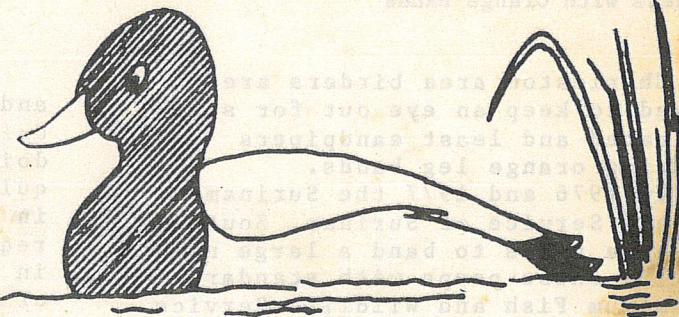


***the lesser
Squawk***



Volume XXVII, No. 5

May 1976

MONTHLY MEETING

Speaker: Allen Shoemaker,
Zoologist, Columbia Zoological
Park (Riverbanks)

Topic: Conservation and Husbandry
Techniques, Especially of Birds
at Riverbanks Park

Time: 11 May 76, 8:00 p. m.

Place: Charleston Museum

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The nominating committee consisting of Alan Bills, chairman, David Huff, and Bruce Ezell has met, and the following nominations will be presented for the election on May 11:

Vice president- Ann Pratt
Sec-Tres- Steve Walker

Members at Large- Bobbin Huff, Susan
Roche, Coots Donaldson, Mary Reed, Robert
Payne, Pete Laurie, Alan Bills

Additional nominations will be accepted from the floor on May 11.

FIELD TRIP

There is no scheduled field trip for the month of May but there are two spring bird counts.

2 May - Annual Charleston Spring Bird Count, sponsored by the Carolina Bird Club. Assembly point will be Gre-gorie's Service Station at Hwy. 17 and Hwy. 41, north of Mt. Pleasant at 6:30 a. m. See April issue of Squawk for details.

9 May - The new Bear's Bluff Spring Bird Count will be held at the Bear's Bluff Lab on Wadmalaw Is. at 7:00 a.m. The count area will include saltmarsh, fresh water ponds and high ground. A light lunch will be provided at noon. Anyone interested in participating in this count should contact Alston C. Badger at 559-0371 during the day, or 795-1875 in the evening.

NOTES FROM ALL AROUND

Peeps with Orange Bands

Charleston area birders are asked to keep an eye out for semi-palmated and least sandpipers wearing orange leg bands.

In 1976 and 1977 the Surinam Forest Service of Surinam, South America plans to band a large number of these peeps with standard aluminum Fish and Wildlife Service bands and one or two orange bands above the tarsus (knee).

The objective of the study is to obtain more information about the origin of birds visiting Surinam and about their migration routes.

Observers should note the species, location, and date, as well as the position and number of the orange and aluminum bands.

All information should be sent to Arie L. Spaans, Surinam Forest Service, P. O. Box 436, Paramaribo, Surinam, South America.

Colonial Bird Register

Dr. D. A. McCrimmon, Director, Colonial Bird Register, Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14850, wishes to inform the CNHS that a colonial bird registry has been established at Cornell. The purpose is to collect data on colonial bird biology. Anyone wishing to help collect field data for this project may write to Dr. McCrimmon for additional information.

Kite Sightings

John Gely, Dept. of Entomology and Economic Zoology, Clemson University, Clemson, SC 29631, is doing a MS thesis on habitat requirements of Swallow-tailed Kites in the Francis Marion N.F. He requests that anyone seeing kites in the forest or having knowledge of past breeding locations for this species in the forest contact him at the above address.

Nest Record Cards

Dennis Forsythe reminds us that the CNHS is a regional center for Cornell's Nest Record Card Program. This, says Dennis, is a very valuable way to help increase our knowledge of bird breeding biology and also a way of monitoring the effects of the environment on bird populations. For more information and nest record cards write to Dennis at The Citadel Dept. of Biology.

Contributions Sought

The Squawk welcomes any and all written contributions from the membership. Why not write a few paragraphs about a recent field trip you and your family enjoyed, or an unusual bird, plant, or animal you observed?

The Squawk also would be interested in any editorial opinions or letters to the editor from CNHS members.

10-YEAR PLAN

The U. S. Forest Service is developing a 10-year plan for managing the National Forest Land in the Francis Marion National Forest.

Obtaining suggestions and opinions from the public is one of the most important steps in developing plans for national forest management, John V. Orr, national forest supervisor for South Carolina with offices in Columbia, said.

Orr's office said Thursday copies of preliminary plans for the forest over the next 10 years are available at the rangers offices at Witherbee and McClellanville or at the Columbia office of the National Forest Service, 1801 Assembly St., 29201.

Comments on plans for the forest should be in writing, but oral suggestions also will be accepted.

from: "The Great Outdoors" by Belvin Horres, Sunday, April 25, 1976

FROM THE AUDUBON LEADER

Conservationist Victory. In a major conservationist victory at a time when such successes have been few and far between, the Senate last month broke through the stone wall of industry opposition to any control on poisonous chemical prevading the environment and approved a strong toxic substances control measure, 60-13.

The bill provides a mechanism to ensure pre-market testing and use restrictions on health-hazardous toxic chemicals. It gives the EPA new authority for pre-market screening; requires a 90-day advance notice by industry to EPA on all new chemicals produced; gives EPA authority to have chemicals tested if it is felt that they present an "unreasonable risk to health or the environment."

PCB Amendment. The Senate also accepted an amendment by Senator Nelson (Wis.) to provide time for "elimination" of use of the widely used and dangerous PCB chemical compound within 2½ years unless the EPA Administrator finds they are not a health hazard. Substitutes are already in use in Japan where widespread health damage occurred from PCB poisoning in 1968

Two Centuries of Change. A book that offers new perspective for the Bicentennial year was announced at the recent North American Wildlife Conference: "The American Landscape, 1776-1976." It reviews the increasing tempo of man-made changes that has been transforming the face of the nation, from the early settler's axe and plow to today's dams, highways and urban complexes; \$2.50 from Wildlife Management Institute, 709 Wire Bldg., 1000 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

What the Citizen Can Do. Another important new book is "Land Use Controls in New York State", a citizen's handbook which explains the local, state, and federal laws and regulations -- zoning, wetlands, wild rivers, Coastal Zone Management, NEPA, etc. -- which can aid the private citizen to protect the environment. It was put out by the Natural Resources Defense Council which hopes it will serve as a model for other states. \$7.50 in paperback, \$15.45 hard cover (both prices include postage) from NRDC, 15 W. 44th St., New York, NY, 10036.

THE PITCHER PLANTS

One of the pleasures of May is to see the pitcher plants flowering out on the savannah lands. Most obvious is the tall *Sarracenia flava* bearing, as its specific name suggests, yellow (really greenish-yellow) flowers. On favored sites they occur by the hundreds, creating a spectacular display. Hidden by taller herbaceous growth, *S. minor* grows and flowers in company with its larger relative. Its petals are also of a greenish-yellow hue. Much less frequently seen is *S. rubra* which bears petals that have a maroon pigment on their outer surface. Its flowers are fragrant, the others being either odorless or at least not fragrant. Rare in S. C. is our fourth species, *S. purpurea* which also has maroon flowers but its hollow leaves are decumbent.

As everyone knows, the hollow leaves of these plants serve as traps in which rain water and a proteolytic enzyme act as a digestive juice on small, drowned animals. The underside of the hoods have downward pointing hairs that encourage the descent of the unwary crawler; the lips of the "pitchers" produce glands that yield an attractant; and the inner sides of the "pitchers" are waxy smooth and may even have waxy scales that come loose and thus help dislodge the struggler into the digestive broth below. Curiously, there is a fly who lays its eggs in these hollow leaves where its maggots feed with impunity on the trapped creatures. When ready to pupate it bores a hole through the side of the otherwise formidable pitcher and thus escapes. There is a mosquito that deposits its eggs only in pitcher plants. It hovers under the hood and drones down to the insectivorous pool where it lays its eggs. Its eggs and larvae are, of course, also immune to the enzymes.

The *Sarracenias* (there are 9 species) belong to the family *Sarraceniaceae*. The generic name was given by Linnaeus in honor of an 18th century, French court physician, a Dr. Sarrasin, who first discovered them, i.e. *S. purpurea*, in Canada. Incidentally, *S. minor* and *S. rubra* were both reported to science by Thomas Walter, the famous S. C. colonial botanist whose botanical garden (now utterly gone) was, and burial site is, on the Santee River near Wilson's Landing.

Edmund R. Cuthbert

HELP!

Due mainly to a computer breakdown at National Audubon headquarters our mailing list has fallen into a state of confusion. The staff of the Squawk needs your help to insure that each CNHS member receives a Squawk each month. Please fill out the following form and return it to assistant editor, Pete Laurie, 1153 Cottage Rd., Charleston, SC 29412.

Please invest a few minutes of your time and 13 cents in this worthy cause.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

____ Member, National Audubon Society

____ Member, CNHS only

____ None of the above, but:

____ wish to continue receiving Squawk

____ do not wish to continue receiving Squawk

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

With the advent of progressively shorter hours of darkness, accompanied by Daylight Saving Time, Sky-watchers will have to become "Nighthawks" once more! They are reminded that time references in these articles are always according to Standard Time.

During the first week in May, Mercury may still be seen after sunset, each evening closer to the horizon until it finally disappears in the afterglow.

Higher in the west, Mars and Saturn are steadily drawing closer together. On May 11, they will set in conjunction at midnight.

The bright stars of winter are now beginning to disappear. By the time it is completely dark at mid-month, Castor and Pollux will be approaching their setting in the northwest, and Leo the Lion will be overhead just west of the meridian. Between these two groups, Mars and Saturn will be located. Following Leo, Virgo is now approaching the meridian in the south. Spica, the brightest star in Virgo, is close to the ecliptic, and about ten degrees southeast of Spica, Uranus may be located through a good small telescope. It will be recognized by its decidedly greenish color. At this time, however, the moon will be full, which may make the search a bit difficult, so it might be wise to wait for a few nights before resuming.

The Big Dipper is now high in the north, with the tip of the handle almost on the meridian. It is easy to find the North Star by the Pointers, (the two outer stars of the bowl), and by following the handle in a wide curve to the southeast and south, brilliant, red Arcturus is located. By continuing the sweeping curve to the ecliptic, the observer inevitably reaches Spica.

Bootes, the constellation in which Arcturus is located, is a kite-shaped figure made up of faint stars, with Arcturus at the tip of the narrow end. At the wider end, some fifteen degrees north of Arcturus, three stars form a triangle. Extending northwestward from the base of this triangle are three very faint stars, ending only a few degrees from the handle of the Big Dipper. To some people of ancient times, Boote was a ploughman about to put his hand on the plough; the plough is represented by the Big Dipper. When the observer faces north, at this time, these figures appear to be upside down; but if one is so situated that he can lie flat on his back, with feet to the south, he can look northward over his head and see the grouping as described.

To the east of the triangle in Boote lies a small, but beautiful curve of stars. Made up of four faint, and one second magnitude star, this little constellation is called Corona, the Crown.

Venus is now too close to the sun for satisfactory observation, but by May 15, Jupiter will rise about an hour before the sun. By the end of the month, it will be above the horizon an hour earlier than that, and until August, it will continue to be a "Morning Star", rising earlier each day as the months go by.

Elizabeth D. Simons

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN MAY BY DATE

Arrivals

2 White-rumped Sandpiper
4 Black Tern
5 Wilson's Petrel

1 Canada Goose
Black Duck
Green-winged Teal
Ruddy Duck
2 Dark-eyed Junco
3 Hermit Thrush
Song Sparrow
4 Kirtland's Warbler
5 House Wren
Worm-eating Warbler
White-crowned Sparrow
6 Robin
7 Ring-necked Duck
White-tailed Duck
8 Grasshopper Sparrow
9 Peregrine Falcon
American Golden Plover
10 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Savannah Sparrow
11 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Orange-crowned Warbler
Blackburnian Warbler

5 Baird's Sandpiper
Wilson's Phalarope
Noddy Tern

Departures

11 Hooded Merganser
Stilt Sandpiper
Wilson's Phalarope
Evening Grosbeak
Vesper Sparrow
12 Great Black-backed Gull
13 Common Loon
14 Roseate Tern
Yellow-rumped Warbler
15 White-winged Scoter
Short-billed Marsh Wren
Gray-cheeked Thrush
Ovenbird
16 Pigeon Hawk
17 Cape May Warbler
Chestnut-sided Warbler
White-throated Sparrow
18 Magnolia Warbler
Red-throated Loon
19 Gadwall
Upland Sandpiper

12 Mag. Frigatebird
17 Northern Phalarope
19 Audubon's Shearwater

19 Swamp Sparrow
20 Common Snipe
Lesser Yellowlegs
21 Swainson's Thrush
22 Piping Plover
Black-th. Blue Warbler
Northern Waterthrush
24 Veery
25 Pectoral Sandpiper
26 Bobolink
Red Crossbill
27 Purple Sandpiper
Yellow Warbler
American Redstart
Le Conte's Sparrow
28 Common Scoter
29 Cliff Swallow
Mallard
Bank Swallow
Mid Scarlet Tanager
American Goldfinch

The following have been observed one or more times during May:

Sooty Shearwater
White-tailed Tropic Bird
Great White Heron
Caracara
Sandhill Crane

Buff-breasted Sandpiper
Hudsonian Godwit
Dickcissel
Nashville Warbler
Wilson's Warbler

Canada Warbler
Western Tanager
Rose-breasted Grosbeak
Tennessee Warbler

This column is primarily a guide for C.N.H.S. members although the dates should apply to all migratory birds of the coastal plain and many over the whole state. It has been a feature of the Lesser Squawk for many years and a number of the dates are from observations of our members. There seems to be much confusion about the meaning of the dates and the fact that common and very rare

species are included in the list. These dates are the earliest arrivals or the latest departure as recorded in "South Carolina Bird Life" by Sprunt and Chamberlain unless there is an earlier or later date in the more recent issues of the Lesser Squawk. Any species that we have sufficient data on should be included in this list. A rare but regular visitor is just as important as the most common bird. Several species

on the list are common on the coast during one season and inland during another season, therefore, they may be permanent residents but their relative abundance varies throughout the year. The Goldfinch is a good example of this, abundant during the winter and rare during the summer on the coast. Easily recognizable subspecies are found on the list. The Red-eyed and White-eyed Towhees are forms of the Rufous-sided Towhee, the former being a winter visitor and the latter a

permanent resident of the coastal plain. One challenge for C.N.H.S. birders is to find and report species before or after the date they have previously been observed. This is one reason for publishing the list. Another is to inform our readers when to start looking for each species. You should expect to find very few specimens of a species at the beginning or end and considerable more during the middle of their visit to the Lowcountry.

Perry E. Nugent

OBSERVATIONS

| | | | |
|----------|---|---|--|
| March 25 | 1 Swallow-tailed Kite Black-th. Green Warblers | I'on Swamp I'on Swamp | John Lynes John Lynes |
| 29 | 2 Baird's Sandpipers | Mt. Pleasant Causeway | John Lynes |
| April 3 | 1 Peregrine Falcon 1 Black-necked Stilt | Cooper River Bridge Magnolia Gardens | Bill Elliott Michael Hull and Edmund Farrar |
| 4 | 5 Swallow-tailed Kites 1 Yellow-throated Vireo | I'on Swamp I'on Swamp | Ruth Test, Perry and Cris Nugent Ruth Test, Perry and Cris Nugent |
| 10 | 1 Prothonotary Warbler 1 Indigo Bunting | I'on Swamp I'on Swamp | Perry Nugent Pete Laurie and Perry Nugent |
| 16 | 1 Swainson's Warbler 50 Water Pipits | I'on Swamp U.S. Vegetable Lab. | Perry Nugent Perry Nugent |
| 17 | 4 Worm eating Warblers | Four Hole Swamp | Pete Laurie and Perry Nugent |
| | 2 Blue Grosbeaks | Four Hole Swamp | Pete Laurie and Perry Nugent |
| 18 | 1 Painted Bunting | 2260 Dallerton Circle | Perry Nugent |

All unusual observations, including early or late arrivals and departures, should be reported to Perry Nugent at 556-3841.