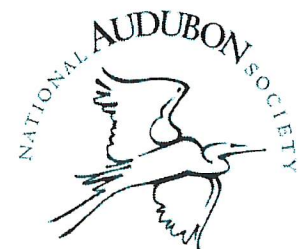


The Lesser Squawk
The Charleston Natural History Society
PO Box 504
Charleston, SC 29402

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Charleston, SC
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 XLVIII No. 1

February 2001

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 Feb. 4th

At the McAlhany Sanctuary open house **Sunday, Feb. 4**, explore the hardwood bottomland between "cat hole" and our oxbow lake with Jeff Dennis. Waterproof boots are recommended.

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.

Mark Your Calendars

March 13— Dr. Walter Anderson, co-author of *Natural History Investigations in South Carolina from Colonial Times to the Present* will speak on "John Edwards Holbrook, the man and his science."

April 10— Dr. Richard Porcher, will speak on SC wildflowers and his new book.

April 21— Dr. Richard Porcher will lead a wildflower walk as a follow-up to his talk.

May 8— James Elliott, exec. dir. of the S.C. Center for Birds of Prey, will speak with live birds - an annual tradition and treat.

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.

Dr. Dennis Forsythe, Renown Ornithologist, Will Speak on February 13th

Dr. Dennis Forsythe, professor of biology at The Citadel, will speak on the "Status and Abundance of Pelagic Birds (seabirds) off the South Carolina Coast" at the meeting **Tuesday, Feb. 13**.

The meeting at the Charleston Museum will begin with a wine and cheese reception at 6:30 pm followed by the program at 7 pm.



Bear Island Outing Feb. 10th

Bob Chinn will lead a trip to Bear Island on **Saturday, Feb. 10**. We may see nesting tundra swans and definitely plenty of ducks and other waterfowl. Meet Bob at 7:30 am in the Food Lion parking lot in Ravenel (intersection Hwy 17S and Hwy. 165). Bring water, lunch, and scopes if you have them.

Bird Nearby Sites Feb. 17th

We'll stay close to home **Saturday, Feb. 17** with a birding excursion to various sparrows.

On Sullivan's Island at Fort Moultrie there should be meadowlarks, Kestrels, Eurasian collared doves, possibly ground doves, Bonaparte's

There will be a favorable tide on that Saturday at Pitt Street for observing marble godwits, dunlins, gulls and black-bellied plovers. dowitchers, yellowlegs, harriers, Meet leader Julian Harrison at 7:30

Birding Festival Feb. 22 thru 25th

The Tidelands Birding Festival will take place **Feb. 22-25** at Huntington Beach State Park and Nearby sites. To register, call 1-888-887-2757 or online at www.ac.coastal.edu/~miles/tbf.html.

am in the Omar Temple parking lot at Patriot's Point.

Great Backyard Bird Count Needs You!

It is well known that many bird species are showing population declines due to habitat loss or other human impacts. Now, people of all ages and backgrounds can help monitor bird populations including several that are showing declines by participating in the 4th annual Great Backyard Bird Count **February 16 - 19**.

A project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society, with funding provided in part by Wild Birds Unlimited and Ford Mo-

tor Company, the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) combines high-tech web tools with "citizen-science" observations of birds. Participants enter their observations at BirdSource www.birdsource.org, a user-friendly, state-of-the-art web site developed by the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab.

Begun in 1998, the GBBC has engaged more than 100,000 people of all ages and skill levels in the effort to keep common birds common.

Continued on P. 2



Marrington Plantation

On Jan. 20, participants found a crawfish whose eggs were hatching and a baby alligator (pictured below). Birds sighted included red shouldered hawk, Coopers hawk, kestrel, meadowlark, brown-headed nuthatch, hairy woodpecker and wood ducks. Attending were leader Bob Chinn, Jean DeMorro, Dennis Forsythe, Lenora Kirkland, Terrance Larimer (Navy Weapons Station natural resources manager), Gail Maginnis, Anne Messick and Tom Snowden.

PHOTOGRAPHS
BY BOB CHINN



GBBC- cont. from P. 1 By tracking changes in bird distribution and abundance over time, such a vast database can serve as the S.O.S. signal for species that may be in trouble. GBBC urges participants to pay special attention to quail, the red-headed woodpecker and the Northern flicker, all showing serious population decreases.

To participate in the Great Backyard Bird Count, count the highest number of each bird species seen at one time (to ensure the birds are not counted more than once) and keep track of the amount of time spent counting. Log onto Birdsource at www.birdsource.org and click on the appropriate state or province for a checklist of the most frequently reported birds in that region.

Results are updated hourly in the form of animated maps and colorful graphs for all to view. Participants will be able to see almost immediately how their observations fit into the continent-wide perspective. Findings from previous years are also available at the site. Instructions for participating can be found by clicking on "Great Backyard Bird Count." There's no fee or registration. Those who would like to participate but aren't online can try their local library. Many Wild Birds Unlimited locations also accept reports.

BOARD MEMBERS

Cornelia Carrier 577-6437
Julian Harrison 795-1694
Christopher Walter 569-1062
Richard Clarke-Pounder 767-9331
Norm Brunswig (843)688-5833
Joe Cockrell 762-3868
Hal Currey 883-9114
Jeff Dennis 577-8890
Molli Hartzog 556-1110
Jennifer Lamar 588-9714
Morgan McClure 763-0222
Jill Midgett 556-7164
Sharon Richardson 556-2281

Scope Raffle Postponed Due to Slow Ticket Sales

We had expected a more enthusiastic response to our winter raffle of a Bausch and Lomb Elite 60 mm waterproof spotting scope and tripod, but we have not yet covered our cost. Please take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to own a \$700 for as little as \$5! Buy tickets and sell them to your friends so CNHS can support many of our projects not covered by our dues share from National Audubon. Come to our Feb. 13 meeting to see the scope and buy tickets. The scope's power is 15-45 the tripod extends up to 60 inches and folds down to 23 inches. The drawing is postponed until the **March 13** meeting. If purchasing by mail, don't forget to enclose a **self-addressed, stamped, envelope**.



Nebo Nature Trail

A pair of brown-headed nuthatches put on quite a show Jan. 13th. They were busy excavating a hole in a tree, oblivious to the staring eyes of enthralled CNHS members nearby. One of these industrious little birds was captured by photographer Bob Chinn.

Backyard Birder by Van Atkins

What do you talk about when the weather is so gloomy? If it is too yucky to go out to your favorite wildlife spot, then how about spending some time on the computer looking up places to go and things to do when the weather is better. There are so many web sites that cover a whole gambit of information from how to build bird houses, landscape for wildlife, take pictures to how to identify birds and where to go to see them.

Here are some of the web sites that I use: A local source is Hilton Pond at www.hiltonpond.org. This is a nature site not just birds. It is here in SC with a lot of interesting features.

Another one in our own back-

yard is Caw Caw Interpretive Center on 17 south at www.ccprc.com. This place has a lot going for it: several miles of trails, boardwalks, dikes, ponds, creeks, pine hardwood forest and open marsh. There are two more links that cover wildlife from a to z: www.birding.com and www.birding.about.com/hobbies/birding. Or check out the Project Feederwatch site at www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/.

Cecil Kirkland called thanking me for the plans I had given him for making a screech owl house. Last year the owls raised three young which the Kirklands really

RAFFLE TICKETS BY MAIL

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Number of Tickets _____

Amount Enclosed _____

One Ticket for \$5; Six tickets for \$25

Don't forget to enclose this coupon and self-addressed, stamped envelope!!!

Mail to CNHS, PO Box 504, Charleston, 29402



enjoyed watching. This year they have a pair back again. In our backyard we have a few American goldfinches, several white-throated and chipping sparrows, white-breasted nuthatch and the regular winter birds. Jim Pierson saw a pair of bluebirds and around 20 cedar waxwings at his place on James Island. Send me your sightings at 766-7000, fax 556-1542 vatkins@awod.com.



VISIT OUR
WEBPAGE
www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon
contact Webmaster Bob Chinn
843-552-7884
rchinn@cchat.com