OUTH HORE KIMMER

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 5 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 2007

NEXT MEETING

Enid Klein

DATE:

Tuesday, February 13, 2007

TIME:

7:30 P.M.

PLACE:

Freeport Memorial Library

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

SPEAKER: TOPIC:

Gardening for the Birds

Vinnie Drzewucki

This month's program will provide you with tips for making your landscape and garden more attractive to native birds and other native wildlife.

SSAS member Vinnie Drzewucki is the Horticulturist at Hicks Nurseries, where he has worked for 22 years. He's a New York State Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional, and teaches "Introduction to Horticulture and Horticultural Merchandising" at Farmingdale State University. Join us!

Pre-Meeting Program on Birds. Starting at 7 P.M. each month, Scott Oglesby (sometimes with Jim Remsen) expands our birding horizons in the room beyond our coffeebreak 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.

IN ORDER TO MINIMIZE WASTE, PLEASE BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS.

OUR E-LIST http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list

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

MAINE AUDUBON CAMP SCHOLARSHIP NEEDS AN APPLICANT!

As reported in last month's *Skimmer*, SSAS, with help from a matching contribution from National Audubon Society, is offering an all-expenses-paid (except transportation) scholarship for a young birder (age 14–17) to attend the Hog Island Audubon Center's "Coastal Maine Bird Studies for Teens" session from June 24–30. We've extended our application deadline by a month, because as of mid-January we don't have any applicants. Here's the description from www.maineaudubon.org:

Advised by world-renowned birding expert and author Kenn Kaufman and led by outdoor educators Laurie McLaughlin and Doug Wentzel of Shaver's Creek Environmental Center in Pennsylvania, a small group of teenagers interested in birds will experience Audubon fieldwork firsthand. Learn field identification tips, birdsong recognition, conservation practices, and more from nationally known ornithologists. Alongside biologists, monitor endangered Piping Plovers at their breeding grounds and venture out to a seabird island with Audubon's Project Puffin to learn more about conservation and restoration methods. This one-of-a-kind session combines an array of field trips to various habitats with slide presentations, workshops, and use of the camp's bird-study skins, audio and videotapes, and reference library. A special guest in 2007 is author-naturalist Scott Weidensaul. Limited to 13 participants.

If you're interested in applying, contact Wendy Murbach at Wmrbch@aol.com or 546-6303 by **February 28**.

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.

★★ 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...... Ms. Linda Ramous. Nora Schual Bellmore Mary Fonda, Miss Nina Gervini East Meadow Mr. Robert Coletti. Mr. Edward K. Horton Elmont Jasmine Smallhorne Farmingdale..... Ms. Edie Palermo Floral Park Helen Cerchia, Nannette Miller Franklin Square William O'Connell Freeport...... Michael Marrell, Lawrence Mattson, William F. Scanlon Hempstead Roy Metcalf Hicksville...... Marsha Eisner, Reni Zuvela Levittown Mr. & Mrs. Peter Calab, Debra Ann Robinson, Mr. & Mrs. Saul Weissman Long Beach Joseph F. Taylor Lynbrook Harvey Brod, Gina M. Maniaci, Mr. Joseph Parienti Massapegua Karen Fleischmann, David Meyers, S. M. Vallury Merrick Emily Mann, Kathy Petrillo Oceanside Myrna Lewak Rockville Centre William R. Joa, Anna Varney Stewart Manor...... Joseph Levano Valley Stream...... Kellie Kinsmin, Grace Turansky Wantagh Mary Cesare, Mrs. Roseanne Mamo, Mr. S. Nestampower West Hempstead Jane Donnelly Woodmere Sylvia Kapner, Paul Shapiro ************************************ AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

NASSAU ENVIRONMENTAL BOND ACT MEETINGS

In early January, SSAS received a letter from County Executive Thomas R. Suozzi that includes the following (many of you won't receive this *Skimmer* until after the first two meetings, but if you're on our e-mail list, you received this information in time):

On November 7th, the citizens of Nassau County overwhelmingly voted to approve a second Environmental Program in the amount of \$100 million to preserve and protect Nassau County's environmental assets. The Program authorizes the County to fund projects in four areas: open space and parkland acquisition, parkland improvement, stormwater quality improvement, and brownfield remediation. Anyone can nominate a property or project for funding, and I encourage you and the members of your organization to join the public meetings, listed below, to learn how.

Tuesday, January 23rd at 7:00 P.M., West Hempstead High School,400 Nassau Boulevard, West Hempstead

Thursday, January 25th at 7:00 P.M., Jericho High School, 99 Cedar Swamp & Road, Jericho

Thursday, February 1st at 7:00 P.M., Herricks High School, 100 Shelter Rock Road, New Hyde Park

Additional information will be available after the commencement of the public meetings at http://www.nassaucountyny.gov.

Most of you already know that SSAS submitted two nominations for the 2004 bond act's funds, both of which made it to the lists of projects recommended by County Executive Suozzi's Advisory Committee. The Brookside Preserve stormwater improvement project received funding authorization from Nassau County last year, but the open space funds were exhausted with only half of the recommended properties being purchased and Brooklyn Water Works in Freeport/Baldwin (between the LIRR and SSAS-managed Brookside) was in the leftover half.



SAVE THE DATE FOR MORTON

On **Saturday, March 31** (for the first time in over five years), SSAS will visit Elizabeth A. Morton National Wildlife Refuge, located on the peninsula of Jessups Neck in Noyack, which is just west of Sag Harbor. Bring sunflower seeds or shelled peanuts to experience Black-capped Chickadees, Tufted Titmice, and/or White-breasted Nuthatches landing on your outstretched hand! Details in next month's *Skimmer*.

165 ACRES IN PLAINVIEW-OLD BETHPAGE

The information below comes from http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/enb/index.html (the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's weekly Environmental Notice Bulletin), and concerns proposed zoning changes and development plans for two mostly undeveloped parcels in the Plainview—Old Bethpage area. The parcels are owned by Charles Wang; one was Nassau County property and includes a few buildings that housed, among other things, the Cornell Cooperative Extension, while the other includes Plainview's Post Office, which would need to be relocated. Trailview State Park, which is a bird survey site for SSAS's Research Committee, is next to the first parcel. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is online at http://www.oldplainview.com/download/download.php.

Your editor knows that the January 23 hearings will have occurred by the time nearly all of you read this, but you have from then until February 23 to submit comments to the Town of Oyster Bay. Please sign up for our chapter's free e-list (see bottom left of first page) if you want to find out about environmental meetings in time to attend them, since they're typically not scheduled far enough in advance for sufficient notice via the *Skimmer*.

Notice of Acceptance of Draft EIS and Public Hearing. The Town of Oyster Bay, as lead agency, has accepted a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Petition of Plainview Properties, LLC & Avalon Bay Communities, Inc. ("Old Plainview"). A public hearing on the Draft EIS will be held on January 23, 2007, at 10:00 A.M. at the Town Hall, 74 Audrey Ave., Oyster Bay, NY, to be continued at Plainview/Old Bethpage Middle School, Central Park Ave. & Southern Parkway, at 7:00 P.M. Public comment period ends February 23, 2007.

The action involves petition to the Town Board for proposed amendments to the zoning chapter of the Code of the Town of Oyster Bay, including the Building Zone Map, creation of a new Planned Unit Development–Mixed Use (PUD-MX) District, changes in the zoning classification of certain parcels, and redevelopment and subdivision of the reclassified parcels.

The proposal for the south parcel includes 499 residential units, 182,513 sq. ft office space, 17,842 sq. ft retail, 15,873 sq. ft of educational/charity use, 264,803 sq. ft of lodging, a community clubhouse, a sports clubhouse, 36.9

acres of contiguous open space, a village green, and trail system. The proposal for the north parcel includes 160 rental apartments, 87,207 sq. ft retail, and 21,533 sq. ft office space. The project is located on 143.26

acre parcel located on the south side of Old Country Road west of Round Swamp Road, Old Bethpage, Town of Oyster Bay, New York and 21.73 acre parcel located on the north side of Old Country Road, 540 feet

east of the intersection with Newtown Road, Plainview, Town of Oyster Bay, New York.

Contact Aldona Lawson, Town of Oyster Bay, Town Environmental Quality Review Division, 150 Miller Place, Syosset, NY 11791; phone 677-5717; fax 677-5730; e-mail alawson@oysterbay-ny.gov.

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BIRDS OF A FEATHER

Esther Ecklund

Editor's note: If you missed our well-attended members' night meeting, you missed laughter, bird games, slides, a table of paintings and photos, and the recital of the following by its author:

January at Audubon is a time to share with birds of a feather who do so much more than care.

The members show off their talents galore as the birds show off their talons once more.

Before the main course, Scott has his informative bird meeting while Dolores, the snowbird, is usually busy flitting around greeting.

With the sound of the cowbell, Michael begins the meeting as the committee chairs start their bleating.
Informing us of the festivals and annual dinner Therese flies up smelling like a rosy winner.
A flutter from Wendy drums up new members as Joe quacks in the nest, summing up contenders.
Jim takes such care handling the raffles that only dizzy squirrels would consider to baffle.
The programs are spaciously and skillfully aligned by our own endearing Enid Klein.
As the Audubon birdwatchers gather for their walks
Elliott spreads his wings to show us direction and for his "birds

iott spreads his wings to show us direction and for his "bird and bees" talks. We can't forget Rick who helps out in a pinch and who willing would certainly point out a finch.

Of course, Betty and Mary Jane gather their seeds for education and hospitality needs. You feathered and non-feathered members-at-large are last but not least

we would not be here without you and Max Wheat, you are so neat!



Elliott Kutne

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.

Jan. 28	Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first lot south of Southern State Parkway, south end of lot)
Feb. 4	Pelham Bay for Owls [pull over to street
a o	on extreme right after going through
	Throgs Neck Bridge toll (Pennyfield Ave.); meet at 9 A.M.; hiking shoes
	recommended]
Feb. 11	Jones Beach Fishing Piers (Field #10,
	which is west of Wantagh Pkwy.)
Feb. 18	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Feb. 25	Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
Mar. 4	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Mar. 11	Hempstead Lake State Park (see Jan. 28)
Mar. 18	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Mar. 25	Jones Beach Fishing Piers (Field #10)
Apr. 1	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Apr. 8	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Apr. 15	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Apr. 22 & 29	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge



Explore the coast with the

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

WINTER BIRDS AT JAMAICA BAY (Sun., Feb. 25). Meet 10 A.M. at the Jamaica Bay Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and hike around the ponds. Learn about the history & management of the refuge and look for ducks, snow geese, raptors, and other birds of winter. Leader: Don Riepe; call him to reserve. Free.

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISES (Sat., May 26 and June 2). Leave at 5 p.m. from Sheepshead Bay, Brooklyn aboard the "Dorothy B VIII" for a 3-hour cruise of the backwater marshes of Jamaica Bay. Learn about the history & ecology of the bay and see nesting egrets, herons, ibis, osprey, oystercatcher, peregrine falcon, and many more species. Cost: \$45 includes narrated tour plus wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. Reservations: Call Don.

HORSESHOE CRABS AND SHOREBIRDS (Saturdays, June 2 & 16). Meet 9 A.M. at the Jamaica Bay Refuge Visitor Center for a slide program and hike to see the mating ritual of the horseshoe crab and the shorebirds that feed on the eggs. Leaders: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe. Call Don to reserve.

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 8-10). Cost: \$345.

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.

BACKYARD SURVEY DATA NEEDED!

Joe Grupp

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. Please do not hesitate to submit your observations, even if you make only very few.

Simply record 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 at the appropriate address listed below, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Survey sheets are available at SSAS events and at ssaudubon.org or you can create your own.

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

Editor's note: Last year, 60,000 people participated for free in the annual Presidents' Day weekend bird count hosted by National Audubon Society and the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. The data from the first nine counts is available at the count's website, including the 162 species reported, town by town, by about 4,000 New Yorkers last year. The following comes from the website and a colorful flyer that will be available at our general meeting. If you participate, please also send your data to SSAS's Research Chairperson, Joe Grupp (see above).

Tens of thousands of people will be outside (or looking through their windows) counting birds **February 16–19**. You can be one of them! Which birds are spending their winter with you this year? Take part in the tenth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) to see how your local birds fit into the landscape of North America.

You'll learn more about the birds around you. People of all ages, and all levels of experience and skill, can take part. Whether you count the five species at your backyard feeder or the 75 species you see during a day's visit to your neighborhood park or wildlife refuge, it's important that you report what you see to the GBBC website,

www.birdsource.org/gbbc. Your bird list, however short or long, helps us all understand more about birds across the continent, as indicators of the state of the world around us. As you enter your results, you'll see how a group of tens of thousands of birdwatchers can paint a picture of our birds in winter.

In 2006, with cold air trapped in Canada and Alaska by a northerly jet stream, and a record-breaking warm winter in the lower 48, GBBC results revealed:

♠ an increase in the numbers and northern distribution of Tree Swallows (pictured) in 20 U.S. states;

- ♣ Common Redpolls and other winter finches remained in northern Canada in the West, and flooded south in the East:
- ♠ American Robins returning early to the Northwest were pushed back by cold weather in British Columbia to rest in huge numbers in the fruit-growing areas of Washington state;
- ♣ record counts of Snowy Owls south of the U.S.–Canada border:
- Pine Warblers and Orange-crowned Warblers reported by more observers farther north into Nova Scotia and British Columbia.

Join other birders in 2007, and have fun as you learn more about the birds around you.

How to Participate

- 1. Plan to count birds for at least 15 minutes during February 16–19, 2007. Count birds at as many places and on as many days as you like just keep a separate list of counts for each day and/or location.
- 2. Count the greatest number of individuals of each species that you see together at any one time, and write it down.
- 3. Enter your results on the Great Backyard Bird Count website (http://www.birdsource.org/gbbc)!

Where should I count birds? You can count birds anywhere: in your backyard, at a local park or wildlife refuge, or wherever you like to watch birds.

How long should I count birds? Spend at least 15 minutes for each day and location where you'd like to count. If you can spend more than 15 minutes, you'll get a better sense of which birds are in your area.

What if I'm unable to identify some of the birds I see? Take a look at your state or province checklist on the GBBC website to help narrow down the possibilities. See if you can find the bird you're looking for in a field guide. The All About Birds website (www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds) also provides photos, sounds, maps, and information about birds. For help in distinguishing similar-looking species, visit the GBBC page on tricky IDs.

If you're still not sure about species ID, that's OK. You don't have to report every species you see. When you enter the data on the website, just be sure to check the box indicating that you are not reporting everything you saw.

If the birds are coming and going while I'm watching them, how do I count them? Record only the highest number of individual birds of each species that you see together at any one time.

How do I count birds that are in huge flocks? Estimate the number as best you can. First count the birds in a small part of the flock. Then multiply that number by the number of parts of similar size needed to make up the entire flock.

Is there a data sheet I can use to record my counts? You must enter your counts online, but if you would like paper forms to record your data, please print out your state or provincial checklist and write your tallies next to the species' names. When you enter your counts online, you'll also be

asked some background information about your location and the amount of time you spent counting. If you wish, you can download a data form to record your answers before you go online to enter your counts.

When should I report my counts? Enter your counts on the GBBC website any time after you have finished your count for the day at a particular location. If you enter your counts as soon as possible, others can see the results as the count progresses. However, you may enter data as late as March 1.

The Ten Most Frequently Reported Species in the 2006 GBBC:#1 Northern Cardinal (33,597 checklists), #2 Mourning Dove, #3 Dark-eyed Junco, #4 American Goldfinch, #5 Downy Woodpecker, #6 Blue Jay, #7 House Finch, #8 Tufted Titmouse, #9 Black-capped Chickadee, #10 American Crow (20,006 checklists).

The Ten Most Numerous Species in the 2006 GBBC: #1 Canada Goose (843,635 individuals), #2 Snow Goose, #3 European Starling, #4 Red-winged Blackbird, #5 Common Grackle, #6 American Goldfinch, #7 American Robin, #8 Dark-eyed Junco, #9 Mourning Dove, #10 American Crow (207,324 individuals).

The remaining dates for the 2006–07 Waterfowl Survey are as follows, rain or shine: **Saturdays, February 3, February 24, and March 24**. Volunteers are welcome to participate in the surveys. If you are interested in spending a full or half day visiting up to 28 locations from Valley Stream to Massapequa Park, call Joe Grupp, SSAS's Research Chairperson, at 481-4208.



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

We'd like to thank the following members for generously sending us unsolicited donations at the end of 2006 and during the *Skimmer*'s four-month summer break (with apologies from your editor/president to the latter for neglecting to acknowledge you sooner): Nathanael W. Berry, Larry A. Ginsberg, Hanni & David Oppenheimer, and Norman Seastedt. We also want to very belatedly thank Margaret Lowe and SSAS's resident bagpiper, Dwain Smith, for donations received at the beginning of last year.

HOLIDAY FESTIVITIES

Therese Lucas

We had a nice turnout for the SSAS holiday party at Tackapausha Museum on December 9, where children and their families enjoyed the live raptor presentation given by Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. They also made bird-feeder crafts with the help of our invaluable volunteers: Gloria Berkowitz, Alice Blaustein, Helen Buckley, Mary Jane Conlon, Marilyn Hametz, Louise Leonard, Wendy Murbach, Laurie Raisher, Chris Schmitt, and Mike Sperling. Thanks to all for the time and effort they extended to the children, who are the future of Long Island.

(516) 887-1541 Fax: (516) 887-1553

ARTHUR C. SNOW

Certified Public Accountant

29 Broadway, Suite 200 Lynbrook, New York 11563-2520 e-mail: ACSnowCPA@verizon.net

Editor's note: Our last Skimmer covered what Congress did or didn't do in 2006. Here's what happened in New York last year; the bills that didn't become law will have to be introduced again in the newly elected Assembly and Senate.

FY 2006–2007 Budget. In the Executive Budget for Fiscal Year 2006–2007, Governor Pataki had proposed more than \$1.4 billion for environmental and recreational programs. Included in this budget was the expansion of the Environmental Protection Fund (EPF) to \$180 million, up \$30 million from last year. In March, the Legislature decided to further increase the EPF to \$200 million, but the new EPF funding was not approved as part of the budget that was passed in April, due to disagreements between the parties involved on how the money was to be spent.

A three-way agreement was finally reached on the very last day of the legislative session to fund the EPF, the state's primary environmental funding category, at \$225 million this year, \$45 million above the Governor's original request.

\$225 Million EPF Highlights: \$50 million for land acquisition projects (up from \$40 million last year); \$23 million for farmland protection (up from \$16 million); \$3 million for the Quality Communities Grants Program (maintained at last year's level); \$7 million for zoos, botanical gardens, and aquaria (up \$1 million from last year); \$1.5 million for the Biodiversity Research Institute (up \$500,000 from last

year); \$3.250 million for invasive species (a new category); \$3 million for an Ocean and Great Lakes Initiative (new); and \$7.250 million for a Water Quality Improvement Program (also new).

New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Act. New York State's coastal ecosystems are a critical economic and environmental resource for the state. Ensuring the long-term protection, conservation, and sustainable management of these significant coastal resources for future generations is of high importance for all New Yorkers. This legislation, sponsored by Assemblyman DiNapoli and Senator Johnson, would set up a Council of State Agencies to coordinate the management of the state's coastal resources, and enhance the protection of these ecosystems through the use of ecosystembased management. The council is also required to issue a report to the legislature and executive on what changes to state law are necessary to improve management of our coastal resources. This bill passed both houses and was signed into law by the Governor.

Prohibiting the Siting of, or Expansion of Existing, Hazardous Waste Landfills That Have the Potential to Discharge Into the Great Lakes Watershed. Pollution from hazardous waste, especially waste that is landfilled in the Great Lakes watershed, has the potential to threaten the survival of the numerous different bird species and the important habitats that they depend on in the Great Lakes basin. The habitat degradation that can be associated with toxic waste discharges into the Great Lakes ecosystem also has the potential to negatively impact the local economies of the region that depend on the lakes for drinking water supplies, and depend on the revenue generated from commercial fishing and ecotourism opportunities like birdwatching and boating. This legislation, sponsored by Senator Maziarz and Assemblywoman DelMonte, would ensure that hazardous waste is no longer landfilled in the Great Lakes watershed in NY. This bill passed both houses, but was vetoed by the Governor.

Great Lakes-St. Lawrence River Basin Water Resources Compact. In 2001, the governors and premiers of the eight Great Lakes states and two Canadian provinces signed the Great Lakes Annex, a supplementary agreement to the Great Lakes Charter to establish proper management of the Great Lakes' water resources. In December 2005, the Great Lakes Water Resources Compact and the Implementing Agreements were signed by the governors and premiers, to implement a strong and effective water management plan for the Great Lakes, including protections against water diversions out of the basin and promotion of water conservation measures within the basin, once it is passed by all the state legislatures and Congress.

The Governor submitted a program bill on May 24th. In late June, the Assembly, thanks to the efforts of the sponsors, Assembly members Tokasz and DiNapoli, became the first house in the basin to pass the bill. The Senate did not act on the measure.

Community Preservation Act. A. 6450, sponsored by Assemblyman DiNapoli, and S.3153, sponsored by Senator Marcellino, would authorize towns in New York State to adopt a transfer tax on certain real property transactions of up to 2% for the purpose of establishing a community preservation fund to use for land conservation. A referendum would be required for participation. In effect, the communities would be authorized to spend this money to provide parkland; safeguard drinking water; protect farmland, habitat, and scenic views; and for other conservation activities. This program is modeled after the successful program established by five towns on eastern Long Island, which has provided these communities with much-needed funds for land conservation initiatives. The funds could be used to match existing federal or state programs.

This legislation passed the Assembly in March and was reported out of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee in early June, but was held in the Senate Rules Committee.

Smart Growth Public Infrastructure Policy Act. A.3574, sponsored by Assemblyman DiNapoli, and S.2070, sponsored by Senator LaValle, help to correct the pattern of development that has required expensive and expansive infrastructure projects, resulting in the underutilization and degradation of existing infrastructure. This important measure requires state agencies (like the Departments of Environmental Conservation, Transportation, and Health) to make smart development decisions and investments by requiring priority to be given to those development projects that utilize areas of existing infrastructure and those that are consistent with local governments' plans for development.

This legislation passed the Assembly in February and was not reported out of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee.

Clean Water Protection/Flooding Prevention Act. A.2048, sponsored by Assemblyman DiNapoli, and S.2081, sponsored by Senator Marcellino, decreases the size threshold for Department of Environmental Conservation regulation of freshwater wetlands to 1 acre or larger, thus increasing the state's ability to protect these important ecosystems. This legislation also greatly increases the state's ability to properly manage these habitats for the benefit of all New York's citizens, birds, and other wildlife by removing the mapping requirements for regulation. Without this increased level of protection, the health of all of New York's waterbodies is put at risk.

This legislation passed the Assembly in February and was reported out of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee, but was held in the Senate Rules Committee.

Invasive Species. As described in the recent report of the New York State Invasive Species Task Force, invasive species are a growing problem in New York, and a threat to many unique and irreplaceable ecosystems and species.

In 2006, we advocated for legislative and administrative measures to address this growing threat, such as measures to limit ballast water discharges in the Great Lakes and promoting the inclusion of a new \$10 million funding category within an expanded Environmental Protection Fund to support the recommendations of the Invasive Species Task Force and other actions needed to combat the spread of invasive species. The Aquatic Nuisance Species Coalition Participation Act (S.7710), which would require New York to participate with the other Great Lakes states to develop permitting requirements for the discharge of ballast water in the Great Lakes, was introduced by Senator Maziarz and reported out of the Environmental Conservation Committee, but was held in the Rules Committee. The Assembly did not introduce a similar measure.

Healthy, Safe, and Energy Efficient Outdoor Lighting Act. A.704, sponsored by Assemblyman Grannis, and S.4474, sponsored by Senator Marcellino, would reduce the unnecessary lighting of the night sky, thus decreasing the threats posed to the migrating birds and other wildlife of New York. Through promoting the use of energy efficient lighting products, and ones that reduce light cast into the nighttime sky, this legislation would also decrease the demand for electricity, which would reduce air pollution associated with energy generation, and decrease costs to municipalities and the state.

This legislation passed the Assembly in May, but was held in the Senate Rules Committee.

Restricting Dune Buggy/ATV Access in Coastal Erosion Hazard Zones. New York's coastal beaches provide an important habitat for endangered and threatened species, such as the Piping Plover. By restricting motor vehicle access in coastal erosion hazard zones, this



legislation would benefit the birds and other wildlife that depend on undisturbed beaches to nest, breed, and feed, in addition to protecting these habitats from

erosion. Therefore, Audubon New York strongly supported enactment of this legislation, A.9165, sponsored by Assemblyman Brodsky, to promote increased protection of New York's sensitive beaches and coastal Important Bird Areas from the negative environmental impacts posed by ATV and ORV [all-terrain and off-road vehicle] use.

This bill did not report out of the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee and was not introduced in the Senate.

NASSAU COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE 571-6306

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

VOLUNTEERS FOR WILDLIFE (631) 423-0982

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

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

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Kathy Asmus, Director (6/07)631-205-	-1163
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Elliott Kutner, Birding / Field Trips 486-	
Therese Lucas, Envtl. Fests. & Annual Dinner 221-	
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