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THE OTTER AND THE ALLIGATOR

It was a warm, sunny morning on December 26, 1971 as I walked along the back fence line of the U.S. Vegetable Breeding Laboratory on Savannah Highway toward a small wooded pond. Cardinals, Goldfinches, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Pine and Myrtle Warblers were singing from the trees with a White-eyed Vireo accenting the chorus. In the brush, Towhees, Brown Thrashers, Catbirds and White-throated Sparrows were scratching the leaves sounding much like a herd of wild pigs except for an occasional song. Overhead, the cry of a Cooper's Hawk could be heard as he flew over the swamp.

Suddenly, as I neared the pond, the brush overhanging the edge erupted when a Great Blue Heron followed closely by a Common Egret flew noisily off over the trees. Continuing around the pond, I came to an opening where I could stand on the shore and watch the activity taking place on the water. Several Coots, Common Gallinules and Pied-billed Grebes were swimming and feeding near the many weed patches that dotted the pond. There was movement in the reeds on the opposite shore and soon a large otter stood on its hind legs looking at something on a weed bed. The otter turned and walked along the edge of the reeds and then came running back as a large 10-12 foot alligator swapped ends in an attempt to catch him. He skillfully dodged the 'gator's lunge and ran back toward its tail. Again the 'gator lunged and the otter was just out of reach. This seemed to be a game and went on for about five minutes until the reptile dove in the water and swam away. Still full of mischief the otter chased all the birds around the pond until they managed to find safety under overhanging bayberry bushes. Unable to find anything else to harass, he climbed the bank and walked away through the woods ending another chapter in the life of my favorite pond.

Perry E. Nugent

EDITOR'S NOTE

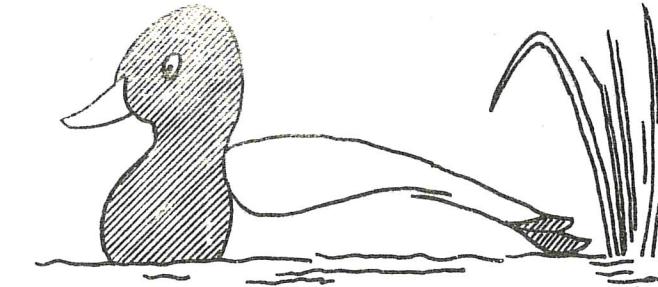
I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Perry E. Nugent aboard as assistant editor. I am sure that Perry will be a great asset to this newsletter.

Let me again encourage more of you the membership to contribute. You can either send articles directly to me or to Perry Nugent. I know many of you think that the Society is oriented strongly towards birds, but this is only because it is the birders who make most of the contributions. Please let us hear from you botanists, herpetologists, anthropologists, ichthyologists, paleontologists, etc. etc. etc!

Many of the older members may remember that the previous editors of the Squawk (the Lamberts) made a survey of interests in the Society. Now that our membership is very much larger we are planning to make another survey in the near future to determine if the interests have changed.

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Squawk



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OFFICERS

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Secretary-Treasurer: Karen Ingram, 7 Ehrhardt Dr. Apt 1B Chas. S.C. 29403

JUNE ACTIVITIES

Monday June 5 - 8:00PM Meeting of Executive Committee 3 St. Michael's Alley, Charleston, S.C.
No regular meeting in June No Field Trips Planned

If there are any items of business or suggestions to be brought to the attention of the Executive Committee, please contact any member of the committee before June 5.

BIRD MOVEMENT IN JUNE

Arrivals

1 Scissors-tailed Flycatcher	16 Roseate Spoonbill	25 Brown-headed Cowbird
14 Sooty Tern	17 Bridles Tern	

Departures

1 Baird's Sandpiper	6 Avocet	13 Cedar Waxwing
2 Sora Rail	Sharp-tailed Sparrow	17 Knot
3 Northern Phalarope	7 Surf Scoter	18 Tree Swallow
4 Solitary Sandpiper	9 Bonaparte's Gull	23 Red-breasted Merganser
5 Horned Grebe	10 White-rumped Sandpiper	25 Snow Bunting
Blackpoll Warbler	13 Black-billed Cuckoo	28 Marbled Godwit
6 Blue-winged Teal		Gannet
American Widgeon		
Shoveler		

Casuals and Accidentals

Western Grebe	Red Phalarope	Red-breasted Nuthatch
Sooty Shearwater	Ruddy Duck	Bobolink
White-winged Scoter		

## NEW OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

Congratulations to the newly elected officers and committee members! Those elected at the May meeting were: Vice-President, Arthur M. Wilcox; Secretary-Treasurer, Karen Ingram; Members-at-large, Ted Beckett, Alan M. Bills, Burkett S. Neely, Richard Porcher, John Reed and Elizabeth Simons. Also, congratulations to Waddell Robey, who will continue as president for another year and to Julian Harrison, who remains on the committee as the immediate past president.

OBSERVATIONS			
<u>Sighting</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Yellow Warbler	Riverland Terrace	May 13	Francis Barrington
House Finch (Male)	Vegetable Breeding Lab	Jan 8	Perry Nugent
	USDA Hwy 17 South		
Canada Geese (200)	"	Apr 23	Perry Nugent
Swallow tailed Kite	Dupont Crossing	Apr 29	Perry Nugent
Red Fox	Vegetable Breeding Lab	Mar 23	Perry Nugent
	USDA Hwy 17 South		

Note: This section will be set aside for unusual observations which refers not only to rare species sighted, but also to unusual habits of common species.

## SPRING BIRD COUNT

Julian Harrison reported that a successful count was made on April 23 by four parties covering 133 miles in 31 party hours. Starting at 7:30 AM and ending at 6:00 PM, 12 people observed 143 species and 2562 individual birds. The high count was by the team of Nelson W. Taylor, David M. Cline and Perry E. Nugent with 93 species in the I'on Swamp area and 84 species in the Awendaw-Moore's Landing area. This group recorded Yellow, Blackburnian, Chestnut-sided and Swainson's Warblers; an immature Bald Eagle, 3 White Pelicans, a Peregrine Falcon, and a white (immature) Little Blue Heron. The Eagle was observed from the abandoned houses on I'on Swamp Road flying towards the north. The Falcon and the White Pelicans were seen from Moore's Landing. Other interesting species were a Gray Kingbird at Sratton Place, Mt. Pleasant, by Dr. and Mrs. John Reed and 3 Swallow-tailed Kites by Dr. and Mrs. Julian Harrison at Fairlawn Plantation.

Thanks are due to all those taking part in the count: William D. Anderson, Jr., David M. Cline, Margaret N. Harrison, Julian Harrison, Kenneth E. Hough, Anne-Marie Noe, Perry E. Nugent, Jeanette Oldland, John K. Reed, Mary Reed, Bruce W. Stender and Nelson W. Taylor.

## CBC SPRING MEETING

The Spring meeting of the Carolina Bird Club was held from May 5-7 at the Sir Walter Hotel in Raleigh, N.C. The host was the Raleigh Bird Club. Julian Harrison attended from CNHS.

The program began on Friday evening with a slide talk by William L. Hamnett, Director of N.C. State University Museum, on birds likely to be seen in the Raleigh area. Several field trips were planned for Saturday and approximately 120 species were seen. Of special mention were several Red-cockaded Woodpecker nesting trees, which is unusual for the Piedmont. There was a barbecue picnic supper in one of the Raleigh parks followed by the Spring business meeting at the hotel. Colonel Fred Probst was re-elected president for another year. Dr. Charles Blake from Hillsborough, N.C., gave a most interesting lecture on the biology of the Purple Finch after the business meeting.

Sunday was left open for the participants, although there were several field trips planned.

## BOTANICAL NOTES

An interesting botanical find of this spring has been that of swamp privet (*Forestiera acuminata*) growing rather commonly along a stretch of the Edisto River above U.S. Highway 17-A.

According to the latest edition of The Vascular Flora of the Carolinas, this species had only been recorded in S.C. from a few counties along the lower reaches of the Savannah River. It is listed as very rare.

It produces its inconspicuous blooms in March, followed in April by leathery, raisin-like fruit of a purplish-maroon hue. The plant does bear a superficial resemblance to the common privet, but its leaves are larger and decidedly acuminate. It grows in small thickets along the muddy junctions of the swamp and the riverbank's sandbars.

Edmund R. Cuthbert, Jr.

## FLOWERS IN JUNE

In late May and early June, after the wild azaleas and dogwoods have gone, nature seems to be "bursting out all over". The bogs, woods and fields are filled with beautiful blooms. Below is a list of some of the more easily identified species which may be found at this time of the year.

Arrowheads - <i>Sagittaria</i> sev. sp.	White-topped Sedge - <i>Dichromicium</i> <i>colorata</i>
Sundew - <i>Drosoea rotundifolia</i>	Pickeral Weed - <i>Pontederia cordata</i>
Colic Root - <i>Aletris farinosa</i>	Yellow Star Grass - <i>Hypoxis hirsuta</i>
Lizard's Tail - <i>Saururus cerna</i>	Blue-eyed Grass - <i>Sisyrinchium</i> sev. sp.
Yellow Milkwort - <i>Polygala lutea</i>	Pitcher Plant - <i>Sarracenia flava</i>
Meadow Beauty - <i>Rhexia</i> sev. sp.	Sensitive Brier - <i>Schrankia michro-</i> <i>phalla</i>
White False Indigo - <i>Baptisia alba</i>	Butterfly Weed - <i>Asclepias tuberosa</i>
Grass Pink - <i>Calopogan pulchellus</i>	Skullcap - <i>Scutellaria integrifolia</i>
Beard Tongue - <i>Penstemon</i> sev. sp.	Horse Nettle - <i>Solanum carolinense</i>
Bladderwort - <i>Utricularia inflata</i>	

Wilhelmina M. Coleman

## ZIG-ZAG SALAMANDER

Dr. Norman Chamberlain and Frank McKiney found a Zig-zag Salamander (*Plethodon dorsalis*) near Ellicott Rock on the Chatoga River in Oconee County on May 21, 1972. This is the first record for the Atlantic side of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

## MUSEUM YOUNG PEOPLES' SUMMER PROGRAM

The Charleston Museum will present a summer workshop program for young people (kindergarten through high school). This program includes many interesting subjects such as Indian lore, habits of animals, insects, animal sounds, etc. For further information contact Mrs. Margaret N. Harrison at the Charleston Museum.

## ADELE PENGUINS

For those who were not present at Baruch Auditorium on May 23, they missed a real opportunity to meet Dr. William Sladen, the noted pathobiologist from Johns Hopkins University. The film on the penguins was even more fascinating than it was on T.V. because of the background information which was so well presented by Dr. Sladen. This program was a real gem and we would hope that it is only the first of many such programs in the future.