

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 9, NO. 5

JANUARY 1979

MEETING: TUESDAY, JANUARY 9TH
FREEPORT LIBRARY
8:15 P.M.

GUEST

SPEAKER: Mr. Alex McKay

"The Seasons of Eatons Neck"

This program will feature a slide show depicting a naturalists' view of a North Shore Peninsula through the seasons. Mr. McKay will emphasize wildlife, flora, and patterns in nature. He is a past president of Huntington Audubon, a trustee of the Suffolk County Department of Parks, Recreation and Conservation. His photographs have been published in "Adirondack Life" and "The Long Island Naturalist". Come and join us for a highly entertaining and informative evening.

IN FEBRUARY: Our 4th Annual
Audience Participation Night

This is advance notice to enable members to prepare and select their favorite slides. All members and their friends are invited to show 5 to 10 slides. All subjects relevant to nature are welcome. Further details will be in the February newsletter.



BIRD SEED SAVINGS DAY-JANUARY 27, 1979

Our final bird seed sale of the season will be held on Saturday, January 27, at the Tackapausha Museum between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. All profits from the seed sale will be donated to the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. Seed can be pre-ordered on the enclosed order form. Although extra seed will be available, pre-ordering forms must reach me no later than January 15. Make checks payable to the South Shore Audubon Society and mail both check and order form to Paul T. Butkereiit, 268 Wallace St., Freeport, N.Y. 11520. Volunteers will be needed on the sale day. If you are interested in assisting us with this event, please call 623-0843 or LY 3-4554.

ADDED INFORMATION: A variety of bird feeders will be available for purchase on the day of the sale. The Special Wild Bird Seed is guaranteed 1/3 sunflower seed and does contain some thistle seed. The soft cover book "Birds of North America" along with Bushnell Binoculars, which are sold to benefit SSAS programs, will be available at discount prices. The Tackapausha Museum is located on Washington Avenue in Seaford, just north of Merrick Road and about 1/4 mile south of Sunrise Highway.

ORDER FORM IS ON PAGE 2

BASIC ACCLIMATIZATION WORKSHOP-APRIL 27-29

A special workshop for all those who love the out-of-doors and would like to share their feelings and understandings with others. Write: Ms. Laurie Farber, Coord.
Box 464

Hicksville, N.Y. 11801
or call (516) 931-3662, (516) 997-8700,
Ext. 264.

BIRD SEED SAVINGS DAY - JAN. 27

QUANTITY	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL
_____ 25 lb. bag	SUNFLOWER SEED	@ \$ 5.90 _____
_____ 50 lb. bag	SUNFLOWER SEED	@ \$11.20 _____
_____ 25 lb. bag	WILD BIRD SEED	@ \$ 3.65 _____
_____ 50 lb. bag	WILD BIRD SEED	@ \$ 7.20 _____
_____ 25 lb. bag	CRACKED CORN	@ \$ 3.50 _____
_____ 50 lb. bag	CRACKED CORN	@ \$ 6.80 _____
_____ 20 lb. bag	SPECIAL WILD BIRD SEED	@ \$ 5.35 _____
_____ 40 lb. bag	SPECIAL WILD BIRD SEED	@ \$10.50 _____
_____ 5 lb. bag	THISTLE SEED	@ \$ 5.50 _____
_____ 10 lb. bag	THISTLE SEED	@ \$11.00 _____
_____ 10 lb. bag	SUNFLOWER HEARTS	@ \$ 5.90 _____
_____ 10 lb. bag	PEANUT BITS	@ \$ 5.90 _____
_____ 1 lb. 12 oz.	MAINE MANNA SEED CAKE	@ \$ 2.95 _____

Please find check for \$ _____ enclosed

Name: _____ Address _____
 City _____ Zip _____ PHONE _____

AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM/LECTURE SERIES

Wednesday, March 7, 1979
Alan J. King, "Song of the Prairie"

Wednesday, May 2, 1979
Tom Pyas, "Northwest Adventures and Adventures in Penn's Woods"

Shows are held at the Town Hall Pavilion, Hempstead at 8:15 P.M. For free tickets (limit of 2) send a stamped self-addressed envelope specifying date and number of tickets to Audubon Wildlife Film/Lecture Series, 200 North Franklin St., Hempstead, N.Y. 11550.

NOTE: PLEASE SEND YOUR BIRD FEEDER SURVEYS TO MIRIAM RAYNOR SOON. ONLY A FEW BIRD COUNTS HAVE BEEN RECEIVED. THANK YOU.

CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

This year SSAS is offering three adult scholarships for Audubon Workshops: (1) one two-week workshop in Maine and (2) two one-week workshops in Connecticut. All are scheduled for July. If you are interested, in being considered for a scholarship, please write explaining how this experience could help you and aid you in helping others to spread the ecological theme. Final decisions will be made in April.



CONSERVATION NEWS

NATURE PRESERVES AND PROPERTY TAXES

A memo from the New York State Government Liaison Office, The Nature Conservancy.

For decades, non-profit conservation organizations in New York have been acquiring and maintaining natural areas for public benefit. During that time, the Nature Conservancy, Audubon Societies, and other organizations have been exempt from real property taxes under state law. Tax relief is basic to the private sector's ability to complement local and state land protection policies. Today, exemption is threatened. Private groups protecting public preserves need your help to assure that the costs and benefits of exempt natural areas are widely known to public decision makers.

The NYS Real Property Tax Law exempts lands owned and used exclusively for "religious, charitable, hospital, educational, moral and mental improvement of men, women or children or cemetery purposes." Until recently, the courts and taxing authorities have found natural area protection and use to be exempt as educational, charitable, and for moral and mental improvement of people. But the exemption law is subject to contradictory interpretation. Within the next six months or year, the State Court of Appeals will be considering whether "conservation" and "recreational" uses of nature preserves fit within the terms of the law.

Exemption for some of New York's most precious natural areas is threatened by the law's ambiguity and by widespread pressures for an increase in local tax revenues. You can help assure that a heightened political awareness will protect nature preserves from uninformed or token tax exemption "reforms".

Returning presently exempt natural areas to the tax rolls would be meaningless as an exemption reform. It would mean the end of private

sector acquisition and maintenance of nature preserves for the public. Spread the facts about the costs and benefits of protected, unspoiled areas. Let your state representative know your opinion on the subject. For more information write to Marcia Hopple, Director, NYS Government Liaison Office, The Nature Conservancy, 196 Morton Avenue, Albany, N.Y. 12202.

CURRENT SITE BEST PLACE FOR OCEAN DUMPING MUNICIPAL WASTES

After months of re-examination, Region II has decided that the best place to maintain the municipal sludge ocean disposal site is still 12 miles off Sandy Hook. EPA has determined that the existing sewage sludge dump site is not a threat to public health and can reasonably continue in use, if closely monitored until ocean dumping is phased out by December 31, 1981.

A final environmental impact statement (EIS) and Federal Register excerpts, as well as letters from interested persons and government agencies, support this conclusion.

EPA Regional Administrator Chris Beck explained that EPA has an alternate dump site selected should monitoring prove that a danger to public health or coastal water quality exists from overtaxing the present dump site.

EPA is opposed to the use of the alternate site not only because of the immediate contamination of still another area of clean ocean bottom, but also because of the cost of off-shore hauling, the need for additional Coast Guard personnel to guard against short dumping, and the hazards of ocean navigation.

The use of a dump site even farther at sea, such as over the edge of the continental shelf 100 miles off shore, would be unfeasible for scientific, not to mention reasons of economics, logistics, surveillance and monitoring.

(Continued on Page 4)

CONSERVATION NEWS CONT'D.

COSTLE SAYS JAPAN'S USE OF SCRUBBERS
SETS AN EXAMPLE FOR U.S. UTILITIES

EPA Administrator Douglas M. Costle asked U.S. utilities to emulate Japan's commitment to the successful application of scrubber technology to control sulfur dioxide pollution from power plants. "Flue gas desulfurization systems (scrubbers) are playing an increasingly important role in both the U.S. and Japan as the primary means of reducing sulfur dioxide, a dangerous pollutant which can cause emphysema, bronchitis, asthma and other lung diseases. The need for scrubbers will become more urgent in the future, as more and more utilities turn to coal as a means of producing power," Costle pointed out.

FROM THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE:

Since the Education Chairpersons of South Shore Audubon received a BOCES grant from Nassau County this year, we have been able to present some outstanding ecological programs to the elementary schools in Freeport.

Asa Starkweather is visiting all the 3rd and 4th grades in the district with his exciting stuffed birds and discussion. These visits have sparked teacher involvement in ecological projects.

Alan Ruppert of the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary came to the Columbus Avenue School to present two Assembly Programs that were paid for by the Parent-Teacher Association. Children enjoyed the "fashion show" and skit about birds and particularly the live screech and great-horned owls that he brought with him. The Sanctuary will be doing other programs for the Freeport Schools later in the year.

Another important educational feature this year has been in-service workshops that have been conducted by your co-chairpersons for the teachers in the Freeport School District. Linda Schlotterhausen of South Shore Audubon conducted a workshop on endangered and threatened animals as a consultant from this Audubon Chapter. This program has

been well received and we would like to see more of these activities happen in other school systems.

Elaine Butkereiit
Gloria Cohen
Co-Chairpersons
Education

Las Islas Encantadas
The Galapagos Islands

5. Isabela - Our Blue-Foot Heaven

A confusing fact about the Galapagos is that every island has an English name and an official name, in Spanish, and several have other names. A ridiculous climax is reached in Santa Cruz, the site of the Darwin research station, which is also known as Indefatigable, Bolivia, Norfolk, Porter, Valdez, Chavez and San Clemente. In these articles I will use the most commonly accepted name. The official name of Tower, described in the last three articles, is Genovesa.

Isabela (Albemarle), some 75 miles long, resembles on the map a sea horse sitting on a rock. It is by far the largest island of the archipelago, occupying just over half of the total land area of 3,000 square miles.

Since whales are often seen in the narrow strait between Isabela, in the area of Tagus Cove, and Fernandina (Narborough), everyone was on deck before 6 A.M. However, for once our luck ran out, and all we saw was one spout in the far distance. Even with binoculars we could not see the animal.

Our landing at Tagus Cove was one of the few dry ones, where the launch could pull up close enough to a rock so we did not have to wade ashore watching for sting rays. We immediately came across hordes of blue-footed boobies, intermediate in size between the red-footed and masked boobies. These fascinating birds are a rather drab deep beige on the back and wing, with speckled heads and necks, white underneath and startlingly gaudy blue feet.

(Continued on Page 5)

They fish the inshore waters, and we frequently saw them from the shore plunging into the water. Their long tails enable them to rapidly change direction under water so that they can dive into very shallow water, especially the males. Nelson has seen a male dive from a height of 50 feet into two feet of water without hitting bottom. Since they fish close inshore, the blue-foots can make short and frequent food-gathering trips of less than an hour. They can thus care for more young, and generally two or three chicks are raised per brood. When the chicks are young the male does most of the fishing but as the chicks grow older and require more food, the female takes over almost completely as she can travel farther and bring back more food, being bigger and stronger.

Contrary to popular belief, boobies do not spear their fish but dive under them and come up to seize their food.

We were extremely fortunate in that we could observe at close hand the mating display of the blue foot. The male goose-stepped several minutes, lifting his bright feet high enough to show the bottoms. The male and female then faced each other and sky-pointed, with heads and tails pointing straight up. The female then picked up a twig in her beak, held it high, and carefully put it down again. The male picked it up, lifted it a short distance, and likewise laid it down again. After another short period of foot lifting, in place, they faced each other again, sky-pointed, and spread their large wings. The whole ceremony was punctuated from time to time with the female's rather strident honking and the male's haunting,

evocative whistle. It is generally, though not universally, believed that the blue-foot at one time built nests and this twig lifting is symbolic of this phase of their history.

The sexes can be distinguished by the differences in size, the male being only two-thirds as large as the female. In all booby species the female is larger, but it most marked in the blue-foot; in the masked the male is about eight-ninths and the red-foot nine-tenths the size of its mate. Also, the female has dark pigment around the pupil of the eye, so that it appears much larger, making for easy identification by any birder.

After several hours of observing the blue-foot colony we returned to the two launches and cruised some distance along the shore. The low cliffs were full of brown pelicans, the males in their breeding plumage: a bright rusty brown stripe running from their heads down the backs of their long necks. Many females were sitting on their nests, interspersed with several juveniles.

A short distance further we spotted several Galapagos penguins swimming or sitting on the cliffs. Again, we were quite startled to see that these small penguins swim on the water almost like ducks. They are the second smallest penguin in the world-the smallest being the fairy penguin of Australia.

After lunch on our yacht, we crossed the narrow channel for our next island-Fernandina.

Al Lemke

FOR NON-MEMBERS

Application for joint Audubon Membership, please check type desired.

_____ Individual 18.00/year	_____ Family 21.00/year
--- Senior Citizen Individual 13.50/year	_____ Student 13.50/year
_____ Senior Citizen Family 15.00/year	

Charter: South Shore Audubon Society

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Membership entitles you to receive six issues of Audubon magazine, published by the National Audubon Society, and ten issues of the South Shore Skimmer which lists all our local activities. Make checks payable to the National Audubon Society, and mail to the South Shore Audubon Society, P.O.Box 31 Freeport, N.Y. 11520.

FEBRUARY NEWS DEADLINE JAN 15

NEXT MEETING-----TUESDAY, JANUARY 9TH, FREEPORT LIBRARY, 8:15 P.M.

FIELD TRIPS: Starting time - 9:30 A.M.

No walk if it rains, snows, or temperature is 25 degrees or below.

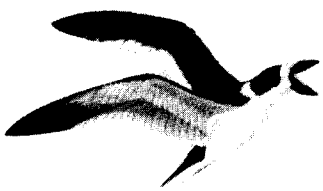
- NOV. 12 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- 19 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 26 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- DEC. 3 Pelham Bay-Throg'sNeck Bridge, right
toll booth at 9:00 A.M. side
- 10 West End #2, N.E. corner
- 17 West End #2, N.W. corner
- JAN. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 14 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner
- 21 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- 28 Short Beach, West End #2, N.E. corner
- FEB. 4 West End #2, N.W. corner
- 11 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 18 Zach's Bay, Pkg.Fld.#4, N.E. corner

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BINOCULAR SAVINGS are available thru barbara Tancredi evenings 7-9 887-2491
the club. Save 30 to 50% on Bushnell Bill Herzog evenings 7 to 9 791-7886
and Bausch and Lomb binoculars and Asa Starkweather 599-5824
scopes. See us at meetings and Joan Butkerei 593-4554
birdwalks or call the committee members listed.

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P.O. BOX 31
FREEPORT, N.Y. 11520



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