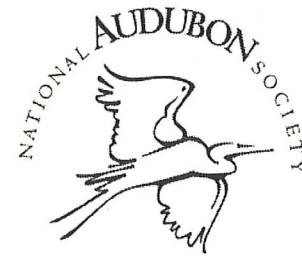


The Lesser Squawk  
The Charleston Natural History Society  
PO Box 504  
Charleston, SC 29402

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

Volume XLVIV No. 3

April 2002

EXPIRES 1/1/2004  
STEPHEN BLEEZARDE  
49 RIVERS POINT ROW  
CHARLESTON SC 29412-3600



*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.*



## Visit McAlhany Nature Preserve May 5th

Come look for prothonotary warblers and other spring arrivals with Jeff Dennis at the McAlhany open house, **Sunday, May 3** starting at **9:30 a.m.**

Directions: Take Hwy. 61 to Cannadys Crossroads



Members of Lowcountry Open Land Trust enjoy McAlhany Preserve now under a conservation easement.

and turn right onto Hwy. 15. When you reach the small community of Grover, take the first left onto Wire Rd. Go over 1-95 and across a small creek. Look for our sign on the left side of the road. Questions? Call Jeff at 577-8890.

### Recruit New Members!

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

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Make checks payable to National Audubon Society  
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## Sea Turtles Subject of May 14 Meeting

Sally Murphy, Wildlife Biologist with the SCDNR Marine Resources Division at Fort Johnson on James Island, will speak about the endangered loggerhead sea turtle (Caretta caretta) at the CNHS meeting **Tuesday, May 14**.

Mrs. Murphy is a loggerhead specialist and was the principle investigator for the 1998 S.C. Loggerhead Sea Turtle Study undertaken by the DNR with funding from the National Marine Fisheries Service. The study investigated the dispersal patterns, migratory pathways and foraging habitat use of five adult female loggerheads that nest at Cape Island in the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, the largest nesting beach north of Cape Canaveral, Florida."

The meeting in the Charleston Museum begins with a reception at **6:30 pm** followed by the program at **7 pm**. This is the last meeting of the year and there will be door prizes and the announcement of the winner of the week's vacation house. There will also be election of officers and a vote on a by-laws revision (see stories inside) plus Earth Stewards showing their handiwork.

## Congaree Swamp National Monument On Tap May 26

On **Sunday, May 26**, Burton Moore will lead an all-day trip to South Carolina's Congaree Swamp National Monument. This 22,200-acre park protects the largest intact tract of old-growth bottomland hardwood forest remaining in the United States. Most of the park consists of congressionally designated wilderness. Visitors have access to miles of foot trails including an easy boardwalk loop (2.4 miles).

Congaree Swamp is a haven for many species of warblers (e.g. prothonotary, parula, and hooded warblers), vireos, gnatcatchers, titmice, chickadees, woodpeckers, owls, thrushes, and wading birds, just to mention a few. Various species of frogs, lizards, and snakes may also put in an appearance.

We'll stop first at the well-designed visitor center. Restroom facilities, water, and a beverage machine are also available. Admission to the Monument is free.

Meet Burton at **7:am** at the Walmart parking lot in Summerville, SC. He'll be in the corner of the lot nearest the first entrance off US Hwy 17A from I26 at the 199 exit. The Monument is about a 90-mile drive from Summerville. Bring the usual. Please call Julian Harrison (843-795-1694) to register for this trip.

## Point of Pines May 18

Join field trip leader Bob Chinn on **Saturday, May 18**, for a return to what has proven to be one of CNHS's more popular field trip sites, Point of Pines Plantation on Edisto Island. Please telephone Julian Harrison (843-795-1694) to register for the trip.

Owner and host Burnet R. Maybank will meet us at 8:30 am. to give us a guided tour of the property, which includes trails, ponds, fields, patches of mixed woods, the tabby ruins of a fort built in 1692, and a beach and grand vistas of the North Edisto River. One of the most interesting features of Point of Pines is a large egret and heron rookery.

Meet Bob at **7:45 am.** at the Food Lion parking lot near the intersection of Hwys 17 South and 165 in Ravenel, SC. Car pooling is highly recommended. Bring lunch/snacks, binoculars, field guides, and insect repellent. Restroom facilities will be available at the house.

## Hampton Plantation June 1 for Swallow -tail / Mississippi Kites

Join Chapter president Bob Chinn for a trip to Hampton Plantation State Park and nearby Wambaw Creek, on **Saturday, June 1**. We should locate several warblers along the 2 1/2 mile trail, including; Swainson's, Kentucky, N. parula, common yellow-throat, prothonotary and pine. Also we

should see many residents such as chickadee, titmouse, Carolina. wren, woodpeckers etc. At Wambaw Creek there is a good possibility of seeing swallow-tailed and Mississippi kites. Butterflies and wildflowers should also be abundant, including spider lilies along Wambaw Creek. (cont. p. 3)



## Hurry! No Bidders Yet in Auction of Spacious Summer House on Lake in Flat Rock, NC

Our last fundraiser of the year is a sealed bid auction with a choice of four different weeks to spend in the mountains of North Carolina. The minimum bid is \$600 for the one-week rental at this spacious house that rents for \$1,200 a week. The available weeks are June 2-9, September 8-15, Sept. 15-22, or Sept. 22-29.

Burnet Maybank has graciously offered CNHS his house for this fundraiser. The Flat Rock, NC, house is located on a point jutting into a large lake full of fish. It features five bedrooms, four baths, kitchen, pantry, dining room, back and front porches (pictured to right). In the back is a small house with a double bed, bath and porch.

This is one of our biggest annual fundraisers so pick one of the four weeks and mail your bid to **CNHS, PO Box 504, Charleston, SC 29402**. The highest bid for the one-week rental will be announced at the **May 14** meeting. Hurry, get those bids in!



## Votes on Officers and By-Laws Revision May 14

There will be two votes at the May 14 meeting. Members will be asked to vote on the following slate of officers (note Bob Chinn's term is for two years): Cornelia Carrier, vice-president, Morgan McClure, secretary, Tom Snowden, treasurer, Julian Harrison, historian. Other board nominees are Steve Bleezarde, Garrett Budds, Norm Brunswig, Joe Cockrell, Doreen Cubie, Melissa Davis, Jeff Denis, Polly Holden and Ann Tiller.

Members will also be asked to vote on a revision to the by-laws required by the National Audubon Society.

The current provision states:

This society may terminate its status as a Chapter of the National Society upon six (6) months' notice in writing to the National Society and the National Society may terminate the status of this Society as a Chapter of the National Society upon six (6) months' notice, in writing, to this Society. In the event of such notice of termination by either this Society

or the National Society the allocation of dues by the National Society to this Society shall cease upon expiration of the six (6) months' period. However, members of this Society shall remain members of the National Society for the balance of the term for which dues have been paid.

The current provision must be replaced with the following:

This Society may terminate its status as a Chapter of the National Society the, pursuant to procedures set forth in the 2001 Audubon Chapter Policy adopted by the National Society's Board of Directors on December 8, 2001.

The Audubon Chapter Policy states: "Circumstances may arise under which either a Chapter or National may choose to reconsider their relationship. These situations include but are not limited to: (i) a Chapter becoming inactive or ceasing operations, (ii) a Chapter choosing to adopt policies or pursue activities that are in conflict with or do

not fulfill this Chapter Policy, and (iii) a Chapter deciding to terminate its certification as a Chapter of the National Audubon Society. In such situations, it is the responsibility of the State Director or Chapter Services Office (in states without a State Office) to work with the Chapter to attempt to return the Chapter to full activity or to compliance with the Chapter Policy. The State Director or Chapter Services Office is encouraged to use whatever tools or resources are needed to restore the Chapter to full Chapter activity or to compliance; options might include formulation of a remedial plan, or designation of 'reorganization' status for Chapters needing additional time with temporary suspension of dues share and access to the mailing list.

If the Chapter is not able or willing to return to full activity or to compliance, then the State Director, acting after consultation with the State Board, or the Chapter Services Office

## Global Effort for Important Bird Areas

by Bob Chinn

Habitat loss and fragmentation are the most serious threats facing populations of birds across America and around the world. Unless we can slow the rapid destruction and degradation of habitat, populations of many birds may decline to dangerously low levels.

The IBA program is a global effort to identify the areas that are most important for maintaining bird populations, and focus conservation efforts at protecting these sites.

Important Bird Areas, or IBAs, are sites that provide essential habitat for one or more species of bird. IBAs include sites for breeding, wintering, and/or migrating birds. IBAs may be a few acres or thousands of acres, but usually they are discrete sites that stand out from the surrounding landscape. IBAs may include public or private lands, or both, and they may be protected or unprotected.

To qualify as an IBA, sites must satisfy at least one of the following criteria. The site must support:

- Species of conservation concern (e.g. threatened and endangered species).
- Restricted-ranges species (species


vulnerable because they are not widely distributed).

--Species that are vulnerable because their populations are concentrated in one general habitat type or biome.

--Species, or groups of similar species (such as waterfowl or shorebirds), that are vulnerable because they occur at high densities due to their congregatory behavior.

The identification of IBAs is an important first step in larger bird conservation initiatives. IBA inventories provide a scientifically defensible method for pri-

### VISIT OUR WEBPAGE

 [www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon](http://www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon)  
contact Webmaster  
Bob Chinn  
843-552-7884  
[rchinn@awod.com](mailto:rchinn@awod.com)

### Kites (cont. from p. 1)

The Hampton Plantation House is a fine example of Georgian architecture. Adjacent to the Santee River, this 322-acre property was part of a coastal rice plantation. The mansion last served as the home of Archibald Rutledge, noted writer and South Carolina's first poet laureate. Its halls have welcomed famous patriots, soldiers, and politicians for more than 250 years, while the grounds provide opportunities to examine the wildlife of the Carolina Low-country. Hampton Plantation is on the National Register of Historic Places as well as a National Historic Landmark. Tours of the historic home are available daily from Memorial Day to Labor Day (fee charged).

Meet Bob at the Lowes' parking lot, Hwy 17N in Mt. Pleasant at 7:30 am. Bob will be in the area right behind the IHOP restaurant. Bring water, lunch/snacks, binoculars, field guides and insect repellent.

oritizing conservation activities and allocating limited conservation dollars to ensure the maximum benefit to birds.

As of now South Carolina has ten IBA's with an additional four under consideration. SC IBA's include; Francis Marion NF, Beidler Forest, Congaree Swamp NM, & Carolina Sandhills NWR. For more information on IBA's go to [www.audubon.org](http://www.audubon.org) or [www.abcbirds.org](http://www.abcbirds.org).

## International Migratory Bird Day Events May 9-12

**May 9 (Thursday), 7 am**

Bird Walk at Grove Plantation, ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge led by Julian Harrison and Jennifer Koches. Meet at Grove Plantation. Call Jennifer at 843-727-4707 (Ext. 19) to register, learn details, and obtain directions. There is no fee for this event. Registration required by Wednesday, May 8.

**May 11 (Saturday), 7:30 am**

Birding walk on South Tibwin in Francis Marion NF. Suggest boots or shoes that can get wet and muddy, water, snacks and repellent. (Plan for about 5 hrs. No facilities.) Meet S. Tibwin parking lot off US 17. Registration required by Friday, May 10

**May 11 (Saturday), 7:30 am**

Birding tour of Bull Island on Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge. Tour led by Pete Laurie, SC Dept. of Natural Resources. Meet at Moore's Landing at 7:30 am. Return to mainland at 2 p.m. Bring water, snacks. Registration required by Friday, May 10. Fee: \$30.00 (cost of tour boat to Bull Island)

**May 12 (Sunday), 7:30 am**

International Migratory Bird Day: I'on Swamp Dr. Julian Harrison will lead a birding walk of I'on Swamp in Francis Marion National Forest. Meet in the parking lot of Sewee Visitor Center and plan to be in the woods for several hours. Registration required by Saturday, May 11.



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## Visit McAlhany Nature Preserve April 7th

Jeff Dennis will lead a walk along the bluff to look for wildflowers at the McAlhany open house, **Sunday, April 7**, starting at **9:30 a.m.**

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 1-95 and across a small creek. Look for our sign on the left side of the road. Questions? Call Jeff at 577-8890.

## Mark Your Calendars

**May 14**—Sally Murphy, SC Department of Natural Resources, will speak on sea turtles.

**May 11 & 12**—International Migratory Bird Day events.

**May 18**—Outing to Burnet Maybank's Point of Pines Plantation.

**May 26**—Outing to Congaree National Monument.

**Early June**—Outing to Hampton Plantation and Wambaw Creek to see Mississippi and swallow-tailed kites.

## Recruit New Members!

CNHS / National Audubon Society membership  
(First Time Members)

Regular- \$20    Sr. Citizens/Students -\$15

Name \_\_\_\_\_

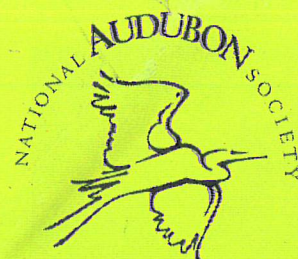
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# THE LESSER SQUAWK

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## Silver Bluff Audubon Sanctuary April 9

Dan Connolly, director of Silver Bluff Plantation Audubon Sanctuary, will speak at the **Tuesday, April 9** CNHS meeting at the Charleston Museum. Reception begins at **6:30 pm**, followed by the program at **7 pm**.

Connolly will present the history of Silver Bluff, a 3150 acre Audubon Sanctuary on the Savannah River near Aiken, S.C. Before colonial times, the property was the site of a Native American settlement. During the mid to late 1700s (1750-1790) it became a trading post

and is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Silver Bluff was the site of a Civil War battle, and later became the cotton plantation of S.C. Governor James Henry Hammond.

Dan will also talk about the ecology of the Sanctuary, which includes the Kathwood Wood Stork Foraging Ponds and a variety of habitats from fire maintained pine forests to riverine bottomlands. We will also learn about the ongoing sustainable, multiple use forest management demonstration project and the new Audubon Center they are developing.

## Visit Our Wannamaker Nature Preserve April 6

Join field trip leader Morgan McClure on **Saturday, April 6** for an all-day outing to CNHS' Wannamaker Nature Preserve near St. Matthews in Calhoun County.

The Preserve's 480 acres include 213 acres of old fields undergoing secondary succession and 267 acres of mixed deciduous woods. A part of the property is bisected by Lyons Creek, a fast moving stream containing diverse mollusks (snails and clams), aquatic insects and crayfishes, fishes, salamanders, frogs, and turtles.

In the northeastern corner of the Preserve there is a steep, north-facing bluff with a rich, mixed hardwood forest featuring beech trees and Mountain Laurel. There are a series of springs and seepages at the base. This bluff is probably the most outstanding natural feature of the Preserve. Mountain Laurel may be in bloom at the time of our visit. CNHS is engaged in a long-term inventory of the Preserve's biota, so we'll probably have a chance to add to our lists of the fauna and flora.

Meet Morgan at **7:30 am** at the Walmart parking lot in Summerville, SC. He'll be in the corner of the lot nearest the first entrance off US Hwy 17A from I26 at the 199 exit. Bring lunch and/or snacks, water, and field guides.

There are no restroom facilities but we'll make a stop in St. Matthews before reaching the Preserve. Please note: parking space is a problem so it will be helpful for us to carpool as much as possible.

## Annual Birding at Power Lines April 20

Join chapter president Bob Chinn for a morning trip along a large set of power lines in N. Charleston, off Ashley Phosphate Rd., on **Saturday April 20**. The area features cleared/weedy habitat under the power lines, mixed woodland on the edge, some swampy areas and perhaps a shallow pond, depending on rainfall.

More than 120 species of birds have been seen here over the last three or four years. Some notable ones include; painted bunting, turkey, king rail, osprey, sedge wren, bobolinks, white ibis, wood stork, prothonotary warbler, Mississippi kite and pileated woodpecker. Bobcat, fox, deer and raccoons also inhabit the area. If there is sufficient water, river otters may also be present. This is pretty amazing, considering the area lies between two large sub-divisions and right off one of the busiest roads in the state.

Meet Bob at the Festival Center at Ashley Phosphate & Dorchester Rds. at **7:30 am**. Bob will be in the parking lot behind the Bank of America, which is on Ashley Phosphate. Bring water, snacks/lunch, binoculars, field guides and bug repellent.



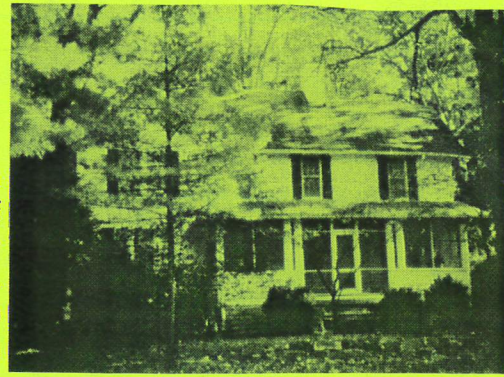


## Choice of Dates in 2002 Auction of Spacious House in Flat Rock, NC

This year bidders in a sealed bid auction will have a choice of four different weeks to spend in the mountains of North Carolina. The minimum bid is \$600 for the one-week rental of this spacious house that rents for \$1,200 a week. The available weeks are June 2-9, September 8-15, Sept. 15-22, or Sept. 22-29. Burnet Maybank has graciously offered CNHS his house for this fundraiser. The

Flat Rock, NC, house is located on a point jutting into a large lake full of fish. It features five bedrooms, four baths, kitchen, pantry, dining room, back and front porches (pictured to right). In the back is a small house with a double bed, bath and porch.

Pick one of the four weeks and mailed your bid to CNHS, PO Box 504, Charleston, SC 29402. The highest bid



for the one-week rental on the date of their choice will be announced at the May 14 meeting.

## Use Less Fuel and Save Birds by Garrett Budds

Imagine a Carolina morning without the festive flight and coaxing call of our native avian representative, the wren: an animated, friendly little bird, familiar to us whether strolling our neighborhoods or exploring our coastal woodlands. The absence of the Carolina Wren may seem inconceivable but our confidence may be misguided. Ours is an age of environmental exploitation to avoid compromising creature comforts.

We are all guilty. Poorly planned errands and overbooked schedules are typical excesses of vehicular use "fueled" by our busy lifestyles. Moreover, it would be difficult to find an area not affected by the rise in average temperature across the United States, a result of greenhouse gas emissions. The United States represents only 300 million of the planet's six trillion people: yet we are responsible for twenty five percent of the greenhouse gas emissions, — a gross imbalance. Consequently, migratory patterns of birds in North America are being affected. *The New York Times* reported that seven state birds are threatened, from California's valley quail to Georgia's brown thrasher, to New Hampshire's purple finch.

Government policy could make or break our steamy future. When the Bush Administration abandoned the Kyoto treaty on global warming last year, many cities, such as Seattle, re-

sponded by trying to meet the treaty's goals via local initiatives and incentives for reduced auto use; a viable option to consider in South Carolina. Increasing fuel standards would save more fuel than the Alaska National Wildlife Refuge would provide. Just last week the Senate voted down a proposition that would require the minimum fuel standard increased to 36 mpg by 2015. Progressive measures are on the table; the time has come to act.

Contact your senators and make them aware of your support for more stringent fuel standards, the benefits thereof, and the high cost of ignoring the warning signs. In addition, make the White House aware of the importance of the Kyoto treaty and a sensible national climate plan. Next time try walking to the store or combining your errands using a little foresight. And if biking is an option, the compound benefits of good health and reduced fuel use are bound to make you smile. Every bit we do helps, but we cannot rely solely on individual concentrated efforts to overcome such a task. It will take government fortification of realistic standards to really cool us off. Get out there and make your voice heard...for the birds' sake.

## Meet Earth Stewards

For the past several years, CNHS has given financial support to the Sewee Earth Stewards environmental program sponsored by the SEWEE Association and its partners, Cape Romain NWR, Sewee Visitor and Education Center, and Francis Marion National Forest.

The Sewee Earth Stewards are 350 fifth-graders from seven public and private schools in Charleston and Berkeley counties as well as 20 home-schoolers from the East Cooper area. The program is a nine-week cross-curriculum program on freshwater wetlands that integrates science, math, reading, writing and journaling into a hands-on learning experience.

Several Sewee Earth Stewards students will have a display of their work and be available for questions during the receptions at the April and May meetings.



Capers Island Capers Photo by Steve Bleezarde

## Cats Kill 400,000,000 Birds Annually!

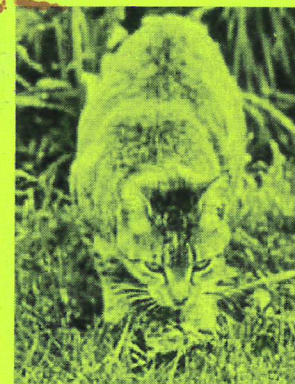
by Bob Chinn

Scientists estimate that free-roaming cats (owned, stray, and feral) kill hundreds of millions of birds in the U.S. each year.

Cats kill not only birds that frequent our backyards, such as the eastern towhee, American goldfinch, and song sparrow, but also Watch List species such as the snowy plover, wood thrush, and black-throated blue warbler, and endangered species such as the least tern and piping plover.

Not only are birds and other wildlife at risk, but cats who roam free often lead short and painful lives, living on average less than 5 years, whereas indoor cats often live to 17 or more years of age.

There are over 73 million pet cats in the U.S., making them the most



popular pet in the country. There may be an additional 60 - 100 million stray and feral cats in the U.S.

Unaltered cats are prolific breeders. In states with warm climates, a female cat can have up to three litters per year, with four to eight kittens per litter.

Cats are the most common carriers of rabies among domestic animals. What can YOU do?

If you own a cat: keep it indoors or on a leash when outside (Charleston County ordinance is same for cats as dogs as far as restraint of animals when outside own property). There are several items that keep cats in your yard (fences, cages etc.) and a collar attachment that prevents cats from catching wildlife ([www.catgoods.com](http://www.catgoods.com)).

Have your cat neutered! If neighbors or feral cats are the problem, you can get a trap from John Ancrum, SPCA, (Charleston County, deposit required) catch the cat/cats, and call them. They will come get the cat, and if tagged will notify owner. Otherwise it is treated as dogs are (kept for a few days, then put up for adoption or euthanized). Encourage local officials to enforce the ordinances.

Trap-Neuter-Release (TNR)/managed colonies

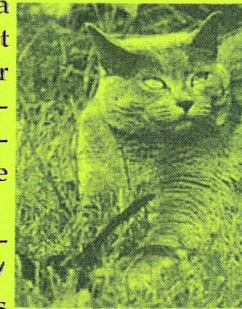
are another problem. There are many groups encouraging TNR/managed colonies as ways to control feral/stray cats, but it does not work. A grad student in Florida did his Masters thesis on colonies in Miami and the conclusion was that the TNR just does not work. To see his work go to [www.fiu.edu/~clarkea/students/castillo/](http://www.fiu.edu/~clarkea/students/castillo/)

The U.S. Navy has a new directive (CNO policy letter of 10 Jan 2002) that ends the Trap-Neuter-Release type control, and requires installations to remove feral/stray animals and educate residents on animal control

Speaking of "Trap-Neuter-Release," here is an excerpt from the March 7, 2002, Raleigh News & Observer on *Operation Catnip*: "The ASPCA is also supportive. It recently teamed with Clorox Corp., a maker of cat litter, to give Operation Catnip a \$20,000 grant. The group plans to use some of the money to send cats to veterinarians who charge a small fee.

"The purpose of the Catnip Connection program will be to do up to 600 additional cats through the program," Cappelson said. Although the program already sterilizes and vaccinates 1,800 to 2,400 cats a year, it should have no problem finding patients. The SPCA of Wake County estimates that as of two years ago, there were 86,000 feral cats roaming Wake County."

I am not a rocket scientist, but even I



can see that neutering 2,400 cats/year out of 86,000 is like shoveling sand against a tsunami.

Cats Indoors is a campaign of the American Bird Conservancy, which attempts to educate cat owners of the advantages of keeping their cats indoors. The ABC web address is [www.abcbirds.org](http://www.abcbirds.org).

## Need Help With Spring Bird Count

CNHS's Spring Bird Count will be held on **Sunday, April 28**. Meet Count compiler Bob Chinn at the Kentucky Fried Chicken parking lot at 7 am at US 17N and SC HWY 41 North of Mt. Pleasant for area assignments.

We need many participants to ensure adequate coverage of the count circle. There is no charge for the Spring Count. You don't have to be an expert birder to help out. Questions? Call Bob at 552-7884 or e-mail at [rchinn@awod.com](mailto:rchinn@awod.com).

## Roadless Rule

Conservationists nationwide are rounding up support for legislation to reinstate the rule banning logging and road building in roadless areas of our national forests. The ban was overturned by the Bush Administration despite the fact that there were more than two million supportive comments from the public.

To help pass this legislation now being drafted, contact your representative in Congress to urge full implementation of the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. Call 1-800-648-3516.

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