



The Charleston Natural History Society – a SC chapter (chartered in 1970) of the National Audubon Society, serving Berkeley, Charleston & Dorchester counties – is a nonprofit environmental organization that actively promotes awareness, appreciation and conservation of the natural environment through educational programs, field trips, conservation projects, sponsored research and social activities.

Request for Volunteers: Can You Help?

A new Department of Natural Resources study aims to characterize the flora and fauna of local small coastal islands, sometimes known as hammocks. Because of limited funding and staff, DNR is asking for volunteers to assist in these field studies. Surveys are tentatively scheduled for the last weekend of September and second weekend in October.

Volunteers will learn appropriate field techniques at a brief orientation before the surveys begin. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Megan Rekow at 953-9019 or via email at rekowm@mrd.dnr.state.sc.us.

The CNHS/Audubon Board for 2003-04

President: Tom Snowden w 953-0311, h 875-3445
Vice President: Joe Cockrell w 462-2150, h 762-3868
Secretary: Melissa Davis h 216-3833
Treasurer: Doreen Cubie h 928-3702
Ex Officio: Bob Chinn h 552-7884
Historian: Julian Harrison
Newsletter: Steve Bleezarde h 406-2061
Committees -----
Hospitality: Don Jones h 572-8232
Education: Melissa Davis
Membership: Doreen Cubie
Publicity: is open at this time.
Outings: Burton Moore 853-1100, Bob Chinn, Andy Harrison
Programs: Polly Holden 853-1100, Burton Moore
Conservation: Garrett Budds h 571-4668, Andy Harrison
McAlhany: Joe Cockrell, Julian Harrison, Garrett Budds, Marion Page, Jeff Dennis.
Wannamaker: Norm Brunswig (843)688-5833, Julian Harrison, Marion Page, Dan Tufford

Interested in joining a committee? Contact one of the members listed, or talk to chapter president Tom Snowden about how you can help.

September Silent Auction: Bid Now on NC Vacation Home

Burnet Maybank has generously offered his house in Flack Rock, N.C. (in the southwest of the state, near Hendersonville) for a sealed bid auction to benefit the CNHS. The minimum bid for a week will be \$600. It can be available for several weeks in October or next spring. The winner can work together with Mr. Maybank to arrange a time convenient to both.

The house is located on a lake "full of fish." There are five bedrooms, four baths, porches and a guesthouse with a bedroom and bath. Walking trails and tennis courts are nearby.

Send in your bids quickly—the leaves should be at their peak in October. Bids must be received no later than September 30, 2003. Mail your bid and contact information to: CNHS, P.O. Box 504, Charleston, SC 29402.

Questions? Contact Tom Snowden at 875-3445 or toms@myexcel.com.

Beach Sweep/River Sweep

Saturday, September 20, the 15th annual Sweep will engage volunteers—who collected 59 tons of debris in 2002—to clean-up S.C. waters. DNR and the SC Sea Grant Consortium organize the statewide event. Contact coordinators Susan Ferris (coastal) 843-727-2078, or Bobbie Adams (inland) 803-734-9108, to participate.

Charleston Audubon Society



President's Message

We are at the beginning of what I think will be another great year for the Charleston Natural History Society. We are planning some great activities for the coming year.

We are returning to a monthly newsletter. We may take out a small amount of advertising to help with costs. Money seems to be a major issue with most organizations these days, as it is with us. We will be having another rummage sale on November 8, so try to save any household articles that we may be able to sell in this fundraiser. Also, please plan to attend; you may find the perfect bargain. Last year was the first sale that we tried and it was a surprising success. The sale will also coincide with the pick-up of the birdseed from our other major fundraiser.

I would like to encourage all of our members to come to the meetings and outings. I am sure most of you are concerned about what is happening to our natural world. These activities are a great way to learn more about the local environment what and we can each do to help protect it. Please join us for the meetings—held at 7 p.m., with social time starting at 6:30, the second Tuesday of each month at the Charleston Museum—and learn more about these important issues. The birding trips are a great learning experience and fun too. Bring others who may be interested.

If you have suggestions or comments please let me know. Get involved!

Tom Snowden PH: 843.875.3445
EMAIL: toms@myexcel.com

UPCOMING EVENTS – details in this issue

Sept. 9 **From the Heart of the Swamp:**
Membership Meeting
Sept. 13 **Orangeberg Sod Farms:**
Field Trip
Sept. 20 **Beech Sweep/River Sweep:**
Sea Grant/DNR state-wide clean-up
Sept. 23 **C.O.E Savannah Spoil Site:**
Field Trip (Register by Sept. 8)
Oct. 4 **West Ashley Greenway/Tidal Flats:**
Field Trip

Birdseed and Rummage Sales Vital to Fall Fundraising Effort

Raising money is never easy, but it doesn't have to be awful – the right projects for the right cause can be satisfying and even fun. Please plan to support our efforts this Fall by buying or selling some birdseed, donating goods to Rummage Sale, or volunteering to help at the Sale:

Rummage Sale Set for November 8

The Charleston Audubon Society will hold its second fundraising rummage sale, Saturday, November 8 at the Masonic Center, 1285 Orange Grove Road off of Sam Rittenberg. Money raised through the sale of goods and refreshments will support our general fund for conservation and education programs, community grants and this newsletter. The sale is timed to coincide with the Birdseed Sale pick-up, so plan now to attend both!

We're seeking items to sell, so start thinking about what contributions you might be able to make—working appliances and electronics, furniture, tools, clean clothes, crafts, books, etc. Clothes on hangers are much easier to display than those that come folded or in a bag. It's also helpful if you have the opportunity to mark goods with prices before the sale.

We're also looking for folding tables we can use on the day of the sale, and volunteers to help staff the event: contact Cornelia if you're able to help. Last year we were able to have items dropped-off a day before the sale through the generous donation of a storage unit courtesy of Charleston Portable Storage. We're hoping to do that again this time.

There will be more details in the October *Lesser Squawk*. Until then, start gathering all that clutter you want out of the house and direct your ideas, thoughts or questions to organizer Cornelia Carrier: 577-6437.

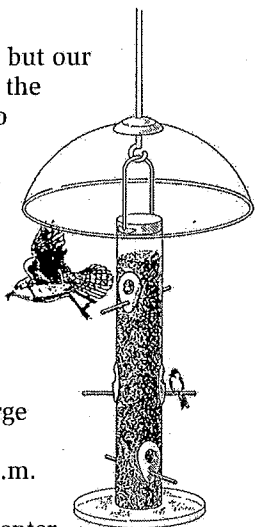
Birdseed Sale: A Chance to Help

Funding for all of our programs remains scarce, but our annual birdseed sale is a good opportunity to help the chapter raise money while getting excellent seed to stock your feeders this Fall and Winter. You may find cheaper seed at some discount stores, but you get what you pay for: Our sale offers high-quality seed at a competitive price!

Use the enclosed form to place your order—and make sure it is postmarked by October 20. If you can sell some seed to your friends, coworkers or neighbors, please do. You can duplicate the order form and let others pick-up their own seed on November 8th, or you can place a large order and then distribute the seed yourself.

Plan to pick-up your seed this year between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. at either the Abide-a-While Nursery & Garden Center in Mt. Pleasant or at the Masonic Center off of Sam Rittenberg where you'll be able to visit our Fall rummage sale too. Remember that Abide-a-While and the Masons are donating the use of their locations, but don't call them with questions about the events.

An additional order form will be included in the October newsletter, and copies will be available at the September and October membership meetings. Contact Joe Cockrell, 762-3868 or cockrelljoe@cs.com, with any questions you have about this year's sale.





MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Upcoming Programs, Outings & Lowcountry Events

Tuesday, Sept. 9 – From the Heart of the Swamp Charleston Audubon Monthly Membership Program

Michael Dawson, the Center Director of the Audubon Center at Francis Beidler Forest (a.k.a. Swamp Genius) will share stories gleaned from 23 years of sloshing around in Audubon's Four Holes Swamp Sanctuary. Stories of weird wildlife sightings, stupid birds, stupid naturalists, and maybe even a few snake encounters of the close kind!

April Stallings, Education and Outreach Specialist at Beidler Forest will spend a few minutes getting you up to speed on the new electronic activist network and the state conservation bank.

Programs are presented the second Tuesday of the month at the Charleston Museum, 360 Meeting St., across from the Visitors Center. Program starts at 7:00 p.m., following a reception at 6:30 p.m. Programs are free and open to the public.

Saturday, Sept. 13 – Orangeburg Sod Farms Charleston Audubon Field Trip*

Join Board Members Burton Moore and Andy Harrison for a trip to the sod farms near Orangeburg, S.C. The sod farms have produced many shorebirds—including Golden Plover during Fall migration—and quite a few rarities in the past (a cave swallow was reported on Aug 9th). There are also raptors, resident ground doves and Horned Larks, and we should have a good number of migrants.

If time allows, the group will also make the short jaunt to Santee NWR's Bluff unit. Bluff is right on Lake Marion and should be good for migrants, waders and shorebirds if the water level is not too high.

Meet Burton and Andy at 7:30 a.m. at the Wal-Mart parking lot (behind Hardee's) in Summerville right off of I-26, exit 199. Bring binoculars, field guides, scopes, water, lunch/snacks and insect repellent. Register with Burton, 853-1100 (Tu.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.) or Andy, 795-6934.

Tuesday, Sept. 16 – Sea-Island Cotton: History & Geology Lowcountry Native Plant Society Lecture Series

Dr. Richard D. Porcher, Professor Emeritus, The Citadel will speak. Dr. Porcher has authored two books on South Carolina native plants and is working on a book on Sea-Island Cotton. He is a wonderfully entertaining speaker.

6:30-8:00 p.m., Baruch Auditorium, 284 Calhoun St. There will be a reception following the lecture. For further information contact Dr. Jean Everett at 853-7890 or everettj@cofc.edu.

Saturday, Sept. 20 – Flitting Through the Francis Marion Lowcountry Native Plant Society Field Trip

The group will spend the morning in the longleaf pine and cypress savannas of the Francis Marion National Forest looking for orchids and other rare fall-blooming flowers. Participants are also sure to see many asters and other sunflower-family species in full bloom. Fall is a very decorative time to explore these communities. John Brubaker and Dr. Jean Everett will guide to some of their favorite spots.

Meet in the parking lot of the Bi-Lo in the Sweetgrass Shopping Center at the corner of US Hwy. 17 North and the Isle of Palms Connector at 8:00 a.m. Car pool from there. Dress for the field with boots and hats. Bring lunch and plenty to drink. Return in the early afternoon. For further information contact Dr. Jean Everett at 853-7890 or everettj@cofc.edu.

Sunday, Sept. 28 – Savannah River Spoil Site Charleston Audubon Field Trip

**** Note: This trip will be limited to 20 participants, **
** and registration is required by September 8th. ****

Join outings chairman Burton Moore and Citadel professor Dennis Forsythe for an outing to the COE Savannah River Spoil Site in Jasper County, S.C. The "Spoil Site" is unique as it is run by the Army COE, is in S.C., but belongs to Georgia! (due to shifts of the Savannah River).

Many rare birds have been found here in past years. Everything from spoonbills to frigate birds and uncommon shorebirds have been observed. This will be good time to see a lot of neotropical migrants as well as coastal raptor migrants.

To register call Burton, 853-1100 (Tu.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.)

Saturday, Oct. 4 – West Ashley Greenway/Tidal Flats Charleston Audubon Field Trip

Join Bob Chinn for a "new" trip along the West Ashley Greenway and tidal flats/streams of the Stono River. This should be an exciting trip, as we should see migrants and locals along the wooded portion and many waders and shorebirds on the flats. We should also see many Fall butterflies. We'll traverse the old railroad grade from Oakland Elementary School to near the Limehouse bridge (about 4 easy miles).

This will be a half day trip (ending about 1 p.m.). There are eateries at the end of the trip; Hardee's, Burger King, Gilligans & The Big Dipper. Bring field guides, water, binoculars, lunch/snacks (see above) and insect repellent. Meet Bob at 7:30 a.m., in the parking lot in front of Sears at the Citadel Mall. We will take vehicles to the end of the walk for transport back to Oakland Elem.

For more info, call Bob (after Sept. 14) at 552-7884 or bobchinn@comcast.net

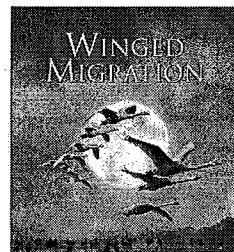
*Charleston Audubon Field Trips

The CNHS/Audubon sponsors at least one field trip/outing per month, September thru May. Field trips are free, unless otherwise noted, and are open to the general public. Please wear suitable outdoor gear and note that a brown bag lunch is often appropriate.

Please register with the trip leader, by 6 p.m. the day before the outing. (This is to allow the leaders to plan appropriately for the size of the group.) All trip participants are required to sign an "acknowledgement of risk" statement as required by our insurance carrier.

Expanding Times...

Are we as a community prepared for the inevitable consequences of with unchecked urban/suburban expansion? I ask this question while contemplating a film I watched last evening, *Winged Migration*. The title defines the content, and the film focuses on bird migration. And while our feathered friends made the jaunt look easy, they do face hazards along the way.



The film played recently at the Terrace theater. Keep an eye on local listings and try to catch this one for yourself.

The image in the movie that moved me most was a pit stop taken during the journey of red-breasted geese through Europe. Desperate for water and rest, they stop at an industrial refinery to scrounge what they can from puddles. Then, startled, and hurrying away, one of the flock gets bogged-down, caught in sludge, never to see the open skies again.

Natural selection occurs in the world, but I doubt this is what Mother Nature had in mind. Which brings me to point: If we, as a conservation-minded constituency, do not voice our objections to the abuse of our lands—whether commercial, industrial, or residential—we shall see the downward spiral of our delicate ecosystems increasing at a terrible rate.

This is locally poignant as of late. The Lowcountry is continually faced with expansion that threatens our treasured adjacent rural environment. Sprawling communities come with sprawling businesses, roads, housing complexes and industrial centers. Left unchecked we will see the rapid destruction of our estuaries, rookeries and refuges. And of the delicate balance that allows our diverse avian populations to exist.

There is strong local pressure for redistricting and changes in land-use regulation that would allow an exodus to pave over the irreplaceable sylvan landscape that comprises our Lowcountry home. I urge you all to contact the County Council and voice opposition toward the latest attempts to infiltrate our wildlands or we too one day may face the fate of that lost goose.

Please contact me with questions or comments.

—Garrett Budds, Conservation Chair PH: 571-4668

How to Contact Your Elected Officials

Email addresses for Charleston's County Council are online: go to www.charlestoncounty.org and follow the links to Elected Officials, County Council and then Contacts. Information for Berkeley and Dorchester Counties can be found at www.co.berkeley.sc.us and www.dorchestercounty.net.

For House and Senate Members go to: www.scstatehouse.net and follow the links to House or Senate and Email Addresses. The mailing address for all House Members is: P.O. Box 11867, Columbia SC 29211; for all Senate Members it is: P.O. Box 142, Columbia SC 29202.



New Members, Renewals, Gift Memberships

For only \$20* you get one-year subscriptions to *Audubon* magazine and *The Lesser Squawk*, and all the benefits of local and National Audubon Society membership. Renew for just \$35/year. *\$15 for Sr. Citizens and Students

CHECK ONE: ☐ NEW MEMBER ☐ GIFT MEMBERSHIP ☐ RENEWAL

THIS IS A GIFT FROM:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

MAIL THIS COUPON AND YOUR CHECK TO:

CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 504
CHARLESTON, SC 29402

THIS MEMBERSHIP IS FOR:

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

#

[RENEWALS MUST INCLUDE THE 20-DIGIT MEMBER NUMBER FROM YOUR AUDUBON ADDRESS LABEL]

Checks payable to Charleston Natural History Society. Include chapter code on check: U-51 7XCH

Save Our Freshwater Turtles

by Andy Harrison

One hundred years ago Audubon societies across the United States were forming to protest the wanton slaughter of birds. Egrets and herons were being killed for their plumes, and millions of passenger pigeons were shot for the table. Unfortunately, the passenger pigeon could not be saved and, like the Carolina parakeet, became extinct early in the 20th century. However, those early efforts played a major role in the preservation of many imperiled bird species.

During the past few years a new threat to local wildlife has emerged; in this case the species being targeted are native freshwater turtles. Turtles are considered a delicacy in many Asian countries, and an enormous demand for turtle meat has resulted in the virtual elimination of some species from their former Asian home ranges. Increasing economic prosperity in much of Asia has enabled traders to look abroad for a continuing supply, and the swamps, rivers and lakes of the southeastern US—including the Carolinas—have not escaped notice. In fact, as reported in the *Post and Courier* (July 12, 2003), a Louisiana turtle trapper claims to have removed about 30,000 freshwater turtles from South Carolina during the past year. Turtles taken in such large numbers are shipped direct to Asian markets or used to stock farm operations. This level of harvest cannot be sustained by even the most common species. Until recently, no laws existed to protect these species from excessive harvest in the Carolinas. That changed earlier this year when North Carolina passed legislation to prohibit the commercial harvest of freshwater turtles.

In South Carolina the actions of the N.C. Legislature prompted the S.C. Natural Resources Board to issue an emergency regulation on June 20, 2003 to protect seven freshwater turtle species (yellowbelly slider, river cooter, Florida cooter, chicken turtle, snapping turtle, Florida softshell turtle, and spiny softshell turtle). Individuals are still permitted to keep a pet turtle and to consume an occasional turtle, but the sale, take, possession or transport of any of the seven species for commercial purposes is illegal without a permit. This regulation is, however, temporary, and lasting protection depends on passage of permanent regulations by the S.C. Legislature. Members of the Charleston Natural History Society can support this cause by writing or e-mailing members of the S.C. State Senate and House of Representatives from their district.

Visit Our Website



Webmaster Bob Chinn keeps us up-to-date with details of programs, outings & more.

<http://cnhsaudubon.homestead.com>