

WETLANDS FIELD TRIP & PROGRAM

Joan Butkerei

On Sunday, April 18th, from 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM, SSAS will present a wetlands workshop in memory of Bonnie June Mellon, a lifelong advocate for wetlands.

Field Trip (9:30-11:15). Our field trip will explore the salt marsh on the bay side of Lido Beach. The long legal battle to save the Lido parcel has been resolved, and we will explore the beauty and benefits of this resource. We will meet at the Conservation & Waterways Building in Point Lookout. As the Loop Parkway enters Point Lookout, the building is the first one on the right. Refreshments will be served after the field trip. If it rains, the field trip will be replaced by a film by Elliott Kutner on salt marshes, a resource that provides two-thirds of our fish catch in the Eastern United States.

Guest Speaker Karen Blumer — Wetlands Protection (11:30-12:30). Why are we losing our wetlands? How effective are our wetlands laws? Are we loopholing our wetlands away? Karen Blumer will give a great presentation on loops, hoops, and other ways the laws and their implementation are failing to save our wetlands. She will present facts about an actual new model wetland law that illustrates how effective local legislation can be. Karen, the author of *Long Island Native Plants for Landscaping — A Sourcebook*, is a freshwater wetlands ecologist. She has an undergraduate degree in Ecology from Cornell University, a Master's Degree in English from Columbia University, and has done Ph.D. work in Plant Ecology. Karen has worked as a researcher in Wetlands Ecology at Brookhaven National Laboratory and Rutgers University's Center for Coastal Studies. She has mapped all of Suffolk County's freshwater wetlands for New York State's Department of Environmental Conservation, and added 1500 wetlands to be protected. Karen is currently an Environmental Analyst for the Town of Southampton and is overseeing wetlands protection under their law.

Guest Speaker John Turner — Recommendations for Change in New York's Wetlands Laws (12:45-1:15). John Turner has served as President of the Long Island Pine Barrens Society, Board Director for the Long Island Nature Conservancy, Biologist for Suffolk County Parks, and member of the Governor's committee to provide recommendations on how to make New York State's wetlands laws more effective. He will tell us what we should be asking for legislatively.

For further information, call committee chairperson Joan Butkerei at 623-0843.

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RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070
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WILDLIFE POISONING HOTLINE (800) 356-0560
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AUDUBON HOTLINE (202) 547-9017
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BROOKSIDE PRESERVE SHAPE-UP

Betsy Gulotta

Everyone is welcome to join in the spring "Shape-Up" day at Brookside Preserve on Sunday, April 25th. We will be gathering at 1:00 PM to trim trails, spread wood chips, remove debris, eliminate nonnative plant species, and perform other maintenance chores.

If you have never been to Brookside Preserve, spring is one of the loveliest times of year to visit — wildflowers are at their best. Some of us will be on hand to lead tours for first-time visitors.

Brookside Preserve is located on Brookside Avenue in Freeport, just north of Sunrise Highway and the LIRR. The preserve was established in 1989, when SSAS members recognized its value as a freshwater wetland and, with the help of Nassau County, saved it from development. SSAS became managers of this County-owned preserve in 1989. Our goals are to preserve and maintain the wetland and surrounding habitats, and to develop the preserve into an outdoor environmental education facility for the community.

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CATSKILL 3500 CLUB

Marion Yavarkovsky

Kudos to past president and current Duck Survey Chairperson Joe Grupp on his most recent accomplishment. On February 27, 1993, Joe climbed South West Hunter Mountain (elevation 3740 feet) in the Catskills and thus qualified for the Winter Patch and Award from the Catskill 3500 Club. In order to obtain this award, club members must climb the 35 highest Catskill peaks during the winter. Joe did the majority of this climbing on snowshoes in snow up to *three feet* deep.

In order to gain membership in the Catskill 3500 Club, an individual must have climbed the 35 highest peaks of the Catskills, including four designated peaks during the winter months. All of these mountains have elevations above 3500 feet. Joe and his wife, Dolores, qualified as members in 1988.

Congratulations, Joe!



Muskrat

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marion Yavarkovsky

It is our pleasure to welcome our newest members. Now that the days are getting longer and warmer, we hope you will make time to join us at our weekly bird walks, monthly meetings, and special events. It is a wonderful time of the year to get involved in the activities of South Shore Audubon Society.

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

- Baldwin Mr. & Mrs. John Mayo
- Bellmore Marion Sierra
- Bethpage ? Moss, Wendy L. Rosen
- Dix Hills Lorraine Broder
- East Meadow Veronica Scutaro
- Freeport Mrs. Evelyn F. Cyr
- Garden City Ron Young
- Hewlett Michael Hemlock
- Hicksville Joe Himmelman
- Island Park Mr. Frank Bruno, Lisa Elshinshy
- Levittown Susanne Portale
- Long Beach Marge Cannon
- Malverne Mr. Joseph J. Hennessy, Mr. Hal
Olson, Ethel & Bernie Unger
- Massapequa Eugenia Messina
- Merrick Vincenza N. Chasin, Joel
Gorinsky, Mr. Vincent Lomare,
Victoria Villano
- Plainview Elizabeth Mullan
- Rockville Centre The Kopkes
- Uniondale Mrs. Dorothy Maciura,
Julie D. Salomone
- Valley Stream Matthew Upton
- Woodmere Harry Mison, Mr. David Shapiro

BIRDHOUSES

The following question and answer is reprinted from *Field Notes*, provided courtesy of the Adirondack Park Visitor Interpretive Centers in Paul Smiths and Newcomb, NY.

Last year no birds were attracted to the birdhouse in our yard. What do we have to do to get birds to nest in it?

Each species of bird is rather particular about where it will nest. Some, like the bluebird or chickadee, will nest only in houses designed to their very specific needs. Others, like sparrows and starlings, are not as picky.

To attract a particular bird to your house, you have to consider a number of things.

First, select the right house for the bird. Whether you build it yourself or buy it, the dimensions of the entrance hole and the inside cavity are critical. If, for example, you want to attract chickadees, the entrance hole should be 1-1/8 inches; if you make the hole 1-1/4 inches, swallows may find it more

attractive. While birds are not too critical of the facade, the inside cavity should be square and the right size, i.e., 4" by 4" for chickadees and wrens, and 5" by 5" for bluebirds and swallows. If it's too small, the bird will be cramped; if it's too large, the bird will give up trying to "decorate" it with nesting material.

Secondly, birds are like people in the sense that they are attracted to particular neighborhoods. You won't tempt, for example, goldfinches or bluebirds from the field to nesting sites in woods. Place your birdhouse in habitats to the liking of the species you're hoping to attract. Nesting sites are specific to species (for example, bluebirds and swallows prefer open fields; wrens, chickadees, woodpeckers, and titmice prefer wooded areas; robins prefer backyards and the vicinity of houses).

Enticing them to your yard involves providing protective cover (trees, shrubs, etc.), water, and easily accessible areas for food and nesting materials. Most birds won't nest in bare yards. They are attracted to areas with various types of vegetation. To a bird, an old garbage can lid sunk in the ground is as attractive as a commercial birdbath; any flat shallow pan (less than 1 inch deep) will do. Additionally, you might try offering some nesting materials near the birdhouse (bits of fur, feathers, string, yarn, wool, grass clippings, etc.) to make it easier.



"BAG LADY" NEWS UPDATE

El Glaser

This is especially for those of you who missed the article in the December/January *Skimmer* and weren't at the October meeting at which my bag plan was discussed. I ordered (and have now received) large canvas shopping bags with the South Shore Audubon logo for the sole purpose of making them available to the membership or to anyone who feels strongly that there is just too much waste of plastic shopping bags at the supermarkets and who wants to do something about it. The bags are not only ideal for grocery shopping, but for just about any other shopping as well. I do hope that all of you who are concerned and care about helping our environment will recognize this as a very worthwhile way of doing your part. The bags will be available at our meetings, but you can also order them directly from me by calling 561-9118. Please be a part of this effort.



AMERICAN REF-FUEL TOUR

On Monday, April 19th, starting at 7:30 PM, up to 30 SSAS members are invited to our second guided tour of the Town of Hempstead's resource recovery plant, located next to the Meadowbrook Parkway in Garden City. If you're interested in joining us and enjoy interesting aromas, please call Annie McIntyre at 379-2206 to register.

CONSERVATION REPORT

Annie F. McIntyre

Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Update. As of early March, legislation to give the refuge's coastal plain wilderness designation (which would protect it from exploitation) had cosponsors as follows: H.R. 39, 42 Congressmen; S. 39, 24 Senators, including NY's Daniel P. Moynihan. I'm currently waiting to hear from Senator Alfonse D'Amato and Representative Peter King about meeting with them on this issue. I hope you'll take the time to write a short note to Senator D'Amato and your Congressman (for most SSAS members, either King or David Levy) and urge them to support wilderness designation. A quick thank you to Senator Moynihan would be great, too. Let's take full advantage of the new "environment friendly" administration and finally get protection for this unique wilderness area.

Clinton's Economic Package — The Green Side. I'm far from an economist, so I won't tout the merits of the President's plan. I will, however, pass on information I've been sent that highlights planned changes. Land use policy changes include:

- ① allow the government to collect fair market value on the minerals extracted from federal land;
- ② phase out federal timber sales that have lost money (which applies to much of the ancient forests);
- ③ change fees for grazing on public land (this program currently loses \$52 million/year).

Energy policy changes include:

- ① public transit funding;
- ② increased funding for low-income weatherization;
- ③ funding increases for renewable energy sources;
- ④ oil taxes, which will decrease dependence on oil, as well as decrease greenhouse gas output.

I recommend that those of you who haven't seen Mr. Clinton's package take a look at it. It seems to have true potential to bring about some positive long-term changes.

Environmental Trust Fund by Any Other Name... Last year I asked *Skimmer* readers to take a stand in favor of Environmental Trust Fund (ETF) legislation, and I represented SSAS at meetings with two of our State Senators, lobbying them to support it. The Assembly passed a bill last year; as usual, it languished in the Senate. This year, we all need to again urge our state legislators to support legislation to establish an environmental fund.

The scenario has changed slightly. An Environmental Assistance Fund (EAF) has been incorporated into Governor Cuomo's 1993-94 budget. As with the ETF, the EAF is a comprehensive proposal to establish a long-term source of revenue dedicated to helping New York communities meet their environmental needs. Please write your Assemblyman and State Senator, urging them to support the establishment of this fund. Letters from people in Senate Majority Leader Ralph Marino's district are especially needed, as he is a major stumbling block to its passage.

As always, please call with any questions or comments.

BIRD WALKS

Elliott Kutner

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

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| Apr. 4 | Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner |
| Apr. 11 | Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot) |
| Apr. 18 | Lido Beach (see Wetlands article) |
| Apr. 25 | Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner |
| May 2 | Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot) |
| May 9 | Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge |
| May 16 | Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner |
| May 23 | Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge |

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Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bird Sanctuary is owned by the National Audubon Society and operated by the Community and three local Audubon chapters, including South Shore Audubon. The following programs are open to the public. Space is limited and registration is required. All program fees are required at the time of registration.

Saturday, April 3rd (1 PM to 3 PM, all ages) — Birds of Prey. You will meet the Sanctuary's raptors and see a flight demonstration. Learn about the natural history and adaptations of these beautiful birds. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

Wednesday, April 14th (7 PM to 9 PM, ages 12 & up) — Owl Prowl. Always popular; meet live owls in the hand and go on a night walk to discover the wild population. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

Sunday, April 18th (2 PM to 4 PM, all ages) — Pond Ecology. Our naturalist will take you to a local pond and introduce you to the myriad types of life found there. We'll use dip nets, live animals, and microscopes.

DEFENDERS OF WILDLIFE'S LIST OF TEN LEADING WILDLIFE CONSERVATION DECISIONS FACING PRESIDENT CLINTON

[Editor's Note: The following article is reproduced from the December 1992 / January 1993 issue of GreenDisk, the paperless environmental journal. It originally appeared as a Defenders of Wildlife press release on January 18th; their release said that the list is not necessarily in order of importance. Although the National Audubon Society's scope is broader than that of Defenders of Wildlife, all of these topics are important to NAS, too.]

* **Biodiversity.** As President, Bill Clinton must decide whether or not to sign the Convention on Biological Diversity that 158 other nations agreed to sign at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro last June. The treaty attempts to stem the tide of global species extinctions by requiring that contracting parties identify, monitor, and conserve their biological resources. Scientists now estimate that as many as 50–100 species go extinct per day. Opponents of the treaty, including [former] President Bush, claim that U.S. intellectual property rights in the biotechnology field would be harmed. However, proponents argue that this can be addressed by a new protocol, a common and accepted practice with such international conventions.

* **Endangered Species.** The new administration must decide whether or not to support a stronger Endangered Species Act during Congressional reauthorization. The U.S. Endangered Species Act requires that federal agencies conserve species in particularly dire straits and makes it illegal for any party to kill, harm, or harass threatened or endangered wildlife. Critics of the act assert that it slows economic development and unfairly punishes individual offenders. Conversely, environmental groups are urging President Clinton to support a stronger Endangered Species Act during the congressional reauthorization this year. Issues include economics and the listing process, protection from harmful agency actions for listed species abroad, incentives, and increased funding.

* **Ancient Forests.** The new administration must decide how it will handle the Pacific Northwest Forest Summit. Fulfilling a Clinton campaign promise, Vice President Al Gore will preside over a "Pacific Northwest Forest Summit" in early 1993. The summit will attempt to find solutions to the continuing gridlock over the Spotted Owl and the future of the Northwest's old growth forests. Certain logging interests claim that the Endangered Species Act and public land statutes have taken away their livelihood, all for the sake of saving the Spotted Owl. Environmentalists counter that the Spotted Owl is a scapegoat for a much deeper economic problem in the Pacific Northwest — namely, below cost raw log exports to Japan, movement of the industry to the Southeast where trees grow faster, and unreasonable timber quotas that have promoted unsustainable harvests. Conservation groups point out that declining salmon runs in the Northwest are also attributable to excessive logging.

* **Trade and the Environment.** The new President must decide whether or not to sign the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). Candidate Clinton promised to support NAFTA only if major environmental problems could be resolved. Depending upon his action on NAFTA, Clinton will be under pressure to also add increased environmental protection measures to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). GATT is a separate but related multilateral agreement currently being considered for revision in the so-called "Uruguay Round." Both trade agreements are expected to have tremendous impact on environmental and wildlife protection. Under GATT alone, over 4 trillion dollars' worth of goods and services are exchanged in international commerce, much of which is dependent upon natural resources. The key for President Clinton will be to make both GATT and NAFTA vehicles for environmentally responsible behavior. For example, when the Mexican tuna industry — which kills about 15,000 dolphins per year — was shut out of the U.S. market because their fishing practices violate U.S. Marine Mammal Protection Act standards, a GATT panel ruled that the restriction was an illegal trade barrier.

* **Wildlife Trade.** The new administration must respond to a petition filed in November by environmental groups to help save the critically endangered black rhinoceros. The total world population of the five species of rhinoceros has dropped to less than 10,000— down from more than 70,000 only 20 years ago. This petition calls on the administration to certify that China, Taiwan, Korea, and Yemen are still engaging in trade in endangered rhino horns despite a ban on such trade under international treaty law, called the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species or CITES. Once certified, the President would have to decide within 30 days whether to ban imports of all or some wildlife from these countries. This same certification process was used successfully against Japan in 1990 to stop their trade in endangered sea turtles.

* **Wetlands.** The new administration must decide whether or not to support strengthening the wetlands protection provisions in the Clean Water Act, which is due for reauthorization by Congress. Section 404 of this act provides primary federal regulatory control over activities affecting wetlands. Legislation will be introduced by proponents as well as opponents of wetlands protection. The outcome of this reauthorization battle may largely determine the fate of many wetland-dependent endangered and threatened species, along with declining waterfowl populations. Environmental groups say that President Clinton should support legislation to strengthen wetlands protection through changes including expanding the harmful activities subject to permit, such as draining, flooding, and excavating; giving the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service stronger roles in the permit process; requiring the Corps of Engineers to explain in writing its reasons when rejecting the recommendations of these agencies; strengthening EPA's oversight of the general permit program; and requiring the Corps to account for wetlands losses resulting from general permits.

SIXTH ANNUAL SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON BIRDATHON

Doreen Remsen and James Remsen, Jr.

* **Wildlife Refuges.** The administration must respond to three major lawsuits regarding uses harming the National Wildlife Refuge System. In October and November of 1992, a coalition of environmental groups filed lawsuits challenging the Interior Department's decision to permit Navy planes to use Copalis National Wildlife Refuge [in Washington] for bombing practice and the Department's decision to authorize construction of jetties at Oregon Inlet, off North Carolina's Outer Banks. A third suit challenges the continuation of various secondary uses, including grazing, water sports, and recreational activities, occurring throughout the National Wildlife Refuge System. One approach the administration could take is to admit that these harmful activities have been allowed to continue and agree to take immediate remedial action. As a possible precedent, environmentalists look to Environmental Protection Agency-designee [now Director] Carol Browner's response to litigation brought against the state of Florida over the Everglades while she was head of the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation. Browner admitted the problems and settled the lawsuit.

* **Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.** The new administration must decide whether or not to actively champion enactment of legislation to designate as wilderness the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Bill Clinton is on record as supporting wilderness for the coastal plain. Richard Lehman (D-Calif.) introduced H.R. 39 to accomplish this objective on Jan. 5, 1993.

* **Natural Resource Subsidies.** In his first budget to Congress, President Clinton must decide whether or not to continue water, grazing, mining, and timber subsidies, and, if so, the extent of those subsidies. Environmental groups estimate that almost \$1 billion is lost every year because of below-cost timber sales, below-market grazing fees, and royalty-free mineral extraction on public lands. What is more, these activities are usually highly disruptive to the ecosystems on which they occur — a large number of endangered species need protection precisely as a result of these economically inefficient and ecologically dysfunctional activities. Environmental groups point out that by ending these subsidies President Clinton can reduce the size of the budget deficit and protect the environment simultaneously. Reversing natural resource policy, however, will surely anger those benefiting from the federal handouts.

* **Wolf Reintroduction.** The new President must decide whether or not to reintroduce the endangered Northern Rockies gray wolf to Yellowstone National Park. An environmental impact statement now being developed by the Department of the Interior will bring to a head a highly publicized issue that has been a political football in the Northern Rockies for 14 years. Those opposed to reintroduction say wolves will decimate livestock and collapse the local economies; environmentalists point to a recent government study in the Yellowstone area that predicts the presence of wolves will stimulate \$19 million a year in sales and services from ecotourism. Public hearings will be held throughout the summer and are likely to draw a vast outpouring of support for the wolf.

It's that time of year again! On **May 8th** (rain date May 15th), the South Shore Audubon Society will take part in the 1993 Audubon Birdathon, organized by the National Audubon Society. Our members will use their birding skills to raise funds for South Shore's local programs here in Nassau, as well as national environmental research, education, and action programs, by getting sponsors who will pledge a certain amount for each species they see on Birdathon day.

Starting points and times for our Birdathon teams are as follows.

Team 1. Leader: Elliott Kutner (486-7667). Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge. Start time: 8:00 AM. 🐾

Team 2. Leader: Paul Butkerei (623-0843). Forest Park, Queens. Meet at 6:20 AM at Hempstead Lake State Park, Peninsula Blvd. parking lot, to carpool. 🐾

Team 3. Leaders: James Remsen (764-5168) and Joe Grupp (481-4208). Participants may join this group at either of two times: at sunrise (5:45 AM) at Mill Pond in Wantagh, or later at Muttontown Preserve [parking lot on Route 106 (not the main parking lot!), time to be announced; should be approximately 8:00 AM]. 🐾

People wishing to participate should notify either the leader of their chosen team or the Birdathon chairpersons in advance of the event. The teams will move, at their discretion, from location to location throughout the day. Participants may leave at will. Members unable to attend on Birdathon day should feel free to seek pledges and count whatever birds they see, wherever they happen to be that day, and forward their pledges and bird lists to the Birdathon chairpersons.

We would like each member to be an active Birdathoner, a sponsor in his/her own right, and a recruiter of additional sponsors from both *within and without* South Shore Audubon Society.

Sponsors will be expected to pledge the amount of their choice (such as 25¢ or \$1) per species identified by the Birdathoner and his/her team. A preselected sum, pledged regardless of number of species seen, is also acceptable.

Birdathoners will be responsible for notifying sponsors after the Birdathon, collecting their checks (made payable to the *South Shore Audubon Society*), and forwarding them with their sponsor pledge form(s) to the Birdathon chairpersons by *May 31, 1993*. Those bringing in the largest number of sponsors, as well as the largest dollar amount, will be recognized and awarded prizes at our June dinner.

Additional sponsor pledge forms and information will be available at meetings, bird walks, or by contacting Doreen Remsen at 865 1-2B Broadway Avenue, Holbrook, NY 11741; phone 472-6830.



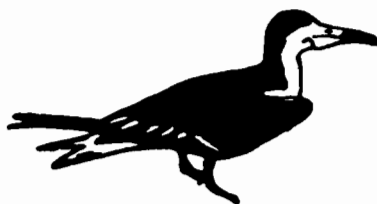
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Joseph Grupp, Duck Survey	481-4208
Betsy Gulotta, Brookside Preserve Committee Chairperson	546-8841
Elliott Kutner, Birding / Field Trips Chairperson	486-7667
Joseph Lancer, Binocular / Book Sales (7 to 9 PM)	536-6574
Annie F. McIntyre, Conservation Legislation Chairperson	379-2206
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South Shore Audubon Society
P.O. Box 31
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