

JOIN THE BIRDATHON!

Jim Remsen

This year SSAS will conduct its 21st annual Birdathon! SSAS raises funds through the Birdathon by having members get cash pledges for each species of bird identified during a 24-hour period in May, when the spring migration is at its height and over 125 species may be identified by the two teams that visit about a half-dozen locations.

If you aren't going with a team, why not try your own Birdathon? Do a variation on the usual theme of seeing as many species as you can during the count period. Use your imagination. Limit yourself to your backyard, a favorite park or preserve, or even a "couch potato" Birdathon. (For this one, you count as many bird species as you can on television during the 24 hours. Yes, people have really done it, but we suggest you make it clear to your sponsors if you decide to give it a try!)

Due to the decision by National Audubon to sharply decrease the amount of financial support given to chapters, the Birdathon is now one of our major sources of income. Many of you have been very generous with your time and pledges in previous years; we hope you will continue and that more people will join us.

Mark the dates on your calendar if you haven't already — **Friday, May 9** from 5:00 P.M. until **Saturday, May 10** at 5:00 P.M. — and join one of our intrepid leaders (or go it alone, in which case you choose the turf). Birding expertise is not necessary and your teammates will be happy to point out the birds for you. Rain dates are one week later at the same time.



Please note: In the event of questionable weather, I will decide whether or not to cancel the Birdathon by 3 P.M. on Friday, May 9. If you have any uncertainty about whether it will be postponed, please call me at (631) 957-0949 or (631) 798-8942 by 3 o'clock on May 9. This may save unnecessary trips.

We need Birdathon prizes! As we have done in the past, we will make everyone who brings in at least one pledge (sponsoring yourself counts) eligible for a prize drawing to be held at our annual dinner (attendance not required). However, as of now we have very few prizes. If you would like to donate a prize, please contact me.

Our schedule of starting places and leaders is as follows:

Friday, May 9 at 5 P.M. Meet Paul Butkerei at Jones Beach's Coast Guard Station, or Joe Grupp and Jim Remsen at Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot).

Saturday, May 10. Meet Paul at the Ryan Building behind Mercy Hospital at 6:30 A.M.; or Joe and Jim at Mill Pond, Merrick Road, Wantagh at 5:45 A.M. Other meeting places on Saturday for the Remsen/Grupp team will be Muttontown Preserve (most likely the gate on Route 106) at 8 A.M., Oceanside Marine Nature Study Area at approximately 11 A.M., and Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge at approximately 1:15 P.M. Please try to notify me if you plan

to go with one of these groups so they will know who to expect. Meeting times at Oceanside and Jamaica Bay for my team are estimates; we can be as much as 15 minutes earlier or 30 minutes later, depending on traffic conditions.

Sponsors are the heart of the Birdathon. These are people who agree to give you 25¢, \$1, or any amount for each species you see (they may also give you a flat pledge not based on number of species). Ask anyone you know, and don't forget yourself!

Note on Submitting Pledges: Pledges submitted to me must be received (not mailed) by June 9 to be eligible for prizes. If you want pledge forms, I can supply them. Let's make our 2008 Birdathon special by raising more funds than ever! Good luck!

Birdathon Chairperson: James Remsen, Jr., 8 Venetian Blvd., Lindenhurst, NY 11757.

BROOKSIDE PRESERVE SPRING CLEANUP THANKS

SSAS thanks the people who participated in our productive April 6 cleanup at Brookside Preserve in Freeport/Baldwin: Jim Brown, Dave Denenberg, George Form, Betsy Gulotta, Marilyn Hametz, Todd Kircher, Joe Landesberg, Therese Lucas, Dorothy McGarvey, Daniel O'Connor, Michael Sperling, and David Stolarz.



Explore the coast
with the

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

SUNKEN FOREST, FIRE ISLAND (Sat., May 17). Meet at Sunken Forest Ferry in Sayville. Cost: \$25 includes ferry & guide. Leader: Steve Finn. Call Don for info and reservation.

HORSESHOE CRAB WALK (Sun., May 18). Meet 7 P.M. at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for a short hike to see the mating horseshoe crabs. Free. Call Don for info.

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISES (Sun., June 1 & Sat., June 14, 5-8 P.M.). Join us for a special 3-hour narrated tour of the backwater marshes of Jamaica Bay aboard the 101-foot boat "Golden Sunshine" out of Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Learn about the history, ecology & wildlife of this 13,000-acre preserve. See nesting peregrine falcon, osprey, terns, oystercatchers, as well as egrets, herons, and migrating shorebirds. Cost: \$45 includes wine & cheese, fruit, drinks, snacks.

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 6-8). Spend a weekend of natural history at the end of L.I. during peak heather & orchid blossom time. Activities include birding, botanizing, seining for sea critters, tidepooling. Cost: \$345 includes 2 nights at luxurious Manor House, 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, and star watch. Free 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.

LAST SKIMMER UNTIL OUR FLEA MARKET

Maureen Rube

We need your help to make this flea market a success! Please donate your unused items so that we can provide scholarships for the environmental day camp program at Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. You can bring your tax-deductible items to the flea market site either that day or prior to the day. We will also collect your items at our next meeting. If you need things to be picked up, please call either me at 352-4327 or Nancy Youngfert at 352-8376 to make arrangements. If anyone is available to help us with some pickups, we would really appreciate it!



The flea market is being held at the Youngferts' home, 258 Roosevelt Avenue, Franklin Square, on **Saturday, May 31** from 9 to 4 o'clock. In the event of rain, it will be the next day, Sunday, June 1. Please come out and support this worthwhile cause. It's a lot of fun!

Directions: Take Southern State Parkway Exit 16 north (Franklin Ave.). Cross Hempstead Turnpike; Franklin Ave. becomes New Hyde Park Rd. Bear left at fork to stay on New Hyde Park Rd. After crossing Tulip Ave. followed by Admont Ave., turn left on Benmore Ave. The flea market will be two blocks down on the left side of Benmore, just before its intersection with Roosevelt Ave. [If you're coming from the north, take L.I.E. Exit 34 south (New Hyde Park Rd.), cross two sets of LIRR tracks, and turn right on Benmore.]

BIRD WALKS
Elliott Kuiner

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 ssaudubon.org.

- Apr. 27 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- May 4 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- May 11 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- May 18 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Summer Break
- Aug. 10, 17, 24 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)

STAY INFORMED - JOIN OUR E-LIST!

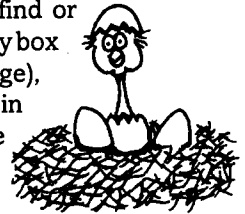
We're now at the beginning of a four-month gap in *Skimmers*. Our chapter-controlled e-list typically has only a few messages each week and there's been virtually no spam. To keep up with local environmental issues and happenings, why not sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list/? It's free and you can drop out anytime.

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

WHAT TO DO WITH DISPLACED YOUNG WILDLIFE

Most young wildlife that you come across are not orphaned. The parents are temporarily away finding food, or are staying away to avoid attracting predators and will later return. If you are concerned that a bird or animal may be orphaned, watch from a distance for a while to see if the parents return. If you have to chase it, it doesn't need your help!

A nestling songbird is only partially feathered and cannot yet run, hop, or move about easily. It should be returned to the nest. If you can't find or reach the nest, make one from a berry box or strainer (something with drainage), line it with grasses, and secure it up in a tree close to where you found the bird. The parents will continue to feed it.



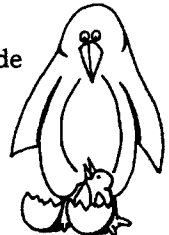
If you are certain a young songbird is orphaned, leave a message for Volunteers for Wildlife at 631-423-0982 for assistance and follow the emergency instructions at www.volunteersforwildlife.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Wendy Murbach

Our new members since last month's *Skimmer* are:

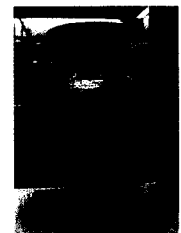
- Cedarhurst Priel Boaron
- Floral Park James F. Clements, Barbara L. Feretic
- Glen Oaks Barbara Moffit
- Malverne Charles Weinschreide
- Merrick Warren Kaplan
- Rockville Centre Ms. ? Callis
- Seaford Bruce Howell
- Wantagh Bob Holland
- West Hempstead Polly A. Trocchia



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ACTION ALERT

Editor's note: As we mentioned last month, SSAS and the other Audubon chapters on Long Island have joined the Coalition for Open Space at EPCAL. The following alert was issued in early April:

Current development proposals here threaten 800 acres of rare grassland habitat as well as the Long Island Pine Barrens, Suffolk County Special Groundwater Protection Area, the Peconic estuary watershed, and the Long Island Sound watershed. State-endangered Short-eared Owls are among the species found here.

In 1998, the Navy turned over the Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL) to the Town of Riverhead, when the Grumman operations located on the site shut down. Today this approximately 2900-acre parcel is facing a number of extremely large development proposals, including a group of eight major themed resorts, a 90-acre fake lake, ATV parks, and industrial development outside the industrial core. The resorts alone could bring at least 1.5 million people to the site each year. The environmental and community impacts caused by development of this magnitude would surely affect the entire region, from air quality to daily commutes!

A few of the environmental impacts include: water pollution from increased sewage and proximity to the sole source aquifer, intense development in the protected Pine Barrens, decreases in air quality due to excessive energy use and increased traffic, increased demand on LI's limited energy supplies and water supply, destruction of rare grassland habitat relied on by endangered/threatened species, threats to freshwater wetlands, as well as negative impacts on the Peconic estuary and LI Sound watersheds.

Some of the quality of life impacts are: greatly increased noise, destruction of rural character, greatly increased traffic on currently congested roads, disruption of services at Calverton National Cemetery, possible widening of small community roads or creation of new roads, increased demand on community services (i.e., ambulance, police, fire), and resultant costs for residents.

Take Action!

Right now Riverhead stands to gain 155 million dollars from just one of these developments (Riverhead Resorts), yet they are currently leading the environmental review. It is essential that we protect our local environment and regional quality of life. Please advocate for a new comprehensive environmental review to be completed by an impartial agency with a regional perspective, such as the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Please support a thorough baseline inventory of the entire site to be completed by the New York Natural Heritage Program; this step will make it clear which areas of the site are not appropriate for development.

- Contact the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and ask them to request lead agency status in

the environmental review for all EPCAL development (Pete Grannis, Commissioner NYS DEC, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233; 518-402-8545).

- Riverhead Town voters, please contact your Town Board members and let them know your concerns with these proposed developments.

- For those outside of Riverhead, contact your town officials and let them know that these proposed developments will have regional impacts that they should be discussing with their colleagues in Riverhead.

- All Long Islanders: Contact your state and federal representatives to let them know that these expansive projects are of great concern to you. (To find your representatives, enter your address at <http://nymap.elections.state.ny.us/nysboe/>.)



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PLOVER VOLUNTEERS WANTED

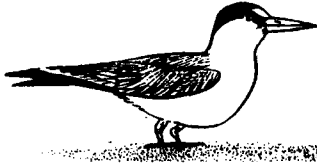
John Zarudsky and Carolyn Spillman

From John: The Town of Hempstead's Department of Conservation and Waterways needs your help in insuring the protection and survival of Piping Plovers, Least and Common Terns, and Black Skimmers that nest between Point Lookout and Atlantic Beach. In New York State, Piping Plover is listed as endangered, Least Tern and Common Tern as threatened, and Black Skimmer as a species of special concern. The Piping Plover is a threatened species nationwide.

Audubon volunteers will help prevent disturbances to nesting areas, will record the presence of plover chicks and any incidents of predation, and can give beachgoers educational literature pertaining to Piping Plovers and terns. Help is particularly needed on evenings, weekends, and holidays from May through August. If you're interested and are able to volunteer regularly, please contact SSAS member John Zarudsky, Conservation Biologist, at 897-4126 (work) or 486-5272.

From Carolyn: Many of Long Island's priority species are beach-nesting birds that are found in few other places in

the state. Dramatic population declines resulting from habitat loss and coastal development led to the listing of the Piping Plover under the Endangered Species Act in 1986. This beach-nesting bird has come a long way since



then, largely due to habitat protection and stewardship activities. Despite these efforts, Piping Plovers and other beach-nesting birds, including Least Terns (pictured), continually face challenges on Long Island's beaches during the breeding season.

Audubon New York's Long Island Bird Conservation program is looking for volunteers to assist with Piping Plover and Least Tern monitoring efforts at local beaches in Nassau and Suffolk. Volunteers are needed to help locate nests and monitor pairs on a weekly basis. If you are interested in volunteering with the program, please contact Carolyn Spilman at cspilman@audubon.org or 631-477-6456.

Biologist Steve Papa of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Long Island Field Office in Brookhaven has approached me for Audubon volunteer help with plover/endangered species monitoring at Nickerson Beach on Long Beach island. He can be reached at 631-776-1401 or Steve_Papa@fws.gov.

Phone: (516) 931-1445
 Fax: (516) 931-1467
 E-Mail: lgk1cpa@aol.com

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**NOMINATIONS FOR 2008-2009
 SSAS BOARD**

At South Shore Audubon Society's general meeting on May 13, officers and directors will be elected for our next fiscal year. All members attending that meeting may nominate candidates from the floor and vote. The SSAS nominating committee (chaired by Wendy Murbach, with Joanne Del Prete and Mary Jane Russell) has recruited the following candidates:

- President — Wendy Murbach
- Vice President — Steve Schellenger
- Treasurer — Laurie Raisher
- Recording Secretary — Ruth Aptacker
- Corresponding Secretary — Alice Blaustein
- Director — Barbara Levine (through June 2011)
- Director — Therese Lucas (through June 2011)



**SIGN UP TODAY
 FOR OUR ANNUAL CENTRAL PARK WALK**

On **Saturday, May 3**, SSAS will be in Central Park for our annual (weather permitting) early May bird walk. City residents (and old-time SSAS members) Chris Cooper and Lloyd Spitalnik have again agreed to lead us through the twisting maze of the Ramble and adjoining areas of the park. In previous years, we've recorded 45 to 70-plus species in under three hours [49 last year, including Scarlet Tanager; Baltimore Oriole (pictured); Great-crested Flycatcher; Wood Thrush; Hermit Thrush; Swainson's Thrush; Veery; and 16 warblers species (American Redstart, Black-and-white, Blackburnian, Black-throated Blue, Black-throated Green, Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, Common Yellowthroat, Magnolia, Nashville, Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Worm-eating, Yellow, and Yellow-rumped)]. There's a photo and article about Chris's "For the Birds!" volunteer work in the recently received Winter 2008 Audubon New York newsletter (p. 10; also downloadable from ny.audubon.org). You can read about Lloyd at www.lloydspitalnikphotos.com, where there's a link to his "Metro Birding Briefs" Yahoo group.



The cost of the walk is \$6 for members and \$8 for nonmembers; all proceeds will be used to support SSAS. Please send your check payable to South Shore Audubon Society, along with your phone number and e-mail address, to: Joanne Del Prete, 20 Ceil Pl., Bethpage, NY 11714-4503 (phone 433-0739, jdelprete47@optonline.net). If you meet us on the train or in the park and have not previously registered, your cost will be \$8 if you're a member and \$10 if not, so register today!

Per the SSAS Field Trip Guidelines published in the *Skimmer* four years ago, if you find that you cannot make the trip, please cancel at least a day in advance to have your fee refunded. If the trip is canceled by the leaders or due to weather, all fees will be refunded.

For train schedule information, you can contact the Long Island Rail Road at (516) 822-5477 or <http://lirr42.mta.info/index.asp>. There are a group of members that will be in one of the front cars of the local Babylon line train that is scheduled to depart from Massapequa at 7:14 and arrive in Penn Station at 8:12. Please note that at many of the LIRR stations, including Massapequa, ticket windows are now closed on weekends. Regardless, a penalty fare of about \$5 is charged by the conductor if you do not purchase a ticket at a window or using the machines located at the stations. A \$4 MetroCard is required for the subway to and from Central Park; it too can be purchased from the LIRR's ticket agents or machines.

We plan to depart from Penn Station's LIRR waiting room at 8:30 to meet our leaders in Central Park at around 9:15. The walk usually ends around noon. You can bring lunch or buy it in the Park, or head back home after the walk if you prefer. Join us!

UPDATE ON LIQUID NATURAL GAS FACILITIES

Jim Brown

Broadwater, a project involving a huge floating liquefied natural gas (LNG) facility to be located in Long Island Sound, has been rejected by the state of New York. The state's decision to terminate the proposal was announced on April 10th by Governor David Paterson. Unfortunately, however, the LNG projects to be constructed off the coast of Long Island are still being pursued. Atlantic Sea Island Group's "Safe Harbor Energy" manmade island project and ExxonMobil's "Blue Ocean Energy" floating terminal were described in the February issue of the *Skimmer*. Incredibly, in the wake of the Broadwater decision, New York Secretary of State Lorraine A. Cortes-Vasquez urged Broadwater's sponsors to construct their own floating LNG facilities in the Atlantic Ocean south of Long Island!

I am happy that Broadwater has finally been defeated, but SSAS believes that if LNG projects are bad for Long Island Sound, they are bad for our ocean as well. LNG projects involve fossil fuels that only contribute to more global warming and heighten dependence on foreign sources of energy. If constructed, these industrial complexes would exclude the public from the ocean areas bordering the terminals, and have negative impacts on the entire marine environment, including endangered and threatened species. (A detailed description of LNG projects can be located at www.cleanoceanaction.org.)

We urge members of SSAS to contact Governor Paterson and tell him that LNG facilities are not good for our ocean. The Governor's stated willingness to embrace renewable energy and serious conservation is to be lauded. The state's support for LNG projects planned for the Atlantic Ocean should be strongly challenged. A facility has been correctly rejected for the Sound, and similar projects in the Atlantic Ocean should be rejected for the same reasons. Governor Paterson can be reached by either phone (518-474-8390) or mail (Executive Chambers, Albany, NY 12224).

A CHANCE TO BE A CHAPERONE

For the past ten years, SSAS has sent disadvantaged children from a school district in our area to the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center's summer day camp program. Our objective is to give the children an opportunity to be exposed to nature and the environment for four half-days and perhaps have them learn a little about conservation.

Our biggest expense is providing a bus to Oyster Bay. If you can be a bus chaperone for a few days in August or assist us in any other way, please contact Michael Sperling at 221-3921 or mssperling@optonline.net.

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

TOM TORMA

In SSAS's 38-year history, very few people have worn as many hats or played as important a role as Tom Torma did. He was identified in the *Skimmer* as our conservation chairperson (1979-80), vice president (1980-82), president (1982-84), vice president again (1986-87), director and fund-raising chairperson (1990-93), programs chairperson (1998-2000), and president again (2000-02), but often handled multiple responsibilities. In 1999, he established and started maintaining our e-mail group and our current website (after National Audubon decided to remove all chapters' pages from its own site).

In October 2006, Tom presented what would turn out to be his final slide program for our chapter. As of this writing (mid-April), you can still see his photography and read about him at his website, www.natureshorizons.net, where there is no hint that he had been diagnosed with advanced lung cancer or that he passed away, on March 29, at age 63. SSAS mourns the loss of a very dedicated environmentalist. In his first President's Message upon returning to our helm in 2000, Tom wrote: "We need to change the mindset for those who own or want to develop the land. Some zoning and environmental laws exist to protect the public from unwise development. Still, the fundamental philosophy remains that landowners have the right to do whatever they want to make money off their land. These moral and ethical standards must change... Developers must consider their neighbors and community in their plans. The air, water, and quality of life must be protected. Planners should think of a whole region, not just an individual piece of property."

It is suggested that donations in memory of Thomas M. Torma support either of the following organizations:

1) Sustainable Long Island (www.sustainableli.org), whose mission is "to promote community and economic development that protects the environment and increases opportunity for all Long Islanders, now and in future generations." Address: 45A Seaman Ave., Bethpage, NY 11714. Phone: 873-0230.

2) Green Chimneys Children's Services, Inc. (www.greenchimneys.org), recognized as the national leader in using animal-assisted therapy for restoring possibilities and creating futures for children with emotional, behavioral, and learning challenges. Their annual Birds of Prey Day features more than 100 raptors (50 of which reside at their Farm and Wildlife Rehabilitation Center), plus falconers, animal experts, and celebrities. Address: Dr. Samuel B. Ross, Jr.; The Friends of Green Chimneys; 400 Doansburg Rd, Box 719; Brewster, NY 10509-0719. Phone: Lillian Roode, (845) 279-2995, ext. 106.

OUR WEB SITE (incl. online store) www.ssaudubon.org

NASSAU COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE 571-6306

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

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Americans Committed to Conservation



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- James Remsen, Jr., Birdathon 631-957-0949
- Dolores Rogers, Welcoming 599-1224
- Mary Jane Russell, Hospitality 766-7397

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

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ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NO.: _____

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