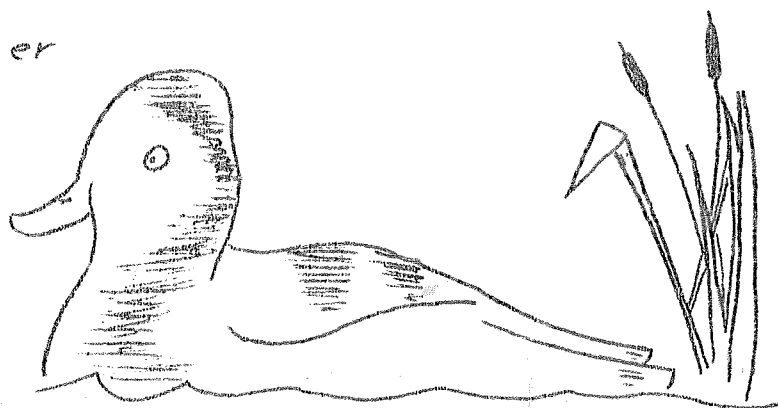


The Lesser Squawk



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OFFICERS

President: Julian R. Harrison III, 670 Stiles Dr., Charleston, S.C.
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Secretary-Treasurer: Alan M. Bills, 221 Forest Circle, Summerville, S.C.

MAY ACTIVITIES

The Society needs a good turn-out of participants for the spring bird count on May 2nd. Participants should call Julian Harrison (795-1694, after 6 p.m.) to be assigned to parties. The group will meet at "Gregorie's" Store at the intersection of Highways 17 and 41 at 6:30 a.m.

The monthly meeting of the Society will be held on May 12th, at 8:00 p.m., at the Charleston Museum. Al Sanders will give an illustrated talk on reptiles of South Carolina. He will also have some materials concerning freeze-drying preservation techniques on exhibit. Also during this meeting the annual election of officers will be held.

On May 17, Julian Harrison will lead an all-day field trip to Wambaw Swamp where Swallow-tailed Kites should be observed. Participants will meet at 7:00 a.m. at the Mount Pleasant Piggly Wiggly.

BIRD MOVEMENT IN MAY

Arrivals

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 Glossy Ibis | 5 Wilson's Petrel | 12 Magnificent Frigatebird |
| 2 White-rumped Sandpiper | Baird's Sandpiper | 17 Northern Phalarope |
| Bank Swallow | Wilson's Phalarope | 19 Audubon's Shearwater |
| 4 Black Tern | Noddy Tern | |

Departures

- | | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1 Canada Goose | 11 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker | 18 Magnolia Warbler |
| Black Duck | Orange-crowned Warbler | 19 Gadwall |
| Green-winged Teal | Blackburnian Warbler | Upland Plover |
| Ruddy Duck | Vesper Sparrow | Swamp Sparrow |
| 2 Slate-colored Junco | 12 Great Black-backed Gull | 20 Common Snipe |
| 3 Pectoral Sandpiper | 13 Common Loon | Lesser Yellowlegs |

Departures (cont.)

3 Hermit Thrush	14 Sora	21 Swainson's Thrush
4 Kirtland's Warbler	Roseate Tern	22 Piping Plover
5 House Wren	Myrtle Warbler	Black-thr.-Blue Warbler
Worm-eating Warbler	mid Scarlet Tanager	Northern Waterthrush
White-crowned Sparrow	American Goldfinch	24 Veery
7 Ring-necked Duck	15 White-winged Scoter	26 Bob-o-link
White-tailed Kite	Short-billed Marsh Wren	Red Crossbill
8 Grasshopper Sparrow	Gray-cheeked Thrush	27 Purple Sandpiper
9 Peregrin Falcon	Ovenbird	Yellow Warbler
American Golden Plover	16 Pigeon Hawk	American Redstart
10 Ruby-crowned Kinglet	17 Cape May Warbler	LeConte's Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow	Chestnut-sided Warbler	28 Common Scoter
11 Hooded Merganser	White-throated Sparrow	29 Cliff Swallow
Stilt Sandpiper	18 Red-throated Loon	Sharp-tailed Sparrow

Casuals and Accidentals

Sooty Shearwater	Sandhill Crane	Wilson's Warbler
White-tailed Tropicbird	Buff-breasted Sandpiper	Canada Warbler
Great White Heron	Hudsonian Godwit	Western Tanager
Caracara	Nashville Warbler	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
		Dickcissel

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

Just as November was the crossroad between summer and winter, so May is the crossroad between winter and summer. The constellations which have been observed as they progressed across the sky during the winter months have now disappeared into the glare of the sun, leaving only a few bright stars to bring up the rear. Throughout the month, Capella may still be found in the northwest, Procyon in the west, and Castor and Pollux between these two. As they linger in the west, the stars of summer are steadily coming into view in the opposite direction.

Three of the planets are now in the evening sky. Mars sets first, a little north of west, in the last of the daylight. Shining like a polished jewel, Venus may be located higher in the northwest; and well above the southeastern horizon after dark, Jupiter appears brighter than all the stars around it.

Regardless of the use of Daylight Saving Time in everyday affairs, reference to time in these articles will continue to be according to Standard Time. The individual may therefore make adjustments for his observations.

Before midnight, even at the beginning of the month, Leo will enter the western half of the sky. It can easily be found by first locating Regulus, the bright star in the Lion's chest. Southeast of the meridian, another bright star may be seen. This is Spica, in Virgo, the Virgin. Jupiter, southeast of Spica, should be an aid in "pointing it out". With the exception of this star, Virgo is made up entirely of faint ones. They cover an area equally as extensive as that of Leo, and when connected, they roughly suggest the figure of an open book.

Higher, and to the northeast of Spica, brilliant orange-red Arcturus will be readily recognized in the constellation of Boötes, the Herdsman. To the east of Boötes, a rather faint, but beautiful little constellation may be seen. It consists of a semi-circle of five stars, one of which is slightly brighter than the others. This is Corona, the Crown, sometimes called Ariadne's Crown.

When facing north, Polaris may be easily found by the aid of the "Pointers" in the Big Dipper, and the Little Dipper will appear to be balanced on the tip of its handle. At this time, a very bright, blue-white star may be seen above the northeastern horizon. This is Vega, in Lyra, the Lyre.

About an hour before sunrise, Mercury and Saturn will rise in conjunction. Thus, at least for early risers, all five planets will be in view between dusk and dawn.

-Elizabeth D. Simons

EDISTO BEACH FIELD TRIP - APRIL 19, 1970

Thirteen hale and hearty souls braved the early hour of 6:00 a.m. to be present on this field trip. The weather looked a little threatening at first, but soon the clouds dissipated, and the sun shone brightly most of the day.

Our first stop was on a dirt road on the way to Raccoon Island. The stop was prompted by a grassy bank which was covered with wild phlox in many different hues. Also in bloom were pockets of stinging nettles and rock roses. A Green Heron was perched in a tall pine tree at the edge of the field and a nervous Kingbird flitted back and forth in the field. The air was full of early morning calls, including those of the Yellow-breasted Chat and a Field Sparrow.

The road across the marsh to Raccoon Island was paved in a unique manner with rubber pipes in various shapes and sizes. These appeared to be metallic and so tended to make one nervous about driving over them. However, later on in the day, we wished that another road was equally well paved. Raccoon Island is a small enclave in the marsh situated on the Edisto River consisting mainly of pine woods and open fields. We appreciate the permission to visit granted by the owners -- the Dions of Summerville. Among the many species of birds observed here was an Orchard Oriole and a Yellow-throat.

On a pond in the marsh toward the river, flocks of Coots and Blue-winged Teal were seen, with occasional groups of Scaup and Pied-billed Grebe interspersed among them. One other creature which was out in great numbers, much to our discomfort, was the deerfly. Swarms of these vicious insects pestered us as we walked.

The beach walk was uneventful. A small group of us hiked down as far as the creek dividing Edisto from Edingsville. Several shorebirds were observed, including a Curlew and some Knots as well as a solitary Brown Pelican. A few fossils were found--pieces of bone and turtle shell--but nothing extraordinary. Mr. Barrington picked up several large pieces of wormstone for use as bird feeders. An interesting observation was the considerable amount of beach erosion which had been inflicted by the winter storms.

After lunch under the Palmettos on the beach, we started on the last leg of the trip--a visit to the Indian mound. However, this part of the trip came to an abrupt conclusion, when one of the cars (driven by A.M. Bills) bogged down on the road to the mound. After much maneuvering and expending of considerable strength, we were able to extricate the car from the mud and so we returned without having seen this interesting site. Well, perhaps a future trip will be more successful.

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All in all, the trip was successful in permitting us to visit new territory and just to be outdoors on such a lovely spring day.

-Alan M. Bills and
Edmund R. Guthbert, Jr.

OBSERVATIONS

Mrs. Corinne Pettit writes from Wadmaw Island: We had a female dickcissel several years ago for approximately eleven weeks, January through March. At the time we were also host to a flock of English sparrows with which the dickcissel fed and travelled. When she left, so did they, and we've had neither species since then.

Mr. Francis Barrington reports two Parula Warblers on March 27th, a Black and White Warbler on March 29th, a Ruby-throated Hummingbird on April 5th. He also reports that male Purple Finches departed about the third week in March but that females were still present on April 12th.

Mrs. Dorothy Glover, who is convalescing from an illness writes from Adams Run: During the last days of a seven-week stay in St. Francis Hospital, I was entertained by a flock of Goldfinches. On the morning of April 15th before 8:00 five females were bathing in rain puddles on the flat roof just below my third floor window. After bathing and drinking they flew to a young oak opposite my window to preen and dry. The next morning the puddles had disappeared but the flock was back, this time accompanied by a brilliantly-colored male. He really stood out among the drab five. I watched them for perhaps an hour each day before they left. On Friday they did not return.

Saturday, April 18th, I returned home and spent three hours--from 1 to 4 p.m.--on the front porch birding. By song and sightings I recorded 18 species; then added number 19, a Chuck-will's-widow, about 8 p.m.

On the 19th from two vantage points--the breakfast room window overlooking the feeder and the front porch--between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. I recorded 23 species with the Chuck-will's-widow making the 24th shortly after dark.

All species are common permanent and summer residents.

Editor's note: The Society wishes Mrs. Glover a prompt recovery and hopes that she shall be able soon to rejoin our activities.

A termite swarm, perhaps triggered by recent rain, provided abundant food for numerous vireos, gnatcatchers, warblers, and Wood Pewees, whose feeding antics were amusing to watch. The most interesting avian species seen were a male American Redstart in full spring plumage and Kentucky Warblers. Edwin Blich discovered a Kentucky Warbler nest with five young on the ground just a few feet off Echaw Road between the Center and the Wambaw bridge.

At lunchtime the group retired to Wambaw Bridge to leisurely await the Kites, and it was not disappointed. The Mississippi Kite appeared first, and later, at about 12:30 p.m., a Swallow-tailed was seen a few hundred yards downstream from the bridge, but was frightened off by a passing car. It reappeared a few minutes later, however, and entertained the group by eating a dragonfly on the wing. A beautiful bird, a beautiful day, a fitting climax to a successful year.

—Julian R. Harrison, III