

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

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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.



Platform Construction Dates

Larry Klimek, acting USFW Ace Basin Refuge manager, has scheduled construction of the viewing platform in the refuge for March 6-11. Those who have volunteered will be contacted. Other volunteers call Richard at 571-1266, Ext. 38.

Christmas Bird Count Totals

Charleston: 151 species

McClellanville: 155 species

Litchfield/Pawley's Island: 157

Santee: 128

Ace Basin: 130



Mark Your Calendars

Here is a schedule of upcoming events:

March 14 - Dr. Richard Porcher will speak on flora of Native American shell deposits.

March 18 - Moonlight Walk at Beidler Forest.

March 20 - Celebrate the Vernal Equinox at the Pitt St. Bridge in Mt. Pleasant for viewing shore birds and sunset with dinner at a nearby restaurant.

April 10 - Daniel Edelstein will teach us about the songs and habits of wood warblers. **Note change in date: second Monday instead of Tuesday.**

April 22 - Suburban Birding with Bob Chinn.

Give Gift Membership

CNHS and National Audubon Society for one low price: 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.



Volume XLVII No. 1

THE LESSER SQUAWK

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

February 2000

Jim Elliott: Kite Study & Live Raptors

Jim Elliott will bring some birds that have never been seen in South Carolina to our meeting **Tuesday, Feb. 8** at the Charleston Museum.

Jim, a favorite speaker and founder and executive director of the South Carolina Center for Birds of Prey, will give us an update on the swallow-tail kite study which CNHS helps fund. In addition, he will bring non-indigenous birds acquired for the Center's education programs.

Bring your children. Wine, cheese and soft drink reception begins at 6:30 p.m. with program at 7 p.m.

View Wintering Ducks On Bull's Island

Meet at Moore's Landing at 9:30 am **Saturday, Feb. 12**, to catch the 10 am boat to Bull's Island (first come first served). The boat costs \$20, adults; \$10, children 12 and under. We'll return at 3 pm. Stay with the group or go on your own to enjoy this island treasure.



Join Us For Trip To Medway

Take the opportunity to visit Medway Plantation, a private plantation near Moncks Corner, **Saturday, Feb. 26**. Meet trip leader Burton Moore in the parking lot of the Regal Cinemas in Charlestowne Square at the Mall Drive exit off I-26 and carpool from there. We'll see the house exterior, nature trail and ponds. Bring your scope. Then join us for Dutch-treat lunch at the Dock Restaurant (for catfish etc.) or bring your own lunch.



More Than A Port Needs Volunteers For Feb. Meetings

Try to attend the following events and inform friends, families, and co-workers:

SC-More Than a Port will hold a public information meeting for North Charleston residents **Wednesday, Feb. 2** at the Dorchester Road Regional Library 6:30-7:30 pm.

Thursday, Feb. 10 at 7 pm. the Charleston City Council and City Planning Commission will hold a joint public hearing in **Gaillard Auditorium**. The commission plans to make its recommendation Feb. 16.

SC-MTAP will hold a public information meeting for West Ashley residents at **St. Andrew's High School Auditorium** on **Wednesday, Feb. 16**, 6:30 to 7:30.

Volunteers are needed to help prepare for these upcoming meetings. Tasks and talents needed include: Making phone calls, public relations, advertising, design specialists, photographers, videographer, table attendants and more. If you can help, please contact **Juliet Cohen, 723-8035** Refer to flyer for more information on port expansion.

VISIT OUR WEBPAGE
[www.audubon.org/chapter/
 sc/charleston](http://www.audubon.org/chapter/sc/charleston)
 contact Webmaster Bob Chinn
 843-552-7884
 rchinn@cchat.com



Thank the Governor

Gov. James Hodges' request to extend the comment period on the port's environmental impact statement until April 14 was granted by the US Corps of Engineers. Write to thank the governor and oppose the port
PO Box 11829, Columbia, SC 29211 or call 803-734-0457 or e-mail:
 Governor@govoepp.state.sc.us.

The Lesser Scaup on The Lesser Squawk

Note the new masthead on the newsletter. The name *The Lesser Squawk* is a play on words on the lesser scaup which is again depicted on the masthead. We will continue to try to improve the appearance of the newsletter.

BOARD MEMBERS

Cornelia Carrier Gibbs 577-6437
 Sue Wallace 722-8279
 Jeff Dennis 577-8890
 Sharon Richardson 556-2281
 Christopher Walter 569-1062
 Laura Jewell 769-3337
 Richard Clarke-Pounder 767-9331
 Julian Harrison 795-1694
 Joe Cockrell 762-3868
 Norm Brunswig (843)688-5833
 Jennifer Lamar 588-9714
 Robert Donato 849-7139

Backyard Birder by Van Atkins

I have had a few reports this month of birds at feeders. Jim and Dee Pierson live on the marsh and reported a loggerhead shrike, several Ibises and a Northern harrier. On another occasion they had a bald eagle and an osprey on the same day plus a cedar waxwing.

Billy McCord was on the South Edisto River and saw seven avocets, two snow geese and three blue geese. While he was at the northeast end of Folly Beach he saw a white winged dove.

Ben Smith had a lot of birds at the back edge of his property last week. They included blue headed vireo, American goldfinch, white throated sparrow, downy and red bellied woodpeckers, ruby crowned kinglets and a bald eagle perched in a tree back by the pond.

It has been slim pickings here at our feeders. We have a sharp shinned hawk that is making a regular habit of visiting our yard each day for a sparrow meal. We have had a few American goldfinches, a white breasted nuthatch, plus a lot of white throated sparrows, a few chipping sparrows and the normal winter visitors.

My wife and I went to Florida last month, starting out at Merritt Island WMA. We got good looks at the Florida scrub jay and a lot of roseate spoonbills. There were ducks and reddish egrets everywhere. Just about every pole served as

an perch for osprey.

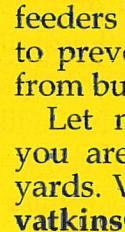
Have you looked out of your window and noticed any small bird with its feathers puffed out, less active than the other birds and seeming to just roost near the feeding area? The bird may have a disease called salmonella or another called conjunctivitis. What can you do?

To prevent this scene from happening in your back yard make sure your feeding areas and feeders are clean. Avoid putting feed directly on the ground. Instead use a raised screen feeder. Clean all your feeders on a regular schedule to prevent mold and bacteria from building up.

Let me know what birds you are seeing in your back yards. Van Atkins 766-7000 or vatkins@awod.com.

Running Raffle of *Birds* To Support SCCBP With Drawing at May Meeting

We are having a running raffle of **David Attenborough's *Birds*** - five video cassettes containing ten hours of this fantastic program on birds—a \$90 value. It will be a wonderful addition to your video library and your bird education. Proceeds go to the S.C. Center for Birds of Prey. Raffle tickets are \$5 each, and we will have the drawing at our last meeting of the year in May.



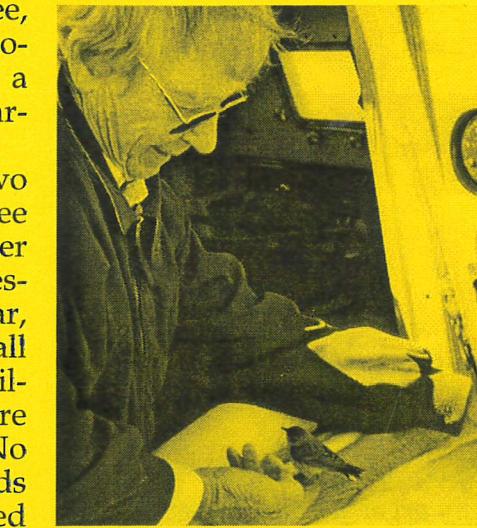
Sailbird from Tennessee by Mollie Herzog

My friend Fred from Ellerbee, SC, handed me a small photograph of a bird, saying "Take a good look at this, a sailing warbler."

It seems that Fred and two friends were sailing two to three miles offshore one warm October morning en route from Charleston to Rockville. Out of a clear, wonderfully blue sky, this small bird arrived to perch on the railing beside the cockpit, and there he sat for nearly 30 minutes. No other migrating or land birds were seen, and this one allowed Fred to approach and take pictures.

When the sails shifted, the warbler headed into the cabin below. Fred followed and watched as the small bird hopped about in the forward berth compartment looking over the life preservers, sail ropes and bunks. It then flew into the head and perched on a wash-cloth, looking at itself in the mirror of the medicine cabinet.

The bird gazed into the mirror for a long while and then flew into the galley where it jauntily perched on cushions, lampshades, liquor bottles and ketchup. It continued to perch



there until the sailboat turned into the inlet and land was visible, whereupon the bird flew out of the cabin and off toward the shore.

The bird was identified from the photographs as a Tennessee warbler, which Fred refers to as his "sailbird from Tennessee."

First Calliope Hummer!

The first calliope hummingbird ever seen in South Carolina was sighted in Greer, SC, on Dec. 4th. At last report the bird was still there. For more information on exact location, call Bob Chinn at 552-7884.

Join Great Backyard Bird Count, Feb. 18-21

The third Great Backyard Bird Count, a joint project of the National Audubon Society and Cornell Lab of Ornithology, will take place February 18-21. and record the amount of time spent counting. In particular, monitor bald eagle numbers because of its proposed de-listing from Endangered Species List..

To participate in this year's count, simply tally the highest number of each bird species seen at one time (to prevent counting the same birds more than once) Then go to the BirdSource web site <http://www.birdsource.org> and click on the appropriate state for a checklist of the most frequently reported birds.

NEWS BRIEFS

Richard Clarke-Pounder has been appointed by the CNHS board to serve as treasurer.



We want to thank member Billy McCord for graciously donating to CNHS a \$100 honorarium he received from the Fripp Island Audubon Club.



WANTED: - An outings chairman for next year. Duties include planning outings and finding leaders. Any volunteers? Call Cornelia 577-6437.



Nature Adventures Outfitters, Inc. has been licensed by the US Forest Service to offer horseback riding, bicycling, kayaking and canoeing, in the Francis Marion Forest. Call 1-800-673-0679.

McAlhany Open House Feb. 6th

Now the first Sunday of each month, open house at the McAlhany Sanctuary Feb. 6th will feature a hike through the upland fields. Directions: take Hwy. 61 to Cannadys Crossroads 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.