OUTH HORE KIMMER

VOLUME 36, NUMBER 6 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

MARCH 2006

NEXT MEETING

Enid Klein

DATE:

Tuesday, March 14, 2006

TIME:

7:30 p.m.

PLACE:

Freeport Memorial Library

144 W. Merrick Rd. (at 5. Ocean Ave.)

SPEAKER: John L. Turner

TOPIC:

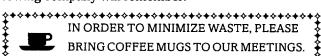
Long Island's Winter Birds

This month's guest speaker will present an overview of our winter birds, with an emphasis on those that overwinter here and head elsewhere in warmer weather, such as the Common Loon, Rough-legged Hawk, and Common Redpolls. John will also mention some species that seem to be more noticeable in winter, such as the Black-capped Chickadee.

John has been a birder since childhood and was the cofounder of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society. He is the author of *Exploring the Other Island: A Seasonal Guide to Nature on Long Island* and a children's book, *Waylon's Wandering Waterdrop*. He is currently the Director of the Town of Brookhaven's Division of Environmental Protection.

Pre-Meeting Program on Birds. Starting at 7 P.M. each month, Scott Oglesby and Jim Remsen will be discussing birds in the room beyond our coffee-break tables. Topic suggestions for future talks are welcome.

Parking Lots. In addition to the parking lot adjacent to the library, there's a lightly used, well-lit, and fairly close municipal lot on the east side of S. Ocean Ave., on the near (south) side of the Gulf station that borders Sunrise Highway. Also, SSAS has a verbal pledge from neighboring Citibank that cars will no longer be towed from their lot during our meetings, but we can't guarantee that their towing company will remember.



\$SHADE-GROWN COFFEE PROTECTS RAINFORESTS | \$

WE'RE OFFERING LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS!

Michael Sperling

At the suggestion of Elliott Kutner, your board has decided to give lifetime memberships in SSAS a try. So, if you're NOT interested in membership in National Audubon Society or if you're paying dues separately to SSAS because you also belong to another chapter (through which you belong to NAS), please consider a lifetime membership in SSAS. The cost is just \$350 per household and we'll keep sending *Skimmers* to you for as long as you remain somewhere in the USA (assuming we know where). Please send your check to our post office box, payable, of course, to South Shore Audubon Society.

SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to local bird populations, wildlife, and habitat; and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

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LONG ISLAND NWR COMPLEX UPDATE

• Editor's note: The following Conservation Planning Update for the nine-unit L.I. National Wildlife Refuge Complex was issued in January.

We're back with good news! Our draft comprehensive conservation plan will be ready for release this spring, now that several new staff members are on board. Although our planning began a few years ago, changes in personnel and regional priorities caused some delays.

What Is a Draft CCP/EA? The draft comprehensive conservation plan and environmental assessment details the strategies and evaluates the consequences of three long-term management alternatives for the Complex. We based them on issues you and we identified early in the planning process. Highlights from the alternatives follow.

Alternative A, or the "No Action" alternative, maintains our current management. Under this alternative, we will continue to

- provide a deer hunt at Wertheim and maintain current fishing access sites
- close beaches at Morton and Target Rock from April through August during the nesting season
- manage populations of the federal-listed endangered sandplain gerardia
- control invasive, nuisance, and overabundant species like Phragmites, mute swans, mosquitoes, and deer
 - upgrade staff housing and offices

Alternative B, or our "Proposed Action" alternative, describes how we would prefer to manage the refuges. Under this alternative, we will

- initiate waterfowl hunting at Wertheim and Conscience Point, with added emphasis on youth and disabled hunters
- improve fishing access sites at Wertheim in partnership with the DEC [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation]
- expand beach closures from March through September to encourage plover pair formation, nesting, and shorebird migration
- initiate the development of a permanent headquarters/visitor center at Wertheim, on the east side of the
- improve significantly public opportunities for environmental education and interpretation, photography, and outreach at the Complex

Alternative C takes a stricter approach to administering the Complex and its biological resources, with less emphasis on visitor services. Under this alternative, we will

- work with town governments to close all refuge beaches and the shoreline above mean low tide to surf fishing during plover, heron, and waterbird nesting seasons and shorebird migration (April 1 through September 30)
 - provide no additional hunting opportunities
- develop a cooperative agreement with the DEC and Suffolk County to limit boaters at plover sites, and prevent beach access at Amagansett if plover pairs are observed

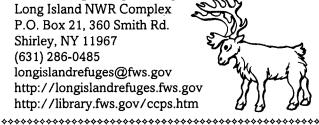
Why Do We Need a Plan? Once our Regional Director approves the final CCP, it will provide strategic management direction for all Complex programs over the next 15 years. Among other things, it will ensure term continuity in refuge management and outreach to partners, elected officials, refuge neighbors, and others.

What Can I Do to Get Involved? Please provide us with your feedback on the draft plan during our 45-day period of public review and comment. We also encourage you to attend one of our public meetings. We will post their dates and locations on the Web, or you may call our main office for details.

When Will the Plan Be Ready? The draft will be ready in the spring for public comment. We will address all substantive comments in a final CCP, which we will complete this summer. Please visit our website or call our main office for details.

For further information on our public meetings or to request a plan, contact

Debbie Long, Refuge Manager Long Island NWR Complex P.O. Box 21, 360 Smith Rd. Shirley, NY 11967 (631) 286-0485 longislandrefuges@fws.gov http://longislandrefuges.fws.gov http://library.fws.gov/ccps.htm



SKETCH, EAT, AND CHAT

Therese Lucas

The evening is about camaraderie as well as fundraising. It's easy. Present your "Easy Way to Raise Dough" coupon at Pizzeria Uno in Lynbrook on Wednesday, April 26 between 5 P.M. and 9 P.M. when paying (one per table is sufficient) or you can do takeout. SSAS gets back 15% of the total sales up to \$500 and 20% over \$500. Coupons are available at meetings and bird walks. Once you have one, you can make copies and pass them along to family and friends. You don't have to be a member to attend. Join us anytime between 5 and 9 and spend a few minutes or a few hours, whatever suits your schedule.

Pizzeria Uno has a varied menu, ranging from pizza (of course) to pasta, chicken, beef, fish, and salads; something for every palate (see unos.com) and all at a reasonable cost. A nice assortment of desserts is available as well.

A very relaxed "poster" contest will be held. Just bring your "poster" with you to Pizzeria Uno. The "posters" will be on display that night and then brought to the next SSAS board meeting, where two winners will be chosen. The winners will be announced at our May 9 general meeting

and you can pick up your "poster" that night. There will be two categories: SSAS membership and birding. The "poster" can be serious or funny, and can be an 8x10 sheet of paper or as large as an oak tag sheet. Use any writing implement,



cutouts, or photos, and put your name and phone number on the back (not front). Let your imagination be your guide; it's all for the fun of it!

The only things you have to remember are to bring your "poster" (not mandatory) and to skip lunch (mandatory). The more you eat, the more we make!!

Directions. Pizzeria Uno (aka Uno Chicago Grill) is located at the west end of Phillips Plaza, 693 Sunrise Highway (opposite Lynbrook's LIRR station, west of White Castle and Broadway, and east of Peninsula Blvd.). **************************************

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



Fllintt Kutner

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. Directions and summaries may be found at ssaudubon.org.

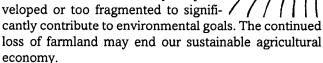
Feb. 26	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	
Mar. 5	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)	
Mar. 12	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner	
Mar. 19	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner	
Mar. 26	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	
Apr. 2	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)	
Apr. 9	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner	
Apr. 16	Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve	
Apr. 23	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)	
Apr. 30	Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first	
	lot south of Southern State Parkway,	
	south end of lot)	
May 7	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge	

LONG ISLAND'S LAST STAND

Back in December, SSAS joined a coalition of 100 organizations, led by The Nature Conservancy and including Audubon's NY office and other LI chapters, in support of the "Long Island's Last Stand" initiative that was unveiled in January. The 21st Century Environmental Vision for Long Island that's tied to this plan (and that SSAS's board endorsed) reads as follows:

As concerned environmental, civic, and business associations, we agree that actions taken over the next ten years will define the final landscape for Long Island.

Without significant increases in the rates of land and water preservation, in ten years, currently unprotected open spaces and watersheds will be completely developed or too fragmented to signifi-



Land and water management and restoration needs are seriously underfunded. Protected lands and waters, already stressed by human impacts, may be degraded to the point of no return unless actions to manage and restore them are planned for and taken now. Public parks have deteriorated; in some cases they are unusable. Critical wildlife habitats are rapidly losing their capacity to sustain diverse wildlife. Many fishing, clamming, and recreational areas are seriously degraded. The quality of our drinking water, waterways, and watersheds will continue to decline. Our quality of life will be compromised as the green spaces in our communities are lost.

We propose this Vision for the Future of Long Island's Lands and Waters — a comprehensive land and water preservation, management, and restoration program that

- ◆ protects the most important remaining 25,000 acres
 of open space
- ◆ protects 10,000 agricultural acres to preserve farming viability
- → manages and restores tens of thousands of acres of parks, open space, harbors and bays, and farms for our sustainable future

We support and encourage management and restoration projects led by the County and Towns to reverse the accumulated impacts of environmental damage to our lands and waters. Now is the time to manage and restore these lands and waters to sustain the environmental and public health values that led us to preserve them in the first place.

New York State and Long Island's Counties and Towns should develop coordinated, complementary funding and policy strategies. We must:

- ♦ increase Long Island's share of State funding to \$50 million/year, for preservation, management, and restoration across Long Island
- ♦ create new and permanent annual management funds by the Counties to provide enhanced parks, and sustainable land and marine natural areas, for about \$8 million/ year for each County
- ♦ extend the Suffolk County Drinking Water Protection Program with a reconfigured allocation scheme that favors environmental programs, increasing funding from \$20 million/year to \$40 million annually

A long-term and diversified financial commitment at the State, County, and Town levels, at acceptable cost to the taxpayer, sets the stage now for public health, environmental, and economic sustainability through the 21st Century and beyond. With strategic land purchases and targeted management and restoration activities, we can assure that our lands, our waters, and our way of life will remain for the benefit of our children and all future generations.

SSAS NEEDS MORE BACKYARD SURVEY DATA!

Joe Grupp

The Research Committee is conducting a study to document the bird species found in the SSAS area and to estimate their numbers. We greatly appreciate input from anyone that feeds and/or observes birds in their yard or neighborhood. Please do not hesitate to submit your observations, even if you make only very few.

Simply record 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 at the appropriate address listed below, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Survey sheets are available at SSAS events and at ssaudubon.org or you can create your own.

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

** 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 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:

	Roy DeBeer, Nina Diamond
Baldwin	Joan A. Byrne, Mr. Frederick V. Crippen, Michael DeLuca, Lisa LaGrande,
	Mr. Robert Meeker
	Andrew Berkman, Mrs. Patricia DeBolt, Ms. Anne DeRusso, Mr. David B. Metz
	Richard H. Kevan, Ms. Gloria Pirozzi, David Weinstein
Cedarhurst	Mr. Mickey Bernstein
	Ms. Karen Alster, Hyman Hoffman, Judith Pitka
	Ms. Carine Bury, Carolyn Layton, Thomas Segarra, Jasmine Smallhorne, Mr. William Werner
Farmingdale	Michael & Mildred Galgano
	Ms. Katrin Lange, Ms. Tracey McGinn,
	Leo Moore
Franklin Square	Jean Coviello-Malle, Susan Kelly, Frances A. Manner, Mr. Hermine & Mr. Paul Mitchell
Freeport	Sharon Bogart, Mr. Owen I. Diringer, Dennis Wise
Garden City	Adelaide Callahan, Alexis Lyon
	Ms. Beverly Hensen, Mr. Harold Wasser
	Anne Millward, Ms. Elaine Nolan, Thomas Zink
	Alice Barbaro, Mrs. Libby R. Landy, Matthew
THERSTHE	Meyer, Brenda Schwartz, Mr. Walter O. Steahle, Richard Weedon
Inwood	Ms. Catherine Murphy
Lido Beach	Mrs. Mark Donnelly, Murray Feustel
J	Mr. Baruch Farbiarz, Ms. Elaine Feldman, Mr. Vincent McDonald, Phyllis Wagner
	Ms. Melinda Fiorino
Massapequa	Ms. Joan Alles, Marie Delmato, Ms. Ingrid DeMilo, Mary Drapeau, Ms. Louise Levine, Irene Mueck, Ms. Joan Scancarelli, Mrs. Donna Sloane
	Ms. Jen Bertalon, Ian Callahan
	William R. MacEwen, Candace Stevens
Oceanside	Mr. Felix Diez, Barbara Ernst, Viola Morris, George Valentino

Old Bethpage	Suzanne Dalby
Plainview	Ms. Margaret Luciani, Steven C. Klein,
	Mrs. Debra L. Mehlman, Ms. Francine Unger
Rockville Centre	Bruce Driver, Carol Granelli, Mr. Macio
	Jackson, Linda Markowicz, Barbara C. Myers,
	Ms. Elizabeth Stack
Seaford	Ms. Marilyn Gorman, Kenneth Henkell,
	T. McHugh, Ms. Rosemary Mittelmark,
	Mr. Robert A. Rodman
Stewart Manor	Mr. & Mrs. Lewis R. DeFazio, Mr. Charles F.
	Godfrey, Jean Purcell, Ms. Anna Lea Smith
Uniondale	John Claps
Valley Stream	Mr. Meyer Balamut, Roberta Kern, Jeff Roth
Wantagh	Susan Boyd, Mr. Gary Lerner, Anthony J. Pellegrino
West Hempstead	Mrs. Betty Agnew, Mr. & Mrs. Marvin I. Edelst,
•	Ms. Florence Pichler, Mr. Timothy C. Rosato
Woodmere	Mr. Berle S. Calodny, Bernard Futter, Arthur
	Kesselman, Phyllis & Sidney Polsky
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APPLY FOR A COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP!

Thanks to the continuing generosity of Evelyn Bishop, South Shore Audubon Society will be awarding two \$750 Jerry Bishop Environmental Scholarships to students who are college juniors, seniors, or graduate students and who are continuing their studies toward a degree in an area of biological or environmental science, such as wildlife management, forestry, animal behavior, ecology, marine biology, oceanography, mammalogy, or ornithology. For information, call Betsy Gulotta at 546-8841 or e-mail gulotte@ncc.edu (yes, that's spelled correctly). Applications are due by April 30 and we typically receive very few, so apply!

PHONE (516) 541-2531

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

Member of SSAS since 1997 Special discount for Audubon members

92 OCEAN AVENUE MASSAPEQUA, N.Y. 11758

THE DAYS ARE GETTING LONGER...

Therese Lucas

Hints of buds are seen...

It's time for Hicks' Horticultural Fair!

Environmental and horticultural groups will be participating at the fair on Saturday, March 18 and Sunday, March 19 from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. at Hicks Nurseries, 100 Jericho Turnpike in Westbury (west of Post Ave.). There will be magnificent garden varieties displayed; the ideas can be applied to your grounds or you can just soak up the beauty. We hope to see you there. Perhaps you'll walk away more knowledgeable or with a plant or two tucked under your arm.

NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER A Bald Eagle Observed at Harpers Ferry

Joe Grupp

Harpers Ferry National Historical Park in West Virginia is located in a magnificent landscape, where through a water gap in the Blue Ridge Mountains, the waters of the Shenandoah River empty into the Potomac River. They then splash, roll, and flow to the Chesapeake Bay and eventually to the Atlantic Ocean.

An active old railroad bridge, built in the early 1930s, crosses the Potomac River from Harpers Ferry, where the two rivers join, to the Maryland shore. There the tracks that the bridge carries continue on into a tunnel that has "Harpers Ferry, 1931" carved into its facade. We walked the downstream edge of that bridge, where a steel walkway has been built to carry the Appalachian Trail across the Potomac River. The bridge shows signs of age — its steel is weathered, some black paint is flaking off, and there are some signs of rust — vet its strength and durability are unquestionably safe. I was admiring the components of the old bridge that carries tons and tons of freight on it each day and was contrasting it mentally to the much newer components of the walkway when beyond the upper reaches of the bridge a smooth motion caught my eye. A tall mountain ridge rises from the edge of the very narrow floodplain of the Potomac, appearing almost as a tall wall clothed in leafless trees as I walked towards it. Above the ridge, a large raptor was taking advantage of the air currents forced up over the ridge and was effortlessly soaring in large circles while moving in an upstream direction.

In spite of it being a hazy sunny day, the light on the bird's underside was poor. The long wings of the bird were held almost motionless, the leading and trailing edges somewhat parallel to each other with the trailing edge more curved. Only the wing-tip feathers altered position to compensate for minor air current variations. The most obvious field marks from below were its dark body and slightly darker head and the long tail which had a terminal band. The wingpits, the area where the wings attach to the underside of the body, were a light white and the most evident field mark seen on the underside of the bird. Occasionally, as the bird circled, enough light hit its underside that some white seemed to wash out farther on the wing. The bird was a first-year bird, a juvenile Bald Eagle.

Bald Eagles develop their mature plumage over a period of four to five years. Each year, the character of their plumage differs until they attain the white head and tail that every American is so familiar with.

I watched it soar in circles until it drifted out of sight. I was somewhat awed by the bird, even more so because of the setting in which I observed it. The area in and around Harpers Ferry is steeped in history. For Native Americans, the area provided a travel route and food source. In our

early history, the power of the flowing waters of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers was diverted through turbines to power various industrial mills. The federal armory that was established there in the late 1700s changed, over time, the production of rifles from a craft-based to a machine-based industry capable of producing interchangeable parts for its weapons. In an attempt to free the slaves, John Brown and a small band of supporters attacked the federal armory a few years prior to the Civil War. He was captured, found guilty of treason, and hanged. His action served to raise the nation's attention to the issue of slavery and was instrumental in heading the nation into the Civil War.

There is a natural history in the region also and some of it is disastrous. Flooding of the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers wiped out the works of human beings a number of times. Today, because of the floods, only foundations remain along the river where once homes and industry thrived. I observed more-peaceful natural history on our visit. As I approached the railroad bridge, where the flowing together of the two rivers could be seen, a Common Merganser (pictured) flew down the Potomac around the point of land and up the Shenandoah. A few

minutes later, a second one did the same.

A Great Blue Heron was also observed as it stood motionless in an abandoned canal while Mallards floated by. Looking down from the bridge across the Potomac River, I could see a few red cedar trees growing on old stone abutments that once supported a bridge across the Shenandoah, and

On the railroad bridge, history, natural history, and the juvenile Bald Eagle became mentally linked together, making a great observation even greater.

on one of those abutments a pair of Canada Geese rested.

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



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JAMAICA BAY WATERSHED PROTECTION PLAN

Editor's note: On February 9, I attended a public meeting at York College in Jamaica, sponsored by the NYC Department of Environmental Protection and the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan Advisory Committee. SSAS was invited by the DEP to attend this preliminary meeting (albeit with one week's notice) since the DEP recognizes that the Jamaica Bay watershed is partly in Nassau County and that SSAS should be involved in the development of the protection plan. Last July, NYC Mayor Michael Bloomberg signed into law a bill that had been initiated by the City Council. First, here's its introductory text:

A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the City of New York, in relation to developing a watershed protection plan for the watershed/sewershed of Jamaica Bay.

Section 1. Legislative findings and intent. In October of 1972, the United States Congress established the Gateway National Recreation Area ("Gateway") as part of an effort to bring the National Park System and its ethic of preserving and protecting outstanding resources closer to major urban areas.

Gateway encompasses the largest collection of natural systems, wildlife habitats, historic resources, and recreational opportunities in the New York City/New Jersey metropolitan area. It also encompasses numerous sites of critical natural and cultural importance to the health of local ecosystems, to the life of migratory and native species, and to the military, navigational, and aviation history of the region and the nation, especially in the context of attendant defenses of New York Harbor.

According to the National Park Service (NPS), Gateway is the only extensive public natural area in the New York City region. The Jamaica Bay Unit is one of several units, consisting oflands, waters, marshes, and submerged lands, comprising Gateway. The Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge ("Refuge"), established by the City of New York in 1948, is located within the Jamaica Bay Unit. The Refuge, a State and nationally recognized important bird area, encompasses 2,500 acres within the boroughs of Brooklyn and

Queens. The only wildlife refuge in the National Park System, it provides a shelter for rare and endangered birds and a variety of habitats for more than 325 kinds of waterfront and shorebirds. It is also a critical stopover area along the Eastern Flyway migration route and is one of the best and world renowned bird-watching locations in the western hemisphere.

Jamaica Bay is one of the largest and most productive coastal ecosystems in the State of New York, as well as within the northeastern United States, and is an important recreational destination for local, national, and international visitors. It contains approximately 13,000 acres of

surface waters, including the largest tidal wetland complex in New York State. These wetlands provide benefits such as natural water quality improvement, flood protection, and shoreline erosion control for the commercial and residential areas in and around the Bay in Brooklyn and Queens. Unfortunately, construction and development within the Jamaica Bay watershed has often been conducted without consideration of potential adverse impacts on the Bay and sometimes without notice to all interested governmental agencies, civic groups, and other interested parties. One such governmental agency is the NPS, which is the primary steward of the Bay, itself, and with whom, among many other agencies, it is critical for the City to collaborate in order to protect the Bay.

Jamaica Bay's future as an oasis of great ecological importance is in severe jeopardy due to the fact that thousands of acres of the Bay's marshy islands, which serve as nesting and feeding areas for an abundance of birds and other wildlife, are rapidly and mysteriously vanishing. Scientists predict that the Jamaica Bay marshlands will completely vanish in less than twenty years if the cause of their deterioration and a solution to their preservation are not found.

This legislation would require the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to create a watershed protection plan for the watershed/sewershed of Jamaica Bay, and would create a Jamaica Bay watershed protection plan advisory committee. The Council finds that such watershed planning is vital to the future of Jamaica Bay. This legislation establishes the initial pathway towards restoring and maintaining the water quality and ecological integrity of the Bay by comprehensively assessing threats to the Bay and coordinating environmental remediation and protection efforts in a focused and cost-effective manner. Watershed protection planning for Jamaica Bay is an efficient and effective means of promoting the sustainability of the Bay's environment, the economy associated with the Bay, and the linkages between the two.

Editor's interruption: The rest of the bill (Section 2) is the actual wording that has been added to the administrative code of the City of New York plus a sentence that the bill takes effect as soon as it's signed (Section 3). Section 2 is a bit wordy and reads like code, so instead here's the

summary I found at the Jamaica Bay Research and Management Information Network Website (http://nbii-nin.ciesin.columbia.edu/jamaicabay/), which also has the complete law (and nbii-nin is indeed hyphenated):

On July 20, 2005, Mayor Bloomberg signed Local Law 71, which

- requires the New York City Department of Environmental Protection to create a watershed protection plan for Jamaica Bay;
- ♦ states that the goal of the Plan is to restore and maintain Jamaica Bay's water quality and ecological integrity;

In developing the Plan, Local Law 71 requires DEP to assess the technical, legal, environmental, and economic feasibility of including the following measures:

- ♦ best management practices to minimize/control soil erosion, and reduce point and nonpoint source pollution, e.g., development practices that control and minimize stormwater runoff;
- measures to address threats to aquatic habitat, e.g., restoring natural features and water flow;
- land acquisition, planning/development practices that encourage or discourage certain land uses;
 - ♦ protocol for agency coordination;
 - public education program;
 - enhanced enforcement against polluters.

Additionally, the Plan must include:

- ♦ specific goals for restoring and maintaining the Bay's water quality and ecological integrity;
- ♦ boundaries of the Bay's watershed/sewershed for purposes of the Plan;
- ♦ an explanation for any Advisory Committee recommendation not assessed or incorporated;
- ♦ a schedule, with interim and final milestones, to implement the Plan's measures and achieve the specific goals, and methods for monitoring progress.

Under Local Law 71, the Advisory Committee is to provide recommendations concerning the measures that should be included in the Plan. The Advisory Committee will also provide recommendations concerning the other required Plan components, i.e., Plan goals, Plan boundaries, interim and final milestones, and monitoring methods.

Under Local Law 71, the Advisory Committee is required to complete their recommendations concerning the Plan by July 1, 2006. The DEP Commissioner must finish the final Plan by September 1, 2006, and submit it to the Speaker of the Council and the Mayor no more than five business days later. The DEP must review the Plan's progress by October 1, 2007 and every two years afterwards.

The Advisory Committee's workplan is the following: *December–February:* With DEP, hold public outreach

meetings, encourage input. Develop preliminary draft of goals, recommendations. Define the watershed/sewershed boundaries for purposes of Plan. Identify outstanding information needs.

March and April: Conduct workshops to fill outstanding information needs.

May: Complete draft recommendations. Receive public comment on draft recommendations.

June: Finalize recommendations.

Input Needed. The Advisory Committee needs your input and ideas on what you'd like to see included in a Jamaica Bay watershed protection plan. Write to Brad Sewell (Advisory Committee Co-Chair), Natural Resources Defense Council, 40 West 20 St., New York, NY 10011 or e-mail him (c/o Megan Lew) at mlew@nrdc.org.

Asian Shore Crabs. At the first public meeting of the Jamaica Bay Watershed Protection Plan Advisory Committee (in Brooklyn; your editor/president attended the second), a participant reported seeing a huge population of Asian shore crabs in Jamaica Bay and suggested that they might be at least partially responsible for the sharp decline of Spartina alterniflora grasses there. At the second meeting, American Littoral Society naturalist (and SSAS member) Mickey Maxwell Cohen mentioned this and presented information about the species, which was first found in the U.S. in 1988. Mickey seeks people interested in joining a crab monitoring group at Jamaica Bay; send email to him at bmcohen@aol.com if you're interested.



NEW YORK AQUARIUM "BEHIND THE SCENES" TOUR (Sat., March 25). Meet 10 A.M. at entrance for 2-1/2 hour special indoor/outdoor tour. See sea otter, walrus, penguins, sharks, stingrays, sea turtles, seals, octopus, etc. Cost: \$20 adults, \$12 kids. Call Don to reserve.

FIRE ISLAND "SUNKEN FOREST" HIKE (Sat., May 20). Join naturalist Steve Finn for a hike along the boardwalk, maritime forest, dunes & beach. Cost: \$20 incl. round-trip ferry from Sayville & guide. Call Steve 631-821-2160 or Don. JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISES (Sun., May 28 and Sat., June 3, 5 p.m.). Join us for a special 3-hour narrated tour of the backwater marshes aboard 96' boat "Dorothy B VIII" out of Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Learn about the bay's history & ecology and see peregrine falcon, osprey, herons, egrets, ibis, oystercatcher, etc. Cost: \$35 incl. tour, wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. Call Don. Rain dates May 29 & June 4.

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 9–11). Explore beaches, bluffs & "Walking Dunes" during peak orchid & heather blossom time. Activities incl. birding, botanizing, seining, tidepooling, star watching. Cost: \$325 incl. 2 nights at luxurious Manor House (heated indoor/outdoor pools, jacuzzi), 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, pickup at LIRR station.

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

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

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Americans Committed to Conservation

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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!

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