

NEWSLETTER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOLUME I, No. 7

OCEANSIDE, N.Y.

June 5, 1971

POPULATION GROWTH ZERO:

The last meeting at Levittown Library saw the election of our officers for the new year. Mrs. Nina Gehringen gave a sincere and informative talk on the need to contain our population growth with many ideas on how to approach different adverse attitudes.

- - - - -

DO YOU WANT TO SEE A SOLAR ECLIPSE?

On June 9, at 8:15 P.M. at the Nassau County Natural History Museum, Washington Avenue, Seaford, Astronomer Peter A. Leavens will screen the color record of the eclipse of March 7, 1970 and the award-winning film, "Universe". He will also discuss future spectacles in the sky.

- - - - -

SENATOR ROBERT W. PACKWOOD of Oregon, who is interested in controlling not only pesticides but population, will be speaking on June 17th, at 8:00 P.M. at Caspari Auditorium, Rockefeller University, York Avenue and 66th Street, New York City.

SENATORS CRANSTON AND TAFT are offering a resolution supporting National Population Stabilization. If you feel that our senators should join them, let them know.

We cannot say enough about the need for individual citizens to keep their representatives informed. Your editor is depressed, but not discouraged in his correspondence with his assembly representative. Did you know that Assembly Bill #7315 which would remove alligators, crocks, and caimen from the protecting cover of the Mason-Smith Act is listed in the Assembly Index as an act to protect crocodiles?!

- - - - -

FISHING THIS SUMMER?

Don't be eating fresh water fish more than once a week. Are you pregnant? Don't eat any. Don't eat fish from Onondaga Lake; no trout from Lake George; no muskellunge from the St. Lawrence River! The villain, as you probably know, is methyl mercury. Three thousand fish from 125 bodies of water were tested. New York State fish exceeded the State and Federal standard of .5 parts per million. It is all right to eat fish from a store. They have already been tested and approved. Oh well! Maybe the fishing won't be good, anyway.

- - - - -

CONFESSIONS OF A CONSERVATIONIST

I have always considered myself an avid conservationist. I enthusiastically support and sign petitions favoring programs which protect wildlife and natural areas. For example, I favor the saving of the wild horses of Wyoming. I also strongly support all efforts to save the Everglades and the Alaskan north slope from industrial spoilage. I become very upset when I hear about oil spills with the resulting dirty beaches and destruction of wildlife. I become nauseous when I read about the wanton killing of baby seals, alligators, and whales. I oppose the building of ugly power plants on our rivers and the damming of scenic rivers and canyons for more surplus energy.

Thus, with my conscience clear I confidently decided to look at myself and see what I was doing locally for improved environmental quality. Well, I admit I'm still using a phosphate detergent. It's the same brand I've been using all along and it does do an awfully good job. I don't really think plain soap is as good. Besides, considering all the phosphate in the world, the amount I would use is miniscule.

I also confess I drive a large automobile which doesn't get the best gas mileage. But, to be honest, I don't care for the less-polluting small compacts or the subcompacts. I much prefer the roominess and comfort of a big car as well as the convenience of driving a car to where I am going. I don't want the pain of having to hassle with train schedules or wonder if the train is going to break down. I also use regular gasoline. The no-lead gasoline is more expensive and the amount of driving I do and with my gas mileage, the extra few pennies would add up. I do sympathize with the problem of air pollution, but, really, my car is just one out of how many million produced annually?

I'm still buying bottles and cans that are non-returnable. Not only are they more predominant on the grocer's shelf, but it's much easier throwing them in the garbage than finding a spot to keep them in the kitchen or carting a batch of bottles back to the store. And as far as separating my garbage goes ---- hogwash! I'm not going to keep three or four ugly brown paper bags around the house.

I'll also admit that I use plastic baggies and wraps for a variety of purposes. They are terribly convenient for storing food products. As a general rule, I usually throw them away after using them only once. I really don't want to spend the time washing and putting them some place to dry and store. They're cheap enough to re-buy. When you see the immensity of a garbage dump, how much difference would it really make without my few bits of plastic wrap. I really don't feel I contribute that much to the problem. Maybe if I had a big family, it would be different.

I'm also putting in air-conditioning this summer. I just bought a new color TV set last week. Sure, they use electricity, but the electricity would be there even if I didn't have these items. So why not have them? They make life a lot more comfortable and enjoyable. I'm sorry, but I dare anyone to tell me my electric can opener is a polluter.

Anyway, my conscience is clear. I enthusiastically support and sign petitions favoring programs which protect wildlife and natural areas. I favor the saving of wild horses in Wyoming. I strongly support all efforts to save the Everglades and

And another one to think about:-

FOR THE BIRDS

How loud and foolishly the conservationist brays depends upon whose biological system is getting altered. We've just read about two of Mother Nature's leading defense units, the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the U.S.D.I. Division of Wildlife Services, engaging in the wholesale assassination of seagulls.

It seems that these outfits aren't such great bird lovers after all. A bunch of dedicated Hitlers of the avian world, they are poisoning gulls around Chatham, Massachusetts, where they say the gulls are in such great numbers that they usurp the nesting places of the "more desirable" species of birdlife.

We'd like to know who gave them the right to determine that the number of gulls now living in a particular area is detrimental to the biological balance of that area. Aren't they the same naturalists who claim that nature will correct momentary imbalances among the various species? Haven't they said that very thing, in fact, about such pests as mosquitoes? Could this be an inconsistency in their natural organic objectivity? We've often suspected the Audubonists of playing God on Mother Nature's stage, and we have yet to see a department of the U.S. Government that won't gladly stand in as Supreme Benefactor for any of the living creatures. It is our opinion that a good many Audubonists and Bureaucrats are usurping the nesting places of us more desirable species, and while we'd not go so far as putting anything into their tea, we pray that a few of our gull friends will take care of that job from time to time.

- - - - -
NATURE'S HARSH WAYS

Recently, I had the unique experience of visiting one of America's great National Parks, the Everglades, and to have a first hand experience of nature's laws of survival. In a pool filled with alligators, turtles, and many species of birds, I watched with great awe a bird that is very rare up north, the Louisiana Heron, with slow steps and an ever watching eye, this magnificent bird fished, at the same time watching for enemies. But suddenly, an alligator caught the heron in it's mouth and the bird's life had ended swiftly, but painlessly. It was hard for me to accept the death of this beautiful bird, for it is a very rare sight indeed for a bird to be killed by an alligator. A struggle between six alligators had begun to see who's meal this would be.

A sign in this pond told how some must die for others to live, for death brings life, which made it easier to accept this death to occur, for in this case, the alligator must kill to live, also.

Laurie Maas

- - - - -
BACKYARD BIRDING -

We have been unable to attend any of the bird walks - ourbirdwatching has been confined to the backyard, and we have found this a most rewarding and more intimate view of bird life. I never tire of the sparrows

and the frantic pace of their spring nesting activities. I watched a house sparrow wrestle with a paper napkin for the better part of an afternoon, repeatedly losing it to the wind, one time reaching the perch in front of her house, only to have the wind grab it like a sail and sweep her and napkin to the ground. Finally, triumphantly, the whole thing was stuffed into the house!

This winter we had to rescue a starling who had gotten trapped under the pool safety net. We watched the courtship rituals of the cardinals and finches - and, I know, a few days after the Junco's disappear, the Towhee's arrive - almost as if they had an exchange agreement. A pair of Blue Jays have built a nest in the pine tree just outside of my son's bedroom window - and somehow, the brilliant blue blends into the green and grey of the tree and you can hardly see the bird sitting quietly there - among the many "little brown birds", so active around our feeder we see one who's different. A quick check confirms it - we have a thrush among our sparrows! The Redwing Blackbird sits in the tree and scolds until I take the dog in, and then a quick liquid trill and he's in the feeder chasing everything else out.

This morning, while clearing the breakfast table, and half watching the birds through the open back door, a flash of yellow caught my eye - a yellow warbler - the first time I had had one here. He surveyed the situation, and winged away - to return, I hope, for many summer visits.

- - - - -

WELCOME TO OUR MANY NEW MEMBERS

In this, our first year, new friends have joined in increasing numbers. Now that the Audubon Society has said that all Audubon members will automatically members of local chapters, we welcome all of you who may be surprised to find you are members of South Shore! This is our last Bulletin of the season until September. You will get all of our bulletins starting in September. They will tell you of our meetings, birdwalks and other activities. You are more than welcome to participate in any or all of our activities. Should you want more information, the following is a list of our officers and committee members, any one of whom we hope you will feel free to call:

Alvin Friedman, President - 3275 Oceanside Rd., Oceanside - Ro.4 - 9069
 Jack Fisher, Vice-President - Ro. 4 - 6529
 Seymour Dashow, Treasurer - 536 - 5257
 Mrs. Audrey Roberts, Recording Secretary - Ro.6 - 7274
 Mrs. Frederick Goldstein, Corresponding Secretary - Or.8-2140
 Clara Thrush, Program Chairman - 796 - 6169
 Mrs. Susan Ross, Membership Chairman - 764-6764
 Elliott Kutner, Field Committee - Iv. 6-7667
 Mrs. Elizabeth Tocknekl, Library Committee - Wa.4-0909
 Alfred Reinharz, Legal Committee - Ro. 4-9887
 Albert Lemke, Publicity Chairman - 735-1110
 Asa L. Starkweather, Bulletin Committee - Ly.9 - 5824