

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



VOLUME 18, No. 2 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1987

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Betsy Gulotta

Having recently returned from a beautiful and stimulating week in the Pacific Northwest (Bellingham, Washington) attending the biannual National Audubon Society Convention, I would like to reflect upon some of the highlights and inform you on the issues that are important to our Chapter.

Firstly, the magnificent beauty of the Pacific Northwest will leave a lasting impression on me and my family. From the snow-covered peaks of Mt. Baker and the magnificent Douglas fir trees of the old growth forests, to the rolling hills and miles of farmland, to the San Juan Islands that dot the expansive Puget Sound, we truly became engulfed in a new world of nature's beauty.

Secondly, I was extremely impressed with the high quality of professionalism of the National Audubon Society staff, researchers, and educators at the Convention. For nearly a week we were stimulated by ecology lectures, workshops on every issue from solid waste to fundraising, and wonderful trips in the area. Peter Berle is a dedicated president and a warm and friendly person. I came away feeling proud to be a part of NAS, in spite of the events that occurred over the summer.

In the light of those events (outlined briefly in the September issue of the Skimmer), major changes have taken place, which will benefit and improve the relationship between chapters and NAS. The recent chapter outcry about the elimination of

regions and regional offices, led to two major decisions by the NAS Board of Directors: 1) no further discussion on chapter dues splits will occur until after Dec. 4, when a new Board of Directors are elected; and 2) each region will select, through its chapters, one Board member for the December 1987 Board election. This means that of the 36 NAS Board of Directors, 9 of them (one from each region) will be chapter oriented people, who will help influence Board decisions in the interests of the chapters.

As the time frame for nominating and voting on regional representatives is extremely short this year (the entire process has to be finished by the end of October), there is not time to survey all Chapter members for volunteers. A more equitable system will be in place for future elections. The SSAS Board of Directors, however, has approved the nomination of Jerry Bernstein as a candidate for Northeast Regional Representative for a period of two years. Jerry has a long record of Audubon service, including his presidency of the chapter. By the time the next issue of the Skimmer is published, we will know the results of the election.

I feel that NAS has really made an effort to respond to chapter interests by reinstating the regional system and bringing chapter input to the its Board of Directors. I look forward to a healthy working relationship with Peter Berle and the NAS.

MOUNT BAKER

By
Rose Ermidis

On Wednesday, at Western Washington University, Bellingham, Washington, where the National Audubon Convention was held, it was field trip day. Fit and hearty people signed up for a variety of trips. My first choice being filled, I signed up to climb Mount Baker. "Moderately strenuous, a four mile hike beginning at 5000 feet." Could I do it?. One of the leaders assured me that I could. What really convinced me was that an anthropologist and a geologist would be leading us. They planned to cover "Man, Fire, and Ice."

John Miles lead the morning hike. Anthropologist, historian, and Dean of the Environmental College at W.W.U. With red hair, a cheerful countenance, and the "gift of gab" he led our party of forty people as we began the ascent. We only meant to tackle the foothills of the mountain. Altitude required some getting used to. We were taught how to breath. "Breath through your nose and let the air out though pursed lips." Well I practiced. The terrain was rough! No path, just stone filled gaps among the heather and brush. I was taught how to walk. "Take small side steps like a goat." If you can't breathe just hold your ribs and take in big breathes until you puff out. I tried. I would have tried anything to survive the hike. The scenery was so beautiful and John's history lesson was so interesting.

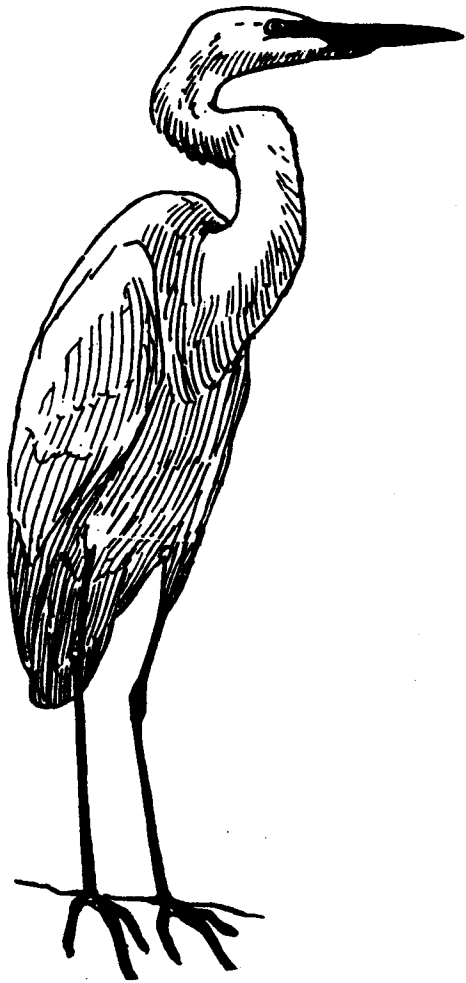
Mount Baker towered over us, ice covered and gleaming in the sun. Water cascaded down from the melting ice. Huckleberries grew profusely on bushes as we passed, to be picked and eaten deliciously wet and tart!. I was determined to make it.

At the summit of our hike, we were rewarded with a view of the ski lifts. We also viewed some awesome scenery. A fire watch station was available to climb for even better viewing. Glad that I had made it, I listened to John describe the many parties who had tried to conquer the mountain. It was climbed successfully for the first time in 1868. The two mile portion of the hike was over when we descended to have our box lunches.



Soon after lunch, we courageously started out for another two mile hike with Scott our geologist. He carried a chalk board for chalk talks as we scrambled up another side of the mountain. We learned about hexagons which form this particular rock formation. This portion of the hike was not as strenous as the morning hike. Wild flowers of Pearly Everlasting crammed the sides of our trail. Here the scenery was most spectacular as we crossed many small streams. Trees as well as brush could be seen on the mountain-side. Here Clark Gable and Loretta Young filmed "The Call of the Wild" in Heather Meadows in 1935. How extraordinary to think of that.

Weather is always uncertain in the mountains. I had left my warm clothes on the bus after lunch. Marching along in a T-shirt, I suddenly felt rain pelting gently down on my back. A companion offered me her red umbrella to keep my glasses dry. This kept me dry in front but the wind blew the rain down my back. We all walked as rapidly as possible over the rugged terrain, skipping across the watery intersections that frequently had to be jumped. Several gallant gentlemen offered me a much needed hand across the streams. An enormous ice floe had fallen near us in the meadow. I just couldn't resist making a snowball in August! Back at the bus, out of the rain, I changed to a warm shirt and felt gratitude to be dry, safe, and successful.



MEETING

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 13, 1987
FREEPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY
Merrick Road and Grove Street, Freeport, N.Y.
8:15 P.M.

Subject: The Ecology of the Florida Everglades
Speaker: Dr. Sylvia S. Mader

Dr. Sylvia S. Mader, Professor of Biology, and a noted author of Biology text books, will share her slides and expertise on the ecology of the Florida Everglades. Dr. Mader lives in Martha's Vineyard, and has written a colorful and interesting nature guide to the Vineyard's plants and animals.

The Florida Everglades is a swampy, subtropical region of saw grass savannahs and water dotted by island-like clumps of trees (hammocks). It contains a rich variety of fauna and flora, much of it unique to this region. Bird life in this area is especially notable.

NEXT MEETING; NOVEMBER 10, 1987
FREEPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY
8:15 P.M.

Subject: Guam, Costa Rica, and the Role of Zoos

Hello, Audubon Hotline?

DON'T BE SCOOPED. Keep up with environmental issues. Find out when decisions are being made in the nation's capital and what you can do to help.

The *Audubon Hotline*, (202) 547-9017, is ready to take your call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. A recorded message gives you background information and current status of Audubon's priority issues. The message is updated every week. The *Hotline* lets you know when sounding off will do the most good.

For more information on legislative issues, contact the National Audubon Society's capital office. Phone: (202) 547-9009. The address is: 801 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Washington, D.C. 20003.

(202) 547-9017

Audubon Hotline



SOIL CONSERVATION

Joan Butkerei. Conservation Chairperson

There have been landmark gains in legislation supporting soil conservation in the past two years. This month Congress is going to vote on an agricultural bill HR 3030 which would provide a multi-billion dollar cash infusion into the Farm Credit System. There will be no Federally guaranteed secondary market for farm real-estate loans (similar to Fannie Mae for home mortgages). Conservationists have an opportunity to protect soil conservation goals in this legislation.

In 1985, the Food Security Act integrated conservation with basic farm programs. In 1986, Congress removed tax incentives to convert wetlands and highly erodible lands to crop production. Farmers are no longer eligible for USDA programs if they convert environmentally sensitive wetlands and range lands to crop production nor can they receive tax benefits if they convert environmentally sensitive lands to cropland. Further still, borrowers must develop conservation plans on any highly erodible lands by 1990 in order to remain eligible for Fm-HA loans and USDA subsidies.

Congress delayed acting on farm credit until this year when indebtedness reached incredible levels. The Farm Credit System which is a quasi-governmental federation of several hundred local lending institutions across the country, holds 1/3 of the nation's farm loans. The FCS has requested a \$6 billion dollar bail out in order to avoid defaults. Banks and insurance companies, that want to resell farm real estate mortgages want a federally guaranteed "secondary market." Both measures are provided in HR 3030. Conservationists ask that in return for direct federal aid to FCS and for indirect assistance to banks and insurance companies, these lending institutions begin following the same conservation requirements for future lending that Fm-HA now follows. Rep. Tim Penny has offered an amendment which would extend these conservation requirements.

What you can do: Write or mailgram your representative and ask him to support adding conservation requirements to any legislation that is enacted. Ask him to support the Penny Conservation Amendment. Letters can be addressed to:

Honorable (Your Representative)
U.S. House of Representatives
2408 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

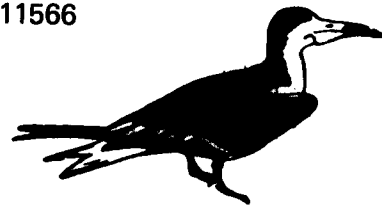
CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE SKIMMER

The Skimmer is the only means through which your chapter can keep the membership informed about the programs, projects, and activities of the Chapter and the National Audubon Society. It is also a vehicle to allow the membership at large to contribute their thoughts, complaints, community problems, and articles of interest to other members of the Chapter. If you feel that you have something that other members may share, please send it to the address listed at the end of this notice.

The only requirements that I have, is that the material be legible (it does not have to be typewritten), 600 words or less, and that I receive it at least 30 days prior to the next months issue.

Send all material to:

Jerry Bernstein
1958 Lowell Lane
Merrick, N.Y. 11566



**HAWK MIGRATION AND FALL FOLIAGE TRIP
HIGH POINT STATE PARK, NEW JERSEY
OVERLOOKING TRI-STATE AREA**

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10, 1987

**COST: \$33.00 PER PERSON
INCLUDES TRANSPORTATION AND DINNER AT
TOM QUICK INN, MILFORD, PA.**

**The bus will leave from the Merrick Road Golf Club,
Merrick Road and Clubhouse Road, Merrick
at 7:30 A.M.**

**Make checks payable to SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON
SOCIETY and mail to:**

**Mrs. Evelyn Blume
313 Smith Street
Merrick, New York 11566
516-378-7122 (After 6:P.M.)**

THEODORE ROOSEVELT SANCTUARY

South Shore Audubon is one of three Audubon Chapters which have teamed up to manage and support the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary in Oyster Bay. Members of SSA are encouraged to take advantage of the many programs that are offered by the Sanctuary or just visit to walk through the grounds. The grounds are open 9-5 P.M. everyday. The Nature Center is open 1-4:30 P.M. on weekends and 8-4:30 Monday-Thursday, Fridays 8-2 P.M. To get to the Sanctuary, take Route 106 into the village of Oyster Bay. Make a right on East Main Street. Go 1½ miles up East Main Street and you will see signs for the T.R. Sanctuary Parking. The parking lot is on the right.

Here are a listing of the activities that you will enjoy. Because space is limited **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.** For information call 922-3200.

Sunday, Oct. 4, Family Program . . . 1:30-2:00 P.M.

Animal of the Month
SCREECH OWL

Observe a live Screech Owl and discover the fascinating adaptations this nocturnal creature possesses.

Sunday, Oct. 11, Family Program . . . 1:30-3:30 P.M.

**INTERPRETIVE NATURE WALK AT
SAGAMORE HILL
(Meet at Sagamore Hill Parking Lot)**

Amble along with the staff and enjoy the beautiful nature spots at Sagamore Hill Historic site.

Saturday Oct 24th through Sunday, Nov. 1st

OWLS OF NORTH AMERICA

Starting off the Halloween Festivities will be an Owl exhibit in the Sanctuary's Visitors Center. Discover the similarities and differences this vast nocturnal group portrays.

Saturday, Oct. 24, Sunday, Oct. 25th . . . 2:00 P.M.
Saturday, Oct. 31, Sunday, Nov. 1st

LORD OF DARKNESS

This exciting 20 minute movie will be shown on the above dates. One of the "Wild America" series, it is sure to answer those questions most often asked about — Whoooo??; "OWLS!"

Friday, October 30th, Grades 2-4 . . . 6:30-8:30 P.M.

**"NOISES IN THE NIGHT"
A HALLOWEEN HAPPENING**

Join the T.R. staff for a night of thrills and chills!!! They will "treat" you to a "trick" or two during a nocturnal prow! through the forest.

Saturday, Oct. 31st, Grades K-1 . . . 1:00-2:00 P.M.

OWL HOOTS

An hour of Halloween Festivities await aspiring witches and ghouls!!!

Sunday, Nov. 8, Family Program. . . 1:20-2:00 P.M.

Animal of the Month
HOG NOSE SNAKE

Learn the facts about one of the oldest and most interesting of living creatures!

**BAT MONTH HALLOWEEN PARTY
TACKAPAUSHA PRESERVE
SATURDAY, OCT. 31, 1-4 P.M.**

Games and activities for children (up to age 10) celebrating Bat Month and Halloween will be held at the Tackapausha Preserve, Seaford. Prizes for costumes will be awarded and light refreshments will be served. All in all, it promises to be a good time for all — a time you can't afford to miss.

Anyone wishing to volunteer to assist in this party should contact Myrna Brier at 795-5842.

**SSA T-SHIRTS and HOODED SWEAT SHIRTS
FOR SALE**

Support your chapter. Order for yourselves, your friends, and children.

T-Shirts \$ 5.00
Sweat Shirts \$15.00

See Mal Marum at the Sunday Bird Walks, General Meetings, or call 752-0396 to order by phone.

DESCRIPTION OF A SALT MARSH

Salt marshes border the salt water bays, and are flooded on high tide at some period during a twenty-four hour cycle. They are dominated by grasses of the genus *Spartina*. **Cordgrass** (*Spartina alterniflora*) is a sturdy grass, one of a group of salt-tolerant plants. It cannot survive underwater as eel grass, but it grows well with a salt-water bath each day. It sends out underground stems and new clumps of **Cordgrass** grow from these. The grass blades slow down the water movement so that the sediment in the water drops and the **Cordgrass** grows higher. Eventually it will form a peat bed many feet thick. **Spike Grass**, grows alongside **Salt-Meadow Grass**. It can be recognized by its shorter leaves. **Black Grass** takes its stand near the landward edges of the marsh. Where the marsh surface develops shallow depressions, known as pannes, water sometimes collects at the highest tides. In these pannes and along the salt-rimmed borders of the marsh the **Glassworts** grow beside the **Sea Lavender**.

Looking out over a marsh for the first time you may not be able to tell each kind of grass from one another. Two clues to identification includes knowing where the grass is located in relation to the amount of time it stays in the water and color. At the water's edge, the **Cordgrass** forms a dark green border, up to six feet tall in favorable conditions. The **Salt Meadow Grass** and nearby **Spike Grass** are one to two feet high and form a lighter green carpet. By late summer the **Salt Meadow Grasses** have bent at their bases to form flattened cowlicks.

The **Black Grass** rims the landward side of the marsh with reddish brown patches. In bare patches and at the high dry edges, the short **Glasswort** is easy to see. In fall it turns a bright red, while the **Sea Lavender** is purple.

After this first survey, you are ready for a closer look between the grasses. Here the primitive **Algae** grow, providing the basic nutrients for many animals. They grow in flat green mats or float up and down the creeks. Down between the grasses are many of the **Coffee Bean Marsh Snail** which feed upon the algae mats and decaying vegetation. At high tide these snails climb to the top of the marsh grass out of reach of the water, and they move back down as the water

recedes. It is a pulmonate snail and must breathe air (*having lungs rather than gills*). When up on the grass blades, the **Coffee Bean Snail** is often eaten by birds. It is a squat, egg shaped snail, translucent brown and about 1/2 inch long.

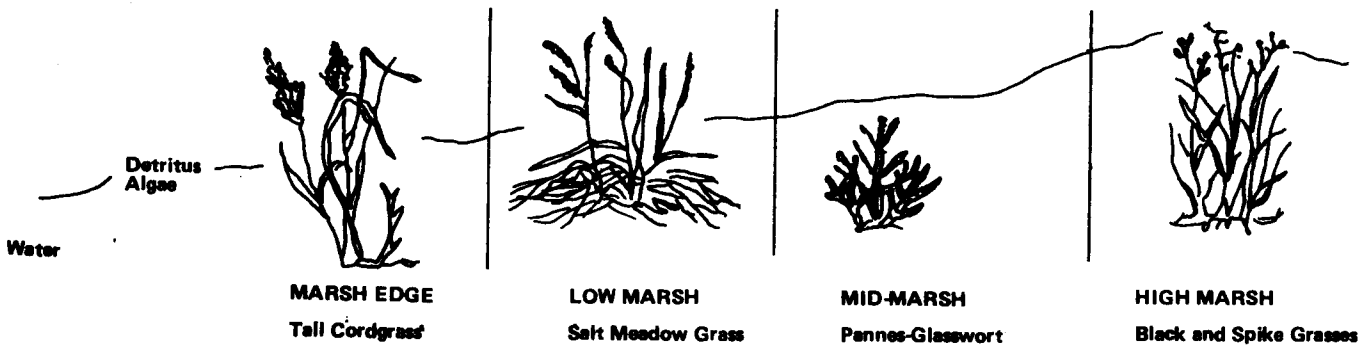
Many holes the size of a finger puncture the marsh. Beside most of the holes are neat balls of sand and mud. These holes are dug by the **Fiddler Crab**. At low tide, the crabs leave their holes to drink and feed at the water's edge. The name fiddler comes from the enlarged claw of the male crab.

Near the water the marsh drops off to form an eroded peat bank, providing homes for a number of burrowing clams and crabs. The box crab or **Marsh Crab**, makes a hole here about 2 inches in diameter with little piles of mud around the hole which leads to a network of tunnels that can be traced to the water. This **Marsh Crab** is shaped like a box and it is larger than the **Fiddler Crab**. When caught it will play possum, keeping the legs extended and rigid. When returned to the ground, it will suddenly come to life and dart away.

Every salt marsh has colonies of **Ribbed Mussels** which are often covered by **Acorn Barnacles**. These mussels are edible, providing that the marsh is clean.

The most unwelcome creature of the marsh is the **Green-head Fly**. The female lays its eggs on grass stems in mid-summer. These females seek the blood of warm-blooded animals to develop their eggs. The eggs hatch into inch-long maggots, which winter in the mud at the base of the plants feeding on insects, worms, snails, and other greenhead larvae. Usually they emerge the following summer as an adult fly.

As many as sixty species of fish have been found to live most of their lives in the marsh creeks. The young of many of our most popular fish begin their lives here such as **Flounder**, **Mullet**, and **Menhaden**. Larger fish such as **Striped Bass**, **Tuna** and **Swordfish** feed in turn on these marsh raised fish.



Jw B

**BIRD SEED SAVING DAY
SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 1, 1987
TACKAPAUSHA MUSEUM
9:30 A.M. — 2:30 P.M.**

The museum is located on Washington Avenue in Seaford, and lies about ½ mile south of Sunrise Highway just north of Merrick Road. Pre-ordering greatly aids us in determining the amount of seed needed, an order form is enclosed for your use. Please keep this upper portion as a reminder of the sale date. All pre-orders must be received by October 19. Please make checks payable to the **South Shore Audubon Society**. Mail check and order form to **Paul T. Butkerei, 268 Wallace Street, Freeport, N.Y. 11520**.

This year we will offer three types of sunflower seed; black oil seed in 25 lb. bags, large white stripe seed in 25 lb. bags, and a blend of the two consisting of 60% oil and 40% stripe in 40 lb. bags. All proceeds from the sale go to the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. Help will be needed on the sale day to take orders and to unload seed. If you wish to volunteer, call 516 623-0843 late evenings and ask for Paul.

.....

MY NAME IS

MY ADDRESS IS

PHONE NO.....MEMBER SSAS: YES NO

Quantity (No. of Bags)	Description	Price	Total
	25 lb Black Oil Sunflower Seed	7.05	
	25 lb. Striped Sunflower Seed	8.30	
	40 lb. Blended Sunflower Seed	12.00	
	25 lb. Regular Wild Bird Seed	5.50	
	50 lb. Regular Wild Bird Seed	11.00	
	20 lb. Special Seed (No Corn, 1/3 Sunflower)	5.25	
	40 lb. Special Seed (No Corn, 1/3 Sunflower)	10.50	
	25 lb. Cracked Corn	4.50	
	50 lb. Economy Generic Brand Mix	10.00	
	10 lb. Sunflower Chips	5.00	
	10 lb Peanut Bits and Pieces	5.00	
	10 lb Safflower Seed	4.00	
	10 lb Niger (Thistle) Seed	9.75	
	Maine Manna Suet Cake	3.75	

TOTAL AMOUNT: _____



Bird Seed Savings Day®

BIRD WALKS

Elliot Kutner, Chairperson516 486-7667

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.
No walks if it rains, snows, or temperature
is 25° F or below.

- Sept. 27 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Oct 4 West End No. 2, N.E. Corner, Jones
Beach
11 Twin Lakes Preserve, Wantagh (Meet
in Forest Lake School Parking Lot,
Mill Road)
18 Zach's Bay, Field No. 4, N.E. Corner
25 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Nov. 1 West End No. 2, N.E. Corner, Jones
Beach
8 J.F. Kennedy Sanctuary, Tobay Beach
15 West End No. 2, N.E. Corner, Jones
Beach
22 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
29 Pelham Bay Park (Meet on Service Rd.
after going through Throg's Neck Toll
Plaza, 9:00 A.M.)

RARE BIRD ALERT
212-832-6523

1987-1988 SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Betsy Gulotta, President	546-8841
Joseph Grupp, Vice President	481-4208
Louise Halpern, Recording Secretary	546-6147
Malcolm Marum, Treasurer	752-0396
Ruth Grossman, Corresponding Secretary	378-8809
George Appoldt, Director	678-4964
Arthur Atlas, Director	223-2327
Ann McIntyre, Director	379-2206
Lois Schlegel, Director	822-1546
James Browne, Director & Preserve Chairperson	889-9330
Evelyn Blume, Director & Trip Chairperson	378-7122
Joan Butkerei, Conservation Chairperson	623-0843
Paul Butkerei, Bird Seed Sales	623-0843
Rose Ermidis, Education Chairperson	785-6028
Elliot Kutner, Birding Chairperson	468-7886
Marion Yavarkovsky, Membership Chairperson	379-2090
Jack McLoughlin, Publicity Chairperson	889-8092
Len Gordon, Program Chairperson	223-1365
James Remsen, Youth Representative	764-5168
Bill Herzog, Binocular & Book Sales(7-9 PM)	791-7886
Myrna Brier, Hospitality Chairperson	764-7523
Frieda Malament, Holiday Parties	795-5842
Jerry Bernstein, Skimmer Editor	623-8825



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY
Post Office Box 31
Freeport, New York 11520

U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 131
NON-PROFIT
Island Park, N.Y.

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Americans Committed to Conservation