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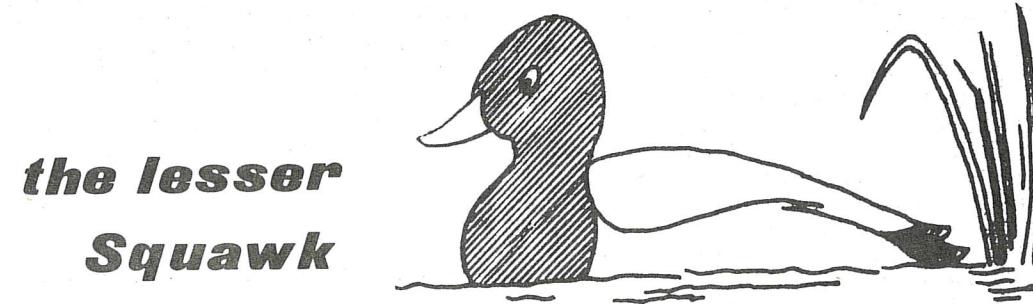
Mr. & Mrs. T. A. Beckett,
Magnolia Gardens III
Route 4, Chas., S.C. 29407

The Charleston Natural History Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members of Audubon that live in the Charleston area automatically become members of CNHS. A portion of the annual dues paid to Audubon are returned to CNHS to cover operating expenses.

CNHS normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month(except June, July, and August) at 8:00 p.m. in the Charleston Museum. One field trip a month is scheduled on a Saturday or Sunday to any of a variety of local natural areas.

THE LESSER SQUAWK welcomes any written contributions from the membership. The deadline for each issue is the 20th day of the preceeding month.

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August - September 1976

MONTHLY MEETING

Program: The Red Wolf - Stepping Toward Extinction

Date: September 14, 8:00 p.m.

Place: The Charleston Museum

The season's first monthly meeting will feature a slide presentation on the endangered red wolf by Mary Anne T. Neville, Director of Environmental Education of the Atlanta Audubon Society.

Ms. Neville will discuss the reason for the red wolf's decline, field research on the remaining population, and recovery plans.

In light of the fact that plans now have been finalized to release a pair of wild red wolves on Bull Island just north of Charleston, this will be a very timely and interesting program.

Ms. Neville will bring us up to date on the progress of the operation to capture a pair of red wolves in their native Louisiana, transport them to South Carolina and eventually release them on Bull.

Ms. Neville earned a B.A. in biology from Lynchburg College in Virginia and a M.S. in biology from West Georgia College. She has taught high school biology and environmental studies and has lectured widely in Georgia on endangered species, ecology, and environmental issues.

FIELD TRIP

A half-day field trip to the Francis Marion National Forest to observe orchids and other blooming fall wildflowers has been scheduled for September 18 by Field Trip Chairman, David Huff.

CNHS president, Richard Porcher, will lead this first field trip of the season. Participants should meet at the Charleston Museum at 7:30 a.m.

FLAMINGOS SEEN LOCALLY

On Friday evening, July 30, I received a call from Ted Ford claiming that he and Tom Hulsey had just seen a pair of flamingos on the front beach of Morris Island, just south of Charleston Harbor.

The next day, around noon, I arranged boat transportation to Morris Island and went to look for myself. I found nothing unusual on the front beach, but climbing the dike that surrounds the spoil area I quickly spotted two very large pinkish birds feeding in the shallow impoundment about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile away.

The following day I returned with a canoe which I launched into the impoundment. I then was able to paddle within 75 yards of the birds and secured some perfectly recognizable photographs. On the next Thursday, Dennis Forsythe, Perry Nugent and I failed to locate these birds on Morris Island despite an intensive search.

Both birds were very pale, almost white, save for some deep pink feathers on their wings that were especially noticeable in flight. Whether these were wild birds wandering far from their native Bahamas and South America, or escaped zoo birds has yet to be determined.

Two flamingos (probably the same birds) had been seen several weeks earlier in the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge.

Pete Laurie

BLAKENNEY THANKS CHAPTER

CNHS president, Richard D. Porcher received the following letter, dated 28 June, 1976, from Audubon's Southeastern Representative, W. Carlyle Blakeney, Jr.

Dear Richard,

Today I received the balance of the Charleston Natural History Society's contribution to our Four Hole Swamp boardwalk project. It was certainly the bright spot in the morning mail as it brought our total to almost \$21,000. I am pleased to

advise you that the chapter has "built" 556.2 feet thus far which exceeds that of any other chapter in the region.

On the personal side, I want to say quite sincerely that the barbecue at Magnolia Gardens was very well done. I hope everyone enjoyed themselves as much as Suzanne and I.

Thank you again for everything the chapter has done.

W. Carlyle Blakeney, Jr.

BLUEBIRD SUCCESS STORY

Until a year ago, bird watching was not my "thing". However, with the encouragement of Mr. Rowe (builder of blue bird houses) to preserve the blue bird, I erected a house for just that purpose. Not feeling very optimistic about attracting the birds, I was surprised a few days later to see a curious male blue bird inspecting the house--and even more surprised when he was joined by the female. These were our new tenants. Shortly afterwards, they were seen building their nest, and it wasn't long before we heard little peeps from the box.

We had three broods this summer, and it was exciting to see them fly out of their nest, each time being encouraged by the male and female to spread their wings. By the time the third brood was ready to abandon the nest, there was a whole family of blue birds waiting to greet them, and it was a beautiful sight to see the blue of their wings when they fluttered around the little ones.

We have a large family now, and recently I counted "nine" with "Mama" and "Papa" still taking charge while they all took turns in the bird bath. A rewarding experience and so easy to encourage the increase in population of this beautiful bird. A mystery to me is how they know this unobtrusive box was especially made for them and if they are so easily attracted, why are they becoming extinct?

Florence Slifer
103 Charter Oak Ct.
Summerville

About 2:00 a.m. at mid-month, the fifth planet, Saturn, will rise as a "Morning Star". It will be located in the northeast, following the constellation of Gemini, the Twins. Saturn is unmistakable as it shines with a steady, yellow glow. Both Saturn, and also Jupiter, (now west of the meridian), will be visible until they become lost in the brilliance of the rising sun.

Elizabeth D. Simons

AUGUST FLOWERS

August, the heat and insects notwithstanding, is perhaps the best month for studying wildflowers in the Lowcountry. The savannah lands, steeped in summer rains, produce an astonishing assortment of blooms, of which the fringed-orchids (Habenaria) are among the most conspicuous. Often occurring in large numbers, the orange colored species are much more common than the white hued ones, and all are rather easily distinguished from other flowers by their thickly set columns of waxy blooms. Very showy and not too common is the pine lily, Lilium catesbaei, which produces vivid orange-red flowers. Related to the latter and blooming now are featherlings, Tofieldia, and Zigadenus. The featherling produces a raceme of small white blooms which differ strikingly from the open panicles and larger flowers of the Zigadenus.

At least four species of deergrasses, Rhexia, can be found flowering in August. Their petals come in shades of purple, pink, and white. Yellow colic root, Ludwigia, wild flax, daisies and Hypericum all bear blossoms in the yellow range. The colic root is a tall wand of deep yellow blooms. Ludwigia's flowers are lighter yellow and are produced in the axils of the leaves of frequently bushy plants, which are in sharp contrast to the slender stems and pale yellow petals of the wild flax, Linum. The daisies come in several species, which take careful investigation to separate as to kind. St. John's

worts, Hypericum, are present in both herbaceous and shrubby forms, and some are very showy. Opposite leaves and numerous stamens serve to rather loosely distinguish them from others now flowering.

This list could run on almost endlessly what with several beautiful milk-worts, Polygala; Lobelias and skullcap in blues; the off-white legions of Eupatorium; graceful hat-pins and yellow-eyed grasses; fascinating milkweeds and scandent morning glories; fuzzy-flowered red-root; the milk-white and rich pink of Sabatias; the redolence of sweet-pepper bushes on the evening air; the spiny heads of button snakeroot and the countless clan of the Pea family; and the great petal moons of mallows in the morning hours.

Edmund R. Cuthbert

PORCHER TO SURVEY

FOUR HOLE FLORA

Dr. Richard D. Porcher, President of CNHS, has been awarded a grant by The National Audubon Society to conduct a floristic survey of the Biedler Forest Sanctuary of Four Hole Swamp.

Dr. Porcher, a botanist, whose special interest is the vascular flora of coastal South Carolina, is also Director of The Citadel Herbarium which will function as a depository of all specimens of vascular plants identified in the Biedler Forest. The specimens can be used by the Audubon Society, or any interested persons, as educational material on the plant life of the forest.

The survey will be conducted over a period of fourteen months in order to include herbaceous annuals of a temporal nature. Included in the final report will be information on the various communities of the forest and recommendations as to how unique aspects of the flora can be made known to visitors.

THE SKY-WATCHER'S GUIDE

September brings summer to a close, as Earth races along on its constant "Merry-go-round" of the sun. Although the days may be hot, the cooler nights, as well as the perceptible shortening of daylight hours, give evidence of this fact. On the afternoon of September 22, at 4:48 o'clock, Earth will reach the half-way point between summer and winter. This is known as the Autumnal Equinox, when day and night are of equal length.

During this month, four planets may be observed as "Evening Stars". Within the first week, both Mercury and Venus will be a little above the horizon after the sun has set. The sky will still be bright, but keen eyes, especially if aided by a small telescope or even good field glasses, should be able to locate the two. Venus will be brighter, and higher in view. A little higher than Venus, Mars may be detected. Although not nearly as bright as it was in past months, Mars can be recognized by its reddish color. It will remain in view for about an hour after sunset, and on September 10, there will be a conjunction of Venus and Mars.

By the time it is dark, these three planets will all have set, and for a few hours, no other will be seen.

The constellation, Scorpius, which we saw rising at this hour in June, will now be setting in the southwest, and Sagittarius, the Archer, will follow closely after. A curve of three stars, with a fourth one directly to the right of the middle star represents the drawn bow and arrow tip. An irregular four-sided figure to the left and a curve of faint stars complete the figure which is supposed to be half-man, half-horse.

Bootes, containing brilliant red Arcturus is moving toward its setting in the west, and by 8:30 o'clock, it will have dropped below the horizon.

By now, the Summer Triangle of first magnitude stars is high overhead. Deneb, in Cygnus, is just about on the meridian; Vega, in Lyra is approximately 12 degrees

west of Deneb; and Altair, in Aquila is about 20 degrees southeast of Vega. If the observer is fortunate enough to be in an area that is free of artificial lighting, he may be able to see the Milky Way band extending overhead from northeast to southwest. Cygnus, the Swan appears to be centered in the Milky Way, flying on a course directly southwestward. The first magnitude star, Deneb, indicates the tail of the Swan. About five degrees southwest of it is a second magnitude star which is flanked by two fainter ones, some five degrees equi-distant from the central star. These represent the outspread wings of the Swan. The neck of the bird stretches about ten degrees southwestward, ending with a third magnitude star called Albireo. This star, of course, indicates the head. Many people see in this constellation a cross, and so it is also called the Northern Cross. (At this point, it may be in order to remind readers that magnitude refers to the brilliance of a star. The smaller the number, the greater the brilliance is indicated.

Soon after 10:00 p.m., the fourth planet of the evening, Jupiter, may be seen in Taurus, just above the northeastern horizon. Climbing steadily as the hours go by, Jupiter will shine with steady, white brilliance. Observers with good field glasses or small telescopes will once more be able to follow the movements of Jupiter's four largest moons. It may even be possible to follow the shadows of the little satellites as they cross the face of the great planet.

When facing north during September, observers in this latitude will not be able to see the Big Dipper, because at this time it is hidden by obstructions along the northern horizon. However, Cassiopeia is high in the northeast. The middle star of this "crooked M"-shaped group will aid in the location of Polaris.

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN AUGUST

ARRIVALS

Date	Species	Date
2	Piping Plover	2
3	Black-billed Cuckoo	3
5	Blue-winged Teal	
8	Stilt Sandpiper	4
	Virginia Rail	
10	Cliff Swallow	5
14	Peregrine Falcon	7
	Sora Rail	
15	Wilson's Snipe	
21	Pintail	8
	Blue-wg. Warbler	9
22	Black Duck	10
27	Greater Shearwater	
28	Whip-poor-will	12
	Long-bld. Curlew	13
29	Veery, Cedar Waxwing	
30	Pigeon Hawk	15
	White-rmp. S'piper	17
		18
		19
		20
		21
16	Black-nkd. Stilt	
31	Audubon's Shearw't'r	

AUGUST DEPARTURES

16	Black-nkd. Stilt	21
31	Audubon's Shearw't'r	22

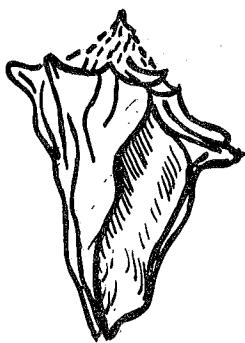
SEPTEMBER DEPARTURES

4	Greater Shearwater	23
8	Gray Kingbird	26
14	Orchard Oriole	29
19	Noddy Tern	30
20	Bridled Tern	
24	Yellow-th. Vireo	
25	Prothonotary Warbler	
26	Sooty Tern	
28	Blue-wg. Warbler	
29	Swainson's Thrush	
30	Chuck-wills-widow	
	Bank Swallow	
	Alder Flycatcher	

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN SEPTEMBER

ARRIVALS

Species
Blackpoll Warbler
Eastern phoebe
Magnolia Warbler
Shoveler
Cape May Warbler
Redhead
Marbled Godwit
Wilson's Phalarope
Tennessee Warbler
Northern Oriole
Gadwall
Swainson's Thrush
Water Pipit
Short-bld Marsh Wren
Hermit Thrush
American Widgeon
House Wren, Catbird
Red-bst. Nuthatch
Gray-ckd Thrush
Mallard
American Goldfinch
Sharp-tid. Sparrow
Golden Plover
Orange-crd. Warbler
Grasshopper Sparrow
Song Sparrow
Vesper Sparrow
American Avocet
Bewick's Wren
Winter Wren
Ruby-crd. Kinglet
Northern Phalarope
Blk. and Wh. Warbler
Red-eyed Towhee
Swamp Sparrow
Myrtle Warbler
Lark Bunting
Alder Flycatcher



Shell Shocked

by

Maggi Yergin

While walking the beaches in search of "treasures" the low tide line should not be overlooked. At first glance nothing can be seen but sand, water and small shell fragments. It's what is living under the sand that I call "treasures".

So many of the low tide line snails bury themselves under the surface of the sand with only a small hole showing to give away their location. The three shells that will be the topic for this month, Polinices duplicata (Atlantic Moon Snail), Sinum perspectivum (Common Baby's Ear), and the Echinoderm Mellita testudinata (Keyhole Urchin or Sand Dollar) all live under the surface of the sand most of the time.

The Moon Snail and the Baby's Ear leave similar trails. While walking on a sand bar or near the edge of a tidal pool notice the mounds of sand about one half inch high. If you work your fingers around the mound and then flip up the sand you'll probably find either a Moon Snail or a Baby's Ear. The first few times you may find nothing but after you have found one or two the spotting of the trails will be easier.

The Moon Snail is easily identified by the bulls eye ring on the top of the shell and the light brown operculum. Identification of the Baby's Ear is a little more difficult. The best way to describe the Baby's Ear is as a white piece of gristle that feels very slimy. The body covers most of the shell with only a small portion of the shell seen. The Baby's Ear has no operculum.

When collecting these snails alive the Baby's Ear should be kept in a separate container away from any specimens that may want to be kept alive as the slime from the snails will get so thick that it may suffocate some of the other specimens.

One of the most prized possessions of the beachcomber is the Sand Dollar which is not a mollusk but an echinoderm. They range in all sizes from the tiny dime size to four inches across. The live Mellita testudinata (Sand Dollar or the Keyhole Urchin) is green but turns white after it dies. It lives under the surface of the sand feeding on microscopic animals by taking in large portions of sand and filtering out the small organisms as food. The sand and waste material are expelled through the opening at the top of the shell.

The sand will be slightly raised and round where the Sand Dollar is lying underneath. There will be three to five holes noticeable in the sand. When you dig down about one or two inches you can feel the rough edge of the animal. After digging up the Sand Dollar look on its underside and see the tiny little feet which are used for mobility and for moving food into its mouth in the center of the underside.

From my own experiences, none of these creatures do particularly well in the home marine aquarium. The Moon Snail and the Baby's Ear tend to bury into the gravel or sand for long periods of time. Also, the slime from the Baby's Ear will float to the surface of the aquarium which makes for more cleaning. The Sand Dollar doesn't seem to be able to bury when gravel is used and when sand is used it will bury but won't live for very long. Feeding of all these animals may present a problem for the hobbyist.

To clean the Moon Snail and the Baby's Ear a simple boiling will do. The Baby's Ear is very simple to clean by just scraping the body away from the shell after it has been boiled. The Moon Snail will have to be twisted by grasping the operculum and slowly wiggling the animal out. Don't pull too fast or it will break off. If it should break

off put alcohol in the shell and stuff the opening with cotton. Leave it this way until the odor has gone, about a week.

The best way that we have found for cleaning Sand Dollars is to place them in freshwater while they are still alive. Change the water as the green color comes off the shell. Two or three changes of freshwater will do. Then place the shell in a water and bleach solution of one cup of bleach to two gallons of water. This is a very mild solution and will have to be used two or three times on the shell. A stronger solution of bleach will cause the shell to dissolve and become very brittle.

Any disturbance in the sand is worth investigating, and, as in all collecting, be very conservative. Put things back the way you found them and take only enough for your own purpose.

Until next time, Happy Hunting.

WILDLIFE MAGAZINE PUBLISHES ARTICLE By MISS SIMONS

Miss Elizabeth D. Simons who for years has written the "Sky-watcher's Guide" for this publication recently had an article on stars published in the July-August issue of South Carolina Wildlife.

Titled "The Summer Sky", Miss Simons' article describes the constellations visible during the summer and how and when to find them.

"Summer vacation is a wonderful time to start exploring the sky," says Miss Simons, "With the background music of crickets in concert, a majestic drama curves westward overhead, from dusk until dawn."

OBSERVATIONS

Date	Observation	Location	Observer
July 4	Mississippi Kite	Wambaw Creek	E. Farrar, C. Geilfuss
9	2 Mississippi Kites	Magnolia Gardens	T. Beckett, S. Roche
10	Dlb-cr. Cormorant	Breach Inlet	P. Nugent
	25 Wood Storks	Copahoe Bay	E. Farrar, C. Geilfuss, Jr, C. Geilfuss III
28	10 Swallow-tl. Kites	Santee Delta	R. Dunlap
30	Solitary Sandpiper	U.S. Veg. Lab.	P. Nugent
31	Black-nk. Stilt	Cooper River Brd.	P. Nugent
Aug 1	100 Black Terns	Morris Is.	P. Laurie
	2 Flamingos	Morris Is.	P. Laurie
	5 Black-nk. Stilts	Morris Is.	P. Laurie
	4 Avocets	Morris Is.	P. Laurie
17	2 Blue-wg Warblers	Wackendaw Lake	C. Geilfuss III
18	Blue-wg Warbler	Wackendaw Lake	E. Farrar, C. Geilfuss III
	2 Ground Doves	Bull Is.	D. Abel, S. Roche
	12 Black Terns	Bull Is.	D. Abel, S. Roche
	Blk. and Wh. Warbler	Bull Is.	D. Abel, S. Roche
19	3 Blue-wg. Teal	Magnolia Gardens	T. Beckett, S. Roche