

NEW MANAGEMENT PLAN BEING PREPARED FOR JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Michael Speirling

This article summarizes and excerpts information from www.nps.gov/gate/parkmgmt/gmp.htm, including an eight-page "Summer 2009" newsletter that's also available in a paper version.

Gateway National Recreation Area, which includes Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge (often identified by SSAS's Elliott Kutner as his favorite birding spot), began the three-year process of writing a new General Management Plan (GMP) in July. This GMP will be the federal government's roadmap for at least 20 years. This is an opportunity for us to help shape a vision for Gateway's future.

According to Gateway Superintendent Barry T. Sullivan, "the first General Management Plan for Gateway was finished in 1979. Since then we have a much better understanding of the natural and cultural significance of Gateway's resources. We understand and acknowledge there are threats to park resources. In addition, the needs of our visitors are very different today than they were a generation ago. Considering all this, it is time to look to the future and determine how best to protect, improve, and sustain the health of our natural and cultural resources."

General management planning offers an open, structured decision-making process that encourages and considers ideas and comments from many different people and groups. These ideas and comments are matched with scholarly and scientific information and analysis. The GMP must comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); this means that impacts to the social, cultural, and natural environments in the park and surrounding areas will be taken into consideration.

PLAN For the Future

All of the ideas, options, and impacts for the future of the park will be presented in a written document that will be available for you to read and make comments on. After all comments are received and considered, together we will choose the best future for the park. The planning process for the GMP is as follows:

Summer 2009 (Scoping): Identify ideas, expectations, and comments related to the park with the public, government agencies, and other stakeholders.

Summer 2010: Develop and present preliminary alternatives. Outline different possible options for the park.

Spring/Summer 2011: Prepare and distribute a Draft General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

Winter 2012: Revise Draft Plan and prepare a Final General Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement.

Summer 2012: Implement the approved plan — prepare and issue a "Record of Decision," and implement plan as funding allows.

Open Houses are an informal opportunity to meet the planning team, get more information about Gateway, and to share your ideas and comments. Five took place in July and five more are scheduled for the end of September, including one on **Sunday, September 27** from 3 to 8 P.M. at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge's Visitor Center.

Gateway was established "in order to preserve and protect for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations an area possessing outstanding natural and recreational features." Legislation was signed into law in October of 1972 and signified the culmination of many years of effort by citizens, planners, activists (including SSAS), the National Park Service, and members of Congress. In the 1960s, Congress recognized that a majority of the nation was living in urban areas, where many outdoor recreation opportunities were too distant for regular use. The ability to bring "parks to people" was assisted by a shift in federal policy, allowing for the appropriation of federal money to acquire shoreline area for park designation. The coastal zone lands that make up Gateway were New York and New Jersey state and municipal lands, Army and Navy installations, and some privately owned lands. Each year, millions of visitors experience this urban recreation area by participating in the recreational, natural, and cultural opportunities that exist at the park's wildlife refuge (Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, of course, which has never been part of the National Wildlife Refuge System), holly forest (at the Sandy Hook Unit), beaches, marshes, waters, and open spaces that stretch throughout three New York City boroughs and into northern New Jersey.



- Birdseed
- Optics
- Birdbaths
- Bird Houses
- Feeders
- Jewelry
- Music
- Nature Gifts
- Tilley Hats
- And much more . . .



Lighthouse Commons
911 Montauk Highway, Oakdale
631-218-BIRD (2473)
www.wbu.com/oakdale
Mon-Fri 10-6; Sat 9-6; Sun 11-5

Discover a Refuge In Your Own Backyard.



Phone: (516) 931-1445
Fax: (516) 931-1467
E-Mail: lgk1cpa@aol.com

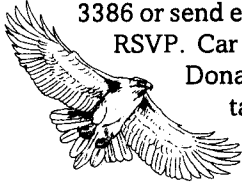
LEONARD G. KONSKER
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

Konsker and Company, LTD
550 W. Old Country Rd., Suite 101
Hicksville, New York 11801

GREENWICH HAWK WATCH

Barbara Levine

On **Saturday, October 3rd**, at 10 A.M., the members of South Shore Audubon Society are invited to the Audubon Center in Greenwich (<http://greenwich.audubon.org>) for the hawk migration. Those of you who visited the Center earlier this year know what a wonderful place it is. Ted Gilman, the education director, is superb. Call me at 741-3386 or send email to barban22@optonline.net to RSVP. Car pools can be arranged if needed. Donation to the Center will be \$5. Picnic tables are available if you wish to bring a bag lunch. I hope you can join us for a memorable day.

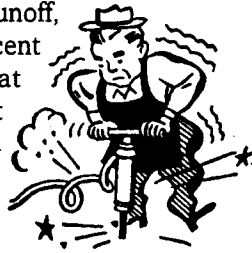


CONSTRUCTION PROPOSALS

Michael Sperling

Our summer break between *Skimmer* issues makes it more difficult than usual to get the word out to our members about the brief (often two-week) comment periods for construction projects of interest to SSAS. Our lightly used e-mail list helps; you can sign up at http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list. You can also check the weekly Environmental Notice Bulletin of the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) at www.dec.ny.gov/enb/enb.html, which covered the two topics below plus a proposal from Covanta Hempstead Energy to expand its energy-from-waste facility in Westbury (near the Meadowbrook Parkway) by adding a boiler and a turbine generator, increasing groundwater withdrawals, constructing a new cooling tower, and upgrading air-pollution control equipment.

Lighthouse. We mentioned SSAS's concerns regarding the environmental impact of the 150-acre, \$3.74 billion "The Lighthouse at Long Island" project in last October's *Skimmer*. Those concerns were again submitted a few weeks ago (following the acceptance of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement by the Town of Hempstead; visit www.toh.li/content/home/news/lightreport.html) by our former VP, Michael Goldsmith, who represents us on the Nassau HUB Citizens Advisory Committee. They include the construction and post-construction effects (traffic, noise, runoff, light pollution, etc.) on the adjacent Francis T. Purcell Preserve at Hempstead Plains (a rare habitat with 147 species of wildflowers and natural grasses, including the endangered sandplain gerardia), on the surrounding natural areas and wetlands along the Meadowbrook Parkway (which is liable to be expanded to support the greater volume of traffic), on songbird migration and breeding, and on raptors in the vicinity of the project.



The project on both sides of Hempstead Turnpike requires rezoning; it includes (according to the DEC) tripling the size of Nassau Coliseum and adding 300 hotel rooms, 118,000 square feet of convention facilities, a million square feet of office space, 500,000 square feet of retail space, and 2,306 residential units.

Jones Beach. The DEC has tentatively approved an application for a permit modification to connect the existing Jones Beach State Park Sewage Treatment Plant to the existing Nassau County Cedar Creek Sewage Treatment Plant ocean outfall and abandon the existing outfall to South Oyster Bay. A pump station will be installed at the existing Jones Beach plant and approximately 16,000 linear feet of 12-inch diameter HDPE sewer line will be installed within the existing paved/mowed-grass right-of-ways to connect to Cedar Creek outfall. Comments on this project must be submitted by August 28. An informal discussion of this among SSAS board members indicated support for the abandonment of the bay-polluting outfall.

**NORTH AMERICAN BIRD PHENOLOGY PROGRAM
VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

The North American Bird Phenology Program (BPP) has tracked arrival and departure times of birds since the 1880s. With six million recorded observations, it is one of the longest and largest collections of phenological records in the world. The BPP's mission is to provide information that will improve our understanding of the distribution, migration, and abundance of birds, particularly in the context of recent climate change. Because BPP data was stored on 2 by 5 inch cards, efforts are underway to digitize it; make it easily accessible to the public, policymakers, and researchers; and establish a model that can be adapted to collect compatible data. Volunteers are needed to transcribe the data at home; visit www.pwrc.usgs.gov/bpp/ (Patuxent Wildlife Research Center) for details.

BIGGER BETTER BOTTLE BILL SUSPENDED

Michael Sperling

In early April, New York State environmentalists were celebrating the long-delayed passage of a compromise Bigger Better Bottle Bill after years of delays in the State Senate. Alas, no sooner had the bill been signed into law, then a lawsuit filed by the International Bottled Water Association, Nestle Waters North America, and Polar Corporation resulted in Manhattan U.S. District Court Judge Thomas Griesa postponing its implementation by 10 months until next April, costing New York State an estimated \$115 million in anticipated revenue. The law adds nickel deposits to sugarless bottled water and captures 80% of the unclaimed beverage deposits for the state's general fund instead of letting the bottlers continue to keep them.

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Steve Schellenger at 987-8103. Directions and summaries may be found at ssaudubon.org.

- Aug. 23 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- Aug. 30 Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside
- Sep. 6 *Labor Day Weekend — No Walk*
- Sep. 13 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Sep. 20 Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
- Sep. 27 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Oct. 4 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Oct. 11 Hempstead Lake State Park (see above)
- Oct. 18 Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner (and Lido Preserve afterwards)
- Oct. 25 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner

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.

BELETED THANKS FROM YOUR EDITOR

Michael Sperling

Since the May–August issue of the *Skimmer* was tight for space, here's my 19th annual thank-you column for my fellow volunteers who help make this newsletter possible. I thank everyone who submitted articles, especially the prolific Joe Grupp and Wendy Murbach; Therese Lucas, Bill Eichholz, and Dolores Rogers for trips to F&B Printers in Island Park; Wendy for printing the chapter-only labels while I printed the rest; and Therese for labeling all of the newsletters with me and bringing the newsletters to the post office. I also thank our faithful advertisers; please let them know you saw their ad here.

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

The SSAS annual dinner was held June 9 at the Coral House in Baldwin. The dinner gave us a chance to enjoy the company of members, old and new. We celebrated our birding adventures and programs conducted by the chapter during the year, such as environmental children's festivals, children's environmental camps, and our Greening of Long Island program.

Special recognition was paid to Elliott Kutner, who was our bird walks chairperson for nearly 40 years. Many anecdotes and memories were shared involving teaching, learning, and the joy of birding. John Zarudsky was the recipient of the chapter's Conservation Award for his work in and around the waters of the South Shore. His main focus is on shorebirds and raptors.

Raffle and Birdathon prizes were distributed during the evening and college scholarships were presented. We hope those in attendance enjoyed the evening as much as we did in preparing the event for you.

Dinner Sponsor Acknowledgments

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Ace Hardware</i> | <i>Library Cafe</i> |
| <i>Flora Allen</i> | <i>Marilyn Lowe</i> |
| <i>American Littoral Society,</i> | <i>Matty's Toy Store</i> |
| <i>Northeast Chapter</i> | <i>Paul Mc Cain</i> |
| <i>Applebee's</i> | <i>Arthur Morris</i> |
| <i>Atlantic Nursery</i> | <i>National Amusements</i> |
| <i>Baskets Bellissimo</i> | <i>Oberle Nursery</i> |
| <i>Bellmore Bagel Cafe</i> | <i>Stacey O'Brien</i> |
| <i>Birder's World</i> | <i>Olive Garden</i> |
| <i>Birdfeeders.com</i> | <i>Panera Bread</i> |
| <i>Birds and Beans</i> | <i>Rudy Perrone</i> |
| <i>Boston Market</i> | <i>Piccolo Ristorante</i> |
| <i>Jim & Gail Brown</i> | <i>David Plank</i> |
| <i>Butera's Restaurant</i> | <i>Rachel's Grill</i> |
| <i>Carol Butler</i> | <i>Rex Ind., Udderly Cream</i> |
| <i>Crab Shack</i> | <i>The Schooner</i> |
| <i>Dee's Nursery</i> | <i>Marcia Specht</i> |
| <i>Dick's Sporting Goods</i> | <i>David Stolarz</i> |
| <i>Docurama</i> | <i>T.G.I. Friday's</i> |
| <i>Eden's Way</i> | <i>Trader Joe's</i> |
| <i>Friendly's</i> | <i>Wild Birds Unlimited</i> |
| <i>Iavarone Bros.</i> | <i>WMF</i> |
| <i>R. S. Jones</i> | |

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

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.

