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The Charleston Natural History Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society. Members of Audubon who 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, 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 membership. The deadline for each issue is the 20th day of the preceeding month.

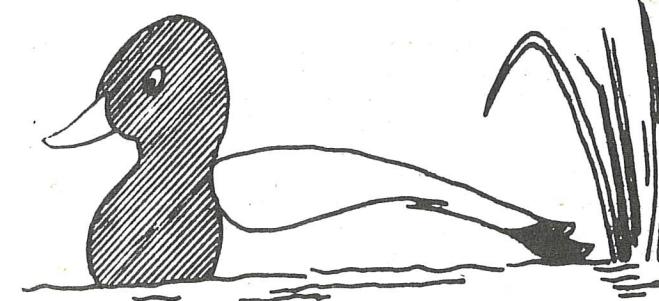
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ECOLOGIST WILL SPEAK AT MARCH MEETING

Speaker: Dr. Michael Smith, ecologist
Topic: Environment studies at the Savannah River Ecology Lab
Date: March 8, 1977, 8 p.m.
Place: Baruch Auditorium, Calhoun and Gadsden Streets

BIRD STUDY GROUP

In March we will return to I'on Swamp to see if we can do better than the turkey, Brown-headed and Whitebreasted Nuthatches, Brown creepers, and Fox Sparrows found on the last trip. Migration should begin shortly and enable us to find more warblers. Sometime will be spent in the pinelands along Willow Hall Road looking for Bluebirds and Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. If you want to see a particular species, join our group, the chances are we will find it sometime this spring.

Meet at the Charleston Museum at 7:00 a.m. Sunday, March 13 for a half-day of birding with an interesting group of people.

PERRY NUGENT

MARCH FIELD TRIP: Sunday, March 20, we will visit several locations in the Francis Marion Forest to study reptiles and amphibians. Julian Harrison will lead the trip. Meet at the Charleston Museum at 8 a.m. Bring a lunch.

EDITOR'S MESSAGE: As precocious blooms and budding trees tell us, spring and warm weather are not far off. Even the skies herald the new season as spring constellations begin to be visible as Elizabeth Simons tells us in her *Sky-Watcher's Guide*. Susan Roche gives us an account of a visit to the Francis Beidler Forest and an update on the boardwalk construction. Budding photographers will have a chance to capture glimpses of spring in a new group being formed and members of the Conservation Committee plan to sell birdhouses and give out information about Audubon at the Flea Market this spring. Perry Nugent's list of arrivals include species winging in for the new season.

(OVERHEARD IN A CONVERSATION BETWEEN TWO BIRD NUTS: "What happens to a duck that flies upside down?...He quacks up.)

That's all folks!

BOBBIN HUFF

WANDO TERMINAL

Anyone opposed to the State Ports Authority terminal on the Wando River should send their objections to Clifford L. Alexander, Secretary of the Army, The Pentagon, Washington, D.C. 20301, Gen. J. W. Morris, Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army, Washington, D.C. 20314.

Letters don't have to be long or go into a lot of detail. They could also be sent to members of our Congressional delegation.

GAME RESOLUTION

At the January meeting, Virginia Gourdin introduced a resolution which was adopted unanimously. It reads, "Be it resolved that the Charleston Natural History Society urges support for the requested increase of \$200,000 in this

year's appropriation for the Game Enforcement Division of the State Wildlife Commission and respectfully requests notification by the House Ways and Means Committee and the Senate Finance Committee of action taken on this matter."

To date, the society has received letters of acknowledgement from J. W. Hudson, chairman of the State Budget and Control Board and Dr. J. A. Timmerman, executive director of the S. C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Department.

CONSERVATION COMMITTEE REPORT

The speakers bureau list will be published shortly and sent to civic groups and schools in the area. Please contact Anne Craig immediately if you would like to include your name.

The Washington office of National Audubon is mounting a serious campaign in support of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. This bill (#R39) was recently introduced by Morris Udall on the first day of the new Congress. Very soon the membership will receive under separate mailing a more complete report on the bill. We will ask for your support at that time in the form of letters and publicity. Please help us support the work that National has done.

Announcing: CNHS Flea Market Booth. This committee will man a table at the Flea Market each Saturday from March until May. We will be selling birdhouses and feeders, bird seed, and hopefully many Audubon memberships. We think this will give us some valuable exposure and a wonderful opportunity to chat with locals and visitors about projects and issues.

ANNE CRAIG

BIRD MOVEMENTS IN MARCH

<u>Arrivals</u>			Species
Date	Species	Date	Species
3	Least Bittern, Wilson's Plover, Chuck Wills Widow	20	Pectoral Sandpiper, Common Night Hawk, Blackthroated Green Warbler
5	Swallow Tailed Kite, Parula Warbler	22	Stilt Sandpiper, Green Crested Flycatcher
7	Chimney Swift, Woodthrush	23	Hooded Warbler
10	Eastern Kingbird	24	Arcadian Flycatcher, Northern Waterthrush
11	Upland Sandpiper	26	Eastern Wood Pewee
12	Mississippi Kite, Glossy Ibis	27	Prothonotary Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Orchard Oriole, Ruby throated Hummingbird
15	Least Tern, <i>Yellowthroated Vireo</i> , Red-eye Vireo	28	Blacknecked Stilt
16	Golden Plover, Veery	29	Roseate Tern
18	Louisiana Waterthrush, Yellow Crowned Night Heron	30	Summer Tanager
		31	Black Rail, Early Bachman's Warbler

Departures

8	Horned Lark	21	Yellow Rail
9	European Wigeon	29	Fox Sparrow
16	Rednecked Grebe, Long Eared Owl	30	Red Head
19	Bewicks Wren	31	Longbilled Curlew

The following have been seen at least once during March:

European (Great) Cormorant
Purple Sandpiper
Whitetailed Kite
Wilson's Warbler
Dickcissel
Lapland Longspur

6. Mrs. Moriandiere's description of a small sparrow like bird having a red cap, black chin and reddish breast fits the Common Red Poll which is not like any other seed eater in our area. She was about 10 - 12' from the bird and studied it for some time with binoculars. It was seen again on February 20 by 3 people.

7. While at Huntington Beach with Pat Probst, he told me of a report from New York about a number of Alcids such as Murre's, Douekies, and Guillemot's seen as far south as Florida. Most of them have been observed about 10 miles offshore. I would appreciate hearing from anyone going offshore about the birds you see. We get very few reports on oceanic birds so any observations of Shearwater's, Petrel's, Alcids, tropicbirds and frigate-birds would be welcomed. Does any member of C.N.H.S. know of someone who would be willing to take a group of birders offshore? There are a number of people in the area that are interested in such a trip.

SOUTH CAROLINA CHECKLIST

A new checklist of South Carolina birds, prepared by Perry E. Nugent, now is available for CNHS members.

The new checklists contain a variety of useful information on the status of each species, including early and late dates of arrival and departure for migrants. As such they are valuable additions to standard field guides. Many experienced birders use checklists to keep a permanent record of each day afield.

To defray printing costs the checklists will be sold for 10 cents each with a minimum mail order of 10. To order checklists send a personal check to Pete Laurie, 1153 Cottage Rd., Charleston, SC 29412. Make checks payable to the Charleston Natural History Society.

I appreciate the nice list of observations and will be looking for more next month. Send yours to me at 2260 Dallerton Circle, Charleston, S. C. 29407. Be sure to include the date and location of the sighting, as well as the names of all observers and any other information that might be of interest to our readers.

PERRY NUGENT

BEIDLER FOREST UPDATE

Sunday, the 13th of February, began with a soft drizzle and warm temperatures which seemed a good combination for visiting the Francis Beidler Forest where National Audubon is constructing an educational boardwalk. As all readers of the Squawk are aware, after completion of the boardwalk, visitors of all ages will be welcome to observe and reflect upon one of the few protected and yet accessible swamps in the southeast.

It was a busy day for Atlanta architect, Walter Pate, and Four Holes Sanctuary manager, Norman Brunswig. They met construction people on the site designated for the visitor center to discuss many last minute details and finalize plans. After the meeting, Walter patiently explained the plans to me involving the educational aspects of the center itself in relation to its surroundings. The road, building, and boardwalk are designed to cause the least disruption to the site which was previously inaccessible to most of the public. Walter went on to explain how visitors will enter and leave the boardwalk through the center which he sees as a "final statement" of man's technology blending with our precious natural resources.

After spending three hours on the boardwalk with Larry Thompson of National Audubon I could appreciate what Walter was emphasizing. Larry and I had photographed several areas along the boardwalk, and noted the variety of plant life that makes up this tupelo-cypress swamp. Here people of all ages will be able to span the water and soft soil of Four Holes with its roots of cypress, tupelo gum, and oak, as the water moves ever so slowly toward the ocean. As we sat on the walk we watched the strong, ageless limbs of the tallest trees reflected in the water and pondered the different interpretations visitors might note between winter, spring, summer, and autumn. The botanical treasures along

with the variety of textures and patterns in the swamp will leave each visitor with many fond memories. My own for the day include my first Wood Thrush song of the spring and Cooper's Hawks defending territory.

When in early summer the boardwalk officially opens, visitors will be viewing a different swamp than that of February. Then the numerous sapsuckers will be gone and warblers will be in abundance. Wildflowers will delight the visitor's eye and the cypress will gain their lime green needles as the rays of sunlight dance down through the massive branches.

One last comment on Four Holes, or as it is officially designated, the Francis Beidler Forest; those desiring to visit must wait until after all construction is finished. Norman Brunswig knows that many people would like to visit the swamp now, but asked me to relate to our members the importance of finishing all construction as soon as possible. When it is finished "our" productive ecosystem will be available for all to enjoy.

SUSAN ROCHE

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

For Sky-watchers weary of sub-freezing weather and the fuel shortage, March brings the promise of pleasanter temperatures in the weeks ahead. Continuously traveling at more than 18 miles per second, Earth is carrying us, (who live in the Northern Hemisphere), away from the winter stretch of its orbit, and will reach the Vernal Equinox on March 20, at 12:43 p.m. Spring will then begin in the Northern Hemisphere, and autumn in the Southern.

We can still have the opportunity of observing the bright stars of winter during the hours before midnight, while watching the arrival of the spring constellations. Adding to the beauty of the scene, four of the planets lend their brilliance. Venus continues to dominate the western sky, but now, it is setting

earlier each evening. It attained its greatest brilliance on February 28. Travelling toward a position on its orbit between the sun and the earth, it may be seen telescopically as a diminishing crescent. By the end of the month, it will make its final appearance, this year, as an "Evening Star". Joining Venus before her disappearance, Mercury may also be seen during the week of the 24 - 31. On March 27, Mercury and Earth's "Sister Planet" will be in conjunction.

By the time it is dark, Jupiter will be located in the western half of the sky, not far from Taurus and the Pleiades; and close to the meridian, Saturn may be found in Cancer, the Crab. Although Saturn is the second largest, it is actually less bright than the other four "naked-eye" planets. The reason for this fact is its great distance away. On February 2nd of this year, when Earth and Saturn were closest together, they were 758 million miles apart, - almost twice the distance between Earth and Jupiter!

A small telescope will reveal Saturn's unique attraction, - the rings which surround it. Galileo was the first person to discover them. Using the crude telescope that he constructed in 1610, he saw what he described as a "cup with two handles". Now we know that three rings, composed of billions of small fragments, are constantly orbiting the planet. Many astronomers believe that these fragments are either rocks encased in ice, or even perhaps solid bits of ice. In addition to the rings, Saturn is surrounded by ten moons, only four of which may be detected in any but the largest telescopes.

Although the rings spread out thousands of miles in width from the equator of Saturn, they are quite thin, ranging from ten miles to only a few feet in thickness. For that reason, and the fact that the axis of the planet is tilted 26.7 degrees from its orbit, there are times when the rings practically disappear from our view. This year, however, they are still quite

visible, and may be observed throughout the night. The thrill of one's first experience is a lasting one, which never diminishes, no matter how often repeated.

Between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. on March 15, the winter constellations, - Perseus, Auriga, Taurus and the Pleiades, Orion and Canis Major, are all west of the meridian, moving toward their setting. Castor and Pollux are high overhead, and the spring constellations are taking their places from eastward.

Some fifteen degrees east of Saturn, a first magnitude star is located directly on the ecliptic. This is Regulus, the brightest star in Leo, the Lion. It represents the chest of the Lion, and is connected with a semi-circle of five fainter stars. The semi-circle is the head of this "King of the Beasts", facing westward. About 10 degrees east of the head is a triangle composed of one second magnitude and two fainter stars. The brightest of the three is the tip of the Lion's tail.

When facing north, the observer can see Cassiopeia preparing to set in the northwest, while the Big Dipper rides high in the northeast. Equi-distant between these two groups, Polaris, the North Star is located.

About an hour before sunrise on the 15th, Mars will appear above the southeastern horizon. It will continue to be a "Morning Star", rising earlier each day, until the end of August. It will then be seen in the evening sky shortly before midnight.

ELIZABETH D. SIMONS

PHOTOGRAPHY OUTINGS

Interested members of the society are invited to join a photography group which is being formed. The group plans outings to various nearby areas which offer natural history subjects. The group hopes to present a photographic show to the society at a future meeting. If you are interested in joining, call Richard Porcher.

5	2 Ipswich Sparrows	Huntington Beach State Park	Pete Laurie, Perry Nugent
5	3 Snow Buntings	Huntington Beach State Park	Perry Nugent
5	1 European Wigeon	Huntington Beach State Park	Perry Nugent
5	Mature Blad Eagle	Bear Island	Bill Elliott
5	Mature Bald Eagle	Bear Island	Bill Elliott
5	Pigeon Hawk	Bear Island	Bill Elliott
5	2 Tree Swallows	Bear Island	Bill Elliott
February 8	Barred Owl	2260 Dallerton Cir.	Perry Nugent
February 11	Purple Finch	Mt. Pleasant	Marge DelBene
February 12	2 Evening Grosbeaks	Near Nebo Church	Perry Nugent
February 12	Turkey	U.S. 17 North	Bird Study Group
February 13	Wood Thrush	I'on Swamp	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
13	Cooper's Hawk	Four Holes	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
February 14	Common Red Poll	68 Lenwood Blvd.	Ellen Morlandiere
14	Pigeon Hawk	2260 Dallerton Cir.	Perry Nugent
February 19	20 Canvasback	Huntington Beach	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
19	3 Ruddy Ducks	Huntington Beach	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
19	3 Ring-necked Ducks	Huntington Beach	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
19	2 Catbirds	Huntington Beach	Larry Thompson, Susan Roche
February 20	Common Red Poll	68 Lenwood Blvd.	Ellen Morlandiere
February 21	2 Northern Orioles	68 Lenwood Blvd.	Cris & Perry Nugent
21	Catbird	68 Lenwood Blvd.	Cris & Perry Nugent

FOOT NOTES

1. The Northern Orioles (Baltimore) have been observed for about 1 month.

2. The Black headed Grosbeak has been a regular visitor at Mrs. Slifer's feeder for several weeks and was seen by Pete Laurie.

3. One Ipswich sparrow was seen back of the dunes near the north end of Huntington Beach. The other 2 were found in the dunes to the right of the path that goes from the north parking lot to the beach.

4. The Snow Buntings flew about 4' over my head from short grass Pat and I had just walked through. Unfortunately Pat did not see them and our effort to find them again was unsuccessful.

5. When we saw the Common Mergansers, Pat put his scope on them and said "I have the scope on one, take a look." To my surprise swimming in front of a male Merganser was a male European Wigeon. The reddish brown head and buff crown were clearly visible even though the light was from the side. While I was trying to convince myself that the bird was for real, something flushed the whole flock and the other members of our party did not see him.

BIRDING

Most serious birders keep a "life list", a list of every species of bird identified during one's lifetime, and nothing annoys a lister more than to have two or more species lumped into subspecies of a single species. Lumping forces the birder to, at worst, purge a no longer recognized species from his list, or at best, denies him the pleasure of adding a life bird at some future time.

Several years ago the American Ornithological Union, which has jurisdiction in such matters, decided that the rare Ipswich sparrow was nothing more than a subspecies of the better known Savannah sparrow. At the time, this decision didn't bother me too much since I had never seen an Ipswich sparrow.

I occasionally had looked for them among the dry, sparse dune grasses during the winter months in places like Sullivans Island, but believing them difficult to identify and far from common, I never searched with any diligence.

But several weeks ago, during a state park winter bird count at Huntington Beach with Pat Probst and Perry Nugent, I suddenly flushed a pair of large pale sparrows from the first row of dunes. We were looking for snow buntings and while these birds certainly weren't snow buntings, they did catch my eye.

Although finely streaked like Savannah sparrows, they were much larger and paler (I had been looking at Savannahs all day). I managed to get quite close and flushed them several times. They fit the description of Ipswich sparrows perfectly: large, the color of beach sand, flew only a short distance when flushed. When seen that well the bird is quite easy to identify and, to my way of thinking, could not easily be confused with a Savannah sparrow.

Several years ago this would have been a life bird for me, but now it is just an interesting subspecies. Nonetheless, I carefully recorded this sighting in my field notes. Lumped species can also be split, and one day the AOU might give me back the Ipswich sparrow.

PETE LAURIE

HELP! HELP! HELP!

The minutes of C.N.H.S., between 1945 and 1957, are apparently lost. This period is an important link in the history of the Society, now in preparation. Any light that can be shed on the whereabouts of the missing record will be very much appreciated. Also, if anyone who was a member during that period can recall events and interesting or humorous incidents, please contact the Historian, Miss Elizabeth Simons, phone 723-6340. Especially desired are the names of officers elected, and the date of the reorganizational meeting in 1945.

ELIZABETH D. SIMONS

~~SAVED~~ will be
NEW AMENDMENTS

In order for C.N.H.S. to maintain its status as a tax exempt organization, the I.R.S. has requested that certain amendments be made to the Society's articles of incorporation. These amendments will not effect the way C.N.H.S. is organized or the manner in which it operates. The amendments are as follow:

"The following language shall be added to the Articles of Incorporation:

In the event of dissolution, the residual assets of the Society will be turned over to one or more organization which themselves are exempt as organizations described in Sections 501(c)(3) and 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or corresponding sections of any prior or future law, or to the Federal, State or Local government for exclusive public purpose.

Notwithstanding any other provision in these articles, this corporation will not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by (a) a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law or (b) a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 or any other corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law."

Members of the Society will be asked to vote upon the proposed amendments at the regular March meeting. This is purely a matter of procedure. It does ensure we will be able to continue enjoying a discount on our postage. Each copy of the Squawk costs us only 2 cents a copy now a substantial difference from what non-tax-exempt organizations must pay. It also means contributions to the society are tax deductible.

OBSERVATIONS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Observation</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Observer</u>
December 28	2 Whistling Swans	Bulls Island	Edmund Farrar
	Great Black-backed Gull	Near Bulls Island	Edmund Farrar
January 22	Orange Crowned Warbler	Magnolia Gardens	Edmund Farrar
22	2 Pairs Northern Orioles	127 Ashley Avenue	Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Glover
22	Horned Owl	2260 Dallerton Cir.	Cris & Perry Nugent
January 25	Black Headed Grosbeak	Summerville	Mrs. Florence Slifer
January 30	Marbled Godwit	Mt. Pleasant Cswy.	Jim Reining, Kathy Wagget
February 1	4 Purple Finches	14 Tradd Street	Virginia Gourdin
February 2	Several Goldfinches	14 Tradd Street	Virginia Gourdin
February 4	Pigeon Hawk	Downtown Charleston	Edmund Farrar
4	Many Purple Finches	Summerville	Bruce W. Kruckle
4	Many Goldfinches	Summerville	Bruce W. Kruckle
February 5	Pigeon Hawk	Huntington Beach	Pat Probst, Pete
		State Park	Laurie, Cindy Floyd, Perry Nugent
5	7 Common Mergansers	Huntington Beach	Pat Probst, Pete
5	Red Necked Grebe	State Park	Laurie, Perry Nugent
5	1 Ipswich Sparrow	Huntington Beach	Pat Probst, Pete
		State Park	Laurie, Perry Nugent
		Huntington Beach	Pat Probst, Perry Nugent