

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 9, NO. 8

APRIL 1979

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, APRIL 10
FREEPORT LIBRARY
8:15 P.M.

GUEST SPEAKER: Elliott Kutner
"Spring Warblers"

For most of us, Elliott Kutner needs no introduction. One of the South Shore Audubon's most significant leaders, he has served as Vice-President, President, and is currently Field Trip Chairman. He is a member of the Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, and has influenced numerous Long Island communities by bringing nature and environment programs to their schools. Mr. Kutner's film of songbirds, in particular warblers, is extraordinary.

Please join us for an exciting introduction to the spring birding season!

SUNDAY, MAY 20, SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON PROUDLY PRESENTS:

"H O R I Z O N S"

A Symposium on Wildlife, Wilderness, Resources, and Resourcefulness

This exciting event will be held at Hofstra University's Student Center. Featured will be programs on American Birds, Ocean Mammals, Wilderness, Long Island Sanctuaries, Natural Resources, and Ecosystems. We will be hosting field trips, debates, exhibits, movies, slide programs and lectures by leaders on key issues. Please look for further information on Page 5 of this issue.

S.S.A.S. PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION

Photos may be submitted in the following categories: 1) Themes in Nature 2) Man & His World. A limit of 3 photos may be entered in each category. Both black and white and color enlargements are eligible. Slides will be accepted for separate judging. All entries will be displayed on May 20 at the Symposium which is being held at Hofstra University. Winners will be announced at this event. Entries may be mailed to: South Shore Audubon Photo Competition, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520. They may also be brought in person to the April 10 or May 15 Audubon meeting. SSAS cannot be responsible for damage or loss in shipment. Non-members are invited to participate.

JUNE DINNER: The annual June Dinner will be held Monday, June 18, at the Arbor Inn, 35 Woods Ave., Rockville Centre. The price per person is \$11.50 and includes hot hors d'oeuvres, appetizer, soup, prime ribs of beef, vegetable, potato, dessert and coffee. Please make your reservations in advance since seating is limited. Checks should be made payable to South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520. Our guest speaker for this occasion will be announced in our next newsletter.

SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR NEXT YEAR:

President	Paul Butkerei
Vice-President	Pat Davis
Treasurer	Kevin Rennahan
Secretary	Dick Bullenkamp
Corres. Secretary	Ruth Grossman
Director (1)	Barbara Tancredi
Director (2)	Doris Pirodsky

GARRISON DIVERSION PROJECT

The infamous Garrison Diversion Project in North Dakota, one of the most potentially destructive water projects in U.S. history, has been sharply criticized by Secretary of the Interior Cecil Andrus. The \$700 million project has long been under attack by the National Audubon Society, the Canadian government and many North Dakota residents. In response to a study of project alternatives resulting from a National Audubon Society lawsuit against the project, the Secretary has announced that he plans to recommend to Congress that the project be reduced in scope from 250 thousand acres of irrigation to slightly over 96 thousand acres.

In a recent interview with the Washington Post, Secretary Andrus said that he would have preferred killing the entire project. Unfortunately, the administration fears retaliation from Congress and instead of seeking deauthorization, Secretary Andrus offered the modified version of the project which remains unacceptable to Audubon. The modified plan retains the Lonetree Reservoir, a major component of the original project and would allow for the addition of original portions of the project at a future date. If we ever hope to get this project off the books the time is now for attempting a knock out punch.

The Garrison Diversion Project has been an Audubon water project priority for the past seven years. The National Audubon Society's lawsuit has halted all construction since May 1977, and help is now needed to achieve complete deauthorization of the project. If you wish more detailed information on the Garrison issue, please contact Ann Graham at the National Audubon Society, National Capitol Office, 1511 K St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005. Phone # (202) 466-6600 or Rich Madison, Regional Representative, N.A.S., P. O. Box 1591, Jamestown, N.D. 58401, Phone # (701) 252-8376.

Your letters can help. Write President Carter (White House, Washington D.C. 20500) and ask him to deautho-

rize the Garrison Project. Send a copy of that letter to Chairman Charles Warren, Council on Environmental Quality, 722 Jackson Place, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. This group has a long history of opposition to the project.

Write to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance (US. State Department, Washington, D.C. 20520). The modified project would involve the direct transfer of harmful fish and fish diseases from the Missouri River system into the Hudson Bay watershed in Canada. Construction then violates the Boundary Waters Treaty between the U.S. and Canada. The Department should be seeking the deauthorization of the project.

Paul Butkerei

CONSERVATION NEWS

As the energy crisis grows, there will be more compromising of our environment. The following issues illustrate a problem that will grow and become more persistent.

A drastically weakened Alaska bill was reported last week by the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee. The 43-member committee was one vote short of the support needed to approve the version of H.R. 39 that was introduced in January by Rep. Morris K. Udall of Arizona and that has 139 co-sponsors. Instead, the committee reported a substitute H.R. 39 offered by Rep. Jerry Huckaby of Louisiana.

The unexpected switch was apparently brought on by a charge that the Udall bill would "lock up oil resources" desperately needed because of the Iranian crisis. The fact is that the Udall bill would leave 95 percent of Alaska's oil and gas lands open for possible development. The Huckaby substitute mandates oil exploration in the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The Huckaby version would also cut out 20 million acres of National Wildlife Refuges and 5 million acres of National Forest wilderness designations, and has many other weakening provisions.

Meanwhile, markup continues in the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee which also is considering this legislation. Congressman Lent is a member of this committee, and we urge you to write him and ask him to support the bill introduced by Udall.

(Continued on next page)

CONSERVATION NEWS CONT'D.

The Kaiparowits Plateau is the site of a new energy project in Utah. Under the plateau is one of the nation's largest undeveloped bodies of high quality coal. It is located near National parks, forests, wilderness areas, Indian reservations, and archeological sites. The project calls for the building of a railroad to ship the coal to Southern California. The Interior Department owns 2/3 of the land that the railroad must pass, and will ultimately determine its fate.

This land is fragile desert. The mining operation will increase the population by 10,000 people. The combination of increased population and the needs of the mines will increase the need for water. It will lower the water table and cause severe ecological damage.

The Dickey-Lincoln Dams are located in Maine. Bill H.R. 2249 has been introduced to deauthorize construction of these dams.

The Dickey dam, in the wilds of northern Maine, would be as large as Egypt's Aswan Dam: two miles long and 350 feet high. Lincoln would be somewhat smaller. Together they would flood 278 miles of free-flowing streams and rivers, including 55 miles of the St. John River that is probably the best white-water canoeing left in the northeast. About 86,000 acres of prime timberland and big-game habitat would be flooded, and another 200,000 acres of timber would be rendered inaccessible, isolated on the Canadian side of the lake.

The project would be an economic disaster as well as an environmental one. The annual value of the timber, a renewable resource that could be harvested from the lands that would be flooded or cut off, is estimated at \$38 million. For this destruction the taxpayer would pay \$822 million, the latest upward revision--or more likely a billion.

The chief benefit for New England would be peak-power electricity, primarily for Boston. But it has

been calculated that by the time the project could be completed (1983) it could meet only about one percent of New England's power needs.

A Massachusetts Audubon Society study in 1977 (when the Army Corps of Engineers calculated the cost of the project at only \$688 million) indicated that if the money were spent instead for attic insulation in New England, this would save 43 times as much energy as the hydroelectric project would produce!

Audubon members are urged to write their congressmen in support of this bill (House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515; U.S. Senate, Washington, D.C. 20510).

Nuclear power continues to have safety problems. Recently, five power plants were closed. These plants were built on geological faults. Yet, there was a deficient analysis of the ability to withstand earthquakes.

A special committee recently reported to President Carter that the safety of disposing of high level radioactive wastes in underground repositories could be determined only after specific investigations at particular sites.

This report differed with previous government assessments. In the past, federal official said that radioactive material was relatively easy to handle.

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has withdrawn most of its support for the controversial 1975 Reactor Safety Study, the so-called Rasmussen report, which likened the risk of a reactor catastrophe to the chance of a meteor hitting a city.

These and other safety problems has cast doubt on our nuclear development industry. Caution should be the watchword.

It should be noted that in President Carter's budget, he calls for an 8% increase in highway construction obligations. The Secretary of Transportation has proposed a 42% cut in energy efficient rail passenger systems operated by Amtrak. Washington should also learn to conserve!

Thomas Torma
Conservation Chairman

(Tom Torma is our new Conservation Chairman---Welcome and thank you for volunteering for this difficult and most important job!)

Las Islas Encantadas
The Galapagos Islands
8. Santa Cruz and Floreana

The following morning found us anchored in Academy Bay off the island of Santa Cruz (Indefatigable), the site of the Darwin Research Station. The village of Puerto Ayora looked quite picturesque across the glittering bay.

Founded in 1959 under the auspices of UNESCO and opened in 1964, the Darwin Research Station is not only noted for its collection of giant land tortoises and breeding program for re-stocking on the appropriate islands, but has lately developed intensive research into all phases of the islands' fauna and flora.

Each tortoise island (not every island had a tortoise population) had its distinct form of tortoise which varied in shape and size of the carapace from all the others. These huge reptiles, the males grow five to six feet in length and weigh up to 600 pounds, were once so common that the islands were named after them (galapagos in spanish for tortoises). But human depredation, direct and indirect, has taken its toll. Due to their ability to live for a year or more without food or water, pirates, whaler and sealers took the hapless tortoises on board ship to provide a constant source of fresh meat.

The major damage, though, which is still continuing, is from the various domesticated animals brought by man. Feral goats compete with the tortoises for food, pigs root out and destroy the eggs and young; dogs, cats and rats eat the eggs and young. The Ecuadorian government has from time to time, with some local success, mounted campaigns to exterminate these feral animals, but is hampered by a shortage of funds. A moderate number of tortoises still exists in the wild, in their original habitat, the higher interior regions. Since most of our time on land was spent near the coasts, we saw none of them.

The decrepit village of Puerto Ayora offered more examples of the tameness of the wildlife, even though quality and quantity left much to be desired. One great blue heron (same species as ours) stood around a dock waiting for fishing boats. When one arrived, he promptly hopped aboard, and took a large fish from the hand of a kindly crew member. Another one sat on the rickety balcony railing of a house, calmly surveying the hustle and bustle.

Numbers of the two endemic gull species patrolled the water's edge. The lava gull is a uniform dull gray, blending in very well with the lava which covers so much of the islands.

The swallow-tailed gull, on the other hand, is a very attractive bird, white with, in the breeding season, an almost black head, red legs and feet, and a brilliant crimson eye ring. In contrast to the lava gull, which is sedentary in the Galapagos, the swallow-tail, in the non-breeding season, wanders as far afield as the coast of Peru.

Later in the morning an ancient bus took us into the interior of Santa Cruz, to an elevation of some 2,000 feet. As this vintage vehicle bounced and wheezed its way along on a dirt road with almost as many potholes as our Long Island streets, it was interesting to watch the changing vegetation. The lower reaches, where the village is, and the low lying cliffs, sport beautiful stands of opuntia trees. These are actually prickly pears which developed into trees, respectable trunks and all. As we climbed higher, wild cotton, coffee and banana plants were interspersed with passion fruit vines (without fruit). Since the higher elevations receive more rain, the vegetation is quite luxurious. Several of the larger trees were bedecked with the epiphytic lace lichen and liverwort, white and black respectively. A few farms had been established years ago, providing a sub-marginal existence for their owners.

After a picnic lunch we walked some two miles to a large sink hole. This area had many different interesting ferns. On the way we passed wild pepper bushes full of tiny, bright red peppers. Our guide told

(Continued on next page)

"H O R I Z O N S"

us they were safe to eat but very sharp. Being of an inordinately curious nature I bit into one. After some two hours of emulating a dragon the fire gradually subsided, and I decided in the future I would listen to those who know better.

That night we crossed to the island of Floreana (Charles), another island which had been settled and, consequently, again less wildlife. We did see a flock of flamingoes, although at a considerable distance. Having seen them elsewhere, we did not consider this too great a loss. However, even though the wildlife here was really nothing to brag about, Floreana does have an exclusive, lecocarpus, a shrubby green plant which grows nowhere else in the world. Also on Floreana is the ancient "post office"; a large wooden box decorated with all sorts of paraphernalia. In past centuries this was used heavily by sailors: crews of outgoing ships deposited their mail, which in turn was picked up by homeward-bound sailors who then mailed it at the end of their journey. The "mailer" got stuck for the postage. This tradition has been kept up - for tourists and perhaps because of the punctuality of the Ecuadorian mails. That night we crossed to our final island, Hood.

Al Lemke

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

This year SSAS is offering three adult scholarships for Audubon Workshops: (1) two-week workshop in Maine and (2) one-week workshops in Conn. All are scheduled for July. If you are interested in being considered for a scholarship, please write explaining how this experience could help you and aid you in helping others to spread the ecological theme. Final decisions will be made in April.

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM/LECTURE SERIES

Wed., May 2, Tom Pyas "Northwest Adventures and Adventures in Penn's Woods" - Shows are held at the Town Hall Pavilion, Hempstead, at 8:15 PM.

A Symposium on Wildlife, Wilderness Resources and Resourcefulness

Sunday, May 20th
11 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Hofstra University
Student Center

South Shore Audubon is sponsoring this event:

- to provide a means of reaching out to new people on ecological themes
- to focus on key issues in an entertaining as well as informative way
- to provide a forum for concerned and knowledgeable people
- to further expand our role in community service
- to mobilize all available resources in the community
- to promote joint action with other organizations & to invite cooperation
- to encourage the development of new projects

If you are able to attend this most important meeting, please fill out the form below and mail it to Pat Davis, 7 Myers Ave., Hicksville, N.Y. 11801.

I WILL ATTEND THE "HORIZONS" SYMPOSIUM ON SUNDAY, MAY 20TH
NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE # _____

I WOULD LIKE TO ORDER THE BOUFFET LUNCHEON @ \$3.50 PER PERSON

Buffet Luncheon includes your choice of roast beef, ham, salami, turkey breast, bologna, a variety of cheese and salads, plus beverage.

PLEASE JOIN US ON THIS SPECIAL DAY!

The Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Birdwalk will take place on Sunday, May 6th, at Sagamore Hill, 9:00 A.M. This is an annual event and a guide will be provided. Please don't miss this beautiful walk in May!

MAY NEWS DEADLINE APR.15

NEXT MEETING----TUESDAY, APRIL 10TH 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.

- FEB. 11 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 18 Zach's Bay, Fkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 25 Short Beach West End #2, N.E. corner

- MAR. 4 West End #2, N.W. corner
- 11 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 18 Zach's Bay Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 25 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary

- APR. 1 West End #2, N.W. corner
- 8 Short Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- 22 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 29 Zach's Bay Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner

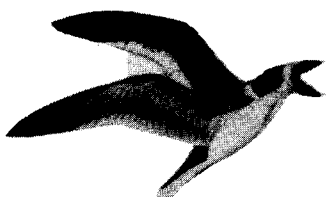
- MAY 6 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

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BINOCULAR SAVINGS are available thru **barbara Tancredi** evenings 7-9 887-2491
the club. Save 30 to 50% on Bushnell **Bill Herzog** evenings 7 to 9 791-7886
and Bausch and Lomb binoculars and **Asa Starkweather** 599-5824
scopes. See us at meetings and **Joan Butkerei** 593-4554
birdwalks or call the committee members listed.

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P.O. BOX 31
FREEPORT, N.Y. 11520



FIRST CLASS MAIL