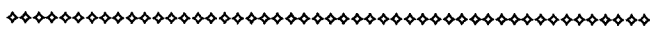


That brings us up to the Blizzard of 1996. We will be talking about this one for a long, long time. January's meeting got canceled — Freeport Library was closed due to the weather. Hopefully, we will be able to reschedule Member's Night. I know a lot of folks were disappointed.

The pressure is still on to write letters to your Senators, Congressman, and President Clinton. Express your concerns over the federal budget and its impact on the Endangered Species Act, wetlands protection, and the Environmental Protection Agency. Another way to let your voice get heard is by joining our **Armchair Activist** program. We cannot sit by and watch our government roll back 26 years of environmental progress. Please do your part to preserve and restore our environment.

If you have any questions, remember that your board members are just a phone call away. Hope to see you at our meetings and on our bird walks.



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marion Yavarkovsky

We welcome all of you to SSAS. Now that the holidays are over, we hope you will have the time to become active members of our chapter. Come to our weekly bird walks, monthly meetings, and special events. You will be happy you did.

[For information on joining the South Shore Audubon Society, please call our Membership Chairperson, Marion Yavarkovsky, at 379-2090. The best time to call is after 4 P.M., Monday through Friday.]

- Baldwin Diane Hawkins,
Ms. Valerie Rizzuto
- Bellmore Lenny Lampel
- College Point Mr. Calvin Rothman
- East Meadow J. Belonzi, Arthur Johnston
- East Rockaway Donald Ferrante,
Louis & Angela Nacchio
- Farmingdale E. Fraser, Mrs. Helene E. Klem
- Floral Park Ms. Patricia A. Tweedy
- Freeport Marianne & Larry Gumbs,
W. Hattakitkosol, Marsha
Jensky, Joan Mallicoat,
Claire Mc Bride, Craig Stark,
Marie Zvitcovich
- Garden City ? Behrman, Ms. Christina
Caughey, Diane Cioffi,
Susan Di Russo, Marcia S.
Kemper, James R. Rhind,
Margaret Taggart
- Hempstead Alex Ortiz
- Hicksville John & Cathy Michaels,
David R. Weymouth
- Levittown Yvonne Stork
- Long Beach Josephine Marone



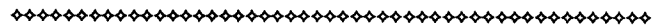
- Malverne A. J. Howell
- Massapequa Susan Armentani, Paul F.
Broderick, John Fusto, Dorothy
& Morton Goldfarb, Miss
Natalie Kramer, Miss Sally J.
Scudder, S. Sherwin & D. Silver
- Massapequa Park John J. Piccoli, Jr.
- Merrick Jacob J. Bohn, Lou DeFilippo,
Mr. D. Dramer, Faye & Arnold
Rosen, Bonnie L. Royer,
Emily Silverman
- Plainview Mr. Peter Harold,
Norma Silberlicht
- Rockville Centre Joel Abrams, Ms. Joan Holstine
- Seaford Gilbert Giamario,
Terryanne Maenza Gmelch
- Syosset Eileen Keenan
- Uniondale Oliver Cuffe,
Ms. Michele Rondon,
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Wagner
- Valley Stream Carol Hogan,
Mr. & Mrs. John Ohanian
- Wantagh Mr. & Mrs. John Gorman
- West Hempstead Robert Farrell, Mrs. Daniel S.
Hirsch, V. Puccio,
Tammy Zeltser
- Woodmere Mrs. Sylvia Rolnick



LICENSED REHABILITATORS WANTED

Dr. Evan C. Dribbon

The South Shore Animal Hospital, located on Merrick Road in Wantagh, has been caring for wildlife free of charge since 1978. Many of the birds treated are either released directly to the wild or are given to licensed wildlife rehabilitators prior to their release. Several rehabilitators already cooperate with the hospital; however, the volume of wild birds presented for medical care increases yearly. Any licensed rehabilitator who wishes to participate in the care of these birds should contact me at 826-3422 or write to me at 3296 Merrick Rd, Wantagh, NY 11793.



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THEODORE ROOSEVELT SANCTUARY

134 Cove Road
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 922-3200

Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bird Sanctuary is owned by the National Audubon Society and operated by the Community and three local Audubon chapters, including South Shore Audubon. The following programs are open to the public. Space is limited and registration is required. All program fees are required at the time of registration.

Thursday, February 8th (4:30 to 6 P.M., ages 6 to 12) — Owls for Kids. An after-school program about owls, their importance, and lifestyles. See live owls and learn what all the fuss is about. This program will include a short owl prowling for children. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

Friday, February 23rd (7 to 9 P.M., ages 12 and up) — Owl Prowl. You'll see six live owls and learn about their behavior, tools, and natural history. We'll walk through the woods calling for wild owls and are likely to see and hear a Screech Owl. TRS members \$5, nonmembers \$7.

Sunday, February 25th (2 to 3:30 P.M., family) — Maple Sugaring. Come make some maple syrup from our Sugar Maples. Learn about the purpose of sap and tree natural history. Take a nature walk and discover the beginning of spring. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

February Nature Camp. Do you know children grades PK through 4th who are looking for something fun to do with nature over the February school break? February 19–22 is the week when we will be studying the forest environment in winter. The week will include nature activities, hikes, live animal presentations, and fun, fun, fun! The cost is \$100 for members and \$110 for nonmembers. The camp will meet from Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. Register early for a space.

SSAS VISITS TRS. Dolores Rogers has arranged for our chapter to visit National Audubon's oldest sanctuary at 9:30 A.M. on **Saturday, May 4th**, to see their many birds of prey close up and observe the sanctuary's songbird banding program. Save the date and watch future *Skimmers* for details and directions.

SSAS Mission Statement — *The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education, and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.*

SSAS Post Office Statement — *South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through June by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.*

CHASING RARE BIRDS IN TEXAS

Michael Higgiston

All the Rare Bird Alert tapes were saying the same thing — there was a good number of rare birds present in Texas and they were grouped fairly closely together. The itch was beginning. Should we chance it? After all, birds have a tendency to be long gone by the time you respond to an alert. However, with each subsequent call to the RBA tapes, the birds were still being reported on the scene; the weekend was rushing toward me.

On a Friday morning in January 1995, I boarded a TWA flight to St. Louis to catch the connecting flight to Houston. There was only one way to scratch this itch. A rental car took me approximately 30 miles southwest of Houston to Brazos Bend State Park. The directions were to park in the first lot on the left and walk to the observation tower. They didn't say how far, but there were Coots and Pied-billed Grebes and White Ibises and Common Moorhens and Little Blue Herons, so the walk and the gnats were ignored. The top of the observation tower brought me my first look at what I sought, Masked Ducks from Mexico. Usually secretive, these ducks were swimming and feeding about 30 yards away. This was a great sighting for me, because I had missed them last October due to the terrible rainstorms that flooded large stretches of southeast Texas.

The Blue-footed Booby beckoned me on to Lake Bastrop outside of Austin, but the airline schedule allowed for no such frivolities. Back in Houston, it was soon on to Harlingen in the Rio Grande Valley and a welcome hotel bed. Early checkout and another rental car (birding can't be said to be an inexpensive hobby for some) had me driving east out of Harlingen toward Laguna Atascosa in the dark. The directions were very explicit: just west of the intersection of Route 106 and Ted Hunt Road were LeConte's Sparrows in the grassy fields. I was dubious about tracking them down. On the local map I bought in Harlingen, there was no mention of Ted Hunt Road, and street signs tend to disappear like birds, if they were ever even put up. Grassy fields mean thick grass a foot and a half high, with the 6 inch birds preferring to stay hidden. Conditions did not portend success, but I'm here, so let's do it.

Seven A.M. saw me at the intersection in question (the sign was there) with the first bit of daylight in the sky. I felt somewhat foolish, standing alone with a great expanse of flat countryside surrounding me, but I decided to plunge in. I started to walk through the knee-high grass to see what I might stir up. Sure enough, a small bird popped up, flew a short distance, and buried itself in the grass. I walked toward that spot and it flushed, flew, and hid again. We performed this dog and pony show three times until he finally flushed to a small bush and remained there. I had a great look at every diagnostic mark of the LeConte's Sparrow, and it was only 7:15 A.M.

I drove south to Brownsville, through fields stretching endlessly, with hawks everywhere — American Kestrels on

WHICH ZIP HAS THE MOST SSAS MEMBERS?

Michael Sperling

This is the 50th *Skimmer* I've typeset, proofread, and squeezed/padded into eight pages. During those five and a half years, I've been keeping a bunch of statistics on how many copies of each issue are printed and where they go. Some of this info is used to properly rubber band and sack our mailings; some of it is semi-useless trivia that will fill up the rest of this paragraph: Including single copies sent to local public libraries, other organizations, and members not living in SSAS's territory, since September 1990 we've mailed between 1774 (December 1993) and 2146 (November 1992) *Skimmers* per issue. In 1990-91, we averaged 2037; in 1991-92, 2037 again; in 1992-93, 2040; in 1993-94, 1873; in 1994-95, 1911; and so far in 1995-96, 1936 (including 1865 for this issue; our membership totals are affected by the extent and success of National Audubon Society's recruitment efforts, and by how fast NAS processes new memberships; right now, the whole membership operation is being moved in-house, which I suspect is responsible for the recent drop).

This article is dedicated to those of you who wonder if you're the only environmentally conscious person in your entire town or wonder how far you'd have to travel to find another enlightened household. Thanks to Betty Borowsky, I have 1994 census estimates for each zip code in Nassau County, and assuming that the typical SSAS household has the same number of residents as any other household (2.97 in the Towns of Hempstead and Oyster Bay, and 2.35 in the City of Long Beach), here are the zip codes that are in SSAS's official territory, in order by what percentage of their households belong to our chapter (I've omitted all the libraries and had to leave out Glen Oaks 11004, which has 14 SSAS households in Queens and Nassau, since I neglected to ask Betty for the Queens part of the population — oops):

- Atlantic Beach (11509): 12 households = 1 in 64
- Rockville Centre (11570): 93 = 1 in 93
- Garden City / Stewart Manor (11530): 86 = 1 in 105
- Merrick (11566): 97 = 1 in 123
- Malverne (11565): 26 = 1 in 127
- Baldwin (11510): 80 = 1 in 137
- Hewlett (11557): 21 = 1 in 137
- Massapequa (11758): 123 = 1 in 145
- Wantagh (11793): 73 = 1 in 146
- Oceanside (11572): 69 = 1 in 147
- East Rockaway (11518): 25 = 1 in 154
- Lynbrook (11563): 49 = 1 in 154
- Point Lookout (11569): 4 = 1 in 161
- Cedarhurst (11516): 14 = 1 in 163
- Valley Stream / N. Woodmere (11581): 39 = 1 in 164
- West Hempstead (11552): 43 = 1 in 177
- Bellmore (11710): 62 = 1 in 187
- Woodmere (11598): 23 = 1 in 190
- Hicksville (11801): 66 = 1 in 193
- Freeport (11520): 71 = 1 in 196
- Massapequa Park (11762): 39 = 1 in 202



- Valley Stream (11580): 53 = 1 in 211
- Floral Park (11001): 43 = 1 in 222
- Franklin Square (11010): 37 = 1 in 222
- Long Beach / Lido Beach (11561): 67 = 1 in 230
- Levittown (11756): 65 = 1 in 231
- Farmingdale (11735): 44 = 1 in 238
- Uniondale (11553): 28 = 1 in 242
- East Meadow (11554): 50 = 1 in 248
- Island Park (11558): 13 = 1 in 248
- Seaford (11783): 30 = 1 in 249
- Plainview (11803): 38 = 1 in 252
- Lawrence (11559): 10 = 1 in 259
- Bethpage (11714): 26 = 1 in 288
- Old Bethpage (11804): 6 = 1 in 289
- Hempstead (11550): 48 = 1 in 348
- Elmont (11003): 29 = 1 in 498
- Roosevelt (11575): 5 = 1 in 1077



The above rankings assume that the average household in every zip code except Long Beach has 2.97 people; this not-so-great assumption insures that the above rankings aren't too accurate. To check my calculations, multiply the two numbers given above and multiply the result by 2.97 (2.35 for Long Beach); you should end up with the number of people sharing your zip code. The total population for these zip codes is 956,798, including 1707 of SSAS's households; if we assume 2.95 people per household (lowered to account for Long Beach), then 1 of every 190 households/residents in our territory currently belongs to SSAS.

COASTAL STEWARDS BEING HIRED

Piping Plover protection has been provided by South Shore Audubon volunteers at Jones Beach and elsewhere for many years. Occasionally, we've seen The Nature Conservancy's four-wheel drive trucks patrolling the nesting areas of these endangered birds. Now's your chance to apply for one of those seasonal jobs (from April 1 to August 23), since SSAS has received an invitation from TNC, which is reprinted below. The deadline to apply is **February 2nd**.

The Nature Conservancy is recruiting four individuals for the Coastal Steward position, which focuses on the protection of Piping Plovers, Least Terns, and the rare beach plant, Seabeach Amaranth. Working in two teams, stewards locate, post, fence, and monitor nesting sites; record field observations; and assist with report preparation. Stewards interface with staff, volunteers, government agencies, and private organizations/landowners. Work involves strenuous activity, excellent communication skills, ability to read maps, and background/commitment to environmental conservation. Compensation is approximately \$330/week for a 6-day/50 hour week (housing/vehicle provided). For more info, contact Cathy Brittingham, The Nature Conservancy, 250 Lawrence Hill Road, Cold Spring Harbor, NY 11724; phone 367-3225.

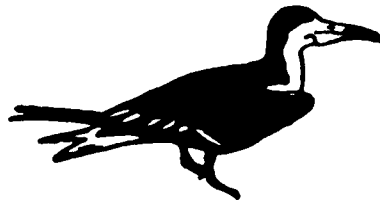
RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

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Marge Jaeger, Fund-raising Chairperson	536-9166
Elliott Kutner, Birding / Field Trips Chairperson	486-7667
Joseph Lancer, Binocular / Book Sales (7 to 9 P.M.)	536-6574
Amanda Neet, Special Events On-Site Coordinator	798-0335
Richard Packert, Special Projects	938-5675
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Porgy Smith, Environmental Information Chairperson	887-2054
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P.O. Box 31
Freeport, NY 11520-0031

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