

This chapter is over 1000 members strong, we have the resources and knowledge to see that every child in the Charleston area is bird literate.

It cost \$35.00 to supply Audubon Adventures to a class for a year.

We need volunteers this spring to take children birding.

We need volunteers to visit classrooms and share their love of birds.

Call Sarah at 402-0937

DECEMBER 29, 1996 IS THE CHRISTMAS BIRDCOUNT

ALL PAST PARTICIPANTS AND INTERESTED PARTIES SHOULD MEET AT GREGORIES TEXACO -INTERSECTION OF HWY 17-N AND 41 AT 6:30AM.

BIRDERS OF ALL EXPERIENCE NEEDED. CALL LEE AT 769-4186 FOR DETAILS.

from page 1.
is expected to be the cost to identify and maintain the species. Areas designated as IBAs can be protected with a little forethought and planning, instead of spending thousand of dollars trying to literally rebuild a species from a severely decimated species population.

All the information gathered in identifying the IBAs will be placed in a database with information from other countries which will become globally available via the Internet to ornithologists, researchers and interested amateurs.

It is important to keep in mind that we are identifying areas that are essential to the birds themselves, rather than identifying sites where we would expect to spot many birds. The birds may only use the IBA habitat for a very short period of the year. For example, tundra swans spend a limited period during the winter in Cape Romaine National Wildlife Refuge.

Become a Member of CNHS

All you have to do is subscribe to Audubon Magazine (\$20 for a year). Your membership in CNHS is automatic.

Name (please print) _____

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Mail to: National Audubon Society, Membership Data Center, P.O. Box 51003, Boulder, Colorado 80323-1003

Charleston Natural History Society
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The Lesser Squawk

Newsletter of the Charleston Natural History Society

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December 1996

Identifying Important Bird Areas in S.C.

By Maura Lake

The National Audubon Society and S.C. Partners in Flight are cooperatively launching the Important Bird Area (IBA) Project in our state. Many IBAs have already been identified in Europe and the Middle East. Programs are ongoing in Africa and South America. In January, our state coordinator, Robin Carter, will issue a specific list of criteria for South Carolina IBAs. Mr. Carter is the author of "Finding Birds in South Carolina."

An Important Bird Area is a site which provides essential habitat for one or more species of birds and which can be distinguished from the surrounding landscape. Examples include wetlands hosting large populations of waterfowl and bottomland hardwood forests that provide breeding habitat for endangered or threatened birds.

The goal of the IBA Project is to affect protection or enhanced management of the designated habitat for the benefit of the birds that depend on it. Cooperation is a key to designating these areas and emphasizing the importance of maintaining a healthy habitat for birds and other wildlife. This coincides with National Audubon's recent release of its first Threatened Bird Species List. The essential difference between the Endangered Bird Species List and the Threatened Bird Species List..

Watch List Warns of Birds in Decline

By Bobbin Huff

The National Audubon Society and Partners in Flight have established a Watch List, a list of all species of birds that are in decline or whose habitats are in danger of disappearing. Currently, 90 species of birds, fully 14 per cent of the total number in the U.S. are on the list. They include the much admired painted bunting, the graceful swallow-tailed kite and the secretive Swainson's warbler.

A list of bird species in decline or in danger will be issued annually by these two groups. The listed birds are not necessarily rare birds, but include such common species as the yellow-headed blackbird, the bobolink and the gray catbird. The birds were identified by expert ornithologists and dedicated citizens working together.

Here are six steps that citizens can take to help combat the decline in species:

1. Participate in Project Feeder Watch, a joint project of The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, the National Audubon Society, Bird Studies Canada and the Canadian Nature Federation. Participants watch feeder birds once every two weeks from November through March, count the kinds and numbers of birds at the feeders, record the information on Feeder Watch data forms and send them to Cornell. For more information, call Project Feeder Watch/Audubon, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, P.O. Box 11, Ithaca, NY 14851-0011.

2. Become an active member of your local National Audubon Society Chapter.

3. Create a bird-friendly environment in your backyard by landscaping with native plants that flower and fruit, put out bird feeders and nest boxes, provide water in simple bird baths, place hawk decals or reflective streamers on windows to prevent bird collisions, and keep your cat indoors.

4. Help protect woods and wetlands that are homes for birds.

5. Support your state and local government wildlife programs.

6. Distribute copies of the Watch List to area schools and libraries.

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It's Happened! The
Seewee Visitors Center is
Opening December 7th.
(15 miles N of Charleston on 17)
There will be exhibits on the
plants and animals of the Francis
Marion National Forest and Cape
Romain National Wildlife Refuge.
Show your support by visiting!

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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 first of the month prior to the month of each meeting

Join Us! CNHS Oyster Roast

Dec. 14 4 p.m.

Fort Johnson, James Island

We'll be serving up fresh steamed oysters, plus hot dogs, dessert goodies and fish stew. Bring family and friends for this outdoor December tradition. The cost is \$10 for adults, \$3 for children, ages 6 to 12, and free for youngsters under 6. THERE WILL PLENTY OF OYSTERS AND BEVERAGES.

Oyster Roast Reservation

Name _____ No. Attending _____
(Please specify no. of adults and children 6-12)

Total ENCLOSED _____

(The deadline for reservations is FRIDAY DECEMBER 13, 1996. Reservations can be made by phone by calling 577-7100. Leave a message.

A limited number of tickets will be available at the door.

Send to: Charleston Natural History Society
P.O. Box 504
Charleston, SC 29402

December Field Trip. Saturday, Dec. 7, 7:30 a.m.

Birding in the North Area

Bob Chinn will lead a tour which will include Goose Creek Reservoir, settling ponds, catchment ponds and some wooded and open areas. Although the setting is an urban and industrial, there are many potential bird sightings. Possibilities include ruddy ducks, bald eagles, wading birds, pipits, mergansers, Bonaparte's gull and many others. Meet Bob at 7:30 a.m. at the parking lot of the Palladium night club, 3378 Ashley Phosphate Road, (approximately halfway between I-26 and Dorchester Road.) (Take Ashley Phosphate exit from I-26.) McAlhany is about 8 miles from Grover.

Early Birding At Beidler December 1, 1996

The next Dawn Watch at Beidler Forest will be Dec. 1. Gates will open at 5:30 a.m. to allow birders to listen to the awe inspiring calls of owls and catch the first burst of activity as the sun rises. This will be the last early morning opportunity until spring. Spring hours will be announced at a later date.

NEXT TIME COME JOIN THE FUN!

Are You Missing Out?

IF YOU MISSED LAST MONTH'S FIELD TRIPS, you missed these moments of natural wonder: ospreys harassing bald eagles trying to steal the eagles' fish; and watching a large buck swimming across the Stono River from Johns Island to James Island, followed by two (non-deer-hunting) dogs (a labrador retriever and German shepherd) swimming ear to ear.

Backyard Birder

By Bruce Krucke

The prizes for the first goldfinch (Nov. 16) go to Mike Milligan of Cypress Gardens and Arthur Ravenel, with Chris Acklin not far behind. A small goldfinch print goes out to them. There were three goldfinches at my feeders the middle weekend of November too. So you can put out your Niger feeders now.

The next thing I'm hoping to hear from you about is evening grosbeaks. We haven't had a good year with them since the mid '80s. Northern feeders must be short circuiting them on their way to us. The newsletter from Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology says there were major increases in irruptive migrations to the southeast region last winter. This statistic comes from their Feeder Watch program and refers to red breasted nuthatches, pine siskins, evening grosbeaks, goldfinches, and purple finches. The southeast region includes Tennessee and Virginia which may be as far south as the birds got. Also from their figures, the junco is still by far the most numerous feeder bird reported. I've seen one twice at my feeders already this fall.

Scott Hall, my downtown reporter, had the first wood thrush ever at his Lamboll Street house in early November. Chris Acklin had a female painted bunting at his James Island feeders in mid November and also still saw woodstorks.

Here's a new food suggestion that I don't recall seeing before. Grape Jelly! Put in shallow dishes (the ever useful terra cotta flower pot saucer?) it is apparently used by orioles, bluebirds, catbirds, and mockingbirds. In the same vain, but better for summer I would think, put overripe bananas in a mesh bag and the fruit flies attracted will bring birds after the insects. It is also suggested that a split banana on your feeder tray will attract warblers.

If you have trouble with cats stalking your feeders, put a circle of welded wire fencing around the area. Make it as high as you can still step over it, preferably at least 30 inches. Continue to offer water throughout the winter. Ideally now deeper than an inch, cleaned and filled frequently, and not where seeds and hulls will fall into it.

Cracked whole nuts continue to be one of the most popular things offered at our house. I've tried pecans, peanuts, and almonds. The last is too expensive, but was the most popular. Peanuts are reasonable, especially bought in bulk, but pecans can be free if you have a tree, access to an abandoned orchard, or a generous friend with pecan trees. Peanuts don't even have to be cracked and seeing a little titmouse put a whole unshelled peanut in its mouth is hysterical.

Now that our winter birds are here, I'm ready for more reports. Bruce W. Krucke, 7352 Toogoodoo Road, Yonges Island SC 29449. Phone 899-

Observations

2 white pelicans
Ann Shahid

Silvan Shores pond, West Ashley.

Nov. 20 1 snow bunting
Russ Johnson

16th Ave. Sullivan's Island,
on beach by dunes.

President's Eye View

By Lee Lowder

Remember the segment of the old "Art Linkletter Show" called "Kids say the Darndest Things?" Cherub-faced little youngsters, fresh from a Norman Rockwell scene, would utter cute, only mildly embarrassing stories about themselves and their families? As an educator in natural history, I sometimes long for the children of the 1960's.

After the "Watch List" was issued last week, I commented to a group of 6 graders that "cats kill 2 to 4 million birds a day." The children cheered. I was stunned. When I asked why they considered the unnesseccary slaughter of 750 million birds a year a good thing, they all said, "We like cats!" These children actually saw this as some kind of avian-feline Super Bowl.

(One could argue at least these youngsters are honest. Unlike adults who say they just love watching birds, but allow their cats to roam the neighborhood, the children were quick to inform me they find Puff more appealing than Tweety.)

Last spring, as many of you recall, our chapter took over 150 children birding for the first time and provided the award winning "Audubon Adventures Magazine" to 24 classrooms. This year under the leadership of Sarah Brunson we're going to take 300 children birding and supply Audubon Adventures to 50 classrooms. On March 23, 1997 our chapter will sponsor an education booth at KID'S FAIR. 5000 children are expected to visit our booth.

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