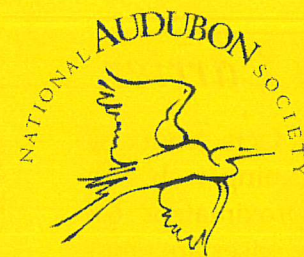


The Lesser Squawk
The Charleston Natural History Society
PO Box 504
Charleston, SC 29402

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. 3

May 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 May 6th

At the McAlhany Sanctuary open house **Sunday, May 6**, will. Directions: Take Hwy. 61 to Cannadys Crossroads and turn right onto Hwy. 15. When you

Don't forget Spring Bird Count, Sunday, Apr. 29.
Meet at intersection of 17N & Hwy. 41 at 6:30 am.

BIRDING—Cont. from P. 1—excellent place to see a variety of other birds, including prothonotary, hooded, and black-throated green warblers. Spider lilies should also be in bloom at the edge of the creek, and we may see an alligator or two and perhaps a brown water snake or a rainbow snake.

Meet Field Trip Leader Julian Harrison at 8 a.m. in the corner of the Lowe's parking lot nearest the IHOP Restaurant on Highway 17 north of Mt. Pleasant (Watch for the conspicuous IHOP sign and turn right just before it; the parking lot will be on your left). The drive to Hampton Plantation will take about an hour. There is no admission fee to Hampton Plantation. Bring lunch or snacks, drinks, and insect repellent.

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 about activity? Call Jeff Dennis at 577-8890.

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.

Elliott, Raptors Back by Popular Demand May 8

Raptor issues and the birds themselves will be the subject of our **May 8th** meeting. James Elliott, executive director of the South Carolina Center for Birds of Prey, will tell us about the swallow-tail kite study, which CNHS helped fund with a \$5,000 grant. We'll also learn about Avian Vacuolar

Myelinopathy that is killing eagles in South Carolina and across the U.S. Jim always brings feathered residents of the center and tells us about their history. Bring your



children or grandchildren.

This will be our last meeting until next fall. There'll be the election, a door prize, clocks for sale, lots of freebies and fabulous food by Dorothy Ann Lee Le-Macks. The reception begins at 6:30 pm with the program at 7 pm at the Charleston Museum.

Webb Center, Tillman Sand Ridge Sunday May 20

On **Sunday, May 20**, Burton Moore will lead an excursion to the Webb Wildlife Center on the Savannah River in Hampton County, and the Tillman Sand Ridge Heritage Preserve in Jasper County. Meet Burton at 6:30 am in the back corner of WalMart parking lot on the Highway 61 expressway near I-526. Carpooling will be desirable since the drive to the Center will take one and one-half to two hours. Bring the usual for this all day trip.

The Webb Wildlife Center is a 5,866-acre facility owned and managed by S.C. Department of Natural Resources to provide wildlife habitat and opportunities for public recreation. Roads and nature trails at the Center provide access to upland longleaf pine forest, bottomland hardwood forests, and tupelo-cypress swamp along the Savannah River. One of the attractions near the river is Bluff Lake, an oxbow harboring a variety of birds, amphibians, and reptiles, including prothono-

tary warblers, an occasional swallow-tailed or Mississippi kite, bird-voiced tree frogs, and several kinds of turtles.

Later in the day we will visit the nearby 953-acre Tillman Sand Ridge Heritage Preserve. This preserve provides habitat for South Carolina's most endangered reptile, the gopher tortoise, and also

protects more than a half-mile of frontage along the Savannah River. We will see the burrows of this terrestrial species and, if we are lucky, the tortoises themselves. The area also harbors a variety of birds including prairie warblers, painted buntings, hairy woodpeckers, and blue grosbeaks.

Birding at Hampton Plantation State Park, Wambaw Wilderness Area Saturday June 2

On **Saturday, June 2**, CNHS will first visit historic Hampton Plantation State Park a few miles north-northeast of McClellanville. There we will hike the Plantation's nature trail, an easy 2-3 mile loop that winds around an abandoned ricefield behind the plantation house and continues through diverse habitats lined in part by ancient magnolias. A variety of both song and waterbirds will likely be seen along the trail.

Later, we will proceed on to the nearby Wambaw Wilderness Area in Francis Marion National Forest, focusing on the area around the bridge over Wambaw Creek on Echaw Road. Here, according to one tradition, swallow-tail and Mississippi kites can be seen soaring overhead between 12:15 and 12:45 p.m. In any event, the floodplain forest along the creek below the bridge is an

Continued on page 4

Message From the President *by Cornelia Carrier*

This will be my last message as president. We have accomplished much in the last two years. We have held successful fundraisers and instituted an annual operating budget. We have had interesting programs and outings. Unfortunately, we have not done much in the area of conservation and activism. I regret that we were not able to focus on the many issues important to the health of our environment.

I recently met someone who said he had dropped his membership because AUDUBON magazine was "too strident." As a local chapter we have had some disagreements with National Audubon on several fronts, but we cannot ignore the very real threats to our environment. We can't just enjoy forests, beaches, birds, wildlife and flora (or pretty pictures of them) secure that they will exist forever. Many will disappear if we don't champion their cause. Doing so can sometimes sound strident.

Join in Spring Birdathon

CNHS will have a Spring Birdathon **April 28 through May 6**. All funds will go to CNHS projects. Here's how it works in five easy steps:

1. Solicit friends, family, customers, clients and/or fellow Audubon members to support your effort. Try to get at least 10 or 12.
2. Ask them to pledge any amount — the more the better — for each bird you see on your Birdathon day.
3. Pick any day between

There is the threat of drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to supply our energy needs for a mere six months. Last week The Wall Street Journal had a story about the failure rate and poor maintenance of safety valves on pipelines on Alaska's North Slope oil fields. This was not AUDUBON Magazine, but the WSJ questioning what would happen to ANWR's pristine environment if a faulty valve caused a spill.

And yet, many of us drive SUV's and trucks that are gas guzzlers. What are we willing to give up to save the ANWR?

The Bush administration has received international criticism for pulling out of the Kyoto Protocol on global warming on grounds that it would "harm the economy." Since the U.S. is responsible for releasing more greenhouse gases than any other nation, shouldn't we feel responsible for their effects on the world's environment?

April 28 and May 6. Go anywhere you like on that day; stay as long as you want, and identify as many birds as you can. Document your sightings.

4. Notify your supporters of the number of species you saw and multiply that number by their pledge amount. Collect that contribution.

5. Send your name, your supporters' names and total collected contributions to:

CNHS, PO Box 504, Charleston, SC 29402.

Here are some facts from the EPA's Global Warming web site: In the U.S. "approximately 6.6 tons of greenhouse gases are emitted per person per year. Emissions per person rose about 3.4% between 1990 and 1997. Most of these emissions, about 82%, are from burning fossil fuels to generate electricity and power our cars. The remaining emissions are from methane from wastes in our landfills, raising livestock, natural gas pipelines and coal, as well as from industrial chemicals and other sources." In comparison, France and Japan emit less than 3 tons of these gases per person.

As individuals we can affect 32% of the total emissions per person by choices we make in the electricity we use in our homes, the waste we produce and personal transportation. The other 68% comes from sources such as industries, offices and agriculture.

On another front, the Bush Administration has floated two proposals that will be good for the Lowcountry environment but have already received local opposition. One proposal would restrict federally subsidized flood insurance to primary residences. Making flood insurance for rental properties and second homes more costly might help cut down on the rampant development that is taking place in our low-lying, flood-prone coastal zone.

Another proposal would do away with federal funding for beach re-nourishment. Fighting the natural processes of erosion and accretion along our coast is a losing battle. Tax dollars could be spent more wisely on projects that have some hope of success.



Send in Bids for Vacation House

Burnet R. Maybank has graciously offered his house in the mountains of Flat Rock, NC, for a sealed bid auction to benefit CNHS. The minimum bid for the week of August 12 in this spacious house is **\$500**. It normally rents for **\$1,000** a week. People seem to be waiting until the last minute to enter their bids. At press time we had none! Don't tarry, get those bids in!

Located on a lake full of fish, the house has five bedrooms, four baths, lots of porches plus a small guest house in the back with a double bedroom, bath and porch. There's a fishing boat for your use. Within walking distance are four tennis courts, a nine-hole golf course and many walking trails. The Green and Davidson Rivers are nearby. It's the perfect escape from the August Lowcountry heat. Send in your bids to **CNHS, PO Box 504, Charleston SC 29402**. All bids must be received by the May 8 meeting when the winner will be announced.

Election of Officers at May 8 Meeting

Nominees for officers are: Bob Chinn, president; Christopher Walter, vice-president and secretary; Tom Snowden, treasurer, and Julian Harrison, historian. Nominees for the board are Norm Brunswig, Cornelia Carrier, Joe Cockrell, Hal Currey, Jeff Dennis, Polly Holden, Jennifer Lamar, Morgan McClure,

Sharon Richardson and Ann Tiller.



VISIT OUR

WEBPAGE

[www.homestead.com/](http://www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon)

cnhsaudubon

contact Webmaster Bob Chinn

843-552-7884

rchinn@cchat.com

Migratory Bird Day Celebration Features Platform Dedication, Birding on May 12

Join us on International Migratory Bird Day, **Saturday May 12**, for birding and the dedication of the Ace Basin National Wildlife Refuge observation platforms. CNHS, as part of the Audubon Refuge Keepers program, successfully secured a \$5,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for this project. The two birding platforms were constructed with the help of our partners AmeriCorps and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These facilities are now open to the public at the Grove Plantation in the Refuge.

The gates will open May 12 at 8 am. The birding walk will begin at 8:30 am and last about an hour. The dedication ceremony will begin at 10 am. Meet at the Grove Plantation House. Refreshments will be served shortly after the dedication.

The Grove is usually closed on Saturday, so we are committed to completing all activities prior to noon, at which time the Grove will close. Take Hwy. 174 off of 17S. Go to flashing light and take a right onto SSR55 (Willtown Rd.). The road to the Grove is on the left. Questions? Call Jeff Dennis **577-8890**.

Beidler MBD Program

International Migratory Bird Week will be celebrated at Beidler Forest with a bird walk **Saturday May 5** at 8 am. Throughout the day there will be programs by Mark Hufford of The Carolina Kids Conservancy featuring live rehabilitated animals. For more information call **1-843-462-2150**.