

.....congress continued

Please contact Congressman Mark Sanford and ask him to vote against the Gingrich Grazing Bill and let him know you expect our public lands to be managed responsibly from both an environmental and economical standpoint.

**YELLOWSTONE,
BROUGHT TO YOU BY TOSHIBA**

Very soon this congress will consider S. 1703, a bill to create a Corporate Sponsorship program for the National Parks System. Efforts are being made to add this controversial legislation to the conference agreement on the Omnibus Parks Bill (HR 1296.) While providing more funds to the nation's parks is critical, the limited funding produced from the sale of Corporate Sponsorships — estimate at less than 3% of the unmet park needs — is not worth the lasting damage to our national parks system.

For instance, S. 1703 creates a conflict of interest for the Secretary of the Interior, who must exercise broad regulatory authority over corporate activities in and around national parks.

If these same corporations are responsible for portions of the Parks budgets, it will be difficult to say no to requests for mining, drilling, logging, draining, etc. etc. The bill does not protect us from rank commercialization of the National Parks. Imagine if James Watts were still Secretary of the Interior, and responsible for deciding the extent of commercialization allowed in the parks. Further, such corporate sponsorship would allow industries to buy environmental images they don't deserve.

The reason we go to National Parks is to get away from the commercial crap that surrounds us every day. How dare they try to insinuate themselves into some of the last wild places in America. While you're on the phone to Sandford, make sure he knows about how you feel about Corporate Sponsors of US National Parks. (Brought to you by Winston.

Underwritten by a grant from Dow Chemical. Made possible by funding from Phillip Morris, blah blah blah.)

backyard continued.....

many notes just after the deadline for the late spring issue. I'm sorry not to use them, but I must relate one great backyard sighting. Jeff Linn of Younges Island had at his tube feeder a late full spring plumage goldfinch feeding with an early male painted bunting! Boggles the mind! The Crowfield eagles successfully fledged a chick this year for the first time.

The Lunch Island Sanctuary in Lake Murray is home to the largest documented assemblage of purple martins in the world! Late July is the best time to see them from a boat, taking care to stay far enough from the island to not disturb them. The roost numbers range from 300,000 to 700,000 birds.

How many major league teams have bird names? Send me your list. There is a prize.

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The Lesser Squawk

Newsletter of the Charleston Natural History Society

September 1996

The Charleston Natural History Society is a nonprofit environmental organization and chapter of The National Audubon Society that actively promotes awareness, appreciation and conservation of the natural environment through educational programs, field trips, conservation projects, sponsored research and social activities.

Adopted by the Executive Board of the Charleston Natural History Society, August 24, 1996

Executive Board Adopts New Mission Statement

By LEE LOWDER

On Saturday, August 24th the executive board of CNHS met at Old Santee Canal State Park in Moncks Corner, SC. The purpose of the day long meeting was to develop a mission statement and set goals for the chapter's new year. Pam Coffey, Science Coordinator for Berkeley County Schools, facilitated the event and made sure all voices were heard.

Mission statements are crucial in determining the goals, purpose and direction of an organization. The executive board of The Charleston Natural History Society is determined to protect the resources of the lowcountry and enhance the public appreciation of our wildlife and plants. The Lowcountry of South Carolina is precious to all of us and we are united in our belief that our swamps, marshes and forests are not only vital to wildlife, but essential to the quality of life, all life.

Bringing together such an eclectic group of strong willed people can be a daunting task, but science coordinator Pam Coffey deserves this chapter's highest regard for facilitating this meeting. Her assistance was invaluable.

The board members left Moncks Corner feeling energized and more committed than ever to the principles that have guided this organization since 1905. We look forward to serving you!

CNHS President Lowder, Secretary Huff and Beidler Sanctuary Director Brunswig Attend Biennial Conference in Washington D.C.

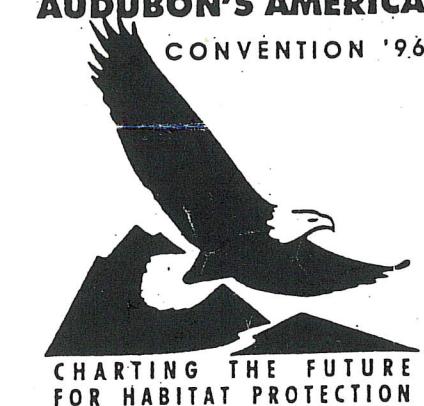
The National Audubon Society held its 1996 Conference at the American University in Washington D.C. on June 8th through 12th. The Charleston Natural History Society and South Carolina was represented by CNHS President Lee Lowder, Secretary and Squawk Editor Bobbin Huff and Norman Brunswig, Sanctuary Director at Francis Beidler Forest.

The conference included leadership workshops, environmental lectures and field trips. Highlights of the conference included an address by Environmental Protection Agency Director Carol Browner and John Flicker the new president of The National Audubon Society.

President Lowder gave exceptionally high marks to a chapter leadership workshop held on June 8. "I have no doubt that my second year as president will be much more productive because of this workshop and the conference as a whole."

Those attending the conference welcomed National Audubon's new efforts to identify more closely with birds and with local chapters. John Flicker noted on several occasions, "the national office is here to support the local chapters and their issues. Local chapters are our strength."

AUDUBON'S AMERICA CONVENTION '96



Gregarious and welcoming John Flicker had little difficulty winning over the most skeptical chapter leaders.

The overall conference was very positive and gave chapter presidents from across the country the opportunity to compare notes and strategies.

The convention culminated in a display of unity and commitment on the steps of the Capital, just hours before Bob Dole would give his farewell address. The crowds of tourist were supportive and cheered on the Auduboners as they urged their government not to turn its back on 30 years of environmental progress.

Charleston Natural History Society Officers:

President: Lee Lowder — 769-4186
Vice President: Jane Lareau — 795-2150
Treasurer: Maurice Snook — 849-9485
Secretary: Bobbin Huff — 886-6911

Executive Board Members:

Sarah Brunson — 402-0937

Bob Chinn — 552-7884

Cornelia Gibbs — 556-7806

Bob Hanlin — 577-5315

Julian Harrison — 795-1694

Sandra Inabinett — 884-3997

Maura Lake — 889-3415

Herbert MacMurphy — 883-9252

Karen McKenzie — 884-4901

Committee Chairs:

Bird Counts: Ed Blitch 795-5277

Conservation: Jane Lareau 795-2150

Education: Karen McKenzie 884-4901

Field Trips: Bob Chinn 552-7884

Membership: Don Watts 797-6783

Newsletter: Bobbin Huff 886-6911

Backyard Birder Column: Bruce Krucke 889-6191

Observations Column: Bob Chinn 552-7884

Programs: Lee Lowder 769-4186

Property: Jane Lareau 795-2150

Publicity: Maura Lake 889-3415

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.

The mission of the National Audubon Society is to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife for the benefit of humanity and the earth's biological diversity.

UPCOMING EVENTS: September 10th Members' Meeting

Welcoming address by chapter president Lee Lowder and Turtle Project Update

Patricia Kusmierski, Herbert MacMurphy and Mary Ellen Rodgers

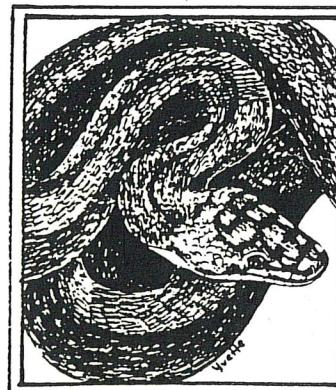
Tuesday, September 10, 7:00pm (refreshments at 6:30)
The Charleston Museum

September Field Trip Saturday, September 28, 7:30am

Early Morning Birding Trip to Pitt Street Bridge, Mt. Pleasant.

Members and visitors should meet at 7:30 am just off 17-N at Herbie's Fireworks parking lot at the entrance to Patriot's Point. Participants will watch for early morning migrants and residents. Bob Chinn, (552-7884) is the trip leader and contact.

October 2 at 3:00PM on Educational Television "PARKVIEW" Featured guest will be Old Santee Canal Naturalist and CNHS President Lee Lowder performing his Snakes and People Program.



Backyard Birder by Bruce W. Krucke

Welcome back from a summer of painted buntings and wood storks. Other areas envy us these birds. I hope you kept the feeders full all summer and enjoyed the youngsters being brought to learn how to eat seeds. We're entering a period now that has an abundance of natural food, so you might find that the seed lasts a little longer. Then before you know it goldfinches will be upon us and seed use soars.

The glop mixture of equal parts peanut butter, lard and yellow corn meal worked well during the summer. Even cardinals are enjoying it now and they're seed eaters. Margaret Seabrook, 559-9056, and Judy Koelpin offer members very good prices on handmade feeders, bird, duck, butterfly and bat houses. All are made of cedar and made to spec from Peterson's measurements.

On 13 August, Walter Swanson watched a vee-flight of Canada geese over his West Ashley house. Seems early. As was the mature bald eagle seen by Cherie Pittillo just where Main Rd. hits 17-S. Marge (I forgot) in Mt. Pleasant had some house finches nesting this year for the first time. This is just the beginning, I guess. I just hope they don't increase as they have in Virginia.

Chris Acklin had a scarlet tanager using the bird-bath on John's Island. Chris and Lee Hurd enjoyed a prothonotary warbler bathing in the birdbath on their deck at Seabrook. That's a first I'm sure. As was the screech owl that bathed for several weeks at Frank and Carol Bremer's place on Edisto. I was amused by an immature sharpshinned hawk bathing here--so nervous! I received so

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Audubon Convention 1996: Report from the Nation's Capital

Audubon Convention: A Visit by John James and The Troubadours

By Bobbin Huff

We were visited by John James Audubon, serenaded by the Environmental Troubadours and inspired by speakers at the National Audubon Convention in June at my alma mater, American University, Washington, D.C.

Lecturers included Dr. Tom Eisner, professor at Cornell University, who spoke on the largely untapped resource of medicines provided by plants, and an impassioned speech by Peter Stengel on the Partners-in-Flight Program. We were visited by John James

Audubon, himself, an actor who made a very convincing Audubon as he related the adventures of the bird artist's life.

After the day's sessions, we were entertained by the very talented Environmental Troubadours (Bill Oliver and Glen Waldeck) who sang rollicking songs about the environment. They were so exuberant that one evening, after one of the singers leaped on a listener's table, their speakers started smoking and had to be disconnected.

Even more impressive than the entertainment and keynote talks were the participants who came from all over the country. Listening to their accounts of projects and concerns revealed more about what Audubon is all about. In a session on wetlands protection, a Florida chapter reported hiring a full-time biologist to access all permits related to wetlands to identify egregious violations and build opposition. A New Orleans representative said his group has sued the area's highway department five or six times over wetlands violations — the department now listens to what they have to say and responds.



In a session on using birds to promote environmental education, members reported sponsoring nature centers for young people, hawk walks, birding 101 and 201 classes, trips to National Wildlife refuges, a hacking program for ospreys and backyard wildlife sanctuary tours, just to name a few. In another discussion session,

Audubon newsletter editors shared solutions to problems and ideas for content, graphics and design. I found that they faced many of the same challenges and awards as I have encountered.

The most impressive participant at the convention was a woman by the name of Hazel Wolf. At 98, she participated in the first keynote session and was in attendance for all the others. At one

point, when the Troubadours were performing and I figured she would have long-since retired to her room, I looked around to see her walk to the stage to ask for a photo with the performers! Wolf has established 20 Audubon chapters in Washington State during her lifetime. Now there's a dedicated Auduboner.

A first for me was our trip to the Capitol, not as a tourist but as a lobbyist, to Sen. Ernest Hollings, and Strom Thurmond's offices. I felt very small standing on the steps of that imposing building. Once inside, I was pleasantly surprised by the warm reception we received from the senators' aides. Hollings' aide, Joab Lesesne, was particularly receptive. He spent a full hour listening to our comments and offering a few of his own. He encouraged us to keep in touch about local issues.



THEY THINK YOU AREN'T PAYING ATTENTION. ARE THEY RIGHT?
by Jane Lareau

education for our future
Western Congressmen are pushing to further open Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service lands to private greed, in the hopes that us Easterners won't notice and don't care. Let's surprise them. Call Congressman Mark Sanford (202) 225-3178 (local number 727-4175) and let him know we do care about environmental abuse on public lands. To add insult to industry — we subsidize this abuse!

At the request of House Speaker Newt Gingrich, and following tremendous pressure from Congressmen representing western ranchers, Rep. Sherry Boehlert (R-NY) — normally a friend to the environment — negotiated a new grazing bill with the livestock industry. Although it is being touted as a compromise, it isn't.

It maintains artificially low grazing fees which cost US taxpayers millions of dollars annually in lost revenues and resource damage.

It allows additional resource damage to occur by undercutting existing environmental safeguards designed to protect and restore federal rangelands.

It limits the application of important environmental laws in the site-specific management of grazing on our federal lands, thus hampering the protection of fish and wildlife.

It limits public involvement. It creates rancher-dominated advisory councils with undue influence on Forest Service and BLM management decisions.

It restricts the public's ability to appeal unsound, anti-environmental grazing management decisions.

It gives private ranchers title to so-called range improvements on federal lands, placing federal taxpayers at risk for expensive private property takings claims if federal agencies act to protect the environment. In other words, taxpayers could be forced to pay private ranchers to stop damaging federal lands!

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