

That was the weekend in a nutshell. A lot was accomplished, a lot was learned, and all of it was enjoyed. On behalf of Betty Borowsky and myself, thank you all for giving us this opportunity to represent you at the Audubon Council of New York State Fall Retreat right here on good old Long Island.

Have a very Happy Thanksgiving and see you out there on the bird walks and at our meetings.

**BROOKSIDE PRESERVE CLEANUP
THIS (LAST?) SATURDAY MORNING**


On October 28th, starting at 9 A.M., we will be planting wildflowers, installing trail markers, and removing debris from Brookside Preserve. Owned by Nassau County and managed by SSAS, this 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland field area was saved from development by our chapter in 1989. The preserve is located on the Freeport-Baldwin border; meet at the main entrance on Brookside Avenue just north of Sunrise Highway (turn north at the traffic light that's just east of Freeport High School).

BINOCULARS, SCOPES, AND FIELD GUIDES

SSAS sells Bausch & Lomb and Bushnell binoculars and spotting scopes plus the *Golden Guide to the Birds of North America* at competitive prices, year-round. If you're thinking about buying these items for yourself or as holiday presents, please call Joe Lancer at 536-6574 between 7 and 9 P.M. or ask for him at our meetings and walks.

 **BIRD WALKS** 
Elliott Kutner

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

- Oct. 29 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Nov. 5 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Nov. 12 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Nov. 19 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
- Nov. 26 Pelham Bay for Owls (pull over to street on extreme right after going through Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet at 9:00 A.M.)
-  Dec. 3 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Dec. 10 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Dec. 17 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
- Dec. 24 Season's Greetings — No Walk
- Dec. 31 Happy New Year — No Walk
- Jan. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Jan. 14 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Jan. 21 Pelham Bay for Owls (9:00 A.M.)
- Jan. 28 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Marion Yavarkovsky

Now that fall migration is over, we will settle down to our winter routine. Bird walking every week, meetings every month, and special events will keep our members busy. Now that you are also members of SSAS, please make a point of joining us. You will be glad you did.

[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 P.M., Monday through Friday.]

- Astoria Scott Kincaid
- Bellmore Ms. Marie Baldwin
- Elmont Ms. Gail B. Zappia
- Farmingdale Dorothy Conboy
- Franklin Square Nina Donnelly, James A. Feaster
- Freeport Mr. Harvey B. Silber
- Garden City Philip Buffa, Garden City Union



- Free School District Business Office, K. Kenna, Kathleen M. Reedy
- Hempstead C. O. Browne, M.D.
- Hicksville Morgan C. Bowen, Suzanne Saramak
- Jericho Jason Staller
- Levittown Josephine Beaudoin, Steven Bonura, Joseph J. B. Rienti, Mrs. Claire I. Walsh
- Long Beach Vicki Anne Gartland, John McLoughlin, Rhoda Pollack
- Lynbrook Diana Clark, Mrs. Christine Hamilton, John Pelkonen, Ms. Jean Sirchia

- Massapequa Mrs. Gay Ellison, Ms. Pamela J. Jatsko, Mr. Edward Kaercher, George Motz, Mrs. Bonnie A. Worme



- Massapequa Park Richard Mc Garrigle, Roy Solvang, John H. Talbot
- Merrick Jaclyn Guttermers, ? Hessen
- Oceanside Ann Mank, Daniel Weissman
- Plainview Judith Ruderman
- Rockville Centre Elizabeth Gatz, Ross Gollub, Carol & Sheldon Shocket
- Roosevelt Theodore Whitting
- Seaford Barbara R. Weiss
- Valley Stream Lisa DiChiara, Jonathan & Andrew Karp, Thomas A. Schoch, Mr. Stanley Schleider
- Woodmere Mrs. Anna Matathias

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

CONSERVATION NOTES

Take a Deep Breath

Betty Borowsky

The most significant event since last month is that the House of Representatives voted against the Department of the Interior budget bill; the proposed budget included some novel ideas to generate income. One of these was the plan to lease parts of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to oil companies for drilling. Most of the other bills that will damage environmental programs and initiatives that we mentioned last month are either still in committee or are on hold as Congress debates (read "macerates") social welfare bills. I have never followed the workings of government so closely before.

The proposed appropriations bill will involve deep cuts to agencies which carry out environmental programs. President Clinton has said that he will veto any appropriations bill that comes before him which contains significant cuts to these agencies. Nevertheless, I would urge you at this point to write to President Clinton and tell him you firmly support his stance in holding out against this potentially devastating reduction in environmental funding. I would also urge you to write to your Senators and Congressman with the same message, since if Clinton does veto the bill, it will go back to Congress where the potential for an override exists.

Armchair Activist. I am very happy to tell you that we now have over 35 persons signed up for this program. It has become a real thing: Mary Jane Russell spends a few hours each month on mailings, conference calls, follow-ups, and whatever to make sure things get sent out in a timely fashion. However, she views this as a labor of love and can still send out a lot more. Join the Armchair Activist program if you feel you can spare a few minutes to write on important issues to your legislators.



In case you haven't heard, here's how it works. Eight times a year I receive a letter from the Albany office of the National Audubon Society which describes some environmental issue which needs our attention. The issue might be federal, statewide, or local. The letter provides the background of the problem and what might be done to rectify it, and provides a form letter which you can copy entirely or which can serve as a guide to frame your own letter.

The first time you get one of these, it will be accompanied by the League of Women Voters' "They Represent You" brochure, which will tell you who your representatives are and how to contact them (until I run out). You will be receiving a copy of each month's letter as soon as Mary Jane and I can get it out.

If you are interested in joining, just call me (764-3596) or Mary Jane (766-7397) — there's no charge and the feedback we've gotten is very positive. One correspondent told us that every letter she sent out got some response.

Phone Us Today!



Hey, I know the responses are form letters, but your representatives and senators are listening; I know it because

they tell us so. And if ever there was a time for writing, phoning, and getting them to listen, it is now.



A NOVEMBER MORNING

Morton I. Silver

Freed from all constraints of time and employment, it was possible for me to yield to impulse and seek the peace and solitude of the bay. The day was bleak, cold, blustery, and threatening. Winds off the ocean roiled the waters and demanded obeisance of the flora in the refuge. Reed grass, bluestem, trees, and shrubbery bent to the persistent nudging of the gusts. Only the birds seemed to disregard the goading of the wind.

On a small sandbar in the bay, American Oystercatchers, black and white clowns with bright red-orange bills, stood at the water's edge like small boys watching the waves. Two imposing Marbled Godwits with long upturned bills rested with their feet submerged in the cold water, and running about between the stilt-like legs of these tall waders, like exuberant children on the summer's beach, were the Dunlin sandpipers (pictured). How varied the fauna that inhabit and visit New York City's Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge!



The East Pond hosted rafts of hundreds of ducks and geese. Dotting the surface were Brant and Snow Geese, Gadwall, American Wigeon, Northern Shoveler, Common Pintail, scaup, and other ducks, each species moving about in unison, oblivious to its neighbors.

Suddenly the surface of the pond seemed to lift in a great display of beating wings. Turning and wheeling in the darkening gray sky, the birds moved in huge clouds and then after a short while settled back down on the water. A Peregrine Falcon, the prince of the skies, had come rocketing over the pond, seeking his prey from among the flocks. Was he successful? I saw in the distance a puff of feathers gently floating down — the powerful falcon and his quarry. The balance of nature was reestablished and the New York environs had returned to normal ... and the November rain beat down. [Editor's note: the preceding was written and sent to me by SSAS member Mort Silver last November.]



THIS ONE'S FOR THE POST OFFICE

Due to third-class nonprofit postal restrictions that took effect on October 1st, the following identification statement will appear in all future newsletters:

South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through June by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031. ☎

HISTORY OF SSAS, PART FIVE

Michael Sperling

Last December, I started recapping South Shore Audubon Society's 25 years. Here's some more:

At the October 8, 1974 meeting, SSAS's Horthy Block presented slides from her trip to the Galapagos Islands. A representative from the newly formed Atlantic Coalition spoke about offshore sludge dumping; SSAS was a founding member of this coalition of Long Island groups and individuals, which sought to eradicate all forms of water pollution.

The second educational field trip run by Linda Schlotterhausen took place on October 19th — a trip to Garvies Point to study geology and visit the museum.

On November 12th, wind-powered generators were discussed by Nassau County's Thomas Darcy and Stephen M. Bernheim. The December 10th meeting featured the Nassau Environmental Council's Chairman Sheldon Shane and the previous June's dinner guest Bill Botwinik discussing environmental problems and plans in Nassau County; coffee and cake were served — the first coffee break in SSAS history.

As the year ended, SSAS joined the Environmental Defense Fund and various Long Island environmental groups as co-plaintiffs in a suit filed against the Environmental Protection Agency and NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. The lawsuit sought to block federal funding of sewer projects that involved treatment plants that used ocean outfall pipes, and sought a comprehensive study of Long Island's water supply problems and a land acquisition plan to protect groundwater recharge sites.

The SSAS tradition of awarding a full-tuition scholarship to an adult member for the Audubon Workshop in Maine began in 1974-75; the winner among four applicants was chosen at the January board meeting. The January 14th general meeting's program was provided by Al Lemke, who showed slides of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks.

The February newsletter marked the first appearance of our now-familiar two sheets of 11 by 17 inch paper, folded twice (replacing four sheets of 8-1/2 by 11, stapled together and folded once), but some future issues were six or ten pages long. February 11th's meeting featured another film by Elliott Kutner, on tundra dwellers — southward bound.

At the March board meeting, the continued absence of a symbol and name for our newsletter was discussed, as an appeal in the January issue had failed to produce a solution; Al Lemke suggested loon and *The Loonatic*, respectively.

The March 11th general meeting starred Guy Coheleach, who showed a movie of himself and the Bald Eagles he was painting; the attendance was described as SSAS's largest turnout to date (estimated at 200), with 40 new members joining that night after having been reached by the Long Island chapters' poster- and brochure-distributing membership drive. Through a special grant, National Audubon offered \$500 and \$1000 prizes to those chapters that showed the largest numerical or percentage increases in members

during the first half of 1975. In February and March, the Long Island chapters gave away one or more of Mr. Coheleach's donated prints to all new members and to old members who recruited at least two new ones. The prints had to be picked up in person at an SSAS meeting; at the March meeting, the artist signed prints for anyone in attendance. Prior to the membership drive, SSAS's membership had been decreasing for several months after steadily growing to 900 since the chapter's founding. By May, membership was up to 1100 and SSAS was six members short of winning \$1000 for highest numerical increase in the Northeast Region (we didn't win). By June, SSAS was the second largest chapter on Long Island and the third largest in New York State.

The April newsletter as usual included Pat Davis's monthly conservation column, this time filling two whole pages with information on aerial wolf shooting in Alaska, strip-mining reform legislation that had been vetoed by President Ford, and the Interior Department's offshore drilling hearings in Trenton that she, Linda Schlotterhausen, and four other SSAS members attended. Also included was an unprecedented full-page message from another organization (Friends of Animals), which the SSAS Board had sought to insert; it promoted a tuna boycott with the headline "Would you kill Flipper for a tuna fish sandwich?" On April 8th, SUNY Farmingdale Professor Rodney Dow discussed the interpretation of bird songs and calls.

The Education Committee ran three field trips — a barrier beach walk at Jones Beach parking field #6 on March 15th, a study of marsh plants at JFK Sanctuary in Tobay Beach on April 26th, and a study of woodland plants in Muttontown Preserve on May 17th.

The January and April newsletters included a notice from Miriam Raynor that the June issue would be her last and that a successor was needed. By the May issue, the notice became a little more direct: "Do we want a newsletter next year? If so, we must have someone to take over for the September issue. June will be the last issue otherwise." The job required "an ability to type" and came with an SCM electric typewriter; Pat Davis volunteered and her successor as Conservation Chairman was Paul Butkerei. The typewriter wasn't needed by Pat, so it was forwarded to Membership Chairman Dorothy Lovering.

At the May 6th Board meeting, Asa Starkweather successfully proposed that SSAS rent a post office box in Freeport; after a short stint on a waiting list, we were awarded our now-familiar P.O. Box 31, which replaced Miriam Raynor's home as the newsletter's return address in September. The position of Hospitality Chairman was created that night, with \$150 allocated to buy a year's supply of coffee, tea, Sanka, cake, etc.

The May 13th meeting featured Trevor Gunton from England's Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, whose program described European bird-watching spectacles. On May 18th, an Arts, Crafts, and Hobby Show was held at the Calvary Temple, again organized by the Fischers and



including Elliott Kutner's films. The annual election of officers installed Fritzie Lemke as a new Director.

On June 3rd, the Board of Directors finally voted on a name for the newsletter — *South Shore Skimmer*. The chapter had \$3,814.01 in its checking and savings accounts; the first ever budget committee was created on that historic night. Also on that night, Recording Secretary Laura B. Friedman requested permission to discontinue her three-year practice of taking minutes of every general meeting in the Freeport Memorial Library, since "not one has ever been read or referred to." Twenty years later, your present editor, having read all 51 pages of handwritten minutes, is grateful that they were available to help write this history; there's no such paper trail for the 162 general meetings we've had since then.

June 8th saw Elliott Kutner lead another pelagic boat trip, which departed the Freeport Boatmen's Association's dock at 7:30 A.M. Al Dowd's Steak House at the Holiday Inn in Rockville Centre was the site of the Annual Dinner held on June 10th; it cost \$7.50 with a one-item menu (sliced top sirloin, although an unidentified fish was ultimately provided as a substitute) and was arranged by Alvin Friedman.

BACK DOOR ATTACK ON ARCTIC REFUGE

[Editor's note: National Audubon Society Vice President Liz Raisbeck sent the following to chapter newsletter editors just after the last *Skimmer* went to the printer. As mentioned in Betty Borowsky's article, the House of Representatives Budget Committee followed the Senate's lead.]

The Senate Budget Committee has broken new ground by including revenue from oil production in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in the pending federal budget. This back door tactic to open the refuge buries efforts to ruin this pristine area in a budget quagmire. The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, which has been called America's Serengeti, is our country's largest wildlife preserve and is home to caribou, grizzly bears, wolves, foxes, musk ox, and more than 130 species of shorebirds, loons, songbirds, and geese. In May, Senators in favor of drilling tied opening the refuge to the pending federal budget bill, making it more difficult to debate and vote on this crucial issue. President Clinton has pledged not to permit drilling, and needs to hear that he should veto a budget bill that allows development in the Arctic.

Opening the Arctic Refuge would mean offering 1.2 million acres of pristine coastal plain along the Beaufort Sea for energy exploration. Although this is only one-tenth of the refuge, the coastal plain is the most important calving ground for the Porcupine caribou herd and is considered the biological heart of the refuge. Oil exploration and drilling will also unalterably change the wilderness character of this arctic ecosystem.

Action: Write or call your Senators [and Representative] and ask them to oppose the inclusion of oil production revenues from the Arctic Refuge in the pending federal

budget. Such a sweeping policy decision should be thoroughly debated in full view of the American public, not buried in a budget bill. Let your Senators [and Representative] know you support full protection for the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Call the White House Hotline (202-456-1414) and ask the President to veto a budget bill that opens the Arctic Refuge or rolls back other environmental protections. Contact: Evan Hirsche, National Audubon Society, 202-547-9009 (ehirsche@audubon.org).

ENVIRONMENTAL QUOTATIONS

Michael Sperling

Here's the fifth installment of favorite entries from *A Dictionary of Environmental Quotations*, compiled by Barbara K. Rodes and Rice Odell (published by Simon & Schuster, copyright © 1992):

"How can this generation justify tearing up 'America's Serengeti' to create a sprawling industrial-pollution factory when a mere two-mile-per-gallon increase in the efficiency of new U.S. cars would save more crude than the oil industry hopes to find in the unique wildlife refuge?" — Gaylord Nelson, opposing opening the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for oil drilling, letter, *Wall Street Journal*, September 11, 1990

"The United States invented the national park. Have we so lost our way a century later that we are prepared to sacrifice a one-of-a-kind wilderness for a shot at a small and temporary supply of oil? Similarly, are we so desperate for a fast buck that other natural treasures in Alaska are for sale to the highest bidder?" — Jimmy Carter, *Los Angeles Times*, December 1, 1990

SSAS IS GOING TO COSTA RICA

As mentioned in the last two *Skimmers*, South Shore Audubon Society and Osprey Tours, Inc., are joining hands again to return to Costa Rica. Our first trip in 1994 was so successful and fun that we are going to visit a different part of this small rich country so we can see new flora and fauna. Our birding and natural history trip is scheduled for January 11-21, 1996. Call Betty Borowsky at 764-3596 for information.

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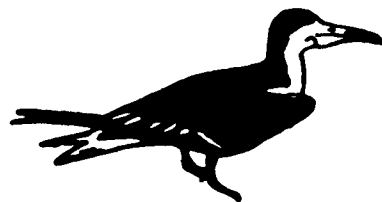
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