



Published at Charleston, S.C., by The Natural History Society, Nov. 1969. Vol. XX No. 12
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NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

The regular monthly meeting of the Society will be on Tuesday, November 11th, at 8:00 p.m. at the Charleston Museum. It will then be our pleasure to view a slide presentation by John Henry Dick.

No regular field trip will occur in November. However, some members of the Society, under the leadership of Harry Freeman, will help to conduct a bird census at Bellefield Plantation this month. Participating members have been notified by telephone. The group will leave the Mount Pleasant Piggly Wiggly (at the intersection of highways 17 and 703) at 6:00 a.m. Sunday, November 16th. Coffee and pastries will be served upon arrival at Bellefield; at noon dinner will be served.

LAST MINUTE OBSERVATION

Mr. James M. Dorn, Jr., on October 22, 1969, saw four white pelicans on North Edisto Sound. Although no other observer was present, he is quite certain of their identity. He writes: "These birds are much larger than the brown pelicans (saw them together) and their entire body is white--black on the wings when in flight. The beak pouch is huge and yellow. They feed right in the water by scouping, not diving as do the browns. I watched these birds for about an hour because I had never seen them before. I took some pictures which I hope will turn out."

OCTOBER FIELD TRIP

On October 18, 1969, nine society members and guests enjoyed a beautiful morning at Fort Johnson on James Island, but were rewarded with few avian species of interest for their efforts. Tides slightly higher than normal and poor exposure of mud flats precluded good views of shorebirds, the primary objective of the outing.

Our first stop was a trail through dry sandy woods from the main road to a bluff overlooking the harbor. Apart from the usual jays, thrashers, towhees and such, no particular species of interest were seen. A visit to the mud flat areas behind the Grice Marine Laboratory building yielded a Ruddy Turnstone feeding among the rocks and an Osprey which later posed for the group on a piling just off the Fort Sumter Bar. An exposed mud flat on the other side of the point (facing the city) turned up a Willet and a Clapper Rail. Excellent views of a Sparrow Hawk were provided by an apparently young bird perched on a nearby telephone wire. The only species of especial interest seen on the trip was a House Wren discovered by Ed Cuthbert in a Yucca thicket after the bird began "scolding" the group shortly before we broke up for the day. Those attending were: Mrs. Button, Miss Button, Mrs. Brewster, Mrs. Coleman, Ed Cuthbert, Mrs. Fugiel, Mrs. Miles, Perry Nugent, and Julian Harrison.

- Julian R. Harrison, III

OBSERVATIONS

Mr. Perry Nugent reports seeing a Bachman's warbler near a swamp off Bee's Ferry Road on May 10th and again two weeks later.

Mr. Francis Barrington reports the following observations in October: white-throats on the 19th, song sparrow on the 21st, eastern cowbird and black-throated green warbler on the 23rd, orange-crowned warbler on the 24th, yellow-bellied sapsucker on the 27th, red-breasted nuthatch, hermit and wood thrushes on the 29th, and rusty blackbird, robins, and myrtle warbler on the 30th. On the 18th he was surprised to see a prothonotary warbler in his yard, which is far from its usual swampy habitat.

BIRD MOVEMENT IN NOVEMBER

Arrivals

1 Sprague's Pipit	5 Parasitic Jaeger	20 Red Crossbill
Fox Sparrow	8 Old-Squaw	24 Common Merganser
3 White-winged Scoter	16 Bufflehead	Saw-whet Owl
Ipswich Sparrow	Golden Eagle	28 Cinnamon Teal
4 Common Goldeneye	17 Rough-legged Hawk	European Widgeon
Snow Bunting	19 Glaucous Gull	30 Brant

Departures

2 Gray-cheeked Thrush	5 Painted Bunting	14 Magnificent
3 Purple Martin	6 Scissors-tailed Flycatcher	Frigatebird
Cape May Warbler	7 Red-eyed Vireo	Blackpoll Warbler
4 Black-throated Blue	Worm-eating Warbler	18 Solitary Sandpiper
Warbler	10 Indigo Bunting	20 Yellow-billed Cuckoo
American Redstart	11 Yellow-breasted Chat	21 Veery
5 Chimney Swift	12 Magnolia Warbler	24 Sprague's Pipit

Casuals and Accidentals

Swainson's Hawk
Sandhill CranePomarine Jaeger
Northern Waterthrush

Wilson's Warbler

THE SKY-WATCHERS' GUIDE

During November of this year, the moon commands our especial attention, for on the 14th of the month, the three-man crew of Apollo 12 is scheduled to begin the space flight for the second such mission ever to be accomplished. On that night, the moon may be seen as a "waxing", or increasing crescent, reflecting the light of the sun. Since the destination of the astronauts orbits the earth at a speed exceeding 2000 miles per hour, the timing must be no less than perfect for the rendezvous.

This is the last month in which the "Summer Triangle" of stars may be seen before it is lost entirely in the sunset glow. The Little Dipper, pivoted on Polaris, the North Star, has swung around a little more to the northern horizon, and Cassiopeia and Pegasus have moved through a wider arc. The bright star, Capella, is high in the northeast by 9 p.m. on November 1, and soon after dark by November 30. The constellation of which it is a part is a five-sided figure called Auriga, the Charioteer. Between Cassiopeia and Auriga is Perseus, a very faint, but beautiful configuration in shape like an old-fashioned letter A.

Mars, in the southwest, and Saturn, high in the southeast, still dominate the evening sky. Mars sets before midnight, but Saturn remains in view until the early morning hours. About 5 a.m., Jupiter and Venus will rise in the east. There should be no difficulty in distinguishing the two, since Venus is exceedingly brilliant. At the beginning of the month, it may be possible, also, to catch a glimpse of Mercury about an hour later.

The topic of the November showing at the Planetarium is "THE MOON, - ONE GIANT LEAP FOR MANKIND". The date is November 17, and the hour, 8 p.m.

- Elizabeth D. Simons

THE JOYS OF THE AMATEUR

An amateur naturalist, who has not the temerity to claim, even to himself, extensive knowledge of any particular branch of natural history does, it seems to me, enjoy one advantage over his more accomplished fellows. In conversations and in reading he is more apt to encounter simple ideas which, though elementary to others, raise his imagination to new heights in appreciation of nature.

So it was when I chanced upon a thin volume, several decades old, which treated of flower families and their ancestors. For so long that the sources of my knowledge were obscure, I had known that apples and hawthorns are in the rose family, that clover and lupine are in the pea family, and that wheat, oats, sugarcane, and bamboo are in the grass family. But that these families, and others which still exist today, could be related in one grand design to depict the entire evolutionary scheme of the common flowering plants was a new idea to me.

Never before had I heard that diversification of an early buttercup-like flower, by producing lilies, roses, and geraniums, had given rise to three main branches of flowering plants. How could I have guessed that somehow one line of buttercups produced the arrowheads, which were the first monocotyledons, and that from the arrowheads sprang the lilies, which in turn diversified along several lines; that one line of lilies, through loosing its petals and undergoing other modifications, produced first the rushes, then the sedges, and finally the multitudes of grasses, which superficially do not look at all like flowering plants; that other branches produced some of our showiest flowers, the irises, amaryllises, and orchids; and that one line even reached the stature of trees and became the palms? And who would have suspected that dogwoods, honeysuckles, and bluebells came from a single line of roses, the same line which, by clustering many small flowers into a single structure produced the sunflowers, chrysanthemums, asters, and dandelions; that a second line of roses produced first the myrtles, including the eucalypts, and then the cacti; and that a third line of roses evolved into many of our forest trees including maples, oaks, chestnuts, and walnuts? How surprised I was to read that geraniums, along a tortuous path, fused their petals and produced heaths, gentians, phloxes, snapdragons, and, finally, mints, and that along other lines geraniums produced pinks, primroses, buckwheats, and goosefoots.

Not even subsequent reading of disagreements, controversies, and refutations of specific— even major— points in this scheme for the evolution of flowering plants could dispell my enthusiasm for the idea imparted by that early volume—the idea that the presently existing legions of flowering plants are their own museum, that to a remarkable extent the ancestors and the descendants live side by side today, their delicate flowering and fruiting structures revealing, to the perceptive eye, their varied kinships.

Of such simple delights are the joys of the amateur compounded.

—Roger D. Lambert