, it also connects history and culture, and we are all connected in this – Native Americans and Revolutionary History, the whole forming of the United States is tied to this web of water. Here at the Santee Wildlife Refuge, you can see the remnants of that here. Mark can you tell us about what we’re going to see over here?

Marc Epstein, Refuge Manager: Okay, well, this is the site of the Santee Indian Mound and the Fort Watson site as well. And it’s real important because the Native Americans lived here. There was a huge nation of people here before the Americans actually came and this was the site that was their ceremonial and burial site. It’s a big mound and we are going to probably go over there in a minute. As the Americans came in, the Indians left largely because of disease, and they were pushed out. But the British actually built a fort on top of the ceremonial mound. It’s called Fort Watson, and during the Revolutionary War, Francis Marion and his troops



actually took the fort from the British. The connection is that as the landscape changes through time, so does a lot of the wildlife population and there is a historical connection, just like you mentioned, that there was once Native Americans here, then the British occupation, and then the Americans took it, the habitat changed...there used to be populations of Carolina Parakeets and passenger pigeons and the ivory billed woodpecker that don't exist anymore. So as the landscape changes, its important that people realize the natural history that's associated with the cultural history and how it all ties together.

Sally, Refuge Ranger: Well today we're putting in some native plants in the landscaping plan around the visitor's center. Most of the plants we're putting in are plants that can be found in this area naturally, and they are plants that attract wildlife, either butterflies to some of the perennial plants, or butterfly larvae for some of the other plants that use it as a host plant that they feed on. Plants that will attract hummingbirds for their nectar, butterflies for their flowers, and just good for wildlife all around. So we're trying to get rid of some of the plants that may not be native to this area and replace them with plants that are, and another benefit for that, is that not only to the wildlife, is that native plants require less maintenance typically so it should cut down on the maintenance for us, and be able to survive the natural conditions that you are going to find here in the Santee Area [end].

