

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 8, NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 1977

WELCOME BACK!!
HOPE YOU HAD A GREAT SUMMER!!

1ST MEETING OF THE YEAR:
Tuesday, September 13, 1977
8:15 P.M., Freeport Library

Our Guest Speaker Will Be:
Mr. Jack La Salle, Baldwin Bird Club
"Predators of the West"



The Audubon Wildlife Film Series will begin on Tuesday, September 27, with Mr. Eben McMillan, "Yosemite-An Ecological Visit." All films are shown at the Hempstead Town Pavillion, Town Hall Plaza, at 8:15 P.M. Write to the Town of Hempstead, Department of Parks and Recreation, Recreational Office, 50 Clinton Street, Hempstead, N.Y. 11550 for tickets. Please enclose a self-addressed envelope.

The South Shore Audubon Fall Canoe Trip has been cancelled. Anyone on the list to go on this trip will automatically have their name placed on the list for the Spring trip.

Brigantine Weekend: All those interested in going to Brigantine for birding on the weekend of October 1 and 2 please contact Lynne or Mort Silver at 212 454-6257. (More on Brigantine on Page 5)

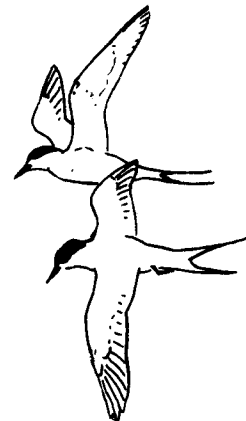
Over the Summer:

On August 3 at 9:00 A.M. in the Rose Garden of the White House, President Carter signed the landmark strip-mine control legislation into law. Audubon Executive Vice-President Charles H. Callison was at the ceremony.

On August 16 a federal judge overruled the Port Authority's 17-month ban on the Concorde and ordered the PA to allow the supersonic jet to land at Kennedy under noise rules in effect for other jets. He said the delay in ruling whether the SST could land was "excessive and unjustified."

A National Audubon office was opened August 1 in Juneau to reinforce the Society's presence in Alaska and strengthen our nationwide efforts to protect the state's beleaguered heritage of wildlife and wilderness.

Reminder:
SSAS has car insignia decals and cloth patches showing a Skimmer in flight on sale at all meetings. Patches are \$2.00 and decals are 50¢. They can also be purchased on all birdwalks.



CONSERVATION NEWS

During September, Congress will decide the fate of the immense tract of wilderness known as the Boundary Waters Canoe Area (BWCA). This one million acre area in Minnesota's Superior National Forest lacks the full legal protection afforded other wilderness areas due to the addition of one paragraph in the 1964 Wilderness Act. The paragraph has left the door open in the BWCA for logging, roadbuilding and motorboats. A second insult to the area was a 1964 decision by the Forest Service to classify snowmobiles as winterized motorboats, a decision the service reversed in 1974. At present, the use of these vehicles is banned by the Secretary of Agriculture, who has the power to either allow or disallow their use.

The major controversy has been over the provision in the 1964 Act to allow logging in the BWCA. Until now, lawsuits have prevented any logging. Last November, however, the courts lifted existing injunctions and logging is scheduled to resume this fall unless Congress intervenes. At stake is nearly 540,000 acres of virgin timber which is the lone remaining habitat for the timber wolf in the lower 48 states. The wolf is probably aided in its survival at BWCA by its close proximity to Quetico Provincial Park, a large highly protected area in Ontario. A question of mining, which along with logging requires extensive roadbuilding, also threatens the area. In the past, test drillings were made for copper and nickle ores. This practice was halted by a suit filed in Federal Court by the Izaak Walton League. An Appeals Court overturned the decision on procedural grounds and the mining question remains open.

Several bills are being offered in Congress this year to clearly define the appropriate use of the BWCA in the future. Two bills show the varied differences of opinion about this gem of a wilderness area. Representative Oberstor's bill would transfer 400,000 acres from the Wilderness System to the National

Recreation System, permitting a variety of recreational activities. In this plan, several large areas would be open to commercial logging and motor use. The remaining acres would remain wilderness, with the question of mining rights to be settled by Congress at a later date. In this plan the ecological makeup of BWCA would be changed permanently and drastically.

Congressman Fraser's bill (H.R. 2820) would preserve all of the present BWCA as wilderness. Logging would be halted immediately and motor use would be banned excepting special cases. Mining would be only allowed during a national emergency and several adjoining areas of wilderness would be added for further wildlife protection.

The BWCA holds the last extensive and complete northern conifer forest ecosystem in the eastern U.S. Wolf and moose, lynx and hare, martin and squirrel osprey and fish, predator and prey, complete the ecosystems food chains. The BWCA offers priceless opportunities for research and education in forest and wildlife ecology, animal behavior, vegetation history, nutrient cycling and aquatic ecosystems. It is important to write your congressman in September if full wilderness protection is to be offered this unique area.

Continued violations of the State's Environmental Conservation Law will force a Smithtown manufacturer of printed circuits to close down. The firm, Computer Circuits Corporation was found to be flushing effluents containing heavy metals, copper and lead, into local ground waters. This same ground water eventually becomes Suffolk County's water supply. Although the State was reluctant to seek a permanent injunction, the corporation forced its hand by continually refusing to abate its pollution. The company failed to follow an abatement schedule designed to eliminate excessive discharges by Jan.1977. Only by threatening the company president with jail was the Dept. capable of instigating any abatement procedure at all. At present the company has filed a Chapter 11 proceeding in bankruptcy court in an attempt to escape a \$50,000 fine which is increasing at a rate of \$10,000 a day for each day of non-compliance. This has forced the Dept.

CONSERVATION NEWS CONT'D

AT THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT SANCTUARY

to seek a permanent injunction even though they were concerned with the impact of the company's closing on its 20 employees. The Dept. felt that the wellbeing of one million Suffolk residents was far more important. It was estimated that the cost of installing a closed system for the collection of harmful wastes would have been about \$18,000 and could have been financed over several years. This procedure has already been implemented by several Long Island companies.

Paul Butkereiit
Conservation

TOLL FREE NUMBERS

Here are some helpful toll free telephone numbers you should keep on hand.

If you want updates and copies of any bills before the N.Y.S. Senate or Assembly call the toll free Legislative Hotline at 1-800-342-9860.

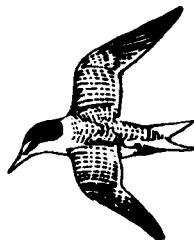
The National Solar Heating and Cooling Center is a new private, government sponsored information source on solar energy systems. You may call them toll free at 800-523-2929, for information. The Center is open weekends from 9AM to 8PM. Or write to the Center at Box 1607, Rockville, Md., 20850 for free brochures.

Toll-Free Hot Lines for reporting fish kills and debris washups along the ocean coast have been established by the Environmental Protection Agency. Response teams will initiate cleanups or other corrective action. Early warning by citizens may help prevent or reduce pollution. The number to call is 800-631-5216.

(Taken from August 1977 issue of Changing Tides published by the Marine Environmental Council of Long Island)

In early July, I participated in an excellent ornithology field workshop planned by the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. On Tuesday, July 5, we went birding at the Muttontown Preserve and walked along the path with a guide from the Nassau County Museum. We saw woodpeckers, tanagers, grosbeak, and even a few rabbits and chipmunks. On Wednesday, we drove out to Speonk to visit noted historian and naturalist, Leroy Wilcox. Mr. Wilcox has been studying birds of Long Island for more than 50 years and has published many books and articles on the history of Speonk and its birds and insects. We saw red-winged blackbirds, willet, oystercatchers, skimmer, and many least and common terns. The tern does not build a nest but lays its eggs on the sand. You must be very careful where you walk because these small creme-colored eggs blend perfectly with the sand. Mr. Wilcox placed a wire cage over each clutch of eggs. When the adult went inside the trap to sit on the eggs, the door sprang shut. Mr. Wilcox lifted the trap, banded the bird, and released it--all in about 10 seconds--he worked so quickly! We all learned so much from this knowledgeable and friendly man. On Thursday, we were taken through the J.F.K. Sanctuary at Tobay by Bill Kolodnicki of Huntington Audubon. Mr. Kolodnicki was an excellent guide, showing us glossy ibis, egrets, blue heron, willet, skimmer, etc. We also found an injured diamond-backed terrapin which we brought back to the Sanctuary for first aid. On Friday, we traveled to Connequot Preserve in Islip. This area was once an exclusive hunting lodge before the state purchased it. Barn Swallows followed us on our walk and nested in great numbers in two old barns on the property. We also visited an osprey nest. The agitated parents flew above warning us to stay away with a shrill whistle. Alan Ruppert and Gary Simpson from TRS did a fine job in scheduling such a diversified, educational and enjoyable series of bird trips.

Pat Davis



THE NATURAL HISTORY OF BIRDS
from the
WORKS OF THE BEST AUTHORS,
ANTIENT & MODERN;
embellished with
NUMEROUS PLATES
Accurately Coloured from Nature
in Two Volumes
BUNGAY;

Printed and Published by Brightly & Childs
Published also by T. Kinnersly
1815

I was fortunate enough to have a friend lend me a copy of the above book. As I browsed through it, I would read about the birds that I recognized. One that I found most interesting was about the Passenger Pigeon. I thought that maybe you would enjoy some of the following excerpts that have been copied, word for word, from this book. Keep in mind, this was published in the year 1815 when the Passenger Pigeon existed in the billions.

"The Passenger Pigeons visit different parts of North America, in enormous flocks...When they alight, the ground is quickly cleared of all esculent fruits, to the great injury of the hog and other mast-eating animals. After having devoured everything that has fallen on the surface they form themselves into a great perpendicular column, and flying around the boughs of the trees, from top to bottom, beating down the acorns with their wings; and they then, in succession, alight on the earth, and again begin to eat...

"A friend told me that in the year in which Quebec was taken, the whole army were supplied with this subsistence, if they chose it...Sir William Johnston told me, that at one shot, with a blunderbuss, he killed above a hundred and twenty...They were so numerous when LaHotan was in Canada, that the Bishop he says have been compelled more than once to exorcise them formally, on account of the damage they committed. Many of the trees were said to have more pigeons on them than leaves in this migration...

"But what is remarkable, they always fly westerly...The whole people

of a town go out a pigeoning, as they call it. They do not, on some days, kill a single hen bird; and on the very next day, not a single cock, (and yet both sexes fly westerly)."

Alexander Wilson, the Father of American Ornithology, once watched a flock of Passenger Pigeons go by. The year was 1808. He stood for hours watching, counting and estimating. In that single flock, he estimated 2,230,272,000! From all accounts, it seems safe to say that there existed billions of Passenger Pigeons during the 1800's.

They were good to eat and everybody ate them. They were easily killed. As the population of people grew, the killing increased. Gradually the slaughter turned into multitudes. What wasn't eaten was used to feed the hogs and dogs and also as fertilizer. By the end of the century, the end of the Passenger Pigeon was also approaching. No longer did the flocks consist of millions; not even thousands. One of the last big flocks seen was composed of about 200 birds!

On September 1, 1914, the last of the Passenger Pigeons died in a Cincinnati aviary. It was a female named Martha. She was eighteen years old. The Passenger Pigeon now became an extinct bird.

N.Y. State has several birds, mammals, fishes and reptiles that are either rare or endangered. This was caused by DDT, which is now banned, water pollution, habitat changed or destroyed, shooting and over harvesting (whales). In 1974, the number of endangered animals in the U.S. was no less than 109. Does the wolf Black-footed ferret, Right Whale or Peregrin Falcon have the right to exist?

Man is an inventive genius. But can he create another Martha?

Stan Ziminski

A SUNNY DAY AT BRIGANTINE

BIRD FEEDER SURVEY

Birding in perfect weather can be exciting. To bird with members of South Shore Audubon at Brigantine National Refuge, New Jersey for the first weekend in May was a memorable event.

From noon Saturday, for five hours, we renewed our acquaintances with Spring migrants. A nondescript wader, ever in view, and calling constantly, was the willet. In flight recognition was easier as he displayed his white wing stripes. Not to be outdone were flocks of Laughing Gulls, Canada, Brant and Snow Geese.

Overhead an Osprey soared in perfect light as the sun beamed through his outstretched wings. Next day we observed the Osprey on his nest atop a telegraph pole. Other noted birds (and probably should rate a "that's a good bird" accolade from our prez Elliott Kutner) were Great Blue, Louisiana, Little Blue, Green and Black-crowned Night Herons, all three egrets, Knots, Dunlin, Whimbrels, Turnstones, Black-bellied Plovers, Oystercatchers, Purple Martins, etc.

All in all we observed sixty bird species - a respectable number of sightings - to be surpassed the next time at Brigantine.

Lynne and Mort Silver

BINOCULAR SAVINGS

As last year, SSAS is offering an outstanding opportunity to purchase Bushnell and Bausch & Lomb binoculars, scopes and tripods at a savings of 30 to 50%. These special prices are available when we order in groups of 12. If you wish further information, please call Asa Starkweather (LY 9-5824) or Joan Butkerei (LY 3-4554).

If anyone would like to volunteer to bake a cake or cookies for monthly meetings, please contact our Hospitality Chairman, Miriam Raynor, RO 4-6204. Thank you.

Please keep a log of the # of the following birds at your feeders - by the month. The Skimmer deadline is printed on the back of your Bulletin. Please send your computations to our editor, Pat Davis, 7 Myers Avenue, Hicksville, New York 11801.

- MOURNING DOVE _____
- DOWNY WOODPECKER _____
- BLUE JAY _____
- BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE _____
- TUFTED TITMOUSE _____
- WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH _____
- MOCKINGBIRD _____
- STARLING _____
- HOUSE SPARROW _____
- RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD _____
- HAIRY WOODPECKER _____
- COMMON GRACKLE _____
- BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD _____
- CARDINAL _____
- EVENING GROSBEAK _____
- WHITE-THROATED SPARROW _____
- HOUSE FINCH _____
- AMERICAN GOLDFINCH _____
- TOWHEE _____
- SLATE-COLORED JUNCO _____
- TREE SPARROW _____
- SONG SPARROW _____
- FOX SPARROW _____
- PURPLE FINCH _____

PLEASE, REMEMBER
TO SEND IN YOUR
COUNT--THIS WILL
GIVE US SOME
IDEA OF HOW
MANY BIRDS
WE HAVE IN
OUR AREA.



OCT. NEWS DEADLINE SEPT. 15

NEXT MEETING---TUES., SEPT. 13, 8:15 P.M., FREEPORT LIBRARY

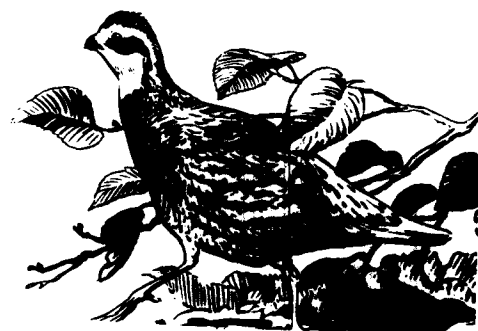
FIELD TRIPS: Starting time - 9:30 a.m.

No walk if it rains, snows, or temperature is 25 degrees or below.

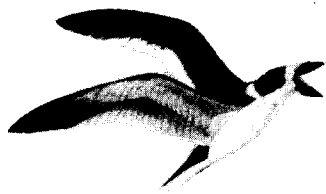
- AUG. 28 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- SEPT. 4 - NO BIRDWALK
11 - West End, #2, N.W. corner
25 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- OCT. 2 - West End #2, N.E. corner
9 - Short Beach
16 - West End #2, N.W. corner
23 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
30 - Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- NOV. 6 - Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
13 - West End #2, N.E. corner
20 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
27 - Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- DEC. 4 - West End #2, N.E. corner
11 - Pelham Bay - Meet at 9:00 at Toll
Booth Throg's Neck Bridge

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