OUTH HORE KIMMER

VOLUME 20, NUMBER 3 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 1990

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Joan Butkereit

Budget 90/91

Insurance800.00Skimmer5600.00Refreshments - Meetings250.00Library Custodians245.00Library Donation300.00
Refreshments – Meetings 250.00 Library Custodians 245.00
Library Custodians 245.00
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Library Donation 300 00
Library Donation 500.00
Library Overtime 300.00
Speakers 500.00
Miscellaneous 600.00
Conservation Projects 1000.00
Education 2700.00
Holiday Wildlife Party 125.00
Cow Meadow Festival 750.00
Brookside Preserve 250.00
Nat'l. Audubon Conferences 1100.00
Lobbying Workshop 200.00
Audubon Camp Scholarships 1650.00
Membership Operations 100.00
National Audubon Scully Sanctuary 600.00
TR Sanctuary 700.00
Affiliated Dues 100.00
Wildlife Rehab. Donation 150.00
College Scholarship 500.00
Treasurer Operations 75.00
Bird Box Nesting Project 200.00
Tree Planting Project 650.00
Total 19,445.00

This is our projected budget for the Audubon calendar year 1990/1991. In a sense it is our planned roster of programs, barring those very important projects, like our weekly field trips, which do not require funding. It is our hope that we have established a working budget that will enable us to reach out to our membership and the general public, to inform, experience, construct, learn, and produce an interaction of ideas

NEXT MEETING

Sandy Brenner (& Michael Sperling)

DATE:

Tuesday, Nov. 13, 1990

TIME:

8:00 PM

PLACE:

Freeport Memorial Library

Merrick Rd. & Ocean Ave.

SPEAKERS: Cree Indians & Inuit Eskimos

TOPIC: <u>Hydro-Quebec Project (James Bay II)</u>

A film program will be presented concerning the planned devastation of the largest wilderness area left in eastern North America. As described in the October Skimmer Conservation Report, much of the electricity to be provided by this disastrous project is under contract to be sent to the New York metropolitan area, including Long Island, and we need to urge our state senators and assemblymen to take action to protect the James Bay area. Please see page 4 of the Skimmer you're reading for more details about this month's program.

IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS

and actions that will enhance our environment. Money, like condiments, might best be used carefully to get the most from the least. We have based these projected expenditures on past needs, present hopes, and future uncertainties. The Society's income traditionally comes from our dues share of everyone's National Audubon membership, interest from savings (approximately \$3000 was earned last year), donations, sale of optical equipment, fundraising events like our annual Birdathon, advertisements in our *Skimmer*, and other fundraising projects. Unlike governmental budgets which have come into the limelight recently, we tend to be conservative in our estimated projected income, so as not to eat away at our central fund, approximating

\$42,000, which forms the core of our fiscal health. We are at a crossroads in policymaking. Everyone on the Board strives to create the best programs to protect and effect a better environment. At the same time, some of us would like to see this central fund grow to a sum large enough to allow the interest to meet future budgetary needs. We would like to hear your ideas on this matter. Please mail your comments to The Board of Directors, South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520.



Keep New York Clean and Green

The Environmental Quality Bond Act will be on the ballot this November 6. The goal of the Bond Act is to improve the environment and quality of life on Long Island for generations to come.

WATER QUALITY

- Provide that Long Island's underground drinking water supplies remain safe and clean by preserving pine barrens and other environmentally sensitive lands.
- Improve the water quality of the South Shore and Long Island Sound crucial to the economic future of baymen, fishermen and all Long Islanders by providing low-cost financing to localities to modernize sewage treatment facilities.

SOLID WASTE RECYCLING

 Expand Long Island's recycling efforts and create markets for millions of tons of recycled products, reducing the financial burden on local governments and property taxpayers. Provide grants and assistance to local governments to close polluting, non-hazardous municipal landfills.

QUALITY OF LIFE

- Protect Long Island's irreplaceable natural, cultural and scenic resources.
- Preserve Long Island's beaches and marine waters for fishing and recreational activities.
- Expand and improve local parks and playgrounds and preserve important historic sites.

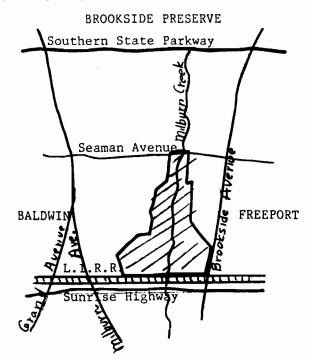
BROOKSIDE PRESERVE FALL CLEANUP SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1:00 PM

Betsy Gulotta

What better way to enjoy the colorful autumn foliage and hear the swishing of fallen leaves under your feet, than to come to our fall CLEANUP! You will not only see, but have a chance to learn about, the abundant variety of plants and animals that make this freshwater wetland habitat their home. Knowledgeable South Shore Audubon Society members will be on hand to show you around throughout the afternoon, and will hand you bags so you can help collect the nonnatural debris that tends to appear in various places due to man's materialistic lifestyle.

The Biological Survey Committee has identified over 130 species of plants, 53 species of birds, and many other species of animals in the Preserve. You may view ducks in the stream, woodpeckers tapping in the trees, and thrushes or sparrows scratching in the ground cover. Find raccoon and muskrat tracks along the banks of the stream. Learn to identify the Atlantic White Cedar, an historically important tree, once abundant along streams in southern Nassau County, now represented by only two survivors in this Preserve, the westernmost siting of Atlantic White Cedar on Long Island. Fall wildflowers will be blooming, and the ferns and other ground covers should be displaying fiery colors around your feet.

CLEANUP begins at 1:00 PM on Sunday, November 4, at the entrance to the Preserve on Brookside Avenue in Freeport. The Preserve is open to everyone, and we need your help. Bring a friend and come out to enjoy the afternoon. More information can be obtained by calling Betsy Gulotta, 546-8841.



BINOCULARS, SCOPES, AND FIELD GUIDES

Bill Herzog would like to remind everyone that binoculars, spotting scopes, and field guides make splendid Christmas / Hanukkah / New Year's gifts! South Shore Audubon Society sells Bausch & Lomb and Bushnell binoculars and scopes at competitive prices, and sells the Golden Guide to the Birds of North America for just \$8.75. For information, please call Bill at (516) 791-7886 between 7 and 9 PM.

PLEASE CHECK YOUR LABEL

Your editor has been trying to verify suspicious looking mailing labels for the past couple of months. Unfortunately, some of you aren't listed in the phone book, while others are listed incorrectly by National Audubon, which makes it tricky for us to modify your label. If your label has been fixed by hand, then hopefully you'll be seeing a beautiful correct label in the next few months. If your name or address is currently incorrect, please call Michael Sperling at (516) 541-0805 weeknights or weekends after noon, or send a postcard to SSAS, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520. Thank you.

EDUCATION NEWS

Rose Ermidis

Our chapter is sponsoring 84 classes of children who receive Audubon Adventures. With an average of 25 children in a class, we are reaching a considerable number of South Shore children.

Congratulations to Sue O'Reilly, Parent-Teacher President of the Gardiners Avenue School in Levittown, and her board for sponsoring 15 classes at their school. The Bayview Avenue School in North Merrick partially sponsored 7 classes in their school. These Parent-Teacher groups are truly interested in the best for their children.

You can sponsor a class for your child or grandchild as a holiday gift. For the small cost of \$30, that class will receive individual copies of Audubon Adventures every other month this year. The teacher will receive a leader's guide to aid in teaching the "Adventures." You must let me know the school name, address, grade, number in class, and teacher's name. Audubon Adventures is designed for children in grades 3 through 6. I will be delighted to send your greetings to the sponsored class. A class may be anywhere in the USA. Think about it — December is on its way.



CONSERVATION REPORT

Lois Bartow Schlegel

The Cree Indians of Canada & the James Bay Project

The Grand Council of the Cree of northern Quebec have been making a tour of New York State this fall, which continues till the beginning of November. We are especially fortunate and privileged that they will be making a SPECIAL TRIP back from Canada to give us a PRESENTATION AT OUR NOVEMBER 13TH GENERAL MEETING.

Their program will be presented by approximately 4 natives of the CREE Community, plus maybe 1 or 2 from the INUIT ESKIMO tribe. The program will feature a color-film show; information about this magnificent subarctic area which is the largest intact wilderness left in eastern North America; the threat of their displacement due to the JAMES BAY PROJECT (see the October *Skimmer*); question & answer period; and, if time permits, some native dancing & traditions.

We have been told that these natives, living on reservations in the wilderness, love people, enjoy talking with others, and are very open and spontaneous with audiences. Some of our SSAS members have graciously opened their homes to put the CREE & INUIT up for the night of November 13th, as they have little or no funds for these trips.

This is a timely program (the JAMES BAY PROJECT is to begin this fall). We have invited LYMAN LANGDON AUDUBON SOCIETY and many other people on Long Island. Let's welcome the CREE & INUIT natives, and hear their story of life in the wild and the effect this proposed project would have on their lives. We are sure to enjoy them and learn. Please invite your family and friends.

Save a Tree & Plant a Tree for Christmas

Earth Day was a big reminder to honor our Earth each day of our lives, and learning to REDUCE, REUSE & RECYCLE has transformed us into conscientious, productive curators of our land and environs. We shall harvest unconditional rewards from the Earth for the love and care we give to it today.

Christmas is just around the corner. Some may want to exercise REDUCING (the amount of trees cut), REUSING (buying a live tree for your indoor pleasure), and RECYCLING (replanting the tree in the ground). For these people, the following will guide you to the ease & variety of using a live (balled) tree for Christmas.

My sources for this information were the following nurseries: Atlantic (Freeport), Dee's (Oceanside), A. Grossman's (Oceanside), Mario Fischetti (Glen Head), Fairhaven (Hicksville); plus books from the library, and my own experience.

All the trees listed in this article are gorgeous. The most popular live trees for Christmas seem to be FRASER FIR (Abies fraseri, 40-60'H, 1-1.5'D), BALSAM FIR (Abies balsamea, 40-60'H, 1-1.5'D), BLUE SPRUCE (Picea pungens, 80-100'H, 1-2'D), and DOUGLAS FIR [Pseudotsuga menziesii, 100-130'H, 2-3'D (this is inland growth; on its native coast the Douglas Fir grows to 250'H & 8'D!); height and trunk diameter indicate their maximum growth. The nurseries suggested to estimate the growth as 1 foot per year. Some people claim that firs don't grow well in L.I. soil, but my experience shows our Balsam and Fraser firs thriving for almost eight years. Our Blue Spruce has more than doubled in size. Six out of our eight trees have survived and flourished.

Other popular species are WHITE SPRUCE (Picea glauca), NORWAY SPRUCE (Picea abies), and EASTERN WHITE PINE (Pinus strobus). These are all lovely trees. Also carried by some of the above nurseries, but not as easily attainable, are ATLANTIC, COLORADO, SERBIAN, MARIKA, and ALBERTA SPRUCES.

Distinguishable features between firs & spruces are: fir needles are flat, spruce's are angled; fir cones grow up, spruce's grow down. (Note: Douglas Firs are not true firs. "Pseudotsuga" means "false hemlock." Their needles are flat, like firs and most hemlocks. Their cones grow down and are pretty, having distinctive 3-pointed "bracts.")

Cost? All dependent on type & size. CUT trees can range from \$10-\$150. BALLED trees can range from \$10-\$600. The ones I have bought, 4-5' tall (add 1-2' for the ball) have ranged from \$69-\$85 (this size is easily maneuverable in and out of the house by one very strong person or two strong people, and can be carried, or a hand truck may be used). Many CUT trees of that size (5-7') are approximately the same cost. It seems worth it to me to spend a few more dollars to have a live tree that will last a lifetime, providing oxygen, and food and habitat for wildlife.

The nurseries listed here are included for informational purposes only. Check out your local or favorite nurseries to investigate this rewarding way to celebrate Christmas; or plant a tree for Hanukkah, the holiday spirit, the New Year, or for a personal occasion of your own. And, yes, to celebrate the trees and the Earth!

THANK YOU

James Remsen, Jr.

South Shore Audubon Society wishes to thank Marion Kaplan for her donation of the book "Birds of America" for a raffle at our October General Meeting.

Long Island Sound

A swirling current in the Atlantic led to the accidental discovery of Long Island Sound in 1613. Dutch Captain Adriaen Block sailed the east coast from Maine to Delaware, seeking contact with the natives. With some twists and turns, he made a connection with what Daniel Webster has since termed "the American Mediterranean."

During the next couple of centuries, the Sound bestowed a plentitude of vigorous fish, clams, scallops, and oysters. Steamboats gracefully plied the Sound, transporting passengers to towns along the shore to as far as Boston. Our shores bore one of the first horseless carriage experiments ever conducted. The Sound helped the farmer, providing fertilizer for his fields. Seaweed cast up on both shores enriched the soil, as did mossbunkers.

Anyone looking at Long Island Sound today would readily agree that the waterway is not the beautiful, unspoiled sea that Captain Block encountered more than $3\frac{1}{2}$ centuries ago.

As far back as 1890, some people who lived along the Sound's shores were aware of the inception of a pollution problem endangering their benevolent inland sea. A 75-yard dredge in Great Neck showed a roller skate, bottle, pasteboard, and increasing refuse.

To help mitigate this growing condition, ecology classes were held in Cold Spring Harbor. Despite this, the bacterial count was high enough by 1930 for the Sound to be labeled a polluted sea.

What are the problems of the Sound today? Increased population, coastal urbanization, and industry development have turned the sound into a conveyor for recreation, transportation, and waste disposal. Storm water runoff, sewage treatment dumping, and coastal wetland development lead to toxicity, closed beaches, diseased marine life, wetland destruction, eutrophication, and hypoxia.

There is not one problem. There is a plethora of consequences from direct and indirect poisoning and devastation.

This 110 mile island-nestled sea needs crucial restoration. If the struggle to save the Sound failed one century ago, how can we assure to heal its current multipronged disease? How can we ensure the wetlands stay rich with a plentitude of nourishment for our marine life? That the feeding and resting grounds for migratory birds remain robust? Can we turn it back into a 17th century safe aquatic playground for our children and habitat for our sea life? Despite OUR wants or needs for this body of water, the answers lie in what the SOUND needs for survival.

It is difficult to conceive one person's role in tackling a large problem, but there ARE things we can begin to do in our own homes to make a positive effect.

To reduce pollutants flowing into the Sound:1

- ♦ Reduce fertilizer application by testing your soil first.
- ♦ Look into using organic vs harmful chemical fertilizers.²
- ♦ Recycle used motor oil. Gas stations that change oil are required to accept used motor oil.
- ♦ Never pour chemicals down the drain. Use the S.T.O.P. program (see last month's *Skimmer*).
- ♦ Cut up the plastic beer & soda 6-pack rings to avoid aquatic animal strangulation.
- ♦ Do not release balloons into the air, to avoid aquatic animal ingestion (the Center of Coastal Studies reported that a 40-ton Humpback Whale died as the result of ingesting ONE Mylar balloon).

500 citizens testified and 1500 attended during NATIONAL AUDUBON'S LISTEN TO THE SOUND CAMPAIGN'S 15 hearings in the spring. The testimonies will be organized into a Citizen Agenda Report to be released around the first of the year. People working together are needed, and NAS will host a 2-day conference on Saturday, January 26, through Sunday, January 27, 1991. Details on location and agenda to follow. Mark your calendars now if you will be interested in attending.

For further details on the cleanup of the Sound, how the EQBA will affect it, the Coastal Defense Initiative Bill, etc., see NEWSDAY'S VIEWPOINTS by David Miller, July 26, 1990.

BIRD WALKS - 1990-1991

Elliott Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 AM except for Pelham Bay Park; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

Nov. 4	Tobay JFK Sanctuary
Nov. 11	Jones Beach West End #2, Northeast
	Corner
Nov. 18	Twin Lakes Preserve (take Sunrise Hwy.
	to Old Mill Rd., go north to school)
Nov. 25	Pelham Bay Park for Owls (pull over to
	street on extreme right after going
	through Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet

Dec. 2 Jones Beach West End #2, Northeast Corner

at 9:00 AM)

^{&#}x27;Many of these are pertinent to keep ALL our bodies of water AND our groundwater clean.

²An excellent source for information on organic gardening, composting, agricultural chemical alternatives, etc., is the SPRING MEADOW SCHOOL OF ORGANIC FARMING AND GARDENING (an Educational Non-Profit Organization), 441 North Country Road, St. James, NY 11780. Contact Crow Miller, (516) 862-6667.

PROJECT FEEDERWATCH

Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology (reprinted with permission)

For folks who feed birds, hordes of hungry finches certainly put a dent in pocketbooks last winter. According to Project FeederWatch, a continentwide survey of birds at backyard feeders, one of the biggest seed guzzlers was the Pine Siskin. This "boom-or-bust" species periodically leaves the boreal forests of Canada to invade the southern United States in spectacular numbers, and the winter of 1989-90 was definitely one of the boom years. Siskins were sighted at 64% of feeders across the continent, compared with only 30% of feeders the winter before. Red-breasted Nuthatches joined the invading finches; FeederWatchers reported twice as many as in the previous winter. Pine Grosbeaks and Common Redpolls also visited feeders in large numbers, mainly in northern regions, while Purple Finches were abundant in the south.

All these invasions were documented by the 8000 bird-watching volunteers who participate in Project FeederWatch, sponsored by the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology in Ithaca, New York, and the Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario, Canada.

The bird seen at the most feeders across North America was the Dark-eyed Junco, which visited 83% of all FeederWatch sites. The House Sparrow was spotted at fewer feeders, just 67%, but the pesky, exotic species was still the most numerous of all birds recorded, reaching an average abundance of nearly nine birds per feeder per week.

Looking at the data for just the northeastern United States and eastern Canada (Editor's note: this includes Missouri, Virginia, Ontario, and all states and provinces to their east and/or north, excluding Newfoundland), the Blue Jay was the most widespread species, sighted at 94% of feeders. The Dark-eyed Junco was seen at just 90%. Other birds visiting more than three-quarters of all feeders included the American Goldfinch, Downy Woodpecker, Mourning Dove, Black-capped Chickadee, and European Starling.

What causes the periodic, dramatic increases in feeder visits from northern finches and nuthatches? The answer in a nutshell: they're searching for food. In the wild, these birds eat seeds — not garden-variety sunflower or niger, but the seeds of trees, especially conifers such as spruce and fir. Conifers produce a bumper seed crop every few years and a paltry supply in the intervening ones. Scientists speculate that this pattern represents a clever reproductive strategy for the trees — in the "off" years, pickings are slim for seed-eating animals. They have few offspring and their numbers remain low. Then, in a good year, the seed eaters are overwhelmed. They can't possibly gobble up all the seeds produced and, as a result, the seeds are left lying around to germinate and grow.

The significance to bird watchers? During a year of plenty, more birds have babies and more baby birds survive. The following year, when seeds are scarce, many young birds head south and end up perched on well-stocked feeders.

The 1990-91 season begins soon. From November through April, FeederWatch participants will observe their feeders on one or two days every two weeks. They'll record their sightings on computer-readable forms, so that results can be compiled and analyzed quickly at the Lab of Ornithology. After sending their data to the Lab, they'll read about results in Feeder-Watch News, a twice-yearly newsletter that provides midseason and annual summaries and population analyses. FeederWatch News also includes tips on feeding birds, reports of unusual and amusing sightings, and information on the behavior and ecology of common feeder species.

There's one other, hard-to-quantify benefit of participation: FeederWatchers have the pleasure of watching birds without guilt. They're collecting scientific data!

If you can accurately identify the birds at your feeders, you're invited to join Project FeederWatch for the 1990-91 season. A \$12 subscription fee covers the cost of data analysis and newsletter production. To sign up, or for more information, write to: Project FeederWatch, Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 159 Sapsucker Woods Road, Ithaca, NY 14850. We need your help!

TACKAPAUSHA MUSEUM AND PRESERVE

Nassau County Dept. of Recreation and Parks Washington Avenue Seaford, NY 11783 (516) 785-2802

Mid-Week Movie: Wed., 4:00 PM

Nov. 7 = How Animals Speak

14 = How Nature Protects Animals

21 = Introducing the Reptiles

28 = Leaves of Green

<u>Natural History Cinema:</u> Sat. & Sun., 11:30 AM, 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 4:00 PM

Nov. 3, 4 = Norman the Doorman

10, 11 = Ducks

17, 18 = Big Bad Wolf

24, 25 = Growing, Growing

Tackapausha Presents: Sat. & Sun., 2:00 and 3:30 PM

Nov. 3, 4 = The Conch Shell

10, 11 = The Hermit Crab

17, 18 = The Glass Lizard

24, 25 = Animal Homes

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marion Yavarkovsky

The welcome mat is out for our newest members. South Shore Audubon is pleased that you have joined us. Now become active participants in our programs. Come to monthly meetings, weekly bird walks, or special events soon.

Baldwin Diane Jacoby, Dorothy M. Sitterly, Mr. David M. Soave

Beilmore Nat Rind

Bethpage Mr. Michael Arenaro, Miss Susan Castor

East Meadow Carol A. Richards, Ms. Nancy D. Stuchin, Mr. Walter Tilitz, Mrs. M. Yashian

Elmont J. Brewer

Farmingdale Richard J. Busch, J. A. Porter, Larry Steckler

Floral Park Mr. Lester W. McCarty Franklin Square Mr. James Senicola

Freeport Mr. John Corry, Mr. Lloyd Lindberg, John R. Williams

Garden City Gregory F. Burke, Ms. Selma H. Cohen, Mrs. Victor H. Emerson, Carol P. Sandquist,

Fahimeh Thomas, Abram C. Williams, Mr. Donald Wilson

Glen Oaks Suzanne Sitkowski Hempstead Mr. Norman Lum

Hewlett Mr. Theodore S. Miller, Richard Travis MD

Hicksville Wanda S. Dillard, Denise Fields, Mr. Richard W. Holecek, Margaret B. Ullmann

Island Park Mr. Richard Krueger Lawrence Mrs. Elliott Klein Levittown Richard & Donis Wolff

Long Beach Mrs. Shirley Schuchman, Mr. John A. Wichmann

Lynbrook Mr. Mark J. Liguori, Tony Mina, Ms. Joan Nargi, Mr. H. Schneider,

Mr. Robert Tipton

Mr. & Mrs. Testagrossa

Massapequa Park Edith M. Corso, Mr. Christopher Egan, John W. Hillman, Anne Kusnitsky, A. Polis,

Pete Roth

Merrick William Baylis, Mrs. Martin Fleischer, Henry Kessin, Gene Philcox, Robert Squires

Plainview Mr. Pete Feine, Mr. Attilio G. Marangione

Rockville Centre Mary E. Dean, S. Deutsch, S. J. Evans, Milton S. Kleinman, Patricia Michos

Uniondale Mr. Francis H. Cooper, Joann Urban

Valley Stream Mrs. Lois Chakmakian, Ms. Maria Rezikoff, Mr. Christopher Romano,

William & Marjorie Steen

West Hempstead Gail K. Vitale

South Shore Audubon is seeking advertisements to help support the printing and mailing of the Skimmer, which currently has a circulation of approximately 2000 copies. An ad the size of the ones that appear below costs just \$20, and one four times that size (one quarter of a page) costs \$60. We reserve the right to review ads. For information, please call Elliott Kutner (486-7667) or Michael Sperling (541-0805).

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Frieda Malament, Holiday Parties	
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South Shore Audubon Society P.O. Box 31 Freeport, N.Y. 11520

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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