

## Wildlife Biologist Has Good News, Bad News

Wildlife biologist Mark Dodd, our speaker for the March meeting, gave an informative and entertaining report on wading bird populations in the state. He had good news and bad news.

Woodstorks, which never nested in South Carolina until 1981, are having phenomenal success. The birds formerly nested predominately in the Everglades in South Florida. Over the past 10 years, the nests there failed due to a decrease in habitat. In 1981, there were 12 nests in the South Carolina. Last year, over 1,000 nesting pairs were counted.

Likewise, cattle egrets didn't

move into South Carolina until the 1950s. Now there are 750 nesting pairs.

Biologists are concerned about white ibis and little blue herons. The population of ibises is down to 50,000. These birds are nomads and nest where they find abundant food, so they do move around quite a bit. The little blue

heron colonies have declined, largely due to a 20 percent decrease in freshwater wetlands in the state.

Birds are very sensitive to changes and are accurate indicators of environmental problems, said Dodd. The decline of the woodstorks in Florida was a tip-off that there were serious problems.

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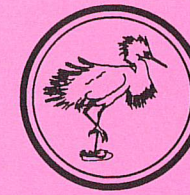
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# The Lesser Squawk

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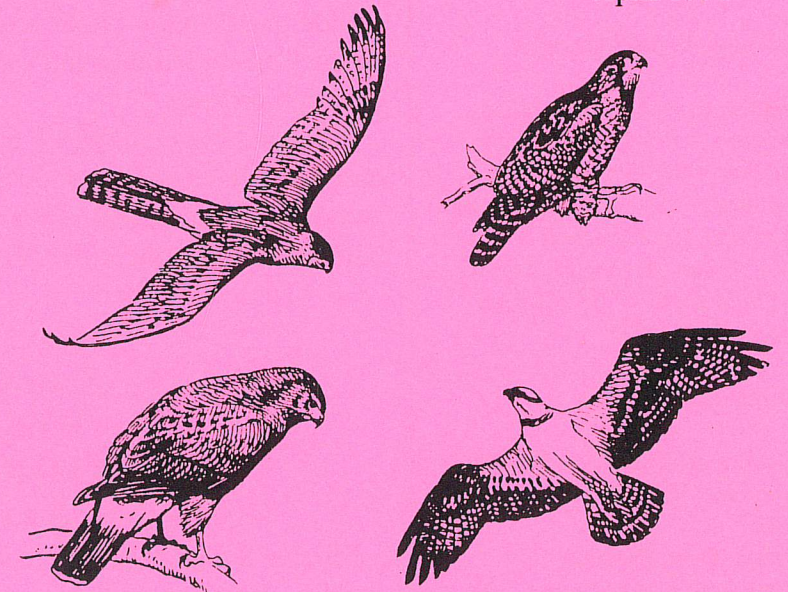
## Hawk Expert Plans Visit

### Special Evening To Feature Pete Dunne

The Charleston Natural History Society, The South Carolina Coastal Conservation League, and The Charleston Raptor Center are delighted to sponsor a visit to Charleston by hawk expert Pete Dunne. Dunne is a nationally recognized authority on hawks and is a much sought-after speaker. An "Evening With Pete Dunne" is scheduled for Saturday, June 1. Other events are planned, so keep your calendars free for this exciting birding event.

### Observations Column

Any member who sees a rare bird, one that usually is not found in this area, or that is here at an unseasonal time, should contact Bob Chinn. Bob will be writing a new "Observations" column to share reports. To report unusual sightings, call or write Bob at 552-7884, 7666 Chippendale Road, North Charleston, SC 29420. Bruce Krucke will continue to report species observed at area bird feeders in her column, "Backyard Birder."



## CNHS President Lobbies Senators

At the invitation of Marilyn England, grassroots organizer for Audubon's Living Oceans Program, CNHS president Lee Lowder met with several senators and staff persons regarding the reauthorization of the Magnuson Act. On March 4 and 5, Lowder visited the offices of Atlantic and Gulf Coast senators, hoping to enlighten them on this important fisheries protection act. Of primary concern is the amount of by-catch and habitat degradation, as well as the potential loss of jobs should our fisheries industries fail. Lowder will have a full report in the May issue of The Lesser Squawk.

## CNHS Plans Sessions at School

### Volunteers Needed for Introductory Birding Program

Our chapter has been presented with an excellent opportunity to help develop an introductory birding program in a Charleston County school. We need about 20 volunteers to help children, in groups of five, identify and record birds in several downtown Charleston locations. Education is what we're all about! If you can help, please call Lee Lowder at 769-4186, or just call if you need more information.



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Programs: Lee Lowder 769-4186

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The Lesser Squawk, newsletter of the  
Charleston Natural History Society, is  
published monthly except for the  
months of June, July and August. The  
deadline for copy is the 10th of each  
month.

## Sky Watch

Watch for an upcoming feature on the  
latest meteor showers, constellations  
and other astronomical events of note.

## April Program

Dr. Richard Porcher

April 9, 1996

7 p.m. (Please Note Time Change.)

Charleston Museum

360 Meeting Street

Botanist, Author and Citadel Professor Richard Porcher will give  
a slide presentation on his recently published book, "Wildflowers  
of the Carolina Lowcountry and Lower Pee Dee," and his latest  
research projects.

Porcher's book is a guide which identifies more than 400 native  
and naturalized wildflowers that flourish in South Carolina's inner  
and outer coastal plain. Flowers are grouped according to the  
natural habitats where they are most likely to be found.

## April Field Trip

Saturday, April 13

Wildflower Trip

Francis Marion National Forest

8 a.m. to noon

Meet at 8 a.m. at Gregorie's Texaco Station, Highway 17 North  
and 41. Botanist, Author and Citadel Professor, Dr. Richard  
Porcher, will take us to several different habitats to find spring  
wildflowers. Richard likes to move off the beaten track in search  
of botanical finds, so dress accordingly. This trip will last until  
noon. Bring a picnic lunch for afterward. Join us!

## Aubudon Mountain Workshop Set

The 19th annual Mountain Workshop, sponsored by the Alabama  
Audubon Council, is set for May 16-19 at Camp Alpine on  
Lookout Mountain near Mentone, Alabama. The workshop is  
staffed by experts in their fields from college campuses throughout  
Alabama. Sessions are limited to 12 and a program for children  
will be directed by David Holloway of the Chattanooga Nature  
Center and Sara Bright of Birmingham. Subjects of classes include  
animal ecology, beginning and advanced bird identification,  
wildflowers, trees and shrubs, edible plants, ferns, stream biology,  
mammals, insects, reptiles and amphibians, rocks and fossils,  
minerals, canoeing and mountain crafts. The goal of the workshop  
is to promote a better understanding of the natural history and  
ecology of the Southern Appalachian Mountains. For more  
information, call or write Mrs. Kap Garmon, registrar, 356 Lucerne  
Boulevard, Birmingham, Ala. 35209, (205) 871-4875.



## Backyard Birder

By Bruce Krucke

This will be an abbreviated  
article since my husband had  
open heart surgery on the day it  
was supposed to be written.  
He's doing magnificently well,  
thank goodness.

The goldfinches have pretty  
well moved on, but we will see  
them again probably in late  
April or early May. I doubt that  
they will be the same birds, but  
rather, some coming through  
from further away. The great  
thing is that they'll be in full  
breeding plumage and really  
look like goldfinches. Scott  
Hall had goldfinches this year  
for the second time in the 18  
years he's lived on Lamboll  
Street downtown. He got a new  
niger seed feeder for Christmas  
and said it looked just like the  
illustration in the catalog with  
the finches all over it.

It's so nice to wake up in the  
morning and hear all the bird  
noises and songs — a real sign  
of spring.

Charlie Walters, Ben Smith,  
and often Van Atkins go out  
birding to someplace interesting  
nearly every Saturday. Give  
them a ring if you'd like to go  
along. Some of their good  
sightings recently have been  
Ross's goose, Brewer's  
blackbird and rusty blackbird in  
Owen, SC, near Laurens, and  
arctic loon at Botany Bay.

Here are some new figures on

the domestic cat impact on  
small wildlife, including  
migratory and non-migratory  
birds. There are between 50  
and 60 million domestic cats in  
homes in the US. The estimate  
of feral cats is about the same.  
It is figured that each cat,  
except for ones which are  
entirely indoors, kills about two  
birds a month. I'll let you do  
the math.

Diane Barber had a male  
painted bunting this winter at  
her feeder in Summerville and  
Marge Del Bene reported a  
white headed robin in Mount  
Pleasant. A friend in Greer  
called to tell me about an albino  
squirrel at her feeder. It had the  
pink eyes and nose of a true  
albino, not like the white  
squirrels we have out here on  
Yonges Island, which have  
black eyes, etc.

South Carolina leads the  
nation in the number of  
backyards certified as wildlife  
habitats by the National  
Wildlife Federation. To  
register your yard, write to SC  
Wildlife Federation, 715  
Woodrow Street, Columbia,  
SC. All you need to have is  
water, food and shelter.

Here's the recipe for what is  
supposed to be the best glop  
mixture there is: Melt 1 cup  
crunchy peanut butter and 1  
cup lard (no substitutes)

together. Stir in 2 cups of  
quick oats, 1 cup flower, 2 cups  
cornmeal, and 1/3 cup sugar.  
Pour into containers about 1  
and 1/2 inches deep and cool.  
Cut into squares and store in  
the freezer. Personally, I don't  
think the sugar, flour and  
oatmeal are necessary. The  
birds really love it and it  
handles the heat well.

Who has purple martins?  
Bruce W. Krucke, 7352  
Toogoodoo Road, Yonges  
Island, SC 29449. Phone 889-  
6191.

## Beidler Canoe Trips

For a great way to enjoy  
spring, try canoeing in the  
National Audubon Society's  
Francis Beidler Forest. The  
Beidler Forest offers canoe  
trips which take visitors  
through the still blackwater  
among towering ancient  
cypress trees. Canoes,  
paddles, life jackets and a guide  
are provided. Regular trips  
lasting four hours are set for  
Friday afternoons and Saturday  
and Sunday mornings  
throughout spring. For families  
with younger children, Francis  
Beidler offers abbreviated  
canoe trips. To make  
reservations, call (803) 462-  
2150.