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The Charleston Natural History
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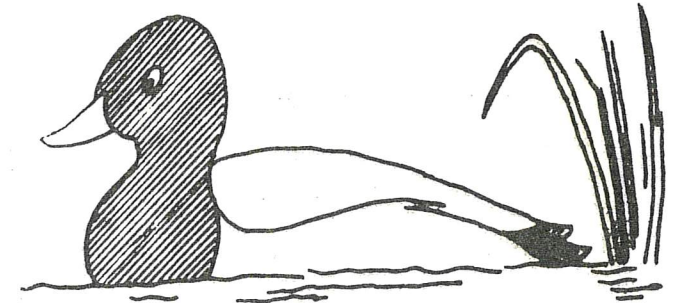
CNHS normally meets on the second
Tuesday of each month (except June,
July, August, and December) at 8:00 P.M.
in Baruch Auditorium.

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 member-
ship. The deadline for each issue is
the 15th day of the preceeding month.

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December 1977

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Dec. 18 -- McClellanville Bird
Count
- Dec. 29 -- Pawley's Island -
Litchfield Bird Count
- Dec. 31 -- Christmas Bird Count

(see inside for details)

UPCOMING PROGRAM

(There is no December meeting.)

Artist and photographer
John Henry Dick will give a
slide presentation on Baja,
Mexico, Jan. 10 at 8 p.m. in
Baruch Auditorium, Calhoun and
Cadsden Streets. John Henry
usually draws a full house, so
come early.

COASTAL COUNCIL MEETING

One of the most important
hearings of the year is coming
up on Dec. 13 at 7:30, The
Citadel. The meeting will be a
chance for the public to discuss
with the S. C. Coastal Council,
the rules and regulations of the
Coastal Zone Management Plan.
It is at this time that the
Council will begin to interpret
how the plan will be implemented.
It's just about going to be a
case of speak now or forever
hold your peace!!

Anyone concerned about how
the Coastal Council is going to
rule on our coast should be
informed, and be at the hearing!
For more information, call me
at 571-5219.

JANE LAREAU



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

It's bird count time. Get out your goose-down coats, gloves, binoculars and thermos jugs and take advantage of the opportunity to participate in a nationwide event.

The Christmas bird count was organized to provide an alternative to traditional Christmas day hunts. And, since its inception, the number of bird watchers in this country has increased in fantastic proportions. In fact, it's even become a sport of sorts in places. In Florida, Texas and California birders employ helicopters and have pre-count pep talks to get participants in the mood to nab those hard-to-find species.

We in South Carolina are fortunate to enjoy above-zero weather and a large number of birds to see. In some areas, counters venture out into below-zero temperatures to seek out their five species.

Not all people who go on the Christmas counts are experienced birders. Persons who would like to learn South Carolina birds are welcome -- they simply go in groups with more experienced participants. It's a great way to learn. See you there!

BOBBIN HUFF

CHARLESTON COUNT

The Christmas Bird Count will take place Saturday, Dec. 31. All interested birders should meet at Gregorie's Service Station, Highway 17N and Route 41 at 6:30 a.m. Participants may bring guests -- there's a fee of \$1.50 for nonmembers. All those interested in taking part should call Julian Harrison at 795-1694.

For Christmas 1977, Why Not Audubon?

Check the Membership You Desire. All members receive bimonthly issues of AUDUBON magazine.

Individual ☐ \$15.00 per year Contributing ☐ \$ 100.00 per year
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Send To:
National Audubon Society
P.O. Box 1268
Charleston, S.C. 29402

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN DECEMBER

Arrivals

Date	Species	Date	Species
13	Great Black-backed Gull	29	Purple Sandpiper
15	White-fronted Goose		

Departures

2	Gray-cheeked thrush	12	Magnolia Warbler
3	Purple Martin	14	Magnificent Frigate bird
	Cape May Warbler		Blackpoll Warbler
	American Redstart	18	Solitary Sandpiper
5	Chimney Swift	20	Yellow-billed Cuckoo
	Painted Bunting	21	Veery
6	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher	24	Sprague's Pipit
7	Red-eyed Vireo		Glossy Ibis
9	Worm-eating Warbler	?	Swallow-tailed Kite
10	Indigo Bunting	?	Wilson's Phalarope
11	Yellow-breasted Chat	?	Purple Gallinule

The following have been seen at least once during December:

Mute Swan, King Eider, Yellow Rail, Long-billed Curlew, Lapwing, Baird's Sandpiper, Red Phalarope, Thick-billed Murre, Long-tailed Jaeger, White-winged Dove, Burrowing Owl, Rufous Hummingbird, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Great Crested Flycatcher, Vermillion Flycatcher, Woodthrush, Gray-cheeked thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Black-throated Gray Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Hooded Warbler, Western Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Lark Sparrow, Sandhill Crane.

TIPS FOR ENERGY SAVERS

There is potential for energy conservation in and around the home, on the road and in the marketplace. The Federal Energy Administration (FEA) has recently published a 31-page booklet showing the rationale and the "how tos" of energy conservation. The booklet contains a glossary of energy terms, measurements and brief statistics on energy usage in the U.S.

To order "Tips for Energy Savers" write "Consumer Informa-

tion, Public Documents Center, Pueblo, Colo 81009.

LEADER AVAILABLE

"Audubon Leader", a newsletter published twice a month by the National Audubon Society is now available to any member interested in up-to-date reports on conservation issues. Send for subscriptions at \$5 a year to National Audubon Society, 950 Third Ave., New York, N.Y. 10022

30	Prairie Warbler	McClellanville	Brian Cassie
	American Redstart	"	"
	White-winged Scoter	Huntington Beach	"
		State Park	"
	Thousands Black Scoter	"	"
	Merlin	"	"
	Merlin	McClellanville	"
	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Francis Marion	"
		Nat. Forest	"
	2 Sharp-shinned Hawks	McClellanville	"
	2 Sharp-shinned Hawks	Brookgreen Gardens	"
	4 Surf Scoters	Pawley's Island	"
	15 Marbled Godwits	Moore's Landing	"
	3 Great Black-backed	Huntington Beach	"
	Gulls	State Park	"
31	70 Fulvous Whistling	"	"
	Ducks	"	"
Nov. 5	3 White-fronted Geese	Santee N. W. R.	"
8	Western Kingbird	Huntington Beach	"
		State Park	"
10	Avocet	"	Pat & Renee Probst
11	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Bull's Island	Pat Probst
13	3 White-fronted Geese	Santee N. W. R.	Perry Nugent
	10 Blue Geese	"	"
	1 Snow Goose	"	"
	1 Coopers Hawk	"	"
	Sharp-shinned Hawk	"	"
	2 White Ibis	"	"
	25 Golden-Crowned Kinglets	"	"
	5 Water Pipits	"	"
14	Harris Sparrow	Huntington Beach	Pat & Renee Probst
		State Park	"
	11 Whistling Swans	"	John Bacon, Bobby
		"	Desporte
	Snow Bunting	"	"

This is great. I appreciate all the sightings and will be looking for more next month. Send them to 2260 Dallerton Circle, Charleston, S. C. 29407. Be sure to include the names of all observers, the date and location of each find.

PERRY NUGENT

PAWLEY'S ISLAND COUNT

The Pawley's Island, Litchfield Bird Count will be held Thursday Dec. 29 at 6:30 a.m. As usual, Renee and Pat Probst will host participants. They'll be offering coffee and rolls that morning and lunch at mid-day. To get to the Probst house, turn right off route 17 onto Boyle Road (the sign says North Litchfield Beach). Drive to Parker Blvd. (along the beach), turn left, go four blocks to Belvedere Lane, turn left, go a half block and the Probst house is the second house on the right. When you see the sign, "Avian Way", you'll know you've made it. A number of participants usually drive up to Litchfield the night before the count and take advantage of off-season rates at the Litchfield Holiday Inn. But, arrangements are strictly up to participants.

MCCLELLANVILLE COUNT

The McClellanville Bird Count is scheduled for Sunday Dec. 18. Participants should meet at 7 a.m. in front of Graham's Hardware Store, in McClellanville.

QUESTIONNAIRES

I am happily reading over the questionnaires members have returned. And I'm hoping that I'll receive more as people have time to get to them. Please jot down your ideas and send them to me. If you didn't get a questionnaire and would like to fill one out, call me at 886-6911 and I'll be happy to send you one. I'll have a report on questionnaire answers in next month's Squawk.

BOBBIN HUFF

ST. PHILLIPS ISLAND HEARING

The Beaufort hearing, originally scheduled for Dec. 20 on the bridge permit for St. Phillip's Island has been postponed, but will be reset soon. This hearing has everything to do with whether the Coast Guard permits developers to build a bridge to St. Phillips, thereby paving (literally) the way for more development.

Many environmental organizations in the state oppose issuance of this permit. Opponents want no decision made on the bridge permit unless and until the Coastal Council has had the opportunity to review the potential effects of the entire development on the critical areas of the island.

Environmentalists fear the bridge permit may be approved -- in which case it would be close to impossible to halt further development of the island -- the argument being -- "Well, a multi-million dollar bridge has already been constructed -- we can't stop now!" Such logic has been all too obvious already in such cases as the Richard B. Russell dam.

We need informed people to join us at the St. Phillips hearing. For further information call Jane Lareau, 571-5219. If you cannot make the hearing, you may still file a protest with the Coast Guard and go on record for the hearing. Write to:

Commander W. J. Brogdon Jr.
Seventh Coast Guard District
51 S.W. First Ave.
Miami, Fla. 33130

FRANCIS MARION FOREST

As it stands now, environmental organizations including the Sierra Club and the S. C. Environmental Coalition have requested an administrative review of the Francis Marion Management Plan recently adopted. Opponents found the plan so reprehensible they wrote 100 pages of reasons why it should not go into effect.

So, we have some good news and some bad news. The Forest Service has agreed to review the reasons, and they granted an extension of the deadline so the reasons could be presented. But, they would not grant a stay of implementation, in other words, the management plan will go into effect soon, if it has not already.

If you are not familiar with the problems posed now in Francis Marion National Forest, I suggest you become informed. The Forest Service is proposing to manage our national forest as a tree farm -- to benefit the forest's products industries. Wilderness, wildlife, watershed and aesthetic values were thrown crumbs, in the management plan. The overall plan is for "genetically improved" super trees to be grown like crops on a "tree farm".

Francis Marion is a public forest. Everyone of us has a right to put in his two cents on how it is managed. Anyone can request a management plan of the forest by writing the U. S. Forest Service, 1801 Assembly St., Columbia, S. C. 29201. They'll drop one in the mail to you free. If you have trouble reading it, we all do. Get with a friend and pick it to pieces. That's

the only way you'll know what is happening to our national forests everywhere.

WANDO UPDATE

The State Ports Authority permit application for a terminal on the Wando River has been sent to the S. C. Coastal Council, the organization newly formed to deal with such issues.

The Save the Wando Association has requested a public hearing on the questions. The organization hopes to see the council draft a carefully drawn management plan which takes into account maximum citizen-environmentalist input and professional expertise. It wants the council to set in motion action which would avert all the problems and dangers of fragmented planning and piecemeal development. Members would like to see the Wando ecosystem designated too valuable and sensitive for any industrial or major development with environmentally negative potential.

Public opinion will definitely (it is hoped) have an impact on the council's decisions. If you want to have a voice, write the S. C. Coastal Council, Suite 205, 4 Carriage Lane, Charleston, S. C. 29407, requesting a public hearing and stating your stand on the issue.

For further information about Save the Wando Association, write P. O. Box 11, Mount Pleasant S. C. 29464.

ALYS ANNE PATTERSON


TAGGED SEA BIRDS

On October 28 I observed an immature Ring-billed Gull at the U. S. Vegetable Laboratory with a green tag on its right wing. The bird was continually flopping in the water of our pond as though it was trying to wash the tag off. When it flew away I thought there may also have been a yellow tag with the green one, but without binoculars I could not be sure.

Pat Probst reports a Caspian tern with a yellow wing tag number 54 at Huntington Beach State Park on October 29.

If anyone can tell us what these tags mean or who might be doing the work, please let me know. I am sure many of our members would be interested in the work.

PERRY NUGENT



OBSERVATIONS

by
Perry Nugent

<u>Date</u>	<u>Observation</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
Aug. 10	American Kestrel	Edisto Is.	Thomas Reeves
Sept. 11	27 Wood Storks	Edisto Is.	Thomas Reeves
Oct. 21	Black-billed Cuckoo	U.S. Veg. Lab.	Perry Nugent
22	Screech Owl	2260 Dallerton Circle	Chris & Perry Nugent
	Immature Blue Goose	Huntington Beach State Park	Pat Probst
27	Bald Eagle	Huntington Beach State Park	Pat Probst
	Sharp-shinned Hawk	Folly Beach	Thomas Reeves
30	American Bittern	McClellanville	Brian Cassie
	Cooper's Hawk	"	"
	5 Shortbilled Marshwren	"	"

April 25, 1918, I saw another female carrying nesting materials, but could not locate the place by following her, as the swamp was too dense."

We learn that Wayne not only meant that the "heavily timbered" forests were mature, he considered them to be remnants of the "original" forest, which by his day were found in "widely separated places." He regarded such swamp forests as "dense." But, were any BWs in the swamp with those Black-throated Greens? April 11, 1917, on which he watched the female in the I'On Swamp pine, gives us the answer. On that day Wayne (unpublished notes in the Charleston Museum) found two BW nests with eggs. These nests were in the northeast part of I'On, several miles from the neighborhood of Mayrant's Backwater where he found the first 6 nests. The two ends of the swamp are reached by different roads. It would have been very difficult, if not impossible, considering the transportation and time available to Wayne, for him to have worked so intensively both parts of the swamp on the same day. He wrote notes on only one of the two nests. It was in "dense swamp".

But it is unlikely that such forest existed in I'On Swamp between 1900 and 1920, the time of Wayne's work there, the FS team contends.

They make a technical argument. Its foundation is Wayne's statement (Brewster 1905, Auk 22:392-394): "The country... was originally a rice field, but is now covered with a dense forest of deciduous trees... Flanking this forest is an enormous back water (reservoir), from the bottom of which have grown millions of buttonwood bushes."

The FS speculates that the rice field was abandoned before the Civil War. Loblolly pine at once takes over such abandoned fields, and keeps out hardwood. Not until the loblolly was cut, probably just prior to 1900, according to the FS, would the hardwood begin to grow. The existence of the rice field is confirmed, according to the FS, by a map of the area, dated 1794, called the "Rose Plat".

The FS kindly sent me a copy of the "Rose Plat." It is not easy to read, but under study a startling picture emerges. The area east of triangle-shaped Mayrant's was wooded, as was the north. A few small rice fields lay to the northwest, but most of the western edge was flanked by woods. A kind of dike, called "drain in bank" on the map, passed through this forest, or along its edge. Water was conveyed through a ditch dug along the top of this type of dike, from a reservoir, across a low place, to a distant rice field.

If Wayne assumed that the diked forest, despite its appearance of great maturity, had once been a ricefield, we should not wonder. Many of us looked over the area recently and assumed the same thing.

The "Rose Plat" was supposed to prove that an abandoned rice field spawned a pure stand of loblolly pine before the Civil War. Instead it showed that Wayne may have been wrong. The swamp hardwood forests in which he found those Bachman's Warblers may have been, literally, both original and primeval.

JAY SHULER

BELLEFIELD COUNT

This year's Bellefield bird census turned out to be very surprising. In the four or five I've gone to, in the past, there has always been something that made that particular day different from all the others and this year was no exception. The Baruch Foundation has a meeting center that was built this year and we met there for coffee in the morning and again for the happy hour after the count. It's a beautiful building which blends well with the forest around it, but it was no substitute for our years at Hobcaw House. So, it was easy to understand why so many jumped at the chance to visit Hobcaw House and ended the fellowship at the lodge too quickly.

The weather was beautiful and clear and the record crowd of birders who came could only complain about the birds -- which they always do anyway -- but this year's count number was fairly normal for Bellefield according to Dr. Harry Freeman and many parties had really good count numbers. The lead went to Perry Nugent's group with 57 species with most others coming in at from 30 to 40 species.

In closing, I'd like to add a note of thanks to someone most of us has never met -- Miss Severin, for it's she who has made Bellefield our most favorite field trip. Madame, thank you, and I earnestly hope we may meet you next year.

DAVID HUFF

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

From early evening, and throughout the night, the December skies present a magnificent display of heavenly bodies. Beginning shortly after sunset during the first week, Mercury may be seen above the southwestern horizon, reaching its greatest eastern elongation, (its highest point east of the sun), on December 3. Looking like a bright star, Mercury is the only planet that possesses the quality of twinkling; thus, there should be no difficulty in locating it. Each evening thereafter it will draw closer to the sun, finally disappearing from view about a week later.

Three other planets are also "Evening Stars" this month, rising at successively later hours. By the time Mercury has set, Jupiter may be seen above the opposite horizon, and as the month advances, it will be located higher in the sky at the same time each night. Later on, Mars will appear, and then Saturn.

At mid-month, Orion may be seen in a defensive position high in the east, as he is being confronted by the menacing Bull. The V-shaped face of Taurus, the Bull may be traced by first locating the red star, Aldebaran, which indicates the "red angry eye" of the animal. Extending about ten degrees northeast of Aldebaran is the tip of one of the horns, and about five or six degrees to the right of that is the tip of the other horn.

Orion stands beneath those

horns, holding a club with his upraised right arm, and a lion-skin shield in his left hand. The two arms will be difficult to locate unless one is in an area free from "light pollution". However, his body and his jeweled belt are conspicuous, even when seen under less advantageous conditions. The first magnitude stars, a red one and a blue-white one diagonally opposite each other, represent his right shoulder and his left foot respectively. A second magnitude star indicates his left shoulder, and one of the third magnitude, his right knee. (his left foot is braced against a rock). A row of three fairly bright stars located between the shoulders and the legs are the jeweled belt, from which hangs his sword, (a blur of light). About ten degrees northwest of Aldeberan, the faint cluster of stars known as the Pleiades, or "Seven Sisters", may be seen.

The red "shoulder star" is called Betelgeuse, a star so enormous that, if it were located in the center of the Solar System, it would engulf Mercury, Venus, Earth, and Mars. Its size may be imagined when one realizes that it is about 300 light-years away! The blue-white star that indicates Orion's left foot is called Rigel. This is a fiercely hot sun that is more than 500 light-years away!

Shining with a steady, white light is Jupiter, some twenty degrees north of Betelgeuse. Sky-watchers with telescopes, or even good field glasses held very steadily, may once more enjoy a season of watching the movements of Jupiter's four largest moons.

Not far above the southeastern horizon, a brilliant star scintillating with numerous colors is bound to catch the eye of even a casual observer. This is Sirius, whose name means "sparkling". This star can be seen from anywhere on Earth, from the North to the South Poles. Its distance away is 8 light-years. One light-year is the distance that light travels in a year at the rate of 186,000 miles per second! (The light of the sun, which is located 93 million miles away, reaches the earth in 8 minutes)!

Mars will rise about 8:00 p.m. on the 15th of the month, followed an hour and a half later by Saturn. Mars may be recognized by its reddish color, and Saturn, by its yellow glow. These two planets may be seen throughout the rest of the night as they follow a curving path westward.

Within an hour before sunrise, Venus may be seen as a "Morning Star" during the first week in December, but after that, it will become lost to view.

On December 21, at 6:24 p.m. Earth will reach the most northerly point of its orbit. The sun will set about 5:00 p.m., and the next morning, it will not rise until about 7:00 o'clock. Winter will then officially begin in the Northern Hemisphere, and summer, in the area south of the equator.

ELIZABETH D. SIMONS

BACHMAN'S WARBLER IN A CLEAR-CUT?

Until quite recently no one had dreamed of such a thing. Arthur T. Wayne, legendary ornithologist of Porchers Bluff, so clearly stated that Bachman's Warbler (BW) nested in mature swamp forests that doubting him seemed beyond the pale. In the account of the first 6 nests he found, Wayne (1907, Auk 24:43-48) wrote: "The swamp in which this warbler breeds is heavily timbered... The trees are chiefly of a deciduous character, such as the cypress, black gum, sweet gum, tupelo, hickory, dogwood, and red oak." In addition, he used in this passage phrases like "this primeval swamp" and "these dark and gloomy woods."

But a U. S. Forest Service (FS) team, whose studies have been used to justify cutting I'on Swamp, where Wayne found 87.5% of the known BW nests, has interpreted Wayne's writing in a novel way and come up with a new theory. As they put it in a paper delivered to the 1977 meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union: "We hypothesize that Bachman's Warbler breeds in early successional stages of swamp forests of the southern coastal plain."

Some fancy reasoning was required. Of Wayne's writing they say: "His statement of primeval swamp most likely referred to the tough working conditions and not to the seral stage of the forest. Although a thinned or sparse overstory is implied, it is not clear what range in tree densities the warbler used (Hooper and Hamel, Wilson Bul. 89:373-379)."

At a hearing held in March of 1977 on BW habitat, Wayne's phrase "heavily timbered" was called ambiguous. It could mean that the forest was heavily cut over, just as easily as it might mean that heavy timber stood in the forest.

Fortunately, Wayne's use of "primeval" and "heavily timbered" are illuminated by other passages in which they occur. In the case of "primeval" it came almost as a relief to me to find that Wayne was not in the habit of reversing the meanings of common English words. Wayne (1910, Birds of South Carolina) wrote of the Pileated Woodpecker: "This fine species is abundant wherever the forest is of a primeval nature, but where the heavy growth has been cut away it is seldom met with." Nothing about a "thinned or sparse overstory" there.

Perhaps the FS wasn't forced to step quite so nimbly to get around "heavily timbered", though a reading of a sample of turn-of-the-century ornithological literature turns up many examples that show that a standing forest of large mature trees was the intended meaning. Wayne (1918, Auk 35:437-442) demonstrated that, and revealed a lot more beside. Of the Black-throated Green Warbler he said: "...I was absolutely certain that it really bred on the coast in widely separated places due to the presence of original heavily timbered forests, which is the requisite for the birds in the breeding season... On April 11, 1917... I found a female building a nest in a tall pine tree in I'on Swamp, and on