

VOLUME 30, NUMBER 2 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 1999

#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Jonathan Staller

As we start off another great season here at South Shore, I would like to wish a Happy New Year for those who celebrated Rosh Hashanah in mid-September.

There are some battles that we're going to have to face this year. The Brooklyn Water Works property that borders our Brookside Preserve in Freeport is on the verge of being transferred from one developer to another, with plans to build a nursing home up to the property line. The developer is seeking an easement from Nassau County, which owns the SSAS-managed preserve. Also, the Underhill property in Jericho and the proposed bike path through Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge will be actively on our agenda.

Now for the good news. As we start our meetings and bird walks again, I hope we have an excellent fall migration. This month we're holding our first annual Fall Bird Festival at Tackapausha Museum and Preserve from 8:30 A.M. to 4 P.M. on Saturday, October 16th, We'll have field trips at 9:30 A.M. at Jones Beach State Park, Oceanside's Marine Nature Study Area, Tackapausha Preserve. Massapequa Preserve, and Brookside Preserve. There also will be a photo workshop at Freeport's Cow Meadow Preserve at 9 A.M. featuring our own Tom Torma. Throughout the day there'll be birding programs at Tackapausha Museum that will run approximately 50 minutes long; National Audubon's Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary will present live-bird shows there at 2 and 3 P.M. Afternoon field trips at Tackapausha, Massapequa, and Jones Beach are also planned.

The festival will be held rain or shine; please bring a bag lunch, although light refreshments will be served. Any questions? Call me or check our web page for directions.

IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE

BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS

### **NEXT MEETING**

Tom Torma

DATE: Tuesday, October 12, 1999

TIME: 8:00 P.M. ②

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

144 W. Merrick Rd. (at 5. Ocean Ave.)

SPEAKER: Jeff Wells

TOPIC: Important Bird Areas & Bird Conservation

in New York State

In March 1996, ornithologist Jeffrey Wells, Ph.D., became the first Important Bird Areas Program Coordinator in New York State when a partnership was established between Audubon's Albany field office (National Audubon Society of New York State) and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Jeff is now the field office's Bird Conservation Director and continues to use the Lab as his home base. According to our field office's web page:

"The goal of the Bird Conservation Program is to ensure that the full diversity of bird species forever remains a part of New York State's natural heritage. Our program has tackled this ambitious agenda by carrying out advocacy, outreach, education, and conservation planning based on a foundation of sound science.

Our first step was to build our bird conservation science foundation by developing an inventory of the key sites across the state that support significant abundance and diversity of birds, through our Important Birds Areas (IBA) program. With the establishment of peer-reviewed criteria and grassroots involvement in site nomination, an inventory was completed over a two-year period. We accomplished the building of this foundation with the publication of the book *Important Bird Areas in New York State* in October 1998. The IBA book was the first of its kind published in the Western Hemisphere and has become a model for other states and countries.

The IBA inventory has served as our blueprint for implementing the advocacy, outreach, education, and conservation planning goals of the Bird Conservation

Program and the other major program areas of the National Audubon Society of New York State, including Wetlands, Forests, Smart Growth, Wildlife, and Education.

The following are the major Bird Conservation/ Important Bird Area achievements and ongoing efforts of the National Audubon Society of New York State:

- ➤ Publication of Important Bird Areas of New York State:
- ➤ Passage of Bird Conservation Area legislation at both state and county levels;
- ➤ Advocating for state open space funding and federal Land and Water Conservation Fund monies for land acquisition at IBAs;
  - Leadership in bird conservation planning;
- ➤ Active research and monitoring, concentrating on WatchList species (see last month's *Skimmer* for the list);
- ➤ Outreach and education efforts continuing to expand through our state education program, local centers, and sanctuaries;
- ➤ Integration of IBA conservation needs into Audubon's Forest and Wetlands Campaigns;
  - Smart Growth initiatives aiding threatened IBAs;
- ➤ Involvement with National Audubon's Refuge and WatchList Campaigns."

Join us for a slide show about the birds of New York and what Audubon is doing to help protect them and their habitats.



Explore the coast with the

# AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

NEW YORK AQUARIUM (Sat, Oct. 23, 10 A.M.). Guided "Behind-the Scenes" tour. See beluga whale, sharks, penguins, walrus, sea otters, and visit new Sea Cliffs exhibit. Cost: \$15 (\$8 kids).

ASSATEAGUE FALL WEEKEND (Nov. 11-14). Visit Chincoteague Refuge and Assateague Seashore in Virginia for great fall/winter birding. See Bald Eagles, Peregrines, Merlins, shorebirds, Snow Geese, Tundra Swan, and White Pelican. Also wild ponies, river otter, and Delmarva fox squirrel. Easy hiking. Cost: \$250 covers 3 nights at Refuge Motor Inn, safari tour, guides, and seafood dinner.

MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND (Jan. 7-9, 2000). Enjoy quiet winter beaches and dunes during the off season and peak winter waterfowl time. See seals, loons, mergansers, scoters, elders, razorbills, and maybe a bald eagle. Cost: \$260 includes 2 nights at the luxurious Manor House, 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, and free pickup at LIRR.

FLORIDA EVERGLADES (March 10-18, 2000). Visit Ding Darling Refuge, Loxahatchee Refuge, Shark River, Corkscrew Swamp, Anhinga Trail, Key Largo, more. Call for info.

For information and free field trip brochure, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 634-6467. 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693

## \*\* WELCOME NEW MEMBERS \*\*

Jackie Richichi

SSAS welcomes this month's new members. We hope that you'll become active members of our very active chapter — join us at a meeting, weekly bird walk, or special event.

[To receive an application for membership in National Audubon Society and SSAS, please call our Membership Chairperson, Jackie Richichi, at 691-1855, or send e-mail to Jacee13@aol.com. Introductory membership is \$20; \$15 for students and senior citizens.]

Baldwin	John Circharo, Patricia Davis,
<b>A A</b>	R. V. & Edna M. Dolan, Ted
	Giordano, Roy G. Jacobson,
110	William J. Karcher,
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<i>ተ</i>	Robert Wexler
Bellmore	Jean Evelly
East Meadow	
East Rockaway	
Farmingdale	
Floral Park	Franklin Kaupp
Franklin Square	Mrs. Paula Ascher, Joseph P. Day,
-	John R. Marmero
Freeport	B. Brown, Christopher J. Wilson
Garden City	Dorothy Pineman, Paul Zapryluk
Hicksville	Nicholas Apostolo, Susan Christie,
	Edward Cy, Patricia Davis
	. Ms. Beatrice S. Burstein
	. Carol McCrystal, Sharon Powers
Long Beach	. Lester Kappel, Joseph Lassman,
•	Irving Leiner, Oscar Peretz,
	Arnold Simonoff
Lynbrook	. George Englehardt, Jerry Sanetti,
•	Charles Vigilante
Massapequa	. Jacqueline Daly, Louise & Lee
	Levine
Merrick	. Iris E. Dietze, Oscar J. Spruyt,
	Ellen Warren
Old Bethpage	. Lon Harvey
Plainview	. Arthur Herrforth
Point Lookout	. Lois A. Goodell
Rockville Centre	. Jane Allen Shikoh
Seaford	. John Gabella
Valley Stream	Bridget Olivieri, Linda Ragazzini,
·	William Vivenzio, John R. Walsh
Wantagh	S. Lubell
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West Hempstead ..... George Galanakis

AUDUBON ACTIONLINE (800) 659-2622
TAPE-RECORDED UPDATES FROM WASHINGTON, DC



Ellialt Kulner

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

Sept. 26	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Oct. 3	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Oct. 10	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Oct. 17	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Oct. 24	Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
Oct. 31	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 7	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

Directions to Jamaica Bay: Southern State Parkway to Belt Parkway to Exit 17 South (Cross Bay Blvd.). Drive four miles, passing through Howard Beach and over Joseph P. Addabbo Bridge; turn right at the Refuge entrance's traffic light and look for dozens of Auduboners in the parking lot.

## **ISLAND PARK VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

Michael Sperling

Our printer is located in Island Park; they open by 8 A.M. on Mondays and close at 5 P.M. on Fridays. Some more volunteers are needed to drop off the *Skimmer* on Monday mornings and/or to pick it up on Friday afternoons (they'll put the heavy boxes in your vehicle), so if you might be available for either trip please call your volunteer editor at 541-0805 after 7:30 P.M.

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#### Michael Speding

The 1995 revision of New York State's Open Space Conservation Plan listed 90 "unique and irreplaceable open space resources that include exceptional ecological, wildlife, recreational, scenic, and historical values." Seven of those places were on Long Island, including the 96 acre Underhill parcel in the northwest corner of Jericho Turnpike and Route 107 in Jericho. The 1998 revision described Underhill as "consisting of rolling hills, woodlands, and a complex of kettle hole ponds. It is a visually spectacular open space area in a heavily populated town and is under developmental pressure. In addition to fulfilling recreation needs, the project [acquiring Underhill] also serves to protect the groundwater aquifer system."

In 1974, Henry Willets Underhill sold the development rights to 81 of those 96 acres to the Tilles Investment Company. In 1986, Tilles sued the Town of Oyster Bay for

refusing to approve a zoning change that would have allowed the construction of 218



condo units and 124 houses. In 1996, Tobay settled that lawsuit by agreeing to 270 houses, a clubhouse, a swim-

ming pool, and four tennis courts, which resulted in Tilles and Tobay being sued by civic groups for failing to comply with the State Environmental Quality Review Act. Last year, the civic groups prevailed in court, but Tilles and Tobay filed an appeal. In June of this year there was a large rally in support of Underhill and the Town of Oyster Bay announced that it would support preservation by not participating in the appeal.

SSAS has been advocating the preservation of the Underhill parcel for over a decade and is one of the dozens of groups (including the Jericho Water District and Jericho Union Free School District) in the Society to Preserve Underhill coalition. According to their fact sheet: "The parcel sits atop the first federally designated Sole Source Aquifer and is one of only two state-designated Special Groundwater Protection Areas in Nassau County... Elected officials at every level have endorsed purchase of this property, yet no effective action has been taken to secure it. Today, thanks to the Clean Water/Clean Air Bond Act and other environmental funding sources, there is an unprecedented opportunity to obtain our long-sought objective."

Letters in support of joint state/county acquisition of Underhill should be sent to Governor George E. Pataki (Executive Chambers, Albany, NY 12224), County Executive Thomas S. Gulotta (1 West St., Mineola, NY 11501), and Town of Oyster Bay Supervisor John Venditto (74 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay, NY 11771).

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Accounting	.\$1500
Armchair Activist	500
Audubon Camp Scholarships	2000
Brookside Preserve	2000
Conferences	1500
Conservation	400
Corresponding Secretary	150
Donations	
Education: Audubon Adventures	300
Education: Media Development	250
Festivals	
Insurance	
Library Custodians	300
Library Donation: Freeport	500
Library Donation: Merrick (committee meetings)	
Library Overtime (Freeport)	500
Membership	
Miscellaneous	
Publicity	200
Refreshments at Meetings	
Skimmer	
Speakers	1000
Sanctuaries	
T.R. Sanctuary Scholarships	2500
Total	

#### CONSERVATION REPORT

Betty Borowsky

This summer marked the second year of our Summer Day Camp Scholarship program for disadvantaged youngsters who live in South Shore Audubon Society's catchment area. The Society arranged to send children of low-income families to the day camp run by the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary for one week in August. In this way we were able to make a contribution to the Sanctuary while providing a memorable experience to our children. We sent many more children this year than last, and for this we have many persons and organizations to thank. The Society extends its deepest thanks and appreciation to the following [if I have misspelled a name or, especially, if I have forgotten someone, I apologize (and please let me know, so I can correct the error)]:

★ The Old Navy Company, which provided a bus and driver free of charge for the entire four days of the pro-



gram. Free transportation is one of the cornerstones of the scholarship program. Most of the families of the children we are sending

have no cars, and the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary is on the North Shore, in Oyster Bay. We could not have conducted this program at all without the generosity of the Old Navy Company. And I want to extend a special thank you to our two bus drivers, who were willing to drive us anywhere we wanted to go and actively participated in the fun.

- ♣ The late *Marge Fischer* and the *Bell Atlantic Foundation*, for their generous donations that went towards the children's tuition (and Doreen Remsen for applying for the Bell Atlantic grant).
- **♣** Our excellent bus *chaperones*, Debra Ross, Maureen Rube, and Chris Schmitt, who accompanied the bus and the children throughout the day.
- ♣ The following individuals from the school districts with whom we worked this year:

From the Roosevelt School District:

- Michael Mostow, Superintendent of Schools
- Lynda Sarnoff, Director, Special Education Services/Alternative Education
- © Regina Cohen, Central Administration
- Seannie Cavanaugh, Centennial School

From the Baldwin School District:

- © Kathy Weiss, Superintendent of Schools
- Margaret Foley-Ingels, President of the PTA
- Peter K. Lynch, Asst. Supervisor of Instruction
- Margaret Lorenz
- © Gordon Gooding

From the Hempstead School District:

 John Moore, Principal, Franklin Elementary School Yvonne Brown, Social Worker, Franklin School (This was the second year of our cooperative efforts with Franklin, and Franklin sent more children to the day camp than any other school)

From the Rockville Centre School District:

- William Johnson, Superintendent of Schools
- © Trudy Lubitz, Secretary to the Superintendent
- ★ Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. Marilyn England, Director; and a very special thank you to Joan Seaman, who put up with all the changes we had to make.

And these are only *some* of the people who helped us this year!

You may recall that we were only able to send one child to the Camp last year, primarily because of how difficult it is to recruit children (for lots of reasons — but this will be a topic for a subsequent article). So this year we cast a wider net, and worked with three more school districts to locate eligible children. In the end we were able to send sixteen children to the camp, but only a few came from each school. Since the children had no individual means of transportation, we wound up stopping to pick up children from seven different schools!

I believe that the major difference between people who enjoy the outdoors and those who don't is that those who do had the privilege of spending time in it as children. If your first exposure is as an adult, you tend to focus on some of the discomforts; like it's wet, or there are insects, or it's muddy. But children tend to ignore all that and can just absorb the atmosphere of the woods, or the beach—that is, if they can *get* there.

The South Shore Audubon Society wants to get more children into the environment. Our goal is to expose as many children as possible to the outdoors to give them some fun, and also to foster a love of the environment which can provide a lifelong appreciation and enjoyment of the natural world.

Meanwhile, we'll try and preserve as much of it as possible so it's there for them on into the future.

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benefit of both people and wildlife.

#### **BIRDSEED SALE**

Michael Sperling

On **Sunday**, **October 31st**, from 9:30 A.M. until 2:30 P.M., SSAS will be in Tackapausha's parking lot (on Washington Avenue in Seaford, just north of Merrick Road) for our annual end-of-daylight-saving-time birdseed sale. Preorders are recommended & appreciated, and are due October 16th, so please call me at 541-0805 (evenings) or send e-mail to mssperling@compuserve.com for an order form if you don't have a copy of last month's *Skimmer*.

We will be selling black oil and striped sunflower seeds, mixed seeds, cracked corn, sunflower chips (no shells), peanut hearts, safflower (for cardinals), niger (thistle), suet bells (no feeder needed), and suet cakes. Help will be needed on the sale date to take orders and carry seed; no purchase required to volunteer.

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Betsy Gulotta

This year, two college students were awarded the Jerry Bishop Environmental Scholarship. Due to the generosity of Evelyn Bishop, who dedicated the scholarship in memory of her late husband, each student received \$750 towards her college education.

Heidi Lesmeister, from Island Park, is beginning her sophomore year at Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania. Possessing a strong interest in the natural sciences, she expects to hold a double major

in Biology and Environmental Studies. She hopes to have a career in natural resource

and wildlife conservation.

Kimberly May, from Massapequa, is beginning her junior year at SUNY – Geneseo. She has a strong interest in conservation biology and environmental issues. Coming from a family with a long history of activity in our Audubon chapter, she also expects to become active in SSAS.

South Shore Audubon Society congratulates both of these bright young women, and wishes them luck and success in their future academic endeavors.



621 Fulton St. (Rt. 109), Farmingdale, NY 11735 Located between McDonald's & Dunkin' Donuts

#### FOR THE BIRDS

In 1997, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service published a 52-page booklet, For the Birds, about food, housing, and plantings that appeal to wild birds. The 50¢ booklet's listed in the Consumer Information Catalog that's available from Pueblo, Colorado (1-888-8-PUEBLO). It also can be downloaded for free from the Internet at www.pueblo.gsa.gov. Here's most of the part about food:

As you learn to enjoy the beauty of bird life around your home, you may wish to improve the "habitat" in your yard so that more birds will visit your property. You can attract birds by placing bird feeders, nest boxes, and bird baths in your yard, and by planting a variety of trees, shrubs, and flowers. These can provide good nesting sites, winter shelter, places to hide from predators, and natural food supplies that are available year-round.

Backyard bird feeding is a convenient way to enjoy wildlife. More than 65 million Americans of all ages watch, feed, and landscape for birds.

Bird-watching is one of the fastest growing forms of outdoor recreation in the country. Each year millions of people discover for the first time the joys of bird-watching. It's easy to understand why. Birds are fun to watch. And you can watch them just about everywhere. The most convenient place to start is right in your own backyard. All it takes to get their attention is food or water, a place to build a nest, and appropriate vegetation.

Feeder Selection. When the ground is covered with snow and ice, it's hard to resist just tossing seed out the door. But it's healthier for the birds to get their handouts at a feeding station, rather than off the ground. Regardless of the season, food that sits on the ground for even a short time is exposed to contamination by dampness, mold, bacteria, animal droppings, lawn fertilizers, and pesticides.

You can start simply with a piece of scrap wood elevated a few inches above the ground. Add a few holes for drainage and you've built a platform feeder. It won't be long before the birds find it.

Placement. There are several factors to consider after you've decided to feed birds in your backyard. Where do you want to watch your birds? From a kitchen window ... a sliding glass door opening onto a deck ... a second-story window? Pick a location that is easy to get to. When the weather is bad and birds are most vulnerable, you may be reluctant to fill a feeder that is not in a convenient spot near a door or an accessible window. Also, pick a site where discarded seed shells and bird droppings won't be a cleanup problem.

Put your feeder where the squirrels can't reach. Squirrels become a problem when they take over a bird feeder, scaring the birds away and tossing seed all over. Squirrels have been known to chew right through plastic and wooden feeders.

If you've seen squirrels in your neighborhood, it is safe to assume they will visit your feeder. Think long and hard before you hang anything from a tree limb. Squirrels are incredibly agile, and any feeder hanging from a tree is likely to become a squirrel feeder. In the long run, a squirrel-proof feeder or any feeder on a pole with a baffle is the least aggravating solution. The most effective squirrel-proof feeder is the pole-mounted metal "house" type.

If you must hang a feeder, select a tube protected with metal mesh. Most plastic "squirrel-proof feeders," despite manufacturers' claims, may eventually succumb to the squirrels. Any wood or plastic feeder can be effective when mounted on a pole with a plastic or metal baffle, if the pole is at least 10 feet from a tree limb or trunk (squirrels can jump great distances).

Durability. Bird feeders are made from a variety of materials. You can buy disposable plastic bag feeders; feeders made of cloth, nylon, vinyl, and metal netting; clear, lexan, colored, and PVC plastic tubes; ceramic and terra cotta; redwood, western cedar, birch, pine, and plywood; sheet metal and aluminized steel; glass tubes; and bottles.

How long a feeder lasts depends on how well you maintain it, the effects of weather, and whether squirrels can get to it. Water can get into any feeder regardless of how carefully you protect it. Cloth, vinyl, nylon, and metal netting feeders are inexpensive, but they do not protect your seed from spoiling in damp or wet weather. Improve them by adding a plastic dome.

Most wood, plastic, ceramic, and solid metal feeders keep seed dry, but water can get into the feeding portals. Look for feeders with drainage holes in the bottoms of both the feeder hopper and the seed tray.

Even bowl-type feeders and trays with drainage holes will clog with seed and bird droppings that can mix with rainwater and be unhealthy for any animal. Look for shallow platelike seed trays to catch dropped seeds while allowing spent seed shells to blow away.

When you feed birds, expect bird droppings and a leftover food mess. While you do not have to wash the feeder daily, you should clean it at least every few weeks. Diseases like salmonella can grow in moldy, wet seed and bird droppings in your feeder tray and on the ground below. Move your feeder a few feet each season to give the ground underneath time to assimilate the seed debris and bird droppings.

The maintenance required to keep your feeder clean varies according to the type of feeder. A thistle feeder for goldfinches should be cleaned about once a month depending on how often it rains. Sunflower and suet feeders need to be cleaned only once a month.

Plastic, ceramic, and glass feeders are easy to clean. Wash them in a bucket of hot, soapy water fortified with a capful or two of chlorine bleach. Use the same regimen with wood feeders, but substitute another disinfectant for the bleach so your wood won't fade.

Food Capacity. The ideal feeder capacity varies with your situation and the types of birds you want to attract.

If you opt for a large-volume seed feeder, protect it from the weather and keep it clean. If after months of use, the birds suddenly abandon your feeder full of seed, it's time for a cleaning.

How Many Birds. If too many birds at your feeder becomes a problem, you can control their numbers by putting out smaller amounts of seed, or by using specialty seeds or restrictive feeders that will attract only certain species. If you fill your feeder only when it's empty, the birds will look for food elsewhere.

You can encourage small birds and discourage large birds with feeders that restrict access. Wood feeders with vertical bars and feeders covered with wire mesh frustrate larger birds. The most nonselective feeders are the tray, platform, or house feeders because they allow easy access by all birds.

Tube feeders without trays also restrict access to only small birds. Remove the perches and you've further restricted the feeder to only those birds that can easily cling — finches, chickadees, titmice, and woodpeckers.

If starlings are a problem at your suet feeder, discourage them by using a suet feeder with access only from the bottom. Starlings are reluctant to perch upside down. Chickadees and woodpeckers don't find that a problem.

You can virtually eliminate visits by birds you would rather not see by offering seeds they won't eat. If you use more than one type of seed, put them in separate feeders. This will reduce wasted seeds, as birds will toss unwanted seeds out of a feeder to get to their favorites.

Watch a feeder filled with a seed mix and you'll see the birds methodically drop or kick out most of the seeds to get to their favorite — sunflower.

Many birds prefer sunflower. Some prefer millet. A few prefer peanuts. Sparrows, blackbirds, doves, and juncos will eat the other grains used in premade mixes: corn, milo, red millet, oats, wheat, and canary seed. Birds will also kick out artificial "berry" pellets, processed seed flavored and colored to look like real fruit.

Black oil sunflower is the hands-down favorite of all the birds that visit tube and house feeders. Birds who visit platform feeders (doves and sparrows) favor white proso millet. Ducks, geese, and quail will eat corn. Many cereal grains (corn, milo, oats, canary, wheat, rape, flax, and buckwheat) in mixed bird seeds are NOT favorites of birds that visit tube feeders.

The most effective way to attract the largest variety of birds to your yard is to put out separate feeders for each food:

- w a starling-resistant suet feeder
- a house feeder for sunflower
- w a wire mesh cage feeder for peanut
- · a nectar feeder
- · a tube feeder for thistle

- a stationary or tray fruit feeder
- a house or platform feeder for millet

Birds Attracted by Various Feeders and Foods

Tube Feeder With Black Oil Sunflower: goldfinches, chickadees, woodpeckers, nuthatches, titmice, redpolls, pine siskins

Adding a Tray to the Tube Feeder Will Also Attract: cardinals, jays, crossbills, purple finches, house finches, white-throated sparrows, white-crowned sparrows

Tray or Platform Feeder — With Millet: doves, house sparrows, blackbirds, juncos, cowbirds, towhees, white-throated sparrows, tree sparrows, white-crowned sparrows, chipping sparrows

Tray or Platform Feeder — With Corn: starlings, house sparrows, grackles, jays, juncos, bobwhite quail, doves, ring-necked pheasants, white-throated sparrows

Platform Feeder or Tube Feeder and Tray — With Peanuts: cardinals, grackles, titmice, starlings, jays

Niger Thistle Feeder With Tray: goldfinches, house finches, purple finches, redpolls, pine siskins, doves, chickadees, song sparrows, dark-eyed juncos, whitethroated sparrows

Nectar Feeder: hummingbirds, orioles, cardinals, tanagers, woodpeckers, finches, thrushes

*Fruit:* orioles, tanagers, mockingbirds, bluebirds, thrashers, cardinals, woodpeckers, jays, starlings, thrushes, cedar waxwings, yellow-breasted chats

Hanging Suet Feeder: woodpeckers, wrens, chickadees, nuthatches, kinglets, thrashers, creepers, cardinals, starlings

Peanut Butter Suet: woodpeckers, goldfinches, juncos, cardinals, thrushes, jays, kinglets, bluebirds, wrens, starlings

Hanging Peanut Feeder: woodpeckers, chickadees, titmice

Uninvited Guests at the Bird Feeder. Once you get your bird feeding station up and running, you may run into problems with two kinds of uninvited guests — those interested in the seeds (squirrels and chipmunks, rats and

mice, and starlings and house sparrows) and those interested in eating a bird for dinner (cats and hawks).

When a squirrel is at the feeder, you're not likely to see birds. Squirrels will scare off the birds while they eat the seed and sometimes they will eat the feeder too. The simplest solution is a squirrel-proof feeder or pole.

Starlings and house sparrows are not native to North America and are aggressive towards other species. Choose your feeder and seed to exclude these species if possible.

Chipmunks, rats, and mice can also become a problem where there is seed spillage under the feeder. Don't use mixed bird seed, and if you don't have a squirrel problem, add a feeder tray.

Feral cats and your neighbor's tabby are a serious threat to many birds. Keep feeders away from brush piles and shrubbery, as this offers cats the necessary cover to surprise birds.



If there are no cats in your neighborhood and you find a pile of feathers near your feeder, look for a full-bellied hawk perching on a tree nearby. Don't put out poisons or try to trap hawks though, as this is against state and federal law.

### Questions About Feeding Wild Birds

When Is the Best Time to Start? Usually, whenever the weather is severe, birds will appreciate a reliable supplemental food source. In northern areas, start before the onset of cold weather so birds have time to find the feeder.

When's the Best Time to Stop? Although you can feed birds year-round, especially with fruit and nectar, you can stop feeding seeds once a reliable supply of insects is available in the spring.

How Long Does It Take for Birds to Find a Feeder? It may take more time for birds to find window feeders than hanging or pole-mounted feeders. You may want to wrap aluminum foil around the top of the feeder hanger. Sometimes all it takes is the reflection of light on the foil to catch their attention.

My Feeder Is Full of Seeds. I Haven't Seen a Bird in Months. Am I Doing Something Wrong? When birds desert your feeder, it may be simply that a lot of natural food is available nearby. Or something may be wrong, such as spoiled seeds or a contaminated feeder. Throw the seeds away and wash the feeder. Look at where your feeder is placed. Be sure it's not vulnerable to predators. At the same time, make sure it is not in an open area, away from the cover in which birds usually travel.

Do Wild Birds Need Grit? Birds have no teeth to grind their food. The dirt, sand, pebbles, and grit they eat sit in their crop and help grind up their food. Adding grit to your feeder is helpful, particularly in the winter and spring. Crushed eggshells do the same thing, and in the spring have an added benefit: they provide birds with extra calcium for producing eggs of their own.

Won't Suet Go Bad in the Summer? In the winter, raw beef fat from the local butcher is all you need for your suet feeder. When temperatures rise, raw fat can melt and get rancid. It's safer to use commercially rendered suet cakes in the spring and summer months. Rendering (boiling) the fat kills bacteria.

How Close to My Window Can I Put a Feeder? Birds will come right to your window. Sometimes it takes a while for them to overcome their initial reluctance, so be patient. Don't worry that a feeder on the window will cause birds to fly into the window. Birds fly into the window because they see the reflection of the woods. Window feeders and decals help break up the reflection.

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## 1999-2000 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Jonathan Staller, President	482-7963
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Scott Oglesby, Director (6/02)	798-4871
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Michael Higgiston, Director (6/00)	538-8376
Judy Hoyer, Director (6/00)	775-0159
Mike Andersen, Youth Representative	546-5352
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Paul Butkereit, Wild Bird Feed Savings Day	
Joanne Del Prete, Special Trips Chairperson	
Joseph Grupp, Duck Survey	481-4208
Betsy Gulotta, Brookside Preserve Committee Chairperson	546-8841
Janice Howard, Hospitality Chairperson	
Marge Jaeger, Fund-raising Chairperson	536-9166
Elliott Kutner, Birding / Field Trips Chairperson	486-7667
Joseph Lancer, Binocular / Book Sales (7 to 9 P.M.)	
Suzanne Lancer, Education Chairperson (7 to 9 P.M.)	536-6574
Annie F. McIntyre, Educational Media Chairperson	379-2206
George Popkin, Financial Advisor (8 to 9 P.M.)	
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James Remsen, Jr., Birdathon Chairperson	
Jackie Richichi, Membership Chairperson	
Dolores Rogers, Welcoming Committee Chairperson	
Mary Jane Russell, Armchair Activist Chairperson	766-7397
Diane Singer, Publicity (5 to 8 P.M.)	561-6118
Michael Sperling, Skimmer Editor	
Tom Torma, Program Chairperson	
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## South Shore Audubon Society P.O. Box 31 Freeport, NY 11520-0031

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