

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



VOLUME 47, NUMBER 8 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

MAY–AUGUST 2018

NEXT MEETING

Paul Stessel & Bill Belford

DATE: Tuesday, May 8, 2018
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
 144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKER: Dr. Douglas Robinson, Jr.
TOPIC: Bird Migration: Not All Those Who Wander Are Lost

The annual movement of animals across great distances is rooted deep in the biology and evolutionary history of those travelers. We'll explore the timing of migration, the factors that prompt annual trips, and the evolution of migration in those greatest of voyagers, birds!

Dr. Douglas Robinson, Jr., is a behavioral ecologist who has studied bird behavior and its evolutionary and ecological underpinnings for over 20 years. His investigations of Eastern Bluebirds, Bald Eagles, and American Crows have yielded insights into the factors that influence decision-making based upon environmental and social conditions. Doug is a tenured faculty member at Mount Saint Mary College in Newburgh, NY, where he teaches courses in ecology, evolution, animal behavior, conservation biology in New Zealand, and anatomy and physiology. 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 month we have two books to discuss, *One More Warbler: A Life with Birds* by Victor Emanuel with S. Kirk Walsh and *Fastest Things on Wings*, which was reviewed by Frank Scoblete.

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 Hwy.

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

THE RETURN OF THE SSAS BIRDATHON

Michael Sperring

Back in May of 2012, SSAS conducted its 25th annual Birdathon, during which our most dedicated participants spent about 18 hours trying to identify as many species as possible from 5 P.M. on a Friday until 5 P.M. the next day. In good years, a team could record over 130 species while visiting about a half-dozen locations during the peak of spring migration.

We're pleased to announce that Joe Landesberg, with coleaders Bill Belford and Bill Clifford (B&B below), are bringing the Birdathon (a National Audubon Society invention) back to SSAS. You can participate, regardless of birding skills, by joining Joe and/or the two Bills for one or more of the walks listed below, and/or by pledging to donate dollars or cents per species to SSAS (or a flat amount, which we hope will be in dollars). Joe has made a few changes to how the Birdathon operates, expanding it to Sunday while eliminating the Friday evening and Saturday dawn hours, and using a combined species list from all of the walks listed below to determine the number of species identified.

To sign up, send e-mail to landesbe@adelphi.edu, identifying the location(s) where you intend to join us and/or your pledge.

Here are Joe's rules, followed by the schedule:

- ① Tabulate all the species seen.
- ② Count the numbers seen, if you can.
- ③ Get a sponsor with a commitment to donate \$X.XX for each bird species (you can sponsor yourself).
- ④ E-mail your results to Joe for total 2-day tabulation.

Saturday, May 12

☞ Marine Nature Study Area (Oceanside) at 9 A.M. (led by B&B; Joe will be at Alley Pond Park, doing our Birdathon while enrolled in Joe Giunta's series of five Saturday bird walks benefitting Brooklyn Botanic Garden)

☞ Cow Meadow Park & Preserve (Freeport) at approx. noon (B&B)

☞ Cammanns Pond (Merrick) at 3 P.M. (B&B)

☞ Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge at approx. 2:30 P.M. (Joe)

Sunday, May 13

- 👉 Point Lookout Town Park (and Lido Preserve) at 9 A.M. (our usual Sunday morning bird walk led by Joe)
- 👉 Hempstead Lake State Park at 9 A.M. (B&B)
- 👉 Jones Beach West End 2 at noon (Joe)
- 👉 Mill Pond Park at noon (B&B)
- 👉 Massapequa Preserve at 3 P.M. (B&B and Joe)



👉 BIRD WALKS 👉

Joe Landesberg

All walks start at **9 A.M.**; no walk if it rains. Call me at 467-9498 in case of questionable conditions or for other info. Check www.facebook.com/SSAudubon (you don't need to have a Facebook account) for cancellations, changes, and lists from recent walks. Directions and lists of what we've seen this decade are at ssaudubon.org.

- Apr. 22 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Apr. 29 Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north side of Merrick Rd.)
- May 6* **Hempstead Lake State Park** (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
- May 13 Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner (and Lido Preserve afterwards)
- May 20 Hempstead Plains**
- May 27 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- June 3 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Summer Break
- Aug. 19 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- Aug. 26 Mill Pond Park (see above)

*Please note: Due to road closings for the Long Island Marathon, we've changed the May 6 location that was listed in last month's *Skimmer*, postponing Hempstead Plains by two weeks.



**For *Hempstead Plains*: Take the Meadowbrook State Parkway to Exit M4 (also used for Hempstead Turnpike/Nassau Coliseum). Continue on the exit road to Charles Lindbergh Blvd. west. Go a short distance on the boulevard to the first exit on the right, which is for Nassau Community College's East Campus parking lots. After turning, park on the right along the entrance to Hempstead Plains and its Education Center. See www.friendsofhp.org/site/index.php?id=9 for a link to Google's map.



ALSO HAPPENING ON MAY 5

As usual, our annual Central Park walk (see next page) is the same day as the much more recently established "I Love My Park Day" in NY. If you're not heading into Manhattan with us, check out <https://www.ptny.org/events/i-love-my-park-day/find-event> to register for the volunteer opportunities at Hempstead Lake State Park (a cleanup at the Northeast Pond), Jones Beach State Park (installation of snow fence and beach mats, plus a cleanup), and elsewhere.

SSAS COMMENTS ON OFFSHORE WIND POWER

Editor's note: One of the many issues that SSAS's board continues to pursue with state and federal government officials is the future installation of wind turbines off Long Island's South Shore. In early April, we submitted comments (drafted by Brien and Jim, with input from Guy and your editor) on New York State's Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement; they are excerpted below.

The DGEIS is a preliminary document that overall correctly defers to site-specific environmental impact statements and identifies areas necessary for study regarding birds and wildlife.

While the DGEIS recognizes that the area for Offshore Wind Energy Development (OWED) overlaps with the Atlantic Flyway from Maryland to Maine, it omits study of the Flyway from Cumulative Impacts. The displacement, disturbance, and loss of habitat for birds over such a large area, especially at the crucial time of migration, when diminished foraging opportunities and the extra energy expenditure for alternate routes can be fatal, need to be emphasized and studied for mitigation. The negative impacts will be compounded when commercial and recreational vessels are displaced into wildlife habitat.

According to the DGEIS, the major routes of bird migration are closer to shore than the planned turbines. However, the DGEIS also recognizes that storms may force birds farther out to sea where they may encounter turbines. Moreover, there is no guarantee that other states along the Atlantic Flyway will be as careful as we hope New York will be in identifying avian "hotspots" to be avoided. Therefore, we would like to emphasize that cumulative impacts on birds be studied as completely as possible, and take into consideration the totality of wind farm projects that will be located along the Atlantic Flyway.



In sum, we are optimistic about being able to support specific OWEDs that are planned for areas chosen by NYSERDA [New York State Energy Research & Development Authority — ed.] and/or BOEM [the federal Bureau of Ocean Energy Management — ed.], provided that they undertake the most complete wildlife studies, especially bird studies. Monitoring must be done during the entire life of any OWED, and if negative impacts do indeed occur, they must be mitigated in some meaningful way. We recommend that the DGEIS incorporate these points about monitoring and mitigation as addressed in Wing Goodale's report, *Offshore Wind Energy Development and Birds in New York: Managing risk and identifying data gaps*. Goodale's report was produced for the South Shore Audubon Society and New York City Audubon with a grant from the Moore Charitable Foundation and National Audubon Society, and is available at www.ssaudubon.org/pdfs/Offshore-Wind-Energy-Development-and-Birds-in-NY.pdf.

**OUR EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL
CENTRAL PARK WALK**

On **Saturday, May 5**, SSAS is planning to be in Central Park for our annual (weather permitting) early May bird walk. As usual, Chris Cooper (who was featured in HBO's 2012 documentary, "Birders: The Central Park Effect," and traces his birding roots to SSAS) has again agreed to lead us through the twisting, hilly maze of the Ramble and adjoining areas of the park.



In previous years, we've recorded from 31 to 70-plus species in under three hours. A year ago we had 47 species, 15 of which were warblers. Highlights included three vireo species, Chimney Swift (pictured), Veery, Worm-eating Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, Prairie Warbler, and Cape May Warbler.

The cost of the walk is \$5, which is a tax-deductible donation to SSAS (refundable if we rain out or you cancel in advance). 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 (jdelprete47@optonline.net, phone 433-0739).

Some of us will be aboard the local Babylon line train that is due in Penn Station at 8:14. We aim to depart from Penn's LIRR waiting room at 8:30 to meet Chris at Belvedere Castle at around 9:15. Please buy a MetroCard for the subway. You can bring lunch, buy lunch in the park or elsewhere, or head back home after the walk if you prefer. Joanne's cell (476-3761) will be on that day only. Join us!

Staircase Alert: Our usual route to Belvedere Castle includes a 30-step climb from the 79th Street Transverse.

New-York Historical Society Exhibit. If you're not pooped, and since this year there won't be any local NHL or NBA playoff games to hurry home for, you may want to do an afternoon visit to 170 Central Park West (at 77th St.) to see "Feathers: Fashion and the Fight for Wildlife," whose three-month run ends on July 15 and is in partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and New York City Audubon. The exhibit includes 14 watercolors by John James Audubon of species that were saved by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which has been in effect for 100 years. See www.nyhistory.org/exhibitions/feathers-fashion-and-fight-wildlife for details; see <http://www.audubon.org/news/the-migratory-bird-treaty-act-explained> to learn about the law and current threats to it (for the latter, you can also look at the February *Skimmer*, which is posted at ssaudubon.org).

NEXT STOP: MASSAPEQUA PUBLIC LIBRARY

SSAS's display case exhibit has now moved to both branches of the Massapequa Public Library, thanks to the efforts of Marilyn Hametz and Betty Belford. In May, it's scheduled to move to the Island Park Public Library.

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 Memorial Library from 7:30–9:30 P.M., usually on the second Tuesday of the month from September through May, 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 last month's *Skimmer* are:

- Freeport Walter Dirzulaitis
- Glen Oaks..... Rachelle Nones
- Hempstead..... Christina Hall, Oluremi Oshin
- Hicksville Chris Papazafiratu
- Long Beach Myra Cohen, Elsa Haupt, Patricia Ripley
- Massapequa..... Linda Mallon
- Oceanside Sarala Johnson
- Roosevelt..... Mario Vasquez
- Wantagh Claudia Keller
- West Hempstead.... Skylar Bader
- Woodmere Jeffrey Kramer



Phone: (516) 931-1445
 Fax: (516) 931-1467
 E-Mail: lenny@konskerandcompany.com

LEONARD G. KONSKER
 CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

Konsker and Company, LTD
 990 Westbury Rd., Suite 103
 Westbury, New York 11590

HOW TO REPORT BANDED SHOREBIRDS

Reporting re-sightings of banded birds plays an important role in shorebird conservation. See <http://ny.audubon.org/news/how-report-banded-shorebirds> for information about the various bands used on Piping Plovers and other Long Island shorebirds.

SHOREBIRD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Town of Hempstead's Department of Conservation and Waterways needs your help in ensuring the protection and survival of Piping Plovers, Least and Common Terns, and Black Skimmers that nest between Point Lookout and Atlantic Beach. 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 longtime SSAS member John Zarudsky, Conservation Biologist, at 486-5272.



NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2018-2019 BOARD

At South Shore Audubon Society's general meeting on **May 8**, officers will be elected for our next fiscal year and directors will be elected to three-year terms. All members attending that meeting may nominate candidates from the floor and vote. The SSAS Nominating Committee (chaired by Jim Brown, with Joe Landesberg and Gail Brown) recommends the following candidates: Michael Sperling, president; Brien Weiner, vice president; Joe Landesberg, treasurer; Alene Scoblete, recording secretary; Bill Clifford, director; and Frank Scoblete, director.

Directors & Officers Liability Insurance. In accordance with state law, this paragraph informs our members prior to the election that SSAS obtained D&O insurance for its board at a cost of \$878.



VICTORIES FOR BIRDS IN BUDGET BILL

Editor's note: This article appeared in the April 2018 Audubon Advisory. You can sign up for alerts at action.audubon.org.

After months of negotiations, Congress passed a spending bill for the 2018 fiscal year in late March, rejecting proposed budget cuts from the administration and numerous harmful policy riders that threatened vulnerable habitats and species. Instead, the omnibus spending bill increased or maintained funding levels for vital conservation programs that will benefit birds and other wildlife.

The spending bill increased funding for many programs within the Department of the Interior that are vital for birds, including an additional \$25 million for the Land and Water Conservation Fund and increased support for the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. For the first time, it included funds to help restore the Delaware River Basin. It also included important advancements in western water conservation to benefit the Colorado River Basin, including a more than 40% increase for WaterSMART grants that fund projects that help communities conserve and use water more efficiently.

Congress rejected the White House budget proposal to zero out funding for the Environmental Protection Agency's regional ecosystem restoration programs. Instead, the bill provides for continued funding for the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative and Chesapeake Bay cleanup, and increases funding for the Long Island Sound and Gulf of Mexico restoration programs. Congress also reversed course on years of declining support for critical conservation programs carried out by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. For a decade, Congress has chipped away at programs that help farmers preserve habitat on their lands, such as the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Regional Conservation Partnership Program; the bill passed last month leaves the current funding in place. It also includes \$150 million for the USDA's Watershed program to help protect and secure water resources in the west. And at the Department of Energy, the bill increases funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy, with strong increases for the solar energy program.



Critically, the final bill rejected numerous anti-environment riders, including language that would have put the old-growth rainforest of the Tongass National Forest in Alaska at risk of more clearcut logging, rollbacks to the Endangered Species Act and removal of ESA protections for key species, disastrous projects such as the Yazoo Pumps proposal that would have drained 200,000 acres of wetlands in the Mississippi River Delta, and several provisions that weakened the Clean Water Act and Clean Air Act.



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 674-0982 (during hospital hours) or e-mail info@volunteersforwildlife.org (after hours) for assistance and follow the emergency instructions at www.volunteersforwildlife.org/baby-birds.



OUR 47TH ANNUAL DINNER IS ON JUNE 13

Please join us — see inserted sheet for information.