

VOLUME 37. NUMBER 3 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2006

NEXT MEETING

Enid Klein

DATE: Tuesday, November 14, 2006

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

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

SPEAKER: John Brokos

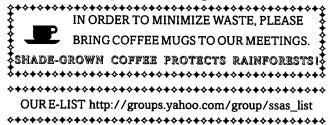
TOPIC: A Showcase of Nature

At our next meeting, frequent SSAS guest John Brokos returns for a slide show of natural photography, showcasing artistic representations of natural settings.

John is a founding member and current president of the Freeport Photography Club. He is a professional nature photographer, with photos published in many places, including in Nikon World magazine and calendar. When he competed in international salon exhibitions, he was ranked #12 in the nature category. You can see some of his work at his website, www.imagesfordecor.com.

Pre-Meeting Program on Birds. Starting at 7 P.M. each month, Scott Oglesby and Jim Remsen expand our birding horizons in the room beyond our coffee-break tables. 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 pledge from neighboring Citibank that cars will no longer be towed from their lot during our meetings, but we can't guarantee this.



OUR WEB SITE (incl. online store) www.ssaudubon.org

BIRDSEED SALE REMINDER

Last month's *Skimmer* contained our annual birdseed order form and the preordering deadline was October 17, but extra seed will be available on the sale date and probably for a short time afterwards. The sale is on **Sunday, November 5**, from 9 A.M. to 2:30 P.M., in the parking lot of Tackapausha Museum (on Washington Avenue in Seaford, just north of Merrick Road). For information, call or e-mail Michael Sperling at 221-3921 or mssperling@optonline.net, or call the sale's chairperson, Paul Butkereit, at 593-1994.

Michael Sperling

SSAS's board urges our members to vote in favor of the \$100 million Environmental Program bond issue that was approved unanimously by the Nassau County Legislature and will be on our ballots on Election Day.

Much of the money from last year's \$50 million Environmental Program Bond Act has already been spent, with just \$483,442.44 left for open space preservation out of the original \$37.8 million. Of the 15 properties recommended for acquisition by the Bond Act's Advisory Committee, one of the ones yet to be acquired is the four-acre Brooklyn Water Works property, which is immediately south of Brookside Preserve in Freeport/Baldwin and was nominated for preservation by SSAS. The developer who owns the property has been trying for years to finalize plans to build a nursing home or dozens of condominiums on the site.

According to the League of Women Voters of Nassau County's Voters' Guide, the wording of the proposition is as follows:

"In order to preserve open space, natural lands and scenic places, protect drinking water sources, reduce water pollution, remediate brownfield sites, and expand and improve parks, should Local Law No. 10-2006 be added to the Miscellaneous Laws of Nassau County authorizing the issuance of \$100 million in bonds to fund and implement an Environmental Program, to require a vote of thirteen members of the Nassau County Legislature to approve all projects proposed under the Environmental Program and to create a tax and special revenue fund dedicated exclusively to paying off the debt service on the bonds?"

The Voters' Guide includes the following explanation: "The approval of as well as the funding for each of the projects funded by the bonds will become part of the County's Capital Plan upon approval by a super-majority vote of thirteen members of the Nassau County Legisla-

ture. The Program is to be funded by the bonds and paid for by an increase of approximately \$16 per household in the County's property tax. The local law also provides that the revenues generated from the increase are to

be placed in a Special Revenue Fund, kept separately from other county funds, to be created for this Program and spent only on the debt service associated with the bonds issued. The County Executive is directed to provide an annual report on the Program to the Nassau County Legislature."

We hope you will vote "YES" on Election Day.

Environmental Voting Records of the Candidates.

To learn how your Senators and Congressman/ Congresswoman voted on key bills, go to the League of Conservation Voters' website, www.lcv.org/scorecard. To learn how your State Senator and Assemblyman/Assemblywoman voted, go to EPL/Environmental Advocates/EPL's site, http://www.eany.org/capitolwatch/votersguide/votersguide.html.

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.

SSAS NEEDS A DOT-MATRIX PRINTER KEEPER!

Your Skimmer's mailing labels are printed inexpensively on the chapter's vintage 1986 Epson FX-86e dot-matrix tractor-fed impact printer. If your computer is old enough to have a parallel port to connect to this printer (drivers were shipped with Windows 3.1, 95, and NT) and you have a copy of Microsoft Word (we can provide the driver), we need you! Alternatively, we may be able to loan you an old computer along with the printer. We're looking for a volunteer who is willing to spend about two hours printing labels, using the Word file provided by our membership chairperson, Wendy Murbach. If you're available, please e-mail Michael Sperling at mssperling@optonline.net.



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. Directions and summaries may be found at ssaudubon.org.

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Oct. 29	Norman J. Levy Park a	nd Preserve
Nov. 5	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 12	Point Lookout Town Pa	ark, S.E. corner
Nov. 19	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 26	Pelham Bay for Owls [p	ull over to street
	on extreme right after g	going through
	Throgs Neck Bridge tol	l (Pennyfield
	Ave.); meet at 9 A.M.; hi	king shoes
77	recommended]	
Dec. 3	Zach's Bay Parking Fie	ld #4, N.E. corner
Dec. 10	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Dec. 17	Jones Beach West End	#2, N.E. corner
Dec. 24	Season's Greetings — N	o Walk
Dec. 31	Happy New Year - No	Walk
Jan. 7	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Jan. 14	Jones Beach West End	#2, N.E. corner
Jan. 21	Jamaica Bay Wildlife R	efuge
Jan. 28	Hempstead Lake State	Park (Exit 18, first
	lot south of Southern S	tate Parkway,
	south end of lot)	•
Feb. 4	Pelham Bay (9 а.м.)	
*****	·	****
(516) 594-0300, Ext 11		Fax: (516) 594-0801

ARTHUR C. SNOW Certified Public Accountant

41 Front Street, Suite 5 (Second Floor) Rockville Centre, New York 11570 e-mail: ACSnowCPA@verizon.net



THE 2006 SUMMER DAY CAMP PROGRAM

Belty Borowsky

It rained for three of the four days in the last week of August this year. We've certainly had rain during the week of our annual scholarship day camp program before, but

not for three whole days! The day before camp began, I kept flashing back to the rainy days when my children were small, to the rainy days when I was small, and to the Uncle Wiggily children's books from the '40s that were all about what happens on rainy days. It did not bode well.

As it turned out, it didn't matter at all. The 15 children we sent to the Theodore Roosevelt Day Camp this year had a wonderful time.

To remind you all: Every year, the South Shore Audubon Society sends about 15–20 children between the third and sixth grade to one week of summer day camp at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center in Oyster Bay. All the children come from families at poverty level, but are considered especially bright by their teachers. South Shore funds the tuition for the children, and the school bus which is necessary to take them from their home school district to camp and back every day. This latter is very important, as most of the parents don't have a car and/or cannot leave work to bring the children to camp.

2006 is the ninth year we've been conducting the program and brings the total number of children we've sent to camp to 135. We offer the program to different school districts on a rotating basis; this year the children were selected from the Hicksville School District.

These are very bright children and, although they may never have been in the woods before, they know a surprisingly great deal about nature from their readings and especially from watching the Discovery Channel. Nevertheless, the children are kept interested and engaged by a variety of activities that the counselors carefully alternate between focused, sedentary activities and games that involve running through the forest or wading through the pond. All the activities have an environmental or a conservation theme, so the children always learn a great deal. This year, one sedentary activity involved dissecting owl pellets to try to figure out what the owls had been eating (and how much). The children loved that. Running activities involved taking on the role of predator or prey, and so forth.

But the highlight of the day comes at the end, just before they are ready to leave. At that time, a live animal is brought out and shown to the children. It might be a giant millipede, a big lizard, or a bird of prey. The counselor first asks the children what the animal is and what they might already know about it; then the counselor tells the children about the animal's habits and life history, and allows them to look at it very closely. They love this. And it is a joy for

us to see how interested the children are and how much they are learning.

As always, we have many people to thank. First, thank you to the Superintendent of the Hicksville schools, Maureen K. Bright, and to Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, Marianne Litzman, for encouraging their teachers to select the children. They also took the trouble to contact the parents to find out whether they would be interested or not, and to distribute and collect the application forms.

A very big Thank You to TR's counselors and staff. I especially want to thank Karl Brummert, Director of Education, who arranged to conduct the camp just for our children this year, as the regular camp ended before ours was scheduled.

This year, Alice Blaustein, Wendy Murbach, and Gloria Berkowitz were our chaperones. Special thanks go to Alice, who attended all four days. I also wish to thank Marilyn Hametz, who made many critical phone calls on our behalf.

Last, but not least, I thank the children for their enthusiasm and for their appreciation. This year it came out as

"Do we have to go home now?" and "Oh, I wish I could go tomorrow too!" and "Can I go to the winter camp?" Arranging this program takes as much time and effort as having a second job. But, as always, I come away with the renewed

desire to provide this experience to as many children as I can.

The earth is breathtakingly beautiful, but, as is becoming increasingly clear, unless we convey this joy in the natural environment to our children, it will not last very long.

This is more than a program for SSAS — it is a commitment to the future of our world.

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.

Seed - Feeders
Houses - Baths
Books - Gifts

WILD BIRD FEED
WILD BIRD CENTER

"NEW YORK'S LARGEST WILD BIRD SPECIALTY STORE"
621 Fulton St. (Rt. 109), Farmingdale, NY 11735
Located between McDonald's & Dunkin' Donuts

WAYS TO REDUCE JUNK MAIL

Michael Sperling

It's been four years since the last time this information was in a *Skimmer*, so here's an updated version:

The options below will get your name removed from the most widely circulated junk-mail lists, but won't discourage organizations and companies you support from selling your name. Remember the environmentalists' three R's, in order of effectiveness: Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle!

Mail-Order Catalogs, Etc. The Direct Marketing Association's website has the following information at http://www.dmaconsumers.org/offmailinglist.html:

Some consumers would like to receive less advertising mail. The Mail Preference Service (MPS) is designed to assist those consumers in decreasing the amount of national nonprofit or commercial mail they receive at home. The MPS is a consumer service sponsored by the Direct Marketing Association (DMA). Established in 1917, the DMA is the oldest and largest national trade association serving the direct marketing field.

How do I get off mailing lists? You may register with the MPS name-removal file online or by mailing your name, home address, and signature in a letter. Registration is good for five years. Use our online registration form. You must register your name and address with MPS directly; third party requests cannot be processed.

[President's interruption: There's now a \$1 fee online and by mail; visit www.dmaconsumers.org/cgi/offmailinglist or send a check payable to "DMA" to Mail Preference Service, Direct Marketing Association, P.O. Box 282, Carmel, NY 10512.]

What happens after I request name removal? When you register with MPS, your name is placed on a "delete" file which is made available to companies four times a year—January, April, July, and October. Registrants typically notice a decrease in the amount of advertising mail approximately three months after their names are entered into the file.

Will registration with MPS end all advertising mail? No. You will continue to receive mail from companies with

which you do business and from charitable or commercial organizations which do not choose to use MPS. In addition, you may continue to receive mail from many local merchants, professional and alumni associations, political candi-

dates, and mail addressed to "occupant" or "resident."

Can I request deletion from specific lists through MPS? No. Name removal through MPS is general in nature. You may reduce the solicitations you receive from a specific company by writing directly to that company and asking to be put on the company's in-house suppress file.

How did they get my name? If you've ordered from a catalog, contributed to a charity, used a credit card, or

have a magazine subscription, your name probably appears on various marketing lists. Direct marketers rent these lists of names if they think their product or service would appeal to the people on those lists.

A company told me they got my name from the DMA, and I should call you to get my name taken off its list. The DMA doesn't have lists or give names to any marketing company except to remove the names of consumers who want less mail. DMA cannot take your name off XYZ Company's list — only that company can. Ask the XYZ Company to place your name on the company's in-house suppress file so that it will not send any further mail to you.

Can consumers who like to shop by mail limit their volume of solicitations? Yes. When you place an order or make a donation, write or ask the company not to rent your name to other companies or organizations.

Credit Card and Insurance Offers. The rest of this article is from www.experian.com/preapproved_credit/opting_out.html. Experian "provides address information for more than 20 billion promotional mail pieces to more than 100 million households every year."

You may choose to exclude your name from creditreporting agency (CRA) lists for unsolicited credit and insurance offers. Creditors and insurers may use file information as the basis for sending you unsolicited offers of credit or insurance. Such offers must include a toll-free phone number for you to call if you want your name and address removed from future lists. If you call, you may select to have your name removed for five years or permanently. If you select the option for permanent removal, you will be mailed a Notice of Election to Opt Out form to complete and return. The toll-free number for all of the national CRAs is 1-888-5-OPTOUT (1-888-567-8688).

Marilyn Hamelz

Not only large industries that create hazardous waste sites commit environmental crimes. By intent, accident, or ignorance, homeowners may also be guilty of offenses.

As part of Phase II of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Stormwater Program regulations mandated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Nassau County is required to fully implement a stormwater management program by 2008 that reduces the discharge of pollutants from the storm sewer system to the maximum extent practicable. Public education and outreach, and public involvement/participation, are two of the six minimum control measures.

Our stormwater system was one of the issues discussed at the Nassau County Environmental Crimes Conference on September 19, which I attended for SSAS. The conference was organized by the office of the District Attorney, Kathleen Rice.

An illicit discharge is "typically anything other than rainfall or snowmelt that enters a storm drain." Discharge from storm drains can pollute our streams and bays, and destroy habitat. Nassau County has a hotline, 571-6863, for information on illicit discharges. Dirty, oily, or soapy discharge; foul odors coming from the drainage system; or unusual colors around a drain area may be indicators.

Another potential environmental hazard discussed was improper disposal of harmful household chemicals. Substances such as herbicides, pesticides, motor oil, or antifreeze should not be included with the regular garbage pickup or poured down a drain. Each town has a STOP Program for disposal of harmful chemical wastes. The contact number for the Town of Hempstead is 378-2200, and for the Town of Oyster Bay, 677-5935.

Other topics discussed at the Environmental Crimes Conference included programs to prevent contamination of our aquifer, the source of our drinking water; other environmental crimes; how hazardous material emergencies are handled; the Nassau County Environmental Response Team; and legislative and enforcement issues.

The District Attorney's Environmental Hotline is 571-6306.



Explore the coast with the

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

NEW YORK AQUARIUM (Saturday, Nov. 4th). Meet 10 A.M. at aquarium entrance for 2-1/2 hour "Behind-the-Scenes" tour. Cost: \$25 (kids \$15). Call Don.

HOLIDAY PARTY (Sat., Dec. 9, 5–10 P.M.). Enjoy good food & drink, Flamenco Dance performance, an "Ugly Auction," and door prizes at our annual party at Floyd Bennett Field, Brooklyn. Cost: \$35 (still!).

MONTAUK WEEKEND (Jan. 5–7, 2007). See thousands of waterfowl & lots of seals. Visit Montauk Bluffs, Walking Dunes, Oyster Pond, Hither Woods. Evening programs. Cost: \$345.

BELIZE: RAINFORESTS, REEFS, AND RUINS (March 3–11). Visit this small but undeveloped country teeming with wildlife. Travel by van with an excellent Belizean guide. We'll go to Crooked Tree Swamp (great heron show), Tikal Ruins (good birding area as well as Mayan site), and the Jaguar Preserve and beaches down south.

NORTH FLORIDA (April 14–21). Visit Merritt Island Refuge, Orlando Wetlands, Silver River State Park, Ocala National Forest, and other great wildlife areas. Travel by van and see manatees, river otter, roseate spoonbill, Florida scrub jay, burrowing owls, and lots more. Leader: Don Riepe.

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

** 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 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:
Baldwin H. Pacella, Virginia W. Painter
Bellmore Catherine Lynch, Ann Marie
Sergi, Christina Sergi
Bethpage Gloria Rabena
East Meadow Robert & Edith Kushner
Elmont Thomas Pappas
Flushing Irene & Saul Grysman
Franklin Square Maria Buffa, J. Copley
Hempstead Mary Sotack
Hicksville Janet K. Collins
Levittown Rudolph Auslander, David
Bentman, Richard Logatto,
Mrs. William Wagner
Long Beach Elaine Dunn, Sandy Freiberg
Lynbrook Phyllis Schoffer
Massapequa Claudia Frost, Angelo Pagano
Massapequa Park Sandra Kaltsas
Oceanside Miriam McEnroe, Margaret Ryan,
Lola Tryon
Plainview Debra Holly
Rockville Centre Helene Kadane, Dorothy
McGarvey, Marc D. Summers
Seaford Angela Montalbano
Stewart Manor Adrienne B. Kennedy,
Mr. Sturges B. Shields,
Edward P. Siems
Woodmere Ralph S. Mann, Edna Ritzenberg

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER Mt. Washburn, Part II: Descending the Mountain

Joe Grupp

Reaching the summit of Mt. Washburn in Yellowstone National Park, we spend some time there relaxing in the enclosed observation deck that is the lower level of the fire lookout tower while we munch on trail mix, read some of the interpretive material mounted there, and enjoy the view, which includes the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. the extensive and more distant Yellowstone Lake, the even more distant Grand Tetons, and many other features of the landscape. The interpretive material provided makes the identification of such features relatively easy and enjoyable, and adds to the satisfaction of having reached the summit and the beauty of the views the summit provides. The observation deck also provides shelter from a wind that is usually significant and at times chilling as it blows across the summit. The upper level of the fire lookout tower, which is closed to the public, is where the fire wardens watch for and determine the locations of fires that occur, and serves as their residence when they are on duty.

After spending ample time on the summit in and out of the tower, it is time to dig an apple out of the pack and begin the hike back down. Eating an apple as I begin a descent from a mountaintop has become sort of a tradition for me. There is something about the sweet, slightly sour taste of a juicy apple that adds to the satisfaction of reaching and enjoying time on a summit as I begin a descent. I'm even disappointed when an occasional apple that I carried up a mountain lacks a good amount of juice. Simple pleasures are sometimes just the best.

Bighorn sheep (pictured) frequent the slopes of Mt. Washburn most of the time. On the climb up we could not

find any, but as we start down we look over a cliff edge down to a very steep slope below, where we spot a small flock resting and almost blending into the rock and green grass habitat. There are about eight animals, including a few young, just resting there. We have to carefully

look at each large rock where the sheep rest, because there are times when what at first appears to be a rock turns out to be a resting bighorn sheep.

As we descend, we hear a hoarse call somewhat like a Blue Jay's that I recognize to be the call of the Clark's



Nutcracker (pictured). They are related to the Blue Jay, being in the family Corvidae which is comprised of the jays, magpies, and crows. They are gray birds that have a black tail and

wings, with white markings on both, and a fairly large and rugged black bill. The color combination provides a somewhat dramatic appearance at times when they are in flight.

Named after William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, they are pine seed eaters and have a special pouch under the tongue that allows them to carry seeds long distances. Gathering seeds, they store them in caches in the ground, remembering where to find them during the winter months even when the cache is under the snow. They have been known to store as many as 98,000 seeds during a year. Many of the seeds not used, or whose locations have been forgotten, sprout in the spring. spreading a particular species of tree well beyond where the wind would carry the seeds.

More than anything, it is their call that attracts our attention before the birds are seen flying in very loose flocks; first one, followed by another and another. For a good time period during our descent they are with us. flying back and forth from somewhere over the ridge we walk on to some dead snags and young pines well down the slope from the trail. They always impress me as they fly, with so much space and distant mountains as their background at these higher elevations.

Among the grasses of the ridge's slope are wildflowers. There are hundreds, thousands, maybe even millions of flowers, some partly hidden by the grasses, some growing above them. Flowers such as monkey flower, violets, lupines, balsamroot, Indian paintbrush, shooting stars, and others share the slopes with the grasses. Hours could be spent studying the flowers and simply enjoying the landscape that they help to create, but time dictates that we move on.

A fluttering catches our attention above an open grassy area as we are well down the trail, and it takes a moment or two to realize that the fluttering is not one but three Mountain Bluebirds. The birds are deserving of their name, as they are a brilliant blue, a bit lighter below than above, with the female being more of a gray-blue color. They are western birds seldom seen in the east.

They hover in the air low over a spot and then plummet to the ground, where they seem to forage for a time. Only later do I learn that this is typical feeding behavior. When available, they also perch on tree or shrub branches over open areas, much like flycatchers do, and then descend upon their prey, which are usually insects such as beetles, weevils, grasshoppers, and other arthropods.

We watch the birds for a period of time before moving on. Our hike then quickly comes to an end at the trailhead and our parked car. We drive back to camp, tired but pleased with our Mt. Washburn experiences.

^^^^^^^^^ HALLOWEEN PARTY THANKS

Once again, it's time to thank the SSAS members who helped out at our annual pre-Halloween Party at Tackapausha: Kathy Asmus, Gloria Berkowitz, Alice Blaustein, Helen Buckley, Dolores Grupp, Therese Lucas, Wendy Murbach, and Michael Sperling.

SSAS BACKYARD BIRD SURVEY

For several years, SSAS's Research Committee has been conducting a study to document the bird species found in the SSAS area and to estimate their numbers. We greatly appreciate input from anyone that feeds and/or observes birds in their yard or neighborhood.

To participate, 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; and fill in the table provided below. If you have more recordings than lines in the table, please attach an additional piece of paper to the table and submit the additional recordings in the same manner. At the end of each month, please mail or e-mail your record to me at the appropriate address listed below, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Additional 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!

Dates: From to								
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				Please send to: Mr. J. Grupp, Research Chairperson 660 Edgemere Ave., Uniondale NY 11553				
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