

THE LESSER SQUAWK
THE CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY, INC.
2260 Dallerton Circle
Charleston, S. C., 29407

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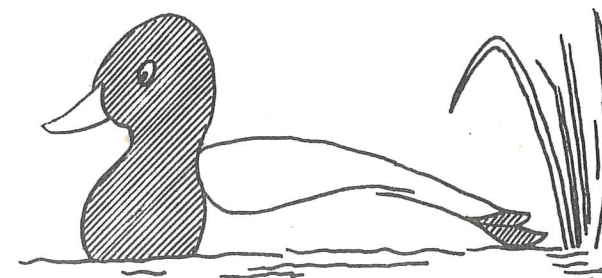
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the lesser

Squawk



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FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES

REGULAR MEETING AT CHARLESTON MUSEUM LECTURE HALL

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1974 - 8:00 P.M.

FIELD TRIP

Sunday, February 16, 1974
MAGNOLIA GARDENS

REMINDER

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

Lucas from Kuba journals

NOTES FROM THE PROGRAM CHAIRMAN

It is indeed a pleasure to announce that the next regular meeting (Feb. 12) of The Charleston Natural History Society will feature an interesting and informative program by Richard D. Porcher, Jr. As many of you know, Richard is not only our Field Trip Leader, but also serves CNHS as Vice-President of the Chapter. This illustrated talk is entitled:

CAROLINA BAYS: MYSTERIOUS CRATERS OF THE CAROLINA COASTAL PLAIN

The lecture will consider the history, flora and possible origin of these unique formations. I hope you will plan now to attend this unusual program.

Wm. Bruce Ezell, Jr.

FIELD TRIP SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 1974

The February field trip will be a half day bird walk at Magnolia Gardens. Meet at the Charleston Museum at 7:00 A.M. Ted Beckett reports large numbers of Robins and Cedar Waxwings arrived January 21. All the common hawks and some ducks, including Fulvous Tree Ducks are currently visiting the garden. Hopefully they will stay for some people watching on the 16th.

For further information call Field Chairman, Richard Porcher (Home 884-9474, Office 723-0611, EXT. 487).

SPICEBUSHES

Soon to flower is a member of the Lauraceae, the spicebush, Lindera benzoin, a shrub of low woods, particularly those that have basic or only slightly acid soils. It is named in honor of Johann Linder, an early botanist of Sweden. The species name stems from an Arabic word meaning incense of Java, referring to the spice obtained from Styrax benzoin, native to that island. Linderas bark produces an oil akin to oil of wintergreen; its fruit an oil related to camphor; and the leaves an oil similar to the essence of lavender. It is said that these parts can be made into a tea, and that the dried fruit can be used as a substitute for allspice.

A second species is known from S. C., but according to the vascular Flora of the Carolinas it has been found only in Berkeley and Colleton counties in this state. It is listed as rare. There are approximately sixty species in the world, being found primarily in temperate and tropical Asia. One of the most notable is L. megaphylla, which becomes a small tree. It bears, as its name implies, large leaves, which are evergreen. China is its native heath. From Japan and Korea come L. obtusiloba and L. praecox, both being leaf-losing, small trees.

Edmund Cuthbert

CITADEL BIOLOGY SEMINARS

- Wednesday, February 6 Dr. I. S. H. Metcalf, Professor, Department of Anatomy, Medical University of South Carolina
Topic: Olfactory Organs in the Hammerhead Shark
- Tuesday, February 12 Dr. Harold G. Hempling, Professor and Chairman, Department of Physiology, Medical University of South Carolina
Topic: The Membrane Functions of Neoplastic Cells
- Thursday, February 21 Dr. Byron Ingram, Associate Professor, Department of Zoology, Clemson University
Topic: Effects of Thermal Discharge on Photoperiodic Responses of Aquatic Insects
- Tuesday, February 26 Dr. Lockett V. Davis, Professor, Department of Biology, Winthrop College
Topic: Ecology of Salt Marsh Arthropods

THE QUEEN, DANAS gilippus, CRAMER, VISITS CHARLESTON

On December 3, 1973, Robert Guthbert and I were collecting Cucumber Beetles in a broccoli field at the U. S. Vegetable Breeding Laboratory on Savannah Highway. The plants were in full bloom and alive with many insects particularly bees, flies, and butterflies. As we left the field, Robert called my attention to a very dark and unusual butterfly. Since this was a new one to me, I collected it for further study. In the hand it was a beautiful dark brown with black wing margins and numerous white spots on the wings. Its relationship with the Monarch was evident, although it appeared to be another species. On further investigation, with the help of T. L. McFadden, we concluded it was a Queen. On December 4 another specimen was collected as it visited the Tea Plants at the Clemson Experiment Station. A third Queen was seen in the broccoli field on December fifth. Klotz in his "Peterson's Field Guide to the Butterflies," says the Queen is a relative of the Monarch and is found in South Georgia, Florida, Gulf Strip, Mississippi Valley North to Kansas and Nebraska. This would seem to make these three beautiful butterflies unique visitors to our city.

Do any readers of the Lesser Squawk have any experience with Queen in our low country? If so, your information would be very interesting to all of the CNHS members.

Perry E. Nugent

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN FEBRUARY

ARRIVALS

- | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Purple Martin | 10 Rough-winged Swallow |
| 3 Cattle Egret | 11 Yellow-breasted Chat |
| 6 Painted Bunting | 28 Evening Grosbeak |

DEPARTURES

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 3 White-fronted Goose | 15 Golden Eagle |
| 13 Cinnamon Teal | 23 Snow Goose |
| European Teal | ? Saw Whet Owl |

REPORT FROM CAPE ROMAIN

The waterfowl have dispersed throughout the area except for the Swans and Sea ducks. There are 20 Whistling Swans on Bulls Island. The Sea ducks have moved close to shore as they do about this time each year. Now would be a good time to observe Greater and Lesser Scaup. Black and Surf Scoters, Goldeneye and Old Squaw from shore. Spring migration is beginning with a large increase in Double-Crested Cormorants and Brown Pelicans around the refuge.

A 6 foot porpoise washed up on Bulls Island January 21 and a crew from the Smithsonian will be here January 25 to study it.

THE SKY-WATCHER'S GUIDE

Kohoutek, - farewell! If the writer of these articles were a sooth-sayer, with perhaps a bit too much imagination, her face would be red with embarrassment, but predictions concerning the comet's appearance were recorded from publications of information given by scientists. At least two members of C.N.H.S. feel certain that they glimpsed Kohoutek in the late evening of January 10. Mrs. Kenneth Donaldson and Mrs. Charles Wilbur, armed with binoculars, went to an open area free of "light pollution" near Mt. Pleasant. Slightly above and to the right of Jupiter, they saw what appeared to be a small bright ball suspended toward the horizon from a narrow net of dimmer light. It was visible only when viewed obliquely. We now look forward to information which the astronauts might offer.

In spite of the re-establishment of Daylight Saving Time, it will be less complicated to continue reference to Sky-watching according to Standard Time, so readers of these articles should make allowances accordingly.

The February skies, on any clear night, present a magnificent display of stars. As soon as it is dark, at the beginning of the month, at least seven stars of the first magnitude, - three of which are even brighter, - are in view. And for those who start sky-watching before dark, Mercury may be seen in the sunset glow. On February 9, Mercury will reach its greatest eastern elongation, remaining above the horizon for about an hour after the sun.

Venus has disappeared from the evening sky, and Jupiter becomes lost in the sun's glare as it sets.

Mars is located near the meridian when twilight ends. Not far from it is the first magnitude star, Aldeberan, also red in color; the two may be distinguished by the fact that Aldeberan twinkles, and Mars shines with a steady light.

High in the east, Saturn may be recognized by its steady, yellow light. Aldeberan is the "red, angry eye" of the Bull, whose V-shaped face is on the meridian at dark. Slightly northwest of this group are the Pleiades, of "Seven Sisters", - a cluster of very faint stars. The tips of the horns of the Bull are above Orion's head, which will be revealed through binoculars as a triangle of even fainter stars than the Pleiades.

Orion is made up mostly of bright stars. The right shoulder is a red star of the first magnitude, called Betelgeuse, and the left heel is an intensely hot blue-white star which is brighter than first magnitude. This is Rigel. Three stars in a row represent Orion's belt. Dangling from the middle star is a faint blur of light which indicates his sword. The telescope reveals this blur to be a breath-taking nebula of hot gases, which is believed by astronomers to be stars in the making.

Orion's two hunting dogs follow him, each of which contains a bright star. To the southeast is Canis Major, the Greater Dog, which is distinguished by the brightest star seen from earth, - Sirius. Sirius is located in the Dog's throat. Six faint stars represent its head, one front paw, one hind paw, the end of its body, and the tip of its tail. Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog, is located a little to the northeast of Orion. Only one star is bright enough in this constellation to catch the eye. This is Procyon, a first magnitude star.

One of the horns of Taurus, - the one higher in view, - serves also as a corner of the five-sided constellation, Auriga. Diagonally opposite this is the third star mentioned as brighter than first magnitude. The name of this star is Capella.

TALLY OF CHRISTMAS COUNT 12-30-73

| Species | No. | Species | No. | Species | No. |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------------------|------|-----------------------|--------|
| Belted King Fisher | 41 | Brown Thrasher | 65 | Common Grackle | 639 |
| Yellow-Shafted Flicker | 223 | Robin | 242 | Brownheaded Cowbird | 18 |
| Pileated Woodpecker | 37 | Wood Thrush | 1 | Cardinal | 248 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 95 | Hermit Thrush | 14 | Rosebreasted Grosbeak | 1 |
| Red-headed Woodpecker | 13 | Swainson's Thrush | 1 | Evening Grosbeak | 8 |
| Yellow-bellied | | Eastern Bluebird | 39 | Purple Finch | 43 |
| Sapsucker | 24 | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher | 5 | Pine Siskin | 18 |
| Hairy Woodpecker | 11 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 68 | American Gold Finch | 153 |
| Downey Woodpecker | 19 | Ruby-crowned Kinglet | 219 | Rufous-sided towhee | 268 |
| Red-Cockaded Woodpecker | 12 | Cedar Waxwing | 61 | Savannah Sparrow | 62 |
| Eastern Phoebe | 24 | Loggerhead Shrike | 6 | Grasshopper Sparrow | 4 |
| Blue Jay | 253 | Starling | 121 | LeConte's Sparrow | 4 |
| Common Crow | 202 | White-eyed Vireo | 9 | Henslow's Sparrow | 4 |
| Fish Crow | 37 | Solitary Vireo | 4 | Sharp-tailed Sparrow | 9 |
| Carolina Chickadee | 102 | Black and White Warbler | 2 | Seaside Sparrow | 2 |
| Tufted Titmouse | 49 | Orange Crowned Warbler | 3 | Vesper Sparrow | 15 |
| White-breasted | | Myrtle Warbler | 1158 | Bachmans Sparrow | 2 |
| Nuthatch | 12 | Yellow-throated Warbler | 7 | Slate-colored Junco | 145 |
| Brownheaded Nuthatch | 66 | Pine Warbler | 118 | Chipping Sparrow | 54 |
| Brown Creeper | 3 | Prairie Warbler | 11 | Field Sparrow | 45 |
| House Wren | 13 | Palm Warbler | 1 | White Crowned Sparrow | 1 |
| Winter Wren | 9 | Yellow throat | 28 | White-throated | |
| Carolina Wren | 109 | House Sparrow | 30 | Sparrow | 428 |
| Long-billed Marsh Wren | 7 | Eastern Meadowlark | 123 | Fox Sparrow | 59 |
| Short-billed Marsh Wren | 3 | Red-wing Blackbird | 794 | Swamp Sparrow | 230 |
| Mockingbird | 56 | Rusty Blackbird | 5 | Song Sparrow | 197 |
| Catbird | 10 | Boat tailed Grackle | 359 | Total Species | 162 |
| | | | | Individuals | 12,772 |

Julian R. Harrison III

This was a fine census and one that all participants can look upon with pride. The 162 species was 15 more than last year. The unusual weather probably contributed to the low numbers of vultures and the absence of ospreys and eagles but may also have contributed to large numbers of perching birds like the thrushes, warblers and sparrows. My experience is that small birds are very active after heavy showers and this certainly was the case in the I'on Swamp area. Some of the most interesting species were: American Bittern, Whistling Swans, Blue Geese, the Hawks, the Rails, Short-billed Marsh Wrens, Wood Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Pine Siskins and the less common Sparrows.

CITADEL BIOLOGY SEMINARS

The following seminars will be held at 8:00 PM in Duckett Hall Auditorium; Room 101. They are free and open to the public.

Thursday, January 31

Dr. Jay B. Hair, Associate Professor, Department of Economic Zoology, Clemson University
Topic: The Usefulness of Measures of Nitch Width and Nitch Overlap in Analysis of Helminth Communities in Waterfowl

North of Procyon and east of Auriga are Gemini, the Twins, or Castor and Pollux. The brighter of the two is pollux, though Castor is just slightly less than first magnitude.

If one continues to watch a few hours longer, the Big Dipper will come into full view in the northeast. It will appear to be balanced on the tip of its handle. Polaris may now be located by following the Pointers, the two outer stars in the bowl of the Big Dipper.

Since many people are astir before dawn, these days, those who have a good view of the southeast may be able to see Venus, which rises about an hour and a half before the sun.

Elizabeth D. Simons

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I was very encouraged by the turn-out at the last meeting. I hope this continues for future meetings.

I was very disturbed to hear from a resident of Riverland Terrace that children in that area have been shooting birds with B-B guns. I am sure that these young people have not been properly instructed in the protection of our wildlife and more's the pity for them and their parents. I hope that all of you will contact the proper authorities and make certain that the laws concerning protection of birds are strictly enforced, and if the opportunity presents itself, please try to educate these young people and their parents.

Alan M. Bills

OBSERVATIONS

| | | | | |
|------------|----|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Dec. | 6 | 200 Red Phalaropes | 5 mi East C2 buoy, Charleston | Peter Laurie |
| * | 9 | Clay-colored Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Perry Nugent |
| * | 16 | Clay-colored Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Chris & Perry Nugent |
| * | 25 | Clay-colored Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Chris & Perry Nugent |
| | 26 | 12 Purple Sandpipers | Rocks at Fort Moultrie | Peter Laurie |
| ** | | 2 ♀ Common Eiders | Off Fort Moultrie | Peter Laurie |
| ** | 30 | 2 ♀ Common Eiders | Off Fort Moultrie | Peter Laurie |
| | | | | & Dennis Forsythe |
| * | 31 | Immature Clay-colored Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| Jan. | 2 | 6 Snow Geese | Over St. Andrews Center | Perry Nugent |
| ** | 6 | 1 ♀ Common Eider | In surf at Fort Moultrie | Julian Harrison & Perry Nugent |
| | 9 | 8 Fulvous Tree Ducks | Clemson Experiment Station | Perry Nugent |
| * | 10 | Clay-colored Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| | 12 | Kohoutek | U.S. Vegetable Lab. | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| *** | 13 | | | |
| to present | | Lincoln's Sparrow | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| | 20 | Swainson's Thrush | U.S. Vegetable Lab. | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| | | Short-eared Owl | U.S. Vegetable Lab. | Perry & Chris Nugent |
| | | Light Phase. Paracitic | Jager Edisto Beach | Dennis Forsythe |

* These Clay-colored Sparrows were observed in good light with 7-10 power binoculars. In each case the bird was sitting on our feeder with one or more Chipping Sparrows. It is possible the observations of December 9, 16, 25 and January 10 were of the same bird. A more detailed report will be in a later issue of the Lesser Squawk.

** I assume there were two Eiders in the Fort Moultrie area and they would be the third and fourth records for the state.

*** This Lincoln's Sparrow is still with us and usually arrives for his evening meal between 5:00 PM and dark. He has been observed in good light with 10 power binoculars at a distance of 20 feet for over 30 minutes at a time. We will have a more detailed account of our interesting guest after he departs. If you would like to see him, give us a call. We would be delighted to have you help confirm our belief that he has all the field marks of a Lincoln's Sparrow.

THE CHARLESTON CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The annual Christmas Bird Count was held December 30, 1973 with 43 observers in 10 parties and the following results.

TALLY OF CHRISTMAS COUNT 12-30-73

| Species | No. | Species | No. | Species | No. |
|-----------------------|-----|------------------------|-----|----------------------|-----|
| Common Loon | 9 | Wood Duck | 20 | Am Oystercatcher | 203 |
| Red-throated Loon | 18 | Ring-necked Duck | 113 | SemiPalmed Plover | 13 |
| Horned Grebe | 35 | Canvasback | 190 | Killdeer | 12 |
| Pied-billed Grebe | 61 | Greater Scaup | 100 | Black-bellied Plover | 62 |
| Red-necked Grebe | 2 | Scaup ? | 60 | Ruddy Turnstone | 10 |
| Brown Pelican | 8 | Bufflehead | 96 | Woodcock | 3 |
| Gannet | 28 | Surf Scoter | 600 | Common Snipe | 61 |
| Double-cr Cormorant | 14 | Common Scoter | 102 | Whimbrel | 1 |
| Anhinga | 3 | Ruddy Duck | 107 | Spotted Sandpiper | 1 |
| Great Blue Heron | 43 | Hooded Merganser | 76 | Willet | 55 |
| Green Heron | 1 | Red-breasted Merganser | 94 | Greater Yellowlegs | 8 |
| Little Blue Heron | 14 | Turkey Vulture | 10 | Dunlin | 94 |
| Common Egret | 46 | Black Vulture | 16 | Short-billed | |
| Snowy Egret | 18 | Sharp-shinned Hawk | 3 | Dowitcher | 39 |
| Louisiana Heron | 27 | Coopers Hawk | 4 | Western Sandpiper | 48 |
| Black-cr Night Heron | 32 | Red-tailed Hawk | 11 | Marbled Godwit | 6 |
| Yellow-cr Night Heron | 1 | Red-shouldered Hawk | 15 | Great Black-backed | |
| American Bittern | 1 | Broad-winged Hawk | 1 | Gull | 1 |
| White Ibis | 3 | Marsh Hawk | 17 | Herring Gull | 350 |
| Whistling Swan | 18 | Pigeon Hawk | 1 | Ring-billed Gull | 195 |
| Blue Goose | 5 | Sparrow Hawk | 18 | Laughing Gull | 36 |
| Mallard | 231 | Bobwhite | 21 | Bonaparte's Gull | 14 |
| Black Duck | 77 | Turkey | 1 | Forster's Tern | 35 |
| Gadwall | 33 | King Rail | 1 | Common Tern | 1 |
| Pintail | 50 | Clapper Rail | 36 | Caspian Tern | 8 |
| Green-wing Teal | 190 | Virginia Rail | 1 | Black Skimmer | 21 |
| Blue-winged Teal | 50 | Sora | 5 | Mourning Dove | 293 |
| American Wigeon | 104 | Common Gallinule | 62 | Great Horned Owl | 5 |
| Shoveler | 105 | Coot | 600 | Barred Owl | 8 |