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1153 Cottage Rd
Charleston, SC 29412

Address Correction Requested

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Rt. 4
CHARLESTON, 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.

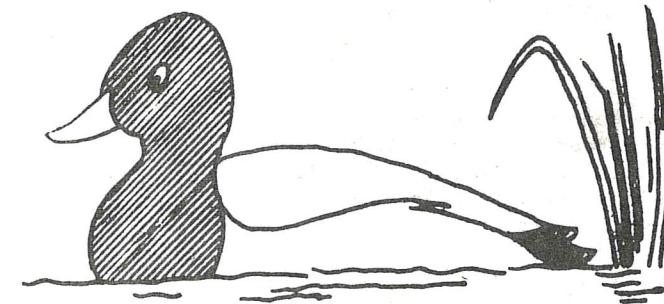
CNHS normally meets on the second Tuesday of each month(except June, July, and August) at 8:00 p.m.

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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December 1976

JOHN HENRY DICK

TO SPEAK IN JANUARY

Date: January 11, 1977, 8:00 p.m.

Place: Baruch Auditorium

Program: Noted artist and photographer, John Henry Dick will present a slide program on the birds of Africa.

BIRD COUNTS

Litchfield Beach - December 19

Charleston - January 2 (See page 2)

JANUARY FIELD TRIP: BULLS ISLAND CAMPOUT

The Charleston Natural History Society will have a weekend camping trip on Bulls Island the 14th, 15th and 16th of January. We are limited to 35 persons and therefore it is necessary for me to take names to fill the 35 slots on a first come-first serve basis. Also, I'd like to know at least a week ahead of time to arrange transportation to the Island. The fees for the boat over and back are \$5.00 per person. You can come on Friday, Saturday or Sunday but we are only allowed to spend Friday night and Saturday night and must vacate the Island with the last boat on Sunday.

This is an excellent opportunity to have enough time to really see a lot of the island which is the major land mass part of the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge. And January is the best time to see the high concentration of migratory waterfowl, waders, and sea birds.

We also welcome day visitors and if you will contact me at 886-6911 I'll arrange for someone to meet the boat you are on and show you part of the island.

David Huff

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT

The count will be held this year on Sunday, January 2, 1977. CNHS members who wish to participate must notify Julian Harrison (795-1694 after 7 p.m.) no later than December 27, 1976. Participants will be grouped into 8-10 field parties, each headed by at least one experienced birder. Remember, National Audubon Society requires a participation fee of \$1 for every count participant. According to the Christmas Bird Count Instructions, "collection of fees is essential to the continuation of the Count, with its costly mailings, editing, and giant (500 pg.) publication." CNHS pays the fee for all members who participate, but not guests. If you plan to bring one or more guests, it is suggested that you mail the appropriate fees to Julian Harrison prior to the count date. This would greatly simplify bookkeeping, and allow us to get into the field earlier on the day of the count.

As in past years, the assembly point on January 2 will be Gregorie's Service Station at the intersection of S.C. Hwy. 41 and U.S. Hwy. 17 north of Mt. Pleasant. Please be there no later than 6:30 a.m. Remember to bring lunch and rain gear.

Julian Harrison
805 Robt. E. Lee Blvd.
Charleston, S. C. 29412

RESEARCH GRANT AVAILABLE

The Charleston Natural History Society is pleased to announce that an annual grant of \$250.00 will be offered for research into any phase of natural history. This grant is named in honor of E. Burnham Chamberlain in recognition of his past contributions to the Society and to conservation in general.

Eligibility: All persons having an interest in any phase of natural history. Preference will be given to students, non-professionals (non-science), and members of CNHS.

Application: Applications should be made in writing to the committee chairman, Dr. John K. Reed
Department of Biology
The Citadel
Charleston, S. C. 29409
not later than January 15, 1977. The letter should contain an outline of the proposed project with an indication of how the money will be spent.

Requirements: A written report will be required to be submitted within two months of the termination of the grant; but in any event not later than 15 months from the date of the awarding of the grant. This grant is renewable upon examination and evaluation by the committee of the work completed.

end is a double star which varies in brightness at regular intervals. One of these stars is much smaller, but also much brighter than the other. As they revolve around each other, the larger, fainter companion eclipses the smaller one every two days, 21 hours. Over a period of five hours, it decreases in brightness to the third magnitude, and five hours later, it returns to the second magnitude.

By the time Taurus reaches the meridian, Saturn will be above the eastern horizon. Mercury and Venus will have set, but Jupiter will remain in view until it sets at 4:00 a.m., and Saturn will not disappear until the light of day fills the sky.

Elizabeth D. Simons

OBSERVATIONS

Oct. 23	Pigeon Hawk	U.S. 17, near Francis Marion Forest
	Purple Gallinule	Edmund Farrar
	40 Pied Billed Grebes	Upper Summerhouse Pond, Bulls Island
		Edmund Farrar
Nov. 4	Pigeon Hawk	" " " "
	Horned Grebe	" " " "
		U.S. 17, Francis Marion Forest E. Farrar & C. Geilfuss, III
		Ashley River near Middleton Gardens C. Geilfuss, III
		& C. Geilfuss, Jr.
13	300 Cowbirds	U.S. Veg. Lab.
	Virginia Rail	2260 Dallerton Circle
23	Ruddy Duck	U.S. Veg. Lab.

Perry Nugent
" "
" "

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

December, known to the Indians as the "Long Night Month", provides for Sky-watchers more hours of viewing than any other month of the year. On the 21st, at 12:36 p.m., Earth will reach the most northerly point on its orbit around the sun. With the North Pole constantly tilted toward Polaris, the sun appears lower in the sky, rising in the southeast about 7:00 a.m., and setting in the southwest by 5:00 p.m. This is the Winter Solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. South of the Equator, the reverse is true. On the day that winter begins here for us, summer officially begins there.

Twilight lingers very briefly after sunset, and in the southwestern sky, Venus rides high, startlingly beautiful against the background of the night. At mid-month, it sets about 2 1/2 hours after the sun, and progressively later each night thereafter.

Nearer the horizon, Mercury may also be seen. Not as bright as Venus, but outshining any stars in its vicinity, Mercury remains in view until almost dark. It will reach its greatest eastern elongation on December 20.

High in the east, the second-brightest planet, Jupiter, has joined the vanguard of winter constellations. The bright, red star to the east of Jupiter is Aldebaran in Taurus, the Bull. Together with Aldebaran, four fainter stars forming a V-shaped figure represent the angry eye and face of the Bull. A few degrees northeast of Jupiter is a faint cluster of stars. These are the Pleiades, or Seven Sisters who, according to Greek Mythology, have fled to Jupiter, (or Zeus), for protection against the pursuing huntsman, Orion. Quickly, the god has changed himself into a bull, and lowered his horns against the offender. To the east of the Bull, Orion may now be seen, suddenly stopped as he runs. Three stars in a row represent his belt; north of the belt, a red first magnitude

star indicates his right shoulder; and a second magnitude star, his left shoulder. South of the belt, a blue-white first magnitude star locates the heel of his left foot, braced against a rock, and a third magnitude star shows his right knee. The names of the two first magnitude stars are, respectively, Betelgeuse, (which means "Armpit of the Giant"), and Rigel. Soon after dark, Orion appears to be in a recumbent posture, but as the evening advances, he may be seen standing upright in a defensive attitude. If the observer has keen eyesight, or possesses field glasses, he may be able to see, between the two shoulders, the head of the hunter, formed by a very faint triangle of stars. Directly above his head, are the tips of the horns of the Bull. Three extremely faint stars extending northward from Orion's right shoulder represent his right arm and hand brandishing a club; and extending westward from his left shoulder, three faint stars in a curve represent a shield of lion-skin with which he is protecting himself.

Cassiopeia is now high in the north, at mid-month just west of the meridian. Approximately 25 degrees north of Aldebaran, a brilliant yellow-white star may be seen. This is Capella, about the same color and temperature as our sun, but enormously brighter. It is about 16 times the size of the sun, and its distance away, about 47 light-years. Capella is the brightest star of a five-sided figure called Auriga, the Charioteer. Located diagonally opposite one of the horns of the Bull, (which is shared by both constellations), Capella represents the left shoulder of the Charioteer.

Between these two constellations is located Perseus, a bit difficult to see in its entirety, because most of the stars of which it is formed are rather faint. However, if the observer's viewing conditions are good, it is worth searching for. In shape, it suggests a flourishing letter A, with the top of the A on the meridian. One side curves around eastward ending in three faint stars forming a kind of hook. The other side extends southward, terminated by two second magnitude stars. The one next to the