

THE LESSER SQUAWK
Charleston Natural History Society
1212 Taliaferro Avenue
Charleston, South Carolina 29412

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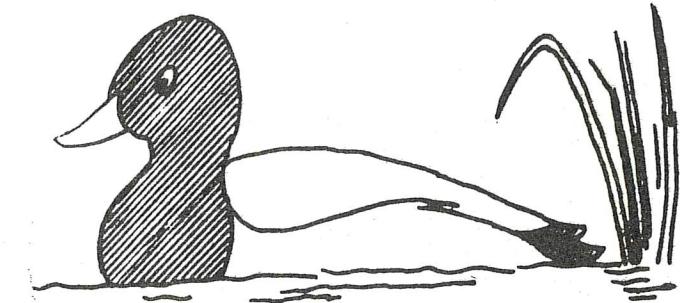
The Charleston Natural History
Society is a chapter of the
National Audubon Society. Members
of Audubon who live in the
Charleston area automatically
become members of CNHS. A portion
of the annual dues paid to Audubon
are returned to CNHS to cover
operating expenses.

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 15th day of the
preceeding month.

the lesser Squawk



Volume XXIX, No. 2

February 1978

BULLS ISLAND CAMPING TRIP

We have been given permission
to camp on Bulls Island on
the 17th, 18th and 19th of
February. We have space available
for 35 people and due to
the demand, I'll fill these
spaces as you contact me. There
is a boat that makes the trip to
the Island for \$5.00 per person
and day visitors will be welcome.

The Island has toilet and
water but all else must be
carried over, about 1/4 mile
to the campsite. Also, once
there you are stranded till the
next boat.

If you've never camped in
winter contact me or someone
who can ascertain if you have
the right equipment to be
comfortable. There are rules
against open fires on the
Island except in the pit
provided, so also consider a
small backpacker's stove.

Last year about 50 people
made the trip and the weather
was pleasant -- a really nice
outing in a fantastic location,
so lets hope this year will be
no different.

For information or
reservation call me after 6:00
p.m. or on weekends at 886-6911.

DAVID HUFF

CNHS LOOKS TO THE SKIES

Dr. Robert J. Dukes Jr. and
William R. Kubinec will speak on
astronomical observation at Kitt
Peak National Observatory Feb.
14th at 8:00 p.m. in Baruch
Auditorium, Gadsden & Calhoun
Streets. Parking is available
at the rear of the auditorium and
on Gadsden Street.



EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

Although I didn't receive a large number of questionnaires, the ones that did arrive were very interesting, mostly because of their suggestions for future programs, field trips and inclusions in the Squawk.

Subjects deemed worthy of possible programs include shells, bird habits and identification, trees, reptiles and mammals, slide and film shows, wildflowers by seasons, slides, Audubon films, wildflowers, wildlife, Bachman's warblers and red-cockaded woodpeckers.

Respondants wrote they would like to see field trips to more plantations and islands, the Congaree River, offshore, to the mountains, Old Fort Dorchester, the woods across from King's Grant, Magnolia Gardens, South Island, Bachman's warbler and red-cockaded woodpecker habitat. One person said she would like to see more field trips on Saturday rather than Sunday.

Suggestions for additons to the Squawk included: more personal input from members; more news of state and federal legislation; activities of the society several years back; favorite birding spots; what can be seen there and how to get there; good places for salt water fishing; bird feeders; mineralogy; and archaeology.

There was total disagreement on whether CNHS should

place most emphasis on programs, field trips, or conservation projects.

One person wanted to see more socialization at meetings and two others didn't approve of having refreshments after meetings.

Another would like CNHS to start a rare bird alert in which interesting bird sightings could be communicated by phone immediately to interested persons.

People responding to the questionnaires were from a wide variety of professions, ranging from a maitre d' to engineer. Several were teachers or professors and a couple, housewives.

So, in response to these suggestions, I'm inviting all members to send in their favorite birding spots. Jot them down on a post card (only 9 cents) and send them to me at 28-21st Ave., Isle of Palms, S.C. 29451. I'll choose the top three spots, based on the cards I receive.

BOBBIN HUFF



COUNT RESULTS

The Christmas Bird Count was "very successful", according to Julian Harrison. A Summer Tanager, Bald Eagle and Peregrine Falcon were among the 160 species sighted.

This is great. I will be expecting more interesting observations next month. Be sure to include the names of all observers, the date and location of each sighting. Send them to me at 2260 Dallerton Circle, Charleston, 29407.

PERRY NUGENT

Are hawks feeding on the birds at your feeder? I have 3 reports of hawks taking birds from feeders. One was a Sparrow Hawk in the downtown area, another was either Pigeon or Sharp-Shinned Hawk in the North Area, and a Pigeon Hawk at my feeder. Let me know if you have this problem. My feeling on this is hawks have to live and I enjoy having them around.

PERRY NUGENT

Bird Movements in February

Arrivals

Date	Species	Date	Species
1	Purple Martin	8	White-tailed Kite
3	Cattle Egret	10	Rough-winged Swallow
6	Painted Bunting	11	Yellow-breasted Chat

Departures

3	White-fronted Goose	23	Snow Goose
13	Cinnamon Teal	?	Dovekie
	European Teal	?	Saw Whet Owl
15	Golden Eagle		

Unusual birds that have been seen in February: Harlequin Duck, Long-tailed Jaeger, Great Black-backed Gull, Snowy Owl, Yellowheaded Blackbird, Orange-crowned Warbler, Parula Warbler, Common Red Poll.

WHAT BIRDS VISIT YOUR YARD?

Last year we had a suggestion that the members be asked to report all birds they see in their yard. This is one activity that some other Audubon chapters have for at least one month. This would give us some interesting information on what the bird population is in different parts of our area.

With this in mind, I would appreciate receiving a list of the birds seen in or above your yard from now until the end of March. Perhaps you could do this on one of our checklists. Do not worry about numbers unless what you see is rare or unusual, in which case I would like as much detail, including the date, as you can give me. If the response to this request is sufficient, the results will be presented in a later issue of the Squawk.

PERRY NUGENT

Date	Observation	Location	Observer
24	Red-tailed Hawk	Coast Guard Base	John W. Horlbeck
	20 Darkeyed Junco's	5 Council St.	" "
	1 Sparrow Hawk	"	" "
26	Great Horned Owl	Coosawhatchee	Susan & Avery Burns
27	5 Purple Finches	24 Gadsden St.	Mr. & Mrs. John M. LeCato, Jr.
28	10 American Gold-finches	5 Council St.	John W. Horlbeck
	6 Buffleheads	Charleston	" "
	Red-breasted Merganser	Marina Lake	" "
	2 Lesser Scaup	"	" "
	Hooded Merganser	"	" "
30	2 Evening Grosbeaks	King's Grant	Mrs. Bruce Krucke
31	Peregrine Falcon	Capers Island	Bill Elliott
1	25-30 Evening Grosbeaks	Walterboro	Mary Hickman
	2 Grasshopper Sparrows	Willow Hall Rd.	Pete Laurie & Perry Nugent
	4 Henslows Sparrows	Willow Hall Rd.	" "
	2 Bachman's Sparrows	"	" "
	Lincoln's Sparrow	"	" "
Dec. 4	15 imm. White Ibis	Folly Rd.	Susan & Avery Burns
8	Lincoln's Sparrow	Willow Hall Rd.	Perry Nugent
	Grasshopper Sparrow	"	" "
9	Bald Eagle	Pepperhill	Nada Carroll
10	Cattle Egret	Doe Hall, McClellanville	Martha Shuler
11	Pigeon Hawk	2260 Dallerton Circle	Perry Nugent
14	Goldfinch	14 Tradd St.	Virginia Gourdine
15	4 Goldfinches	"	" "
	3 Orange Crowned Warblers	4 Hole Swamp	Pete Laurie & Perry Nugent
	1 Yellowthroated Warbler	"	" "
	1 Black & White Warbler	"	" "
	3 Brown Creepers	"	" "
	2 Solitary Vireos	"	" "
	many Field Sparrows	"	" "
	many Chipping Sparrows	"	" "
	many Savannah Sparrows	"	" "
	1 Grasshopper Sparrow	"	" "
	many Fox Sparrows	"	" "
18	10 Evening Grosbeaks	2260 Dallerton Circle	" "

AUDUBON CONFERENCE

The National Audubon Society's Southeast Regional Conference will be held in Charleston, February 24-26, instead of Myrtle Beach, as earlier reported.

The conference theme will be offshore oil exploration and the conference will include several chapter related workshops, as well as field trips.

As we planned our Myrtle Beach conference, we learned that a conference with a similar theme was being planned for the same date in Charleston, so we decided to combine our efforts and co-sponsor the conference with several other parties.

We invite as many chapter members as possible to join us. For further information, write or call The Southeastern Regional Office of the National Audubon Society.

W. CARLYLE BLAKENEY, JR.

PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP MEETS

The CNHS photography group will hold its next meeting Feb. 16th at 7:00 p.m. at Porter-Gaud School.

We are planning our April program for the regular membership with the theme of Natural Areas of Charleston.

Please bring slides of the following areas: Pitt Street Causeway, I'on Swamp, Bull's Island, Santee Coastal Reserve, Huntington State Park, Brookgreen Gardens, Four-Holes Swamp,

Edisto River and Santee National Wildlife Refuge.

Write your name in non-smudgeable ink on each slide border.

Since we are photographers, we have some artistic license, so if you have a slide which is not from the above areas, but illustrates what is present in those areas, bring those also.

Our monthly field trip will be announced at the meeting.

SUSAN ROCHE

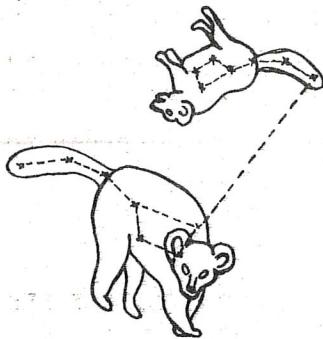
LITCHFIELD RESULTS

The seventy-eighth annual Christmas Bird Count, sponsored by the National Audubon Society, was held in the Litchfield-Pawleys Island area December 29.

This year the 34 observers, two each of whom were from New Jersey, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina, with the rest being from various places in South Carolina, saw and counted 148 species of birds. There were 17,639 individuals sighted.

Notable sightings include these: observers working the ocean and beach area counted 895 Common and 970 Red-Throated Loons, while those working the more inland areas recorded 29 Red-Headed Woodpeckers where none had been recorded last year. From various areas observers also saw an Osprey, a Barn Swallow, a Short-Eared Owl, a Gull-billed Tern, a Purple Sandpiper, two Eastern Wood Pewees, 10 Whistling Swans, and other birds

unusual for this area at this time of year. Five individuals even went out before light, with a tape recorder, to listen for owls. A Great Horned Owl and five Screech Owls were heard and recorded. Some even worked the area until after dark that evening.



Before submitting this month's article, the writer wishes to apologize for an error made in the January issue. Quite unintentionally, the brilliant star in the constellation of Auriga was identified as Vega. The correct name of this star is Capella. Vega, a star of the summer sky, will not appear until June.

Four of the "naked-eye" planets will be in the evening sky during February, 1978. Venus, having recently emerged from behind the sun, may be visible shortly after sunset, possibly by the middle of the month. It will be located low on the western horizon.

By the time it is dark, Mars will be high above the opposite horizon, and at 8:00 p.m., Jupiter will be on the meridian. Because Earth, traveling twice as fast as its red neighbor,

All in all it was an excellent day; sunny and somewhat cool, with very good conditions for viewing through binoculars or telescopes. Everyone enjoyed the chance to renew acquaintances and to talk over birding (and other) experiences. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the day so enjoyable.

THE SKY-WATCHERS'

GUIDE

passes Mars on January 22, Mars now appears to be moving clockwise instead of counter-clockwise. This is known as retrograde motion. During February, Mars will pass from east to west back to Gemini. Then, after that, it will gradually resume its normal passage eastward through the constellations as Earth puts more distance, in the same direction, between them.

Saturn rises shortly after sunset. Since Earth will pass Saturn on February 16, it too, will then start moving in retrograde fashion.

This might be a very good time for Sky-watchers who like to practice their skills at telescopic photography. Surface features on Mars may still be visible, and Saturn with its rings will be brighter than at any time later in the year.

within other dead shells. They make interesting creatures in the aquarium, except that they don't move around much.

For many collectors, the hardest species to find is the Crepidula aculeata (Spiny Slipper Shell). Most collectors only have five or six specimens of this species although they are listed as common in most of the shell books. I have found the Spiny Slipper on sponges that have washed up and on rocks occasionally. This is one of those shells that most of us are on the lookout for while collecting other specimens. The C. aculeata is shaped like the other Slippers except that it has little spines across the top. The inside ledge has a

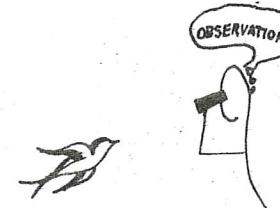
ridge that runs down the middle of it.

All of these shells can be found from the high tide line to very deep water. I have specimens that are of a better quality that came from 70 feet and from 30 fathoms. I was very pleased at the condition of these shells from such a depth.

In searching for the Slipper shells, you will come by many other types of shells. Don't overlook these, as any shell can be a welcome addition to any collection.

Until next time, Happy Shelling!

MAGGI YERGIN



Date	Observation	Location	Observer
Nov. 29	Great Blue Heron	Colonial Lake	Mr. & Mrs. John M. LeCato, Jr.
Dec. 2	Great Blue Heron	Alberta Long Lake	" "
11	11 Canada Geese	Magnolia Gardens	W. Edmund Farrar, Jr.
15	5 Snow Geese 6 Buffleheads	"	" "
20	Purple Finch	Charleston Marina	Susan & Avery Burns
23	Pigeon Hawk	King's Grant	Mrs. Bruce Krucke
	female Northern Oriole	Magnolia Gardens	W. Edmund Farrar, Jr.
	2 female Common Goldeneyes	"	" "

Between 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. on the fifteenth, the February skies appear as a jewel-studded dome overhead. Eight stars of the first magnitude, - or brighter, - are in view, and will slowly proceed westward as the night advances. West of the meridian, Taurus the Bull, containing red Aldebaran, hovers menacingly above Orion, the Hunter, while Orion's dog, Canis Major follows at his heels. The brilliant star, Sirius, is on the meridian. About five degrees east of the "Dog Star", two faint stars at a right angle from Sirius represent the Dog's head, and five degrees west of Sirius, a second magnitude star indicates a front paw. About eight degrees southeast of this Brightest star, a triangle of second magnitude stars form the end of the body, a hind paw, and the tail.

North of the ecliptic, (the imaginary line that runs between the horns of Taurus), the second-brightest star in view shines in the shoulder of Auriga, the Charioteer. This is Capella. Together with Capella, four fainter stars form a five-sided figure. One of the horns of Taurus is diagonally opposite Capella, while two fainter stars to the east and the southeast of Capella represent the head and other shoulder of the Charioteer. The fifth star completing the five-sided figure is located about five degrees northwest of the upper horn of Taurus.

To the east of Auriga,

Gemini, the Twins are approaching the zenith. The brighter of the two is Pollux. When viewed through the telescope, its Twin, Castor is discovered to be a double star. The spectroscope has revealed that each component of the double star is also a double star. Further spectroscopic probing showed that, revolving around this group of stars is yet another pair of double stars! Thus, the less bright member of the Twins, Castor, is actually a system of six stars!

South of Pollux, two stars in close proximity represent Canis Minor, the Lesser Dog. The brighter of these two stars is first magnitude, Procyon.

Well above the eastern horizon, Leo the Lion is climbing into view. The brightest star in this constellation is blue-white Regulus, - the "dot" under the "backwards question-mark". Quite near Regulus, the planet, Saturn shines with a brilliant, yellow glow. Mars, red in color, also drawing closer to Gemini and Jupiter, and vying with Sirius in brilliance, is located on the ecliptic above the club held in Orion's up-stretched arm.

In the northern sky, Polaris, the North Star, may be seen almost exactly between Cassiopeia in the northwest, and the Big Dipper rising in the northeast.

ELIZABETH D. SIMONS



Shell Shocked

by

Maggi Yerger

The next few articles will be for the person wanting to collect live specimens. I will start with the easiest to find and more common shells, and work toward the harder to find specimens. Not all types of shells can be covered as some are so unusual they would be near impossible to find and accessibility to them would be very difficult to the average collector as they are in deep water.

Many things must be kept in mind as a live collector. As we all know, most shells will have an odor to them and the live shells will have the worst if not taken care of promptly and properly. The best method for keeping and learning about mollusks is to set up a salt-water tank to put them in. This can provide hours of entertainment for the entire family. If this idea is out of the question, then be prepared to clean your specimens as soon as you return home. For the type shells we will discuss today, a simple boiling will be fine. However, not all types of shells should be boiled, and I will discuss proper methods of cleaning shells as they are brought up.

Probably the most common shells on our beaches are Slipper shells (genus Crepidula). There are four types which are relatively easy to find on our coast. The best way to identify a slipper is by a ledge on the inside of the shell. This ledge is used to protect the soft digestive system of the animal. Slippers don't get around much, but stay in one place or on one shell for the majority of their life.

The most common of the Slippers is the Crepidula plana (Eastern White Slipper). They are easily identified from the others. The shell is usually found on the inside of other dead shells. It is thin, usually white, and fragile looking. Sometimes it will be covered by a brown periostracum (outer layer). This species will take a form of the shell in which it is attached so in many cases different specimens can have varying shapes.

The two types of Slippers that are often mistaken for each other is the Crepidula fornicata and the C. convexa. Both shells are thicker than the C. plana and have a more definite shape. The C. fornicata (Common Atlantic Slipper) is the largest of all our Slippers. Its average size is one and a half inches. The shell is convex shaped with the edges flattening out lightly. The inside ledge is very obvious and strong. The C. convexa (Convex Slipper Shell) is more rounded than the C. fornicata. Its length is about a half inch.

All of these shells are easily found around rocks or