

Arctic drilling provisions were not attached to the Energy Bill that was sent to President Bush, but there's still one legislative vehicle pro-drillers are using to open this pristine wilderness — the federal budget for next year. The House did not include drilling provisions in their version of the budget, but the Senate did. That means members of both houses have to meet to hammer out the differences between the two bills. Word on the Hill is that it will be included in the final version, with an expected final vote the week of September 26th.

Audubon is making a big push to save the pristine wilderness in Alaska from destructive oil drilling, and you can help! After 25 years of fighting, our last best chance to protect the refuge will be in the House of Representatives on a vote quickly approaching in September. In August, members of Congress that will be casting deciding votes will be back home talking with their constituents — like you! Audubon chapters and Audubon members around the country will be using this opportunity to weigh in with their members of Congress and fight at this critical time for one of the most pristine places left in America! Please make a point to call, write, or e-mail your elected officials today! Every member of Congress will be voting on this measure and right now, it's too close to call.

Log on to Audubon's special "Protect the Arctic" Web site — accessed via www.audubon.org — to find out more about how you can help!

BIRD WALKS
Elliott Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667. Directions and summaries may be found at ssaadubon.org.

- Aug. 28 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Sep. 4 Labor Day Weekend — No Walk
- Sep. 11 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Sep. 18 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- Sep. 25 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Oct. 2 Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first lot south of Southern State Parkway, south end of lot)
- Oct. 9 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- Oct. 16 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

SSAS BACKYARD BIRD SURVEY

Joe Grupp

As many of you know, the Research Committee is conducting a study to document the bird species found in the SSAS geographical area and to make some estimates as to their numbers. We request input from anyone that feeds and/or observes birds in their yard or neighborhood. If you would like to participate, we would greatly appreciate it.

Simply record the birds that you see in your yard, neighborhood, or at your feeder; the date, time, and the number or approximate number of each species. At the end of each month, please mail or e-mail your record to me, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Survey sheets are available at SSAS events.

Please do not hesitate to submit your observations, even if you have been able to make only very few. **WE NEED YOUR INPUT!**

Please mail your data to Mr. J. Grupp, Research Chairperson, 660 Edgemere Ave., Uniondale NY 11553 or e-mail Birdstudyjoeg02@aol.com.

FLEA MARKET WRAP-UP

We did indeed hold our first flea market in quite a few years on May 7. We thank everyone who contributed the items that enabled us to raise over \$800 and would like to give recognition to the members who spent the day in the parking lot in Freeport: Betty & Richard Borowsky, Dolores Grupp, Maureen Hogan, Marian Hubbard, Louise Leonard, Therese Lucas, Wendy Murbach, George & Marianne Peters, Maureen & Paul Rube, Chris Schmitt, Ed & Michael Sperling, and Judy Wolosoff. Thanks, also, to Kathy Asmus for making the sign that helped attract Sunrise Highway drivers' attention.



*Explore the coast
with the*
**AMERICAN
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JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE (Sun., Sept. 18, 4:30 P.M.). Three-hour narrated tour of the backwaters of the bay aboard the 96' boat "Dorothy B VIII" out of Pier 6 in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Cost: \$35 includes wine, cheese, fruit, snacks. Learn about the history & ecology of this 13,000 acre urban preserve. See migrating shorebirds, egrets, herons, falcons, oystercatchers, and waterfowl.

MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND (Jan. 6-8). Join us during peak winter birding time. See thousands of waterbirds, incl. loons, eiders, long-tailed ducks, scoters, etc. Cost: \$325 includes 2 nights at luxurious Manor House (heated pool, Jacuzzi, spacious lobby with fireplaces), 5 meals, 5 hikes, 2 evening programs, and star watch. Free LIRR pickup.

SOUTH FLORIDA (Jan. 28 to Feb. 5). Visit the best birding and wildlife areas, incl. Everglades, Ding Darling, Loxahatchee, Corkscrew Swamp, Big Cypress Preserve, Wakodahatchee boardwalk, Okechee County Park. Cost: \$1,595 incl. airfare, lodging, park fees, vans, guides, sunset boat cruise, welcome barbecue, and most meals.

BELIZE WILDLIFE (Feb. 24 to Mar. 5). High-end tour of rainforest, ruins & reefs, incl. birding, boat, etc. Cost: \$2,695.

For information and free field trip brochure,
call/write Don Riepe, (718) 318-9344, donriep@aol.com,
28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693; www.alsnyc.org.

GARDEN CITY BIRD SANCTUARY OUTING

The Garden City Bird Sanctuary is a nine-acre Nassau County stormwater storage basin (sump) that was converted into a community nature preserve a decade ago, with the support of SSAS. It is located at the intersection of Tanners Pond Road and Colonial Avenue, and is open to the public on Sundays from 1 to 5. Over 75 bird species have been recorded in its first decade. The sanctuary has extensive memorial plantings that are accompanied by signs identifying the many wildlife-friendly species. SSAS will be touring GCBS on **October 2** (rain date October 9); the next *Skimmer* will have more details.

PHONE (516) 541-2531

JERROLD AXINN, D.D.S., F.A.G.D., P.C.

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Special discount for Audubon members*

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OUR E-LIST http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

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 (third in 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:

Amityville Carolina Setzer
Baldwin Harvey Jacoby
Bellmore Kevin Scheafer

Bethpage A. B. Hynson
Bronx Paul J. Doherty
Copiague Milagros Penato
East Meadow Ms. Shirley Bard, John Blakeney,
Sean Blakeney, Kathleen L.
Woesner
East Rockaway Beverly Kerner
Elmont Kevin Smart, Brittany Ziems
Farmingdale Ronald R. O'Reilly
Floral Park George Dlugozima, Sarah J.
Hamilton, Jean F. King
Franklin Square James Feaster, James J.
Schiavone
Freeport Muriel M. Cook, Herbert Jurist,
Stephanie Riveaux, Frank D.
Young
Garden City Maureen Grossi
Glen Oaks Lorraine Palma, Paul Wulff
Hempstead Alison McQueen, Johyn Meyer
Hicksville Kaela & Leanne DiMarcantonio
Jericho Jean Wikstrom
Lawrence Beryl Slater
Levittown Ann Carroll, Gene Hoffman,
Richard Stalter, Noah A. Walters
Lynbrook William G. Cullen, Kezia Hayman,
The Poje Family, Phyllis
Schofler
Malverne Marion Capobianco
Massapequa Marcia Cannava, Miriam Edelson,
Joan V. Murray, Theresa Perez,
Thomas Allen Smith, Susan
Werner
Massapequa Park Phillip Leong
Merrick Michael Eskalyo, Maureen
Giannotti, Linda Savarese
Mineola Thomas H. Schmelke
Old Bethpage Paul Amore
Plainview Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon,
Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein
Point Lookout Robert L. Unger
Rockville Centre Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy,
Collette Hinton
Seaford Richard L. Galligan
Stewart Manor Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman,
Douglas A. Hard
Uniondale Marion S. Corbin
Valley Stream M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey
Goldberg, Gisela Petersen,
Thomas Schoch, Rose Tesone,
Raoul & Joan Vegosan,
Brien Weiner
Wantagh Marvin Fischman, T. Whiteside
West Hempstead Nicholas P. DeGregorio
Westbury Ray Reardon
Woodmere Harry Mison, June Sheer, Nancy
J. Sherman, Kate Spielberg



BUSY BIRDERS

Therese Lucas

On June 14, there were tables stretching the length of one wall in the Colonial Room at the Coral House in Baldwin for SSAS's 34th Annual Dinner. The tables held Chinese and silent auction selections, along with Birdathon raffle items. Strolling among the attendees were people offering tickets for the 50-50 drawing, which was shared by SSAS and one lucky winner.

Presentations were made to our special guest, County Legislator David Denenberg (who responded in kind), and to George Peters, our outgoing president finishing his third one-year term (the maximum allowed by our by-laws).

We look forward to an equally entertaining evening at Coral House next June.

Special thanks to our members and local businesses for their donations. Without the generosity of the following, our fund-raising activities at the dinner would not have been possible:

- Abby's Parkside Nursery & Florist, Wantagh*
- Atlantic Nursery, Freeport*
- Avis Lube, Farmingdale*
- B.A.C. Wines & Liquors, Bellmore*
- B&H Photo-Video-Pro Audio, Manhattan*
- Beautiful Baskets by Kathy, Middle Island*
- Carvel, Merrick*
- Charu Champaneri*
- Cookie Bear, Merrick*
- Country Cupboard, Farmingdale*
- Evan & Vicki Goldstein*
- Harmony and Wellness, Massapequa*
- Hicks Nurseries, Westbury*
- Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., Poughkeepsie*
- Sam Jannazzo*
- Kings Supermarket, Merrick*
- Stew Leonard's Wines, Farmingdale*
- Library Cafe, Farmingdale*
- Long Island Ducks, Central Islip*
- Long Island Picture Frame, Massapequa Park*
- Marjé Salon, Merrick*
- Matty's Toys, Merrick*
- Milos Pizzeria & Ristorante, Merrick*
- Olive Garden, Massapequa*
- Outback Steakhouse, Merrick*
- George & Marianne Peters*
- Piccolo Ristorante, Bellmore*
- Jim & Angela Remsen*
- Maureen & Paul Rube*
- Starkie Brothers Garden Center, Inc., Farmingdale*
- Trader Joe's, Merrick*
- WMF, Farmingdale*
- Westbury Camera, Hicksville*
- Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr.*
- Wick's Florist, Baldwin*
- Wild Bird Feed Barn, Farmingdale*
- Judy Wolosoff*
- Wooden Heart / The Olde Towne Garden, Wantagh*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael Sperling

In the spring, when I mentioned to one of our former board members (Michael Goldsmith) that I was running for president and planning on continuing as newsletter editor if elected, he quipped that I was going to have control of both the executive branch and the press. I laughed, but have no fear — SSAS needs lots of people besides me just to maintain our current activities (look at the back page for starters) and there is lots more we could do if more of you stepped forward and volunteered to help. For example, we need people with experience in writing grant applications, with an interest in attending public hearings, and with the energy to help maintain and improve Brookside Preserve.

If there's something that you'd like to see us do and, especially, that you'd be willing to help us do, please e-mail me at mssperling@optonline.net or speak to me or any board member at SSAS events.

Since this is my first president's message and roughly my 125th *Skimmer* (actually my 127th), I figured it's a good time to write something about how I got involved in SSAS, so here goes...

I joined National Audubon Society (my first environmental group) at age 25 in 1984. A combination of backyard bird feeding; Ronald Reagan's environmental policies and especially his infamous Secretary of the Interior, James Watt; unemployment; and a desire for like-minded friends led me to write to NAS before joining, asking if there was a chapter nearby.

After attending general meetings for six years and occasionally setting my alarm clock for bird walks when the weather was expected to be very good, I spotted the following in the June 1990 newsletter: "DESPERATE!!!! Editor needed for the *Skimmer*." Having inadvertently turned an astronomy and applied math education into a technical editing career, I volunteered and was promptly "hired" by incoming president Joan Butkerei. At the time, Joan joked that I had to agree to be editor for nine years, since two of my predecessors had lasted that long. I volunteered because I knew SSAS's active members were a bunch of nice people with a passion for the natural world. We still are and the more active members we have, the better, so how about giving us a try?



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ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP

SSAS's steady advertiser, the American Littoral Society's Northeast Chapter, is coordinating the 19th annual New York State Beach Cleanup. Data on the debris collected on **September 17** will be sent to The Ocean Conservancy to help regulate pollution. In 2004, over 7,700 New Yorkers documented and removed over 215,000 pounds of debris from 312 sites (22 in Nassau County) along lakes, rivers, creeks, bays, sound, and ocean. Dangerous debris included 14,130 bags, 4,254 balloons, 361 crab/lobster/fish traps, 1,757 fishing lines, 271 fishing nets, 3,259 plastic sheets/tarps, 3,092 ropes, 1,485 six-pack holders, 1,334 strapping bands, and 329 syringes.



For information on nearby cleanups, contact ALS's Barbara Cohen at ALSBeach@aol.com or 718-471-2166, or check www.alsnyc.org (which also has lots of info about the purposes and achievements of the cleanup). For out-of-state cleanups info, call 800-449-0790.

2005 NYS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

On June 24th, the New York State legislature ended the 2005 session without taking action on many of Audubon New York's environmental priorities (the priorities are based on the annual resolutions approved by representatives from Audubon's NY chapters). Here is a list from Audubon NY of the main priorities and how they fared.

Environmental Protection Fund: Representing the environmental high note of this legislative session, the legislature did pass an increase of \$25 million in funding for the state's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to \$150 million. Included in the expanded EPF were increases in many of the fund's categories, including \$40 million for land acquisition projects, \$16 million for farmland protection, and \$1 million for the Biodiversity Research Institute. Also included were the additions of two new categories: \$6 million for the Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquaria program (ZBGA), which provides important funding for environmental education; and a \$3 million Quality Communities Grants program which will provide matching grants (85% state to 15% local share) to municipalities to do land use and other planning.

The Community Preservation Act: This measure would authorize towns in New York State, by referendum, to adopt a transfer tax of up to 2% on certain real property transactions above the median value of a house in the county, for the purpose of establishing a community preservation fund. The funds generated would be used to acquire land; provide parkland; safeguard drinking water; protect farmland, habitat, and scenic views; and for other conservation activities. This measure passed the Assembly, but even though there was strong bipartisan support in the Senate, it was held up and never had a chance to be voted on by the full Senate.

Clean Water Protection/Flooding Prevention Act: This measure would decrease the size threshold for NYS

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulation of freshwater wetlands to 1 acre or larger, thus increasing the state's ability to protect these important ecosystems. [Editor's interruption: The DEC currently regulates wetlands 12.4 acres or larger; a 2001 Supreme Court ruling eliminated federal Clean Water Act protection for all "isolated wetlands"(those not connected by navigable water), so the states now need to protect those.] As with the Community Preservation Act, this measure passed the Assembly but was held up in the Senate, even though there is strong bipartisan support for the measure.

Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act: This measure requires state agencies (like the DEC, Transportation, and Health Departments) to make smart development decisions and investments by requiring priority for funding new development projects to be given to those that utilize areas of existing infrastructure and those that are consistent with local governments' plans for development, instead of funding projects that destroy our important open spaces and farmland. This measure passed the Assembly but was stuck in the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

Healthy, Safe, and Energy-Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act: This measure, also known as the Light Pollution bill, would reduce the unnecessary lighting of the night sky by promoting the use of energy-efficient lighting products that reduce light cast into the nighttime sky. Excessive outdoor lighting, especially in adverse weather conditions, can cause migrating birds to become disoriented, a phenomenon known as fatal light attraction. This phenomenon has led to the death of an estimated 100 million birds annually by collisions with windows, walls, floodlights, the ground, or even each other. This measure passed the Assembly but was held in the Senate Rules Committee.



Expanding the Bottle Deposit Law: This measure would expand the current Bottle Deposit law to require a nickel deposit on noncarbonated beverages (bottled water, juice, tea, etc.) and dedicate the "unclaimed" deposits (on those bottles not redeemed) to the state's EPF [instead of the manufacturers' pockets]. This measure passed the Assembly late in the session but was not taken up by the Senate. (Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno called the Assembly passage of the Bottle bill "one of the dumbest things that has happened this year in the Legislature on the Assembly side.")

We thank you for all your efforts to help us advance these priorities through the state legislature. Next year, we will again be looking toward the Audubon chapters to help us break through the gridlock in the state Senate. Visit ny.audubon.org for the latest updates on these and other environmental legislative issues.

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

South Shore Audubon Society
P.O. Box 31
Freeport, NY 11520-0031

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Americans Committed to Conservation



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BECOME A MEMBER OF SSAS
Think Globally, but Join Locally!

Option 1. You can join SSAS for a year by sending \$15 payable to **South Shore Audubon Society** using the form below. Our address is P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

Option 2. To join NAS and your all-volunteer local chapter, you can help SSAS survive NAS's major dues-share cutbacks by joining Audubon through us for the same price that it costs if you join through NAS (we get \$0 unless you join through us). Mail the form below and your check payable to **National Audubon Society** to SSAS at the address above. The special rate for the first year is \$20 per household; \$15 for students and seniors.

➔ **Renewing?** Please send NAS renewals directly to NAS (we now get \$0 for all NAS renewals).

Donations to SSAS are always welcome!



Yes, I'd like to join: SSAS only National Audubon too

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NO.: _____

E-MAIL: _____

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