

# ... WETLANDS (FROM PAGE 1)

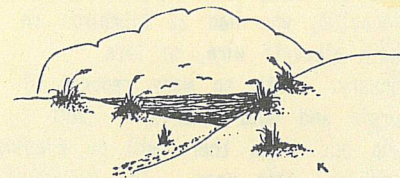
Inland from the coastal counties, management of wetlands changes dramatically. The primary regulatory agency is the U.S. Army Corps of engineers, using the federal regulations. These are based on the Federal Clean Water Act, which is mainly concerned with water quality, and the Federal Rivers and Harbors Act that oversees navigational interests. These regulations are greatly weakened by 26 "general permits" which allow exemptions for activities which they determined had only "minimal adverse impact." The most notorious of these is the 26th, which effectively exempts isolated wetlands of less than 10 acres from any regulation. These "general permits" are scheduled to be reissued in 1992 -with some improvements. The Clean Water Act will also be up for reauthorization soon, and many organized attempts to weaken it are expected. At the state level, S.C.DHEC administers the S.C. Pollution Control Act, which is concerned with water quality. Unfortunately, a lot can be done to a wetlands that does not degrade the measured quality. The State Budget and Control Board controls the state interest in navigable waters, and the S.C. Water

Resources Commission administers this program for the. These regulations have extended to conservation and environmental impact, however, many wetlands we're concerned about are not navigable.

The results of these regulations is that wetland fills and discharges into wetlands that could affect water quality are monitored. Draining, flooding, hydrologic alterations and placement of structures or obstructions in wetlands is not regulated. Construction and activity on land adjacent to wetlands, which can result in the destruction of the wetland, is not regulated. Public notice and the opportunities for public input into the permitting process is very limited. Last year Governor Campbell sponsored a Freshwater Wetlands Forum to address these issues. Unfortunately, the forum was dominated by business and development interests to the point that any recommendations were filled with exemptions and resulted in little improvement. A number of freshwater wetland regulation bills were introduced in the legislature last year, but no action was taken. So far this year 2 bills have been

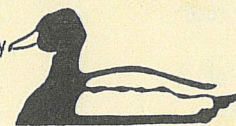
filed, and at least 2 more are expected. DHEC and the Water Resources Commission are both lobbying hard to become the administering agency of any resulting law.

This is where we come in. There were 36 attendees from Audubon chapters around the state at the "Save Our Wetlands Workshop." Our goal is to provide an organized statewide influence into the enactment of a strong freshwater protection law. A wetland watch program will also be established to monitor the effectiveness of the law. Audubon offers a program where individuals with minimal scientific background can identify and document wetlands. There is a need to begin protecting wetlands before developers reach the point of submitting permits to alter them. We will also push for re-authorization of an effective Federal Clean Water Act next year. Anyone who would like to help with the wetlands team please call me at (556-7430).

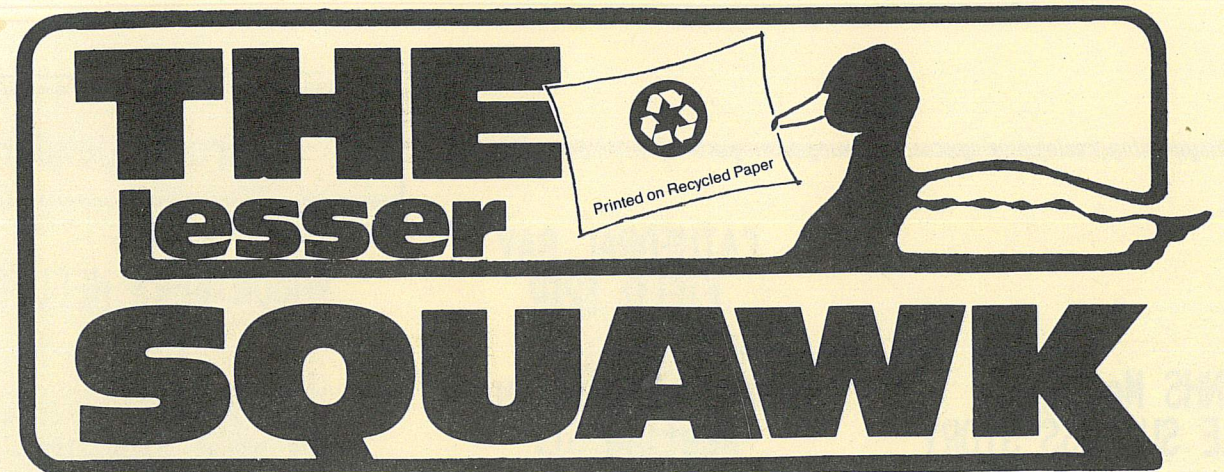


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## THOSE WONDERFUL WETLANDS

Hayes Patterson

**S.C. AUDUBON COUNCIL - WETLANDS WORKSHOP-** Eleven eager participants rose before the crack of dawn and drove to Columbia to represent CNHS at the S.C. Audubon Council's Save Our Wetlands Workshop on February 9. The workshop provided a comprehensive overview of current wetlands regulations and their effectiveness, upcoming legislative and regulatory proposals and guidance on how we can influence the whole process. Presently, wetland modifications are regulated by permitting procedures administered by a number of state and federal agencies. Projects are evaluated only when someone requests a permit to do something that might impact a wetland. Evaluations are based on laws and regulations which have evolved over the years as a result of lessons learned from past mistakes. The process can seem a labyrinth for both conscientious developers who want to modify wetlands and environmentalists who want to preserve them. Just talking to the pertinent agencies can require a whole new vocabulary.

In recent years there has been a major shift in policies at the federal level. The value of wetlands has been more widely recognized. They're not just swamps anymore!! The regulations are being revised to take more of a systems approach - identifying the functions of individual wetlands and evaluating proposals by their impact on these functions. The federal agencies have agreed on a common definition of wetlands which is workable and enforceable. They are currently mapping all the wetlands in the country, so that management can be dealt with up front and not piecemeal as permits are processed. Unfortunately, the effectiveness of regulation at the federal level is limited. There are a number of exemptions built into the current laws and the lack of funding makes policing impossible. Achievement of our often stated "no net loss" policy will require management at the local level. South Carolina made significant progress in wetland management in the coastal counties with the passage of the Coastal Zone Management Act and the Beachfront Management Act. The legislature recognized the value of this resource by law, and provided for the protection of the public's interest in preserving these wetlands. They also provided a central regulating agency, the Coastal Council, where a developer can go to learn exactly what is expected of him. Most importantly, they require public notice and input throughout the permitting process. This critical equalizing element gives the concerns of average citizens equal footing with well financed presentations of paid consultants.

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Sat. Mar. 16

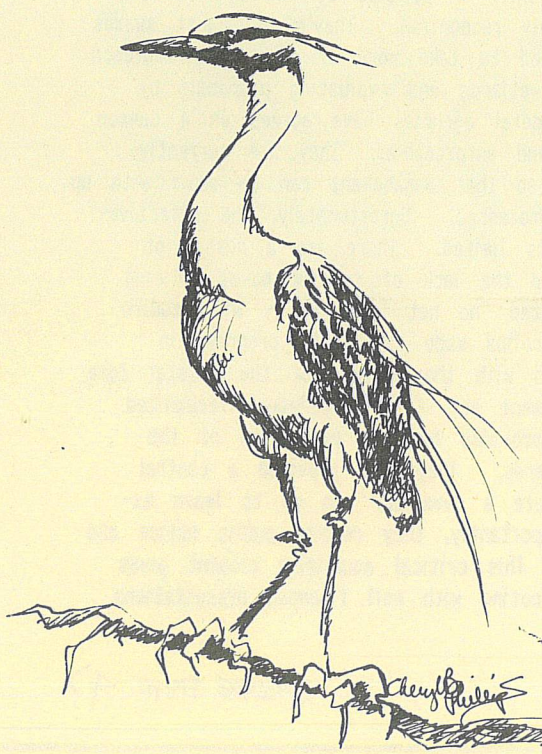
Charleston Museum  
Meeting St.  
8 a.m.

CNHS Meeting  
TURTLE SUCCESS STORY

Tues. Mar. 12  
MUSC Psych. Bldg.  
President Street  
8 p.m.

1990 proved to be a very successful year for the turtles nesting on Edisto Island Beaches. Mr. Frank Bremmer will share his report on the Edisto Island Turtle Project, including slides and lots of turtle info.

Members are encouraged to bring a photograph or 60 second video to share with the society.



## HERON UPDATE

Carolyn Burrington

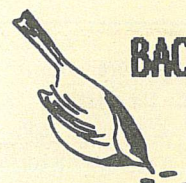
The first Yellow-crowned Night Herons reported for 1991 were seen at Waterfront Park on February 6 by Carolyn Burrington and Danny Burbage. It will be interesting to see how many return to Washington Park to nest. Pris Massenberg, Wildlife Technician with South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department at Fort Johnson, will be conducting a formal study under the guidance of Dr. Julian Harrison at the College of Charleston. She will be collecting data on the population density and nesting ecology of the herons in order to provide a management tool for the City of Charleston. If

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

CNHS has been asked by the U.S. Forest Service to conduct breeding bird surveys in the Francis Marion National Forest. Starting on March 15, volunteers are needed to cover 8-12 mile routes. Four routes are in the Wambaw district and 4 in the Witherbee district. This will involve stopping every 1/2 mile and recording all birds that can be identified by sight and/or ear in a 5 minute time period. The survey will run through June 1. All birders are asked to participate. For more information contact Don Watts at 797-6783.

Don also reports that 24 bluebird houses have been put up at McAlheny property and the road trimmed back. The work crew consisted of Don Watts, Joe Grange, Bobbin, David and Gilbert Huff, Dave and Cindy Winston and Mac McMurphy.

anyone sees Yellow-crowned Night Herons on the peninsula, nesting or feeding, please contact Pris at 762-5030. Dr. Will Post, Curator of Ornithology at the Charleston Museum, is planning to do some studies on Human Interaction with the herons in Washington Park. Both these studies should prove very interesting, as the more known about the herons, the easier it will be to protect them. Anyone wishing to see the herons in Washington Park can do so between the end of February and June. Yellow-crowns don't appear to be that plentiful! Anyone visiting Hampton Park can get a good look at a pair of nesting Great Horned Owls.



# BACKYARD BIRDER

*Bruce Krucke*

Remember the Lasernas who are just building their yard list? They only have about 35, but the newest is wild turkey! Lucky Lasernas! Dan Atkins lives on a double lot in the Springfield area, - one lot is just for birds. He's featuring goldfinches recently. They are attracted to the special niger feeders he made from empty soda bottles. He puts a perching dowel through the neck of the bottle, adds pecking holes above it on either side, bends a coat hanger into a loop to stab into the sides of the bottle near the bottom and hangs it upside down by the loop. Dan counted over 80 goldfinches at one time. He also has good luck keeping squirrels off standing feeders by greasing the poles with vaseline. He renews it every 3 weeks. The interesting high count for the month goes to Bobby and Sally Faulkner in Ridgeville, who had 22 bluebirds on their electric wire, in late January. With so many reports of purple and gold finches, I can't help but think there will be evening grosbeaks this year. The unusually warm weather up north is against us, but a March blizzard would do the trick!

Last month your assignment was to  
clean your bluebird houses. This

month you should put out your hummingbird feeders. Wash them with a bleach solution to make sure all mold and mildew is gone. The mixture is made by briefly boiling 4 cups of water with 1 cup of sugar, cool it and store in the refrigerator. Hang your feeders near where they were last year - hummers will come to the exact spot and find it easily. If you're putting hummingbird feeders out for the first time, put a plant with red flowers nearby, or put a red bow on the feeder - hummers apparently are really attracted to red.

Did you know that several species of hummingbirds reuse their nests from year to year? Our Ruby-throated Hummingbird of the east is one of these species. More hummer trivia: A hummingbird's heart beats up to 1200 times per minute. The ruby throat beats its wings 50- 70 times per second. A human expending energy at the same rate would need to evaporate 100 pounds of perspiration per hour to keep the skin below the boiling point. The smallest hummingbird weighs about 1/10 of an ounce. A hummingbird, a starling (20 times heavier) and a Canada Goose (1000 times heavier) all have maximum speeds of 50 to 56 mph. Because the hummer uses such extraordinary energy for its size, it requires an enormous amount of food relative to its size, and more often. A hummingbird the size of a man would require 155,000 calories in the same time period to survive, or a man would have to eat 3/0

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pounds of potatoes a day to function like a hummingbird!

Having as many flowers as possible, with successive blooming is very important for hummingbirds. Here are some good hummingbird plants: honeysuckle, wild columbine, trumpet creeper, hibiscus, cardinal flower, bee balm, rose of sharon, pinks, jewelweed, red bud, clematis, bleeding heart and fox glove. Hanging baskets, window boxes or pots of impatiens, geraniums, fuschias, nasturtiums, petunias, phlox and nicotina will attract hummers. Most of these flowers are variations of red (which bees do not see), have no attracting scent and are pendulant or trumpet shaped without platform petals, so bees, moths, and butterflies don't compete for the nectar. Hummingbirds also gather insects, and will drink sap and take insects from sapsucker holes, especially when feeding young. Hummingbirds have been found to migrate just after sapsuckers, before flowers are in bloom, using this food source.

Watch for interesting migratory species and let me know! Bruce Krucke, 7352 Toogoodoo Rd., Yonges >[s]land, SC 29449.

