

Charleston Natural History Society  
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# The Lesser Squawk

Newsletter of the Charleston Natural History Society

Vol. XLVII, No. 5

MAY 1997

## Memories and New Beginnings

by Lee Lowder

On May 13, a new slate of officers and board members will be presented for your consideration. These highly skilled, self-motivated over achievers will have strengths and new priorities, not that there was anything wrong with the old ones (i.e. mine). Each subsequent board focuses upon those issues which they consider most deserving of the chapter's resources, yet always mindful of the traditional responsibilities carried out by this 92-year-old nature society.

Our greatest and most enduring asset are our members. The people who support this society with their time, knowledge and finances. The membership can not be neglected and it is incumbent that the board be diligent in protecting the members' natural environment and be imaginative in providing speakers, field trips and educational opportunities. The McAlhany Sanctuary's importance to this chapter and to The Edisto Basin can not be overstated; its potential as a learning, research center has yet to be fully realized. I predict that some time in the middle of the next century all of Four Holes Swamp from Calhoun County to Gihvans Ferry will be a sanctuary. The Edisto River will be a carefully preserved corridor of blackwater beauty and our sanctuary will be part of that. Most of us will be dead when this dream realizes itself, except, of course, Beidler director Norman Brunswig, who, at the age of 125, will cut the ribbon on the last 20 acre tract to complete his life's mission.

About the time ancient Norman's cutting that ribbon, several loggerhead sea turtles are hauling their egg-bloated bodies out of the surf on Botany Bay Island. As hatchlings, these turtles were saved from predation 50 years earlier by The Charleston Natural History Society's Turtle Project. The best money any Audubon chapter ever invested, what a pay off! Our commitment should remain absolute to this project. Thank you, Patricia Kasmierski.

Before I became president of this chapter, I believed that we could reach out and change anyone's view of the natural world if we just "educated" them. I have reluctantly realized that there are many well educated people who know about sustainability and interdependence, but continue to *knowingly* make decisions that are harmful to the environment. They have money, undeserved influence and, tragically, are often elected to office or appointed by like-minded people to environmental boards and park commissions. They will never get it and therefore we must stay vigilant and watch them like a Buteo!

I have enjoyed being your president. I regret my achievements failed to keep pace with my imagination, but that is the nature of dreams. To those members and nonmembers who called with misgivings about flower-munching deer, barn-drilling pileated woodpeckers, Carolina wrens nesting in geraniums, sneaky squirrels, gatherings of geese, "dam" beaver and sinister snakes I say, enjoy! Convenient, well behaved wildlife enriches no one. It's against the very nature of nature.

## 'Play On Birds'

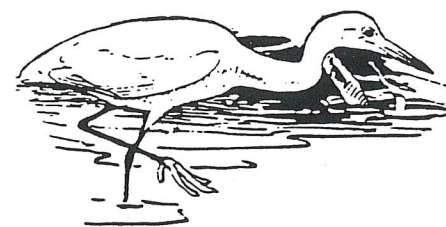
Peewee's Day Off  
The Coot, The Bat and The  
Ugly Duckling  
Grebe Expectations  
The Crane Matiny  
The Finch Lieutenant's Woman  
Ducktor No  
Citizen Crane  
Owl's Well That Ends Well  
Robin Hood  
Pippit Longstocking  
Last Days of the Third Shtrike  
Thrasher in the Rye  
Wren Johnny Comes Marching  
Home  
The Greatest Crow on Earth  
Ani  
Skua for Scandal  
Dr. Killdeer  
Balbul Durham  
LaWRENce of Arabia  
Ani Get Your Gun  
Balbul Without a Cause  
A Smew Good Men  
The Gadwall of China  
Owliver  
Noah's Awk  
Looking for Booby Fisher  
Alice Doesn't Live Here Any  
Moa  
Sora! Sora! Sora!  
Trogon With the Wind  
The Rookie  
The Roc  
Terning Point  
Down Periscope  
City Flickers  
Drakefast at Tiffany's  
Midnight Cowbird  
Ma & Pa Kettle  
Osprey Can You See  
Fiddler on the Ruff  
Taras Balbul  
Loon Over Miami  
Law of the Toucan  
Kowloon Assignment  
Loon Struck



## New Officers Nominated

The nominations for members of the Executive Board and officers of the Charleston Natural History Society for the upcoming year are:

Jane Lareau, president;  
Sharon Richardson, vice president; and Cornelia Gibbs, treasurer. Executive Board members nominated are: Maura Lake, Sarah Brunson, Lee Lowder, Norman Brunswig, Karen Beshears, Arch McCallum, Jeff Dennis, Robert Donato, Julian Harrison and Jeremy James. New board members will be elected at the May meeting on May 13.



## Become a Member of CNHS (U51)

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## Charleston Natural History Society Officers:

President: Lee Lowder 769-4186  
V. President: Jane Lareau 795-2150  
Secretary: Bobbin Huff 886-6911

### Executive Board Members:

Sarah Brunson: 889-8198  
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 McMurphy 883-9252

### Committee Chairs:

Conservation:  
Jane Lareau: 795-2150  
Education:  
Sarah Brunson 889-8198  
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:  
Box Chinn 552-7884  
Programs: Lee Lowder 769-4186  
Property: Jane Lareau 795-2150  
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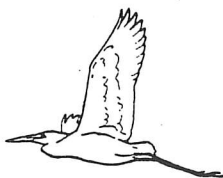
## May CNHS Events

### May Field Trip The Washoe, Blake's Reserve in the Santee Coastal Reserve Saturday, May 17

Meet at 7:30 a.m. at Gregorie's Texaco, Highway 17 North and 41. We will see warblers with possibilities including yellow-throated, prothonotary, parula, and pine, as well as Eastern kingbirds, and great crested flycatchers. Bring water, lunch and insect repellent. This will be a half-day trip.

### May Program Prescribed Burning in the Forest May 13 at 7 p.m. Charleston Museum 360 Meeting Street Charleston

A representative of the U.S Forest Service will discuss prescribed burning in long-leafed pines. Partial burning techniques offer many benefits to the forest and it's inhabitants. Officers for next year will be elected.



### Open House at McAlhany Sunday, May 11 Gate Opens at 8:30 a.m.

Come enjoy spring at the McAlhany Sanctuary May 11. Special features include an oxbow lake, hiking trails, and a cabin which provides facilities. To get to the McAlhany Sanctuary, take highway 61 North to U.S. Highway 15, turn right (North). Follow 15 to

Grover, SC. In Grover, turn left onto Highway 19. Just past intersection of Highway 19 and county road 26, you'll cross Cattle Creek. The entrance to McAlhany will be on the left side of the road. McAlhany is about 8 miles from Grover.

### New Plant Society Organizing

A Lowcountry chapter of The South Carolina Native Plant Society (SCNPS) that was started last year at Clemson is being organized, according to John Brubaker. The society is a non-profit organization founded in the up-state in 1996 by a group of people dedicated to the promotion of awareness and appreciation of our native plants and their habitats through education, research, and community outreach. SCNPS provides speakers for interested groups, such as gardening, conservation and civic organizations and schools. Members make presentations for special programs, lead field trips, and write articles for the quarterly SCNPS Newsletter. Speakers from across the state will lecture and conduct workshops on gardening with native plants, identifying native plants in the field, and preserving habitats at the first SCNPS symposium on May 24 at Clemson.

One of the group's top goals is the protection of native plant communities. The society is committed to creating public support for preservation and conservation through education and to supporting legislation to protect rare and endangered plants and habitats. Members act to preserve natural plant communities through plant relocation projects, stewardship programs and cooperation with other environmental organizations in preservation initiatives.

Application forms and additional information are available through John Brubaker, 42 Warren Street, Charleston, SC 29403, (803) 722-4333, or Rick Huffman, South Carolina Native Society, P.O. Box 759, Pickens, SC 29671.

## Backyard Birder

By Bruce Krucke

Mike Milligan, ornithologist for Cypress Gardens, has been sending me wonderfully thorough reports of the birds at the gardens. He saw 85 species in March. Some of the highlights were prairie warblers, prothonotary warblers, white crowned sparrows, kestrels (probably nesting), baby great horned owls, house wrens, yellow throated vireos, and hundreds of tree sparrows. (swallows??) Dot Reed still had goldfinches (in bright spring plumage) in mid-April. They were feeding with the house finches that are found year-round now in Colony North. Their first indigo bunting was a thrill. We've been enjoying both indigo and painted buntings here — the best view being their sitting side by side on a millet feeder — wow! In Kings Grant, Paul Kushubar watched a red-bellied woodpecker maneuver himself around until he could drink out of the hummingbird feeder.

Here are the recommended plants for our location for a hummingbird garden: sweet william, foxglove, nicotiana, red salvia, Indian paintbrush, bleeding heart, jewelweed, cardinal flower, bee balm, pinks, cross vine, trumpet creeper, red morning glory, cypress vine, honey suckle and confederate jasmine.

I haven't heard a lot of purple martin reports. We've finally gotten rid of the starlings here by having nothing but gourds, no apartments. So far I've seen only one pair in a gourd.

Someone sent me a column from Georgia showing a leucoistic (partly white) cardinal that was divided exactly in half — red and white. No one saw the famous white mockingbird at the end of Toogoodoo Road in 1996. Maybe this year.

While watching a luna moth on my windshield one evening, we noticed another bug on the roof of the car. It was a medium large beetle with a gold shell and beautifully luminous

turquoise to identify it with the use of my son's Audubon insect guide. It was a real goldbug — of Edgar Allen Poe fame!

Since this is my last column, I want to review a few basic rules for attracting birds to your back yard. You need to provide water, cover, nesting areas and food — in that order of importance. Native plants are always best. Leave some areas natural. Have grasses, flowers, small shrubs, large shrubs, small trees, large trees, evergreens, deciduous trees, and always choose specimens that flower and fruit. Don't cut everything — let some go to seed. If you're going to feed, feed throughout the summer — that's when there is the least natural food available before plants go to seed. You don't have to offer a huge variety of seeds. The essential ones are black oily sunflower seeds and plain white millet. Corn and wheat attract black birds. Peanut butter and suet mixtures are very popular. Leave a dead tree. Have a brush pile from the early fall until all the cold weather is through. Offer nesting materials in the spring. Have hanging feeders, tube feeders, platform feeders, sprinkle seed on the ground, keep the bird baths clean and filled. Etc., etc., etc! Enjoy!

## CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY T-SHIRTS ARE HOT!

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PROCEEDS BENEFIT:  
TURTLES  
BIRDS

VERY OLD TREES  
AND CHERUB FACED YOUNGSTERS



FOR SALE AT MAY 13  
MEETING

### Observations

Apr. 23	1 Dickcissel	North Charleston (off Cross County Road)	Bob Chinn
Apr. 27	12 Painted Buntings	Guerins Bridge Road Wando Store near Deytens Dunes West	Bob Chinn Shipyard &
May 5	2 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks	New Hope, Summerville	Betty & Andy Anderson

The Observations column includes unusual sightings, birds not usually found in this area, or seen at an unseasonal time. To report unusual sightings, call or write Bob Chinn at 552-7884, 7666 Chippendale Road, North Charleston, SC 29420.