



## Southeast Book Club

The World of the Salt Marsh by Charles Seabrook

8:00-9:00 PM ET on Monday, February 27th, 2023

### Meeting Schedule

Date	Chapters	Number of Pages
3/13/23	Chapter 11: Saving the Oyster Chapter 12: Saving the Marsh Chapter 13: Rice Fields and Causeways Chapter 14: Bridging the Marsh	74
3/27/23	Chapter 15: The Ultimate Price Chapter 16: Living on the Edge Chapter 17: The Last Season Chapter 18: The Beloved Land	58

### Discussion Questions

As you read, you will most likely come up with questions of your own. Jot them down and share them with us! Here are the questions our facilitators came up with as they read Chapters 11-14 last week.

#### Chapter 11: Saving the Oyster

1. Why did Seabrook harvest oysters with Captain Sonny “on a bone numbing cold day in January?” Why is it important to consider Captain Sonny’s perspective in a quest to save the oyster?
2. Reflect on the efforts put in place by the [North Carolina Coastal Federation](#) and other environmentalists to protect oyster reefs. Knowing that oysters are keystone species in healthy estuaries and salt marshes and support the economy in many areas, what limits should there be on oyster harvesting? What are some other ways to “save the oyster?”

#### Chapter 12: Saving the Marsh

1. Mackinnon states that “The bottom line is that our marshes are so important that we cannot take their functions for granted.” What functions of the marsh do you feel we are taking for granted? How are our actions or inaction contributing to the “balding” of the marshes?
2. We often focus on the animals and landscapes of the marshes. Why is it just as important to make sure we are protecting marsh grass (*Spartina alterniflora*)? Which species or relationship between species in this chapter caught your attention? Why?

### **Chapter 13: Rice Fields and Causeways**

1. Mitigation is when builders promise to create new marsh, preserve an existing one elsewhere, or restore a comparable piece of degraded wetland to compensate for the loss (p. 239). Seabrook discusses the pros and cons of mitigation. If you had to choose a stance on mitigation, would you be “for” or “against?”
2. Seabrook tells us that only in recent years have scientists and engineers begun to understand the enormity of the damage causeway construction causes (p. 245). How have expressways, overpasses, bridges, etc. impacted the landscape or ecosystem in your area?

### **Chapter 14: Bridging the Marsh**

1. Hammocks are crucial components of salt marshes, especially as important safe havens for wildlife (p. 255). Seabrook outlines a series of recommendations, rulings, and regulations to protect marsh hammocks. What questions do you have about the effect or current status of any of the protection plans mentioned in this chapter?
2. University of Georgia marine scientists concluded that docks and similar structures have the potential to contribute directly or indirectly to water quality problems (p. 263). In what ways do docks negatively impact salt marshes?