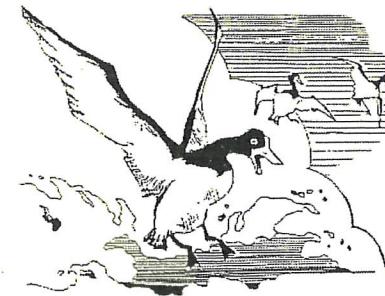


The Lesser Squawk
The Charleston Natural History Society
PO Box 504
Charleston, SC 29402

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Permit No. 349



THE LESSER SQUAWK

Newsletter of the *Charleston Natural History Society*/local chapter of *The National Audubon Society*
Founded 1905
NAS Affiliation 1970

Volume XLVII No. 3

April 2000

"Wood Warblers: Threatened Species" At Meeting Monday, April 10, at 6 pm

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.



McAlhany Sanctuary Open House April 2nd

The open house at the McAlhany Sanctuary April 2 will feature a spring cleanup walk along Wire Rd. Directions: Take Hwy. 61 to Cannadys Cross-roads and turn right onto Hwy. 15. When you

reach the small community of Grover, take the first left onto Wire Rd. Go over I-95 and across a small creek. Then look for our sign on the left side of the road. Questions? Call Jeff at 577-8890.

Mark Your Calendars

May 9—Membership meeting: Dr. George Folkerts, ecologist at Auburn University, will speak on *Rare and Little-Known Habitats in the Southeast*. For more about Dr. Folkerts, see www.auburn.edu/~folkegw. For our enjoyment during the reception, the Charleston Museum will mount a special exhibit from its collection. Many of the items have a connection to CNHS.

May 13—Migratory Bird Day. Birding and dedication of viewing platforms at Ace Basin National Wildlife Refuge. Booth at official celebration (location and details in next newsletter).

May 20—Point of Pines Plantation hosted by Burnet R. Maybank.

Recruit New Members!

CNHS / National Audubon Society membership
(First Time Members)
Regular- \$20 Sr. Citizens/Students - \$15

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to:

National Audubon Society,
Membership Data Center, PO Box 51003,
Boulder, CO 80323-1003

Make checks payable to National Audubon Society
Write Chapter Code U-51 on your check.

We are pleased to announce that our April program will be a course on identification of wood warblers and their songs. Daniel Edelstein, a naturalist and science writer, will present the program

"Wood Warblers: Threatened Beauties" Monday, April 10 at

6:30 pm at the Charleston Museum. Note: the meeting is on Monday instead of the usual Tuesday. The reception will begin at 6 pm instead of the usual

6:30 pm. The program will begin at 6:30 pm instead of the usual 7 pm.

Edelstein's presentation will include slides of warblers, maps of their ranges and habitats. In addition, we will learn about their songs. Handouts of his material will be available.

Our speaker has led bird walks and taught natural history classes for the last 20 years. He works for the Center for Conservation Research and Technology which specializes in bird radio telemetry monitoring and is head-

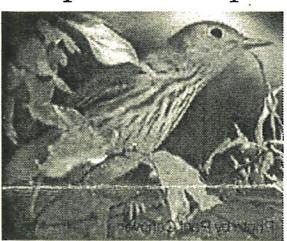
quartered at the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.

BIRDING OUTING

Edelstein will lead a morning bird walk Sunday, April 9, to I'On Swamp. Meet at the Seewee Center, Hwy. 17N, at 7:45 am.

Birding Suburban Hot Spots April 22

At 7:30 am, Saturday, April 22, Bob Chinn will take us to places that guarantee a long checklist of sightings. Bob knows real hot spots right in the middle of developments in North Charleston. It's somewhat of a mystery, but innumerable species love hanging out in these areas. No strenuous hiking, and the birding is easy. Meet Bob in the Waccamaw parking lot in shopping center at Dorchester and Ashley Phosphate Roads.



Help Spot Raptor Nests

Breeding and nesting season for raptors is underway in the Low-country, and the South Carolina Center for Birds of Prey (SCCBP) has already received the first raptor orphans of the season.

Frequently, the original nests of these orphans have been destroyed or the parents are no longer in the area. Uninjured orphans can be placed or fostered into other active nests of the same species. To foster orphans successfully, we need to document active raptor nests in this area.

If you know of active hawk, owl, kite or other bird of prey nests please contact the SCCBP at kdlan2@home.com or phone 843-849-3660 and leave a message on the machine.

Provide the following information: species, location of nest, height and accessibility of nest, is it on public or private property, your name and how we can contact you.

Please remember that human activity near active nest sites will cause many birds of prey to abandon nests and nestlings. When observing nests, use binoculars at a discrete distance from the nest and for only brief periods of time.

Thank for your help and we will update you on the status of this year's orphans in the future!

By **Kathy Dolan**, SCCBP volunteer.

BOARD MEMBERS

Cornelia Carrier 577-6437
Julian Harrison 795-1694
Jeff Dennis 577-8890
Richard Clarke-Pounder 767-9331
Sharon Richardson 556-2281
Christopher Walter 569-1062
Laura Jewell 769-9945
Joe Cockrell 762-3868
Norm Brunswig (843)688-5833
Jennifer Lamar 588-9714
Robert Donato 849-7139



"Canopy Care" Saves Nests of Squirrels, Hawks by **Molli Hartzog**

The last day of January, I awoke to the disheartening sound of chainsaws in my backyard. A crew of men wearing hard hats labeled *Asplundh* were clearing a 10-foot wide path along the power line. Over the next week, I got to know them as Joe in the tree, Chris in the tree and two Joes on the ground. Through them, I learned a good bit about nesting habits in the canopy.

For example, Joe in the tree spent quite a long time trimming carefully in a circle around a very angry mama squirrel with a nest full of January babies in the main trunk of a damaged hickory tree. Her squared stance and stream of sputters showed she meant business. Her nest stayed.

Chris in the tree discovered a large deep nest in a live oak he worked on for three days. On

Monday it contained chunks of squirrel so he knew it was some sort of raptor. On Tuesday the nest contained white goose feathers and a pile of dove feathers plus some droppings. On Wednesday, the nest revealed two chunks of raccoon complete with fur and some blackbird feathers. This led him to believe it was only a dinner nest. As we watched him, suspended by a rope 490 feet in the air, examine the nest, here came the owner - a red-tailed hawk who dove and circled and, obviously impatient, lit in a number of nearby trees. As the Joes put their weight into the guide ropes, Chris carefully cut away the branches leaving the hawk nest concealed. It was a good lesson watching what they called "canopy care." By the time they loaded their gear for the day, the hawk was back on the nest.

Message From the President by **Cornelia Carrier**

Well, it looks like Laurel Hill Plantation has been saved for the time being - until, say, the pressures of traffic from a possible port expansion bring demands to build I-73. Then part of the plantation might be condemned for an interchange. But for the time being we can breathe easy that one of the few islands of nature in the Mt. Pleasant sprawl will still be available to enjoy.

Will Remley's Point be saved or go the way of Patriot's Point and Parrot Point? Chip mills, clear-cutting and tree farms are decimating our Southern forests. Can bird and animal populations survive in the remaining fragmented islands of nature?

The Charleston area has become so developed that we now must depend on an archipelago of natural habitat islands scattered throughout the metropolitan area. In addition to Laurel Hill, there's the Dill property, James Island

The Song of the Dodo, Island Biogeography in an Age of Extinction.

Backyard Birder by **Van Atkins**

Spring has sprung! Every- and sharp shinned hawks, anhinga, where you look flowers are black and white Warbler and blue blooming; trees are budding, headed vireo. and birds are singing. The From his office window, Dr. wrens, chickadees and blue- Ravenel and his nurse watched a birds in our yard are building Cooper's Hawk pluck a pigeon off nests. Make sure your bird the limb of a oak tree on Bee Street. houses are cleaned out and I still have several white throated sparrows left as well as some

Ben Smith called with a veery American goldfinches. There were and yellow-throated warblers as many as 225 of the finches. They in his yard.

Don Jones from the Elms months. Remember you need to Plantation has had some good have clean water available if you birds in his back yard: three want to keep the birds around your purple finches, 18 wood storks, yard. Call me with your reports. golden crowned kinglets, an ea- Van Atkins, 766-7000, gle, red tailed, red-shouldered vatkins@awod.com

Nominations for CNHS Board

Election of 2000-01 board members and officers will be held at the May meeting. Named to the nominating committee are Christopher Walters and Sharon Richardson. They will be accepting recommendations and volunteers between now and the election. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor at the May meeting.

NEWS BRIEFS

NEW WEB SITE DESIGN - Our webmaster Bob Chinn has created a fabulous new design for our web page. Check it out at www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon and send your sightings to Bob so he can post them on the page. Contact him at 552-7884 or rchinn@cchat.com.

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DEADLINE - The deadline for comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Proposed Expansion of the Charleston Port is **April 14**. Please send your comments to the US Army Corps of Engineers, PO Box 919, Charleston SC 29402.

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SPRING BIRD COUNT - The Spring Bird Count will be April 30. Meet at 6:45 am at the service station at Hwy. 17 N and Hwy. 41.

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BIRDSEED SALE - Next fall we hope to please everyone. We will have a West Ashley pickup site at the Sofa Superstore on Savannah Hwy. and a Mt. Pleasant pick-up at Abide-a-While Nursery on Hwy. 17N. Thanks to Gerald Muckenfuss for volunteering to handle the sale, Herb Goldstein for the use of his store, and Bruce Donaldson for the use of his nursery.

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CORRECTION - The phone number for Beidler Forest in the last Squawk was wrong. The correct number is 843-462-2150.

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GIBBES MUSEUM - New exhibit is "John James Audubon in Charleston: The Watercolors for the 'Birds of America,'" March 31-June 11.