

THELESSER SQUAWK

Newsletter of the Charleston Audubon & Natural History Society

DON'T MISS EVENTS!

* Note Change of Venue: All LECTURES will be held at 6 PM in the Biology Auditorium (room 101) in Duckett Hall on the campus of The Citadel (map). Free parking is available along the west and south sides of Summerall Field directly across the street from Duckett and Bond Halls. There is also free parking after 5 PM in faculty lots directly behind Bond Hall.

LECTURE (March 13th): Aaron Given, "A Bird in the Hand: Bird Banding on Kiawah Island"



Aaron Given is a Certified Wildlife Biologist (CWB) endorsed by The Wildlife Society, and has been the Assistant Wildlife Biologist for the Town of Kiawah Island since 2008. He holds a B.S. in Zoology from Southern Illinois University (2000) and an M.S in Wildlife Biology from Southeast Missouri State University (2005), where he studied yellow rails wintering in coastal Texas. He is originally from Oswego, IL (a suburb of Chicago).

We will meet at 6 PM for socializing and snacks (feel free to bring a snack to share ;-) and then Mr. Given will begin his talk at 6:30.

FIELD TRIP (March 16th): South Tibwin

(Originally scheduled for February 23, this trip was postponed because of heavy rain on that date)

South Tibwin Plantation has a variety of great birding habitat, including freshwater ponds, salt marshes, tidal creeks, waterfowl impoundments, and longleaf pine uplands. Besides waterfowl and wading birds (possibly including American Bittern), we may also see some shorebirds. Songbirds that we might see include wintering species such as Blue-headed Vireo, Orange-crowned Warbler and Brown Creeper, plus some early spring migrants.

We will meet at 7AM in the parking lot of the "new" Walmart Supercenter in Mt. Pleasant (map) and carpool from there. Please bring water, snacks, your birding gear and a spotting scope if you have one. There are no restrooms at Tibwin, and we will do a fair amount of walking (2-3 miles). After the field trip ends about noon, we will go to lunch at TW Graham's (info). Please register with Doreen Cubie (doreencubie@tds.net or 843-991-1054) by March 15.

Calendar of Events

Saturday March 9th, 7:30am-3:30pm

FIELD TRIP: Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center

- TRIP IS FULL -

Wednesday March 13th, 6-8pm

LECTURE: Aaron Given, "A Bird in the Hand: Bird Banding on Kiawah Island[®]

See article to the left for more information.

Saturday March 16th, 7am

FIELD TRIP: South Tibwin

See article to the left for more information.

Stay on top of upcoming events, even without internet access; we're trying out a telephone call-in system. a listing of

Call 843-720-9736 (843-720-WREN) each month to hear upcoming lectures. field trips, and other events.

President's Notes

"Let's get blitzed!" That could either be a flashback to early college days for many, or a call for volunteers to help with a Bio-Blitz at our McAlhany Nature Preserve (MNP). As a follow-up to a successful, fun bird survey there last April, and to build on a great, joint meeting with the Lowcountry Chapter of the SC Native Plant Society, we are planning a weekend-long event to identify as many species as possible of the birds, plants, herps, bugs, fungi etc to be found at MNP.

Brian Reid, a Colleton County High School teacher and coach, and Citadel Biology graduate student, has taken the lead in organizing the event and has an article announcing it within this issue of The Lesser Squawk. Paul Kalbach of the SC Association of Naturalists (SCAN) and others are also mobilizing to get involved with the BioBlitz. If you're a member of other relevant groups, please share this newsletter with them and encourage the members to turn out. This promises to be a really fun, useful event, so please contact Brian and come help out —we'll even provide lunch that day!

There are also plenty of other ways to get involved with the group besides (or beyond) the BioBlitz. We are due to elect officers for the group at our meeting in May, and are actively searching for candidates to fill each of the offices except the role of Secretary. If you are interested in running for the office of President, Vice President, or



Treasurer of CNHS, please get in touch with me or any member of the Board (listed in *The Lesser Squawk* and on our web site) and we can give you a feel for what's involved. It can be tremendously rewarding, and really doesn't demand that much time to have a positive impact on your community.

We also have a strong need for several other people to serve on the Board, for example a Development Director to coordinate our fundraising events and apply for grants would be a huge help, as would a Membership Chair to handle correspondence with new members and to field occasional questions from visitors to the Lowcountry. Our fledgling Education Committee can always benefit from additional energy, and a Volunteer Coordinator to actively recruit help for our various events at MNP and elsewhere would be a godsend. Oh, and we can always use help in designing & posting signs announcing our lectures, special events, and field trips. See? There really are plenty of ways to get involved with CNHS, and it can even start with getting blitzed. Join us!

Paul Nolan paulnolancnhs@gmail.com

Calendar of Events

Saturday March 23rd, 7am-3pm

page 3.

FIELD TRIP: Seabrook PlantationFor more information, see article on

Wednesday April 10th, 6-8pm

LECTURE: John Gerwin, "Birdfriendly coffee plantations in northern Nicaragua."

See article on page 3 for more details.

Saturday April 13th, 7am-3pm

FIELD TRIP: Dewees Island

See article on page 4 for more details.

Sunday May 5th, 7am-3pm

EVENT: Spring Bird Count & Bird- a-thon Fundrasier

See flyer on pages 5 & 6 for details.

Wednesday May 8th, 6-8pm

LECTURE: Topic TBA

Saturday & Sunday May 11th, & 12th

EVENT: Bio-Blitz

For more information, see page 8.

Don't Miss Events!

FIELD TRIP (March 23rd): Seabrook Plantation



Our first visit to Seabrook Plantation was in November 2010, and those who attended were impressed with the beauty of the restored plantation house grounds. The main house was built in the Federal style by William Seabrook in 1810 and became a model for other builders in the area. Seabrook grew Sea Island cotton on the plantation and established a steamboat line that ran between Charleston and Savannah.

Located on the banks of Steamboat Creek, the 350-acre property contains a variety of habitats, including salt marsh, mixed hardwoods, pine forest, old agricultural land and freshwater

features. We can expect to see herons and egrets, ducks, raptors, and field and woodland birds. There is also an active Bald Eagle nest tree on the property.

We will meet at 7 AM in the Food Lion parking lot in Ravenel, SC. Restrooms will be available but no picnic area. Bring your birding gear, food and water, and bug spray.

Registration for this outing must be made several days in advance so that we can let our host know how many people are coming. Please call or email Andy Harrison prior to March 20 at parula23@aol.com or 843-795-6934.

LECTURE (April 10th): John Gerwin, "Bird-friendly coffee plantations in northern Nicaragua"

John has worked with local colleagues to co-lead ecotours to various locations in Nicaragua since 2005. They visit primarily "bird-friendly" coffee plantations in northern Nicaragua. He has been doing some bird banding while on these trips, at one farm called Finca Esperanza Verde. This abandoned farm was purchased and renovated by a couple from Durham, NC, and became a model for coffee farming – it is certified fair trade, organic, and shade-grown. In 2012 John sent two students to another plantation, whose owners receive support from Audubon NC, to study Golden-winged, Wilson's, and Kentucky warblers.

Join us to learn about the birds of northern Nicaragua, the people who are working to produce sustainable coffee and conserve birds, and some of the research being done. John holds the position of Research Scientist and Curator of Birds, with the NC Museum of Natural Sciences and is the Treasurer of the Wake Audubon Society. He currently does research on the life cycles of migratory birds, with a focus on breeding biology. He is currently studying

Photo: wakeaudubon.org

Painted Bunting (NC/SC), Black-throated Green Warbler (NC), Swainson's Warbler (NC/SC), Golden-winged Warbler (Nicaragua), and plans to add Worm-eating Warbler in 2013.

We will meet at 6 PM for socializing and snacks (feel free to bring a snack to share :-) before John begins his talk at 6:30.

FIELD TRIP (April 13th): Dewees Island

On Saturday, April 13 we have an opportunity to visit Dewees Island, a private community located north of the Isle of Palms that is accessible only by boat. Most of the island is maintained as a wildlife sanctuary, and the birding here can be superb — our field parties on both the Christmas and Spring Bird Counts routinely tally 80 or more species. As I write this in early February, a Roseate Spoonbill has been observed in the impoundment on Dewees!



Maritime forest, salt marsh and a 2 ½ mile stretch of ocean

beach also provide abundant habitat for numerous shorebirds, seabirds, herons, egrets, raptors and songbirds, particularly during fall and spring migration. Lori Sheridan Wilson, the Environmental Program Director and ARB Coordinator for the Dewees Island POA, will be taking us on a guided tour of the island on a trailer outfitted with cushioned seats. We will have time to stop and bird at the impoundment and walk along the beach. However, the capacity of the trailer for people and gear limits the number of participants for this trip to 17.

Participants will take the 8 AM ferry to Dewees, and there is a \$7 fee for this service. Plan to arrive in plenty of time to get yourself and your gear on board. If you are late, too bad – the ferry will leave without you! Bring water, snacks, lunch and your birding gear. The tour will finish at 12:30 PM, at which time we will take the ferry back to the Isle of Palms. The Dewees Island ferry dock is on IOP (map) – just before you reach the Isle of Palms Marina at the end of the road.

If you would like to join this trip, please register with Andy Harrison prior to April 9 at parula23@aol.com or 843-795-6934 (Lori needs a list of names ahead of time so that she can arrange for ferry passes). Registration will be on a first-come, first-serve basis. The first 16 people to reply will be added to the confirmed list, and all others will be placed on a waiting list (from which any necessary replacements will also be selected on the same basis).

Find an injured Bird of Prey or Shorebird?

Call the Center for Birds of Prey:



They have volunteers throughout the county to meet and help transport injured birds. If they don't take the birds (ie: songbirds), they have a list of bird rehabilitators in the area that may be able to help.



Other Interesting Events in the Lowcountry:

- Wine & Warblers at Beidler Forest
- SC Native Plant Society Plant Sale
- Birds of Prey Raptor Center





^{ON} BIRDATHON

AND Spring Bird Count

Charleston's Natural History
Society Since 1905

May 5, 2013

www.CharlestonAudubon.org

PARTICIPATION

There are three easy ways to participate:

1. MAKE A PLEDGE

You can pledge a fixed amount (\$15, \$30 or \$50, for example) or pledge a specific amount per species identified. (We usually observe between 140 and 160 species on a Spring Count). Make your pledge via e-mail to parula23@aol.com (please put Spring Bird Count in the subject line) or mail-in the pledge form (see reverse).

You may pay using PayPal through the links on our website — whether you pledge-per-species, or choose to make a fixed donation, PayPal is a safe, secure way to make your donation — no PayPal account is required.

2. SIGN-UP SPONSORS

Don't hesitate to ask friends, relatives and neighbors to support the Birdathon! You can distribute copies of the small pledge form for donations, or have sponsors sign-up on the larger form and collect their pledged amounts after the Spring Count (totals will be available 7-10 days after the May 5th Count.)

Extra forms can be downloaded from the website: www.charlestonaudubon.org.

3. JOIN THE COUNT

Anyone, whether you're an experienced birder or just getting started, is encouraged to participate in the Spring Count. Groups – each led by an experienced birder – will record the numbers of species and individual birds they identify in their assigned territory over the course of the day. Afterward all of the team reports are compiled into a single report.

To join the count, please contact Andy Harrison who is coordinating this year's Count and Birdathon: Call **795–6934** or email parula**23**@aol.com

The Charleston Spring Bird Count and Birdathon is just around the corner! This year's event will be held on Sunday, May 5. Our chapter has conducted the Spring Count for many years, and the data we collect is extremely valuable in detecting long-term trends in bird populations. The money we raise during the Birdathon will be used to support ongoing work at our McAlhany Nature Preserve (MNP) and other local chapter activities. There have been many recent changes at MNP, including vast improvements to the cabin facilities and the completion of the loop section of the entrance road near the cabin. We are also getting ready to perform another late winter/early spring prescribed burn in Units 3 and 4 of our longleaf pine/native grass restoration area on the north side of Wire Road.

Our 15-mile diameter "count circle" (the same area used on the Charleston Christmas Bird Count) is divided into territories and groups of observers – led by experienced birders – record the numbers of species and individuals they see or hear in their territory over the course of the day. This is birding with a purpose, but it is usually a lot of fun, too!

Sign up for the count: Birders of all skill levels are welcome to participate on the Spring Count. And becoming involved in a count is a good way to improve your birding abilities! Contact the compiler, Andy Harrison, at 795–6934 or parula23@aol.com for more information.

AND AFTERWARD...

Our birding party with the highest species total and the donor making the largest contribution to the Birdathon will receive special recognition for their accomplishment. Please be patient when awaiting results – tabulating the data and verifying any unusual sightings after the count day may take a week or more (after all, we want to maintain a high-quality dataset for the long-term record).

Whether you join us for the Spring Count or make a donation in support of the Birdathon (or both), you will be taking part in a very worthy cause.

— Thanks very much!

NAME:	CHECK	MY PLEDGE			
ADDRESS:		I would like to pledge \$ per species seen during the 2013 Birdathon. (i.e. if we fin 135 species, a \$.25 pledge would equal \$33.7			
PHONE: STATE: ZIP:		I would like to contribute \$ to the 2013 Birdathon effort. (i.e. \$25, \$50, \$75)			
MAIL:	4 0	Please Mail all pledges/donations to:			
Sending your donation now? MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: The Charleston Natural History Society		Andy Harrison CNHS Birdathon Coordinator 35 Cross Creek Drive, APT. P-7 Charleston, SC 29412			

Use the form below to sign-up sponsors and take their pledges. (You can use a pad or make your own form as long as you collect all the data.) Contact the Birdathon coordinator, Andy Harrison (at 795-6934 or by eMail at parula23@aol.com) and you'll be contacted after the count is compiled so that you can calculate and collect your sponsors' pledges.

Use the form above to make a pledge or donate a fixed amount. Donations may be paid online with PayPal, or sent immediately. If you return a pledge, you will be contacted, by phone or small, after the Spring Count totals have been compiled, and asked to fulfill the pledge amount.

Charleston Natural History Society 2013 Birdathon and Spring Count Pledge Sign-Up

NAME	ADDRESS	PHONE #	S/per	LEDGE INF fixed donation	TOTAL	PAID	NEW AUDUBON MEMBERS
			species	donation	IUIAL	1/14	MEMBER
							21
ir -		<u> </u>			L.J.		F
11							E
							1

After collecting all pledges and donations, please mail them, along with your name and contact information, and this form, to:

Andy Harrison, CNHS Birdathon Coordinator, 35 Cross Creek Drive, APT. P-7, Charleston, SC 29412

FIELD TRIP (May 18th): Briar's Creek

For our final field trip of the year we'll return to bird at Briar's Creek. Located on Johns Island, Briar's Creek is a 900-acre residential community and golf course that has retained much of the property in its natural state. Since the planning stages, Briar's Creek has worked with Audubon International to develop the community as an environmentally friendly sanctuary.



In addition to a large lake, there are freshwater swamps, salt marsh and upland wooded areas that provide habitat

for a variety of birds. On the first Sea Islands Christmas Bird Count on January 4, the Briar's Creek field party recorded 44 species in just a few hours there – highlights that morning included 10 Sedge Wrens in a grassy wetland area, 4 Blue-headed Vireos in one small patch of woods, and great looks at several Bald Eagles and Red-shouldered Hawks. On this trip we may observe some late spring migrants and summer resident songbirds in addition to various raptors and numerous herons, egrets and other wading birds.

We'll meet in the shopping center parking lot at the intersection of Folly Road (SC 171) and Maybank Hwy (SC 700) on James Island (map) at 7:30 AM and carpool from there to Briar's Creek. Bring water, snacks, lunch, insect repellent and your birding gear. There are restroom facilities on the property. We will probably continue birding through mid-afternoon. To register for this trip, contact Andy Harrison at parula23@aol.com or 843-795-6934 by May 15 (so that we can give our host an idea of how many people to expect).





SENIORS & SONGBIRDS

Seniors and Songbirds began in Mount Pleasant about 10 years ago. The goal was to bring some of the outdoor sounds into the senior Assisted Living Homes. Bird calls, pictures and open talking sessions have been a wonderful way to bring some joy to the residents. Not to mention, they have gone on field trips, learned to hold and focus binoculars, and generally had the chance to be active again.

Some residents have been given feeders, bird baths and bags of birdseed. Also, Birds and Blooms magazines and any other printed materials with large pictures are very popular. It is a joy to see them laugh and occasionally remember experiences from their past. Some of those stories are so very touching.

I want to thank Wild Birds Unlimited, the Charleston Audubon Chapter, the Quilters Guild of Charleston, and Beidler Forest for giving materials to enrich this very special program.

Ann Tiller

CNHS Board

President:

Dr. Paul Nolan paulnolancnhs@gmail.com

Vice President:

Patrick Markham pjmarkham@aol.com

Secretary & Citizen Science Coordinator:

Jenny McCarthey Tyrrell jmccarthey23@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Steve Moore

Outings & Conservation Chair:

Andy Harrison parula23@aol.com

Programs Chair:

Mary Kennerty

Webmaster:

Steve Bleezarde steve@bleezarde.com

Social Media Coordinator:

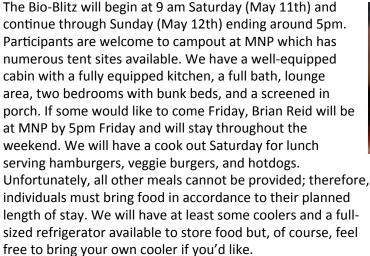
Brian Rogers

Lesser Squawk Editor: Sarah Latshaw paintedbuntinglady@gmail.com

Find us on facebook by searching for Charleston Audubon & Natural History Society

Bio-Blitz: McAlhany Nature Preserve

On May 11th-12th, 2013 we will host a Bio-Blitz at McAlhany Nature Preserve (MNP). The Nature Preserve has a vast diversity of organisms and habitats on the 367 acre property. This is a very unique area with upland wetlands, non-alluvial swamp, bottomland hardwood, xeric pine forest, and mesic hardwood/pine forest. MNP has an upland portion and a lowland portion. The upland portion contains the first-order stream Cattle Creek, as well as a new wetland restoration project, and a moreestablished project restoring a long leaf pine/wire grass savanna. The lowland area contains a 9-acre oxbow lake, numerous vernal pools and seasonally-flooded cypress swamp, and is bordered by 1.5 miles of Edisto River frontage. All of these characteristics provide for a great diversity within the habitats on MNP. The purpose of the Bio-Blitz is to involve specialists in all areas of biology to document the biodiversity and to provide a comprehensive flora and fauna species list.



Saturday morning we plan to break out in groups scouting out areas in MNP. Because we want to create a list of flora and fauna on the property, we need participants to document their findings through pictures, notes, or possible GPS coordinates. Everyone needs to return to the cabin around 12pm for the cookout. Once everyone is finished with lunch, we plan to send groups out again to survey the property finishing around 5 pm. When finished with surveying the property, please turn over the information to one of the MNP project leaders so we can compile all the data. Hopefully, this will be a great time for everyone getting out into the habitat and provide us with valuable information about the flora and fauna of MNP. Please contact Brian Reid (bkrcoach@yahoo.com) if you are interested in helping with this project.













Smart Phone Apps for Nature Lovers

WildObs

Next time you are bird watching, hiking, or even enjoying nature in your backyard, get involved by using the WildObs Observer app. This species identification application helps you to recognize 1000s of plant and animal species while also contributing to the National Wildlife Federation's



Wildlife Watch database. The program tracks the behavior and health of species across the US with the help of citizen scientists. The free app (available for Android, iPhone, iPad, and iPod touch) allows you to report plant and animal sighting with your specific location, without having to take a picture, and your sighting shows up on the Wildlife Watch website. What a great way to turn your next hike into a nature treasure hunt!

Caitlin Black

Naturalist



Olympics

This species is found in South Carolina along the rivers and lakes where there is a supply of mussels and fish. Note the incisors and large canines (in relation to the skull size). The large nasal opening also helps identify this playful species, the third species of this year's Naturalist Olympics. Send your answer to

naturalistolympics@gmail.com. A fifth event--and the ID of the bird--will be announced in the next Lesser Squawk.

Thanks to everyone who competed in our Naturalist Olympics, as described in the January/February issue of The Lesser Squawk. Because only one entrants correctly guessed the ID of the native bird, common loon (Gavia immer), the contest is still wide open.



Photo Courtesy of Pamela Corwin



Photo Courtesy of Pamela Corwin

Energy & Recycling Tips: BOUNCE THIS ALONG

These tips on Bounce fabric softener came to me from a friend. If you use Bounce, the sheets can be reused in the following ways. You may decide to purchase some to eliminate buying a multitude of other products that may be more toxic. These have not been tested by me. If you do try any of these and they work, please let me know. Also, I'd be interested to find out if the unscented sheets work as well for those who are sensitive to perfumes. Bounce sheets may:

- 1. Chase away ants and mice.
- 2. Prevent rodents from getting into trailers or cars that are sitting. Just spread them around the foundation.
- 3. Take the odor out of books and photo albums that don't get opened too often.
- 4. Repels mosquitoes. Tie a sheet of Bounce through a belt loop when outdoors during mosquito season.
- 5. Eliminate static electricity and dust from your television (or computer) screen.
- 6. Dissolve soap scum from shower doors when you clean with a sheet.
- 7. Freshen the air in your home. Place an individual sheet of Bounce in a drawer, hang in the closet, or even put it in the vacuum cleaner.
- 8. Prevent thread from tangling. Run a threaded needle through a sheet of Bounce before beginning to sew.
- 11. Prevent musty suitcases. Place an individual sheet of Bounce inside empty luggage before storing.
- 12. Freshen the air in your car. Place a sheet of Bounce under the front seat.
- 13. Clean baked-on foods from a cooking pan. Put a sheet in a pan, fill with water, let sit overnight, and sponge clean. The anti-static agent apparently weakens the bond between the food and the pan.
- Eliminate odors in wastebaskets. Place a sheet of Bounce at the bottom of the wastebasket.
- 15. Collect pet hair. Rubbing the area with a sheet of Bounce will magnetically attract all the loose hairs.
- 16. Eliminate static electricity from Venetian blinds. Wipe the blinds with a sheet of Bounce to prevent dust from resettling.
- 17. Wipe up sawdust from drilling or sand papering. A used sheet of Bounce will collect sawdust like a tack cloth.
- 18. Eliminate odors in dirty laundry. Place an individual sheet of Bounce at the bottom of a laundry bag or hamper.
- 19. Deodorize shoes or sneakers. Place a sheet of Bounce in your shoes or sneakers overnight.
- 20. Keep bees, yellow jackets, and other insects away while you are outdoors. Some golfers put a Bounce sheet in their back pocket to keep the bees away. The U.S. Postal service sent out a message to all letter carriers to put a sheet of Bounce in their uniform pockets to keep yellow-jackets away.
- 21. Help camping gear smell fresh. Put a Bounce sheet in your sleeping bag and tent before folding and storing them.
- 22. Aid in bug removal when washing your car. Wet a Bounce sheet, hose down your car, and wipe love bugs off easily with the wet Bounce.
- 23. Keep mites and other critters out of your suitcase while traveling. Put a sheet of Bounce in your suitcase when traveling, it will help keep mites or any other critters out of it. While you are at it, travel with several Bounce sheets and run them up and down your bed linen before getting into bed, it will cause all the critters already in your bed to run. Keep a sheet in your suitcase even after you have unpacked to protect your suitcases from bugs nesting in it.

All this time you've just been putting Bounce in the dryer!

Ann Shahid rashahid@att.net

MOST VIEWED

See what all the facebook fuss is about. Here's what our Charleston Audubon & Natural History Society facebook friends have been checking out recently:

- 1. Cats' bad reputation among bird-lovers may be deserved
- 2. Random Photos from McAlhany Nature Preserve
- 3. Anatomy of a Prescribed Burn
- 4. Here is a list of up coming events for Charleston Natural History & Audubon Society
- 5. We figured everyone could use a little sunshine this weekend (whether you're snowed in or not)
- 6. Random Photos from McAlhany Nature Preserve
- 7. Don't throw away worn out shoes, recycle them!
- 8. Help us caption this photo by Robert Thomson
- 9. Leopards try to make sense of a mirror in the forest
- 10. Like many of our most common birds, Blue Jays are beautiful



