

SAVE THE DATE FOR MORTON

On **Saturday, March 31** (for the first time in over five years), SSAS will visit Elizabeth A. Morton National Wildlife Refuge, located on the peninsula of Jessups Neck in Noyack, which is just west of Sag Harbor. Bring sunflower seeds or shelled peanuts to experience Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, and/or White-breasted Nuthatches landing on your outstretched hand! Details in next month's *Skimmer*.

165 ACRES IN PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE

The information below comes from <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/enb/index.html> (the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's weekly Environmental Notice Bulletin), and concerns proposed zoning changes and development plans for two mostly undeveloped parcels in the Plainview-Old Bethpage area. The parcels are owned by Charles Wang; one was Nassau County property and includes a few buildings that housed, among other things, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, while the other includes Plainview's Post Office, which would need to be relocated. Trailview State Park, which is a bird survey site for SSAS's Research Committee, is next to the first parcel. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is online at <http://www.oldplainview.com/download/download.php>.

Your editor knows that the January 23 hearings will have occurred by the time nearly all of you read this, but you have from then until February 23 to submit comments to the Town of Oyster Bay. Please sign up for our chapter's free e-list (see bottom left of first page) if you want to find out about environmental meetings in time to attend them, since they're typically not scheduled far enough in advance for sufficient notice via the *Skimmer*.

Notice of Acceptance of Draft EIS and Public Hearing. The Town of Oyster Bay, as lead agency, has accepted a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Petition of Plainview Properties, LLC & Avalon Bay Communities, Inc. ("Old Plainview"). A public hearing on the Draft EIS will be held on January 23, 2007, at 10:00 A.M. at the Town Hall, 74 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay, NY, to be continued at Plainview/Old Bethpage Middle School, Central Park Ave. & Southern Parkway, at 7:00 P.M. Public comment period ends February 23, 2007.

The action involves petition to the Town Board for proposed amendments to the zoning chapter of the Code of the Town of Oyster Bay, including the Building Zone Map, creation of a new Planned Unit Development-Mixed Use (PUD-MX) District, changes in the zoning classification of certain parcels, and redevelopment and subdivision of the reclassified parcels.

The proposal for the south parcel includes 499 residential units, 182,513 sq. ft office space, 17,842 sq. ft retail, 15,873 sq. ft of educational/charity use, 264,803 sq. ft of lodging, a community clubhouse, a sports clubhouse, 36.9

acres of contiguous open space, a village green, and trail system. The proposal for the north parcel includes 160 rental apartments, 87,207 sq. ft retail, and 21,533 sq. ft office space. The project is located on 143.26 acre parcel located on the south side of Old Country Road west of Round Swamp Road, Old Bethpage, Town of Oyster Bay, New York and 21.73 acre parcel located on the north side of Old Country Road, 540 feet east of the intersection with Newtown Road, Plainview, Town of Oyster Bay, New York.



Contact Aldona Lawson, Town of Oyster Bay, Town Environmental Quality Review Division, 150 Miller Place, Syosset, NY 11791; phone 677-5717; fax 677-5730; e-mail alawson@oysterbay-ny.gov.

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BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Esther Ecklund

Editor's note: If you missed our well-attended members' night meeting, you missed laughter, bird games, slides, a table of paintings and photos, and the recital of the following by its author:

*January at Audubon is a time to share
with birds of a feather who do so much more than care.*

*The members show off their talents galore
as the birds show off their talons once more.*

*Before the main course, Scott has his informative bird meeting
while Dolores, the snowbird, is usually busy flitting around
greeting.*

*With the sound of the cowbell, Michael begins the meeting
as the committee chairs start their bleating.*

*Informing us of the festivals and annual dinner
Therese flies up smelling like a rosy winner.*

*A flutter from Wendy drums up new members
as Joe quacks in the nest, summing up contenders.*

*Jim takes such care handling the raffles
that only dizzy squirrels would consider to baffle.
The programs are spaciouly and skillfully aligned
by our own endearing Enid Klein.*


*As the Audubon birdwatchers gather for their walks
Elliott spreads his wings to show us direction and for his "birds
and bees" talks.*

*We can't forget Rick who helps out in a pinch
and who willing would certainly point out a finch.
Of course, Betty and Mary Jane gather their seeds
for education and hospitality needs.*

*You feathered and non-feathered members-at-large are last but not
least*

*we would not be here without you
and Max Wheat, you are so neat!*

All walks start at 9:30 A.M. except for Pelham Bay; 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 ssaadubon.org.

- Jan. 28 Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first lot south of Southern State Parkway, south end of lot)
- Feb. 4  Pelham Bay for Owls [pull over to street on extreme right after going through Throgs Neck Bridge toll (Pennyfield Ave.); meet at 9 A.M.; hiking shoes recommended]
- Feb. 11 Jones Beach Fishing Piers (Field #10, which is west of Wantagh Pkwy.)
- Feb. 18 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Feb. 25 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
- Mar. 4 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Mar. 11 Hempstead Lake State Park (see Jan. 28)
- Mar. 18 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Mar. 25 Jones Beach Fishing Piers (Field #10)
- Apr. 1 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Apr. 8 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Apr. 15 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Apr. 22 & 29 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

For several years, SSAS's Research Committee has been 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 ssaadubon.org or you can create your own.

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

TENTH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

Editor's note: Last year, 60,000 people participated for free in the annual Presidents' Day weekend bird count hosted by National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The data from the first nine counts is available at the count's website, including the 162 species reported, town by town, by about 4,000 New Yorkers last year. The following comes from the website and a colorful flyer that will be available at our general meeting. If you participate, please also send your data to SSAS's Research Chairperson, Joe Grupp (see above).


Tens of thousands of people will be outside (or looking through their windows) counting birds **February 16-19**. You can be one of them! Which birds are spending their winter with you this year? Take part in the tenth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) to see how your local birds fit into the landscape of North America.

You'll learn more about the birds around you. People of all ages, and all levels of experience and skill, can take part. Whether you count the five species at your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's visit to your neighborhood park or wildlife refuge, it's important that you report what you see to the GBBC website, www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Your bird list, however short or long, helps us all understand more about birds across the continent, as indicators of the state of the world around us. As you enter your results, you'll see how a group of tens of thousands of birdwatchers can paint a picture of our birds in winter.



In 2006, with cold air trapped in Canada and Alaska by a northerly jet stream, and a record-breaking warm winter in the lower 48, GBBC results revealed:

◆ an increase in the numbers and northern distribution of Tree Swallows (pictured) in 20 U.S. states;



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

WINTER BIRDS AT JAMAICA BAY (Sun., Feb. 25). Meet 10 A.M. at the Jamaica Bay Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and hike around the ponds. Learn about the history & management of the refuge and look for ducks, snow geese, raptors, and other birds of winter. Leader: Don Riepe; call him to reserve. *Free.*

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISES (Sat., May 26 and June 2). Leave at 5 P.M. from Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn aboard the "Dorothy B VIII" for a 3-hour cruise of the backwater marshes of Jamaica Bay. Learn about the history & ecology of the bay and see nesting egrets, herons, ibis, osprey, oystercatcher, peregrine falcon, and many more species. Cost: \$45 includes narrated tour plus wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. Reservations: Call Don.

HORSESHOE CRABS AND SHOREBIRDS (Saturdays, June 2 & 16). Meet 9 A.M. at the Jamaica Bay Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and hike to see the mating ritual of the horseshoe crab and the shorebirds that feed on the eggs. Leaders: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe. Call Don to reserve. *Free.*

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 8-10). Cost: \$345.

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.

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

Therese Lucas

We had a nice turnout for the SSAS holiday party at Tackapausha Museum on December 9, where children and their families enjoyed the live raptor presentation given by Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. They also made bird-feeder crafts with the help of our invaluable volunteers: Gloria Berkowitz, Alice Blaustein, Helen Buckley, Mary Jane Conlon, Marilyn Hametz, Louise Leonard, Wendy Murbach, Laurie Raisher, Chris Schmitt, and Mike Sperling. Thanks to all for the time and effort they extended to the children, who are the future of Long Island.

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**MORE OF AUDUBON NEW YORK'S
END-OF-SESSION REPORT**

Editor's note: Our last *Skimmer* covered what Congress did or didn't do in 2006. Here's what happened in New York last year; the bills that didn't become law will have to be introduced again in the newly elected Assembly and Senate.

FY 2006-2007 Budget. In the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2006-2007, Governor Pataki had proposed more than \$1.4 billion for environmental and recreational programs. Included in this budget was the expansion of the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to \$180 million, up \$30 million from last year. In March, the Legislature decided to further increase the EPF to \$200 million, but the new EPF funding was not approved as part of the budget that was passed in April, due to disagreements between the parties involved on how the money was to be spent.

A three-way agreement was finally reached on the very last day of the legislative session to fund the EPF, the state's primary environmental funding category, at \$225 million this year, \$45 million above the Governor's original request.

\$225 Million EPF Highlights: \$50 million for land acquisition projects (up from \$40 million last year); \$23 million for farmland protection (up from \$16 million); \$3 million for the Quality Communities Grants Program (maintained at last year's level); \$7 million for zoos, botanical gardens, and aquaria (up \$1 million from last year); \$1.5 million for the Biodiversity Research Institute (up \$500,000 from last

year); \$3.250 million for invasive species (a new category); \$3 million for an Ocean and Great Lakes Initiative (new); and \$7.250 million for a Water Quality Improvement Program (also new).

New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act. New York State's coastal ecosystems are a critical economic and environmental resource for the state. Ensuring the long-term protection, conservation, and sustainable management of these significant coastal resources for future generations is of high importance for all New Yorkers. This legislation, sponsored by Assemblyman DiNapoli and Senator Johnson, would set up a Council of State Agencies to coordinate the management of the state's coastal resources, and enhance the protection of these ecosystems through the use of ecosystem-based management. The council is also required to issue a report to the legislature and executive on what changes to state law are necessary to improve management of our coastal resources. This bill passed both houses and was signed into law by the Governor.

Prohibiting the Siting of, or Expansion of Existing, Hazardous Waste Landfills That Have the Potential to Discharge Into the Great Lakes Watershed. Pollution from hazardous waste, especially waste that is landfilled in the Great Lakes watershed, has the potential to threaten the survival of the numerous different bird species and the important habitats that they depend on in the Great Lakes basin. The habitat degradation that can be associated with toxic waste discharges into the Great Lakes ecosystem also has the potential to negatively impact the local economies of the region that depend on the lakes for drinking water supplies, and depend on the revenue generated from commercial fishing and ecotourism opportunities like birdwatching and boating. This legislation, sponsored by Senator Maziarz and Assemblywoman DelMonte, would ensure that hazardous waste is no longer landfilled in the Great Lakes watershed in NY. This bill passed both houses, but was vetoed by the Governor.

Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. In 2001, the governors and premiers of the eight Great Lakes states and two Canadian provinces signed the Great Lakes Annex, a supplementary agreement to the Great Lakes Charter to establish proper management of the Great Lakes' water resources. In December 2005, the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact and the Implementing Agreements were signed by the governors and premiers, to implement a strong and effective water management plan for the Great Lakes, including protections against water diversions out of the basin and promotion of water conservation measures within the basin, once it is passed by all the state legislatures and Congress.

The Governor submitted a program bill on May 24th. In late June, the Assembly, thanks to the efforts of the sponsors, Assembly members Tokasz and DiNapoli, became the first house in the basin to pass the bill. The Senate did not act on the measure.

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A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
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: _____

Chapter Code R15 7XCH (South Shore Audubon Society)

