

THE LESSER BRIEF EDITION SQUAWK

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Newsletter of the
Charleston Audubon &
Natural History Society

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

FIELD TRIP (Feb 8th): Dewees Island

On Saturday, February 8 we will be returning for a winter visit to 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. During February 2012 a Roseate Spoonbill was 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. We may also see some interesting birds (grebes, sea ducks, etc.) while traveling by ferry between the Isle of Palms and Dewees.

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 necessarily 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.

To get to the Dewees Island ferry dock from the end of the IOP Connector on the Isle of Palms, go east on Palm Blvd (SC 703) until the road bends to the left and becomes 41st Ave. After a couple of blocks look for the parking lot for the Dewees Island ferry on your right – it will be 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 February 4 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).

LECTURE (Feb 12th): Sparrow Wars: territories, personalities, alternative tactics, and song in song

We often make generalizations about the behavior of birds or other animals – generalizations such as "these birds defend territories". But what variation is hiding in those generalizations? Do all individuals defend a territory the same way? How does personality affect territory defense? Dr. Melissa Hughes has been studying these questions, along with the use of song in territory defense, in song sparrows for years. Join us in welcoming Dr. Hughes, as she shares some of tales from these sparrow wars on **Wednesday, Feb 12th from 6-8pm**.



Dr. Hughes did her graduate work at Duke, where she studied honesty and deception in the communication of snapping shrimp (something she still works on, when not studying birds). After brief stints at the Free University, Berlin and Princeton, she came to the College of Charleston in 2001. Melissa maintained a long-term population study (by which she means she followed their lives like a soap opera: who lives where for how long, who is mating with whom, etc.) on song sparrows in northwestern PA from 1998-2010, and still returns there for experimental work. We will begin at 6 pm as usual, with snacks and socializing before the presentation begins at 6:30; feel free to bring a snack to share.

FIELD TRIP (Feb 16th): Bear Island and Donnelley WMAs

On Sunday, February 16 Ann Shahid and Cherrie Sneed will lead our group on a birding tour through the Bear Island and Donnelley WMAs, located in the ACE Basin. Managed by the SC Department of Natural Resources, these two properties have a combined area of some 20,000 acres and include a wide range of habitats, including mixed pine-hardwoods forest, tidal creeks, freshwater impoundments, salt marsh and agricultural fields. During the winter season they host a large number of waterfowl and wading birds, in addition to various raptors and many wintering songbird species. Last year at Bear and Donnelley we observed a combined total of 91 species, including American White Pelicans, Snow Geese, and Tundra Swans; Mottled and American Black Ducks; numerous White and Glossy Ibis; King and Clapper Rails; Bald Eagles and American Kestrels; and nearly 150 American Avocets.



This will be an all day trip so bring water, snacks, and a lunch in addition to your birding gear, including a scope if you have one. Restrooms and picnic areas are limited. Most of the birding will be done from the roadside so there will be a minimal amount of walking. We will meet at 7 AM in the Food Lion parking lot at the intersection of US Hwy 17 South and SC 165 in Ravenel, SC and carpool from there. Please register with Ann Shahid prior to February 16 at rashahid@att.net or by phone at 843-695-0175 or 843-697-2366.

FIELD TRIP (March 8th): Santee Coastal Reserve

Andy Harrison will lead our group on a visit to Santee Coastal Reserve. More details TBA later.

We'll meet at 7 AM in the small parking lot next to the First Citizens Bank in front of the Summerville Walmart, just off Hwy 17-A and not far from its intersection with I-26. If you plan to attend, please register with Don Jones prior to January 18 at Birdfrogdjlj@aol.com or 843 572-8232.

LECTURE (March 12th): Deveaux Bank: Challenges Local and Global by Dana



Dana Beach speaks about the history and ecology of Deveaux Bank, and discusses the threats it has faced and the prospects for the future. Beach will have 120 of the most stunning photographs imaginable of the island and the birds that use it. Read more in his book to be published this spring.

Join us in welcoming Dana Beach, on **Wednesday, Feb 12th from 6-8pm**. We will begin at 6 pm as usual, with snacks and socializing before the presentation begins at 6:30; feel free to bring a snack to share.

FIELD TRIP (March 22nd): Bonneau Ferry WMA

Andy Harrison will lead a field trip to Bonneau Ferry WMA. More details TBA later.

Give Us a Call!

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

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