

Elevating 'Just Taking A Walk' To An Art Form

BY LYNN CARLSON

Almost anybody can go for a walk, and almost everybody likes to now and again.

Phillip Manning of Chapel Hill has found a way to turn taking a walk into something of an art form, combining physical, intellectual and spiritual exercise with the simple need to stretch one's legs and get some fresh air.

Manning is the author of *Afoot in the South: Walks in the Natural Areas of North Carolina*, a handy, painstakingly thorough volume outlining the best places on the

barrier islands, coastal plain, Piedmont and mountains to learn more about the natural areas of this beautiful and geographically rich state.

The idea came when Manning had a traveling job. "I spent a lot of hours in airports and hotels and offices, but an interest in the outdoors led me into the countryside whenever I could get away. My main purpose was to relax and enjoy myself, but I also wanted to learn something of the natural history of the places in which I found myself.

"I quickly discovered that the

best way to do both was to find a spot to stretch my legs, a place to take a long walk. But good walks were often hard to find, and I often wished for a guide that would help me locate them. For those who would like to learn about and enjoy the natural areas of North Carolina, this book is meant to be that guide."

In each of the state's landscapes, Manning describes four or five walks. None require backpacking, but Manning recommends that any serious walker take along a rucksack with a few safety and first-aid essentials he lists in the the book's

Afoot in the South

Walks in the Natural Areas of North Carolina

PHILLIP MANNING
Illustrations by Diane Manning

**AFOOT IN THE SOUTH:
Walks in the Natural Areas
of North Carolina**

By Phillip Manning
Illustrations by Diane Manning
John F. Blair, Publisher
©1993
\$12.95

introduction.

He attempts to find the best trails through the most representative habitats of each region. Each chapter consists of three parts—a map, a brief description of the route, a mileage total for the walk, and an estimate of the degree of difficulty (easy, moderate or strenuous). The second part covers the natural and cultural history of the area, and the third gives the information needed to take the walk: where you might stay, and what arrangements, if any, you should make.

Each chapter is highlighted by pen-and-ink illustrations by Manning's wife Diane. There are also black-and-white photographs. He even includes a brief bibliography for each walk.

Beginning with the mountains and ending with the coast, Manning covers every kind of walk from the strenuous (but spectacular) 10-mile round-trip hike from Clingman's Dome (elevation 6,643 ft.) to Siler's Bald (5,620 ft.), to an easy 4.8-mile stroll on the North Pond Trail at Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge on the Outer Banks.

Mountain walks include Deep Creek-Indian Creek Loop in Great Smoky Mountains National Park; the Boone Fork Trail off the Blue Ridge Parkway; the Mount Mitchell Trail in Pisgah National Forest and Mount Mitchell State Park; and

the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness in Nantahala National Forest.

Suggested Piedmont treks are in Uwharrie National Forest, Eno River and South Mountains state parks, and Duke Forest.

On the coastal plain, Manning begins with what he calls the "Tundra Swam Walk" at Rose Bay Canal in Mattamuskeet National Wildlife Refuge. His words encourage newcomers to learn what those of us who love this Hyde County treasure already know: a walk in winter there is nothing less than a religious experience.

After giving the reader/walker a thumbnail history of Lake Mattamuskeet, he writes: "On that morning, it was packed with tundra swans, graceful, long-necked birds with wingspreads of six or seven feet. My presence alarmed the flock closest to me, and the birds flapped heavily into the air, forming a silvery, scraggly V. The sounds coming from the lake became louder and higher pitched as the remaining swans expressed their resentment at being disturbed. I sank to the ground and didn't move. After a while, the swans settled down again, and I eased my binoculars out of my knapsack to watch them."

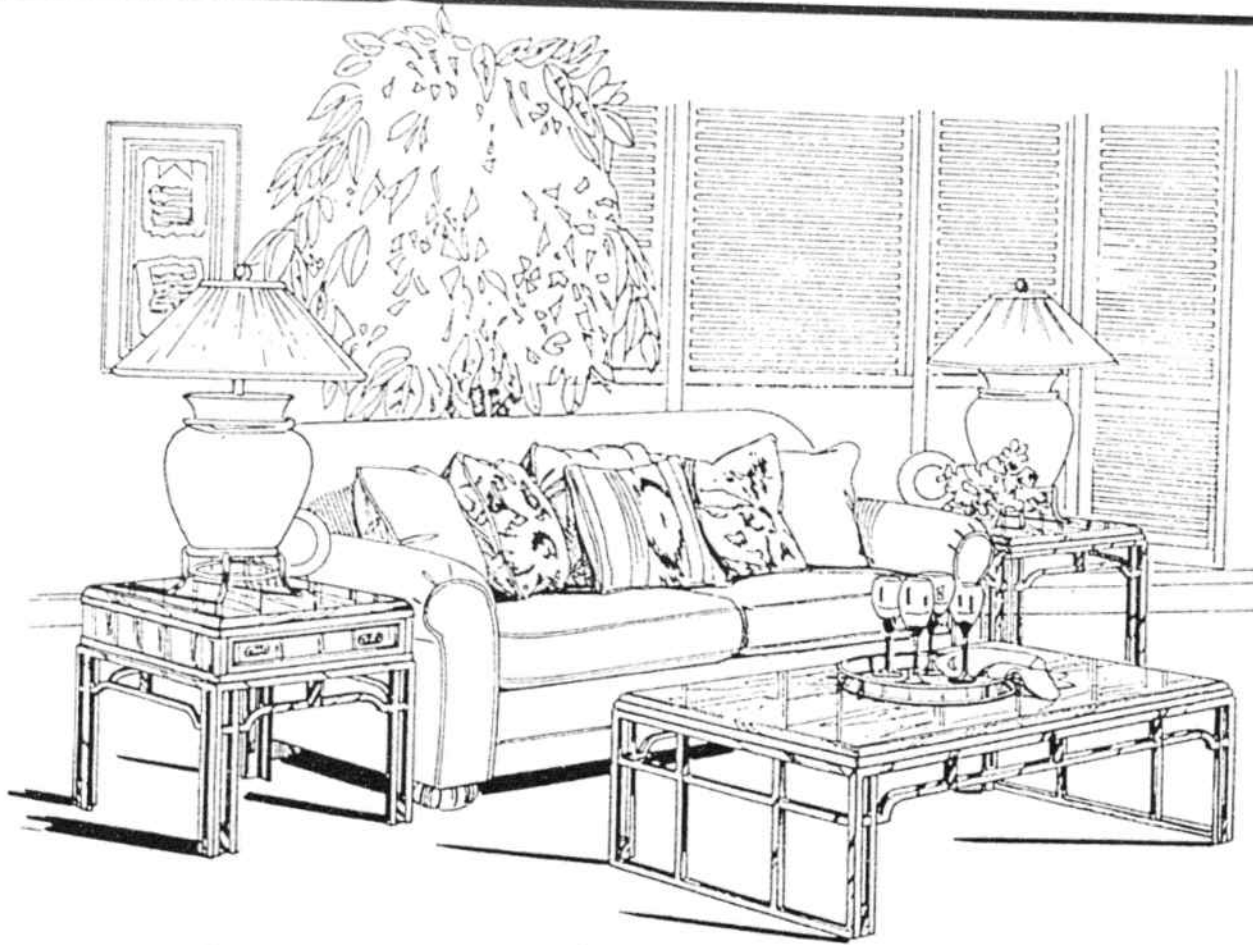
Other coastal plain walks described are at Jones Lake State Park, Waymouth Woods Sandhills Nature Preserve, Pettigrew State Park and Merchants Millpond State Park.

On the barrier islands, Manning sticks to the preservation lands, such as the Buxton Woods Trail in Cape Hatteras National Forest and Bear Island at Hammocks Beach State Park. He ends with Portsmouth Island in Cape Lookout National Seashore.

Manning does a masterful job of shining a spotlight on some of North Carolina's most special places. It's almost impossible to flip through this book without hungering to revisit some old haunt or explore one you may have overlooked in the past.

After all, it takes many a taxpayers' dollar to get and keep these public areas protected and pristine. They're here for you to enjoy and appreciate while heeding Manning's admonitions to "leave the land as we find it" and "protect it from the careless, from the devious, from the kind of people for whom only the bottom line counts."

This book will put you within striking distance of a great hike on any road trip you'll ever take in North Carolina. I'm putting my copy in my car!



G & M Interiors

Everything you need for home design is now under one roof!

- *Traditional & Contemporary Furnishings
- *Exquisite & Unusual Accessories
- *Blinds *Window Treatments *Wallpaper
- *Flooring *Bedding *Upholstery Service

SPECIAL SUMMER CLEARANCE

- Sleepers starting at \$499
- 4-Piece Bedroom starting at \$449
- Rattan Dinettes starting at \$399

Condominium and House Packages Available

2-Bedroom starting at \$3,999



1466 Hwy. 17, Little River, SC
OPEN: Monday-Saturday 9-5:30



800-676-9819 * 803-249-2889



THE PHOTO SHOP

(919)579-9411

1 HOUR PHOTO PROCESSING

- PORTRAIT STUDIO
- PHOTOGRAPHY ON LOCATION
- GLAMOUR SHOTS
- PASSPORT PHOTOS
- COPY WORK
- ENLARGEMENTS
- FILM, FRAMES, ALBUMS

9954 Beach Dr., Calabash, NC
(Located behind Wings)