

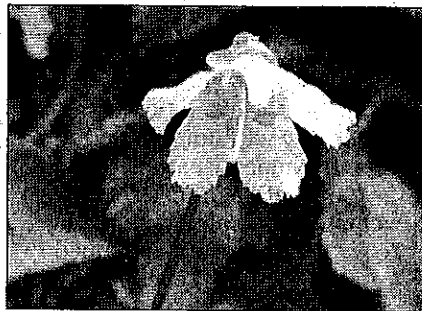
## *New educational exhibit at Devils Fork State Park*

THE JOURNAL STAFF

SALEM — Dr. John Scroggins of Lenoir, N.C., recently approached the South Carolina State Park Service wishing to donate to Devils Fork State Park some native Oconee bells — scientific name *shortia galacifolia* — that he removed from the Jocassee Valley prior to the formation of the lake. That donation helped develop a special exhibit at the park.

Viewing the beautiful blooms of the Oconee bells in early spring is hard enough. Their native habitat is streambanks and slopes of the Jocassee Gorges in high rainfall areas, usually in the deep shade of rhododendrons. Now imagine having limited mobility. This issue has been a concern for Devils Fork State Park for many years.

The Devils Fork team welcomed the opportunity and, with the help



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**Oconee bells are native to the Jocassee Gorges.**

of the Friends of Jocassee and the Salem Iris Garden Club, created an exhibit that allows wheelchair access to view a colony of native Oconee Bells. The exhibit, which is located at the ranger station, simulates the environment of a mountain creek.

“Allowing people to connect to the natural resources of the park is one

of our main goals,” park manager Kevin Evans said. “We are so grateful to everyone who has helped us make this exhibit possible. Without the donations of the bells, the funds to create the exhibit and the time spent helping install the plants, this exhibit would not exist.”

Admission to the park is \$5 for adults, \$3 for children ages 6 to 15, and free for children ages 5 and younger. Members of the South Carolina National Guard, as well as South Carolina residents 65 or older or disabled residents, are admitted for a discount of \$3.25 per person. For more information, call Devils Fork at (864) 944-2639.

Devils Fork State Park is located on Lake Jocassee in Salem. The park is open daily from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., with extended hours during daylight saving time. For more information on South Carolina’s state parks, visit [SouthCarolinaParks.com](http://SouthCarolinaParks.com).