

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



NEXT MEETING

Paul Stessel

DATE: Tuesday, October 13, 2015
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
 144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKER: Dennis Fleury with Live Animals
TOPIC: Tackapausha Wildlife



This month's program will be presented by Dennis Fleury, the site director at Nassau County's Tackapausha Museum and Preserve, located in Seaford. The South Shore Audubon Society has had a long and rewarding relationship with Tackapausha.

Dennis is a font of first-hand knowledge about our local species, and he will be bringing representative live birds (including an owl) and other animals from the museum to explain their life-histories. He will tell the stories of why they have to be kept in captivity and will also talk about upcoming Tackapausha programs. He is a state-licensed wildlife rehabilitator who has been rescuing and advocating for animals since he was a youth. His programs are always lively, informative, and extremely enjoyable.

PARENTS PLEASE NOTE: WE WELCOME CHILDREN! In order to make it possible to bring your children, as this is a school night, we are reversing the general meeting's order this month. We will begin the presentation promptly at 7:30, break for refreshments at about 8:15, and have our committee reports at about 8:30. Dennis is one of the most outstanding wildlife educators on Long Island, and can answer almost any question your child may have about the animals he brings and about our wildlife in general. Join us!

Pre-Meeting Book Discussion. Arrive a half-hour early to participate in a discussion led by R. U. Abyrdar II (aka Paul Stessel) of the book that he and Sy Schiff reviewed in the previous *Skimmer*. This meeting's book is *Tales of a Low-Rent Birder* by Pete Dunne.

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.

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- 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

The Scholarship Programs of the South Shore Audubon Society

Betsy Barowsky

Environmental education is integral to the mission of SSAS. It is an important component of our public programs, our field trips, and many of our environmental advocacy efforts. In addition to these educational activities, we conduct a scholarship program that supports or provides environmental education to college, high school, and grammar school students.

Each year, thanks to the generosity of Evelyn Bishop, who funds our college scholarship program in memory of her late husband Jerry, we award scholarships of at least \$750 to two or three students taking courses for a career in some aspect of environmental conservation. We also award \$250, from our own funds, to three or four high school seniors who have demonstrated a commitment to the environment. (The college program is coordinated by Betsy Gulotta, and the high school program by Joe Landesberg; this year's recipients were listed in September's *Skimmer*.) In addition, each summer we send between 5 and 13 financially disadvantaged youngsters in our catchment area to attend a week of the environmental

NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER Warblers, Warblers, Warblers

Joe Grupp

Mid-May last spring found my wife and I on the shore of Lake Erie, a few miles east of Toledo, Ohio, approximately 600 miles by car from home. We were encouraged, even nudged a bit, to make the trip as early as last fall by Steve Schellenger, a past SSAS field trips chair and birding friend who many of you might know from the SSAS Sunday walks. The attraction there is a concentration of migratory birds that spend a few days in the area, feeding before continuing north across Lake Erie on their way to their breeding grounds. The number of birds, coupled with a birding festival by the name of "Biggest Week in American Birding," organized by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, draws birders by the hundreds to the area during that week of the year. The migratory spectacle has drawn Steve there for the last five years and by the time our stay ended we knew why any birder, including ourselves, could be drawn back to it again and again during future spring migrations.

The physical area of concentration covers five extensive pieces of property, dedicated all or in part to wildlife conservation. First and foremost is Magee Marsh and its six-tenths of a mile long boardwalk and other trails, which is the focal point of songbird activity and a place where we spent time each day. Abutting the marsh, but a car ride away to gain access, is the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge, which has an auto tour road that we rode and a number of foot trails that we never got the chance to explore. Nearby is the Metzger Marsh Wildlife Area, where access to the marsh is mainly from roadside pullouts, but it also has a wooded area with a trail at the road's terminus by the shore of Lake Erie and a footpath along a dike that separates the lake from the mainland. In addition to all that, there is a series of isolated Metroparks, some of significant size, that in part provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. Some have what is called "A Window on Wildlife," which is a large window that looks out on a landscape that includes bird feeders and is designed to attract birds and other wildlife. We took advantage of one of those locations for a while on a somewhat rainy morning.

Add to those locations Maumee Bay State Park, where the festival headquarters was located, and its open spaces and nature trail, and there were more than enough areas to explore in the five days we were there. In total there is a significant amount of open space not only for migratory birds but also for resident birds and other wildlife. It is a special area of conservation.

Our observations there are hard to define, not because there were not any great ones but because there were so many of them. Birds were everywhere on our first morning at Magee Marsh. The first species to impress me was a Chestnut-sided Warbler that was close enough

that binoculars were not really needed. The bird hopped from branch to branch, hopped over my head, and was never far from me. What made the observation more impressive was that eight or ten, maybe a few more, other people gathered around me to also observe and the bird continued its activities, showing absolutely no awareness of the crowd watching it.

A short time and a few birds later, I spent some time with a Bay-breasted Warbler nearly as close and just as cooperative. As we moved on, I spotted another Bay-breasted Warbler, and another and another. There were



lesser numbers of other species there also but Bay-breasted Warblers seemed to be everywhere. Another day it was Tennessee Warblers that seemed to dominate; another day it was Cape May Warblers; and on another day not quite as conspicuous were Blackpoll Warblers (pictured). All the while, other species of warblers and other migrant species were scattered throughout the vegetation, being observed at times by a significant number of people. My list of warblers approached thirty after the first two days.

It seemed that one good observation followed another, not only at Magee Marsh but at other locations as well. Five Bald Eagles, mature and immature, were observed on a distant leafless tree. A scope was needed to determine that one of the birds was really a Bald Eagle; it appeared so thin. It was and I did not think its chances of survival were very good. A scope was also needed to observe a distant Hudsonian Godwit (pictured), a fairly rare bird in the area that was resting



and then feeding before heading north. One evening, Steve and I went at dusk to try and find a few Common Nighthawks that he had seen previously but we had to be satisfied with watching an Eastern Screech-Owl leave its nest box, pounce on some prey, and return to the nest box with it. The owl did it a second time, flying farther from the box. A third time it flew quite a distance away and we did not wait for it to return. The next evening we got two Common Nighthawks and the following day we had one resting on a limb above us as we tried to find an elusive Connecticut Warbler.

Great observations continued throughout our stay but what impressed me most was the number of birds of a particular individual species of warbler as well as the number of individual species that were there most of the time. Frequently the observations were very close. Most species were present for a number of days. We were literally standing in the midst of the spring migration. It was warblers, warblers, warblers everywhere. Thanks for convincing us to make the trip Steve!

Addendum: By chance alone, the current Audubon magazine has an article in it about this spring phenomenon, titled "Welcome to Warblerstock."

SSAS CALENDAR

Marilyn Hametz

October 2015

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
"Tackapausha Wildlife" with live animals
Tuesday, Oct. 13, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
Oct. 4, 18, 25

November 2015

NYS Audubon Council Fall Meeting
Windham, NY, Nov. 6-8
General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, Nov. 10, 7:30 P.M.
Brookside Fall Cleanup
Sunday, Nov. 15, 1 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

December 2015

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, Dec. 8, 7:30 P.M.
Tackapausha Children's Holiday Party
Saturday, Dec. 12, 1 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
Dec. 6, 13, 20

January 2016

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Members' Night
Tuesday, Jan. 12, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
Jan. 3, 10, 17, 24, 31

February 2016

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, Feb. 9, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
Feb. 7, 14, 21, 28

March 2016

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, March 8, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
March 6, 13, 20

April 2016

General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, April 12, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
April 3, 10, 17, 24
Brookside Preserve Cleanup (TBA)

May 2016

Central Park Bird Walk
Saturday, May 7
General Meeting, Freeport Memorial Library
Tuesday, May 12, 7:30 P.M.
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
May 1, 15, 22, 29

June 2016

Annual Dinner
Wednesday, June 15
Bird Walks, Sundays, 9:00 A.M.
June 5, 12

THE PAPER VS. PLASTIC BAG DEBATE

Editor's note: The following question and answer come from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's collection of "Myth Busters," which is archived at www.dec.ny.gov/public/45772.html. This one was published back in 2008.

Q: A paper bag is a more environmentally conscious choice than a plastic bag, right?

A: Neither paper nor plastic is your best choice.

To accurately compare paper and plastic bags requires a look at the life-cycle environmental costs of each. Life-cycle costing considers a product's use of resources and energy and environmental impact during the extraction of the raw materials, transport, manufacture, use, and disposal.

Paper bags are made from trees (a renewable resource) and are biodegradable. However, they take four times as much energy to produce as does a plastic bag. Making pulp for paper requires the use of toxic chemicals and large quantities of water. Paper bags are heavier and bulkier, requiring more trucks to transport than plastic bags.

Plastic bags are a non-renewable, petroleum-based product and never degrade. We use one million plastic bags a minute! Very few are recycled and thousands end up in the ocean — killing marine wildlife. On the plus side, they take 91% less energy to recycle.

Your best option is to get some sturdy, reusable bags and keep a supply handy.

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

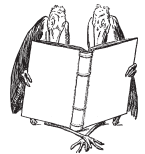
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BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

R. U. Abyrdar II with Sy Schiff

You ask, "Why do we feed birds?" Because... we do it for the birds; in winter they can use our help. But... we also do it for ourselves! Many of us long for some contact, however brief, with nature. Our gifts of birdseed and hospitality towards these birds make us happy as well. Well, which is it? Or is it a little of both?



This month's book is *Feeding Wild Birds in America: Culture, Commerce, and Conservation* by Paul J. Baicich, Margaret A. Barker, and Carrol L. Henderson. Today, feeding birds is big business as well as a popular pastime. It hasn't always been that way. This book tells

SSAS BACKYARD BIRD SURVEY

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.

To participate, 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; and fill in the table provided below. If you have more recordings than lines in the table, please attach an additional piece of paper to the table and submit the additional recordings in the same manner. 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. Additional 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!** **Town of Hempstead residents who feed birds should contact the Town about its ordinance.**

<i>Dates:</i> From _____ to _____							
Date	Time	Species	No.	Date	Time	Species	No.

Submitted by: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Please send to: Mr. J. Grupp, Research Chairperson
600 Edgemere Ave., Uniondale NY 11553
or
E-mail: Birdstudyjoeg02@aol.com

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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Dolores Rogers, Welcoming.....	599-1224
Michael Sperling, <i>Skimmer</i> Editor.....	221-3921

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

Option 1. You can join SSAS for a year by sending \$20 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 by joining Audubon through us for the same price that it costs if you join through NAS (we get \$0 from these dues 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.



Renewing? Please send NAS renewals directly to NAS.



Donations to SSAS are always welcome! \$ _____

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

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____ (Zip+4)

PHONE NO.: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Chapter Code C5ZR150Z (South Shore Audubon Society)

