

## Honor Awards for Volunteer Serv

### **The Pinckney 9 Pinckney Island National Wildlife Refuge**

Nine volunteers run and manage this refuge with oversight from Service staff, making it possible for the refuge's 200,000 annual visitors to enjoy a unique, quality outdoor experience in a safe and natural environment.

The nine – Clem Dietze, Twila Gray, Buck Hackett, Bill Hamel, Dick Hansen, Mike and Karen McGinty, and Dale and Connie Terrell – ensure the refuge is staffed every day. There is almost nothing these nine don't do. They maintain and repair bluebird boxes, inventory nesting wading birds, conduct Chinese Tallow control, mow grass, pick up trash, paint buildings, restock brochures, blow leaves, wash bird poop off signs, maintain signs and trails, clean the restroom, collect gate count information, distribute refuge information, assist visitors, and so much more.

In 2007 this group, in conjunction with the Environmental Club from the local high school, created a butterfly demonstration garden on Pinckney. The students did the research on the most common butterflies and the native plants they rely on. For the past 2 ½ years, these volunteers, with the help of the Master Gardners of the Lowcountry, have maintained the garden by providing plants, expertise, and their valuable time. This demonstration garden has become one of the most successful projects at Pinckney. More than 250 butterfly species use the garden, including nine species that could be seen every day this fall. Visitors to the refuge were thrilled to see such a variety of butterflies and to learn how they could recreate this garden in their own yard.

Without the work of these dedicated volunteers, this 4,053-acre refuge, located just west of Hilton Head Island, South Carolina, would suffer in many ways.