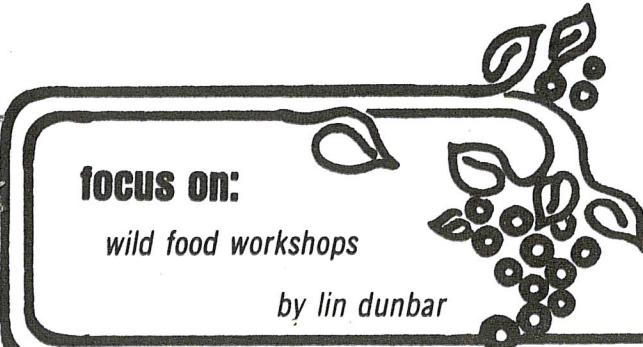


focus on:
wild food workshops
by lin dunbar



Ever wonder whether the claims about wild foods are really valid? Do cattails really taste like asparagus? Are elderberry fritters really good eating?

Find out June 22 and July 20 as the Continuing Education Department of the College of Charleston host two wildfood workshops by Lin Dunbar. Participants will meet at 9:00 am at the

College, spend the morning in the field collecting plants, and return to prepare a wildfood extravaganza! The fee is \$12 which will cover the cost of groceries.

Call 792-5620 to register, or Lin Dunbar, 571-1379, for any questions. Sign up early—participation is limited!

in the court of the spruce grouse

by dave harvey, ellicot city, md

In a boreal forest far, far away, I searched in vain for a glimpse of a local prince of the avian monarchy. A gray jay or a boreal chickadee, would have been delightful but instead I was confronted by pure majesty.

I had received directions, during a telephone conversation, to a local birding hot spot referred to as "Spruce Grouse Lane". I was told to follow the trail down a hill, across a bridge, up a hill to a "T" at the end of the road. At this juncture I could go either direction I wanted. What I was not told was that most of the trail was under water, and what was not was 20 percent grass and 80 percent muck.

I followed the trail as best I could. Several times I had to extricate myself from the ever-clutching muck; I had to scramble around, over, and through fallen trees; I was forever battling the clutches of briars and brambles; all this in a strange and silent boreal world. I trudged along the path keeping an ever-watchful vigil for any avian members of the boreal clan. Twice I glimpsed the tail-end of some unknown bird creature as it quickly and quietly flew deeper into the thick woods, remaining forever a mystery bird.

The sun was relentless, sending small rivulets of perspiration coursing across my body, but the moment I stopped moving the cool Arctic bite of the wind reminded me that this was a boreal wood and not a southern swamp.

After having rested in a small clearing, I started trudging back towards the car. My step was slow,

my head hung with disappointment at the seemingly sparse birdlife. Suddenly, up ahead, a slight movement caught my eye. Immediately I stopped dead in my tracks and slowly lowered myself to a crouch. It was one of the few times in my life that I have done the right thing. The bird, after a momentary pause went back to its feeding. I knew the male spruce grouse (*Dendragapus canadensis*) was black underneath. While this bird looked like a grouse, it was not black underneath. Yet it seemed too gorgeous to be a female (a female bird I mean, ladies).

This bird was a very dark brown overall with a liberal amount of white barring on the underside and up the sides to the wings. It had small red markings above the eyes and a white spot behind the eye. The throat had an orange tinge and the tip of the tail was orange. The bird would pause from its meal, look across the path, fan its tail out (showing the orange tips) then continue eating.

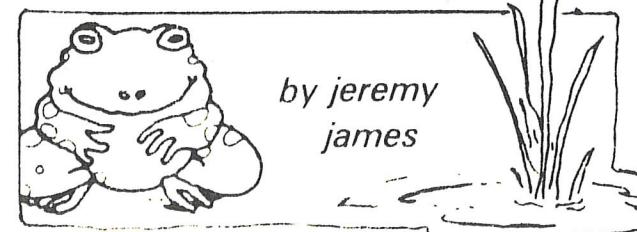
Eventually, I was able to discern a dark shape under the bottom-most branches of a nearby conifer. Majestically he sauntered into the path. There was no doubt; this was the king and the lovely creature across the way was his lady fair. They were indeed the fabled spruce grouse. His mighty chest was jet black, emblazoned with streaks of startling white. These streaks seemed to continually move, as though silently announcing his presence. Above his eyes, two large ruby-like protrusions heralded the front of his crown. It was the black of ebony, laid downward at the back, flared out on the sides like a cobra. It was plain yet

historic documents donated

The Kiawah Island Company has named the University of South Carolina's South Caroliniana Library as the permanent repository for a unique collection of papers relating to the history of the island from 1728 to 1816.

According to Kiawah Island Company President Saleh F. Alzouman, the company felt that the documents belonged in the university library system to benefit all interested South Carolinians. Alzouman also said that it is the responsibility of corporations, organizations, families and individuals to entrust historically significant documents for safekeeping to professional archivists, such as those at the South Caroliniana Library. The seven manuscripts will be maintained by the library in Col, SC for academic study and research.

view from the swamp



by jeremy
james

As some of you may have figured out, in addition to performing as your sometimes columnist, I have been acting as president of CNHS for the past two years. At the last membership meeting I relinquished all the power to the very capable Julian Harrison, talented teacher, author, biologist, herpetologist, and staunch supporter of CNHS for several decades. Amazing, and he is just a young man.

The new officers and board members are all skilled and enthusiastic. I couldn't be more delighted to turn over the helm to such a capable group. I am sure they will get the encouragement and support they truly deserve from you members.

As General Washington, at the end of the long struggle, gave his troops a farewell address warning of the growing strength of the military-industrial complex—no, forget it. That was Eisenhower. I wish to take my leave (of the presidency, not of the swamp) with a few reflections to the past fifth of a decade.

Many high points and much success spring to mind. We have been able to continue our outstanding Edisto Island Sea Turtle project under Debbie Mundell's indefatigable leadership.

It has grown stronger as has the chapter's support of it. Our Adopt-A-Nest campaign has exceeded my expectations, as well it must, since the Center for Environmental Education after years of major funding rightly wishes to turn its resources toward environmental problems in the less developed parts of the world.

Our Children's Film Series, thanks to the Marquette Foundation and Hal Currey's effort and skill, reaches more middle school students than ever. The teacher's reports are glowing. This is all the more pleasing in the face of the general public's and our members' indifference to our Wildlife Film Series. We hope, in reaching a large proportion of the area's impressionable youth, to turn out a few more conservationists, photographers, wildlife lovers, and environmentalists in the years to come.

Everything hasn't been great, of course. Despite some fine meetings and solid field trips, attendance has been lower than I think it should be. I mean, our membership has been growing steadily but the numbers coming to our activities has been static. The cost of our Christmas banquets has edged up, although more slowly than the rate of inflation. I love seeing new faces, but I miss some of the ones I used to see. Going to I'On Swamp and the Bluff is great but where are the swamp slogs and the blackberry chigger trips of yore?

Donna Clark has made great headway with alleviating any membership problems. She now

personalizes a welcome to new members renewals. Mary Neale Berkaw makes mailing *The Lesser Squawk* seem easy and fun. Virginia Beach has increased the chapter sales and built the Birdathon into a well-known and effective fundraiser involving conservation award-winner David Green in the process. Support of the chapter from Terrance Larrimer, Polly Holden, and Carlyle Blakeney at the Audubon regional office has been outstanding. I have been delighted at our move to the Charleston Museum. The Christmas banquets have been festive, well-attended, and warm. Cheryl Phillips continues to put out one of the highest quality newsletters (which you are holding in your hands) of any organization our size. Our presence at the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition grew thanks to Peggy Eppig. Nancy Ryan continues to do wonders with our bird-seed sales. And behind the scenes have been more people than I can thank: Betty O'Connor, Bruce Krucke, Perry Nugent, Charlie Walters, Jo Hutcheson, Henry Dunbar, Marge Humphreys, Will Post, Dana Beach, Grace Yeatman, and Roger Tory Peterson, for instance.

Although I often fear for the state of the nation, the state of the Society reassures me. We are making a difference in the entire lowcountry. Know what I mean, Vern?

contributors commended

by cheryl phillips

Since this issue of the *Squawk* seems destined to be dedicated (as it should be) to those who have donated their time and efforts this year to the Audubon cause, I would like to mention my many contributing columnists:

Lin Dunbar
Dave Harvey
Bruce Krucke
Hal Currey
Will Post
Jullian Harrison
Nancy Ryan

I hope to get commitments from each of these contributors to continue the same fine work in the future that they have so willingly done in the past. Because of their efforts, *The Lesser Squawk* is a publication we can all be proud of.

I have also relied on many others for special

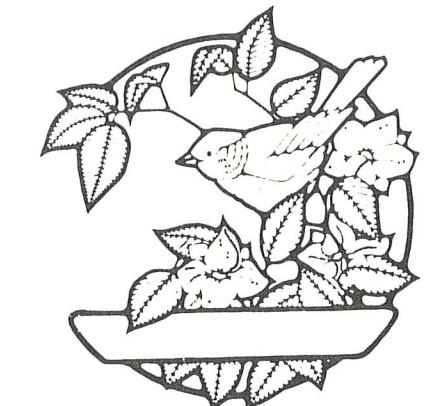
birdathon update

Birdathon day was approaching just as the summer *squawk* went to press. From available information, it can safely be assumed that Birdathon '85 was the best yet.

As always, the success can be attributed to the participants-sponsors and birders. Thanks to all those who pledged generously on behalf of the many birders who roused themselves in the wee hours to scour swamp, field and seashore in search of illusive and not-so-illusive quarry.

Birdathon chairman, Virginia Beach, is to be commended for her superb effort, organization and "brainwork" for this event. We owe an added debt of gratitude this year to the media (and to Virginia for alerting them). Lynne Langley did her usual fine job with article and photo in the News and Courier. WKCN radio interviewed David Green and several other birdathon participants as did Betsy Green who featured the motley-looking CNHS Birdathon group on three WCIV *Around Town* segments. Many thanks to the media for all the great coverage!

Just a reminder; if you haven't sponsored your favorite birder, it's not too late to do so. If you have sponsored a birder, please be prompt in fulfilling your promise. CNHS will use your donations for much needed educational and conservation programs. Thanks!



observations

by perry nugent



Date Observation Location Observers

4/6 Many Prothonotary Warblers Francis Beidler Forest P. Nugent, C. Walters, D. Abbott

1 Prairie Warbler "

1 N. Waterthrush "

Many Hooded Warblers "

Many Prothonotary Warblers "

Many Swainson's Warblers "

2 N. Waterthrushes "

1 Ovenbird "

Several Kentucky Warblers "

2 Rusty Blackbirds "

2 Long Billed Curlews Ft. Johnson

4 Swallow Tailed Kites Middleton Gardens

1 a, 2 i Bald Eagles "

2 Pectoral Sandpipers "

2 Rusty Blackbirds "

3 Swallow Tailed Kites "

2 Bald Eagles "

1 Painted Bunting "

1 Painted Bunting "

5 Mottled Ducks Kinlock Plantation

5 Soras "

4 Long Billed Dowitchers "

20 Black Necked Stilts "

1 Purple Gallinule "

6 Wood Storks "

300 Whimbrels Folly Beach Causeway

1 Wormeating Warbler Patriot's Point

1 Bewick's Wren "

2 Saw Whet Owls I'on Swamp

1 Black Billed Cuckoo "

comments by perry

Bewick's Wren: Charlie Walters observed a wren in good light with 10x binoculars at Patriot's Point. He described the bird as white below, tail with white on edges and long white eyebrow. Song same as Peterson tape.

Saw Whet Owls: Charlie Walters had 2 saw whets answer his tapes in I'on Swamp near the Clayfield and I'on Rd. intersection. This is the same area where Steve Compton and I heard some several years ago.

Red Knots: There have been large concentrations of red knots in various plumages from winter to fall breeding on the south end of Folly Beach. On April 28, there was a dredge in the Folly River pumping sand on the south beach. It seemed to

attract the birds.

Philadelphia vireo: This vireo was observed by Perry Nugent and Nelson Taylor as it bathed in water that was coming from an artesian well into a wooded impoundment on Witewood Canal in I'on Swamp. Through 7x binoculars in good light, they saw the uniform olive back, head and tail which contrasted with an off white tinged yellow breast and throat and a paler belly. A dark line ran through the eye from the bill and contrasted with the grayish white eye line. The vireo bill was obvious. From 50 to 100 feet, we observed this pale phase bird for about one minute.

Tennessee Warbler: This bird was seen in a tree about 7:15 a.m. in good light through 20x scope

Date Observation Location Observers

4/28 1 Wood Stork I'on Swamp C. Walters, G. Barnes

8583 Red Knots S. Folly Bch. P. & K. Nugent

35 Sandwich Terns N. Folly Bch. "

1 Painted Bunting S. Folly Bch. "

3 Painted Buntings Patriot's Point "

1 Indigo Bunting "

1 Yellow Breasted Chat "

1 Scarlet Tanager Edisto Is. D. & V. Beach

1 Scarlet Tanager Hwy 61 P. Nugent

1 a. Bald Eagle Moncks Corner E. Phillips

2 a. i. Bald Bluff Plantation Many Observers

2 Redheaded Woodpeckers "

Many Bluebirds "

1 Yellow Warbler "

1 Black Throated Warbler "

4 Kentucky Warblers "

Several Blue Grosbeaks "

Several Indigo Buntings "

3 Whip-poor-wills I'on Swamp P. Nugent, G. Barnes

2 Wormeating Warblers P. Nugent

1 Tennessee Warbler "

1 Yellow Warbler "

1 Magnolia Warbler "

2 Black Throated Warblers "

Many Kentucky Warblers "

400 Yellow Breasted Chats Many Observers

435 Hooded Warblers "

1 Philadelphia Vireo "

1 Scarlet Tanager "

arrivals

Date Species

6/1 Scissor-tailed Flycatcher

6/14 Sooty Tern

6/16 Roseate Spoonbill

6/17 Bridled Tern

7/4 Yellow Warbler

7/7 Tree Swallow

7/8 Solitary Sandpiper

7/10 Lesser Yellowlegs

7/11 Bank Swallow

7/20 Knot

7/28 Roseate Tern

mid Upland Sandpiper

late Pectoral Sandpiper

Black Tern

American Redstart

Piping Plover

Black-billed Cuckoo

Blue-winged Teal

Stilt Sandpiper

Virginia Rail

Cliff Swallow

Peregrine Falcon

Sora Rail

Wilson's Snipe

Alder Flycatcher

Pintail

Blue-winged Warbler

Black Duck

Greater Shearwater

Whip-poor-will

Long-billed Curlew

Veery

Cedar Waxwing

Merlin

White-rumped Sandpiper

Common Tern

departures

Date Species

6/1 Baird's Sandpiper

6/2 Sora Rail

6/3 Northern Phalarope

6/4 Solitary Sandpiper

6/5 Horned Grebe

6/6 Black-poll Warbler

Blue-winged Teal

American Wigeon

Shoveler

Avocet

Sharp-tailed Sparrow

Surf Scoter

6/9 Bonaparte's Gull

6/10 White-rumped Sandpiper

Black-billed Cuckoo

Cedar Waxwing

Knot

6/18 Gannet

Tree Swallow

6/19 Lesser Scaup

6/22 Common Tern

6/23 Red-breasted Merganser

6/25 Snow Bunting

6/28 Marbled Godwit

The following have been seen on rare occasions during the summer. June: Western Grebe, Sooty Shearwater, Red Phalarope, White-winged Scoter, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Bobolink, Ruddy Duck, Gray Kingbird, and Gadwall. July: Yellow-rumped Warbler, Cory's Shearwater, Common Scoter, Baird's Sandpiper. August: Great White Heron. Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

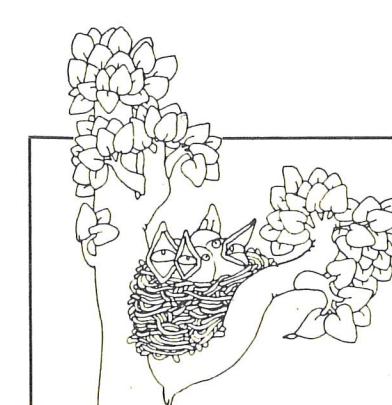
This column is primarily a guide for C.N.H.S. members although the dates should apply to all migratory birds of the coastal plain and many over the whoe state. It has been a feature of the Lesser Squawk for many years and a number of the dates are from observations of our members. There seems to be much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



Once again, this month my backyard was enlarged. I spent a week in Hoisdorf, Germany, a very small rural village near Hamburg in the northern part. My hosts had a wonderful backyard for my birding: a grassy area with apple trees and a fish pond bordered by a good hedge. There was a large variety of European "tits" in the garden-two of the nicest being the coal and the blue tits. They looked a lot like chickadees but had yellow breasts divided by a vertical black stripe. Their backs were bluish-gray. There were also lots of English sparrows and beautiful rust and blue chaffinches. Beyond the garden was a public footpath and then a small farm field with low grass where I saw six kinds of crows and a grackle-like amsel. The magpie was striking in black and white. There were two partly gray crows one all black, the rook and huge raven. Beyond the field lay a large lake which was "natur schutz"-a protected area. There I saw nesting mute swans, osprey, tufted ducks, black terns, great crested and red necked grebe, gray geese, Canada geese, mallards, pochards, coot, lapwings, red throated swallows, goldeneye ducks, huge wood pigeons, and the beautiful (red, white and blue) jay. I also took some marvelous walks in the surrounding farms and woods. Another highlight of our trip was a visit to the Vogel(bird) Park in Walsrode. It's said to be the best bird collection in the world, quite fabulous, especially the green house aviary where I walked among the birds.

There have been some interesting garden birds in our area this month. Nancy and Don Wilson in Summerville had the pleasure of watching a rose breasted grosbeak making good use of their bird bath in late April. The Kushubars and Hammonds in Kings Grant both had orchard orioles using their hummingbird feeders. The Eppigs have had a Canada goose! Mary Shaw on the Isle of Palms has a pair of painted buntings at her feeder.

Don't feel guilty if you keep your feeders going in the summer. Both you and the birds will enjoy it and studies have shown that birds don't become dependent on our extra food supplies. One thing that's always fun to see, especially if your feeder is stocked, is the huge baby birds fluttering after the parents still demanding to be fed. Of course, keep your hummingbird feeders cleaned and filled. See you in the fall! Bruce Krucke, 101 Old Tavern, Summerville, 29483, phone: 871-2039.



bird seed available

Remember—keep your feeder well stocked! Hatchlings are making voracious demands on their parents for "fast food" and fledglings make great entertainment at the feeder. CNHS still has a selection of bird seed available for spring and summer feeding. Call Grace Yeatman to place your order—556-9054.