

SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 10, NO. 7

MARCH 1980

CAN YOU SEE YOURSELF IN THIS PICTURE ?



Caption & photo - E. Butkerei

Take a short one-hour car ride to Greenwich, Connecticut and you can be part of this group any Saturday afternoon or for a full week during the summer months.

To see and hear more about this area, come to our meeting on March 11 and see two slide shows. One will be the experiences of two of our members, Elaine Butkerei and Gloria Cohen, and the other will be presented by Ted Gilman, Naturalist and Director of the Audubon Center at Greenwich.

SSAS SCHOLARSHIPS

South Shore Audubon Society is offering three adult scholarships for Audubon Workshops: (1) two-week workshop in Maine and (2) one-week workshops in Greenwich, Connecticut. All are scheduled for mid to late July. If you would like to be considered for a scholarship, please write explaining how this experience could help you to further spread the ecological theme. You need not be a member of Audubon to try.

Deadline: May 1, 1980
Write to: South Shore Audubon Society
P.O. Box 31
Freeport, New York 11520

MARCH MEETING

TUESDAY, MARCH 11
FREEPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY
8:15 P.M.

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CONSERVATION

by Thomas Torma

Declining Renewable Resources

We can see evidence of declining mineral resources all around us. Such resources as petroleum, natural gas and minerals, such as tungsten, nickel, zinc, silver, lead and platinum, have either peaked in production or are approaching that point.

There has also been a decline in our so-called renewable resources. Two studies, one by World Watch and the other by the National Wildlife Federation (Annual Environmental Index), emphasize this growing problem. World Watch used data gathered by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization and the United States Department of Agriculture. World Watch used six commodities in its study: fish, beef, mutton, wool, cereals and wood. All of these commodities have peaked in and are steadily declining.

Wood production peaked in 1967, when it totaled 2.2 cubic feet per person. Today the world forests produce only 2 cubic feet per person. The world fisheries' production peaked at 43 pounds per person in 1970, but today that figure is at 36 pounds per person. Beef, which peaked in 1976 with 26 pounds per person, is now at a level of 24 pounds. Mutton has declined from a high of 4.2 pounds per person to 4 pounds. Wool reached a peak twenty years ago at 2 pounds and stands today at 1.4 pounds. Cereal production reached a high of 739 pounds per person in 1971. Today the world croplands produce only 701 pounds per person.

One reason for these declines is the abuse of our soil. According to the National Wildlife Federation, we lose about 5 tons of soil per acre per year due to erosion. World Watch claims that we are losing soil on nearly a fifth of the world farmland. We are also losing farmland to development. In the 1970's the number of households in the United States alone increased three-fold. Government projects also cause a reduction in farmland. One example is the Columbia Dam on the Duck River in Tennessee. This project will flood 12,600 acres of

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Audubon Expedition

by Gail Bialostok



It is the middle of a chilly January. The thought of crawling out of my nest-haven sleeping bag is shocking. The cold, crisp air makes it difficult to inhale, but the anticipation of the perfect beauty of nature waiting patiently for me to look around is well worth that first unbelievably brisk breath.

I can hear the sharp shrill of the coot, accompanied by an orchestra of larks and thrushes, the rustling of the leaves on the forest floor and the light whistling of wind through the canopy of trees. The cold, biting chill that permeated my body and deadened my fingertips last night is no longer present, for, surrounded by nature's serene beauty, I fell into a warm, peaceful sleep.

As I eagerly wait for the sun's first rays to cast bizarre figures on the side of my tent, a meadowlark arranges and rearranges a melodious repertoire, beckoning me to come out and marvel at his virtuosity. The sounds become almost deafening, especially if I try to imagine the feverish activity going on all around me: the squirrels foraging for nuts; the fumbling and shoving of ants slowly moving their food on a dirt path toward their hill; the spider tediously spinning his web for an unwary victim; the microscopic animals feeding on the fallen detritus leaves. All of these are part of my bedroom.

As I unzip my sleeping bag and gaze through my tent window, the feeling of nature's incredible, flawless

NO BIRD !!

by Asa Starkweather



Mr. Lindauer of North Valley Stream called me after trying for six days to get somebody! anybody!! to get a squirrel out of his chimney. Exterminators said they wouldn't come until it was dead. Majorie Lindauer wouldn't go into her living room because, whenever she did, the squirrel would go, "errrr." I didn't know squirrels growled, but as we went into the room, "errrr, errrr, errrr."

I tried to reach it, but, when the damper was open, the squirrel stayed behind it and said, "errrr." There was no way to take the damper out, nor could I dislodge it with a golf club or a bent wire.

I suggested food and water, and Millard produced half an English muffin with a strip of bacon on top and a pan of water. The Squirrel was down like a shot, but, when we closed in, it was back behind the damper like a shot. Fortunately, Millard Lindauer is handy. He had a coil of wire and he rigged wires so that he could close the damper from across the room with the screen against the fireplace.

Back down came the squirrel, still hungry and thirsty. Bang went the damper, and the squirrel was trapped in the fireplace!

We would now have had the problem of releasing the squirrel from the fireplace, but, unable to get past the damper, it ran up the screen and plastered itself on the curved top section of the screen. Millard had some large, collapsed corrugated boxes. I pulled the screen slightly away and slipped part of a box behind it. Then I reached in the side and pulled it against the screen. The squirrel was trapped. Picking up the screen and holding the box in place, I went out the front door and took the box away. Out popped the squirrel and aimed for the still open front door! I said, "Grrrr," and it changed its mind and went across the lawn.

I don't know what we would have done if the squirrel hadn't cooperated and climbed into the curve of the screen. I don't want any more squirrels. Birds are easier!

wonder once again far exceeds anything within the realm of my imagination. Only when one lives, feels and touches the natural environment directly does one achieve such heightened sensitivity. A year-long program with the National Audubon Society Expedition Institute has given me a unique opportunity to explore not only the natural surroundings but my relationship with and sense of belonging to the environment as well. Twenty of us - high school, college and graduate students receiving credit from Lesley College in Cambridge, Massachusetts - explore a wide variety of natural and social environments through exposure to many different lifestyles across the country. Everlasting values are created when these widely varied environments serve as our classrooms.

Backpacking along the New England coast, hiking the White Mountains, living with and sharing the daily life of a Mennonite farmer, canoeing along the Okefenokee,

visiting our senators and congressmen in Washington to discuss conservation issues, exploring Indian and desert communities out west are only a few of the virtually unlimited sources of knowledge we encounter. Sharing our energies with resource specialists heightens each of these learning experiences. The traditional music and dances of each region are also an integral part of our expedition.

Acquiring a working knowledge of community development, getting an in-depth look at my surroundings and building an education which opens incomparable opportunities rids me of the societal blinders I have worn for so long. This sense of belonging enables me to experience an understanding of the intricately spun web of nature's wonders.

For me, my school year with Audubon was an adventure that served to whet my appetite for more and more knowledge.

South by Southwest

by Al Lemke

III Bryce Canyon

In the heart of the high Paunsaugunt Plateau of southwest Utah lies Bryce Canyon National Park. A description of the region written a century ago by Mr. T.C. Bailey, a U.S. Deputy Surveyor, aptly describes this natural wonder: "the surface breaks off almost perpendicularly to a depth of several hundred feet -as though the bottom had dropped out and left rocks standing in all shapes and forms as lone sentinels over the grotesque and picturesque scenes. There are thousands of red, white, purple and vermilion colored rocks, of all sizes, resembling sentinels on the walls of castles, monks and priest in their robes, cathedrals and congregations, presenting the wildest and most wonderful scene that the eye of man ever beheld."

The events that shaped Bryce Canyon began with the deposition of the pink rock layers in the early Eocene age, some 60 million years ago. Even then, eons had already passed away. High mountains had developed several times, only to be eroded away. Streams carried these eroded materials into the last ocean to cover the region, about 120 million years ago. These earlier rocks make up much of the walls of the Grand Canyon and the cliffs of Zion National Park - in Bryce they are buried deep beneath the surface of the Paunsaugunt Plateau. For 30 million years the streams deposited sediments and small, rounded pebbles, and marine animals left a limy ooze.

This was followed by a prolonged period of uplift. The ocean became scattered lakes which in turn disappeared completely. The sediments hardened into rock and today form the varying layers of limestone, shale and conglomerate that make up the Wasatch formation.

The uplift also resulted in many fractures and breaks in the surface. At one of these fractures, the Paunsaugunt Fault, the earth collapsed, forming Bryce Canyon, which is not a

canyon at all but an obsequent fault block. The bottom did literally drop out. As at Arches, the forces of erosion were sand-laden wind, rain and ice. This erosion is still going on - recently a camel driver and camel became just the driver as the camel's head broke off.

The plateau, ranging in elevation from 8,200 to 9,100 feet, is pleasantly cool, with large stands of trees - mainly junipers, pinyons and Gambel oaks. The lodge is perched at the edge of the "canyon", and hikes of varying lengths took us down into the midst of the colorful formations, such as Wall Street, where the high walls come to within four feet of each other, Queen Victoria, complete with hoop skirt and bonnet, Thor's Hammer, and several windows and natural bridges, one of the latter a double bridge, one above the other.

Bryce also contains a varied fauna, most of them beggars. The areas around the overlooks are crowded with least chipmunks and various ground squirrels, looking as if they were suffering from a bad case of the mumps due to having stuffed their cheeks with nuts taken from the hands of captivated tourists. Large gray and white Clark's nutcrackers and colorful Stellar's jays, with glossy blue bodies and jet black crests, stand on low branches raucously demanding peanuts. Gray headed juncos parade along the ground, and white breasted nuthatches work up and down the tree trunks. Several ravens added a touch of somber beauty to the scene, and robins a reminder of home. Shortly before sunset a pair of young mule deer roamed a meadow near the lodge.

The tameness of the wildlife expedites close-up photography, and combines with the bright blue sky, delightful climate and breathtaking scenery to make Bryce Canyon a true natural wonderland.

Stream Flow Augmentation

Public Workshops

by Paul Butkerei, Sr.

In an attempt to justify the construction of sewers over an enormous additional upland area south of the divide in Nassau County, the Nassau County Department of Public Works needs additional data for an environmental impact statement. The effects of sewers bleeding groundwater from the environment are recognized as unacceptable to this writer and, perhaps, to E.P.A. E.P.A. has commissioned a study to determine if some way can be found to best mitigate these adverse effects. Alternative means of augmenting fresh water stream flows are being studied. Public participation is required by E.P.A. if such a study is to be considered adequate.

Just what public participation entails was exhaustively argued at a meeting on Stream Flow Augmentation Study held in Mineola on January 16. It is my understanding that it involves public input from the inception of the study - not just passive listening followed by automatic acceptance of carefully screened data.

Toward making this public participation more active - seeking public support - the engineering firm has judiciously encouraged our attendance at a series of workshops. To further encourage our participation, one of these workshops will consist of a bus trip. This trip will visit salient portions involved in the study - selected representative streams and ecological areas. I am going and would like to go with as many of you as possible.

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 The first workshop will be held on April 16 at 8 P.M. in the County Exec. Building (5th floor), 1 West Street, Mineola. Anyone wishing to attend who did not sign up at the January meeting may call Miss Ruth Maikish at 741-6202 or write her at Lawler, Matusky and Skelly Engineers, 1 Blue Hill Plaza, Pearl River, N.Y. 10965. The firm, which is the major consultant to Nassau County and the coordinator of the study, will send its newsletter to anyone requesting it. The newsletter will provide information about future workshops.

ROY LATHAM 1881-1979

FARMER, FISHERMAN, NATURALIST

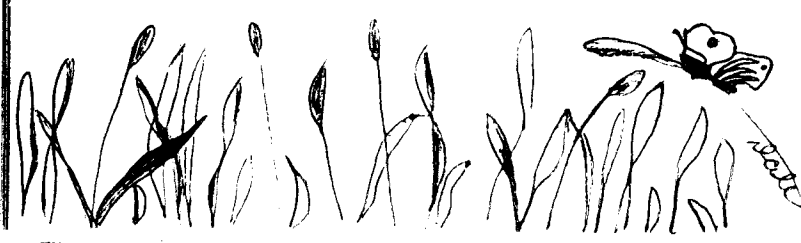
by Stan Ziminski

Roy Latham was a farmer and commercial fisherman who spent the leisure time of his life enjoying the various aspects of Long Island's natural history. With very little formal education, he went on to become Long Island's greatest naturalist. He authored numerous articles on botany, ornithology and archaeology

After years of wandering, searching and collecting throughout the fields, swamps and woods of eastern Long Island, he turned over his collections to the museums. Thirty thousand indian artifacts became the Archaeological Museum in Southold. Ten thousand animal specimens and 100,000 plant specimens went to the New York State Museum in Albany. Insects, including a fly, Lydella lathamii, which he discovered, went to Cornell University. A mounted moth, Eucoma lathamii, which he also discovered, went to the National Museum in Washington D.C.

Roy Latham was a generous man. He willingly shared his great knowledge with the amateur, such as myself, as readily as he did with the professionals. We of the South Shore Audubon Society were very fortunate to have had several articles written by Roy for the South Shore Skimmer. These were: Orchids at Montauk (June 1976); The Fringed Gentian on Eastern Long Island (April 1977); The Wood Lily on Eastern Long Island (February 1978).

Roy Latham was born nearly one hundred years ago. He died November, 1979. He was a charming and witty gentleman who will always be remembered by those who knew him. He leaves behind his records and writings for future generations to know the natural and archaeological history of Long Island. Maybe, by reading these, they too will get to know a little about Long Island's greatest naturalist, Roy Latham.



FIELD TRIPS: Starting time - 9:30 A.M.
No walk if it rains, snows or temperature
is 25 degrees or below.

MAR. 9 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
16 West End #2, N.E. corner
23 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
30 West End #2, N.W. corner

APR. 6 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

CONSERVATION (cont.)

earthquakes, epidemics and global climatic changes; soil deterioration; and the buildup of toxic chemicals in the food chain.

Technological advances, new sources of materials, new distribution methods, benevolent climate changes and new biological discoveries, could reverse the decline. However, it will be difficult to reverse, or even halt, the downward trend without reversing population growth.

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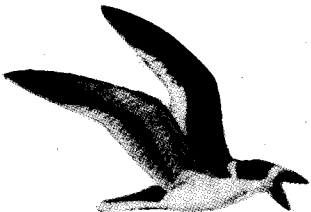
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