

THE LESSER SQUAWK

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Newsletter of the
Charleston Audubon &
Natural History Society



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LECTURE (Jan 12th): 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](#)) 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.

Calendar of Events

Jan 12th, 6-8 pm

LECTURE: Diadromous Fishes of SC

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](#)) as our usual meetings.

See article (left) for more details.

Jan 21st, 7 am -3 pm

FIELD TRIP: Santee NWR

See article on page 3 for more details.

Feb 4th, 7 am -3 pm

FIELD TRIP: Savannah River NWR

See article on page 3 for more details.

Feb 16th, 6-8 pm

Lecture: Seabird research in the Southeastern US and Bahamas

See article on page 4 for more details.

Note: The "ending times" listed in the calendar descriptions for field trips are only approximations. Trip leaders will take weather and birding conditions into account, as well as the attitude of the group when deciding when to wrap-up. If you have questions, please ask the trip leader when you register to participate.

President's Notes



About a year and a half ago I was fortunate enough to have a vacation throughout Ireland with a friend, including a side trip to some ancient ruins in the Boyne Valley. I was so taken with the age—at over 5000 years old, they predate both Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids—and the size of the Newgrange site that I entered a lottery for one of the few spots available to stand inside the tomb as it's [illuminated by the rising sun of the winter solstice](#). I didn't win that lottery (I'm entered again for next year :-)) but did revisit their web site recently to learn more about the region's history. What struck me again was the enormous amount of cooperation and coordination that must have been necessary to accomplish the feat of building these structures.

Those ideals of cooperation and coordination have been on my mind recently, because of their abundance at our annual oyster roast and holiday party earlier this month. An event like that demands attention to a zillion details, from having both beer and cups to pour it into, to having both silent auction prizes and festive table covers to display them, and an abundance of paper products to hold the 15(!) different types of chili brought by the attendees. It was a rewarding sight to see our corps of volunteers arrive at Bowen's Island and, in less than an hour, arrange everything we needed to ensure that the event was once again a success. My thanks go out to all of those volunteers, to the 100+ people who attended, to our sponsors, and especially to Robert Barber for use of the iconic Bowen's Island restaurant to hold our event.

Cooperation and coordination—writ large—are hallmarks of the ongoing [Christmas Bird Counts across the Carolinas](#) and across [North America](#). The combined efforts of countless

CBC participants over the years have assembled a database of avian abundance that's proven invaluable to researchers, as evidenced by the [hundreds and hundreds](#) of scientific articles relying on CBC results. Our count just passed, on New year's Eve, so watch for updates from our CBC compiler, Jenny Tyrrell, on the number of species observed in our count circle. Check out her regularly-appearing Citizen Science column in *The Lesser Squawk*, also, to learn about some of the many other opportunities to get outside while helping scientists get data.

Even if you're not getting data, I hope you're able to get outside and enjoy the gorgeous weather we've been having. We have a full slate of outings planned for the winter and spring, and will have several calls coming for chances to visit our [McAlhany Nature Preserve](#) as we recognize the 25th anniversary of our stewardship of that property. Finally, the majority of our natural history lectures for this program year are still to come. Scheduling troubles related to the Charleston Library's increased use of their own facilities mean that we can't be as predictable as in the past, relative to the night of the week on which our talks are held. Please refer to our [web page](#) or to our [facebook page](#) for details, or sign up for our email announcements for reminders of upcoming events.

I wish the best of holiday seasons for you and your family, and hope to see you at one of our upcoming functions in the new year.

Cheers,

Calendar of Events

Feb 25th, 7 am-3 pm

FIELD TRIP: ACE Basin, Bear Island, Donnelly WMAs

These two areas contain a total of over 20,000 acres of mixed pine-hardwood forest, tidal creeks, fresh water impoundments, salt marsh, and ag. fields. On past visits we've seen between 60 and 70 species: Tundra Swans, White Pelicans, ducks, shorebirds, warblers, bluebirds, and Bald Eagles. We're still looking for the elusive Whooping Cranes that have wintered here in the past.

Please bring water, snacks, a lunch, and your birding gear (including a scope if you have one). Restrooms are limited. Most of the birding will be done on the road side. We will meet at 7am in the Food Lion parking in Ravenel ([map](#)), and carpool from there. Please register with Don Jones (572-8232 or at Birdfrogdjj@aol.com) prior to Feb 25th.

Mar 14th, 6-8 pm

LECTURE: South Carolina's Changing Energy Landscape

Mr. Hamilton Davis, Energy and Climate Director with the SC Coastal Conservation League, will discuss the current opportunities and challenges that exist in SC related to the generation and use of energy. A window of opportunity has opened in SC to rethink not only how we use energy, but also where that energy will come from. If we don't move quickly, there will be critical opportunities lost: near term job creation and economic development, a smooth transition into a new energy reality, the preservation of a healthy environment for residents, and the conservation of our natural resources (cont...).

DON'T MISS EVENTS!

FIELD TRIP (Jan 21st): Santee NWR

Our annual winter outing to the Bluff and Cuddo units of Santee NWR. is scheduled for January 21st. Geese, ducks, eagles, and raptors are the main attraction here but we usually see lots of other interesting species including Sandhill cranes, meadowlarks, sparrows, kinglets, woodpeckers and other woodland species. You can expect to see between 50 and 60 species on this trip. If lake levels remain low the waterfowl may be concentrated, which would afford us good views of the over-wintering species. Restrooms are available at the visitor center and we usually take a mid day break there for lunch, before heading to our next birding destination. There will be a moderate amount of walking on this outing.

We'll meet at 7:00 am in the small parking lot next to the First Citizens Bank, in front of the Summerville Wal-Mart just off of 17-A ([map](#)). From there we will carpool for the approximately one hour drive to the refuge. Bring your birding gear, a scope if you have one, a lunch, and dress for the weather.

FIELD TRIP (Feb 4th): Savannah River NWR



Want to see some ducks? Then this is the trip for you. Nineteen species of waterfowl have been recorded at the reserve along with herons, egrets, bitterns, rails and shore birds. The concentration of ducks also attract eagles and other birds of prey. There is a four mile loop road that will take us past fresh water impoundments, salt marsh, tidal creeks and bottomland

hardwood forests. Mostly roadside birding with a minimum amount of walking on this outing.

If you plan to attend, please bring food and water (enough to last through the day) and your birding gear (especially a scope if you have one). There are restrooms, but no picnic facilities on site. Depending on conditions we will bird until mid afternoon, which should get us home before dark. Our meeting point will be in the Food Lion parking lot in Ravenel, near the intersection of US 17 and SC 165 at 7:00AM ([map](#)). We will car pool from there, for the 40 mile drive to the refuge.

*** Please register with Don Jones (843-572-8232 or Birdfrogdjj@aol.com) prior to any of our field trips.**

Calendar of Events

Mar 14th, 6-8 pm (cont...)

(Continued from previous page...)

The Coastal Conservation League (CCL) advocates for our elected officials, business leaders, and all South Carolinians to support energy policies that will lead to a more secure and prosperous clean energy future for the Palmetto State. A truly comprehensive approach by the state should include ambitious energy efficiency and conservation programs while also promoting the state's bio-energy, offshore wind, geothermal, and solar potential.

A native of SC, Mr. Davis earned a B.S. from Clemson University and a J.D. from the University of South Carolina School of Law. He has worked with the SC CCL since 2006 and now serves as their Energy and Climate Director. The CCL Energy and Climate Program promotes the implementation of progressive local, state, and federal energy policies related to renewable energy, energy efficiency, and climate change.

We'll gather at 6 pm for snacks (feel free to bring something to share :-)) then Mr. Davis will speak beginning at 6:30, with time for questions afterwards. This lecture will be held at our usual venue, the Charleston County Public Library at 68 Calhoun St. in Charleston.

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 birdfrogdjj@aol.com.

LECTURE (Feb 16th): Seabird Research in the Southeastern US and Bahamas

Note: because of scheduling constraints we are holding our February 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.

Dr. Patrick Jodice, Unit Leader of the USGS SC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Associate Professor in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Clemson University, and Chair of the Pacific Seabird Group, will be the speaker at our February 16, 2012 CNHS meeting. Although seabirds are a conspicuous component of marine and coastal ecosystems, they have received surprisingly little research attention in the southeastern US, Bahamas and Caribbean. Since 2002 the SC Cooperative Research Unit has been engaged in a variety of projects that have focused on nearshore and pelagic seabirds. In his lecture Pat will describe seabird ecology in the region, discuss data gaps and recent research findings in SC and also review results from recent studies on large-scale movement patterns and habitat use of Bahamian seabirds.

Dr. Jodice earned a B.S. at the University of Maine in 1983, an M.S. at the University of Florida in 1990, and a Ph.D. at Oregon State University in 1998. He joined the faculty at Clemson University in 2002 and began serving as Assistant Leader of the USGS SC Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit the same year (becoming Leader of the Unit in 2007). In 2010 Pat was named as the Chair of the Pacific Seabird Group. His research is focused on applied wildlife ecology and conservation, and over the course of his career Pat has investigated topics in avian ecology, reproductive energetics, foraging ecology, marine ornithology, survey design and methodology and urban ecology. We'll gather at 6 pm for snacks (feel free to bring something to share :-)) then Dr. Jodice will speak beginning at 6:30, with time for questions afterwards.

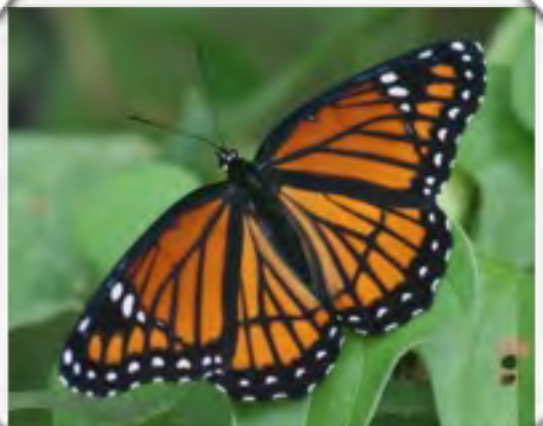
Naturalist



Olympics

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

Thanks to everyone who competed in the second event of our Naturalist Olympics, as described in the November/December issue of [The Lesser Squawk](#). All of the entrants correctly replied, the butterfly you see here is a [Viceroy](#). The Viceroy mimics the Monarch butterfly, except for the horizontal black lines at the bottom of its back wings.



Viceroy (*Limenitis archippus*)

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) has done more than any other program to expand the system of local parks, recreational green spaces and public lands enjoyed by hundreds of millions of Americans.

This program was established by Congress in 1965, to be paid for with a small portion of revenues generated by the leasing of oil and gas permits, not directly from taxpayers. The concept was that the depletion of one resource would help protect other resources. Unfortunately in recent years Congress has seen fit to raid the fund, putting the money in the General Fund and no one can say precisely where it went, leaving LWCF perpetually underfunded.

That is a foolish move because LWCF is a wise investment. Not only does it ensure access to public lands for hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation, but it also supports economic vitality and jobs in communities, and positively impacts people and jobs in every state.

South Carolina has had over 1100 projects and 60,000 acres protected through LWCF. These funds helped support such important areas as the Francis Marion National Forest, Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge, and the ACE Basin. It has also helped bring about Charleston's Waterfront Park, as well as numerous county and city parks and boat ramps. Fort Sumter National Monument, the Charles Pinckney Historic Site, and others have been protected partially through LWCF.

This year the House of Representatives proposed to fund LWCF at \$90 million. Fortunately the Senate did not go along with that, and the appropriations bill that is ready for the President's signature has \$323 million in LWCF funds. This is still well short of the \$900 million that the program is authorized to receive.

Americans understand that LWCF is essential to protecting critical habitat for wildlife, conserving wetlands, watersheds, and clean water supplies, and ensuring public access for hunting, fishing, and

other recreation. Please let Congressman Scott know that you support adequate, consistent funding for LWCF.

Congressman Scott's phone number in Washington is 202-225-3176 and his Charleston office number is 843-852-2222.



Photo by Steve Moore

Don't Forget

Visit www.CharlestonAudubon.org and sign up for email updates on upcoming lectures and field trips, and reminders when new editions of The Lesser Scaup are published. You may also send a note to membership@charlestonaudubon.org and we'll add your email address to the mailing list.

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Species Highlight: Reindeer Lichen

As much attention as Rudolph has gotten over the years during the Christmas season, maybe it's time to focus on other reindeer. After all, they're not just completely fictional characters of our holiday seasons. In fact, **reindeer** (also known as Caribou) are very real creatures that can thrive and frolic in the midst of the wintery season. But while most of us can pinpoint the cold Boreal and Temperate forests in which we may find reindeer, it's important to note that their ability to withstand harsh winters vastly depends on their food source—**Reindeer Lichen** (*Cladonia rangiferina*).



Reindeer Lichen (Photo from)

A lichen is a combination of a fungus and an alga. Different species of each can come together and thrive as one. This concept is broadly known as symbiosis, but the relationship between fungi and algae to form lichen is more specifically known as mutualism—both species benefit from each other. Generally speaking, **lichens** tend to be slow growing, but highly tolerant of extreme climates and substrates (like the tundra, rock surfaces). Lichens can grow in various forms but as its Greek genus origin (kladon) suggests, Reindeer Lichen tend to grow in branchy shrub-like formations (called fruticose). Often, this leads them to be mistaken for **Reindeer moss**. Nevertheless, the role of Reindeer Lichen in the midst of winter is one of significant importance—it is one of the very few remaining plants that can supply Caribou with the energy they need to survive. Even more interesting is that Caribou are one of the few species that can even eat (and more importantly digest) lichens.



Caribou (Photo from Red Orbit)

- Emma Paz:
emma.paz@gmail.com

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!

Citizen Science projects typically focus on specific flora or fauna, but the project highlighted this month covers just about any species! [Wildlife Watch](#), a program from the [National Wildlife Federation](#), uses your observations of the wildlife and plant life you see everyday. This citizen generated information is used to monitor the status of the many different species in the US.



Before you go on your next adventure, log on and select your state from the drop down menu. Then you can get an idea of what phenomena to look for. Next, go for a hike! When you return, log online and record your data and encounters. Not only are you contributing to a nationwide database but you can also find out what other observers are seeing in your area.

SAVE THE DATE!

• April 27-29, 2012 •

*Santee Birding and
Nature Festival*

The National Wildlife Federation want to know what you're seeing on your adventures. Not to mention, it's always fun to share your memorable sightings! If you get some photos you can share them on the flicker account set up on the site. So next time you head out for a walk in the woods, you can make it relaxing, enjoyable, and constructive!

• Jennifer Tyrrell: Jennifer.tyrrell@avianconservationcenter.org



Energy & Recycling Tips: Sunflowers

When thinking of what to plant in the spring, don't forget the beautiful sunflower. Not only do they improve the soil and increase the yield of future plantings, they bring beauty into our homes and food for birds. They also attract harmful insects (like the dreaded stink bug or squash bug) away from vegetables in the garden. When they have finished growing, they keep on giving through compost. Add them to your compost or leaf pile and they contribute nutrients to future plantings.



Photo by Therasa Reuter

• 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 &
Natural History Society**

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Charleston Audubon – serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties, founded as the Charleston Natural History Society in 1905, and a chapter of the National Audubon Society since 1970 – 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.

Learn more at www.CharlestonAudubon.org.



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