

THE LESSER SQUAWK

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Newsletter of the
Charleston Audubon &
Natural History Society

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LECTURE (Nov. 14th): Conserving the Bats of SC - New Threats on the Horizon

Bats have long inspired feelings of both wonder and dread, and these mysterious flying mammals have been the subject of countless folk tales.

[Fourteen species of bats inhabit SC](#) and provide us with important goods and services, such as the consumption of agricultural and forestry pests and the production of guano. At our November 14 CNHS meeting, Dr. Susan Loeb, a [Research Ecologist with the USDA Forest Service](#), will discuss the natural history of bats and help us understand and appreciate these fascinating animals. She will also address the many threats that bats in SC are currently facing, including: habitat destruction and fragmentation, global climate change, wind power development and [White-nose Syndrome](#).



Dr. Loeb earned her B.A. at Stanford University and M.S. and Ph.D. degrees at the University of California, Berkeley. She has been a Research Ecologist with the US Forest Service, [Southern Research Station \(SRS\)](#) since 1988. For the first part of her career with the SRS she conducted research on the [interactions between Southern Flying Squirrels and the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker](#). In 2000 Susan began research on the conservation and management of bats in the Southeast, focusing on rare and endangered species such as the [Indiana Bat](#) and [Rafinesque's Big-eared Bat](#), as well as examining the [effects of forest management on bat habitat use and populations](#). She is a member of the Upland Hardwood Ecology and Management Unit of the SRS based at Clemson University.

We will meet at 6 PM to socialize and share some snacks, then Dr. Loeb will speak beginning at 6:30 PM. Please feel free to bring a snack to share.

Calendar of Events

Nov 5th, 7am-1pm

Field Trip: Poplar Grove

Poplar Grove is a 6,000 acre property that straddles the Charleston, Dorchester County line. It contains numerous habitats including pine and mixed hardwood upland forest, cypress swamps, agricultural lands and fresh and saltwater features. On past visits we have counted 50-60 species including numerous sparrows, waterfowl, raptors, woodpeckers and wading birds.

We will meet at 7am at the Poplar Grove sales office ([map](#)). Bring food and water, bug spray, and dress for the weather. We will do mostly road side birding with a minimum amount of walking. Restrooms are at the sales office. Please contact Don Jones (572-8232 or Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com), prior to November 5th.

Nov 14th, 6-8pm

LECTURE: Conserving the Bats of SC: New Threats on the Horizon

(Note: because of scheduling constraints, we are holding our Nov meeting on Monday evening, although at the same time (6pm) and place (Charleston County Public Library).

See "Conserving the Bats of SC" to the left.

President's Notes

As I write this, I'm thinking a lot about bridges. Not the natural kinds formed as weak rocks [erode and leave a span of rock](#) above them, or when the ocean's waves carve a promontory and leave a 'bridge' certain to be photographed many times over. Not even the Brooklyn kind of bridge; I'm thinking about [bog bridges](#). You've probably crossed one in the past while hiking, without giving much thought to the structure. That's the point, it makes the hike easier and lets you focus more on enjoying your time in the woods than on how you'll scramble across a ravine or get through some water. By the time you read this, we should have installed several lengths of bog bridge on the trails at our [McAlhany Nature Preserve](#), helping us build the infrastructure necessary for CNHS members and guests to enjoy the property.

An interesting mix of volunteers, including a group of [Citadel cadets](#), [Master of Environmental Studies](#) (MES) students from the College of Charleston, and a motivated sampling of our membership, is scheduled to arrive at the Preserve on October 22nd. If all goes as planned and the weather cooperates, we'll not only construct the bridges occupying my thoughts right now, we'll re-open the Bluff Trail, install more bluebird nesting boxes, mark out some parking spaces for future guests, and do a variety of other maintenance tasks before enjoying a cookout. All this effort should have the site in prime shape not only for a field trip the next day, but for other activities in the future. Watch future issues of the [Lesser Squawk](#) for details of events held at the Preserve in Spring 2012.

I'm also thinking more figuratively about bridges, especially bridges between groups whose missions overlap with ours at least somewhat or even just at some times. For example, this initial collaboration with the MES program may lead to further use of the McAlhany Preserve by those students as they develop their



research projects. Similarly, I hope to build a lasting connection to the Citadel's [Krause Center](#), which administers and is further developing the service learning commitment asked of sophomore cadets. In each case, it seems like a 'win' for everyone involved, with the students getting hands-on exposure to the natural world, and our group being able to meet its educational mission. On perhaps a broader scale, building bridges to other groups, such as the [Native Plant Society](#), [Mt. Pleasant](#) and [Kiawah Conservancies](#), [Center for Birds of Prey](#), or even the [Charleston Beekeepers](#) group, can lead to a synergy in our efforts with results greater than the sum of its parts. In the next year, I hope to encourage members of each group to attend meetings and field trips of the other groups, and even to hold more joint meetings or to co-sponsor lectures. Stay tuned as plans develop, and I hope you'll join us in walking both literal and figurative bridges.

Finally, I want to say thank you to those who supported us in our bird seed sale, run with the strong support of the Wild Birds Unlimited stores in [West Ashley](#) and [Mt. Pleasant](#). If you missed your chance to support us in the seed sale (or even if you didn't :) then be sure to join us for our annual oyster roast holiday party and fundraiser, to be held at [Bowen's Island](#) restaurant on December 11th. This year we'll have a silent auction rather than raffle the prizes as we did in the past, so bring your checkbook if you'd like to stock up on some presents right before the holidays. :) Until then, enjoy the great weather beginning in the Lowcountry, and I hope to see you at a field trip or lecture!

Paul Nolan
paulnolancnhs@gmail.com

Calendar of Events

Nov 20th, 7am-2pm

FIELD TRIP: Botany Bay

This WMA has over 4500 acres of mixed pine-hardwood forest, agricultural fields, coastal wetlands and a front beach. Botany Bay has a few intact buildings, as well as ruins of some of the original plantation homes. There is a three mile loop road with many interesting stops along the way, and a trail that provides access to the beach. We have the opportunity of possibly seeing over-wintering sparrows and shorebirds, as well as raptors, woodpeckers, herons, egrets, vireos, winter warblers, and waterfowl.

Bring food and water, and your birding gear, and expect a moderate amount of walking on the beach. We will meet at the Food Lion on US 17 and SC 165 in Ravenel ([map](#)). Please contact Don Jones (572-8232 or Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com), prior to November 20th.

Dec 11th, 2-5pm

EVENT: Oyster Roast & Silent Auction Fundraiser

Save the date! Our 4th annual holiday party & oyster roast fundraiser will be held at Bowen's Island, with the best of Lowcountry oysters, multiple kinds of chili, live music, lots of cool prizes to be for the silent auction, and beer will be available. Enjoy the best view of the marsh around while socializing and supporting a good cause.

Tickets are \$25, with advance purchase options to become available as the date gets closer. Check back here or on the web site (charlestonaudubon.org) or on our facebook page for details as we get closer to December.

DON'T MISS EVENTS!

LECTURE (Jan 12th): Lecture: Diadromous fishes of South Carolina

Note: because of scheduling constraints we are holding our January meeting on a Thursday evening, although at the same time (6 PM) and place ([Charleston County Public Library](#), 68 Calhoun St.) as our usual meetings.

Ms. Pamela Corwin, Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Biologist with the SC Department of Natural Resources, will be the speaker at our January 12, 2012 CNHS meeting. In her talk Pamela will explain the differences between anadromous, catadromous and diadromous fishes and briefly describe the various species of such fish found in South Carolina waters. She will also discuss conservation issues and the efforts by the SC DNR to monitor these species. In addition to showing many photos and videos of diadromous fishes, Pamela will bring preserved specimens for up-close observation.



A native of Spartanburg, SC, Ms. Corwin earned two Bachelor of Science degrees in Anthropology and Biology (with a minor in Chemistry) from the College of Charleston in 2006. Since 2007 she has worked full-time as a SC DNR Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries Biologist on the Santee Shad Accord, which involves collecting adult shad, spawning the adults, collecting eggs, incubating the eggs until they hatch, marking fry with OTC and stocking them in the Wateree and Broad Rivers. In addition to her work with SC DNR, Pamela is also currently serving in the SC National Guard and working on a graduate degree at The Citadel under the supervision of Dr. Paul Nolan. The focus of her graduate research is the relationship between avian community change and successional stages and seasonal change in abandoned rice fields along the Cooper River.

We will meet at 6 PM to socialize and share some snacks, then Ms. Corwin will speak beginning at 6:30. Please feel free to bring a snack to share.

Sign-Up Now for Email Alerts

Visit www.CharlestonAudubon.org and sign-up.

You may also send a note to membership@charlestonaudubon.org and we'll add your email address to the mailing list.

Calendar of Events

Dec 17th, 7am-3pm

FIELD TRIP: Huntington Beach State Park

This is one of the best birding spots on the South Carolina coast. The site contains over 3000 acres of fresh water impoundments, salt marsh, and ocean beach. We usually see around 60 species of birds including ducks and other waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, gulls, terns, eagles, other raptors, and sparrows. Over 300 species of birds have been recorded at the park and it's a great place to look for rarities such as Purple Sandpipers, Great Cormorants, and Piping Plovers.

Wear comfortable walking shoes as the walk to the south jetty at Murrells Inlet is about 1¼ miles. Bring a scope if you have one. Also bring water, snacks, and a lunch. There is a covered picnic area and restrooms on site. There is a \$5.00 fee to enter the park; \$3.25 for seniors.

We'll meet at 7 am directly behind the I-Hop ([map](#)), in front of the Lowe's in Mount Pleasant. From there we'll carpool for the one hour drive to Huntington. Please register with Don Jones prior to December 17th 572-8232 or Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com.

More Information

For more information check out our calendar online:

www.charlestonaudubon.org/calendar.html or join our gmail calendar by searching for CNHS. To attend field trips, please register with Don Jones prior to the scheduled dates: 843.572.8232 or birdfrogdjlj@aol.com.

EVENT (Dec 11th): Oyster Roast & Silent Auction Fundraiser

Save the date! Our 4th annual holiday party & oyster roast fundraiser will be held at Bowen's Island, with the best of Lowcountry oysters, multiple kinds of chili, live music, lots of cool prizes for the silent auction, and beer will be available. Enjoy the best view of the marsh around while socializing and supporting a good cause.

Tickets are \$25, with advance purchase options to become available as the date gets closer. Check back here or on the web site (charlestonaudubon.org) or on our facebook page for details as we get closer to December.



Wild Birds Unlimited®
Nature Shop

Fresh Start Event

Join our sponsor, Wild Birds Unlimited, as they celebrate the store's new ownership. From Friday, November 4th to Sunday, November 6th they are giving away prizes, refreshments, and having some very special guests. Also, they will be hosting their famous Feeder Swap. Don't miss it!

Naturalist



Olympics

Break out your field guides and take your best guess at the identity of this butterfly, a resident of the Lowcountry. Email your response for this second competition to naturalistolympics@gmail.com. A third event--and the ID of the butterfly--will be announced in the next Lesser Squawk.

Thanks to everyone who competed in the first event of our Naturalist Olympics, as described in the September/October issue of [The Lesser Squawk](#). As roughly half of the entrants correctly replied, the bird you see here is a [Canada Goose](#); note the black and white neck feathers at the upper left of the photo.



Mystery Species #2



Canada Goose (*Branta canadensis*)

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Species Highlight: Thanksgiving Feast

We're taking a different approach in our *Species Highlight* in this edition, by highlighting the delicious species that feed us during the holiday season.

Sweet potatoes are the sweet-tasting tuberous roots of the plant. This complex carbohydrate is high in fiber and rich in beta carotene, vitamin C, and Vitamin B₆. Sweet potatoes are thought to originate in either Central or South America and have been domesticated for >5,000 years.

Maize, or corn is technically a grain, but used in cooking as a vegetable or starch. Domesticated by the indigenous people of Mexico, the crop spread to the Americas and is now the most widely grown crop in the US.



Cranberries, often adorning our plates in the sauce form, are native to North America. These woody vines grow from the East Coast to the Central US and Canada and are wetland-adapted. Many commercial growers must create "cranberry bogs" to produce these yummy berries.

Eastern Wild Turkey, native to North America, aren't quite the domesticated fatties we find on our plates. These slim omnivores feed on nuts, berries, and insects in our mature forests. Benjamin Franklin thought the Wild Turkey was a respectable bird, and was disappointed that the Bald Eagle was designated as the National Bird, instead of the Wild Turkey.

Other Interesting Events in the Lowcountry:

- Francis Beidler Forest
- Birds of Prey Raptor Center
- Sewee Visitor & Environmental Education Center

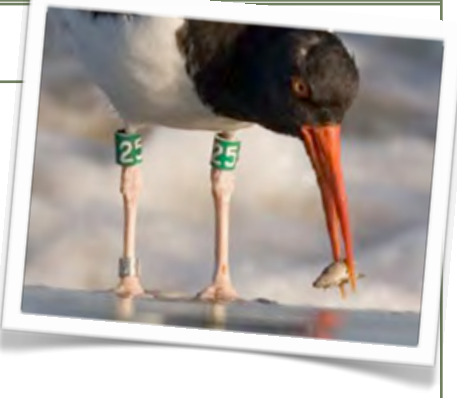
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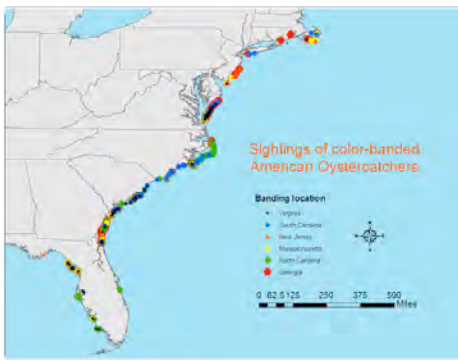


Citizen Science, Get Involved!

This edition's Citizen Science spot light will shine on the American Oystercatcher Banding Program! I'm sure many of us have enjoyed observing these beautiful birds poke around oyster beds all over the Lowcountry, so let's all take a closer look! American Oystercatchers are currently classified as a species of least concern. However, researchers are trying to identify their conservation needs and learn more about their basic biology. This study centers on tracking their movements up and down the Eastern and Gulf Coasts.

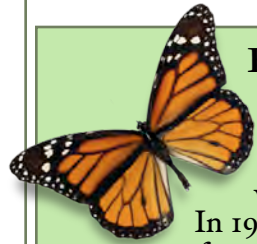


The scientists have put colored legs bands on all of the birds that are readable with binoculars or through a telephoto lens. Each band identifies the state in which each bird was originally banded. If you see a banded oystercatcher try to get a picture, and write down the color and code on the bands. If you're not sure which number or letter comes first you can consult the [website](#). Using this link to the program's web page you can report your sightings. Banded oystercatchers have been spotted all over the East Coast, so be on the lookout! For more general information on this species as well as others visit: allaboutbirds.org. Helping programs like this one recover data earns you the title of Citizen Scientist!



• Jennifer Tyrrell: Jennifer.tyrrell@avianconservationcenter.org

Energy & Recycling Tips: Recycling Batteries



Do you hang on to batteries, wondering what to do with them? Ideally we should use as few as possible, but there are ways to recycle those that energize products we can't seem to live without.

In 1996, the Battery Act was signed into law to address two fundamental issues: to phase out the use of mercury in rechargeable batteries and to provide collection methods and recycling or proper disposal of rechargeable batteries. Since then, recycling rates have steadily increased. Batteries should be recycled whenever possible and never thrown in the trash. Improperly disposed batteries can pollute water sources, leach from solid waste landfills, cause burns or danger to eyes and skin and expose the environment to hazardous lead and acid. Rechargeable batteries contain more hazardous materials than single-use.

To find a site near you that recycles single-use batteries, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/3rqhqj9>.

In Charleston County, the following places will recycle single-use batteries:

[Batteries Plus](#), 6303 Rivers Ave, North Charleston, SC 29406 and
2031 Sam Rittenberg Blvd, Charleston, SC 29407

[Charleston County Recycling Drop-off Programs](#)

Rechargeable Batteries can be recycled at: [Home Depot](#), [Best Buy](#), [Lowe's](#), [RadioShack](#), [Staples](#)

You can also use the site mentioned above and type in "Rechargeable Batteries" in the "Search" line.

Earth911.com is a great site for information about recycling. You can join them on Facebook and you can sign up for their weekly newsletter with great tips.

•Ann Shahid: rashahid@att.net

As Climate and Energy Outreach Coordinator, I would like to share an energy saving or recycling tip in each "Lesser Squawk." If any readers have tips they would like to share, please email them to me.

**The Charleston Audubon &
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Learn more at www.CharlestonAudubon.org.



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