

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



VOLUME 42, NUMBER 3 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2011

NEXT MEETING

John Gaglione

DATE: Tuesday, November 15, 2011
REASON: Library is Closed on Election Day
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKERS: Peter Capainolo & Carol A. Butler
TOPIC: How Fast Can a Falcon Dive?

At our next meeting, the authors of *How Fast Can a Falcon Dive?* will present a digital slide show based on the book published last year by Rutgers University Press.

In their question-and-answer book, our guest speakers define and classify raptors, explore the physical attributes of birds of prey, view how their bodies work, and explain their social and physical behaviors, including how they communicate, hunt, reproduce, and have adapted to the human world.

Peter Capainolo, who received a falconry permit as a Long Islander at age 18 and did a raptor program for us in 2009, is a senior scientific assistant in the Department of Ornithology at the American Museum of Natural History, an adjunct faculty member at the City University of New York, research associate and board member at the Long Island Natural History Museum, and serves on the New York State Falconry Advisory Board.

Carol A. Butler is the coauthor of *Salt Marshes: A Natural and Unnatural History* and books within the Rutgers Animal Q&A series that she originated, including *Do Butterflies Bite?*, *Do Bats Drink Blood?*, *Do Hummingbirds Hum?*, and *Why Do Bees Buzz?*. She is a psychoanalyst and a mediator in private practice in New York City, an adjunct assistant professor at New York University in the Department of Applied Psychology, and a docent at the American Museum of Natural History.

Pre-Meeting Program on Birds. Starting at 7 P.M. most months, Scott Oglesby expands our birding horizons 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 gas station that borders Sunrise Highway.

IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE
BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS.
SHADE-GROWN COFFEE PROTECTS RAINFORESTS!

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.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Bird Collisions

Jim Brown

Last month in this column I referred to the belief that environmentalists must attempt to solve very real problems that confront us and threaten the natural world we love so much. A problem that now confronts and threatens birds — and the enjoyment and conservation of birds comprise the core interest of Audubon members — is being addressed by New York City Audubon, our sister chapter to the west. NYC Audubon is a leader in the study of bird collisions with buildings, and is seeking solutions and suggesting remedies to this huge problem. As many as 1 billion birds per year die in the United States alone from flying into buildings, attracted by light at night and by reflections in windows during the daytime. Autumn and spring migrations are particularly deadly. After habitat loss, bird collisions with glass pose the single greatest human-related threat to birds.

Suburbs are not exempt from the problem of bird-building collisions. The average home on Long Island will cause between 1 and 10 bird fatalities a year, and we have tens of thousands of homes here, as well as glass office buildings that can equal the destructiveness of the deadliest buildings in New York City. In fact, the rate of bird collisions with manmade structures is higher in the suburbs than in both urban and rural areas.

This past September, I and my wife, Gail, had the pleasure of attending a bird-collision monitoring workshop given by NYC Audubon at the Bronx Zoo. The program, attended also by members of Huntington-Oyster Bay Audubon Society, North Shore Audubon Society, and Capital Region Audubon Society, learned about NYC's Safe Flight program in a very hands-on manner. The workshop was held in a certified green building, the Center for Global Conservation. Unfortunately, though "green" in many respects, the Center contains a great deal of reflective glass. The bird-collision monitor of this particular building at the Zoo led the group around the structure, instructing us on the methods used to find and care for dead and injured birds. This is done for this building and other buildings in the city, to study the effects of architectural elements on bird collisions. Circling the Center for Global Conservation, we actually, unfortunately, discovered two dead birds, two recent deaths from collisions with glass. Statistics gathered at this building and others will hopefully provide answers as to what can be done to make buildings safer for birds. It is ironic, and instructive, that a building such as the Center for Global Conservation can create problems for birds because of the very glass that helps make the building energy efficient.

Humans, fortunately, can lessen the potential harmful nature of our buildings. Bird-collision deaths can be prevented by safer site planning and landscape design. Fixes can be made to existing buildings through the use of such devices as netting and decals. New types of glass that are less reflective should be used whenever possible. Nighttime lighting, which confuses and disorients migratory birds, should be kept at a minimum. Buildings are often over lit, and for excessive amounts of time. Hopefully we can lessen the adverse effect on birds produced by increased urbanization, suburbanization, and the concomitant loss of suitable habitat. We must forcefully advocate for policies that foster bird-friendly structures if we are to protect and save those avian species so dear to us.

For more information on this issue of bird collisions, see www.nycaudubon.org.



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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 Tuesday this November) to hear what you can do to help preserve your local environment's health and viability, to hear about local issues that you can help to solve, and to see an interesting program.

Whether you are a beginning birder or someone with a large life list, you will enjoy our weekly Sunday bird walks. 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:

- Bethpage I. R. Shapiro, Annlyn Welles
- East Meadow Fred Brunner, Erica Howe
- Farmingdale Jeremiah Ahern, Hayo Broers
- Franklin Square Stephen Skelly
- Freeport A. M. Hurtado, Elsa Sprado
- Hicksville Dennis Cunningham, Adele Werneberg, Kay Weymouth
- Levittown Donna Lynam
- Lindenhurst Roland Davidson
- Long Beach Marguerite Pawlowski, Hilda Schneider
- Massapequa Claudia Auerbach, Florence Zimmermann
- Merrick Barbara Bowker
- Plainview Sara V. Gertz
- Port Washington Irwin Zuckerman
- Seaford Roy Campolongo, Carol Lowinger
- Wantagh Judith Donadio
- West Hempstead Lenore Nemirow



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ANOTHER BROOKLYN WATER WORKS UPDATE

Michael Sperling

On September 8, I was among five members of SSAS's board who attended a meeting of the Landmark Preservation Commission in Freeport's Village Hall. The topic was the revised proposal to develop the 4.2-acre Brooklyn Water Works property on the southern border of SSAS-managed Brookside Preserve. Just prior to the meeting, the revised proposal was modified to increase the 66-foot tall, 362.5-foot wide building's distance from the Preserve to about 14 feet instead of 3 feet 2-1/2 inches, reducing the size of the building so that, according to the architect's calculations, it would occupy 30% of the property (which is the maximum allowed under Section 210 of Freeport's code). As was the case in March, the overwhelming consensus of the audience was that the proposed Waterworks Apartments should be rejected because it would negatively impact the neighborhood and the Preserve.

On October 4, with one Commission member absent and the 60-day decision deadline having already been extended by the developer while the Commission sought legal advice, a 4-4 vote resulted in the proposal being approved by default. SSAS remains hopeful that the property will be preserved as open space; it is listed as a priority acquisition for the remaining funds of Nassau County's 2006 Environmental Bond Act but a willing seller is required.

BROOKSIDE PRESERVE CLEANUP SCHEDULED

On **Sunday, November 6**, starting at 1 P.M., SSAS will have its fall cleanup at Brookside Preserve, rain or shine.



Brookside is a 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland area owned by Nassau County that was rescued from oblivion and is managed by SSAS. With help from a state grant, we produced a trail guide, educational freshwater wetland guide for children, and a video. PDF files of the guides can be downloaded from ssaudubon.org.

The Preserve is located on the Freeport-Baldwin border, along Milburn Creek; park at the main entrance on Brookside Avenue just north of Sunrise Highway (turn north at the traffic light that's just east of Freeport High School). Please bring gloves, rakes if possible, and friends of all ages.

CONNECTING WITH NATURE

Marilyn Hamelz

Animal adaptations and the importance of the natural environment were the theme of South Shore Audubon Society's summer programs enthusiastically enjoyed by more than 130 children. A program presented by SSAS volunteers which focused on the beach environment, and SSAS-sponsored live animal presentations by educators from the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center, comprised the two sessions.

Kerry Da Silva, Larry Gumbs, Wendy Murbach, Laurie Raisher, and I presented the beach program, which included a live hermit crab; a guessing story; examination of sands; handling of shells, egg masses, and live seaweed; and assembling a beach on a display board.

The children were from the Freeport Recreation Center Summer Youth Program and the Hagedorn Summer Camp, a program of Family and Children's Services in Hempstead. Since they had an available bus, the children from the Hagedorn Center were able to visit the TR Sanctuary for the live animal presentation and had the opportunity to walk the trails. In Freeport, the animals were brought to the Center.

CHECK IT OUT

Therese Lucas

There just might be some Audubon wall calendars left! At \$8 each they're going fast. Calendars (Songbirds, Butterflies, National Parks, and Wildflowers) are being sold at our bird walks and general meetings.

SSAS IS NOW ON FACEBOOK.COM — LIKE US!



Explore the coast with the AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

ASSATEAGUE NATIONAL SEASHORE / CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (Nov. 3-6). Visit this great wildlife area along the Maryland/Virginia coast. See wild ponies, river otter, red fox, endangered Delmarva fox squirrel, bald eagle, peregrine falcon, shorebirds & waterfowl plus 20,000+ snow geese. Cost: \$385 includes lodging at Refuge Inn (heated pool, jacuzzi, sauna, exercise room), 5 guided hikes, safari bus tour of back dune areas, plus "all-you-can-eat" seafood buffet. Leaders: Mickey Cohen & Don Riepe.

WINTER WATERFOWL WORKSHOP (Sat., Nov. 19, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.). Meet at Jamaica Bay Refuge visitor center. View a slide presentation on identification, then hike 1.7 miles around West Pond to look for snow geese, brant, bufflehead, many species of wintering ducks. Contact Don to reserve. Free!

HOLIDAY PARTY (Sat., Dec. 3, 5-9 P.M.). Join us for our annual holiday fundraiser party at VFW Hall in Broad Channel. Cost: \$55 includes buffet dinner, desserts, wine, beer, soda, plus entertainment (flamenco & exotic dancers). We'll have an "Ugly Auction," door prizes, and lots of food & drinks. There will be a nature/bird walk from 3-5 P.M. at nearby Jamaica Bay Refuge.

MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND (Jan. 6-8). Seals, seabirds.

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

