

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 9, NO. 3

NOVEMBER 1978

MEETING: TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 1978
FREEPORT LIBRARY
8:15 P.M.

GUEST
SPEAKER: Ms. Hortense Block

"African Memories"

This exciting program will feature photos taken in Uganda, Botswana and South Africa. Ms. Block is a long-time member of South Shore Audubon. A world traveler, her programs emphasize diverse natural habitat and wildlife. Having Ms. Block as our guest speaker is always a special treat, so don't miss this meeting! Remember the date-Tuesday, November 14th:

FOR ECOLOGY SAKE: We are requesting that our members bring their own coffee cups (we will supply the coffee, of course) to all meetings so that we will not use the styro-foam or paper cups and thus save on waste materials. Please help us in this small way to eliminate use of plastic and paper "thro-away" materials. As we normally have approximately 100-150 members present at each meeting, this is quite a savings! Thank you!!

HOSPITALITY

The Hospitality Committee is in need of one or two helpers!! What this entails is getting up tables, start coffee, etc. After the meeting, it has to be cleaned up. If we have no

volunteers signed up for cakes for the following meeting, they must be solicited.

Miriam Raynor
Hospitality Chairperson

BIRD SEED SAVINGS DAY-NOVEMBER 4TH

The first bird seed sale of the season will be held on Saturday, November 4, at the Tackapausha Museum between the hours of 9:30 A.M. and 3:30 P.M. Even if you didn't preorder, seed and feeders will be available, along with binoculars, on the day of the sale. All profits from the sale will be donated to the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. Tackapausha Museum is located on Washington Avenue in Seaford, just north of Merrick Road and about $\frac{1}{4}$ mile south of Sunrise Highway. Volunteers will be needed on the sale day to take orders and carry seed. If you are interested in assisting us with this event, please call 623-0843 or LY 3-4554. Thank you.

Paul Butkerei

AT THE GREENWICH AUDUBON CENTER:

National Audubon Society members are eligible for a 10% discount on most items in the Environmental Bookstore and Gift Shop, located at the Audubon Center in Greenwich, Connecticut. So, if you take a trip to Greenwich, be sure to tell them you are a National Audubon member and take advantage of the 10% discount!

Don't forget to send in your Oct. Bird Feeder Survey by Nov. 15. Thank you!!



The Love Canal disaster in Niagara, New York involves 90 families and a public school located on property created on a remnant of William Love's 19th century uncompleted canal. The canal was to have linked the Niagara River to Lake Ontario. The canal was purchased by Hooker Chemical, which utilized it as a chemical waste disposal site. In 1953, the Niagara Board of Education purchased a portion of the dump and the remainder was sold to developers. Over the years, the ground has settled and rain has aided in corroding waste disposal drums, allowing for the escape of toxic chemicals into the surrounding soils. As a consequence, chemicals have seeped into basements, vegetation has died, the air smells and children get skin burns from playing in the yard. Recent disclosures of a high rate of miscarriages and birth defects caused the New York State Department of Health to recommend evacuation of pregnant women and infants from the area. This move attracted media attention which was quickly followed by governmental action. Families are now being relocated, and individual family members are being checked for health problems. The soils in the area have been tested and shown to possess a mixture of 82 industrial chemicals, 11 of which are suspected carcinogens. Attempts to clean up the dump site by draining, filtering and treating the ground waters have already begun.

The problem does not end at Love Canal. There are thousands of industrial landfills across the country all slowly decaying. The Environmental Protection Agency, under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, is in the process of inventorying these sites, including full assessments of any potential dangers created by these fills. Yet to date, even though

the government has enacted legislation to control toxic chemicals from many angles, there is no set program for dealing with a landfill site if a health-related danger is detected. A major problem is the cost and who should pay. At Love Canal, the city, state and federal government picked up the tab. Realistically, one can never correct the mistakes of the past completely, but a national plan for coping with hazardous chemical landfill sites can cut some of the risks and costs involved.

Paul Butkereiit

The following article appeared in the July 1978 issue of THE JOURNAL and was sent to us by Marge Fisher.

....Cashing in on Pollution

Pollution control has become a business creating more jobs and company profits than it costs companies in jobs and profits. Seven years ago, the Boeing Company lost a bruising battle with the environmentalists over the supersonic transport jet. Today controlling the environmental problems brings the company millions of dollars of business. They build garbage recyclers, mufflers for power plants, sludge dryers for sewage plants and desalinators.

Boeing is not alone. More than 600 companies-including some notorious polluters-are cashing in on the environmental movement, providing many more jobs than have been lost. While 20,318 jobs have been "affected" by plant closures since 1971, a 1974 National Academy of Sciences study found 677,900 persons gained employment in the pollution control industry-a figure that reportedly increased since then.

But if other American companies continue to take their wastes, pollutions and low wages abroad, sending us the products made to the detriment of the people of the foreign lands, then pollution prevention companies soon will not have any American companies to sell their wares to, and more jobs would be lost.

Import regulations that tax goods coming into the country to insure that the hidden costs of production-such as air, water and wage quality-are represented, is one solution to take away the corporate advantage of export exploitation.

Here is another fine articles by a frequest contributor to the Skimmer, Stan Ziminski.

Praying or Preying

I was in back of the dunes, at Jones Beach, photographing some wildflowers. Looking around, I saw a butterfly on top of a Bull Thistle. It looked like a Monarch. But there was something different about it. Going closer to get a better look, I could see that it was a Monarch in the clutches of a Praying Mantis. The butterfly was slowly being devoured.

The mantids have insatiable appetites and feast mostly on destructive insects such as the roach, flies and various garden pests. Unfortunately, they may also eat some of the non-destructive insects such as the Monarch Butterfly, Lady Bugs and honeybees.

Like the Black Widow Spider, the female mantid may eat the male after mating. In the fall, the egg case that she builds may contain two hundred or more eggs. These will hatch in the late spring. The newly released babies may then feast upon each other.

The mantid does not seem to realize the limits to its prey. There are records of them capturing birds and trying to devour them. In the Spring 1976 issue of King Bird, Anthony Lauro of Amityville reports finding a Solitary Vireo, Vireo solitarius, dangling by one wing from the forelegs of a Praying Mantis. The mantid was attempting to chew on the wing of the bird.

This report was followed by two more in the Fall 1976 issue. One mantid had captured a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Archilochus colubris, and another had a hummingbird of unknown species. In the May-June 1977 issue of the Conservationist, Mrs. Bahler of Baldwin reported coming upon a Praying Mantis with a

Parula Warbler, Parula american, entrapped in its claws. In all cases, the birds were released by persons who had come upon the events as they were taking place.

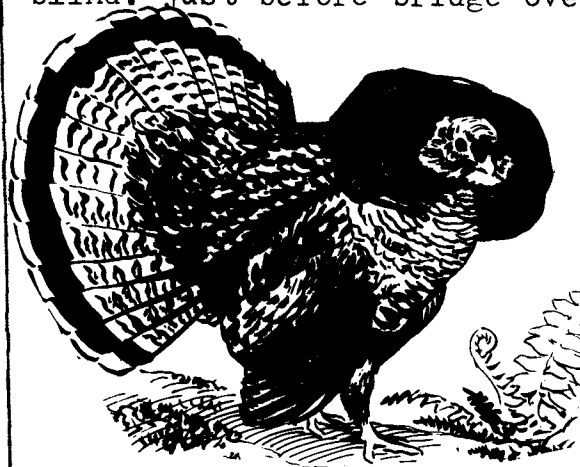
Would the mantids actually be able to devour birds? Maybe not, but they were certainly trying. Maybe they would have succeeded if they had not been interrupted. In any case, I do think that it is possible that these small birds, in their frantic struggle to escape, might have fatally injured themselves.

Specifically, the mantids were not identified. As two of the incidents took place in the John F. Kennedy Sanctuary, I assume that they were the Chinese Mantises, Tenodera aridifolia sinensis. This is one of the larger mantids reaching a length of four inches. The Ancient Greeks thought that it had the gift of prophecy and named it Mantis (meaning "Diviner"). "Praying" refers to its usual, motionless position of standing with its forelegs raised as if in prayer. But maybe instead of being called "Praying Mantis" it should more appropriately be called "Preying" Mantis.

Stan Ziminski

Birding at Tobay

Here is a listing of birds seen at Tobay on Friday, September 29 by Ann and Edward Koelbel: Great Blue Heron, 2 Louisiana Herons, heard a Loon, Cormorants, Towhees, Marsh Hawk, Common Egret, Eastern Phoebe, Catbirds, Canada Geese, Myrtle Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Pine Warbler, flocks of Goldfinches, Sharp-Shinned Hawk, Flickers, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Glossy Ibis, Kingfisher, Brown Creeper, Whitethroated Sparrow, American Bittern, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, immature, Juncos, Song Sparrows, Rough-winged Swallows and a swimming Snake (new blind, just before bridge over outflow).



HAPPY
THANKSGIVING

The following is Part 4 of Al Lemke's excellent series on the Galapagos Islands.

Las Islas Encantadas
The Galapagos Islands

4. Tower - Masked Boobies and Cheeky Mockers

After an excellent lunch and a short rest on the Isabela, our two launches took us back to another part of Tower. Our guide, Ulrike Eberhardt, a graduate zoologist from Stuttgart, Germany, who celebrated her 31st birthday during our trip, warned us that at landing we would be faced with a rather steep climb. That turned out to be the understatement of the year. We had to claw our way some 60 to 70 feet up an almost sheer lava cliff, hanging on with fingernails and teeth to a series of tenuous footholds, carrying cameras (I had two) and binoculars.

After what seemed like an endless climb we arrived on a large, rock-strewn plateau (the Galapagos are among the rockiest places on earth). The ground was full of masked boobies so that one had to be careful not to step on a chick or an egg or even an adult bird.

The masked (or white) boobies are strikingly colored snow white with black wings and tail, grayish feet, a yellowish bill and a black-masked face. Nelson writes "There are many shades of white. A gannet is whiter than a gull, but the white booby is the whitest bird imaginable; it positively dazzles."

It is the largest booby, with a five-and-a-half foot wing span, but weighs only two-thirds as much as the comparably-sized gannet. As in all boobies, the female is somewhat larger and heavier than the male. She has a raucous, trumpeting voice, while once the male has outgrown his juvenile plumage he also outgrows his lusty voice, which degenerates into a pathetic piping whistle.

The masked booby in the Galapagos breeds from about September to July.

The female usually lays two eggs, five days apart, so the first hatched chick is larger and stronger and physically evicts the younger from the "nest" (actually a small depression in the ground) so that it dies of starvation or exposure. Nelson noted that this sibling murder was carried out whether food was scarce or not. The masked booby fishes closer in than the red-foot, about a mile or so from the shore. Thus, less time is needed for feeding, and the average egg-sitting stint is 18 hours. The chicks begin flying after fourteen to twenty weeks, but are fed by their parents for some time after that.

We had been struck from the start by the extreme tameness of the wildlife in the Galapagos. Although we had read of this and came quite prepared, it must be actually experienced. Our guide told us several times that it is strictly prohibited to touch the animals, for one could easily do so. It is necessary to pass within a foot of the boobies, especially the ground-nesting masked and blue-foots. Although many had young of various ages or were sitting on eggs, they seldom seemed very disturbed and never fled.

But the prime example is the Galapagos mockingbird. Slightly smaller than our mockers, with a thin, down-curved bill, these birds are extremely curious and downright cheeky. They were constantly hopping along with our group, watching our every movement or perhaps looking for hand-outs (which they didn't get). While sitting around prior to descending the cliff on our return (which was worse than ascending), several came into our midst. Since it was quite chilly, one girl was wearing a shaggy white wool sweater. Two mockers came up, took a close look, and hopped onto her arm and attempted to pull out the threads, presumably thinking they would make good nesting material.

Thus ended our first full day in the Galapagos - a day of wonders never to be forgotten. That night we departed for Isabela Island and more miracles.

Al Lemke

Pintails



This beautiful drawing was done by one of our members, Mr. Fred Labitzke of So. Farmingdale.

DECEMBER NEWS DEADLINE NOV. 15

NEXT MEETING-----TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, FREEPORT LIBRARY, 8:15 P.M.

FIELD TRIPS: Starting time - 9:30 A.M.

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

- NOV. 12 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- 19 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 26 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- DEC. 3 Pelham Bay-Throg's Neck Bridge, right side toll booth at 9:00 A.M.
- 10 West End #2, N.E. corner
- 17 West End #2, N.W. corner
- JAN. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 14 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 21 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- 28 Short Beach, West End #2, N.E. corner
- FEB. 4 West End #2, N.W. corner
- 11 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 18 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner

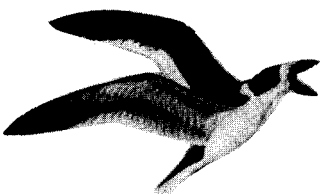
OFFICERS

- P. Butkerei-President-623-0843
268 Wallace St., Freeport 11520
- P. Davis-Editor-822-6189
7 Myers Ave., Hicksville 11801
- T. Stoltz-Membership-LY 3-4554
19 Broadway, Lynbrook 11563
- E. Kutner-Birding-IV 6-7667
461 Dunster Ct., W.Hempstead 11552

BINOCULAR SAVINGS: 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 Joan Butkerei (LY 3-4554) or Asa Stark-weather (LY 9-5824).

REMEMBER BIRD SEED SAVINGS DAY, NOVEMBER 4

**SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 31
FREEPORT, N.Y. 11520**



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