

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

EXPIRES 11/1/02
ANN S TILLER
345 HOBCEW DR
MT PLEASANT SC 29464-2571



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 March 3rd

Christopher Walter will lead a walk through the riparian bottomlands recognized as exemplary by DNR Heritage Trust). He'll be available to talk about our new conservation easement on the property **Sunday, March 3**. Gates open at **9 am**. Directions: Take Hwy.



Photo Bob Chinn took of Cooper's hawk in his backyard

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. Look for our sign on the left side of the road. Questions? Call Chrisopher at 569-1062.

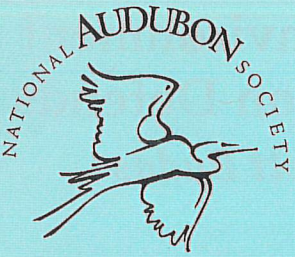
Recruit New Members!

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 51001,
Boulder, CO 80323-1001

Make checks payable to National Audubon Society
Write Chapter Code U-51 on your check. 7XCH



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. 2 March 2002

Savannah River Ecology Lab Talk Mar. 12

Our program speaker for the March 12 meeting will be Dr. Jay Whitfield Gibbons, reptile ecologist and head of the Environmental Outreach and Education Program, at the Savannah River Ecology Lab near Aiken, SC. He will discuss current ecological re-

search programs at SREL, including his own interests in the ecology of aquatic reptiles and amphibians.

The Tuesday meeting in the Charleston Museum begins with a reception at 6:30 pm followed by the program at 7 pm. We'll be selling prints of "The Lone Snowy Egret." Buy one to support the chapter.

Capers Island Trip March 16 Limited to 10; Need 3rd Boat

CHNS will sponsor an outing to Capers Island on **Saturday, March 16**. However, participation will be restricted to 10 participants on a "first come - first serve" basis as we were unable to obtain more than two boats for the trip on this date.

To reserve a space, please call Julian Harrison (795-1694) by **March 12**. A waiting list will be established because of the limited space, so please call Julian with cancellations as soon as possible. If anyone has a boat to offer, contact Julian.

Capers Island is a South Carolina Heritage Trust Preserve located about 15 miles north of Charleston between Dewees Island and the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge. Accessible only by boat, the island lies about three miles from the mainland and is about three miles long and one mile wide.

Meet Julian in the Lowe's parking lot in Mt. Pleasant at **7:15 am**. He'll be in the corner of the lot nearest the IHOP restaurant. From there we'll car-pool to the Isle of Palms Marina on 41st Street where the boats will be waiting to take us to the island at 8 a.m. There may be a parking fee at the Marina. Bring water, lunch or snacks, rain gear, bird guides, and binoculars.

We'll dock at the South end of the island, do some birding at the large impoundment, and then hike some of the trails. Any decision to cancel the trip will be done that morning at the meeting place and not before.

Woods Bay Park /Preserve All-Day Outing March 23

Join trip leader and board member Morgan McClure for a visit to Woods Bay State Park & Heritage Preserve, near Olanta/Turbeville **Saturday, March 23**.

Woods Bay features a geologic formation known as a Carolina Bay. The origin of these elliptical depressions are as mysterious and unique as the wildlife found in their swampy habitat.

Woods Bay offers a nature center that is handicapped accessible. The Mill Pond Nature Trail is an easy 3/4 mile loop. The Carolina Bay Boardwalk is an easy 500 feet one-way.

The 1,541-acre state park is a refuge for many varieties of birds, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals, as well as to a host of rare and specialized plants.

It contains both swampland areas and grassy savanna areas, as well as pine barrens along its sand rim. A cypress-tupelo community dominates the interior of the Bay, while longleaf pines cover the drier rims.

Meet Morgan at the Summerville WalMart (I-26, Exit 199) at **7:30 am**. Morgan will be in the parking lot corner nearest to I-26. Bring water, lunch/ snacks, binoculars and field guides. Admission is free and the park opens at 9:00 am. This is essentially an all day trip as the park is about 90 miles from Summerville.



Spot Surrogate Nests

Again this year, the SC Center for Birds of Prey is asking our help in finding foster nests for orphans. If you know the location of nests of hawks, falcons, owls, ospreys, kites, eagles or vultures, please contact the center at (843) 928-3494 or Mary Pringle on the Isle of Palms at 886-8733. Report the species, location of nest, accessibility, property ownership and contact information.

The Center has learned it is best to return the young birds back to the original nest if at all possible. If the nestling has suffered an injury, it is treated and released when appropriate. When no injury is present, every attempt is made to return the birds to the original nest or, if necessary, to a surrogate nest of the same species. Your help is needed to find these back-up nests.

New Education Project

We have chosen Hursey Elementary School in N. Charleston to begin a bird feeder project with a second grade. A few volunteers are needed to erect several feeders on the school grounds. One member volunteered to help build them. If you volunteered, or could help, please call Ann Tiller at 884-4532. We hope to have these up in early March.

BOARD MEMBERS

Bob Chinn, president/web master 552-7884
Christopher Walter, vice-pres., secy. 569-1062
Thomas Snowden, treasurer, 875-3445
Julian Harrison, historian, outings 795-1694
Ann Tiller, membership, 884-4532
Cornelia Carrier, newsletter, 577-6437
Joe Cockrell, birdseed sale, 762-3868
Morgan McClure, programs, 763-0222
Jeff Dennis, McAlhany, 577-8890
Norm Brunswig, State Office, (843)688-5833
Polly Holden, 853-1100

We Must Defend Environment While Administration Defends Our Nation *by Garrett Budds*

A call to arms my friends...

Yes, another battle must be waged, and with the utmost expediency! While our nation undergoes one the most catastrophic and transformational periods in its brief history, the present foreign policy focus may be an impromptu guise of significant environmental injustice.

We, as a nation, stand strong in defense of our land and its people, but we are dropping the ball when it comes to defending our natural resources. Such sacred, invaluable assets should not be taken for granted or abused with reckless abandon, as if a never-ending cornucopia of lumber, fossil fuel, and clean water is at our disposal.

The future holds macabre possibilities if we do not change our course of action now. Our dire situation resonates throughout the country where (to name a few)

- oil companies push to drill in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge;
- the International Snowmobile Manufacturers Association fights limits on snowmobile use in Yellowstone despite the US Park Service issuing gas masks to rangers because of air pollution;
- model airplane organizations are fighting their exclusion from the Shawangunk Grasslands NWR where birds nest, roost and forage.

Our Southern forests are also at risk. Over the past century, the southern forests have served as steady suppliers of lumber and wood products for the United States as well as the world. Rarely has the benefit of these sales been seen locally; more often than not, it profits lumber corporations alone. As cutting has been limited in the Pacific Northwest, timber companies have increased their operations in the South.

Can the corporate machine be at fault for running so smoothly? Certainly not when we, as a constituency, have done little to voice opposition to such practices. At present, the Bush administration is pushing for plans that would restructure the regulation of federal forestland. This is in addition to its admitted wish to revisit legislation of the Clinton era that protects large sections of forest from having additional roads built throughout them.

Ignorance of sound, environmentally-friendly forest management and abolition of the "roadless rule" will become a reality if we do not speak up and voice our opposition. This administration will continue to cater to

(continued on page 3)

Internet Storehouse of Information

There are so many wonderful sites on the internet that offer birding information, detailed information on conservation issues and easy ways to participate in environmental activism.

As the use of computers and the numbers of web pages continue to grow, many newcomers to the internet are confused by the sheer number of sites available. Here are a few of the sites that relate to the environment and conservation.

Some relevant sites: (Note: put www. in front of all these)
birdsource.org - a collaboration

of National Audubon and Cornell Univ.; **uga.edu/~srel/home.html** - the site for Savannah River Ecology Lab.; **ornithology.com** - general bird site; **americanbirding.org** - American Birding Assn. Site; **walterboro.org/ACE-Basin/index.html** — site for info on the ACE Basin; **windstar.org** - a site dealing mainly with backyard habitats; **worldwildlife.org** - World Wildlife Fund site dealing with world wide conservation issues; **birding.com** - various topics; **birdingonthe.net** - news, info and rare bird alerts; **dogwoodalliance.org**—site deals with threat to our Southern forests.

One of the best search engines is



by Bob Chinn

Google (**google.com**). It searches

over 1.6 billion sites.

Examples of search results are "bluebird", 316,00 results and "conservation," 6,270,000 returns!

These are just a few examples of what is on the web. There are literally hundreds of thousands of web sites dealing with birds and the environment. Be patient and have fun!

Backyard Birder *by Van Atkins*

Spring is almost here! But you would think that it had already come from all the flowers blooming. The bluebirds and Carolina wrens are checking out places to build a nest for there mates already.

Soooo! if you don't have your bird boxes up you need to do it soon. Also you must get your purple martin houses up this week if

you don't already have them up. Make sure they are clean. Use 1 or 2 teaspoons of ammonia to a quart of hot water to clean all your nest boxes.

Don't forget to put out crushed eggshells for the birds, for the calcium, and order meal worms for the bluebirds to feed there young.

Cornelia Carrier e-mailed me that she saw five hooded mergansers on Colonial Lake one morning.

Don Jones has had a lot of the normal winter birds at his feeders as well as a lot of extras since his yard backs up to a wooded swamp, so he gets wood ducks, herons and egrets.

Ben Smith called and he has purple finches at his feeder — the first I have heard of here this year.

My wife and I went to Bear Island and, as we approached, we saw 38 white pelicans soaring overhead, then landing on one of the large ponds. On Mary's House Pond we counted over 800 white ibis, five swans, 30 Caspian terns, a lot of Forrester's terns, several greater and lesser yellowlegs and sandpipers.



Two eagles overhead kept flushing a lot of the birds on the pond. The eagle's nest on the point has been taken over by a great horned owl.

If you've not been to Bear Island, it's a great place to go for an outing. You can spend a whole day there or just drive through in a hour or so. To get there take 17S; turn left at Bennet's Point Rd. (seven miles past Jacksonboro). Go 13 miles and you are there.

The Carolina Bird Club spring meeting May 4-6 will be at Black Mountain, N.C. Go to **carolinabirdclub.org** to find out about it. Call me with your sightings at 766-7000 or at **vatkins@awod.com**.

VISIT OUR WEBPAGE



www.homestead.com/cnhsaudubon
contact Webmaster
Bob Chinn
843-552-7884
rchinn@awod.com