



# The LESSER SQUAWK



Newsletter of the  
Charleston Audubon

www.CharlestonAudubon.org

November-December 2007

## President's Notes:

There is a lot going on with CNHS these days, and I want to mention many of these activities in this message. However, first I'd like to apologize to our membership for the lateness of the last newsletter. Several factors contributed to the delay in mailing, but we are working to ensure that the problem does not happen again.

On October 13th we held our 20th Anniversary Celebration at the McAlhany Nature Preserve. The weather was perfect, and 25 members and guests enjoyed a morning walk along the Edisto and a delicious barbecue lunch. Then Joe Cockrell led us on a tour of the longleaf pine/native grass restoration project in the old field area across Wire Road. Our guests included Joseph "Bubber" McAlhany (nephew of Mrs. Cleo McAlhany), his wife Jan and son Jason, and four of our neighboring property owners. All appreciated visiting the property again, and they shared fond memories of the "old days" with us. This winter will be a busy one at MNP, as Joe plans to conduct another prescribed burn in the longleaf stands and also to plant some 16,500 wiregrass plugs. We are also discussing the possibility of making some much-needed improvements to the entrance road, in addition to continuing work on the cabin.

Speaking of celebrations, mark your calendar now to attend our Holiday Fundraiser Oyster Roast at Bowen's Island from 2-5 p.m. on Sunday, December 2! Last year our plans for a similar event were cancelled by the unfortunate fire there, but things are cooking at

*continues – SEE President, pg. 2*

## Quick Calendar – CNHS Events:

- 11/7 Lecture: Incredible Insects . . . . . pg 1
- 11/17 Edisto Beach Fieldtrip . . . . . pg 3
- 11/9-18 Bird Seed Pick-Up
- 12/2 Holiday Oyster Roast . . . . . pg 1
- 12/8 Huntington Beach Fieldtrip . . . . . pg 3
- 1/9 Lecture: Congaree Preservation . . . . . pg 1

## Amazing Insects Have Adapted to Life In Every Corner of the Earth



On Wednesday, November 7, 2007, we welcome Clemson University professor of entomology Dr. Merle Shepard. Dr. Shepard's talk will focus on the abundance and diversity of insects on earth, and some of the amazing adaptations seen in their life cycles, in natural and cultivated ecosystems.

Insects comprise the largest group of animals on earth. There are over a million described species and estimates of species remaining to be classified are as high as 10 million. More than 90% of the world's animals (because they're insects) can fly. This presentation will touch on this very diverse and fascinating group of animals – with examples of their incredible modes of adaptation to diverse habitats in cultivated and natural ecosystems.

» NOTE: There will be no lecture program in December

*Lectures are held in the 2nd floor auditorium of the Charleston County Library, 68 Calhoun Street, downtown Charleston. We meet for a reception at 6:30 p.m. – and our lectures – which are free and open to the public – start at 7 p.m. Drinks, plates and napkins provided – please consider bringing a snack to share!*

## The Legal Battles to Protect Our Environment: January Program from SCELPA Addresses Congaree

At our Wednesday, January 9, 2008 program we'll hear from James S. (Jimmy) Chandler, Jr., who founded the SC Environmental Law Project, a non-profit public interest law firm, in 1987. He has represented national, state, and local organizations in environmental cases before state and federal courts and agencies. His cases have involved a variety of issues, including wetlands, coastal management, water quality, air quality, solid and hazardous waste landfills and incinerators, and mining. His environmental work has set many valuable legal precedents and been recognized by several state and national awards. For 20 years, SCELPA was the only non-profit environmental law firm in this state.

Jimmy is currently representing the Audubon Society (among others) in a case concerning proposed road work within the Congaree National Park. We seek to stop to plans to fill wetlands in the Congaree floodplain and to obtain a full Environmental Impact Statement by the Dept of Transportation.

To find out more about this case and others, visit the SC Environmental Law Project Website at [www.SCELPA.org](http://www.SCELPA.org)

## Holiday Oyster Roast At Bowen's Isl., 12/2

We hope everyone will turn out for our first (and if successful, annual) Holiday Oyster Roast Fundraiser on Sunday, Dec. 2 at Bowen's Island Restaurant. The festivities will begin at 2 p.m. at the famous restaurant on the marsh off Folly Road. Bring yourselves and invite some friends along too!

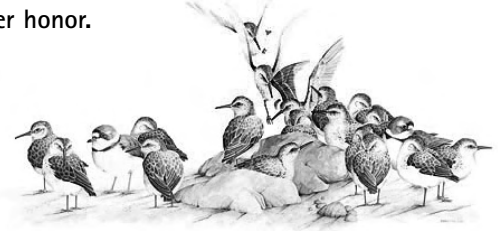
*continues – SEE Oyster Roast, pg. 2*

## In Memoriam: Mary Anne Cromartie

We note with sadness that one of our active chapter members, Mrs. Mary Anne Cromartie, passed away suddenly on August 18, 2007. Mrs. Cromartie and her husband George regularly attended CNHS lectures and field trips, and one of her favorite activities was walking her dog along the Pitt Street Bridge and observing the birds and other wildlife in the marsh and harbor.

In lieu of flowers, friends and family were asked to make donations to the chapter in her memory. We have received over \$1700 in such gifts, and we plan to devote a large portion

of these funds towards a collaborative project (with SC Audubon) at the Pitt Street Bridge involving the construction of one or more bird identification displays. Mrs. Cromartie will be missed, and we thank all those who made memorial contributions in her honor.



## President – continued from pg. 1

Bowen's Island again. In addition to oysters, we'll have chili (meat and vegetarian), beer and soft drinks, and various desserts. There will also be live music and great raffle prizes provided by local businesses and organizations. Arrive early to savor some tasty oysters, and stay late to watch a beautiful sunset over the marsh!

In November Dr. Merle Shepard will be speaking to us about his research on the amazing diversity of insects, and as usual Don Jones has an excellent set of field trips planned for the next two months. Among the locations we will be visiting are Edisto Island, Dewees Island and Huntington Beach State Park.

Our Fall Birdseed Sale is wrapping up now – thanks to all who purchased seed, and also to the folks at Wild Birds Unlimited for helping make this fundraiser a success! Don't forget to pick up your seed between November 9–18 at one of the two WBU locations.



Late December and early January is the time for Christmas Bird Counts. Consider participating in the Charleston CBC this year (or one of several nearby counts in coastal SC). Birders of every skill level are welcome – it's a great way to learn birds and help contribute to "citizen science!" Data from these counts is very important in identifying long-term trends in bird populations.

Finally, I'd like to welcome Kevin Hart as a new at-large member of the CNHS Board. We also note that Mike Hutchinson is stepping down after two years as Treasurer, and Tom Snowden has agreed to take his place. Thanks to Mike for his valuable service to CNHS, and also to Kevin, Tom and all our other board members for volunteering their time and effort to the chapter. As always, if you have suggestions or comments, or are interested in volunteering (for instance, helping out on a McAlhany work day or on a Piping Plover survey at Seabrook Island), don't hesitate to contact me or another Board member.

Thanks.

– Andy Harrison

phone: 843 795-6934  
Email: parula23@aol.com

## Oyster Roast – continued from pg. 1

Admission is \$15 in advance (send your name(s) with check payable to the Charleston Natural History Society, to P.O. Box 504, Charleston, SC 29402) or \$20 at the door. Be sure to mail advance admission purchases no later than 11/26 so we're sure to have your reservation at the door.

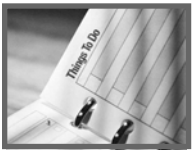
There'll be plenty of oysters, regular and vegetarian chili, desserts, soft drinks and beer. Local artist Dave LaBoone will be playing guitar and singing songs from the sixties through the eighties. The sunset over the marsh will wind up this afternoon celebration.

Local businesses have supported our fundraising effort with some wonderful raffle prizes which include:

- » Ten (10) tickets to the Terrace Theater, an \$80 value.
- » Two tickets to Charleston Cooks! A Taste of the Lowcountry is a 90-minute cooking class with light meal and glass of wine is a \$50 value.
- » Two tickets to Middleton Place Plantation house, gardens and stables – at \$70 value.
- » A numbered, signed photograph of a snowy egret by Burton E. Moore III, the owner of The Audubon Gallery on King Street. This 24 inches by 15.5 inches photograph is perfect for framing and has a retail value of \$50.
- » A birdfeeder pole system donated by Chris Wood at the West Ashley Wildbirds Unlimited, and a birdfeeder from Patty Montgomery at the Mt. Pleasant Wildbirds Unlimited. The combined retail value is over \$100.
- » A hummingbird pin and earring set donated by the Beidler Forest Gift Shop. This set is colorful cloisonné on silver with a retail value of \$50.

Tickets for raffle items and beer will be sold at the door – three (3) for \$5 or seven (7) for \$10. Each ticket is good for a beer or for a chance to win one of the items above. There will be a jar in front of each item so one can put multiple tickets in the jar of a desired item.

Please bring guests and plan to attend! We will also need volunteers for this function and will accept desserts from anyone willing to bring them. If you are able to volunteer for set-up or other chores for an hour (you'll still have time to enjoy the event) please call Cornelia Carrier 577-6437.



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

Upcoming Programs, Outings & Lowcountry Events

*(Please note that this is the Nov./Dec. issue of The Lesser Squawk: the next issue will cover Jan./Feb. 2007. Please mark upcoming events on your calendar now!*

*Up-to-date calendar items will also be posted online: [www.charlestonaudubon.org](http://www.charlestonaudubon.org))*

### LECTURES:

**Wed. November 7, 6:30 p.m.**

- » Dr. Merle Shepard
  - » Clemson University
  - » Amazing Insect Adaptations
- See story, pg 1.*

**Wed. Jan. 9, 2008, 6:30 p.m.**

- » SCELP's James Chandler, Jr.
  - » Congaree Legal Action
- See story, pg 1.*

*NOTE: We do not hold a program meeting in December. Please join us at our December 2nd Holiday Oyster Roast - see story, pg. 1*

### FIELDTRIPS:

**Sat. November 17th, 7:00 a.m.**

- » Edisto Beach State Park

Join Don Jones for an early winter visit to Edisto Beach State Park on Saturday November 17th. The park contains 1255 acres including beach, salt marsh and maritime forest. There is a 4 mile nature trail and an ancient shell mound, as well as a new visitors' center in the maritime forest section of the park.

There are lots of shells and bone fossils as well as shark teeth on the beach so bring a bag to carry your collection. And by the way we should also see some birds.

There is a fee to enter the park: \$4.00 adults \$2.50 seniors.

Our meeting place will be in the Food Lion parking lot in Ravenel near the intersection of U.S.17 and Hwy.165 at 7.00 a.m.. Bring your birding gear, sun screen and bug spray. We will stop for lunch at a local restaurant on the island.

To register contact Don Jones, 572-8232 or [Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com](mailto:Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com) before November 16th.

**Sat. December 8th, 7:00 a.m.**

- » Huntington Beach State Park

On Saturday December 8th we'll be going to one of the premier birding locations on the East Coast, where more than 300 species of birds have been recorded. The park features a large freshwater marsh impoundment as well as many acres of tidal salt marsh. Wading birds and ducks may be seen from several boardwalks and observation platforms. In addition there is a nature trail and a large rock jetty accessible from the beach. In past years we have seen Eagles, Reddish Egrets, Piping Plovers, Purple Sandpipers, Northern Gannets and numerous species of ducks, loons and grebes. The entry fee to the park is \$5.00, \$3.25 for seniors.

We will meet in the Lowe's parking lot in Mount Pleasant just off of Rt. 17 at 7:00 a.m. and car pool from there. Comfortable walking shoes are a must. Bring a lunch; there is a covered picnic shelter and rest rooms. To register please contact Don Jones by December 7th at 572-8232 or [Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com](mailto:Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com)

### Annual Backyard Bird Count

Count for the Birds in  
America's Great Backyard:  
February 15-18, 2008

- No Fee or registration required
- All ages and skill levels welcome
- Track results in real time, online
- Count in your backyard, balcony, schoolyard, park, wildlife refuge, etc.
- Be a part of the network

Join with thousand of others to find out how many birds are being seen in your area and across the continent this winter. By participating in the Great Backyard Bird Count, you help document where birds are, and track changes in their numbers compared to previous years, helping scientists paint a picture of the state of birds this winter.

For more information, and to view past results, go to:

<http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc/>

### UPCOMING in 2008 –

Wondering what there is to look forward to? Make plans to attend in February when we have a joint meeting with the Nature Conservancy with guest speaker ETV naturalist Patrick McMillan. In March the CofC's Dr. Melissa Hughes discusses birdsong; In April, Audubon's Alaska Field Coordinator, Taldi Walter; and in May Michelle Smith from the Dogwood Alliance speaks on forest preservation.

### Christmas Bird Counts

#### 108 Years of Citizen Science

The annual count period runs from December 14, 2007 through January 5, 2008. The Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC) is the oldest and largest citizen science event in the world. For over a hundred years, people have gathered together during the winter holiday season to count birds. For many people, this is an annual tradition that has passed from one generation to the next. Contact one of our area leaders and join the fun!

CHARLESTON: Sunday, 12/30

» Being organized by Jeff Mollenhauer and Maria Whitehead. Contact Jeff (843.462.2150, [jmollenhauer@audubon.org](mailto:jmollenhauer@audubon.org)) to participate)

McCLELLANVILLE: SUNDAY 12/16

» Nathan Dias will again run this count: [offshorebirder@yahoo.com](mailto:offshorebirder@yahoo.com)

Learn more about other area counts, leader contact information, etc., by visiting <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org> (follow the link for Christmas Bird Counts). Area leaders you may wish to contact for details include:

→ Santee N.W.R. Sat. 12/29/07

Robin Carter: [rcarter@sc.rr.com](mailto:rcarter@sc.rr.com)

→ Litchfield-Pawleys Isl., Wed. 1/2/08

Jack Peachey ([ppaw@scoast.net](mailto:ppaw@scoast.net))

Learn more about the CBC and results from years' past online at:

<http://www.audubon.org/bird/cbc>

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Charleston Audubon – founded as the Charleston Natural History Society in 1905, a chapter of the National Audubon Society since 1970, and serving Berkeley, Charleston and Dorchester counties – 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 online at [www.CharlestonAudubon.org](http://www.CharlestonAudubon.org).

## Fieldguide Exchange Recycles and Serves New Birders

Have an old guide you just don't use any more? Donate it to the chapter and give it a new life!

It's a good idea we started a year ago. Whether you are a brand new birder, or a long-time watcher who's getting more serious... the Charleston Audubon Society would like to help. We purchased a collection of used fieldguides

that we're making available to any member who feels they'd like to use one to improve their birding abilities.



Experienced birders may like to argue about which fieldguide is best, but for anyone just starting out, having ANY guide is a great help and a good place to start.

To make a donation of an old guide, or receive one of our used guides (currently our supply is limited!) please talk to Steve or Cornelia at one of our lecture meetings at the library, or send email:

[steve@charlestonaudubon.org](mailto:steve@charlestonaudubon.org)

If we don't have a guide to give out right now, Steve will get your contact information and let you know when more have arrived.



### New Members, Renewals, Gift Memberships

For only \$20\* you get one-year subscriptions to *Audubon* magazine and *The Lesser Squawk*, and all the benefits of local and National Audubon Society membership. Renew for just \$35/year. \*\$15 for Sr. Citizens and Students

CHECK ONE:  NEW MEMBER  GIFT MEMBERSHIP  RENEWAL

**THIS IS A GIFT FROM:**

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**MAIL THIS COUPON AND YOUR CHECK TO:**  
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 BOULDER, CO 80323-1003

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 [ RENEWALS MUST INCLUDE THE 20-DIGIT MEMBER NUMBER FROM YOUR AUDUBON ADDRESS LABEL ]

Checks payable to **National Audubon Society**. Include our chapter code on your check: U-51 7XCH

