Wilderness in Orlando by Dr. Peter Brewitt

The safari jeep rumbled over the dirt track, passing a pride of sleepy lions on a rise, when I spotted something truly outlandish, something you’d never expect to see in the Kalahari. “Quick, look!” I whispered. “What? Where?!” my wife asked. I pointed, she looked, and the two of us focused in on...a duck. A mallard, dabbling serenely amongst the exotic megafauna. Because, of course, we weren’t in Botswana. We were in Orlando, at Disney World’s Animal Kingdom. Welcome to the wilderness.

My family and I went to Disney over Thanksgiving, and the experience was SO much. So, so much. My daughters (5 and 9) loved it – of course they did. My wife and I liked it. But at the same time, the experience was so overwhelming that we had to spend two hours talking it over as we drove to my father’s place afterwards. And a big part of it was the nature.

Disney is about believing in magic, of course, so it made sense that there’d be fairies and aliens all over the place, but a whole 580-acre chunk of Disney, Animal Kingdom, is about pretend nature. It’s a zoo, basically, but you’re supposed to feel like it’s not. It was a little disconcerting, really, to exist in a zone of semi-belief the whole time, having fun seeing okapis and rhinos but being nagged by the unshakeable knowledge that this was still Florida. We had a good time – everyone did – and places like this do, I think, inspire a sense of wonder and care for nature in millions of children. But more than anything, Animal Kingdom made me want to actually go to Botswana. On that note, I hope everyone has a great spring break, with a good blend of nature, magic, and authenticity. See you in April!
Upcoming Events and Opportunities

Follow the [Goodall Center Instagram](#) page.

**Summer Internship with Coastal Conservation League**: 12-week environmental advocacy internship based in Beaufort, SC. [See more information and how to apply](#).

**Happy Spring Break!**

**The Environmental Education Association of South Carolina** is seeking individuals or groups/organizations to present sessions during the 2024 Annual Conference, June 20-22, at USC Upstate. The theme is Climate ResiliencEE: How to Save the Planet 2024. [Learn more and submit your proposals](#).

**A Community Centered Climate Future**: Furman University is hosting a two-day conference. Student tickets are $15. [Registration and additional information](#).

**Second Saturdays Volunteer Day in Glendale**: Join us on the second Saturday of the month to help beautify the garden and surrounding areas at the Goodall Center. [Register here to let us know you’re coming](#).

**PALs Trail Stewardship Day**: This clean-up day will focus on beautifying the Mary H. Wright Greenway Trail. [Sign up to participate](#).

**PROFILE OF THE WEEK:**

**East Carolina University – MS in Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality**

In 2009 East Carolina University began offering the nation’s first interdisciplinary [Master of Science in Sustainable Tourism and Hospitality (MS-STH) degree](#).

The program website states, “Sustaining environments, businesses, and social and cultural identities requires an interdisciplinary approach and perspective. The MS-STH program draws upon emerging sustainability sciences ranging from the physical to the social to address complex sustainable tourism issues. Science and education are critical partners in the sustainable, long-term management of tourism, and this program provides the foundation for this new approach to sustainable management.”

The completely online program is affordable and offers four core courses in sustainability and tourism are offered - an introductory course, a science course, a business course, and a planning and policy course. Students also choose from a set of electives and can opt for independent study or internship experience. The program can be completed in one-two years.