

VOLUME 22, NUMBER 2 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1992

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

James Remsen, Jr.

This month I have two messages for you. Neither is particularly original, as past presidents have conveyed them in these pages, but I would feel that I had missed an important opportunity if I did not address these two issues.

First, South Shore Audubon Society is an organization of volunteers, where each of us pulls whatever weight we are capable of pulling. No contribution of time or effort is considered too small or too insignificant. Bearing this in mind, I would like those of you reading this who have not been active members of our chapter to consider joining in our activities, all of which are aimed at ultimately insuring a habitable planet for all of us. A good way to begin is to attend one of our bird walks (held at 9:30 on Sunday mornings for ten months of the year; schedule always found in the Skimmer) or general meetings (held at 8:00 PM on the second Tuesday of the month at the Freeport Library; details always on the first page of the Skimmer). Then listen to the words of our officers and committee chairs and find the activity or committee that most closely reflects your own interests, and dive right in! Our well-informed members will show you how easy it is to make a difference, so don't be afraid that you "don't know enough." I'm still learning new facets of environmental issues almost constantly.

Also keep in mind that you, not just your Society, will benefit from your active involvement. Sixteen years ago, when a twelve-year-old walked into his first South Shore Audubon meeting, he didn't think he'd encounter such an outstanding group of like-minded individuals as our active membership is, or be asked to serve on chapter committees or as an officer, or be offered a full-tuition scholarship to study field ecology for two weeks in the summer at the Audubon Camp in Maine. Yet my involvement with South Shore has given me all these rewards. Who knows what direction yours will take?

The second message I bring you this month, I bring you at the risk of preaching to the converted. Yet, as I said earlier, I feel this opportunity is too important to let slip by. A national election is imminent. I offer you no recommendations, no endorsements of candidates. South Shore Audubon's Constitution forbids us from making such endorsements.

NEXT MEETING

Sandy Brenner

DATE: Tuesday, October 13, 1992

TIME: 8:00 PM

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

Merrick Rd. & S. Ocean Ave.

SPEAKER: Herb Mills

TOPIC: Spectacular New Zealand

Herb Mills is the Curator of Geology for the Nassau County Museums system and supervises the management of our County's nature preserves. He has traveled extensively in the South Pacific. This exciting slide program will cover the Southern Alps, geysers and hot springs, gannet colony, and city of Christchurch in the beautiful country of New Zealand.

However, I hope that when making your choices for any office, you will, among the many issues you have to consider, remember the environment. Vote for whomever best represents your views on this subject. Obviously it is an issue of concern to you, or you wouldn't be reading this. There is a theme that unites the two messages I have just delivered, namely that activism matters. Our environment needs your voice, your views, your participation. The easiest way to guarantee its mismanagement is to remain silent.

BIRD SEED SAVINGS DAY

Our first Bird Seed Savings Day this season is Sunday, October 25, 1992, from 9:30 AM to 2:30 PM at Tackapausha. All preorders should be sent to Paul Butkereit by October 13th (see last month's *Skimmer* for the order form or contact Paul or Michael Sperling to get a copy). *HELP IS NEEDED* to take orders and carry seed. Help is especially needed at 9:30 AM, since many of you arrive bright and early to pick up your orders. Call Paul at 623-0843 to volunteer.

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NEW YORK STATE SENATE STRIKES OUT ON ENVIRONMENT

Eric Siy

[Editor's Note: The following is reprinted from the Northeast Edition of the Summer/Fall 1992 Audubon Leader, published by National Audubon Society's Northeast Regional Office and mailed to chapter leaders. Eric Siy is NAS Adirondack Campaign Director.]

In an election year anything can happen, even Senate action on the environment. Not this year! Forget "swing and a miss." This session, which ended in July, the New York State Senate was caught looking at three great legislative pitches for the environment: protection of the Adirondack Park on its 100th birthday, creation of an Environmental Trust Fund, and a bill to protect James Bay from the devastating consequences of future hydropower construction. These measures happened to be the top three legislative priorities of the Audubon Council of New York State. The Senate failed to act on all three.

How could this happen? Well, as most of us [leaders] know by now, it's a point-source problem that flows straight from the Senate leadership — as the leadership goes, so goes the entire Senate. Never mind the fact that there are a total of 61 senators, and the views of a very sizeable Democratic minority (26 senators) are irrelevant no matter how supportive. When in doubt, as the State Senate usually is on environmental matters, its leaders quickly succumb to political pressure. The pressure that matters most comes from those who write the biggest campaign checks.

Take the Environmental Trust Fund (ETF) for example. Of the three bills in question, the ETF appeared to have the best chance for passage. The fund, which would have provided desperately needed revenues for recycling, landfill closure, and open space protection, passed without a hitch in the Assembly. And in the Senate, Environmental Conservation Chair Owen Johnson [R-Babylon] did his level best to convince Majority Leader Ralph Marino [R-Oyster Bay] that the ETF had strong support in that house as well. In the final days of the session, Senator Johnson even went to Marino with a list of 22 Republican senators who had indicated varying degrees of support for the ETF. With this kind of support, the bill should have passed by a landslide. It didn't. It was never even debated, let alone voted on.

Funding for the ETF would have involved no new taxes. Most of the \$100 million to be spent annually was to come from an existing excise tax on beer and soda — a tax that had been created by the legislature in 1990 to help retire the debt on the environmental bond act. The bond act failed, but the tax remained in effect, with revenues being deposited into the state's general fund.

Throughout most of the session, a powerful beer and soda lobby showed no opposition to the ETF or its primary funding stream. The tax, which had no real chance of being repealed, would go toward the purpose for which it was established — the environment. But, what could have been

a wonderful promotional opportunity for Coke, Pepsi, and Anheuser Busch instead degenerated into an all-out lobbying blitz by the industry to kill the bill. And they did, despite the efforts of Owen Johnson, despite the thousands of citizens and organizations across the state who wrote, called, and visited their senators urging passage of the Environmental Trust Fund. What industry wanted, industry got.

It wasn't quite the same story with the Adirondacks or James Bay, but the result certainly was — no legislation, no debate. In the case of the Adirondacks, one senator, Ron Stafford [R-Plattsburgh], retained his absolute veto power over any Adirondack bill, thanks to a Majority Leader who treats the largest park in the country like another Oyster Bay bridge — just another member item.

And thanks to continued inaction by a Marino-controlled Senate, the future quality of New York State's environment remains uncertain. When it comes to the Senate and the environment, only one thing is certain, this kind of quid pro quo politics must end. Thankfully, it's an election year and, in an election year, anything can happen...

1991 NYS ENVIRONMENTAL LEGISLATION

Michael Sperling

In the May Skimmer (call me if you'd like a copy of any issue returned by a post office in the two years that I've been editor), I summarized the Environmental Planning Lobby's 1991 Voters' Guide. After discussing EPL's comments on the overall situation in the New York State Legislature and giving EPL's scores for Nassau County's Assemblymen and State Senators, I started reprinting their descriptions of the bills used to rate our legislators. This is the fourth and last installment of environmental bills from 1991.

Solid Waste Flow Control Bills. In 1991, four bills allowing local solid waste flow control regulations became law (the votes were treated as one vote in the scorecard). Specifically, certain towns in Westchester County and the Counties of Madison, Rockland, and Fulton are now permitted to impose solid waste flow control regulations that would override any conflicting local law. Solid waste flow control is used to insure that there is a steady stream of garbage for a particular solid waste facility, such as a landfill, incinerator, or recycling facility. EPL strongly opposes any flow control measures that could seriously compromise the recycling efforts of New York State and override local recycling programs by failing to mandate specifically that recyclable material not be burned or buried. Therefore, EPL opposed all four of these bills: A6511-B (Barnett) / S3860-A (Goodhue), A7402-A (Magee), A8181-A (Gromack) / S5264-A (Holland), and A4230-A (King) / S2750-A (Farley).

Sewage Treatment Water Conservation. Increasing industrial and residential water use, pollution, and development in watershed areas are negatively impacting New York's drinking water supply. Sewage facilities use very

large amounts of potable water in the treatment process. This bill would require any sewage treatment plant projects that apply for state or federal assistance to incorporate water conservation measures, including but not limited to reuse of treated wastewater. A6192-A (Yevoli) / S3661-A (Trunzo) passed the Senate but was held in the Assembly Rules Committee.

Sewage Floatables. DEC estimates that an average of 172 million gallons of raw sewage is released daily into New York's marine environment from sewer overflows. This sewage contains floatable material such as syringes and plastics, which contaminate New York's water, litter our beaches, and threaten the health of New York citizens. This bill requires that all sewer treatment outfalls into marine or coastal waters be equipped with devices to remove all floatable material from the sewage discharged. S2316 (Johnson) passed the Senate but did not have an Assembly sponsor.

Sewage Power Sources. This measure requires large sewage disposal systems and those near marine or coastal waters to be equipped with emergency sources of power. In the event of an energy shortage, backup power source generators would prevent tons of raw sewage from spilling out of the disposal facilities and into the waters of the state. Especially threatened by raw sewage spills is the Hudson River estuary, an important spawning area and habitat for many aquatic species. A2830-A (DiNapoli) / S1828-A (Johnson) passed the Senate but was held in the Assembly Ways and Means Committee.

Seepage of Pollutants. A loophole in the existing Environmental Conservation Law excludes the "seepage" of pollution into the waters of the state as an unlawful act. This bill specifically makes unlawful the seepage of pollutants into waters constituting or lying above a sole-source aquifer. The bill also allows consumers and water suppliers who have been affected by the pollution to seek injunctive relief and damages. A1159 (Brodsky) / S4734 (Maltese) passed the Assembly but was held in the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

Clarify Liability for Oil Spills. This legislation places the burden of liability for an oil spill where it belongs: with the owner or operator of the vessel. The bill also recognizes the rights of individuals who have been injured due to a petroleum spill to take civil action against the polluter. The ability of a victim to take direct legal action against a polluter is fundamental to the fair and effective enforcement of environmental laws. A8466-A (Boyland) / S4664-C (Johnson) passed both houses and was signed into law by the Governor.

Water Supply Protection. Under current law, if there is a conflict between state and local realty subdivision regulations regarding water supply protection, the locality is given preeminence. This bill would instead insure that the state or local regulations that are most protective of the water supply be followed. A1792 (Hinchey) passed the Assembly but had no Senate sponsor.

SSAS TRIP TO COSTA RICA

Betsy Gulotta

Join South Shore Audubon Society for a short and sweet trip organized by Osprey Tours. Although the bent will be toward birding, all aspects of the natural world will be explored. We will visit several of Costa Rica's great parks that represent habitats with different flavors, including Carara Biological Reserve, Monteverde National Park, La Selva, and Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge. We will visit cloud forest, Pacific lowlands, and Caribbean lowlands.

Susan B. Whiting and her husband Flip Harrington will be our escorts. They are frequent travelers to Costa Rica and have been escorting trips there for 10 years. Both are good birders. We will also be joined by a Costa Rican naturalist/guide once we arrive in Costa Rica. The itinerary includes:

January 4, 1993 — Flight from Miami to San Jose, Costa Rica. Welcome dinner with local naturalist/guide.

Jan. 5 — Carara Biological Reserve day trip for Scarlet Macaws and wintering shorebirds.

Jan. 6 & 7 — Monteverde Cloud Forest.

Jan. 8 & 9 — Arenal Volcano and Cano Negro Wildlife Refuge (riverboat day trip for alligators, monkeys, and countless birds). Arenal is over a mile high and is an active volcano that after sleeping over 400 years erupted in July of 1968 and has continued since. A truly spectacular sight, especially at night.

Jan. 10 & 11 — Caribbean coast and Organization of Tropical Studies at La Selva. OTS is in the Atlantic lowlands and is used by many U.S. universities for tropical research.

Jan. 12 — White river rafting or birding around Arenal Observatory Lodge. Return to San Jose.

Jan. 13 — Departure to Miami for New York.

The trip costs \$2185 per person from Miami, which includes a tax-deductible \$100 contribution to South Shore Audubon Society. This cost is based on a group of ten people departing from Miami and is based on September 1992 quotes; it is subject to change if there are increases imposed by airlines or fluctuations in currencies. The \$2185 includes all lodging (\$325 extra for a single room if wanted and available), all domestic land and air transportation, group airport transfers, meals as specified in the itinerary (breakfast, lunch, and dinner for Jan. 5th to 12th, plus dinner on the 4th), entrance fees to parks and reserves, all tips except where specified [includes tips for naturalist/guide and driver (additional tips welcomed if you feel that they did an outstanding job), and for porters and waiters], and the services of a bilingual naturalist/guide and escort.

A deposit of \$300 per person and a completed reservation form are due as soon as possible. Full payment is due 60 days before departure; there is a \$50 charge for cancellation prior to then. Contact Susan Whiting of Osprey Tours at (508) 645-9049 (P.O. Box 832, West Tisbury, Martha's Vineyard, MA 02575) for information and reservations. Please notify Betsy Gulotta if you are going. Any questions? Call Betsy at 546-8841.

BUDGET 1992-1993

Advertising Campaign	500.00
Audubon Camp Scholarships	1400.00
Bird Boxes	150.00
Brookside Preserve	1000.00
College Scholarships	500.00
Conservation	1000.00
Corresponding Secretary	75.00
Donations	
Education	
Holiday Wildlife Party	150.00
Insurance	
Library Custodians	200.00
Library Donation	
Library Donation (owed from 1991-92)	
Library Overtime	
Membership	
Miscellaneous	
National Audubon Conference Attendance	
Refreshments at Meetings	
Skimmer	
Speakers	
T. R. Sanctuary	
T. R. Sanctuary (owed from 1991-92)	
Wetlands Conference	
Total	21,125.00
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FINANCIAL REPORT

Last year, our chapter constitution was amended to require the publication of our financial report. For years, SSAS's Treasurer, Lennox Gordon, valiantly tried to give away copies of the New York State Annual Financial Report for Charitable Organizations that he prepared, but despite announcements in the *Skimmer* and at our meetings, virtually no one requested a copy. His successor, George Popkin, provided the following information.

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Income		
	7/1/91	7/1/90
	to 6/30/92	to 6/30/91
Direct Public Support		
National Audubon	11576.00	9778.53
 Audubon Adventures 	330.00	770.00
Other / Dues	375.00	3942.45
Total Direct	12281.00	14490.98
Indirect Public Support		
 National Audubon Birdathon 	2758.45	1595.16
Advertising	63.00	384.00
• Field Trips — Net	0.00	216.05
Misc. / Fund Drive	1610.30	55.50
Total Indirect	4431.75	2250.71

Program Payanua			
Program Revenue Bird Seed Sales	18934.78	21919.64	
	- 14307.17	- 16317.03	
Net	4627.61	5602.61	
Greening of Long Island	3326.00	0.00	
Less: Trees for Jones Beach	- 3228.00	0.00	
Net	98.00	0.00	
• Binoculars, Scopes, Books — Ne	et 505.45	<i>5</i> 72.96	
• T-Shirts	8.00	91.00	
Total Program Revenue	5239.06	6266.57	
Other Revenue			
 Memorials 	381.00	251.00	
• Tree Fund	20.00	40.00	
 National Audubon Camp Refund 		450.00	
• Interest Income	2279.50	3440.42	
Total Other Revenue	2680.50	4181.42	
Total Revenue	24632.31	27189.68	
Expenses			
	7/1/91	7/1/90	
	to 6/30/92	to 6/30/91	
Grants			
• T.R. Sanctuary (Birdseed Sales)	4500.00	5602.61	
 Chapter Funds (Birdathon) 	1208.97	700.00	
 Camp Scholarships 	1345.00	1435.00	
Scully Sanctuary	0.00	600.00	
• College Scholarships	0.00	500.00	
• Other	289.24	510.00	
Total Grants	7343.21	9347.61	
Rent	555.00	360.00	
Program Expenses			
Audubon Adventures	1982.55	2783.12	
 Conservation & Education 	331.62	214.67	
• Brookside Preserve	1427.30	255.65	
• Conferences, Meetings, etc.	1922.44	740.36	
Miscellaneous & Equipment	0.00	769.41	
• Insurance	682.00	682.00	
• Environmental / Field Trips	100.00	866.47	
Total Program Expenses	6445.91	6311.68	
Management & General			
Postage / Office / Misc.	515.20	186. 5 8	
Chapter Publications	6993.62	5742.39	
Total Expenses	21852.94	21948.26	
NET PROFIT	2779.37	5241.42	
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RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 832-6523			

WILDLIFE POISONING HOTLINE (800) 356-0560			

AUDUBON HOTLINE			
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BIRD WALKS

Elliott Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 AM; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

Oct. 4	Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
Oct. 11	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Oct. 18	Hempstead Lake State Park (Pen. Blvd.)
Oct. 25	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 1	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
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EDUCATION NEWS

Rose Ermidis

Fall is here. Now is the time to subscribe to Audubon Adventures. Teachers, scout leaders, and librarians are encouraged to call me at 785-6028. Please tell me the size of your group. You may have up to 32 copies and a leader's guide every other month. This year's topics are: Spiders, Endangered Species, Contemplating Conifers, Meet the Mammals, Bird Migration, Soil Invertebrates, and the Gulf of Mexico.

Sixth graders who received Audubon Adventures in their classrooms seven years ago will go to school this year to vote in a Presidential election. Let's encourage our children to become aware of the ecology they must inherit.

South Shore Audubon is charged \$30 per subscription. We ask for a donation of \$10 to help defray that cost. This splendid publication is suitable for children in grades three through six. Ask your child's teacher if a subscription would be useful to her or him. Perhaps the PTA would like to sponsor several classes.

Did you know that Audubon volunteers will visit a school to present a program about birds? Thank you for your interest in today's children — they will be the men and women of tomorrow.

Marion Yavarkovsky

Welcome to SSAS! You have become members of a very active and dedicated chapter of National Audubon. We hope you will participate in the many activities we offer. Join us!

[For information on joining the South Shore Audubon Society, please call our Membership Chairperson, Marion Yavarkovsky, at 379-2090. The best time to call is after 4 PM, Monday through Friday.]

Mary J. Barzilay, S. P. Mermell,
Miss Julie M. Whiston
Mr. Paul Bromberg, Joanne M.
Murray, Joyce E. Roth
F. Lipow
Darin Garguilo
Margaret L. Maguire
Mrs. John C. Donovan

Glen Oaks Noel D. Tan
Hempstead Charles Rook
Hicksville Rebekah Alpert
Island Park Maria Vamracaris
Levittown Marie Cavataio
Massapequa Park Barbara Rios & Frank Atyert,
Lee Anne Walker
Merrick Mrs. Henrietta Waterman,
Michael Zone
Oceanside Paul Oresky
Plainview Kevin Hanley,
Robert L. Thompson
Seaford Patricia Hughes
Valley Stream Marvin Greenberg, Irving
Kornheiser, Jeffrey R. Smith
Wantagh Mr. Clarence J. Dahl,
Mr. Ron Donohue
West Hempstead Mr. Lionel Richburg
Woodmere Mr. & Mrs. Sy Baxter

HIGH FLYING BIRDS

The following article is reprinted from *Nature Detectives*, provided courtesy of the Adirondack Park Visitor Interpretive Centers in Paul Smiths and Newcomb, NY.

How high do birds fly when they migrate? The most common altitude for migrating birds is 1500 to 2500 ft above sea level. Fewer than 10% of migrating birds fly above 5000 ft.

Geese are one of the highest fliers, as some have been seen flying over the Himalayas at nearly 30,000 ft. Ducks and geese travel about 40 to 50 mph, with smaller birds averaging only 10 to 17 mph.

The Arctic Tern is the best long-distance flier. One traveled halfway around the world in less than 4 months as it averaged 100 miles per day. A shorebird, the Lesser Yellowlegs, may hold a record at 322 miles per day.

On a clear night, observers have spotted more than 9000 migrating birds in a single hour.

The tiny Ruby-throated Hummingbird uses a quarter of its body weight for a 10 hour, nonstop, 500 mile voyage over the Gulf of Mexico. The Blackpoll Warbler flies 2000 miles without stopping, which is equivalent to running 1200 miles without stopping.

TWIN LAKES PRESERVE FALL CLEANUP Saturday, October 24th — 9:30 AM

Dolores Rogers

Enjoy the colorful fall foliage while helping SSAS members and friends clean up this beautiful preserve in Wantagh. Trash bags will be provided. If there's light rain, it's on; if there's heavy rain, the cleanup will be rescheduled.

Directions: Sunrise Highway to Old Mill Road, north to school parking lot (on Sunrise Highway, Old Mill Road is one block west of the Wantagh Parkway).

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS — HAWKS

Tom Torma

On a cool, crisp, sunny, early October morning, a stiff breeze was blowing out of the northwest. It was a perfect day for hawk watching. I was at J.F.K. Sanctuary, Tobay Beach, to photograph hawks that migrate down the barrier islands during early autumn. While I was walking down the main path toward the observation tower, a Sharp-shinned Hawk suddenly landed on a tree branch directly in front of me. In his talons was a Yellow-rumped Warbler. Despite my surprise and delight, I snapped a series of pictures while the "Sharpie" consumed the warbler. He seemed oblivious to the fact that I was standing a few feet away from him. Only after the bird had finished dining and flew away did I realize that I had forgotten to load my film. I promised myself never to forget the film again.

Hawks are often very misunderstood birds. In the past, they have been described as bold, dashing, audacious murderers and as bloodthirsty. Bird lovers in Cape May, New Jersey, would line up across the Cape each fall with shotguns in hand and attempt to kill every hawk passing by. They foolishly thought that this would help the songbirds they loved so much. Today we have a different image of predators; we recognize that they are an important part of the food chain. The predators help maintain a healthy population of the prey species.

Despite all our knowledge, many hawks, eagles, and falcons are still in trouble. One problem is hunters who find shooting a hawk irresistible. A visit to a raptor rehabilitation center will provide graphic proof of this intolerable situation. The Bald Eagle, our national symbol, is often found murdered from gunshot wounds in the west. This most often occurs near lambing operations. Despite being against the law, many sheep herders kill eagles because they believe that the eagles will carry away newborn lambs.

I was once leading a South Shore Audubon Society bird walk at Pelham Bay in the Bronx. It was a great walk; we saw Great Horned Owls, Barn Owls, and many other birds. I was returning to my car when some stragglers came running up, screaming about a Red-tailed Hawk. I ran back along the path to find a group of South Shore Auduboners watching the hawk sitting in a tree just a few feet from the path. We watched the bird for about ten minutes while it was eating a rat. Because I was the walk leader, I had decided to leave my camera at home. I left Pelham Bay that day with memories, but no photographs.

Because hawks are shy, wary birds, I find them difficult to approach. One must first understand when and where the birds are present. For example, Cape May in the fall is an excellent location to photograph hawks. Long Island's barrier islands are also good locations for hawk photography. I look for hedgerows or other spots that are active with other types of birds. I set myself up with a simple blind made of mosquito netting draped over my camera, lens, and myself. I concentrate on the birds that are there. If I am lucky, a hawk

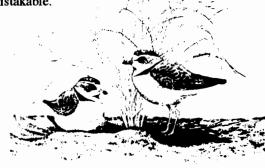
will come in, looking for a meal. If my luck holds up, I will get a picture of a hawk.

On another nice autumn day I was at Jones Beach's West End. Near the parking lot is a brush line that attracts song-birds. I set myself up with my makeshift blind, sat down, and waited. Before long, some Prairie Warblers landed on a bush in front of me. While I was photographing the warblers, a sudden panic spread among the birds. At that same moment, a streak flew into the bush. A Cooper's Hawk dropped to the ground with a warbler in its talons. As the hawk spread its wings over its prey, I shot three quick pictures. The hawk then looked directly into my lens. Realizing my close proximity, the bird flew off with the warbler in tow. This time I had my camera, lens, and film. I finally got my picture of a hawk up close.

CONSERVATION REPORT

Annie F. McIntyre

Piping Plovers at West End #2. The Piping Plover is a small sand-colored shorebird with a single black ring circling its neck. Its coloring allows it to "disappear" on the beach, though its call, a bell-like whistle for which it's named, is unmistakable.



Once abundant on Long Island, these small creatures are now federally endangered. Their numbers were ravaged in the 1800's by hunting for sport and plumage. The main impediment to the plovers' recovery now is habitat loss, and its numbers are currently at an all-time low.

The Nature Conservancy hires four stewards each year to help protect the Piping Plovers, as well as the New York State endangered Least Terns. These stewards install "symbolic fencing" (posts & strings) and "exclosures" (chicken wire fences that allow the birds freedom to come and go while protecting the nest from predators); they also do nest, egg, and fledgling counts.

Many South Shore Audubon volunteers, along with TNC volunteers, spent time during their weekends this summer at Jones Beach's West End #2, guiding the public around nesting areas and educating them about the plight of the plovers. As the coordinator of this summer's volunteers, I'd like to thank them all. It was a successful summer for the plovers at West End, with 23 nesting pairs yielding 37

fledglings (Long Island beaches have the largest Piping Plover population on the Atlantic coast, with approximately 200 nesting sites). It's worth noting that West End was also the site of 180 nesting pairs of Least Terns, thought to be the largest colony on Jones barrier island.

Again, my thanks to all those who volunteered. I hope you all enjoyed your time on the beach. I will be writing up a framework to hopefully aid those volunteering in the years to come. If any of you have suggestions, please let me know.

The Endangered Species Act Is Threatened. Passed in 1973, the Endangered Species Act (ESA) was landmark legislation designed to protect flora and fauna whose very existence was threatened. During the two decades since then, those on both sides of the fence — protection versus development — have found problems with the Act. Now that the ESA is up for reauthorization, legislation representing both viewpoints is being introduced.

National Audubon Society is urging Congress (and asking us to urge Congress) to support the Endangered Species Act Amendments of 1992, H.R. 4045. Introduced by Gerry Studds (D-MA), H.R. 4045 is a bill that will strengthen species protection, help promote population recovery, and provide more funding to accomplish these goals. Specifically, H.R. 4045 includes:

- deadlines for development of species recovery plans;
- development of integrated multispecies recovery plans that will maintain and restore ecosystems (preserving the ecosystem an endangered species depends on);
- alleviation of the backlog of 3000 species awaiting listing decisions, by including them in the multispecies plans.

Another important change included in this bill deals with a 1989 Supreme Court decision that precluded citizens from filing lawsuits to enforce the ESA for 60 days after giving a violator notice. H.R. 4045 would allow immediate action in emergencies posing significant risk to an endangered species.

There are three pro-development bills in the House of Representatives — H.R. 3092 ("Human Protection Act"), H.R. 4058 ("Balanced Economic and Environmental Priorities Act"), and H.R. 5105 ("Environment and Economic Stability Act of 1992"). The exact number of cosponsors of these bills was unknown as we go to press, but, happily, the pro-development bills recently had a total of 30 cosponsors, while H.R. 4045 had 101.

The camps on both sides of this debate are gearing up for a fierce battle. The "wise use" (pro-development) movement is powerful, well funded, and determined. Each one of our voices (or pens) raised in support of H.R. 4045 is vital.

My frequent urgent pleas for action on different issues come not from my flair for the dramatic, but from the sad reality that the assaults on our environment are dangerous and relentless. Please take action on H.R. 4045 today. Write to your Congressman, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515.

ADIRONDACK ACTION BULLETIN

Eric Siy, NAS Northeast Regional Office

A federal windfall could save the undisturbed Follensby Pond, Raquette River, Lake Champlain Shoreline, and Hudson River Gorge if you write now to Governor Cuomo and ask for his leadership.

Question: How can the construction of interstate highways — which in New York State alone have consumed 97,000 acres of open space — be the salvation of some of the wildest, most beautiful lakes and landscapes in the Adirondack Park?

Answer: Through a new federal law that will reimburse one third of a billion dollars to New York State residents each year for 15 years for construction of the NYS Thruway many years ago. The law, called the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991, was sponsored by Senator Daniel P. Moynihan. "It's payback time," the Senator recently told us. "Surely we aren't going to let [all that money] disappear into the state budget. Shouldn't we build something or do something we will then have? Any suggestions?"

Significance: The decision on how the \$5 billion is to be spent rests with the state Department of Transportation — and thus, ultimately, with Governor Cuomo. The state apparently has great discretion on how to use these funds.

The Present Plight: The state's acquisition fund has been empty since the narrow defeat of the environmental bond act in 1990. For the past two years, the State Senate has blocked the creation of an acquisition fund from an existing tax on beer and soda. Meanwhile, some of the state's finest lakes, streamsides, wildlife habitat, forests, and watersheds are up for grabs — and could be lost forever if we fail to act now.

What You Can Do. The competition for the payback money has begun. The line is already forming. All of us who see the preservation of our natural heritage as one of the finest gifts we can leave our children and grandchildren must now position ourselves at the front of that line.

The annual payments of \$338 million will start in 1996. A firm commitment NOW for at least \$100 million each year for land acquisitions (and conservation easements) would enable the state to borrow on this guaranteed revenue to purchase lakes and landscapes NOW AVAILABLE.

Write to Governor Mario M. Cuomo, State Capitol, Albany, NY 12224. Urge the Governor to earmark a fair share of the Thruway payback money to land and easement acquisitions. Interstate highways have devoured almost 100,000 acres of open space in New York State. Governor Cuomo can balance that loss by using some of the payback funds to preserve the best of the state's natural legacy for future generations.

[Editor's Note: If you're interested in protecting the Adirondacks and aren't already on the mailing list, write to Enc Siy, Director, ADIRONDACK ADVOCATES, National Audubon Northeast Office, 1789 Western Avenue, Albany, NY 12203.]

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