



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

Wendy Murbach

One of the wonderful perks that you get from an Audubon membership is the chance to be a part of your local Audubon chapter, South Shore Audubon Society.

You are automatically a valued member of this active and friendly chapter, so please come out to the next meeting at the Freeport Library from 7:30–9:30 P.M. on the second Tuesday of the month (Monday this November) to hear what you can do to help preserve your local environment's health and viability, to hear about local issues that you can help to solve, and to see an interesting program.

Whether you are a beginning birder or someone with a large life list, you will enjoy our weekly Sunday bird walks led by Elliott Kutner, birder extraordinaire. Check out the special events that are mentioned in this *Skimmer*. Attend them yourself, and bring your family and friends too.

You are warmly invited to be an active participant in this vibrant all-volunteer organization comprised of persons who, like you, care about the earth we live on, about our local environment, and about the creatures that live alongside us.

Our new members since the last *Skimmer* are:

- Baldwin..... Elaine Devlin, J. Ezzo, V. Rohrer
- Bellmore ..... Elizabeth Feliciano
- Bethpage ..... Claire Skellington
- East Meadow ..... David McDonald
- Floral Park ..... S. Zeldin-Schneider
- Franklin Square ..... Mary P. Myer, Marilyn O'Neill
- Freeport ..... Herman Kraskow
- Garden City ..... Anita Brennan, Vincent DiGregorio, Mr. Terrence J. Kelleher, Robert Larocca
- Hicksville ..... Catherine Sica
- Island Park ..... Dr. Maureen Ahogan
- Levittown ..... Andy Szego, Norman Wiesenfeld
- Massapequa ..... Ms. Joan Alles
- Massapequa Park ..... Janine Harris
- Merrick ..... John Deleo, Jr.; F. M. Lamonica
- Rockville Centre ..... Nancy K. Bell, Robert Taylor
- Seaford ..... Dorothy Lauber
- Stewart Manor ..... Thomas McManus, Harold J. Priest
- Uniondale ..... Edward Gallagher
- Valley Stream ..... Joan DeMartino, Antonia Martin, Jeff Roth
- Wantagh ..... Muriel Gottesman
- Woodmere ..... Michael & Grace Sole



OUR E-LIST [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas\\_list](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list)  
 AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

**VISIT SSAS'S ONLINE NATURE STORE!**

South Shore Audubon's Web site ([www.ssaudubon.org](http://www.ssaudubon.org)) includes an online store run by WithoutBricks.com. Our chapter receives a portion of all purchases, so please pay our store a visit and look at some of the 7000 items.

There are thousands of books about birds, animals, insects, trees, natural history, geology, astronomy, gardening, etc., typically available at a 20% discount. You can shop in over 20 departments, including: Animals; Art & Photography; Audio, Video & CDs; Best-Selling Items; Binoculars & Optics, Bird Baths, Clocks, etc.; Bird Books; Bird Feeders; Bird Food; Bird Houses; Bird Songs; Butterflies & Bugs; Children's Books; Clothes; Earth & Space; Environment; Field Guide Series; Gardening; Gifts, Coffee & Toys; Jewelry; Magazines; Natural History; Plants; Recreation Guides; and Wholesale CD-ROMs.

Seed – Feeders (516) 694-2180  
 Houses – Baths  
 Books – Gifts



**FEED & SEED BARN**

**WILD BIRD CENTER**

"NEW YORK'S LARGEST WILD BIRD SPECIALTY STORE"  
 621 Fulton St. (Rt. 109), Farmingdale, NY 11735  
 Located between McDonald's & Dunkin' Donuts



Explore the coast  
 with the  
**AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY**

- ASSATEAGUE FALL WEEKEND** (Nov. 6–9). Cost: \$295 includes 3 nights at Refuge Motor Inn, marsh boat tour, guided hikes, Saturday dinner. See wild ponies, Bald Eagles, Snow Geese, River Otter, Sika Deer, and much more.
- HOLIDAY PARTY** (Sat., Dec. 6). Ryan Visitor Center at Floyd Bennett Field (5–9 P.M.). Cost: \$35 includes food, drinks, "Ugly Auction," and Flamenco Dance performance.
- NEW YEAR'S DAY BEACH WALKS** (Jan. 1). Meet 11 A.M. at Jones Beach West End, Fire Island Lighthouse, Fort Tilden, Rockaway Beach. Free champagne at Fort Tilden. Free.
- MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND** (Jan. 9–11). Cost: \$305 includes 2 nights at luxurious Manor House (heated pool, jacuzzi, spacious lobby), 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, star watch, free pickup at LIRR station. See seals, many species of sea ducks, loons, etc.
- EVERGLADES & SOUTH FLORIDA** (Feb. 28 – Mar. 7). Cost: \$1,495 includes airfare, van rentals, lodging, ferry, boat tour, canoe rental, park fees, guided hikes, evening programs. Great wildlife.
- ICELAND** (June 18–30, 2004). Cost: \$2,895 includes everything. Contact Don for details.

For information, reservations, and free newsletter, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 318-9344, [donriepe@aol.com](mailto:donriepe@aol.com), 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693; [www.alsnyc.org](http://www.alsnyc.org)





## THIS PLACE, LONG ISLAND

John Turner

*Editor's note:* For this *Skimmer*, John Turner replied that I could identify him as a “birder, naturalist, writer, conservationist, and a cofounder of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society.” He could easily have specified much more. The following article was originally a speech he gave last year as the keynote speaker at Moriches Bay Audubon Society’s annual dinner.

### *Paradise Found*

This place, Long Island, with its basement of 450 million year old schist bedrock dating back to the Silurian Period of the Paleozoic Era, a time when the land was first invaded by vascular plants, when the first jawed fishes plied primordial oceans.

This place, Long Island, where along the base of its north shore bluffs ooze Cretaceous clays containing leafy imprints of trees a Long Islander would hardly recognize (cinnamon, magnolia, ginkgo, eucalyptus, sequoia, and fig trees), imprints in materials laid down in a vast delta upon the basement of bedrock from the eroding Appalachian Mountains.

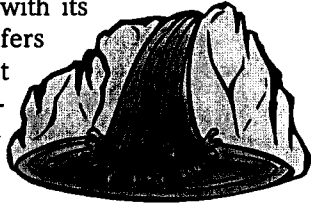
This place, Long Island, a million-acre sandbox on permanent loan from New England, sculpted by two continental ice sheets, 500 feet high along their moving fronts, pocked by kettle holes, rounded by kames and moraines, with two bony fingers that jut into the briny foam wash of the Atlantic.

This place, Long Island, whose outwash plain during the Ice Age extended to the edge of the continental shelf, where rushing braided streams fed from the melting ice sheets cascaded as waterfalls into the lowered Atlantic.

This place, Long Island, with its hidden, underground aquifers more than a thousand feet deep, containing incomprehensible amounts of water — 70 trillion gallons — enough to fill all of Manhattan island to the height of the top of the Empire State Building. If your thirst is quenched from the Lloyd aquifer, the deepest one, you are drinking water that fell from rain clouds that formed a thousand years before the birth of Christ.

This place, Long Island, home thousands of years ago to species of the boreal forests — red spruce, arctic willow, and crowberry — and mastodons, yes mastodons (pictured above right), whose sets of molar teeth have been unearthed by bottom draggers fishing the Atlantic. And maybe, just maybe, the skies over Long Island during this time held the shadows of California Condors, whose bones have been found within caves in eastern New York.

This place, Long Island, where in 1609 Robert Juett, Henry Hudson’s first mate, exclaimed as his ship, the *Half Moon*, slipped into New York Harbor: “We found a land full



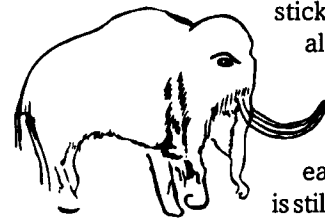
of great oaks, with grass and flowers, as pleasant as ever has been seen.” Daniel Denton, 61 years later, had this to say: “The greatest part of the Island is very full of Timber, as Oaks, white and red, Walnut-trees, Chestnut-trees, which yield store of mast for swine...also Maples, Cedars, Saxifrage, Beech, Birch, Holly, Hazel, with many sorts more...the Country itself sends forth such a fragrant smell that it may be perceived at Sea before they can make the land.”

This place, Long Island, where the plaintive echoes of the Eskimo Curlew once rang across unbroken expanses of salt marsh, and whose forests were filled with the howls of timber wolves and the whistling of wings from countless Passenger Pigeons, and whose thickets of scrub oak echoed with the booming mating calls of the Heath Hen.

This place, Long Island, which once knew black bear, mountain lion, beaver, cricket frog, and timber rattlesnake.

This place, Long Island, saw the last known Labrador Duck pass through the veil of extinction, as a young male, mortally wounded by a gunner, crashed into the wavelet waters of the Great South Bay in 1875.

This place, Long Island, was once the Osprey capital of the world, with more than one hundred of their jumble



stick nests on Gardiner’s Island alone and an estimated 2,000 nests on eastern Long Island.

This place, Long Island, boasted the largest prairie east of the Mississippi River. It is still called the Hempstead Plains, but it is a tiny, tiny fragment of the sea of grasses that once graced central Nassau County and gave rise to the communities of Plainedge and Plainview. It merged with the dense shrubby oak thickets of the Oak Brush Plains at a place later to be called Island Trees — where islands of pitch pine stood surrounded by prairie grass.

This place, Long Island, where hessel hairstreak butterflies once danced in the shadowy swamps of Atlantic white-cedar lining tea-colored streams, which drained the interior pine forests that provided water to productive cranberry bogs that made Suffolk County the third-largest cranberry producing area in the U.S. a century and a half ago.

### *Paradise Reduced*

This place, Long Island, with the all but 40 acres of the Hempstead Plains gone to make way for modern-day suburbia that spread post-World War II and where 95% of the coastal salt marshes fringing Nassau County’s south shore have been filled or bulkheaded.

This place, Long Island, where half of the Pine Barrens have been lost, where more than half of our fertile farmland is gone, and where a suite of invasive plant species (like purple loosestrife, Asiatic bittersweet, Japanese knotweed and barberry, garlic mustard, and porcelainberry) threaten the ecological integrity of the places we care about.

This place, Long Island, where 2.6 million Long Islanders work, live, and play above their water supply, and due to this unique relationship have a groundwater system degraded by contamination from a host of chemical acronyms, enough to make the makers of alphabet soup proud, including MTBE, the latest bad actor to explode on the scene; methyl tertiary butyl ether — the name sounds cool, but its impact on our water supply most certainly is not.

### *Paradise Redux*

And while diminished, this place, Long Island, today still provides home and hotel accommodations to more than 300 species of resident and migratory birds, some of which are hemispheric globetrotters passing through on their magical journeys that connect their breeding and wintering grounds (it reminds me of the classic surfing movie in search of perpetual summer). A spectacular example is the Blackpoll Warbler, which in breeding plumage is reminiscent of a Black-capped Chickadee. In the fall, the overwhelming majority of individuals of this species, which weigh less than an ounce, move east to the Canadian Maritimes, New England, and Long Island, some having flown as much as 3,000 miles from Alaska. And then, in a 2,300 mile leap of faith, these feathered puffs (as one writer has noted, you could mail one using a single postage stamp) launch out in favorable weather conditions (a high-pressure system with winds from the northwest) into the hostile Atlantic. At first they head to the southeast, staying the course until about Bermuda,



where they pick up the trade winds that redirect them to the southwest, making landfall typically in Venezuela or Guyana some 72 hours later. That's right folks — after lifting from Long Island, they fly nonstop for as much as three days straight. During this time, they will have flapped their wings an

estimated 3 million times, with never more than a second or two rest between flaps. As one researcher noted, if they burned gasoline instead of stored fat, they would get about 720,000 miles to the gallon!

This place, Long Island, whose coast still offers nurturing habitat for dozens of beach-dependent species, including Piping Plovers (62 new youngsters growing up on Southampton beaches this year [2002] alone); tens of thousands of seabeach amaranth, *Amaranthus pumilus*, a modest plant if ever there was one; and where earlier this year [2002], at Orient Point State Park, seabeach purslane, *Sesuvium maritimum*, was rediscovered after an absence of 90 years.

This place, this crowded Long Island, still boasts whales frolicking offshore and harbor seals onshore, and, at the mouth of the Peconic Bay, harbors large rafts of sea ducks in the winter — the vocal Long-tailed Ducks with their bubblegum-pink bills, the Red-breasted Mergansers with

their punk rocker haircuts, and the countless number of stout-bodied scoters (White-winged Scoters, the clownish Surf Scoters, and the not-so-common Common Scoters). One flock of scoters I counted more than a decade ago from the pavilion at Montauk Point State Park contained 35,000 birds, and last winter [2001–02] I was privileged to watch as a thousand gannets dropped like torpedoes from 100 feet, sending up 10 foot plumes as they participated in a full-fledged feeding frenzy, preying on a school of herring estimated to contain 400 million fish.

This place, Long Island, still boasts nearly three dozen species of native orchids. And lurking in the wetlands — now pull in your fingers and toes — are plants that eat animals: more than half-a-dozen bladderworts, the unmistakable pitcher plant, and three species of sticky sundews — beautiful but deadly!

This place, this crowded Long Island, still harbors tigers in the night, as in tiger salamanders. If you doubt this, go then on a warm and dank late winter night when the scent of pine is strong, and you can watch these magnificent ambystomid salamanders, the mole salamanders as charismatic as any amphibian can be, engaged in an eons-old urge to reproduce, as they crawl down to their vernal ponds in search of a mate.

This place, Long Island, where the striped skunk hangs on by its fingernails and the gray fox by the tips of its fingernails.

This place, Long Island, whose citizens led the successful fight to end the DDT madness, who passed a county bottle bill which catalyzed a state bottle law, who banned sudsy detergents, who have voted for 19 out of 20 ballot measures to protect land, who dedicated its four rivers to the state's river protection program, and whose bays and estuaries — the Peconic Bay, Moriches and Great South Bay, and Long Island Sound — are the focus of curative measures to restore their ecological health and vitality.

This place, Long Island, has spent more than half-a-billion dollars to protect its wild places and open spaces, and has the only federally designated wilderness area in New York State — on that most fragile and dynamic strand of sand called Fire Island. This, in a state that boasts the Adirondack and Catskill forest preserves.

This place, Long Island, reaching from the shadow of the great metropolis, has protected nearly 60,000 acres of land in the Pine Barrens. Do the math and we're talking nearly 100 square miles of land, a big enough place for you to get lost in the woods, large enough for you to be able to walk from Rocky Point to the Shinnecock Canal with your feet never leaving public parkland. That's your land and that's my land, and it's the land of the Prairie Warbler and Mr. Drink-your-tea [Eastern Towhee].

This place, Long Island, where on the 13,000 acre Montauk Peninsula, from the Napeague strip east, two-thirds of all the land is publicly owned parkland.

Here on Long Island, we have lost much, but we have achieved so much. Perhaps we needed loss to understand

what we wanted to gain. So let's give due to the great and lasting work of Long Island's great conservationists and naturalists, people such as Dennis Puleston, Gil Raynor, Roy Latham, Leroy Wilcox, Edwin Way Teale, and Robert Cushman Murphy — who was the first to advocate for the establishment of a Pine Barrens preserve, urging government officials to make it "a really big preserve." Let's appreciate the ongoing and tireless efforts of folks like Paul Stoutenburgh, Art Cooley, Jim Tripp, Steve Englebright, Dick Amper, Marilyn England, Dan Morris, and many, many others.

Most importantly, let's continue to marvel at and revel in the magic of the natural world, as it unfolds around us in infinite variety and expression, every day. Like ripples in a pond caused by a tossed pebble, let's carry our efforts forward and outward to convince others to protect those places so special to us, and let's continue to reveal to our fellow Long Islanders by informing, educating, and advocating, and most of all celebrating the very special natural treasures that collectively comprise Long Island.

Fill your pockets deeply with pebbles, and toss often.

\*\*\*\*\*

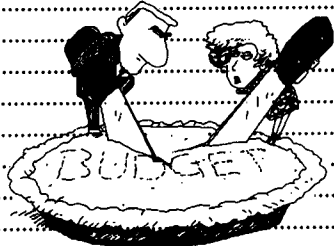
### BIRDSEED SALE REMINDER

On **Sunday, November 2**, from 9:30 A.M. until 2:30 P.M., SSAS will be in Tackapausha's parking lot (on Washington Avenue in Seaford) for our annual birdseed sale. It's too late to preorder, but some extra seed will be available on the sale day (we suggest you come early if you didn't preorder; see [ssaudubon.org](http://ssaudubon.org) for prices). We will be selling black oil and striped sunflower, mixed seeds, cracked corn, sunflower chips (no shells), peanut hearts, safflower, nyjer (thistle), suet seed cakes, peanut butter seed cakes, and suet baskets. Help will be needed and much appreciated on the sale date; no purchase required to volunteer!

\*\*\*\*\*

### BUDGET 2003-2004

Brookside Preserve .....	\$1000
College Scholarships .....	\$1000
Conferences/Council Meetings .....	\$700
Conservation .....	\$250
Donations .....	\$300
Education .....	\$500
Festivals .....	\$600
Insurance .....	\$1500
Library .....	\$2000
Membership .....	\$200
Miscellaneous .....	\$500
Office Expenses .....	\$500
Public Relations .....	\$400
Refreshments .....	\$300
Skimmer .....	\$6000
Speakers .....	\$900
TRS Camp Scholarships/Bus .....	\$5400
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>\$22,050</b>



### INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING PROXY

\* Insert date of signing.

\* Print name exactly as membership is carried and shown on your magazine label. You must be a National Audubon Society member in good standing, as of October 17, 2003, in order to vote.

\* Proxy to be signed by person in whose name membership is carried. If carried in two names or as Mr. & Mrs., either party can sign.

\* Show current address and zip code.

\* **SIGN ONLY ONE PROXY FORM. DO NOT SIGN ANY OTHER PROXY FORM YOU MIGHT RECEIVE. HOWEVER, IF YOU HAVE ALREADY SIGNED A PROXY FORM, THIS FORM WILL SUPERSEDE ANY EARLIER FORM.**

\* Return signed proxy form by **November 30** to: John F. Gallagher, 121 Larchmont Road, Springfield, Ohio 45503.

⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ ---

# PROXY

KNOW ALL PERSONS BY THESE PRESENTS, that I, the undersigned, a member of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., do hereby constitute and appoint Marsha Cannon, John F. Gallagher, Andrew L. Mason, and Darrel K. Whipple, and each of them, with full power of substitution, my attorneys and agents for me and in my name, place and stead, to vote as my proxy the number of votes I should be able to cast if then personally present at the Annual Meeting of NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY, INC., to be held in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Saturday, December 6, 2003, or at such other place and time as said Annual Meeting may be held, and at any adjourned meeting thereof as follows:

(a.) For the election of directors for the terms expiring in 2006, or until their successors are elected; and

(b.) In their discretion, for the transaction of such other business as may properly come before the meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ Two Thousand and Three.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
(must be signed to be valid)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(please print name)

Address \_\_\_\_\_

⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ --- ⌘ ---