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VOLUME 36, NUMBER 1 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 2005

### **NEXT MEETING**

Enid Klein

DATE: Tuesday, September 13, 2005

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

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

SPEAKER: Rich Patterson

TOPIC: Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary

September's program will be a screening of a video from filmmaker Rich Patterson, entitled "Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary." The sanctuary is located in Sarasota, Florida.

The Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary was founded by Dale Shields, who was fishing off his dock when he saw a pelican lying motionless in the water. Dale put down his rod and picked up the helpless bird and brought it into his home. After calling every number in the phone book, trying to find someone or some organization to help, Dale realized there was no one who would help injured wild birds.

Dale and his wife nursed the bird back to health. He began to find more injured birds and decided it was time for someone to get involved and it was going to be him! After years of rescuing birds by himself and almost going broke, Dale and his supporters founded a nonprofit organization in 1985, dedicated to the rescue and rehabilitation of wild and injured birds.

The Pelican Man's Bird Sanctuary rescues over 5000 will birds a year. Some of the rescued can't be returned back to the wild because of their injuries, so 250 permanently disabled birds live in the sanctuary.

If his schedule permits, Rich Patterson will be present to answer questions. Join us! More info is at www.pelicanman. org.

Pre-Meeting Program on Birds. Starting at 7 P.M. each month, Scott Oglesby will be expanding our horizons while discussing birds and birding in the room beyond our coffee-break tables, accompanied by Jim Remsen if his teaching schedule doesn't get in the way this semester.

Topic suggestions for future talks are welcome.

Parking Lots. In addition to the parking lot adjacent to the library, there's a lightly used, well-lit, and fairly close municipal lot on the east side of S. Ocean Ave., on the near (south) side of the Gulf station that borders Sunrise Highway. Also, SSAS has a verbal agreement with neighboring Citibank that cars will no longer be towed from their lot during our meetings, but we can't guarantee that the towing company will remember.

IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE

BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS.

Shade-grown coffee protects rainforests!

SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to local bird populations, wildlife, and habitat; and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

# ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE VOTE DUE IN SEPTEMBER – VOICE YOUR OPINION NOW!

Editor's note: In early August, the following was e-mailed to newsletter editors by Desiree Groves of the Audubon Public Policy Office in Washington, D.C. Nearly all of SSAS's members live in the Congressional district of either Peter T. King or Carolyn McCarthy, who have voted in opposite directions on previous bills involving drilling the refuge. You can contact Congressman King at 516-541-4225 or pete.king@mail.house.gov, Congresswoman McCarthy at 516-739-3008 (no e-mail address available), or either one at http://www.house.gov/writerep/ (which will select your Representative using your Zip code).

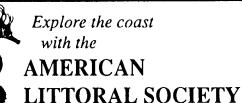
The last big fight to protect the Arctic Refuge is coming up and we need your help like never before!

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Arctic drilling provisions were not attached to the Energy Bill that was sent to President Bush, but there's still one legislative vehicle pro-drillers are using to open this pristine wilderness — the federal budget for next year. The House did not include drilling provisions in their version of the budget, but the Senate did. That means members of both houses have to meet to hammer out the differences between the two bills. Word on the Hill is that it will be included in the final version, with an expected final vote the week of September 26th.

Audubon is making a big push to save the pristine wilderness in Alaska from destructive oil drilling, and you can help! After 25 years of fighting, our last best chance to protect the refuge will be in the House of Representatives on a vote quickly approaching in September. In August, members of Congress that will be casting deciding votes will be back home talking with their constituents — like you! Audubon chapters and Audubon members around the country will be using this opportunity to weigh in with their members of Congress and fight at this critical time for one of the most pristine places left in America! Please make a point to call, write, or e-mail your elected officials today! Every member of Congress will be voting on this measure and right now, it's too close to call.

Log on to Audubon's special "Protect the Arctic" Web site—accessed via www.audubon.org—to find out more about how you can help!



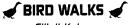
JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE (Sun., Sept. 18, 4:30 p.m.). Three-hour narrated tour of the backwaters of the bay aboard the 96' boat "Dorothy B VIII" out of Pier 6 in Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn. Cost: \$35 includes wine, cheese, fruit, snacks. Learn about the history & ecology of this 13,000 acre urban preserve. See migrating shorebirds, egrets, herons, falcons, oystercatchers, and waterfowl.

MONTAUK WINTER WEEKEND (Jan. 6–8). Join us during peak winter birding time. See thousands of waterbirds, incl. loons, eiders, long-tailed ducks, scoters, etc. Cost: \$325 includes 2 nights at luxurious Manor House (heated pool, Jacuzzi, spacious lobby with fireplaces), 5 meals, 5 hikes, 2 evening programs, and star watch. Free LIRR pickup.

SOUTH FLORIDA (Jan. 28 to Feb. 5). Visit the best birding and wildlife areas, incl. Everglades, Ding Darling, Loxahatchee, Corkscrew Swamp, Big Cypress Preserve, Wakodahatchee boardwalk, Okeeheelee County Park. Cost: \$1,595 incl. airfare, lodging, park fees, vans, guides, sunset boat cruise, welcome barbecue, and most meals.

**BELIZE WILDLIFE** (Feb. 24 to Mar. 5). High-end tour of rainforest, ruins & reefs, incl. birding, boat, etc. Cost: \$2,695.

For information and free field trip brochure, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 318-9344, donriepe@aol.com, 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693; www.alsnyc.org.



Elliatt Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667. Directions and summaries may be found at ssaudubon.org.

Aug. 28	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sep. 4	Labor Day Weekend — No Walk
Sep. 11	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Sep. 18	Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
Sep. 25	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Oct. 2	Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first
	lot south of Southern State Parkway,
	south end of lot)
Oct. 9	Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
Oct. 16	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge

### SSAS BACKYARD BIRD SURVEY

Joe Grupp

As many of you know, the Research Committee is conducting a study to document the bird species found in the SSAS geographical area and to make some estimates as to their numbers. We request input from anyone that feeds and/or observes birds in their yard or neighborhood. If you would like to participate, we would greatly appreciate it.

Simply record the birds that you see in your yard, neighborhood, or at your feeder; the date, time, and the number or approximate number of each species. At the end of each month, please mail or e-mail your record to me, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Survey sheets are available at SSAS events.

Please do not hesitate to submit your observations, even if you have been able to make only very few. WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Please mail your data to Mr. J. Grupp, Research Chairperson, 660 Edgemere Ave., Uniondale NY 11553 or email Birdstudyjoeg02@aol.com.

### **FLEA MARKET WRAP-UP**

We did indeed hold our first flea market in quite a few years on May 7. We thank everyone who contributed the items that enabled us to raise over \$800 and would like to give recognition to the members who spent the day in the parking lot in Freeport: Betty & Richard Borowsky, Dolores Grupp, Maureen Hogan, Marian Hubbard, Louise Leonard, Therese Lucas, Wendy Murbach, George & Marianne Peters, Maureen & Paul Rube, Chris Schmitt, Ed & Michael Sperling, and Judy Wolosoff. Thanks, also, to Kathy Asmus for making the sign that helped attract Sunrise Highway drivers' attention.

### **GARDEN CITY BIRD SANCTUARY OUTING**

The Garden City Bird Sanctuary is a nine-acre Nassau County stormwater storage basin (sump) that was converted into a community nature preserve a decade ago, with the support of SSAS. It is located at the intersection of Tanners Pond Road and Colonial Avenue, and is open to the public on Sundays from 1 to 5. Over 75 bird species have been recorded in its first decade. The sanctuary has extensive memorial plantings that are accompanied by signs identifying the many wildlife-friendly species. SSAS will be touring GCBS on **October 2** (rain date October 9); the next *Skimmer* will have more details.

### JERROLD AXINN, D.D.S., F.A.G.D., P.C.

Member of SSAS since 1997 Special discount for Audubon members

### **★★** WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ★★

Wendy Murbach

One of the wonderful perks that you get from an Audubon membership is the chance to be a part of your local Audubon chapter, South Shore Audubon Society.

You are automatically a valued member of this active and friendly chapter, so please come out to the next meeting at the Freeport Library from 7:30–9:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month (third in November) to hear what you can do to help preserve your local environment's health and viability, to hear about local issues that you can help to solve, and to see an interesting program.

Whether you are a beginning birder or someone with a large life list, you will enjoy our weekly Sunday bird walks led by Elliott Kutner, birder extraordinaire. Check out the special events that are mentioned in this *Skimmer*. Attend them yourself, and bring your family and friends too.

You are warmly invited to be an active participant in this vibrant all-volunteer organization comprised of persons who, like you, care about the earth we live on, about our local environment, and about the creatures that live alongside us.

Our new members since the last *Skimmer* are:

Amityville	Carolina Setzer
Baldwin	Harvey Jacoby
Bellmore	Kevin Scheafer

Bethpage  Bronx  Copiague  East Meadow	Paul J. Doherty
East Rockaway	
Farmingdale	
	George Dlugozima, Sarah J. Hamilton, Jean F. King
Franklin Square	James Feaster, James J. Schiavone
•	Muriel M. Cook, Herbert Jurist, Stephanie Riveaux, Frank D. Young
Garden City	
	Lorraine Palma, Paul Wulff
	Alison McQueen, Johyn Meyer
	Kaela & Leanne DiMarcantonio
Jericho	
Lawrence	
Levittown	Ann Carroll, Gene Hoffman,
	Richard Stalter, Noah A. Walters
Lynbrook	William G. Cullen, Kezia Hayman, The Poje Family, Phyllis Schofler
Malverne	Marion Capobianco
	Marcia Cannava, Miriam Edelson, Joan V. Murray, Theresa Perez, Thomas Allen Smith, Susan
	Werner
Massapequa Park	
Merrick	Michael Eskalyo, Maureen
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20. 1	Giannotti, Linda Savarese
	Thomas H. Schmelke
Old Bethpage	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore
Old Bethpage	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon,
Old Bethpage Plainview	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein
Old BethpagePlainview	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger
Old BethpagePlainview	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy,
Old Bethpage Plainview  Point Lookout Rockville Centre	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton
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Old Bethpage	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton Richard L. Galligan Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman, Douglas A. Hard Marion S. Corbin M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey
Old Bethpage	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton Richard L. Galligan Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman, Douglas A. Hard Marion S. Corbin M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey Goldberg, Gisela Petersen, Thomas Schoch, Rose Tesone, Raoul & Joan Vegosan,
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Plainview Point Lookout Rockville Centre Seaford Stewart Manor Uniondale Valley Stream Valley Stream Who Vary	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton Richard L. Galligan Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman, Douglas A. Hard Marion S. Corbin M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey Goldberg, Gisela Petersen, Thomas Schoch, Rose Tesone, Raoul & Joan Vegosan, Brien Weiner Marvin Fischman, T. Whiteside
Plainview Point Lookout Rockville Centre Seaford Stewart Manor Uniondale Valley Stream WHO Wantagh West Hempstead	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton Richard L. Galligan Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman, Douglas A. Hard Marion S. Corbin M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey Goldberg, Gisela Petersen, Thomas Schoch, Rose Tesone, Raoul & Joan Vegosan, Brien Weiner Marvin Fischman, T. Whiteside Nicholas P. DeGregorio
Plainview Point Lookout Rockville Centre Seaford Stewart Manor Uniondale Valley Stream WHO "US? Wantagh West Hempstead Westbury	Thomas H. Schmelke Paul Amore Harry R. Berman, Melba Gordon, Michael Gruenberg, Jerry Klein Robert L. Unger Aida Cino, Ray-Ann Havasy, Collette Hinton Richard L. Galligan Joseph Alfiero, Lillian Berryman, Douglas A. Hard Marion S. Corbin M. Cheng, Muriel Currie, Tracey Goldberg, Gisela Petersen, Thomas Schoch, Rose Tesone, Raoul & Joan Vegosan, Brien Weiner Marvin Fischman, T. Whiteside Nicholas P. DeGregorio Ray Reardon
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### **BUSY BIRDERS**

Therese Lucas

On June 14, there were tables stretching the length of one wall in the Colonial Room at the Coral House in Baldwin for SSAS's 34th Annual Dinner. The tables held Chinese and silent auction selections, along with Birdathon raffle items. Strolling among the attendees were people offering tickets for the 50–50 drawing, which was shared by SSAS and one lucky winner.

Presentations were made to our special guest, County Legislator David Denenberg (who responded in kind), and to George Peters, our outgoing president finishing his third one-year term (the maximum allowed by our bylaws).

We look forward to an equally entertaining evening at Coral House next June.

Special thanks to our members and local businesses for their donations. Without the generosity of the following, our fund-raising activities at the dinner would not have been possible:

Abby's Parkside Nursery & Florist, Wantagh Atlantic Nursery, Freeport Avis Lube, Farmingdale B.A.C. Wines & Liquors, Bellmore B&H Photo-Video-Pro Audio, Manhattan Beautiful Baskets by Kathy, Middle Island Carvel, Merrick Charu Champaneri Cookie Bear, Merrick Country Cupboard, Farmingdale Evan & Vicki Goldstein Harmony and Wellness, Massapequa Hicks Nurseries, Westbury Hudson River Sloop Clearwater, Inc., Poughkeepsie Sam Jannazzo Kings Supermarket, Merrick Stew Leonard's Wines, Farmingdale Library Cafe, Farmingdale Long Island Ducks, Central Islip Long Island Picture Frame, Massapequa Park Marjé Salon, Merrick Matty's Toys, Merrick Milos Pizzeria & Ristorante, Merrick Olive Garden, Massapequa Outback Steakhouse, Merrick George & Marianne Peters Piccolo Ristorante, Bellmore Jim & Angela Remsen Maureen & Paul Rube Starkie Brothers Garden Center, Inc., Farmingdale Trader Joe's, Merrick WMF, Farmingdale Westbury Camera, Hicksville Maxwell C. Wheat, Jr. Wick's Florist, Baldwin Wild Bird Feed Barn, Farmingdale Judy Wolosoff

Wooden Heart / The Olde Towne Garden, Wantagh

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Michael Sperling

In the spring, when I mentioned to one of our former board members (Michael Goldsmith) that I was running for president and planning on continuing as newsletter editor if elected, he quipped that I was going to have control of both the executive branch and the press. I laughed, but have no fear — SSAS needs lots of people besides me just to maintain our current activities (look at the back page for starters) and there is lots more we could do if more of you stepped forward and volunteered to help. For example, we need people with experience in writing grant applications, with an interest in attending public hearings, and with the energy to help maintain and improve Brookside Preserve.

If there's something that you'd like to see us do and, especially, that you'd be willing to help us do, please email me at mssperling@optonline.net or speak to me or any board member at SSAS events.

Since this is my first president's message and roughly my 125th *Skimmer* (actually my 127th), I figured it's a good time to write something about how I got involved in SSAS, so here goes...

I joined National Audubon Society (my first environmental group) at age 25 in 1984. A combination of backyard bird feeding; Ronald Reagan's environmental policies and especially his infamous Secretary of the Interior, James Watt; unemployment; and a desire for like-minded friends led me to write to NAS before joining, asking if there was a chapter nearby.

After attending general meetings for six years and occasionally setting my alarm clock for bird walks

when the weather was expected to be very good, I spotted the following in the June 1990 newsletter: "DESPERATE!!!!! Editor needed for the *Skimmer*." Having inadvertently turned an astronomy and applied math education into a technical editing ca-

reer, I volunteered and was promptly "hired" by incoming president Joan Butkereit. At the time, Joan joked that I had to agree to be editor for nine years, since two of my predecessors had lasted that long. I volunteered because I knew SSAS's active members were a bunch of nice people with a passion for the natural world. We still are and the more active members we have, the better, so how about giving us a try?

SSAS Post Office Statement — South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through May by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

### **ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL COASTAL CLEANUP**

SSAS's steady advertiser, the American Littoral Society's Northeast Chapter, is coordinating the 19th annual New York State Beach Cleanup. Data on the debris collected on **September 17** will be sent to The Ocean Conservancy to help regulate pollution. In 2004, over 7,700 New Yorkers documented and removed over 215,000 pounds of debris from 312 sites (22 in Nassau County) along lakes, rivers, creeks, bays, sound, and ocean. Dangerous debris included 14,130 bags, 4,254 balloons, 361 crab/lobster/fish

traps, 1,757 fishing lines, 271 fishing nets, 3,259 plastic sheets/tarps, 3,092 ropes, 1,485 six-pack holders, 1,334 strapping bands, and 329 syringes. For information on nearby cleanups, contact ALS's Barbara Cohen at ALSBeach@aol.com or 718-471-2166, or check www.alsnyc.org (which also has lots of info about the purposes and achievements of the cleanup). For out-of-state cleanups info, call 800-449-0790.

### **2005 NYS LEGISLATIVE UPDATE**

On June 24th, the New York State legislature ended the 2005 session without taking action on many of Audubon New York's environmental priorities (the priorities are based on the annual resolutions approved by representatives from Audubon's NY chapters). Here is a list from Audubon NY of the main priorities and how they fared.

Environmental Protection Fund: Representing the environmental high note of this legislative session, the legislature did pass an increase of \$25 million in funding for the state's Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to \$150 million. Included in the expanded EPF were increases in many of the fund's categories, including \$40 million for land acquisition projects, \$16 million for farmland protection, and \$1 million for the Biodiversity Research Institute. Also included were the additions of two new categories: \$6 million for the Zoos, Botanical Gardens and Aquaria program (ZBGA), which provides important funding for environmental education; and a \$3 million Quality Communities Grants program which will provide matching grants (85% state to 15% local share) to municipalities to do land use and other planning.

The Community Preservation Act: This measure would authorize towns in New York State, by referendum, to adopt a transfer tax of up to 2% on certain real property transactions above the median value of a house in the county, for the purpose of establishing a community preservation fund. The funds generated would be used to acquire land; provide parkland; safeguard drinking water; protect farmland, habitat, and scenic views; and for other conservation activities. This measure passed the Assembly, but even though there was strong bipartisan support in the Senate, it was held up and never had a chance to be voted on by the full Senate.

**Clean Water Protection/Flooding Prevention Act**: This measure would decrease the size threshold for NYS

Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) regulation of freshwater wetlands to 1 acre or larger, thus increasing the state's ability to protect these important ecosystems. [Editor's interruption: The DEC currently regulates wetlands 12.4 acres or larger; a 2001 Supreme Court ruling eliminated federal Clean Water Act protection for all "isolated wetlands" (those not connected by navigable water), so the states now need to protect those.] As with the Community Preservation Act, this measure passed the Assembly but was held up in the Senate, even though there is strong bipartisan support for the measure.

Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act: This measure requires state agencies (like the DEC, Transportation, and Health Departments) to make smart development decisions and investments by requiring priority for funding new development projects to be given to those that utilize areas of existing infrastructure and those that are consistent with local governments' plans for development, instead of funding projects that destroy our important open spaces and farmland. This measure passed the Assembly but was stuck in the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

Healthy, Safe, and Energy-Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act: This measure, also known as the Light Pollution bill, would reduce the unnecessary lighting of the night sky by promoting the use of energy-efficient lighting products that reduce light cast into the nighttime sky. Excessive outdoor lighting, especially in adverse weather conditions, can cause migrating birds to become disoriented, a phenomenon known as fatal light attraction. This phenomenon has lead to the death of an estimated 100 million birds annually by collisions with windows, walls, floodlights, the ground, or even each other. This measure passed the Assembly but was held in the Senate Rules Committee.

Expanding the Bottle Deposit Law: This measure would expand the current Bottle Deposit law to require a nickel deposit on noncarbonated beverages (bottled water, juice, tea, etc.) and dedicate the "unclaimed" deposits (on those bottles not redeemed) to the state's EPF [instead of the manufacturers' pockets]. This measure passed the Assembly late in the session but was not taken up by the Senate. (Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno called the Assembly passage of the Bottle bill "one of the dumbest things that has happened this year in the Legislature on the Assembly side.")

We thank you for all your efforts to help us advance these priorities through the state legislature. Next year, we will again be looking toward the Audubon chapters to help us break through the gridlock in the state Senate. Visit ny.audubon.org for the latest updates on these and other environmental legislative issues.

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

### **BROOKSIDE CLEANUP PARTICIPANTS**

SSAS recognizes, with appreciation, the members who spent a few hours at our productive annual spring cleanup on April 10: Betsy Gulotta, Christine & Dominick Marzigliano, Heidi Mauricio, George Peters, Chris Schmitt, Michael Sperling, and John Zarudsky. County-owned Brookside Preserve straddles the Freeport-Baldwin border and is managed by South Shore Audubon Society.

### **\* NOVEMBER MEETING VS. ELECTION DAY**

This year, Election Day falls on the second Tuesday, so the Freeport Memorial Library will be closed and our general meeting will be delayed one week to Tuesday, November 15. Please mark your calendars.

### **^^^^^^^^ SSAS THANKS YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

We'd like to thank all of the wonderful members who responded to the annual fund-raising letter that we sent out in April:

Mildred E. Ackerley Carole A. Adams Anonymous (49) Dr. Jerrold & Lori Axinn Jack S. Bakunin Bruce H. Baldwin William Belford Nancy Bell Elaine T. Bermas Philip Blocklyn Irene K. Bossert Barbara A. Braine Sandy Brenner Jim & Gail Brown Mr. & Mrs. Peter Bruno Marian C. Burke Sally Cappitelli Andrew E. Cardno Robert Carp Charles & Gloria Chapman Helen Demas Mrs. Denise Detilleux Elaine Devlin John Dickin Beatrice A. Draudt Joan & Trisha Duffy Bill Eichholz June Fait Richard Powers Marilyn Fisher Mr. & Mrs. Cleo Rhodes Judah Frank Don Riepe John Romanchek

Mr. & Mrs. Clifford Franklin Phyllis & Leo Freed Claudia Frost Larry A. Ginsberg David Glickman

Diana F. Jindra Patricia M. Joseph Elaine Kahn Betty Kaseler Marion Kilfoyle Katherine Killoran Richard F. Koch Lorraine Kogler Richard Kopsco Joseph Landesberg Evelyn Langer Henry Levine Rolf Lohse Therese Lucas Katherine Luger Mr. & Mrs. William M. Marshall Mary May Lloyd Miller Carl J. Muller Nancy A. Mundy Clifford Scott Oglesby Hanni & David Oppenheimer Eva & Lawrence Paul Vincent & Noreen Perry Marian Petrone Doris B. Pirodsky

Steven Ronan

Alvin M. Rosen

Betty A. Scully

Michael Sperling

Sari Golos Dr. Robin Taubman Phillip Gribbins John J. Thornton Lucille Guardala Vincent Tinebra Larry & Marianne Gumbs Gloria Tynann & Family Anita Weinblatt Halberstadt Marlene Vyskocil William J. Hauck Mr. & Mrs. George Warrin Pearl & Seymour Weinstein William Henry Bill Herzog Virginia D. White Geraldine Holtzman Clem Wingert Mr. & Mrs. Charles W Judy Wolosoff Dorothy A. Zondag Howkins, Jr. Theodore & Sharon Jankowski

(516) 594-0300, Ext 11

### ARTHUR C. SNOW

Fax: (516) 594-0801

Certified Public Accountant

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### **FEEDER FRUITS**

Editor's note: This article, by Kathy Piper of Pennsylvania, is reprinted from the March/April 2000 issue of Bird Watcher's Digest.

Ask anyone who has cherry trees or blackberry bushes and they'll tell you that birds love fruits. Their fondness for these foods can be used to draw a greater variety of birds to your feeding station. In fact, providing fruit attracts otherwise reluctant birds such as orioles, tanagers, warblers, waxwings, various thrushes, and certain thrashers.

Fruits can be used to lure birds all year long. Summer, of course, is when these foods are usually offered, not only because they are more available for us to use, but also because there are more birds around to eat them. As John V. Dennis wrote in his book A Complete Guide to Bird Feeding [available in our local libraries]: "On the whole, birds seem more receptive to fruit, whether dried or fresh, in summer. This is not surprising. Birds that are predominantly fruit eaters are likely to spend the winter months in the tropics. Back with us for summer, they [will recognize] the fruits they knew in more southern climes."

Many of us, however, don't realize that fruits can be offered in other seasons as well. In spring and autumn, migratory birds take advantage of these foods, as do resident birds such as woodpeckers, cardinals, finches, and mockingbirds; these local birds also dine on fruits during the winter months.

Having oranges, apples, bananas, and other fruits available may even prove to be a lifesaver for an oriole, chat, catbird, warbler, or bluebird that is seeking food in harsh, cold weather. In late winter and early spring, when most natural foods have been eaten, fruits put out at your feeding area will be eagerly consumed.

Fruits can be offered either fresh, dried, or frozen. Just about any fruit can be used. For larger fruits, such as apples, bananas, oranges, and pears, cut the fruit in half and impale it, cut side out, on a sharpened dowel, a twig, or a nail (melon rinds can also be skewered to these objects). Hammer the nail into a stump, fence post, feeder roof, or even the side of a deck or a porch.

These same fruits, as well as smaller ones (grapes, cherries, blueberries, etc.) can also be chopped up into bite-sized pieces. Either scatter the pieces on the ground or set them on a feeder or in some other conspicuous place. You may want to make a separate feeder for the fruits, because they can get somewhat messy. Putting the bits of fruit in a shallow bowl is one choice, or you can make a fruit feeder from a coconut shell or a grapefruit or orange rind that has been cut in half. A log or stump with a shallow depression in the top makes a great natural-looking feeder. Another way to serve chopped fruits is to include them in your suet mixture recipes.

Offering dried fruits has the advantage of creating less of a mess than fresh ones, plus dried fruits last longer. You can buy dried fruits at health food and other stores, or you can dehydrate them yourself. Dry fruits in the oven at a low temperature, from 4 to 15 hours, depending on the type being dried. Or you can dry them in the sun (on trays that allow air to reach the food from top and bottom) for at least two days, being sure to bring them in at night. Fruits can also be dried in a commercial food dehydrator.

To dry wild fruits, simply cut fruit-laden twigs, tie them in bundles, and suspend them from rafters in a garage or attic. You can also handpick the fruits and dry as described

above. In winter, hang the branches from feeders, or place the fruits in their own container for use by the birds. Cherry, crabapple, elderberry, blueberry,



currant, and gooseberry (pictured) are only a few of the fruits that lend themselves to such treatment.

Whether wild, homegrown, or store-bought, many fruits can be frozen and then placed at the feeding stations whenever you want. Fruits grown during the summer can be stored in the freezer for later use. Most can be saved this

way for at least a year. Just about any fruit is worth trying. Some of the more common ones are as follows:

**Apple.** One of the most popular fruits for birds, apples are eaten by bluebirds, cardinals, catbirds, finches, flickers, orioles, robins, tanagers, thrushes, waxwings, woodpeckers, grouse, pheasants, chats, jays, mockingbirds, and warblers.

**Banana**. An excellent way to attract warblers is to place a ripe banana on the feeder during migration. Bananas are also eaten by cardinals, catbirds, finches, orioles, tanagers, thrushes, and mocking birds.

Blackberry and Raspberry. These and other bramble fruits are especially loved by grouse, pheasants, cardinals, catbirds, tanagers, and yellow-breasted chats. They are also eaten by bluebirds, flickers, jays, orioles, phainopeplas, robins, thrashers, thrushes, towhees, mockingbirds, waxwings, grosbeaks, and woodpeckers.

**Blueberry.** These are very good for attracting bluebirds, tanagers, thrushes, grouse, catbirds, chats, jays, orioles, robins, thrashers, and towhees.

**Cherry.** Bluebirds, cardinals, catbirds, finches, flickers, grosbeaks, jays, orioles, robins, tanagers, thrashers, thrushes, towhees, vireos, woodpeckers, and waxwings are among the many birds that eat cherries.

**Grape and Raisin.** These are eaten by a wide variety of birds, including grouse, pheasants, bluebirds, cardinals, catbirds, flickers, jays, orioles, finches, mockingbirds, phainopeplas, robins, tanagers, thrashers, thrushes, warblers, waxwings, woodpeckers, and wrens. Experts advise that raisins should be softened by soaking before being offered.

*Orange*. Extremely attractive to orioles, tanagers, and woodpeckers, they are also eaten by finches, thrushes, thrashers, catbirds, jays, mockingbirds, and warblers.

Other fruits to try are currants, figs, pears, strawberries, pomegranates, and melons, especially watermelon and cantaloupe.

Hummingbirds, too, are attracted to fruits, not only for the sweet fluids exuded, but for the flies drawn to the fruit as well.

One problem with offering fruits is that it may take some time before the birds discover them. Putting fruit out when you also have seed and suet available in the same general area may shorten the time it takes for the birds to find it. Whether it takes a few days or several weeks for the birds to notice them, fruits should be monitored for spoilage. Fruits too spoiled for human consumption may be perfect for some birds, but excessive spoilage may compromise the health of visiting birds and damage feeders. Watch the birds' feeding behavior and note the conditions of your feeders to learn when the fruit has become too spoiled.

Once the birds have discovered this food source, they'll return to eat it again and again. Continue to put fruit out through every season and you'll have steady visitors all year long.

## South Shore Audubon Society P.O. Box 31 Freeport, NY 11520-0031

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