

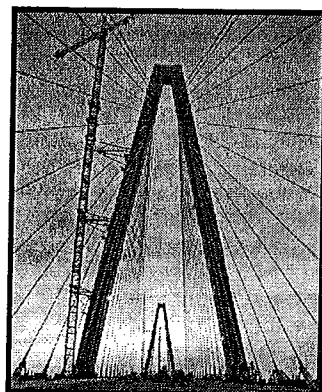
The Charleston Audubon Society — a SC chapter of the National Audubon Society since 1970, founded as the Charleston Natural History Society in 1905, and serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties — is a nonprofit environmental organization that actively promotes awareness, appreciation and conservation of the natural environment through educational programs, field trips, conservation projects, sponsored research and social activities.

Updates, continued from page 3

Lighting on the New Cooper River Bridge:

The original DOT plans called for very bright decorative lights to illuminate the bridge at night after it was completed. Representatives of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service worked long and hard to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding with DOT that would require dimming the lights during sea turtle nesting season (May – October). However, the months of March, April and November are also important months for bird migration, and the lethality of bright lights on tall structures to migrating birds is well documented. CNHS is supporting an effort led by Jane Lareau of the Coastal Conservation League to have the lights dimmed during those months too (or perhaps replaced by bird-friendly and cost-efficient Light Emitting Diodes).

The towers reach over 575 feet into the air. Both towers and cables will impact flying birds.



Ibis Roost at Citadel Mall:

I contacted Mr. John Ryan, General Manager, in early February about on-going work at the retention pond that is used as a roost by white ibis and other birds (near the theater).

Unfortunately, mall management is not considering anything beyond natural regeneration to restore the vegetation buffer that formerly protected the roost from light and noise.

Your calls (766-8321) or letters in support of active planting are still needed. Meanwhile I am pursuing other avenues in order to accelerate restoration of the buffer.



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

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CHARLESTON NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 504

CHARLESTON, SC 29402

THIS MEMBERSHIP IS FOR:

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ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

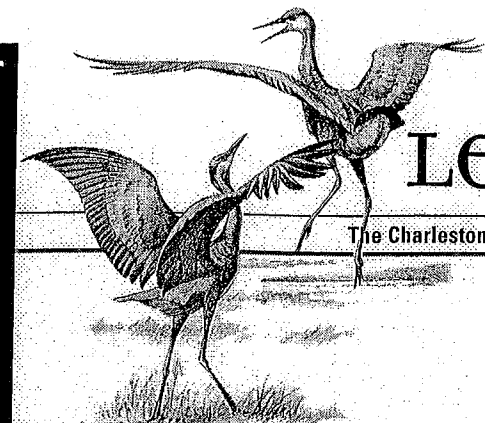
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[RENEWALS MUST INCLUDE THE 20-DIGIT MEMBER NUMBER FROM YOUR AUDUBON ADDRESS LABEL]

Checks payable to National Audubon Society. Include our chapter code on your check: U-51 7XCH

Charleston Audubon Society



THE **Squawk**

The Charleston Natural History Society, Celebrating 100 Years, 1905-2005

March 2005 • Vol. LI • No. 6

Rudy Mancke to Review History of Natural History in South Carolina

Note that our April lecture will be held on Thursday, April 14 – still in the second floor auditorium of the main branch of the Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street in Charleston. Lectures are free, and open to all Audubon members, guests and to the general public. We gather at 6:30 p.m. for a reception and speakers will begin their programs at 7:00 p.m.

We're glad to welcome well known naturalist Rudy Mancke to speak on South Carolina's diverse natural history and it's role in our heritage as we celebrate 100 years as the Charleston Natural History society and the Audubon Society's 100th year.

Many South Carolinians are familiar with Mancke from his role on SCETV's NatureScene since its inception in 1978. His field trips, broadcast nationwide, have earned him a legion of dedicated viewers. Rudy's knowledge of the complex inner-workings of different ecosystems and his great admiration for the natural world make him a perfect guide.

Along with his duties as SCETV's director of nature programming, Rudy finds time to author articles and pamphlets about the environment as well as maintain a demanding schedule as a public speaker. Before coming to television, Rudy served as the natural history curator at the South Carolina State Museum for 10 years, and was a high school biology and geology teacher. He earned a degree at Wofford College, attended graduate school at the University of South Carolina, and has received honorary doctorate degrees from the College of Charleston, Winthrop College, and Wofford College.

Two of Mancke's common themes are "little things in nature are important" and "you don't have to go far to see powerful stuff right here in South Carolina." Although his NatureScene shows have included footage from across the U.S., Mancke brags about the wonders of his home state and says he's pleased so many fellow Carolinians are developing "pride in place" and "love of local country and its natural heritage."

Chapter Rummage Sale Coming, April 23rd

Friday 4/22 Drop-Off — Sale Saturday, 4/23, 7 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The Charleston Audubon Society will hold our third annual fundraising rummage sale, Saturday, April 23. Once again we'll be in West Ashley at the Charleston County Masonic Association on 1285 Orange Grove. Money raised through the sale of goods and refreshments will support our conservation and education efforts, and our community grant program.

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. This is our big fundraiser so clean out your attic and closets now!

We're also looking for folding tables we can use on the day of the sale, and volunteers to help staff the event and to help us set-up on the 22nd: contact Cornelia if you're able to help. If you have large items you cannot bring yourself, please phone and we'll arrange for a member with a truck to pick it up the week before the sale.

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.

President's Message

I wanted to thank Andy Harrison for handling all of the arrangements for our booth at the Southeastern Wildlife Exposition. He also prepared and set-up the displays and spent time manning the booth. Thanks also go out to our volunteers, Zoe Butler, Don and Lois Jones, Linda Cutlip, Stephanie Oppenheimer, Pete Silveston and Julian Harrison. There was a huge turnout at the expo and we had an opportunity to let the public know more about our activities and to sign up new members.

We're still looking for new volunteers to help with many of our committees and for offices. If you'd like to become more involved, please call me.

• A McAlhany Nature Sanctuary Open House is generally held the first Sunday of the month. The gate usually opens at 9:30 a.m. Directions: Take I-26, Hwy 78 or Hwy 61 to US 15. Go to the small town of Grover, which is 10 miles south of St George. Take Wire Rd. west about 8 miles until you see the sign on the left. Open House questions? Call me or Joe Cockrell (762-3868).

• Don't forget to check us out online too: reports, updates and calendar information are available thanks to Bob Chin: <http://cnhsaudubon.homestead.com>

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

UPCOMING EVENTS —

- Mar. 9Lecture: *Red Wolves*
- Mar. 26Fieldtrip: *Pitt Street Bridge* p. 2
- April 3McAlhany Open House p. 2
- April 14Thursday Lecture: Rudy Mancke p. 1
- April 20Audubon at the Aquarium
Celebrating 100 Years details T.B.A
- April 23Chapter Rummage Sale p. 1
- April 23Wine & Warblers p. 2
- May 7Fieldtrip: *Dixie Plantation* p. 2



MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Upcoming Programs, Outings* & Lowcountry Events

1st Sunday Each Month – McAlhany Open House

The McAlhany preserve is located in upper Dorchester County on the Edisto River. On the first Sunday of each month we usually hold an Open House for members and the public. The gates open at 9:30 a.m. Dress for the weather, bring your fieldguides, binoculars – snacks and drinks are a good idea.

Directions to McAlhany: Take Hwy. 61, Hwy. 78 or I-26 to Hwy 15. Go to the small town of Grover which is about 10 miles south of St. George. Turn west on Wire Road, cross over I-95 and continue for several miles and look for our signs on the left (the main sign is set-back somewhat, so look carefully.) More detailed directions to McAlhany are on our website, or contact Tom at 875-3445.

Saturday March 26 – Pitt Street Bridge

Join Andy Harrison for a short in-town excursion to the Pitt Street Causeway and Bridge and Ft. Moultrie on Sullivan's Island. Birding from the causeway at Pitt Street around "half-tide" is often rewarding for those hoping to get good looks at shorebirds. When we are done at Pitt Street we will also visit the beach in front of Ft. Moultrie.

Meet Andy at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, March 26 near the Wild Birds Unlimited store in the Moultrie Plaza shopping center in Mt. Pleasant

(624 Coleman Blvd). Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, water, food/snacks, sunscreen/insect repellent, and weather-appropriate clothing – it can be chilly on the causeway or beach.

Register with Andy at 795-6934 or by e-mail at parula23@aol.com by Friday, March 25.

Saturday April 23, 5:30 p.m. – Wine & Warblers

Join Audubon and the South Carolina Wildlife Federation to celebrate Audubon's Centennial Anniversary and the return of Spring to Beidler Forest.

The evening will include bird watching from the boardwalk, a wine tasting and heavy hors d'oeuvres. All proceeds benefit the South Carolina Wildlife Federation and Audubon.

Admission will be \$25.00 per guest. To make your reservation please call 462-2150.

Saturday, May 7 – Dixie Plantation Outing

Dr. Julian Harrison will lead a trip to the Dixie Plantation, willed to the College of Charleston in 1995. On the Stono River in Hollywood, an easement restricts the property's use to low impact educational uses. This special visit to a site normally unavailable to the general public is part of the Audubon Centennial Celebration.

More details of this trip in next month's newsletter.

CNHS and SC Audubon at SEWE a Success

Our appearance at the 2005 Southeastern Wildlife Exposition was a tremendous success. Thanks to the hard work of many CNHS members we were able to reach out to hundreds of interested visitors. We shared our booth in the Conservation Tent on Marion Square with S.C. Audubon, and the cooperative effort was beneficial for both groups.

The winners of our free raffle were: Henry Galvin (North Charleston), who won the bird feeder provided to us at cost by Wild Birds Unlimited; and Alex Whitley (Mt. Pleasant), who won the purple martin house that Laren Clark had made and donated to CNHS. 128 people entered the raffle, and 46 of them left behind e-mail addresses requesting more information about CNHS. We answered many questions, distributed membership applications and other brochures, and made a few contacts too.

Volunteers staffing the booth included: Zoe Butler, Peter Silvesten, Don Jones, Tom Snowden, Linda Cutlip, Stephanie Oppenheimer, and Julian Harrison. Steve Bleezarde designed the raffle ticket; Tom Snowden obtained

brochures and small "giveaway" items from National Audubon, prepared hundreds of raffle tickets, and assisted in setting up our booth; Mike Hutchinson (who first suggested that we participate at SEWE) helped us secure the booth; Jennifer Koches and Joe Cockrell loaned us a display panel and space heater – the latter unnecessary, thank goodness – from their US Fish and Wildlife Service office; and Bob Chinn supplied digital photos for the display.

It was a pleasure to work with Ann Shahid, Mark Musselman and Mike Dawson of S.C. Audubon. Thanks to all who helped at SEWE!

*Charleston Audubon Field Trips

Field trips are free, unless otherwise noted, and open to the general public. Wear suitable clothes and note that a brown bag lunch is often appropriate. Please register with the trip leader by the eve before the outing, (allowing us to plan for the size of the group). All participants sign an "acknowledgement of risk" statement.

THE LESSER SQUAWK

The Charleston Audubon
The Charleston Natural
History Society
P.O. Box 504
Charleston, SC 29402

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Don Jones
843-572-8232
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Wannamaker
Norm Brunswick

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Stephen Bleezarde
steve@bleezarde.com

Website
Bob Chinn
bobchinn@comcast.net

Must We Lose the Savannah River Ecology Lab?

by Conservation Chair Andy Harrison

The Savannah River Ecology Laboratory (SREL), one of the most important and productive centers of long-term ecological/environmental research on the East Coast, may soon be forced to close its doors. In the budget President Bush recently submitted to Congress, he proposed cutting \$7.75 million in direct federal support to SREL (approximately 76% of its operating budget). Dr. Paul Bertsch, SREL director, was informed that the lab would have to compete for project funding from within the Environmental Remediation Sciences Division (ERSD). However, Bush's budget also calls for an identical cut in ERSD funding – so there are no funds for which to compete.

Founded in 1951 by the late Dr. Eugene P. Odum, SREL is located on the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site (SRS) near Aiken, SC and has been operated throughout its history by the University of Georgia. Its mission is "to provide an independent evaluation of the ecological effects of Savannah River Site operations through a program of ecological research, education and public outreach."

Research at SREL has resulted in the publication of thousands of articles in national and international journals covering a wide range of topics, including wildlife ecology, soil ecology, forest management and radiation ecology. This work has made the SRS one of the best ecologically characterized sites in the entire DOE complex. SREL has also actively contributed to environmental remediation, restoration and stewardship of lands both on the SRS and elsewhere.

Many hundreds of future scientists and engineers have received invaluable experience through their training at SREL. The outreach program at SREL is very successful, reaching tens of thousands of individuals in Aiken County and beyond. In short, SREL is a highly cost-effective organization. Shutting it down would be a tragic blunder and cost this country much more than the few million dollars saved.

Updates on Local Issues

Off-leash Dogs at Folly Beach: In an article published in the February 10 issue of *The Journal* (a weekly paper covering James Island and Folly Beach), the reporter quoted a "professional bird watcher" who claimed that unleashed dogs would have no detrimental impact whatsoever on shorebirds.

To refute this false statement, Melissa Hughes drafted and sent a letter to the editor of *The Journal* that Andy Harrison and April Stallings (SC Audubon) co-signed. With the support of other organizations such as SC DNR, US FWS, the Coastal Conservation League, and Charleston County Parks, we are continuing our effort to protect shorebirds from disturbance at Folly Beach.

Shorebird surveys (to document patterns of shorebird use and dog-bird interaction before and during the "trial run" of a leash-free zone in April that was passed by the Town Council) at Folly Beach should be underway by the time you are reading this – if you'd like to participate (several hours observing on Folly Beach and recording your observations), contact Melissa Hughes (HughesM@cofc.edu) or Andy Harrison (parula23@aol.com).

— Updates, continued on page 4

Please call, fax or e-mail one or more of the following individuals and tell them that you support restoration of funding to SREL (or at least the monies to ERSD):

Department of Energy —

Samuel W. Bodman, Secretary of Energy

Phone: (202) 586-6210

Fax: (202) 586-4403

e-mail: the.secretary@hq.doe.gov

Jeffrey M. Allison, Manager, Savannah River Operations Office

Phone: (803) 952-6337

Fax: (803) 952-8144

e-mail: jeffrey.allison@srs.gov

Presidential Science Advisor —

John Marburger, Director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy (Executive Office of the President)

Phone: (202) 456-7116

Fax: (202) 456-6021

e-mail: info@ostp.gov

Governor —

SC Governor Mark Sanford, Office of the Governor

Phone: (803) 734-2100

Fax: (803) 734-5167

e-mail: <http://www.scgovernor.com/Contact.asp?sitecontentid=33>

U.S. Representatives (SC) —

South Carolina, District 3

The Honorable J. Gresham Barrett

Phone: (202) 225-5301

Fax: (202) 225-3216

e-mail: go to http://www.house.gov/htbin/wrep_findrep

South Carolina, District 2

The Honorable Joe Wilson

Phone: (202) 225-2452

Fax: (202) 2455

e-mail: Joe.Wilson@mail.house.gov

U.S. Senators (SC) —

Senator Jim DeMint

Phone: (202) 224-6121

Fax: (202) 228-5143

e-mail: <http://demint.senate.gov/index.cfm?FuseAction=Contact.Home>

Senator Lindsey Graham

Phone: (202) 224-5972

e-mail: <http://lgraham.senate.gov/index.cfm?mode=contactform>

Another good resource – when you want to make yourself heard on Audubon issues: visit <http://www.capitolconnect.com/audubon>.

With your 9-digit zipcode reday visit <http://www.vote-smart.org/> and get a complete list of your representatives and elected officials.

Visit Us Online — <http://cnhsaudubon.homestead.com>



Webmaster Bob Chinn keeps us up-to-date with details of programs, outings & more, including items that don't make it into the Squawk!