

THE LESSER SQUAWK  
THE CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, INC.  
2260 DALLERTON CIRCLE  
CHARLESTON, S. C. 29407

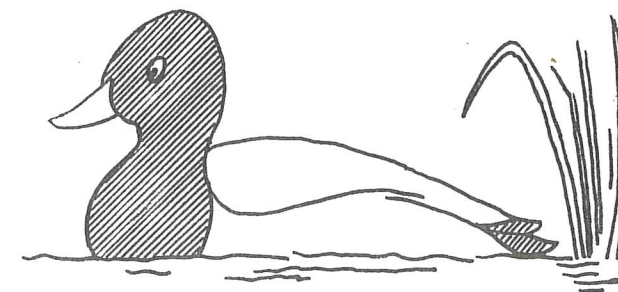
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FIRST CLASS MAIL

Mr & Mrs T A Beckett III  
Magnolia Gardens  
Route 4  
Charleston S C 29407



# the lesser Squawk



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2260 Dallerton Circle, Charleston, S. C. 29407, Phone 556-3841.  
Assistant Editor Mrs. Jesse L. Griffin, P. O. Box 72, Citadel, Charleston, S. C. 29409

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## OFFICERS

President: Alan M. Bills, 116 Presidents Circle, Summerville, S. C. 29483  
Vice President: Richard D. Porcher, Jr., Biology Dept., The Citadel, Charleston, S.C. 29409  
Secretary-Treasurer: Mrs. Jack Pratt, P. O. Box 251, Sullivans Island, S. C. 29482  
Members at Large: Perry Nugent, W. Bruce Ezell, I. Mayo Reed, Mrs. Jesse L. Griffin,  
Hans J. Heller, and Mrs. James Ingram

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## OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

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Tuesday, October 9, 1973 - 8:00 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING AT CHARLESTON MUSEUM

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FIELD TRIP - HALF DAY - OCTOBER 14  
MIDDLEBURG PLANTATION

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## REMINDER

Items for publication in the Lesser Squawk should be submitted in writing to the Editor by the 20th of the month

## NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

This month's program will feature the film, Billion Dollar Marsh. This excellent film was produced by the British Broadcasting Corporation, but was filmed in Georgia and Virginia. A "No-nonsense" approach is taken as to the value of wetlands. The value of marshes in dollars and cents is illustrated and explained. If you have ever wondered why the marshes are ecologically important as well as beautiful, I would like to urge you to attend this meeting.

W. Bruce Ezell, Jr.



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I was extremely gratified to see the response to the September Field Trip into the Santee swamp - no fewer than 37 persons made it! I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of CNHS to John Cely of our sister chapter in Columbia for guiding us into the swamp. It was one of the best field trips I have participated in. I'm sorry that some members were not able to participate because of a lack of space in boats - I hope that they will not be discouraged.

Well, the new 1973 - 74 year is upon us and we have plans for several important projects. Perhaps one of the most pressing problems with which we should deal is the problem of some kind of Tidelands legislation. Several bills have been introduced into the Legislature in the past, all having good points and bad points I'm sure, and yet we still have no protection at all for our marshes. The time is ripe for CNHS to support some constructive legislation in this area. I would like to appoint a committee of members-at-large to study this area carefully so that we can come up with some definite and well informed recommendations that will put CNHS on record with a definitive stand. Let's have some volunteers to serve on this committee.

The first meeting is on October 9, and we are promised an excellent program, so let's see you all in record numbers to start out the new season.

Alan M. Bills

## STATEMENT OF THE SOCIETY ON THE PROPOSED MANOA METALS PLANT SITE ON THE ASHEPOO RIVER

My name is Wm. Bruce Ezell, Jr. I am a member of the executive committee of The Charleston Natural History Society, Inc., a chapter of the National Audubon Society. I am pleased to be here today on behalf of Mr. Carlyle Blakeney, Southeastern Regional Representative of the National Audubon Society, to present the views of the National Audubon Society, its 302 Chapters and 287 affiliated organizations.

While the various state and federal agencies have encouraged participation in environmental decisions affecting the public, we note with interest that "no fact sheets were required in this case" according to a note received from The Environmental Protection Agency by our regional office dated 22 August 1973. In addition, a permit application could not be and was not provided by The Environmental Agency to our regional office as late as 7 September 1973. Under such conditions, it is difficult for us to compile useful information and to participate to the extent we would like. We do question certain conditions in spite of what seems an irregular manner of encouraging public participation and a certain lack of information.

First, the Ashepoo is virtually an undeveloped river from the standpoint of industrialization. Few rivers in South Carolina still enjoy this status. While it is encouraging to see industry interested in re-cycling, we would not encourage re-cycling at the expense of one of the state's few remaining wild rivers. Surely the many rivers within the state that have already been industrialized offer more than adequate sites for such activities. The Ashepoo River feeds into St. Helena's Sound, which has been described as one of our last remaining unspoiled estuarine systems. It is also one of the most productive estuarine ecosystems in our state. The loss of another of our remaining wild rivers, the possible detrimental effects discharge may have on the River's ecosystem and the downstream ecosystem of St. Helena's Sound; are not to be taken lightly. Therefore we would like to strongly urge denial of the permit and further urge that the Manoa Metals Co. seek an alternate site in a previously industrialized area.

## OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

The October field trip will be a half-day trip to Middleburg Plantation, on October 14, Mr. Edward Dingle our host. Persons wishing to participate should meet Richard Porcher at the Charleston Museum parking lot at 6:30 a.m.

## SKY-WATCHER'S GROUP MEMBERSHIP FORM

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_

PREFERENCE OF DAY OF WEEK \_\_\_\_\_

The Squawk is once again running the Sky-Watcher's Group Membership Form for the convenience of those who have requested it.

A minimum of 6 to 8 members are required to make the efforts of this group worthwhile, so please fill out the form, if you are interested, and turn in to Miss Elizabeth Simons or Hilda Griffin at the next regular meeting of CNHS on October 9, or mail to Hilda Griffin, P.O. Box 72, Citadel Station, Charleston, S. C. 29409, at your earliest possible convenience.

October will offer brilliant night watching. Let's get together.

## REPORT FROM CAPE ROMAIN

Warm weather has slowed the arrival of fall visitors and winter residents at the Cape. Dunlins and Dowitchers have arrived in large numbers. Brown Pelicans are concentrating in large flocks getting ready for their trip.

This year's Alligator census has just been completed, with a daytime count of more than 80 and 3 active nests. The reptiles were grouped according to size, the largest class was 4 - 6' followed by less than 4', with fewer larger specimens.

The big excitement for September was when a 3 - 4' Eastern Diamondback Rattlesnake with 8 rattles took a stroll across the refuse compound at Moore's Landing. Burkett Neely and his men could not get this snake to coil or strike, which is unusual behavior. Perhaps this rattler had something else in mind or was full from a multicourse rodent and bird dinner.

THIS SPACE WAS RESERVED FOR YOUR ARTICLE



# Santee Swamp - Field Trip

Champ Smith, age 9, probably said it best at the conclusion of the Charleston Natural History Society field trip to Santee Swamp on Saturday, September 22, "Wouldn't it be great to do this all the time?" Those who heard his question smiled and nodded and reflected that, judging by what we had seen, onelong perpetual field trip might be great. For a while.

Richard Porcher was the group's guide and undoubtedly spent much time making arrangements for the trip. Many thanks! Under the pleasant and experienced leadership of John Cely of the Columbia Audubon Chapter, participants numbering 37, in 9 boats, took to the water at Low Falls Landing at nine in the morning.

Our caravan glided smoothly through what seemed an endless array of lakes, narrow corridors and free-form rooms bordered by trees of great variety - tupelo gum, ash, water oak and cypress, to mention a few. In the dense swamp, sunlight filtered through and we were struck by the fantastic tranquility of the place. While crossing a fairly large lake, a flock of six Anhingas soared and circled over us. Other birds sighted or heard, included the Pileated Woodpecker, Black-Crowned Night Heron, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Kingfisher, Black Vulture, Parula Warbler, Chickadee, Egret and Osprey.

At Sparkleberry Landing, we went ashore for lunch and our leader choose a site inland away from the river's edge. Waiting to greet us - or so it seemed - was a handsome Glossy Ibis who very patiently turned every profile to his watchers in order that positive identification could be made. With that established, he then perched amiably and people-watched the entire time we were there. This hour gave us time to eat, stretch and converse about the one thing we all had in common - the wonders of the natural world.

On the return trip a slightly different route was taken and one handsome uninhibited Barred owl must have anticipated our plans. He choose a tree located in a part of the lake large enough for all nine boats to arrange themselves in a semi-circle for owl-watching. He couldn't have been more oblidging and was probably thinking that anything an Ibis could do he could do.

## THE HALESIAS

Roger Lambert recently discovered a specimen of silver-bell, (Halesia Carolina) growing on the outer coastal plain of S. C., where this species is considered rare. The plant is growing in an alluvial forest, in Georgetown County, not far from the Santee River. He reports that it is a multiple-trunked specimen, apparently having been damaged in the past and so causing the development of several boles.

He collected a few of the four-winged, ellipsoidal fruit which serve to distinguish this species. Perhaps the seed from which this plant came arrived on a great freshet of the Santee River from one of its piedmont or mountain tributaries, for Helesia caroline is a common plant of the mountains. There are two other species of Halesia known from S.C., and both are considered rare. One, H. diptera, has been found in Jasper county. Its fruit, as its specific name implies, is two-winged. The third species, H. parviflora, is listed by Vascular Flora of the Carolinas from Dorchester and Saluda Counties. The latter bears four-winged fruit but they are club-shaped.

Edmund R. Cuthbert

## EGRET PERCH

On September 11, I was interested to note a Cattle Egret fly up from the back of one of our cows to the power line that crossed the pasture. It lit on the lower wire, swaying and flapping. In a second it was joined by another. Then a third one lit on the upper wire and a fourth joined it. By now they were constantly trying to keep balance on the swaying wires. After about a minute they gave up and returned to the solidity of the ground. This is the first time I've ever seen an egret of any kind perch on a wire.

Dot Glover

# Executive Committee Meeting August 14, 1973 8 Members present

The president called the meeting to order and announced that our local chapter has become a full member in the National Audubon Society as opposed to our provisional membership in the past. Certain requirements will have to be met to retain this position in future years.

The following items were discussed:

1. Audubon does not approve of a chapter belonging to a coalition since lobbying may be involved.
2. A letter from Mr. Sullivan of Briarcliff Acres in Myrtle Beach was read. Three thousand feet of dunes are being threatened by prospective condominiums. This would seriously affect the wildlife in the area. We need more details in order to reply.
3. The North American Nest Record Program has asked our chapter to become a regional center. We will talk with interested members in order to make a decision.
4. The chapter needs more publicity. Radio, T.V., newspaper, and talk shows were mentioned as possibilities. Audubon films and speakers could also supplement our regular monthly meetings.
5. A motion was made to provide some money for research. A committee of 3 will meet to decide on the amount and requirements for the grant.

The following motions were accepted by the committee:

1. The executive committee will meet in September, November, January, March, and May. The committee will have a brief meeting before regular chapter meetings. At least 5 members must be present. Each member will be allowed 2 unexcused absences.
2. Five hundred dollars will be transferred to a savings account.
3. An article in the paper by Congressman Dorn was considered for a possible statement from the chapter. It was deemed unworthy of our consideration.
4. The chapter decided to make a statement against a metal recycling plant to be located on the Ashepoo River at a hearing on September 11 in Walterboro.
5. Perry Nugent presented a revised checklist of birds.

Ann Pratt

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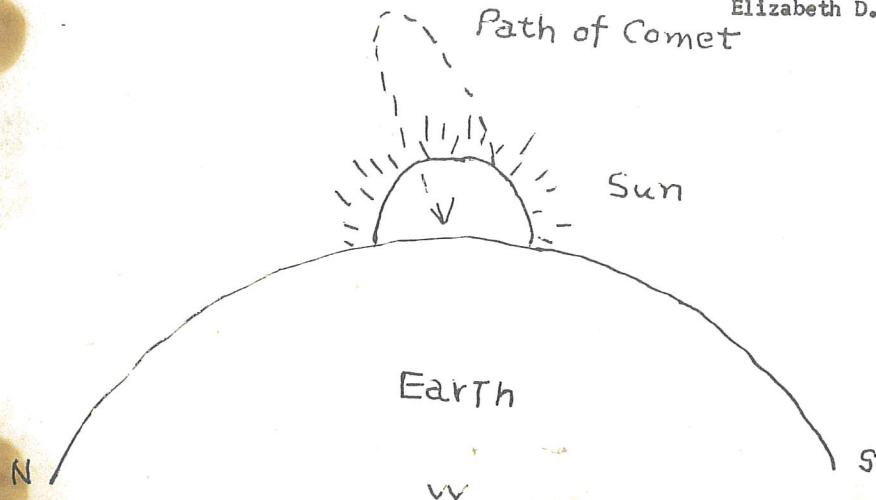
# THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

All five of the naked-eye planets will be visible in the evening hours during October. Mercury will reach its greatest eastern elongation on the 18th, setting about an hour after the sun. About 15 degrees above Mercury, Venus will be shining with dazzling brilliance, and at the same time, Mars, glowing red, may be located not far above the northeastern horizon. On October 16th, Mars will be nearer to the earth than at any time this year. Almost mid-way between these setting and rising planets, Jupiter may be seen a little west of the meridian. At 10:00 p.m. on the first of the month, and two hours earlier at the end, Saturn will rise, shining with a steady, yellow light.

Between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. in mid-October, the three constellations that contain the Summer Triangle of brilliant stars will be located in the western segment of the sky, approaching their setting. The Square of Pegasus will be just east of the meridian, high overhead. The star in the northeastern corner of the Square belongs, also, to the constellation of Andromeda, the hapless princess who was condemned to be devoured by a Sea Monster. The mutually shared star represents her head, and two others of the same magnitude, extending northeastward from the head indicate her body and feet. To the north of Andromeda, her mother, Cassiopeia, is seated in a chair. Between these two, - east of Cassiopeia, and northeast of Andromeda, the prince who rescued the princess is located. This is Perseus, the group which resembles an old-fashioned letter "A". Not far from the northeastern horizon, the bright star, Capella may be seen. On the meridian, high above the southern horizon, shines the white star, Piscis Austrinus, - the Southern Fish.

October of this year brings an exciting early morning "bonus" for those who possess small, (or large) telescopes. A comet which was discovered last March by Dr. Lubos Kohoutek, of the Hamburg Observatory in Germany will become visible in small telescopes. Observers can begin to look for it by October 1st, between 5:00 and 6 a.m., (Standard Time). The comet will be located just above the eastern horizon, below Leo. It will appear as a fuzzy star, with a tail pointing westward, or northwestward. As the month advances, the comet will become steadily brighter, eventually making optical aid unnecessary. Some scientists predict that this will be the most brilliant comet of the century. A comet consists of three parts: a head, which is a large group of separate rocks held loosely together by their mutual gravity; an envelope of gases; and a tail. Comets are members of the Solar System, traveling around the sun in very elliptical orbits. As a comet approaches the sun, the gases are excited into luminosity, and the pressure of the sun's light pushes them away from the head to form the tail. After the comet goes around the sun, then begins to move along its orbit away from the sun, the tail precedes the head. The month of October and the first part of November will be the best time to observe Comet Kohoutek, for after that, it will move between our line of vision and the glare of the sun.

Elizabeth D. Simons



## BIRD MOVEMENT IN OCTOBER

### ARRIVALS

- |                            |                         |                       |
|----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Blue Goose               | 9 White crowned Sparrow | 20 Lesser Scaup       |
| 2 Gannet                   | 10 Red-necked Grebe     | 21 Ring-necked Duck   |
| Red-breasted Merganser     | Golden Crowned Kinglet  | Henslow's Sparrow     |
| Brown Creeper              | 11 Black Scoter         | 22 Whistling Swan     |
| White throat sparrow       | Bonaparte's Gull        | 23 Long-eared Owl     |
| 4 Yellow bellied Sapsucker | 13 Solitary Vireo       | 24 Surf Scoter        |
| Western Kingbird           | Savannah Sparrow        | 25 Le Conte's Sparrow |
| Kirtland's Warbler         | 15 Red throated Loon    | Horned Grebe          |
| Dark-eyed Junco            | Yellow rail             | 26 Short-eared Owl    |
| 5 Green Winged teal        | 16 Snow Goose           | 29 Hooded Merganser   |
| American Avocet            | 17 Common Loon          | Dovekie               |
| Ruddy Duck                 | Robin                   | 31 Canvas back        |
| 7 Canada Goose             | 18 Hermit thrush        | Greater Scaup         |
| 8 Purple Finch             | 19 Rusty Blackbird      | Pine Siskin           |

### DEPARTURES

- |                                 |                               |                        |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| 6 Black Rail                    | Least Bittern                 | 27 Swainson's Thrush   |
| 9 Black tern                    | Louisiana Water thrush        | 28 Upland Plover       |
| Acadian Flycatcher              | 20 White-rumped Sandpiper     | Least Tern             |
| 14 Roseate Spoonbill            | Stilt Sandpiper               | Cliff Swallow          |
| Summer tanager                  | 22 Wood Thrush                | Parula Warbler         |
| 15 Wilson's Sturn Petrel        | Black Burnian Warbler         | 28 Yellow Warbler      |
| Rough-winged Swallow            | Northern Water thrush         | Kirtland's Warbler     |
| Hooded Warbler                  | 23 Mississippi Kite           | 30 Pectorial Sandpiper |
| Blue Grosebeak                  | 24 Kentucky Warbler           | Eastern Wood Pewee     |
| Lark Sparrow                    | 25 Northern Phalarope         | Sandwich Tern          |
| 16 Gull-billed Tern             | Black-billed Cuckoo           | Tennessee Warbler      |
| Eastern Kingbird                | 26 Great Crested Flycatcher ? | Purple Gallinule       |
| 17 Wilson's Plover              | Chestnut Sided Warbler        | Roseate Tern           |
| 19 Black throated Green Warbler |                               |                        |

### OBSERVATIONS

- |             |                     |                         |              |
|-------------|---------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| August 23   | * Bald Eagle        | Seabrook Island         | David Huff   |
|             | * Osprey            | Seabrook Island         | David Huff   |
| August 26** | Bachman's Warbler   | 4 Hole Swamp            | Farley Smith |
| Sept. 16    | Savannah Sparrow    | South Island            | Ted Beckett  |
| 17          | 2 Mississippi Kites | U.S. Veg. Lab.          | Perry Nugent |
| 18          | Upland Sandpiper    | (Plover) U.S. Veg. Lab. | Perry Nugent |

These species listed above are uncommon or rare in our area. Some may be rare in one season and common in another. There is room in this column for observations other than birds. Any sighting of some phase of nature would be welcomed. If your sightings require more detail than will fit in this column, write a short article for The Squawk.

\*David Huff observed the Eagle take a fish away from the Osprey. This behavior has been reported on other occasions, but is not common, and must be a magnificent sight.

\*\*This unconfirmed observation of this Bachman's Warbler by Farley Smith, is the first good report of this bird since 1969. There had been 3 or 4 possible sightings during 1972 but Farley's description of a Hooded Warbler-like bird, with yellow above and below the bill, leaves little doubt that our rarest Woodland Warbler is still with us. Also the date is a new departure date by more than a month.