

## unusual observations by Pete Laurie

6 Nov	3 Snow Geese	Johns Island	P. Laurie
10 Nov	5 Snow Geese	Bushy Park	P. Watts
30 Nov	1 Wh.-crowned sparrow	Folly Beach	D. & D. Forsythe
1 Dec	210 Am. Avocets	Savannah Spoil Area	D. & D. Forsythe
			J. & P. Metze
5 Dec	1 Bald Eagle	James Island	M. Levison
7 Dec	1 Snow Goose	Brittlebank Park	D. Forsythe
26 Dec	1 Western Tanager*	Goose Creek	D. Watts
6 Jan	1 Loggerhead Shrike	Folly Beach	D. Goldstein
11 Jan	1 Painted Bunting**	James Island	B. Tucker
12 Jan	1 Western Tanager***	Johns Island	P. Laurie

\* Don Watts had a fall plumage male Western Tanager eating sunflower seeds at his feed for several days. Several other birders also observed this bird.

\*\*Brenda Tucker reported an adult male Painted Bunting at her feeder on James Island beginning on January 11. The bird was still visiting the feeder on January 15.

\*\*\*I saw a female Western Tanager eating privet hedge berries in my yard on the morning of January 12. The bird was olive green with prominent yellow wing bars and the "saddle back" as described in Peterson (1980). I watched the bird at 30 feet with 7X glasses for 10 minutes.

Pete Laurie - 750 Copperhead Trail, Johns Island, SC, 29455. Work phone -762-5076. Home phone -559-2046.

### SERENDIPITY

by Pat Leonard

*Searching for a golf ball in the woods,  
I looked up and there he stood,  
A young buck of perhaps a year  
Gazing at me without fear.  
His dark, limpid eyes met mine and we  
Stood staring at each other endlessly  
Until at last a word was spoken  
And the spell forever broken.  
Alarmed, he bounded off;  
My attention returned to golf.*

fr. pg. 3 (birder)

Bitter cold is predicted for mid January. Maybe the feeder activity will pick up. Hope so. Let me know what you get! Bruce W. Krucke, 7352 Toogoodoo Rd., Yonkers Island, SC, 29449. 889-6191

### CYPRESS GARDENS DAY

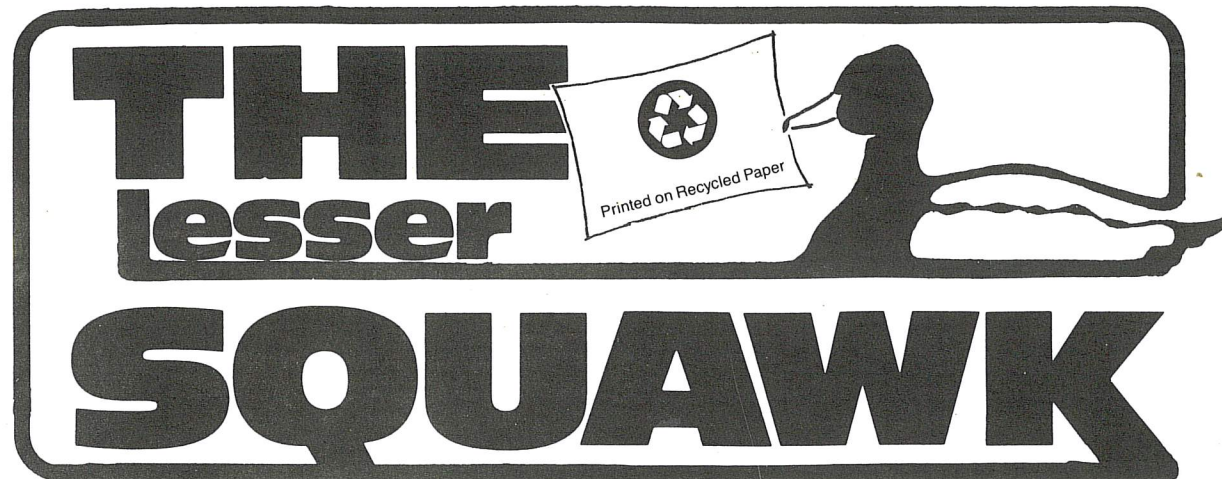
Watch for details in the next issue of your SQUAWK concerning a day of birding and just "hanging out" at Cypress Gardens for CNHS members. Saturday April 4 we are planning bird walks to be led by Pete Laurie and Cheryl Phillips. There will be coffee and donuts for the "early" birders.

Charleston Natural History Society  
P.O. Box 504  
Charleston, S.C. 29402

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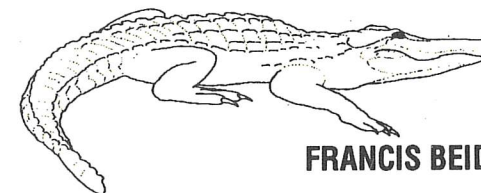
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## SWAMP NOTES

NEWS FROM

FRANCIS BEIDLER FOREST by Mike Dawson

You work in a what?! That is the usual response I get when telling people that I work in a swamp. Their expression is invariably accompanied by that little sneering lip curl, that translates into "ooh, yuck!" That lip curl says a lot. It tells me that the individual is conjuring up images of slimy, stagnant water with big glorpy bubbles popping; neck deep quicksand; snakes dangling from every tree (89% of them poisonous); clouds of mosquitoes; rank odors; and Lizard Man, Swamp Thing or other swamp monsters lurking in the shadows. You know what I mean, the "Hollywood Swamp!"

Patiently, I explain that swamps are not necessarily so objectionable, and that they are, in fact, extremely valuable to both people and wildlife. I let them know that swamps are being abused and destroyed at an alarming rate, and explain that swamps that happen to be nasty are only that way because people have messed them up. Afterwhich I usually get the double raised eyebrow look, which translates into . "Yea, right, so go play in your precious swamp you bonehead and leave me alone."

If you happen to be one of those skeptics who consider me a bit touched to love working in a swamp, I would like to invite you to visit my swamp and see for yourself. I would like to tell you that it is the National Audubon Society's Francis Beidler Forest in Four Holes Swamp, and that there is a boardwalk trail and nature center that allows you to see the swamp with dry feet. I would like to tell you that Beidler Forest contains the largest remaining stand of virgin Cypress swamp forest in the world, complete with 1000 year old trees! I would like to tell you all of this, but I won't. That would be too much like a self-serving advertisement and not the highly refined and educational literary treatise I intended this column to be. Hey, put those eyebrows down!!

Well anyway, if you live in the Low Country, you live near a swamp. In the coming months I hope to use this column to share Four Holes Swamp with you . how it works, who lives here, what threats it faces, what good it is, and why we bother protecting it. I'll share interesting wildlife stories that I've experienced here (everything from mating otters to close encounters of the alligator kind.) I'll also discuss some of the cultural history of swamps, areas that are a big part of our heritage.

Enough of this introductory stuff, let's get started with our sojourn together, the path of "swamp enlightenment," if you will. Just what is the definition of a swamp anyway?? Probably the simplest and easiest definition is that of a "flooded forest." The water can be fresh or salt, the trees can be any number of species, but ALL swamps have the combination of those two elements. I can fine tune the definition a bit. Many swamps experience seasonal spells when it is entirely possible to be bone dry. It is probably more appropriate to call a swamp, "trees in the water part of the year." Don't confuse a swamp with a marsh, however. A marsh is "flooded grassland" and a swamp is "flooded forest." Two very different and important wetland ecosystems that are common in the Low Country.

For a better view of the swamp come vist me at Beidler Forest.



## FEB. Calendar

**CNHS FIELD TRIP**  
**SANTEE WILDLIFE REFUGE**  
**Charleston Museum**  
**February 23**  
**7:30 am**

This trip will be led by Dennis Forsythe. Waterfowl and other species will be noted at the Refuge. A stop by a sod farm is also possible. Plan for all day - bring lunch. Call Rhet Wilson at 571-4304 for more info.

## EDISTO CANOE TRIPS

Don Watts will lead monthly canoe trips on the Edisto starting in February. Dates to make a note of are: Feb. 23 - March 22- April 5- May 17. The \$10 fee includes equipment and guide. Don suggests you bring a lunch and change of clothes. To register or for further info call Don at 797-6783

## 1992 OBServ Birding Tours

Dennis Forsythe will lead the following birding tours in 1992. If you are interested please call Dennis at 795-3996:

**Lake Erie Migrant Trap Weekend - May 14-17** -Spring migration at its best - flycatchers, vireos, warblers, and much more.

**Southeastern Arizona Fiesta - July 9 -18 - seeking trogons, hummingbirds, Roadrunners, Red-faced warblers, and other SE Arizona birds - plus a rarity chase, if one is available.**

**Chan Chich Lodge, Belize** - Aug. 1- 8 - about 200 species of Neotropical birds, including: toucans, trogons, antbirds, Howler Monkeys and more -we will stay at the spectacular Chan Chich Lodge based in the plaza of a Mayan Temple with over 9 miles of well-maintained trails in the 250,000 acre Rio Bravo Jaguar Preserve.

## WEDNESDAY WALKS

Old Santee Canal State Park is offering guided nature walks on the last Wednesday of each month from January through May - from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. The park naturalist will lead discovery walks as the park turns from winter into spring. Call Carol Moore at 899-5200 for more information and to register.

On the second Thursday of each month bring a bag lunch and meet at the new interpretive center at Old Santee Canal State Park for the "Curator's Choice". Topics will vary from recycling to ospreys. Call 899-5200 for more info!

When on the boardwalk at Old Santee Canal State Park look for the Great Horned Owl that is nesting in the Osprey nest!!

**CNHS MEETING  
ASSIGNMENT EARTH  
February 11  
8:00 pm  
MUSC Psych. Aud.**

Cindy Winston is sponsoring this musical presentation about environmental issues by students from Bravo Brentwood, directed by Mary Anne Williams.

## BEAR ISLAND INVITATION

The Columbia Audubon chapter is going to Bear Island in the ACE Basin on February 15 and invites interested CNHS members to join them. Meet the group at Woods Bros. Store on Hwy. 17 - 9 am. Call Rhett Wilson at 571-4304 for more info.



## Success of Field Trips

*by Dennis Forsythe*

Following is a brief summary of successful CNHS field trips.



**September 15, 1991 - Savannah NWR and the Savannah Corps of Engineers Spoil Site in Jasper County.**

I met 8 adventurous people at 0700 hours at Shopper's Port - Hwy 17 S and they headed for the Savannah NWR, arriving at about 0915 hours. Our first stop was at some deep water ponds along HWY 17, where our best birds were some lingering Purple Gallinules. We spend the rest of the morning in the Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive section of the Savannah NWR where we saw a selection of migrants in the Oak Hammocks, including: Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Kingbird, Veery, White-eyed, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed Vireos, Northern Parula, Yellow, Prairie, Palm, Black-and-white and American Redstart Warblers, Blue Grosbeaks, Indigo and Painted Buntings.

In the afternoon we met Tom Smith of Savannah at the Corps of Engineers' spoil site. He led us on a tour of this large, exciting birding spot where our target birds were a group of Roseate Spoonbills that had been seen there during the summer. We did not see the spoonbills, but saw large numbers of puddle ducks and shore birds, including: American Avocets and 4 Wilson's Phalaropes.

### October 13, 1991 - Charleston City Parks Field Trip

I led a birding trip of the Charleston City parks on October 13 in conjunction with Pris Massenburg's talk at the Society's previous Tuesday night meeting concerning the Yellow-crowned Night Herons in Washington Park. I knew the trip was going to be good when Donna and I got up before dawn and could hear hundreds of migrants, chiefly Swainson's Thrushes.

We started the trip at Waterfront Park just before dawn. Our group was treated to a beautiful sunrise and the typical harbor birds, such as Laughing Gulls, Brown Pelicans, egrets, and Clapper Rails. Completely unexpected was a first year male Yellow-headed Blackbird which was feeding on the lawn with Boat-tailed Grackles. Everyone got an excellent view before the bird flew up the Cooper River and out of sight.

Next we walked to Washington Park. We saw no Yellow-crowned Night Herons, but saw a definite migrant - a Scarlet Tanager! We drove to Brittlebank Park, but did not stay long as the "Battle of the Bands" was to begin at noon. We saw the usual - but also had migrant Yellow Warblers. The field trip ended at Hampton Park with lunch, and where the expected species were laced with interesting migrants such as: Eastern Wood Pewees, Red-eyed Vireos, Scarlet Tanagers and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks.



## CONSERVATION CORNER *by Hayes Patterson*

**WETLANDS** - The comment period on the wetland delineation manual ended on Dec. 17 with over 20,000 comment letters being received by the EPA. Reports are that the letters were overwhelmingly against the proposed changes by a ratio of about 20 to 1. The results of the field testing by the governments' own interagency testing teams were finally made public and were uniformly negative. These teams consisted of representatives from the Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Soil Conservation Service. Their reports document that the proposed changes, as written, lack scientific credibility to accurately identify wetlands and are not usable for delineating wetland boundaries. You would think that the White House might take the hint and reconsider these changes, but the last word from the Audubons' Washington office is that the administration intends to implement them anyway. Efforts for implementation will most likely be put on hold until after the elections so as not to conflict with a pro-environmental political image. Bills are being introduced in Congress to require an independent scientific review of the delineation manual. Meanwhile, the National Academy of Sciences issued a report calling, not just for a no further net loss of wetlands, but for an accelerated national effort to restore damaged wetlands at a pace that would result in a net gain of approximately 10 million acres of wetlands by the year 2010.

**SC COASTAL COUNCIL-** An appeal of last years ruling by the SC Supreme Court that the state does not owe an Isle of Palms property owner, D.H. Lucas, compensation for the Coastal Council's denial of his permit request to build 2 homes on his beachfront property will be heard by the US Supreme Court this year. The outcome of this case could have a major impact of local, state and federal government regulations that restrict property use without compensating the owner. Health and environmental regulations, land use and zoning requirements and even local tree ordinances could all require major revisions or massive funding to be enforceable. The Bush administration has filed a "friend of the court" brief in support of the Lucas appeal, urging the court to set aside the SC decision which denied the compensation.

## FRANCIS MARION NATIONAL FOREST - The Forest Service has

**FOREST** - The Forest Service has published four summary alternatives for the proposed forest plan revision. One of these is basically a continuation of the present plan. The other three all tend to increase wildlife and recreational uses and utilize increased timber rotation ages, but with small size pulp remaining the primary timber product. Red-cockaded Woodpecker management has a major impact on all four proposals, with the three alternatives creating Habitat Management Areas (HMAs) to promote breeding between isolated woodpecker colonies. HMAs prescribe vegetative management practices that should provide interconnecting corridors of preferred habitat between colony sites. Red-cockaded Woodpecker management practices are becoming a major issue with the timber industry in the southeast. Timber industry activists working on the Spotted Owl debate in the northwest have announced that the Red-cockaded management practices are going to be their next target. They are concerned about both the impact on access to timber on National Forests and the potential subsequent impact on silvicultural practices required on private forests. Interestingly, the pre-Hugo management of the Francis Marion is frequently cited as the most successful Red-cockaded Woodpecker management program, and the only National Forest that has fully implements the recovery plan which was developed in 1985. It is succeeding modifications to the 1985 plan by the Forest Service that is generating the most controversy.

# BACK YARD BIRDER

*Bruce Krucke*

You're not the only one with not many birds at your feeders. I'm getting complaints from everyone. Dave Harvey reports that the feeders in Maryland and Texas are way down in numbers and species too. Van Atkins in the Springfield section of West Ashley had an interesting report of 20 to 30 goldfinches and just as many house finches. He's had Pine Siskin and White-breasted Nuthatch, and has a mockingbird eating his suet. A Sharp-shinned Hawk hit his door trying for a finch. Van reports many, many birds around the headwaters of Rantowles Creek, where he fishes—even turkeys.

The Taylors in McClellanville report big flocks of robins and cedar waxwings feeding on the American and Yaupon (cassena) hollies. Don Watts in Goose Creek has had goldfinches also, but the exciting thing is a Western Tanager - a rare thing here in the East - that's been put on the Hotline so people can see it. Probably it will be gone by the time this is printed, although one stayed at my mother's house in Virginia Beach for nearly two months. Over 200 people came to see it and it didn't disappoint a single one - appearing every time.

Some article from Cornell told that most people would have a bird bath rather than a feeder if they were forced to choose, feeling that the water attracts more birds than food. During the brief cold we had before Christmas, I had a robin, 6 bluebirds and 3 Yellow-rumped Warblers at the bird bath at once.

Teddy Schuler from upstate, who is on the Board of the Carolina Bird Club, was visiting Edisto in early January and called to tell there was a Glaucous Gull at Bay Point. I went down and didn't get to see it, but they saw it several more times. It was a second year bird - they had wonderful views with binoculars and their new Christmas-present "scope from about 30 yards. I'm going to try again as it would be a life bird for me. While there we did see ground dove - they've been rather scarce lately.

Early February is the time to be sure your bluebird houses and purple martin apartments are cleaned and debugged. You can now order a cassette of an hour of male purple martins morning flight songs to attract birds to your houses. Call me if you want the address.

Hint of the month: Hang the empty peanut butter jar from a branch or the eaves. The wrens, chickadees, etc., will love cleaning it out. One man reported that after it was clean, a wren raised three broods in it!!

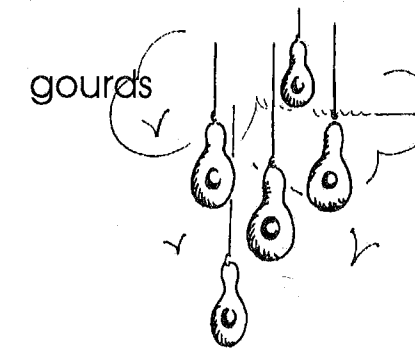
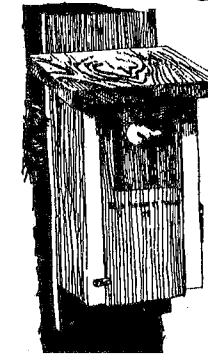
It's the law: May a person get a special permit to keep or mount a protected species of bird or animal if it can be proved that it was killed accidentally? Legally, no. Once again, because of the difficulty of enforcement. Unscrupulous people would use this loophole. How can you "prove" the accidental death? Only bona fide public or state scientific, educational or zoological institutions may keep or display protected species, and then only with a permit.



## PROVIDE A HOME FOR THE BIRDS

CNHS has been maintaining the McAlhaney property on the Edisto River since 1987 when it was given to the Society by Mrs. Cleo T. McAlhaney. The property covers 370 acres with 1 1/2 miles along the Edisto River bank. In the past few years Don Watts has been actively working on various projects at the McAlhaney property. The latest project is to provide homes for birds and to raise a little money for things needed to help maintain the property. Don will provide all the labor to build and erect the bird houses on site. Your donations will pay for some materials that have not been donated and the remainder will go toward things that are on the McAlhaney Property wish list. If you would like to be a part of this project, please complete the form on the back of this and mail it with your check (made out to CNHS) to: Don Watts, 9 Clarksville Lane, Goose Creek, SC, 29445 - and Don will build your choice of one of the following:

small song bird



owl box

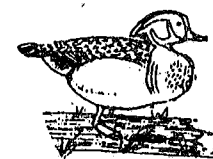
**WANTED:** Small outboard motor needed for boat used in wood duck project.

### OTHER NEEDS:

Tractor - bush hog - various small tools.

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:** For planting trees in conjunction with a Soil Conservation Service program at McAlhaney.

If you can help with any of these or have questions call Don at 797-6783.



## PROVIDE A HOME FOR THE BIRDS

Here's a wonderful opportunity for you to help your favorite birds find homes and at the same time support the CNHS efforts at our McAlhaney Property. With your contribution we will construct a home, especially inscribed with your name or that of a friend, if you wish to make it a gift or a memorial. We will then place the birdhouse in an appropriate location on the McAlhaney property. If you choose, we'll send you a photo (on location) of your birdhouse and inscribe your name on a special plaque on the house. Contributions may be made in any of three ways:

DONORS - Purple Martin gourds.

SPONSORS - A house for bluebirds, chickadees, wrens or other songbirds.

BENEFACTORS - A house for songbirds or larger birds, such as: wood ducks, screech owls or kestrels.

Yes, I'd like to provide a home! (check the desired category)

- ☐ Donors (\$25) Purple Martin Gourds  
☐ Sponsors (\$50) ☐ wrens/chickadees ☐ bluebirds  
☐ Benefactor (\$100) ☐ kestrels/screech owls ☐ wood ducks  
(or either of the above songbirds)



Inscribe as follows: (20 character limit)

This home provided by \_\_\_\_\_

This home in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Send photo of home with inscription on location at the McAlhaney Property to this name and address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



***THE BIRDS AT MCALHANEY THANK YOU!!***