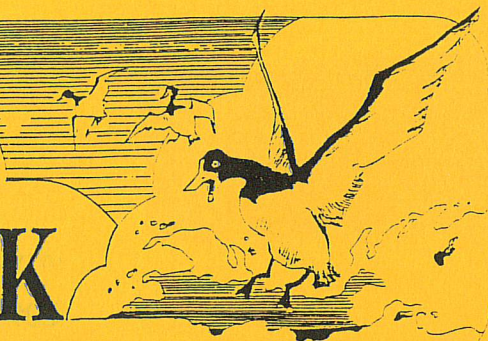


# THE LESSER SQUAWK



## NEWSLETTER OF THE CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

### CHAPTER, NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

#### BACKYARD BIRDER

By **BRUCE KRUCKE**



It's nice to have hummingbirds and painted buntings back. I've heard the orchard orioles too. I've hung gourds in hope of luring purple martins, but haven't had activity yet. I've given up keeping the starlings out of the martin apartments.

There were lots of Canada goose reports. Julia Logan saw the one on Colonial Lake that the paper reported. That same day (4/2) I had two fly very vocally over here and one on 17S near Main Road. On Good Friday we had a flock of about thirty fly over while we waited for our ride for a day's outing at Bull's Island. The new boat over is very nice. The island is very different -- we hadn't been there since Hugo. We saw and heard 71 species of birds, but were disappointed to not see any fox squirrels, turkeys, or catch a glimpse of a red wolf. I also found out how out of shape I am!

So on April 2nd, Dot Glover heard Chuck Will's Widow and a Whippoorwill at the same time in Adam's Run. Marilyn Lesanne saw eagles and ospreys opposite Charleston County Trash. "They" say there's a big eagle nest nearby. Speaking of big nests, there's a great horned owl sitting on eggs in "downtown" Hollywood. There used to be a big redbill around -- the owls must have taken over the nest.

Van Atkins put up a couple of dead trees in his yard. They're about 20 inches in diameter and nearly 50 feet tall. The woodpeckers are making cavities in them. He's especially enjoying the redheaded woodpeckers. (That was the most numerous bird we saw at Bull's Island.) Van has also built a fish pond in his yard with a long rippling waterfall that the birds love. The wonderful pond on Clouder Island where Van took us to see the avocets has been filled by dredging.

Recently on Penny Creek, off the Edisto near Adam's Run, our son, Kurt, watched what he thought at first were otters, but turned out to be a pair of beavers working on their den on the bank. There were two definite entrances. The water was brackish and there were huge alligators all around. Kurt said they were smaller than the beavers he's seen in the mountains.

Pete Rugheimer and Janet Thomas, who have 30 acres along the Intercoastal Waterway had flocks of robins and goldfinches, and lots of bluebirds, chickadees and wrens. It's nice to hear when someone is excited about their new birding experiences. Walter Swanson notices yellow rumped warblers and blue-gray gnatcatchers along with bluebirds in his yard this spring. Jean Lynn reported the first chimney swifts on March 25th.

The International Council For Bird Preservation has spent three years mapping the breeding distribution of the world's land birds. They found

it very surprising that a quarter of all bird species have very small ranges. Twenty-seven percent of all bird species are confined to just five percent of the earth's land. These areas overlap with areas of great biodiversity, so saving these hot spots would be very beneficial. Pinpointing these spots is now possible.

In ancient China, the governing bureaucrats during the Manchu Ching Dynasty (the last imperial dynasty -- 1644-1912) were ranked into many levels. They all had to be scholars and poets as well. They chose birds as their ranks and

wore embroidered depictions of their bird symbol on their robes in "Mandarin Squares". The crane was the highest rank. Egrets were sixth and orioles tenth. The badges were worn on both front and back of dress and garments were made with non-decorated areas for the squares to be placed. Wouldn't it be nice if our government officials had bird symbols? We might like them better. What birds



would you suggest for whom?

Remember, there are no seeds ripe in the wild yet, so don't stop feeding in the warm weather. The nesting birds need easier food sources now more than ever. Many more species will use suet/peanut butter mixtures when they have nestlings. Also try fruit pieces for orioles and meal worms for all baby birds.

I recently decided to put my brushes where my typing was and painted a series of ten songbirds which I put into print. I hope my readers will like them. Included are: chickadees, titmouse, Carolina wren, goldfinch, white-breasted nuthatch, bluejay, red-winged blackbird, painted bunting, and two different bluebirds. You can see them at Lowcountry Artists on Hassell Street, The Pink House Gallery on Chalmers Street, and in Summerville at the new Hand Works Gallery.

Let me hear from you. Bruce W. Krucke, 7352 Toogoodoo Rd., Yorges Island, SC 29449. Phone, 889-6191. Someone pointed out that I forgot to tell everyone that this Bruce is a she at the first of the year, so now I have!

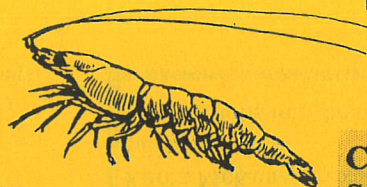
The May 9 meeting of The Charleston Natural History Society is the annual business meeting and includes the election of officers and board members. Nominees are:

President, Lee Lowder; Vice President, Hal Currey; Secretary, David Huff; Treasurer, Maurice Snook; Executive Committee, Patricia Giddens, Rose Mitchell, Polly Holden, Jane Lareau, Karen McKenzie, Reese Inabinet, Sandra Inabinet, Bob Chinn, Julian Harrison.

Nominations may be made from the floor.



**MAY 1995**



## CNHS MAY MEETING

**Tuesdays, May 9, 16, 23, & 30**

### *A Lecture Series on the State of Our Local Estuary*

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources/Marine Resource Division (SC DNRMRD) and the Charleston Natural History Society (CNHS) announce a spring series of lectures on the state of our estuary. The programs presented by MRD scientists will highlight active attempts to conserve and protect Lowcountry coastal resources.

The lecture series is a joint concept of Dr. Fred Holland of Marine Resources Division and members of the program committee of CNHS. Dr. Holland is Director of MRD's Marine Resources Research Institute. He is a Citadel graduate and earned master's and doctoral degrees on biology from the University of South Carolina. Before becoming director of the research institute in Charleston, Dr. Holland was vice president of Cosar, Inc., a large environmental consulting firm in the Washington/Baltimore area. Much of his career has focused on restoring and protecting the Chesapeake Bay ecosystem.

Members of the Charleston Natural History Society have long been interested in the preservation and conservation of all natural resources in the Charleston area. This interest, in combination with the experience, skills and knowledge of Dr. Holland and his

staff, has generated this series of lectures. All programs will be at the Marine Resources Division in the Laboratory Building at Fort Johnson on James Island. The May 9 program will also be the official CNHS business meeting.

**MAY 9, 7:00 PM**

#### **Introduction of the Marine Resource Division**

Paul Sandifer, Deputy Dir., DNR  
Fred Holland, Director, Research Institute

**MAY 16, 7:00 PM**

#### **Chemical Contamination and Habitat Modification**

Geoff Scott, Chief, Ecotoxicology Unit  
Bob Van Dolah, Asst Dir, Environmental Services

**MAY 23, 7:00 PM**

#### **Fishery Resources & Issues**

George Sedberry, Mngr, Marine Fisheries Unit  
Charlie Wenner, Mngr, Estuarine Fisheries Unit

**MAY 30, 7:00 PM**

#### **Fishery Management: Solution Or New Problem?**

Steve Hopkins, Mngr, Waddell Mariculture Center  
Paul Sandifer, Dep Dir, DNR  
David Cupka, Dir. Office of Fisheries Management

## CHNS FIELD TRIP

**Sunday, May 21 8:30 AM**

### *Wildflowers of The Francis Marion National Forest*

**Dr. Richard Porcher**

Dr. Richard Porcher, Citadel botanist and CNHS member, has done an extensive botanical survey of the Francis Marion National Forest. There he has documented an astonishing variety of habitat and plant life. Join us as we follow Dr. Porcher into The Marion to see the really good stuff.

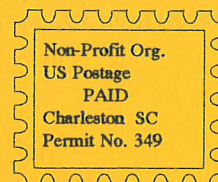
As usual with Dr. Porcher, bring your wetland shoes or boots. If there is water around we will get in it. You might want to prepare a picnic. We will finish up around lunch time and you'll be in a natural garden.

Meet in the parking lot of Gregory Texaco, Hwy 17N & Hwy 41, north of Mt. Pleasant, at 8:30 AM.



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED



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