

## CNHS OFFICERS

Pres: Richard Porcher, Jr.

Vice-Pres: Ann Craig

Sec-Tres: Steve Walker

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

THE LESSER SQUAWK is published monthly by the Charleston Natural History Society, Inc. Editor: Perry E. Nugent, 2260 Dallerton Circle, Charleston, S.C. 29407, Ph: 556-3841. Assistant Editor: Pete Laurie, 1153 Cottage Rd., Charleston, S.C. 29412, Ph: 795-6350. Circulation Manager: Teddy Muckenfuss, 1212 Taliaferro Ave., Charleston, S.C. 29412, Ph: 795-4436.

THE LESSER SQUAWK  
Charleston Natural History Society  
1153 Cottage Rd  
Charleston, SC 29412

Address Correction Requested

T. A BECKETT III  
MAGNOLIA GARDENS  
RT. 4  
CHARLESTON, S.C. 29407

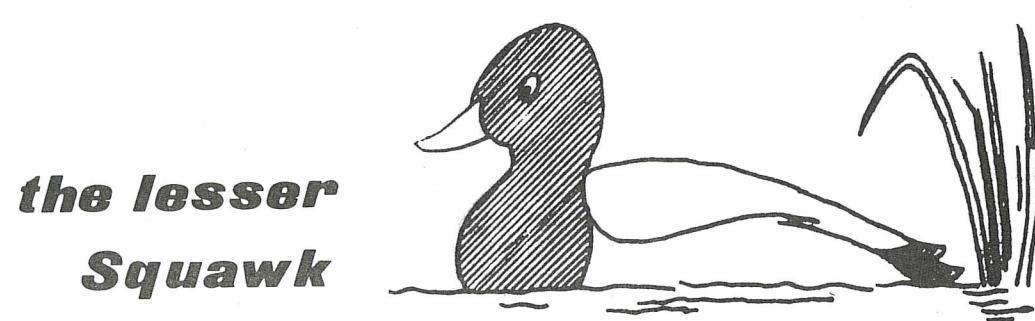
The Charleston Natural History Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members of Audubon that live in the Charleston area automatically become members of CNHS. A portion of the annual dues paid to Audubon are returned to CNHS to cover operating expenses.

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.

Bulk Rate  
U.S. Postage  
Paid  
Chas. S.C.  
Permit No. 349



Volume XXVII, No. 10

November 1976

## NOVEMBER PROGRAM: OIL SYMPOSIUM

Date: November 9, 1976, 8:00 p.m.

Place: Baruch Auditorium, Calhoun St.

Program chairman Richard Porcher has invited three persons with differing viewpoints to speak on the development of offshore oil.

Speakers will be Will Davis of EPA's Bears Bluff Lab., a representative of the South Carolina Petroleum Council, and a representative of the Charleston business community. Each speaker will be allowed ten minutes to express his views and a question and answer period for the membership will follow.

Pat Probst advises The Squawk that the Christmas Bird Count of the Litchfield-Pawley's Island area will be held on the first Sunday of the count period, Dec. 19, 1976.

## BELLEFIELD COUNT

On Sunday, November 21, the Bellefield bird census will once again take place. Thanks to the kindness of Ms. Severin, our host, we are permitted absolute freedom on the 70,000 acre estate.

It will be open to all who write Dr. Harry Freeman a postcard. His address is 1340 Bluebird Dr., Mt. Pleasant SC 29484.

We will leave the Sea Island Shopping Center, Int. Hwy 17 & 703, at 6, and be met at the Hobcaw house at Bellefield at 7:30. There will be assigned count areas and served coffee and pastries. Following the day's count a happy hour will be provided by Ms. Severin. See you the 21st.

## BIRD STUDY GROUP

A half day bird study field trip to the old Pitt St. Bridge in Mt. Pleasant is scheduled for November 13. We will leave the Charleston Museum at 7:30 a.m. East Copper residents may prefer to meet the group at Pitt St. Emphasis will be on gulls, terns, and typical shorebirds. Spotting scopes are useful in this area.

## CITADEL TO OFFER ORNITHOLOGY IN SPRING

Professor Dennis Forsythe will teach ornithology at The Citadel in the spring! This is exciting news for those many Audubon members who recognize birds in the field but know virtually nothing about migratory patterns, feeding and breeding habits, structure, or ecology of birds.

The four-credit course consists of lecture on Wed. evenings, followed by lab work on pigeon or grackle specimens, and three-hour field trips on Saturday mornings. Dr. Forsythe, well-known animal behaviorist, also offers an optional trip to the mountains, and a boat trip to observe offshore birds.

Coastal and pelagic birds are Dr. Forsythe's specialty. He asked me to mention that laughing gulls wearing green wing tags are being released by Rutgers University. Anyone spotting one should call him at The Citadel. Also, vast numbers of scoters are now being seen off Kiawah, and an unusually large number of Arctic variety peregrines have been observed this year.

Caution, Audubon members! The Ornithology course is limited to 18 people. You must pre-register as soon as the forms are issued. I suggest that you call or drop a card to the Biology Dept. now, before you forget, and ask that information be mailed to you as soon as it is printed. See you in Ornithology 408.

Teddy Muckenfuss

## BOARDWALK UPDATE

To date we have raised a total of \$27,546.03. Contributions have come from 32 states plus the District of Columbia and Canada. By far the largest amount, however, has come from our chapters and our members in the Southeast. I feel sure that all of you will take a great pride in the results of your efforts, especially when you have the opportunity to visit the Francis Beidler Forest and take advantage of the fine facilities. While we have been working to raise boardwalk money, Sanctuary Manager Norman Brunswig and his team have been busy working on plans for the route the mile-long boardwalk will finally follow. At the same time a team of experts headed by Atlanta architect Walter Pate, himself a member of the Atlanta Audubon Society Board of Directors, have been devoting much of their attention to developing an overall plan for our facilities to accommodate the public. The facilities will include access road, parking area, and visitor/interpretive building which reflect Audubon philosophies. More information will be forthcoming when the architects have finalized their plan.

Actual construction of the boardwalk began in mid-October and hopefully, our fund-raising efforts will have produced the entire \$30,000 needed by the time it is completed.

W. Carlyle Blakeney, Jr.  
Southeast Regional Rep.

Galaxy, at a distance of two million light-years. (One light-year is the distance light travels at 280,000 miles per second!) A telescope will reveal the shape of the galaxy to be like that of a wheel. Forming the "wheel", and enclosed within it are billions of stars too distant to be discerned as individuals, even by the great telescopes. Our own galaxy has been found to be of this shape.

In the east, Taurus and Orion are beginning to make their appearance. Since they may be seen earlier in the evenings in December, the discussion of these constellations will be postponed until next month.

Neither Mercury nor Mars is visible during November. Mercury, located between the earth and the sun, is lost to sight in the intense glare; while Mars continues to travel around the other side of the sun.

Elizabeth D. Simons

## A BEGINNING IN NOVEMBER

November is mixed with omens of winter, a time primarily of muted, sere dormancy, but as our winters are really more of a northern spring, this last full month of autumn is filled with stirrings of new plant life. Down in the gathering browns of November are thousands of greening seedlings and sturdy perennial crowns with fattening buds, for our colder months are the appointed time of growth of a melange of species.

Wild onions (Allium canadense) will soon push gray-green leaves above old summer's grasses, while in moist thickets the leathery fronds of Southern grapeferns (Botrychium biternatum) have already unfurled. One of the fleabanes

(Erigeron quercifolius) is spiraling out into gray-green rosettes of pubescent leaves. The obscurely colored leaf of the crane-fly orchid will presently push through the litter of its favored beech wood. Chickweeds, both Stellaria media and Cerastium glomeratum, are now tender seedlings that will become tenacious mid-winter clumps.

Vetches, particularly Vicia angustifolia, are coiling up thru senescent roadside growth, where one may also see the crisp greens of plantains (Plantago sp.) and the edible foliage of dock (Rumex sp.) In or near sandy fields the makings of surrey's (Spergula arvensis) feathery mounds are still green wisps. Not to be forgotten is our camp follower from Europe, the wild radish (Raphanus raphanistrum) which is sprouting now and will by late winter bring a bright yellow to field edges.

November is time, too, for spreading Modiola; tufts of speedwell (Veronica); Soliva, with feathered leaves; pungent Coronopus; and the gray-green of fumatory (Fumaria officinalis). Indeed, November might be the chilly signal to rest for the majority of plants, but there are still a number that welcome its frosty arrival.

Edmund R. Cuthbert

## TYPIST WANTED

The staff of the Squawk is seeking a professional typist, preferably a CNHS member, who would be willing to volunteer several hours each month to type the copy for the Squawk.

Professional typists with access to an IBM SelectricII typewriter who would be willing to undertake this important task please call Pete Laurie at 795-6350, or evenings at 795-5267.

one-seventh of the light which it receives. It just happens to be Earth's nearest neighbor.

As the planets all revolve, counter-clockwise around the sun, at different rates of speed, so likewise, the moon revolves around the earth. At a distance of 240,000 miles from the earth, the moon moves at the rate of more than 2,000 miles per hour. Thus, we can observe two kinds of movements during the course of a month. From moonrise to moonset each 24 hours, the moon appears to travel from east to west. This, of course, is due to Earth's counter-clockwise rotation at about 20,000 miles per hour. In addition to this apparent movement, the observer will notice that the moon rises about fifty minutes later each night, and that it progresses steadily eastward through the constellations. It takes the moon about 29½ days to make a complete revolution around the earth.

From an earthling's viewpoint, the moon appears to change in shape as it travels. This is caused by its position in relation to both the sun and the earth. The moon is a spherical body, and when it appears opposite the sun, we see its fully lighted face. This is called Full Moon.

About a week later, the moon will rise at midnight, showing only half of its lighted surface. Actually, we can then see only one-fourth of its whole body, so this phase is known as the Last Quarter.

Each night thereafter, the amount of reflected sunlight diminishes, becoming a crescent of increasingly narrower proportions.

Then for perhaps a couple of days we see no moon at all. At this time, the moon is between the earth and the sun, and the

dazzling brilliance of our Day Star completely overpowers our ability to see the moon. It is now that the moon is New. After a day or two, we discover a thin crescent of light after the sun has set. If the atmosphere is clear, we might be able to see, in the darkening twilight, a faint glow which indicates the round face of the moon. This is called "The Old Moon in the New Moon's Arms". It is caused by sunlight reflected from the earth to the moon.

Each night for about a week after this, the crescent of moonlight increases in size until we can see, near the meridian at twilight, half of the moon's lighted face turned toward the sun. This is called the First Quarter Moon. From then until Full Moon, we can watch each night as the amount of reflected sunlight increases, and the face of the moon more nearly round until the Full Moon returns to our sight.

From 8:00 to 10:00 p.m. at mid-month, the Square of Pegasus is located overhead, just west of the meridian. Andromeda, extending northeast from Pegasus, is in excellent view. In addition to its three most conspicuous stars, Andromeda has something special to offer observers with good field glasses or small telescopes. If one possesses keen eyes, and is fortunate enough to be in an area free of artificial light, he may be able to discover the "surprise" without optical aid. From the middle star of Andromeda's body, two very faint stars extend about five degrees northwestward. Just beyond these stars, a faint blur of light is located. This is the most distant object which may be seen by the naked eye. Astronomers have found it to be a galaxy of stars, similar to our Milky Way

## PRAIRIE FALCON

On October 7th, while standing on the back steps of the Entomology building at the U. S. Vegetable Lab, I observed a large falcon flying over a wooded area in the back corner of the station. As I drove in that direction, the bird flew directly in front of my truck at about 20', giving me an excellent view. Still thinking Peregrine, I was surprised to see black wing pits

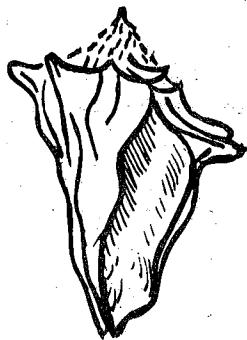
which contrasted sharply with the light underpart. Its face pattern was two rather thin cheek lines which is quite different from the Peregrine's bold face pattern and eye.

This is the second Prairie Falcon in South Carolina, the first being a bird observed by Edward Dingle at Middleburg Plantation during May of 1973. There was a Prairie Falcon around Atlanta last winter.

Perry Nugent

## OBSERVATIONS

Sept. 21	2 Northern Orioles	Wakendaw Lake	E.Farrar,C.Geilfuss
21	F. Northern Oriole	Near MUSC	Susana Avery Burns
26	Pigeon Hawk	Kiawah Is.	E. Farrar
	Gray Kingbird	" "	E. Farrar
30	Peregrine Falcon	Cape Romain	Holland Mills
Oct. 2	" "	Bulls Is.	Holland Mills
2	Magnolia Warbler	Hilton Head	Holland Mills
2	Gannet	2260 Dallerton	David Chamberlain
2	2 Sapsuckers	U.S.Veg.Lab.	Perry & Chris Nugent
6	Golden Plover	" " " "	Perry Nugent
7	Prairie Falcon	" " " "	Perry Nugent
7	Pigeon Hawk	" " " "	Perry Nugent
7	2 Coopers Hawks	" " " "	Perry Nugent
9	Sharp Shinned Hawk	" " " "	Perry Nugent
10	Peregrine Falcon	F.Marion Forest	E.Farrar,C.Geilfuss III
10	6 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers	" " " "	" " " "
14	Greater Black-backed Gull	Morris Island	David Chamberlain
15	Great Horned Owls (7)	U.S. Veg.Lab.	Perry Nugent
	Barred Owls (3)	" " " "	Perry Nugent
	Kestrels (10)	" " " "	Perry Nugent
16	Screech Owl	2260 Dallerton	Cir. P. Nugent
	Swainsons thrush	U.S.Veg.Lab.	Perry Nugent
	Magnolia Warbler	Wakendaw Lake	Edmund Farrar
	Wood thrush	" "	Edmund Farrar
18	Black throated Blue Warbler	U.S.Veg.Lab.	Perry Nugent
21	Sharp Shinned Hawk	" " " "	Perry Nugent
	Coopers Hawk	" " " "	Perry Nugent
	Screech Owl	" " " "	Perry Nugent
23	Immature Peregrine Falcon	Buoy 20, U	
& 24		Sullivan's Is.	Bill Elliot
26	Mature Bald Eagles (2)	7 mi.S. of Georgetown, HWY 17	Tom & Robin Hankins



## Shell Shocked

by

Maggi Yergin

For all of you adventurous people who like to get outdoors instead of staying cooped up in the house, this is the time of year for you. The weather is getting cooler and the bugs aren't nearly as bad as in summer. It's a great time for starting that shell collection or for adding to your present one. Of course, as the season progresses, the weather will be getting cooler and wetter so it will be the more dedicated collector that will continue to add to his collection.

The cooler months tend to bring more shells and a wider variety to the beaches. Some of my best collecting has been in the cooler weather. Of course, a little preparation is needed for such an endeavor. Warm clothing is an absolute must: A good coat that will keep the rain off and warm gloves that will keep your hands warm and dry. Nothing is worse than to go out for a day of collecting and finding yourself so cold as to make your day miserable.

I like to travel light in the colder weather. I usually have lots of pockets or a large deep shoulder bag that is easy to handle. The large collecting bags that the scuba divers use are very handy for putting specimens

in and dragging behind you. The long rope of the bag can be slung over the shoulder or attached to your belt.

When the weather is wet and cold I usually keep my collecting local but after a good windstorm and rough weather I like to go to the islands -- Capers, Dewees, etc.

Sometimes you may find a common specimen of shell but something will be different about it. It may be larger than normal or have better color. At any rate, usually it will be a welcome addition to your collection. I will give two examples of this: On January 13, 1975, I found an Attrina serrata (Rigid Pen Shell) 1½ miles NE of Breach Inlet on the Isle of Palms. The weather was very cool, with winds at 15 to 25 mph. The shell measured 11-5/8" long and 7¼" wide. The average size of this shell is only seven inches, so needless to say I kept it. (This data is taken from my own catalog system). Another common shell, Busycon contrarium (Lightning Whelk), unusual because of its size was found on the east end of Isle of Palms. It measures 12" long and 6½" wide; the average size for this shell is 6".

My favorite place to go for collecting is Sandy Point Beach on the Raccoon Keys. The rarest shells that I have came from there. The shells are more abundant on that island than anywhere else I've been, especially in winter. I won't begin to describe the island, as it is a very special place to me and I could write forever about it. My most prized possession is a Cassis madagascarensis (Emperor Helmet) that was given to me by a member of the shell collecting party we had taken up there. It isn't a perfect specimen but it is the best

that I have seen from our area. This was collected on Dec. 31, 1974. From the same place I have some very good specimens of Tonna galea (Giant Tun) and Pleuroplaca gigantea (Florida Horse Conch). All three of these specimens are hard to find and I have never found them anywhere else, and only in the wintertime.

Capers Island offers the Murex fulvescens (Giant Atlantic Murex) the year round, but the better specimens are found when it's cooler. If you haven't found one yet, check in the sand dunes on the north end of Capers--there are usually quite a few so you can take your pick.

Morris Island has more of our common shells to offer in the cooler weather than in the summer. Often the Busycon whelk can be found at the low tide line half buried in the sand.

One final note on winter collecting: baited fish traps offshore may have some surprises in them when they are brought up. I received two Fasciolaria tulipa (True Tulip), of which one is still alive, in the fall of the year. Winter collecting can be as much fun as you want it to be. So make the best of cold weather.

Any of you that would like to join a shell club please get in touch with me. There are a lot of things that we can do together, including going to the islands for field trips, shell crafts, and shell-swapping. It is a good way to meet other shellers, and good fun for the whole family. 'Til next time, Happy Hunting!

Maggi Yergin  
886-8529

## THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

During November, Venus continues to climb higher into view in the west each evening, outshining the bright stars of the Summer Triangle which are now approaching their setting in the northwest.

Above the opposite horizon, Jupiter will share honors with Venus for about two hours. Observers may thus be able to compare the relative brilliance of the two planets. After Venus sets, Jupiter will dominate the night sky without a companion until about 10:00 p.m., when Saturn rises. These two will then remain in view until dawn.

During the first week of November, brilliant moonlight will blot out of sight nearly all but the brightest stars. As the sun sets on the evening of the sixth, the Full Moon will rise. For the observer in an open area, this will be an impressive sight. It is then that one can realize that the sun which is still shining on the earth is shining, also, on the moon. After the sun drops out of sight below the horizon and night settles over the earth and the sky, the moon continues to shine with increased brilliance. This is our assurance that the sun's light, though lost to our view, has not diminished, but is radiating from it in all directions. The earth, the moon, and the planets each receives a measure of this light according to its distance from the sun, and then immediately reflects the light out into space.

To our eyes, the moon appears to be the largest and most brilliant of these heavenly bodies. Actually, it is the smallest that we can see, reflecting only about