

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



VOLUME 29, NUMBER 6 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

MARCH 1999

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Doreen Remsen

"So what do you think we'll find in those pines up ahead?" a friend of mine asked as we cautiously picked our way down a trail littered with rocks, leaves, and an occasional sneaky tree root that managed to catch us unaware, causing another scuff mark on our boots and a precarious two-step to maintain our balance. I listened to the calls of Blue Jays, loud and raucous — perhaps they had a hawk or owl in sight. There was the faint, soft echoing of titmice and chickadees and the sound of something being cracked open. They could be feeding on pine seeds, an easy target for binoculars to focus on! And then there were the sounds of tapping against the trunks of those wonderful trees and my mind ticked off nuthatches, woodpeckers, perhaps a Brown Creeper as a bonus! The possibilities were endless. Yet I answered, "I don't know. We'll have to wait and see."

Being involved in the conservation movement is a lot like the hike down into the woods. There are times we hear the call for help and through loud, raucous phone calls and letter writing, we are able to influence legislators at all levels to save precious areas like Bethpage State Park and Jamaica Bay, and keep legislation that protects our wetlands and endangered species strong. Our constant "tapping" on computers and typewriters (are there any left out there besides mine?) keeps the public educated and informed on issues involving habitat loss, population, and urban sprawl. There are scuff marks, to be sure, and echoes of sadness when there is loss, such as the recent decision to build on the former site of Camp Tanglewood. Like on that rocky, root strewn trail, we must regain our footing and keep on. The possibilities are endless!

South Shore Audubon is blessed with many "bonus birds" — to name them all will have to wait for another issue. (Can you hear our editor doing his soft, echoing "Phew!" call?) I do want to thank George and Sally Popkin for their generosity to our Green-2000 appeal. You both are as constant and faithful as the pines in my story and one

NEXT MEETING

Tom Toma

DATE: Tuesday, March 9, 1999
TIME: 8:00 P.M. ☉
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
 144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKERS: Vince Puglisi & Betsy Gulotta
TOPIC: Jungle Jumping In Costa Rica

At our next monthly meeting, three SSAS members will pool their resources and give a slide presentation on Costa Rica. Betty Borowsky, Betsy Gulotta, and Vince Puglisi have been teaching a field biology course there for Nassau Community College for the last three years. Betsy and Vince will show the slides, and Betty will be an enthusiastic seated supporter.

Birds were a spectacular component of the biota on these trips, including some of the most colorful and striking ones in the western hemisphere. Besides birds, students were exposed to all aspects of tropical biology. With that went tropical foliage, plant-animal associations, crocodiles, venomous snakes, poison dart frogs, scorpions, and even splendid eruptions of the Mt. Arenal volcano. In other words, the students were thrilled beyond compare. Join us (and read the article inside)!

♦♦♦♦♦
 IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE
 ♻️ BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS
 ♦♦♦♦♦

🐾 of the many reasons South Shore flourishes. To all South Shore Audubon, thank you for your support through the years, and if you think you heard a faint echo in your heart, then I encourage you to become more active, for all of you are South Shore's most valuable resource and the reason we will continue to flourish. You have much to offer and to receive.

🐾 What lies ahead for South Shore Audubon? I don't know; we'll have to wait and see. But one thing I do know.....91 DAYS UNTIL.....!!!!!! (Editor's hint: see page 7.)

MORTON TRIP SCHEDULED

Joanne Del Prete

On **Saturday, March 27th** we will meet at 11 A.M. at the 187-acre Morton National Wildlife Refuge, located on the peninsula of Jessups Neck in Noyack, which is just west of Sag Harbor (driving moderately, from Bethpage it takes me about 1½ hours via Long Island Expressway to Sunrise Highway). Bring sunflower seeds if you want to feed the Black-capped Chickadees and Tufted Titmice out of your hand. We should also see many other species of birds who are attracted by all the free food and some others in the pond and bay. Bring a camera for great close-up shots.



There are several options for exploring this great treasure: There are two ½-mile trails — one is a woodland trail with a pond and the other leads to the Peconic/Noyack Bay. We can also walk along the beach to the end of Jessups Neck. Afterwards, at your own discretion, you can visit Sag Harbor for lunch, shopping, and celebrity watching. (Note: I have identified a celebrity on each of my last three visits to Sag Harbor; however, no scopes allowed.)

Directions to Morton: Sunrise Highway (Route 27) eastbound (from LI Expressway take Exit 70, County Route 111 and follow signs to 27 east). Route 27 will change from a highway to local roadway going through the towns. A few miles past Southampton College, make a left at County Route 52 intersection (the sign points left for Noyack). The name of Route 52 changes from Sandy Hollow Road to North Sea Road. Proceed a few miles and then make a right on County Route 38 (Noyack Road; look for small sign on right side of road “5 Miles to Morton Wildlife Sanctuary”). The refuge entrance is on the right. There is a big brown sign right at the entrance.

There is limited parking so it would be advisable to arrange carpooling. You can call me if you need help with carpooling (433-0739 evenings or send e-mail to jdp4@erols.com). As far as I know, there is still no entrance fee. The bathroom facilities at the preserve are not open at this time of year.



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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Jackie Richichi

SSAS welcomes this month's new members. We hope that you'll become active members of our very active chapter — please join us at a meeting, weekly bird walk, or special event.

[To receive an application for membership in National Audubon Society and SSAS, please call our Membership Chairperson, Jackie Richichi, at 691-1855. Introductory membership is \$20; \$15 for students and senior citizens.]

- Bay Shore Lois Sagrestano
- Bethpage Nancy Tropin
- Floral Park C. A. Heipershausen, Patricia A. Tweedy
- Franklin Square Geoffrey Schaffner
- Garden City Emmett Campbell, Dr. George K. Russell
- Glenwood Landing... Annette Zbodula
- Lynbrook Nancy Bush, Jonathon Katlan, Nicholas V. LaPietra
- Malverne Larry & Terry Altman, Gary Bellotti, Francis Duffy
- Massapequa Regina Coons, Mrs. Thomas Grupp
- Merrick George Closs, D. Danielsen, Judith Dunn, Pat Milizio
- Muttontown Dr. Lyle H. Peters
- Plainview Ms. Ruth Costa
- Rockville Centre Mr. Joseph A. Antonellis, Mr. Sean Crowley, David Dalferro, Greg & Eileen Ryan
- Seaford Barbara Day



BIRD WALKS
Elliott Kulner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

- Feb. 21 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Feb. 28 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
- Mar. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Mar. 14 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Mar. 21 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Mar. 28 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Apr. 4 *Happy Easter — No Walk*
- Apr. 11 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Apr. 18 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Apr. 25 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge



AUDUBON ACTIONLINE (800) 659-2622

TAPE-RECORDED UPDATES FROM WASHINGTON, DC



JUNGLE JUMPING IN COSTA RICA

Vince Puglisi

Never underestimate the power of a determined birder. In January of 1996, deep in the rain forest of Costa Rica, Betsy Gulotta turned to me and said "I'm bringing a class here next year." We were on a birding trip with Audubon Society members and, as no such class existed at the college where we worked, I said to my teaching colleague of thirty years: "I doubt that."

One year later we were back there as co-instructors with a class of students from Nassau Community College. The field biology course taught in Costa Rica has since proven to be so successful that we have had to limit enrollment so as not to overwhelm the facilities we use there. This country was chosen for several reasons:

It is a major goal for all serious birders. The size of West Virginia, it contains 850 species of birds, which is more than Canada, the United States, and northern Mexico combined. Some of the avian splendor awaiting the viewer includes the Resplendent Quetzal, thought by many to be the most beautiful bird in the New World. The Scarlet Macaws, motmots, toucans (pictured), manikins, and arrays of unbelievably colored tanagers, euphonias, and kingbirds will make the viewer suspect they have found a bird-watching paradise. Add 57 species of hummingbirds and one look at a Montezuma Oropendola defending his harem of pendulous nests, and the watcher will know it. Sightings through your field glasses seem to yield a different species each time you lift them.

Costa Rica is a stable nation, committed to a democratic form of rule, and is the most progressive of the Central American nations. One can travel there with comparative ease and peace of mind. Much of the country is ecologically minded and vast tracts of land have been set aside as various types of wildlife preserves. Its splendid biodiversity results from a series of mosaics which harbor a wealth of wildlife. Observers can move from beaches and mangrove swamps through lowland forests, rain forests, and cloud forests, to paramo (high plateau) vegetation in a few hours of driving. Several of the volcanoes are still active and much activity has been seen by us at Mt. Arenal.

Exciting and prominent as birds were, our course was a rain forest ecology course and due attention was paid to the ecological zones and their associated biota. Self-tamed coatimundis cavorted around us and begged for food. Howler monkeys screamed their territorial rights and a collared anteater (tamandua) greeted us at one of our lodges. We watched a researcher using mist nets to capture bats at night, which he examined and weighed.



This was a reversal for those of us who are used to watching birds mist netted in the daytime. At rivers we looked down into the gaping maws of crocodiles who seem to say "come on in, the water's fine." We spotted basilisk lizards that actually run on water, and deadly fer-de-lance vipers, which we photographed at a respectful distance. Our full-time guide, a tropical biologist, took us on several night hikes and flashlights revealed a world we did not even know existed in daylight.

Several lodges, hotels, and fincas (ranches) have established nature trails rated from low to high impact in difficulty. This year, Betty Borowsky, who also teaches at NCC, filled in for Betsy. I found they had several things in common; one was a love of high impact trails. As I stumbled over vines, roots, rocks, and fallen logs (and this was the trail), I would find both had reached the crest of the ridge and with a large number of 20-year-olds were wondering what was keeping me. I told them I was classifying plants on the way up. Someday, in Costa Rica, I will actually find a trail that seems to go down.

Minor inconveniences are well worth the trip to this splendid land. A mixture of birds from two continents, with several special ones such as the rare potoo (one of only five species in its entire family), together with more familiar birds such as Wood Storks, flocks of Magnificent Frigatebirds, and scores of Brown Pelicans all on one small beach is a sight that will remain forever in memory. I cannot wait to go back.



*Explore the coast
with the*

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

NEW YORK AQUARIUM (Sat., April 17th). A 2-1/2 hour behind-the-scenes tour of this wonderful facility in Coney Island. See walrus, sea otters, seals, sharks, sea turtles, penguins, local fish, and more. Cost: \$15 (\$8 kids).

FIRE ISLAND HIKE (Sat., May 8th). Visit the Sunken Forest during peak warbler migration. Hike the boardwalk trail through the holly maritime forest, dunes, and beach. Bring lunch. Cost: \$20 includes round-trip ferry and guides.

ASSATEAGUE SPRING WEEKEND (May 20-23). Visit Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge and Assateague National Seashore in Virginia. See nesting Bald Eagle and Osprey, wild horses, river otter, etc. Cost: \$260 includes 3 nights at Refuge Motor Inn, 3 evening programs and star watch, marsh boat tour, Safari bus tour, and all-you-can-eat seafood buffet.

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET BOAT CRUISE (Sat., June 5th). Enjoy a calm cruise aboard the "Dorothy B VIII" during peak bird nesting season. See Peregrine Falcon, egrets, herons, ibis, oystercatcher, terns, skimmers, and lots of shorebirds. Learn about the history & ecology of the refuge. Cost: \$35.

For information and free field trip brochure,
call/write Don Riepe, (718) 634-6467.
28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693

WRITE A LETTER FOR OPEN SPACE IN NASSAU

In December 1998, the Nassau County Planning Board adopted Nassau County's first county-wide master plan. This plan addresses county planning issues over the next 20 years, to be updated at 5-year intervals.

One of the major issues addressed in the plan was the need to acquire open space in Nassau County. To achieve this goal, it was strongly suggested in the plan that the County must establish a means for funding an **open space acquisition fund**. This fund would be utilized to aid in the purchase of properties deemed appropriate by the County's Open Space Resource Committee. Our surrounding counties have already taken up this challenge successfully and are in the process of saving sensitive properties. The lack of such a fund leaves Nassau in jeopardy of not being able to act quickly when certain parcels are available and may cause the County to lose out on New York State environmental bond funds, which are available only to counties with existing funding sources.

Please alert your county legislator of the need for our County to establish such a fund with a dedicated funding source for the future betterment of Nassau County. Write to The Honorable so-and-so, Nassau County Legislator, 1 West St., Mineola, NY 11501. SSAS members live in the districts of Darlene D. Harris; Roger H. Corbin; John Ciotti; Bruce Nyman; Tom Glynn; Francis X. Becker, Jr.; Bruce A. Blakeman; Vincent T. Muscarella; Richard J. Nicoletto; Peter J. Schmitt; Norma Gonsalves; Salvatore B. Pontillo; Dennis Duane, Sr.; Judith A. Jacobs; Edward P. Mangano; and Edward H. Ward. If you're not sure which one's yours, call the League of Women Voters of Nassau County at 433-9768.

BIRDSEED SALE'S NOT OVER YET!

At our first seed sale this year, we didn't have nearly enough seed to fulfill the requests of people who hadn't preordered. To compensate, at our second sale we had what turned out to be 3000 pounds more than we needed, so on **Sunday, March 28th**, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M., SSAS will have another seed sale!

The sale will take place at 10 Lincoln Place in Lynbrook (home of Joan Butkerei's shop, *Poodles in Blue*). From Sunrise Highway, go one block south on Atlantic Avenue and turn left onto Lincoln Place; the shop's very soon on the right. The following packages are available; please call Paul Butkerei at 599-0395 by March 13th or between March 22-26 to let him know what you'd like (he'll return your call to confirm the order):

- ☆ 20 lb Premium Wild Bird Seed Mix: \$6.75
- ☆ 40 lb Premium Wild Bird Seed Mix: \$12.75
- ☆ 20 lb Special Mix (no corn, 1/3 sunflower): \$6.90
- ☆ 40 lb Special Mix (no corn, 1/3 sunflower): \$13.00
- ☆ 25 lb Sunflower Chips: \$17.75
- ☆ 25 lb Peanut Splits: \$17.75
- ☆ 12 oz Pine Tree Peanut Suet Cake: \$1.75

Super Bowl Sunday Thanks. The following SSAS volunteers spent an invigorating 18-degree morning and afternoon processing orders and carrying seed at our second sale at Tackapausha: Joan & Paul Butkerei, Joanne Del Prete, Joe Grupp, Mike Higgiston, Bill Hollweg, Marge Jaeger, Scott Oglesby, Chris Schmitt, Michael Sperling, Jonathan Staller, and Tom Torma.

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

Thanks to the continued generosity of Evelyn Bishop, South Shore Audubon Society will be awarding two \$750 Jerry Bishop Environmental Scholarships to students who will be juniors, seniors, or graduate students this fall at any college. Applicants must be working on a degree in an area related to the environment, such as ecology, marine biology, forestry, ornithology, mammalogy, or animal behavior. For information, call Betsy Gulotta at 572-7570 (daytime) or 546-8841, or send e-mail to gulotte@sunynassau.edu (yes, that address is correct); the deadline to apply is April 1st.

GOT A MODEM?

If you ever misplace your *Skimmer*, you can find the blurb about our next meeting and a list of the Sunday morning bird walks on SSAS's modest web page, which is part of National Audubon's site (<http://www.audubon.org/chapter/ny/southshore/>).

If you have access to e-mail, you can subscribe to the free *Audubon Advisory*, which provides a weekly summary of what Congress is up to and what you can do about it (send a message to listserv@list.audubon.org; leave the subject line blank and in the body of your message type "sub audubon-news"). You can also sign up for e-mail from Audubon's National Wildlife Refuge campaign by sending the message "sub refuge-chat" to listserv@list.audubon.org.

NASSAU COUNTY POLLUTION HOTLINE 739-6666

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

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.



SEA-TROWS

Tom Torma

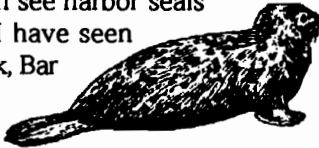
Both the Irish and the Scottish had legends of seal-like creatures that could shed their sealskins and take on human forms. If they should lose their skins they could not return to the sea. These creatures were known in Scotland as sea-trows.

One Scottish legend involves three fishermen who observed a group of seals come ashore one moonlit night. The seals shed their skins and transformed themselves into humans. As they celebrated and danced in the moonlight, the fishermen stole the skins of three beautiful seal maidens. Without the skins the maidens could not return to the sea, and were soon abandoned by the other seals. The fishermen hid the skins and claimed the maidens for their wives.

The maiden who was claimed by the youngest fisherman pleaded for the return of her skin. The fisherman was moved by her distress. He returned the skin and allowed her to return to the sea. Nine days later, the seals returned. The lonely fisherman could only watch as he yearned for his seal love. Suddenly the maiden's father appeared. He informed the fisherman that the maiden also loved him and missed him as much as she had missed the sea. Because of his kindness, the father would allow the maiden to return every ninth day to visit him.

The other fishermen did not fare so well. One fisherman lost his wife when the children found their mother's skin and returned it to her. She quickly returned to the sea. The third fisherman, upon hearing of the bad luck of his friend, decided to destroy his wife's skin. He threw the sealskin into a fire. His wife perished when she jumped into the fire to retrieve her skin.

Sea-trows have not been reported on the south shore of Long Island, but seals are common in this area. Recently, harbor seals (pictured) have been seen in Jones Inlet (near West End 2) and in early mornings on a sandbar near Field 10 (by SSAS treasurer Nancy Frame). They are more common on the east end of Long Island. They stay in this area throughout the winter, returning north in the summer. In the summer you can see harbor seals along the coast of Maine; I have seen them in Acadia National Park, Bar Harbor, Maine. Off the coast



of Nova Scotia are a couple of small islands known as the Bird Islands, where you can see puffins, kittiwakes, cormorants, and other northern nesting seabirds. You can also see gray seals there. The easiest place to see seal-like animals is in San Francisco. On Fisherman's Wharf next to Pier 39 with its tourist shops and restaurants are sea lions sitting in floating rafts easily seen from the shopping center.

Seals belong to the suborder pinnipedia, which means fin-footed. There are 32 species of seals in three families. One family is the fur seals and sea lions, known as the

eared seals. These seals have small exterior ears and rear fins that rotate forward, allowing them to be somewhat nimble on land. The second family is the true seals. These creatures have real flippers that only extend backwards; therefore, they hump themselves forward with an awkward wiggle. True seals have no outer ears. The third family is walrus. They have no outer ears and can rotate their rear flippers forward. They are best known for the ivory tusks and mustachioed whiskers. Seals and walrus are timid and intelligent animals. For hundreds of years they have been persecuted for their fur or tusks. Their greatest enemy is man, who hunted them to near extinction; several species are still endangered.

Seals pose a problem for those who wish to photograph them. They are dark in color and usually seen near highly reflective water or light-color sand beaches. Film, particularly slide film, will not allow proper exposure of both the bright and dark areas. If you expose for the dark area, the bright area will be washed out with no detail. If you expose for the bright area, the seal will end up looking like a blob of black with no detail. Automatic cameras will be of no help; they average the light coming through the viewfinder to a neutral gray halfway between black and white. While these cameras work great for average pictures, they have trouble with difficult lighting situations. Modern programmable cameras with multiple meter reading work better but you must decide what program to use for the situation you are photographing.

To solve this problem, start by previsualizing the image you want to capture on film. Obviously with a seal picture you want the seal exposed properly. You want to take your meter reading off the seal. If your camera has the center weighted or spot metering features, use them to take the reading. The reading you take off the seal will be halfway between white and black. To get the proper exposure you must decrease the exposure by 1 or 1 1/2 f-stops. To do this you must increase your aperture by 1 or 1 1/2 f-stops, or increase your shutter speed by doubling and then increase the speed by another 50% if required. If you are in doubt, buy a gray-colored card that is used for taking exposure readings. Appropriately called a gray card, this card is placed in a position so it is in the same light as the picture's subject. Aim your camera at the card and take your meter reading. Being halfway between white and black, the meter reading should be right on. No gray card handy? Use another neutral-tone surface that is in the same light as the subject you are photographing, such as green grass.

It is curious that many of our public beaches close at dark. If there was such a creature as a sea-trow they could come up on our beautiful south shore beaches and we would never know it.

WILDLIFE POISONING HOTLINE (800) 356-0560

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

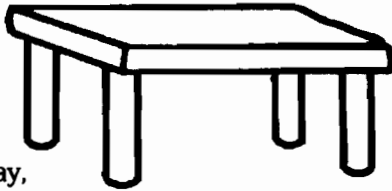
**SSAS TO PARTICIPATE IN
HICKS HORTICULTURAL FAIR**

Doreen Remsen

Every year, to celebrate the arrival of spring, Hicks Nurseries (on Jericho Turnpike in Westbury, between Post and Ellison Avenues) holds its annual Horticultural Fair. This event is centered on Hicks Nurseries' Spring Garden and Flower Show and is a gathering of plant and gardening clubs, societies, schools, and organizations who share a common interest in plants, wildlife, and the environment. The show is attended by hundreds of Nassau County residents over the course of the two days and is an excellent opportunity to greet the public, share information about our chapter and its goals, and recruit new members for Audubon.

This year, South Shore Audubon has accepted Hicks' invitation to participate in this event and will be partnering with our sister chapter, Lyman Langdon/North Shore Audubon. Our tables will be inside among the plants and flowers, so we don't have to worry about those spring rains! The dates are Saturday and Sunday, **March 20th and 21st**, from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. We hope to see you there!

Attention South Shore Auduboners: Hicks requires our table to be manned throughout the two days. We are looking for volunteers, for any time(s) throughout the weekend. If you can do a half day on Saturday, an afternoon on Sunday, or just an hour or two, it will be greatly appreciated! Jonathan will have sign-up sheets at our general meeting, or you can contact him or Doreen by phone and let us know what dates and times you can be there. Thank you!



A NEW SPECIES

Jonathan Steller

My brother and I went birding one day at Planting Fields Arboretum in Oyster Bay. It's a great place to see birds, because on the property there's different kinds of habitats (woods, meadows) and, of course, all different species of plants and trees. They even have a resident Red-tailed Hawk in the area, which occasionally can be seen eating a rodent on a low branch in a tree.

On a fall day back in 1996, we were walking through the woods. Sitting on top of a fallen tree lying beside the path, we saw a woodpecker. By the size of it we knew it was a Hairy Woodpecker (rather than a Downy), but we didn't know if it was a male or female because it was facing the wrong way. When it did turn around, we saw a yellow patch behind the head where the red patch is supposed to be.

"Wow!!" we both said out loud, as we knew we had a new bird on our hands. We checked the field guides for

other birds with yellow, but they had different patterns on their wings and bodies. Our bird had the characteristics of a Hairy Woodpecker and, being that my brother spotted it, we named it Jason's Woodpecker.

Later that day, we called the Rare Bird Alert and told them what we saw. They laughed and told us it was a Three-toed Woodpecker. Sure I would like to see a Three-toed Woodpecker, but we kept trying to tell them it looked like a Hairy. They told us to go back and take a photograph. The next day and the following week, we went back to the woods but couldn't find the Jason's Woodpecker, and the Rare Bird Alert still to this day doesn't believe us.

While doing research on Hairy Woodpeckers, I found out that, although very rare, the Hairy and only the Hairy can develop a yellow spot instead of a red one. We're convinced that what we saw was just that, but in our hearts that bird will now be known as a Jason's Woodpecker.



**BETHPAGE-COLD SPRING HARBOR BIKEWAY
LETTERS NEEDED**

Back in the November *Skimmer*, SSAS announced its opposition to the proposed 8½ mile bikeway between Bethpage State Park and the Cold Spring Harbor train station. The 13- to 16-foot wide route, with approximately 8-foot shoulders on each side, would destroy nearly 4 acres of forest along the Nassau Greenbelt Trail using Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Funds. These federal funds are intended for projects that provide alternatives to rush-hour traffic jams; it makes far more sense for New York's Department of Transportation to spend them on constructing and improving bikeways alongside our parkways and highways than to use them to turn oak forest, successional southern hardwood, and shrub habitats into recreational pavement.

To voice your opposition to the Bethpage-Cold Spring Harbor proposal, please write to:

The Honorable Caesar Trunzo (the new Chairman of the State Senate's Transportation Committee), NY State Senate, State Office Building, 250 Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, NY 11788; and

Mr. Craig Siracusa (the Regional Director), NYS Department of Transportation, State Office Building, 250 Veterans Memorial Highway, Hauppauge, NY 11788.

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AUDUBON CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS REMINDER

It's not too late for SSAS members to apply for full scholarships to the Audubon camps in Maine and Connecticut. As reported in last month's *Skimmer*, our chapter will pay all costs except transportation for a child age 10-14 to attend the Youth Ecology Camp on Hog Island, Maine for eleven days starting July 29th or August 11th (via the Marion Yavarkovsky Youth Camp Scholarship), and for an adult to attend the Audubon Adventures for Teachers (of classes, youth groups, etc.) workshop for seven days starting July 11th, 18th, and 25th, and August 1st and 8th.

For scholarship applications and/or a copy of National Audubon's 1999 Summer Camps brochure, call Doreen Remsen at 472-6830. Applications are due **March 10th**.



WIN PRIZES IN THE SSAS TWELFTH ANNUAL BIRDATHON!

Jim Remsen

This year, SSAS will conduct its twelfth annual Birdathon. The Birdathon is the ideal way to support your chapter and have fun doing it!

As most of you know, SSAS raises funds through the Birdathon by having members get pledges for each species of bird identified during a 24-hour period in May, when the spring migration is at its height. This year, we once again offer a special prize drawing for those who help us to generate funds.

All participants will receive equal weight in the drawing, to allow us to award prizes to the maximum number of people. Of course, the participant raising the most money and the one recruiting the most sponsors will automatically receive a prize, as has been customary since the start of the Birdathon in 1988. Among the prizes we will offer in 1999 are: Birdathon T-shirts; a framed, limited edition wildlife art print; nature sound compact discs; an oversized replica of all 435 plates from John James Audubon's original edition of *The Birds of America*; and more.

How do you get a chance to win one of these prizes? You can either participate in the Birdathon and recruit sponsors (you can sponsor yourself, if you can't think of anyone else to recruit), or use the coupon at right and make a pledge to the Birdathon. You can sponsor one of our expert Birdathon teams led by some of our chapter's best birders (pledging the amount of your choice for each species the team sees), sponsor the chapter as a whole (pledging the amount of your choice for each species the three teams see combined), or make a flat pledge not based on number of species. Remember, if sponsoring a specific team, that each team will probably see at least 100 species (Paul Butkerei's team holds the current chapter record at 155), and the chapter total may be 150 or greater. So, to paraphrase an old ad campaign, "Pledge with your head, not over it!" You can also make a donation to be used toward obtaining more Birdathon prizes (see below).

Make sure the form below is completely filled out so we can contact you after the Birdathon and inform you of the amount of your pledge. To be eligible for sweepstakes entries, all pledges must be submitted to the Birdathon chairperson by Monday, June 7, 1999. This deadline will be strictly observed. The sweepstakes drawing will be held at our 1999 annual dinner the next night. You need not be present to win, but winners present will receive first choice of prizes.

We are seeking to increase our prize pool. If you are interested in donating a prize, or in soliciting a donation of a prize, please contact me (764-5168; I'm best reached after 8 P.M.). You can also make a cash gift to the Birdathon and ask that it specifically be used to defray prize costs. If you do this, you will also be entered in the prize drawing! (Remember that all Birdathon income not used for expenses goes to SSAS and to the National Audubon conservation programs of our chapter's choice! For the past several years, the Birdathon has been run totally cost-free, with all prizes, time, and effort donated by chapter members.)

More on the Birdathon next month!



SSAS 1999 BIRDATHON PLEDGE FORM

COUNT ME IN! I wish to support the SSAS 1999 Birdathon as indicated below. Please enter me in the prize drawing.

Name _____

Address _____

Evening Phone Number _____

I want to sponsor Paul Butkerei's Birdathon team at _____ \$ per species.

I want to sponsor Elliott Kutner's Birdathon team at _____ \$ per species.

I want to sponsor Joe Grupp and Jim Remsen's Birdathon team at _____ \$ per species.

I want to sponsor SSAS as a chapter at _____ \$ per species.

I would prefer not to make a per-species pledge. I am enclosing a flat pledge of \$ _____ toward the Birdathon.

I want to make a gift of \$ _____ to be used toward increasing the prize pool.



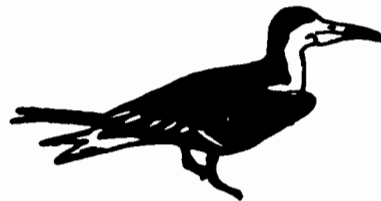
Please mail the above form (with your check made payable to South Shore Audubon Society, if applicable) to: South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031. Thank you for your support.

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South Shore Audubon Society
P.O. Box 31
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Americans Committed to Conservation



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