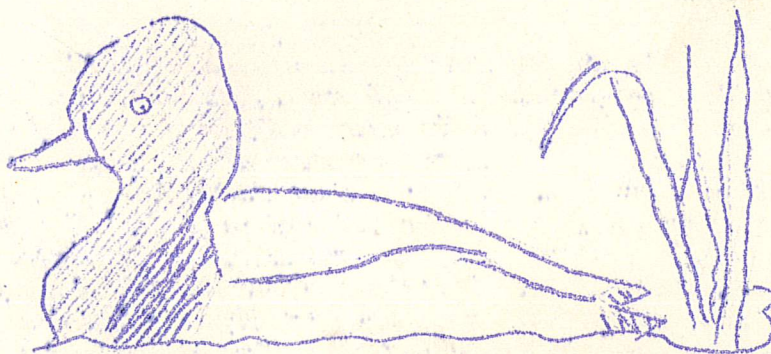


the lesser  
Squawk



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• • • OFFICERS • • •

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PROGRAM FOR MARCH

March 11

Regular Meeting Museum Lecture Room 8:00 p.m.  
Speaker: Dr. Jerry Nagel, Kangaroo Bats-Slides

March 15

(Saturday)

All-day Trip to Bull's Island. Leader E. B. Chamberlain  
Leave Moore's Landing 8:00 a.m. For details see page 7

BIRD MOVEMENT IN MARCH

Arrivals.

- |                        |                              |                         |
|------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 3 Least Bittern*       | 15 Least Tern                | 25 Hooded Warbler       |
| Wilson's Plover        | Yellow-throated Vireo        | 24 Arcadian Flycatcher  |
| 5 Swallow-tailed Kite  | Red-eyed Vireo               | Northern Waterthrush    |
| 6 Parula Warbler       | 16 American Golden Plover    | 25 Yellow-breasted Chat |
| 7 Chimney Swift        | 18 Veery                     | 27 Prothonotary Warbler |
| Wood Thrush            | Louisiana Waterthrush        | Blackburnian Warbler    |
| 9 Rough-winged Swallow | 19 Yellow-crowned Nightheron | Orchard Oriole          |
| 10 Eastern Kingbird    | 20 Pectoral Sandpiper        | 29 Black-necked Stilt   |
| 11 Upland Plover       | Common Nighthawk             | Roseate Tern            |
| Chuck-wills Widow      | Black-thr. Green Warbler     | 30 Summer Tanager       |
| 12 Mississippi Kite    | 22 Stilt Sandpiper           | 31 Black Rail           |
| 13 White Ibis (PR)     | Gr. Crested Flycatcher       | late Bachman's Warbler  |

Departures.

- |                     |                      |                   |
|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| 8 Horned Lark       | 16 Long-eared Owl    | 28 Eastern Phoebe |
| 9 European Widgeon  | 19 Bewick's Wren     | 29 Fox Sparrow    |
| 16 Red-necked Grebe | Brown-headed Cowbird | 30 Redhead        |

CASUALS AND ACCIDENTALS

Lapland longspur

\*The Least Bittern has been seen at Magnolia Gardens many times during the winter season and should possibly be counted as a permanent resident.



### BULL'S ISLAND.

On Saturday March 15, through the kindness of Mr. E. M. Hancock we will take our annual cruise to Bull's Island. The boat will leave Moore's Landing at 8:00 a.m. It would be well to be on hand 15 or 20 minutes before that time. Space is limited so please do not ask to bring guests. It is possible to reserve lunch at the island or you may bring your own. For reservations for the trip send a card to Mr. E. Burnham Chamberlain P.O. Box 3039, Charleston, S.C. 29407 before March 9. Send your name, address and 'phone no. and the number of members in your party and if you wish lunch. Payment for lunch (\$2.00) will be collected at ~~Moore's~~ Moore's Landing before sailing. The boat can carry only 35 passengers, so reservations will be made on a first come, first served basis. If cancellations occur late applicants will be given an opportunity to fill the vacancy.

### February Program.

Each year the Natural History Society looks forward to an evening with John Henry Dick and his beautiful photography of places and creatures from all over the world. Last year we took a trip to Antartica. This year we traveled to the other end of the continent.

Our February program was one of pure delight. Mr. Dick's color slides of the wonders of Alaska, Mt. McKinley in all its grandeur, birds and flowers of the far north, caribou, moose and seals were shown in "living color" and enjoyed by a full house. We hope you didn't miss it.

### February Field Trip.

Rain, cold, nastiness. The least said the better!

### OBSERVATIONS.

February has brought a number of early and unusual observations. Francis Barrington reports a male Painted Bunting at his feeder in Riverland Terrace on Feb. 6. While this is a very early record it is not the only winter record for this bird. S.C. Birdlife says, "On Jan. 19, 1949 Mrs. Burton saw a male on John's Island. On Jan. 27 two males were observed near Mt. Pleasant. That year was unseasonably warm which may have caused early migration." As the 1968-69 winter can hardly be called warm, can Mr. Barrington's bird have wintered here?

Mrs. Ellison Williams reports two Hummingbirds in her yard on Limehouse St. Feb. 11. S.C. Birdlife has this to say about winter records of hummingbirds. "Occasionally hummers are found in South Carolina in winter. Known dates seem to indicate that some simply remain during the cold season and are not belated migrants." Charleston winter records are Dec. 18 and 30, 1910 (the same bird?) H. R. Sass and Feb. 20, 1952 Hugh Rutledge. Looking back to the Squawk of March 1960 I find this note on the hummingbird. "On Jan. 25 Mrs. John Leland saw a hummingbird in her yard in Riverland Terrace--- this may be the same bird seen by Francis Barrington on Jan. 14 since the Barringtons and Mrs. Leland live next door to each other.

Mr. John Henry Dick reports purple martins at his place near Meggett on Feb. 11. This is an early record for the purple martin, but in the same Squawk of March, 1960 I find this note. "On February 1 the Colemans and Burnham Chamberlain watched for ten minutes or more a small group of purple martins flying over a marshy tract near the Bear Island Wildlife Refuge and on Feb. 20 three or four males were seen by them flying over a pond near Wallace River."

Mrs. Marianna Blair, our member from the Isle of Palms, reports a strange bird at her feeder for several days during the first week of February. The bird was obviously a female oriole, ~~but~~ but was unlike either of our eastern orioles. Its belly was definitely white and in other ways it fitted the description of the Bullock's Oriole, which our experts agree has never been seen here, but no real bird student will ever state positively that any strange bird could not possibly be seen out of its own territory



## OBSERVATIONS cont.

Your editor remembers well-authenticated records of observations of western species seen in this area. Black-headed Grosbeak, Western Tanager, Vermillion Flycatcher, Lark Sparrow and just recently, Yellow-headed Blackbird to name a few which have been seen in the past five or ten years, so she consulted Burnham Chamberlain who said he did not know of any record of Bullocks in South Carolina. A little later he 'phoned to say that he had looked in the A.O.U. check list and found the Bullock's Oriole had been seen over a period of years in Maine, New York, Massachusetts, Georgia and recorded by our own Rhett Chamberlain in Newbern, N.C. As the bird has been seen in states to the north and south of us it is not impossible that Mrs. Blair's bird was a Bullocks. Unfortunately, he recorded unless verified by two or more qualified bird students.

Burnham Chamberlain reports 8 or 10 Pine Siskins on the lawn opposite the Avondale Post Office on Feb. 12. Reports of Evening Grosbeaks are still coming in. Mrs. Falley says her flock has increased to about 30 and Anne Richardson says that those in the vicinity of Avondale ~~Wad~~ are still there. Your unfortunate editor has yet to see one!

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNT-1900

Miss Ruth Clements sent to the editor "The Warbler", the publication of the Alan Devoe Bird Club of Chatham, N.Y. in which is printed the following most interesting account of the origin of the Audubon Christmas Bird Census, and I quote - "In the latter part of the nineteenth century, a barbarous custom had grown up in America called the "side hunt". Sportsmen of all ages on Christmas Day or the day after would group themselves into teams, chose an area, and go out to kill everything they could find in fur or feathers that crossed their path. The "side" with the most carcasses at the end of the day was the winner. The results were published in the leading journals of sport with usually a word of editorial praise for the winning side.

Frank Chapman, the famous ornithologist, decided the custom must be eradicated, so in the December 1900 issue of Bird-Lore he proposed a new kind of Christmas side hunt in the form of a Christmas Bird Census, and added, "We hope that all of our readers who have the opportunity will aid us in making it a success by spending a portion of Christmas Day with the birds and sending a report of their "hunt" to BIRD-LORE before they retire at night. Thirty-seven people in thirteen states responded, and that was the birth of the Christmas Count.

That the custom caught on is now history. In 1905 the Audubon Society took over the task of accepting and collating the information that poured in from many sections of the United States and Canada, and the Christmas Count has become part of the lives of more than a million bird watchers in America today.

But what was the origin of the insidious side hunt? --- It seems to be a ritual of great antiquity brought to us from the British Isles, and may have its roots in Druidism and Wren Worship. --- The fishermen from the Isle of Man still carry a wren's wing or carcass on their ships to bring good luck to the herring fleet. When the Christian missionaries came to Britain in the seventh century they deplored the worship of the wren and decreed that anyone could and should kill all the wrens he saw on St. Steven's Day, December 26. This ritual was apparently brought to the new world and grew into the custom of wholesale slaughter at the Christmas season. What a strange "ancestor" for the Christmas Bird Count.