

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 Tuesday this February) 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. 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..... Carole Ryan
- Bellmore Maria Gould
- Glen Oaks David Coopersmith
- Hempstead..... April Schachtel
- Hicksville Karen Andreone
- Levittown Doris Gerdts, Gil Goff
- Lynbrook Jean O’Regan, Dawn Taylor
- Massapequa Eleanor Fay, Joyce Wells
- Rockville Centre Patricia Sachs
- Valley Stream Mary Berman
- Wantagh Robert Spicer



PIPE LEAKING AT JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Editor’s note: The following consists of most of an alert on the Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers’ Web site (<http://jamaicabayecowatchers.org>), followed by excerpts from “Busted Pipe Ruining Broad Channel Lakes” by Queens Chronicle Associate Editor Domenick Rafter (originally posted at www.qchron.com on August 30 and updated a week later).

The Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge has often been called the crown jewel of [Gateway National Recreation Area] and the reason for this is the two freshwater ponds that the visionary Robert Moses had built over 50 years ago. The West Pond is extremely accessible to visitors with the walking trail that rings its perimeter and provides stunning views of the many varied bird species that are drawn to its fresh water supply, as well as breathtaking scenes of the

Bay’s wetlands with the Manhattan skyscrapers as a backdrop. This irreplaceable resource is now threatened. The drain pipe for the Pond ruptured this winter. The Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers were the first to note and report this. The pipe remained broken for a few weeks and in that time the salt water of the Bay filled the Pond to the point where the salinity rate of the Pond is the same as the Bay — in effect eliminating it as a fresh water source for the thousands of shore and migratory birds. At this time, the National Park Service has no funding to correct this situation and the Ecowatchers are asking concerned residents to call Senators Schumer and Gillibrand’s offices to request assistance. [Contact info is available at ssaudubon.org.]

A broken pipeline and valve system that was built over half a century ago is causing salt water from Jamaica Bay to seep into the two freshwater ponds: 45-acre West Pond and East Pond, which is more than twice as large... West Pond is nearly entirely salinated, sharing the same salt content level as Jamaica Bay, and freshwater birds have stopped breeding there, said Don Riepe, president of the Northeast Chapter of the American Littoral Society and a resident of Broad Channel. East Pond is also at risk.

Riepe said he and other environmental groups like the Jamaica Bay Ecowatchers have been lobbying the National Park Service, which oversees the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge, to provide funding for reconstruction of the pipe and valve system. “We’ve been pushing them to do something about it,” Riepe said.

In a statement, the National Park Service acknowledged that the federal agency does not have the funds to fix the pipe, but has been working to maintain the existing broken system. “Although funding to fully fix the pipeline is not yet available, routine maintenance will help maintain the original system so that birds and birders alike can continue to enjoy the ponds,” the statement said.

The estimation for the cost of a new pipeline is around \$1 million. The Ponds were constructed over 50 years ago and were the basis for the wildlife refuge envisioned by Robert Moses, who forced the city to build the two Ponds as mitigation in order to construct a new A-train viaduct over Jamaica Bay. The subway line now runs only steps from East Pond.

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

LEONARD G. KONSKER
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

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

ANOTHER BROOKLYN WATER WORKS UPDATE

Michael Sperring

Those of you who participate in SSAS's e-list or view its messages on our Yahoo! Group's pages were notified about a hastily scheduled press conference led by Brooklyn Water Works owner Gary Melius and Freeport Mayor Andrew Hardwick. The press conference took place on August 29, with SSAS's Rich Kopsco, who co-chairs the Brookside Preserve committee, also speaking. The reason for the press conference was concern that the Nassau County Interim Finance Authority (NIFA), which was meeting the next day, was going to vote to reject the County's purchase of the property using unspent (and therefore yet to be bonded) open-space funds from the voter-approved 2006 Environmental Bond Act.

Our e-list was also used to urge chapter members to attend the NIFA meeting. Jim Brown posted a letter he sent to NIFA, explaining the rationale for preservation of the 4.2-acre Brooklyn Water Works property, which is located in Freeport and Baldwin, on the southern border of chapter-managed Brookside Preserve.

The NIFA directors' vote was two in favor of rejection (including the chair), two opposed, with one abstention, which under NIFA's bylaws is great news because a minimum of four "wrong" votes are needed for a rejection (two directors' seats are currently vacant).

JERRY BISHOP MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED TO TWO OUTSTANDING STUDENTS

Betty Borowsky

An important part of the mission of the South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education. One way we do this is by awarding scholarships to college and graduate school students who are studying the environment.

Each year Evelyn Bishop funds two \$750.00 scholarships for this purpose, in memory of her husband Jerry, who loved nature and birding. This year the Scholarship Committee, chaired by Betsy Gulotta, received seven outstanding applications, making it difficult to select just two. But in the end, the Committee awarded the funds last June to Jordan Hollarsmith and Shawn Billerman.

Jordan graduated from Columbia University, majoring in environmental biology, with a 4.0 in sciences, and a 3.74 GPA overall. She requested the funds to pay for a trip to the International Coral Reef Symposium in Cairns, Australia this summer, to present the findings of her senior research project involving methods used in the restoration of reefs damaged by vessel groundings.

Shawn is a Ph.D. student in ecology at the University of Wyoming. He expects to obtain his degree in 2016, and his current GPA is 4.0. Shawn requested funds to help support his field research this summer, when he planned to collect the bulk of the data for his Ph.D. thesis. This involved

collecting morphological and genetic information about the Red-naped and Red-breasted Sapsuckers in the hybrid zone in California and Oregon. His broader goal is to shed light on methods of evolution of reproductive isolation and speciation, but specifically he is interested in what influences individuals of these two woodpeckers to hybridize where they coexist.

We sincerely thank Evelyn for her continuing kindness and generosity; we are very grateful to be able to support students who plan to have a career in environmental studies, because it's another way for us to contribute to the preservation of the environment in the future.

SAVING DIAMONDBACK TERRAPINS

Russell Burke

SSAS members: You probably know about my long-term (since 1999) research on the terrapins of Jamaica Bay. We have made incredible progress and learned a



huge amount. But the next step is to learn more about what terrapins are doing when they're not on land; we need to know what they're doing in the water. As part of the overall research, I have an exciting project which unfortunately until now I have not been able to get funded. I am now working with a group called iAMscientist that is dedicated to accelerating these kinds of discoveries. iAMscientist provides the financial and marketing platform for scientific projects to be funded through a peer-to-peer system called crowdfunding. Crowdfunding allows anyone to donate any amount of money to support scientific projects.

I've posted my new project on their site and it is located at www.iamscientist.com/projects/80-Saving-Diamondback-Terrapins-with-New-Technology. I've added some rewards to encourage and thank my supporters, so please click on the link and have a look. It goes without saying I appreciate your support. I will definitely reciprocate!

Editor's note: Dr. Russell Burke is a biology professor at Hofstra University whose most recent programs at our general meetings were "Italian Lizards Invade North America" and "Diamondback Terrapins of Jamaica Bay."

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

SWS Garage Door Service Co.

43 Mackey Ave.

Port Washington, NY 11050

(516) 627-0600

Fax (516) 627-8504

SWSGARAGEDOORS@GMAIL.COM

Steven W. Schellenger

Licensed and Insured

 **BIRD WALKS** 
Steve Schellenger

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

- Sep. 23 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Sep. 30 Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside
- Oct. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Oct. 14 Tackapausha Museum and Preserve
- Oct. 21 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Oct. 28 Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
- Nov. 4 Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner (and maybe Lido Preserve afterwards)
- Nov. 11 Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north side of Merrick Rd.)
- Nov. 18 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Nov. 25 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Dec. 2 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner

PLAN AHEAD

Therese Lucas

The best way to plan ahead is to jot things down on your calendar. And the best calendar to use, of course, is one from Audubon!

There will be an assortment of Audubon calendars available for sale at a reduced rate of \$9.00 each for our



members beginning at our October 9 general meeting. Thereafter, they will be available at Sunday bird walks and other general meetings as the supply lasts.

The assortment will include World of Trees, Wildflowers, Nature, National Parks, Songbirds, and Butterflies.

L.I. DRINKING WATER HEARING SCHEDULED

Nassau County Legislator Judi Bosworth of Great Neck and Suffolk County Legislator William R. Spencer of Centerport have teamed up to host public hearings on how to "protect and secure" Long Island's water supply.

The information in the last three paragraphs was taken from a press release issued on August 31 by Dr. Spencer (a pediatric surgeon) after the first hearing took place in Suffolk. The next one is scheduled for **Tuesday, October 2** from 6 to 8 P.M. in New Hyde Park, at Clinton G. Martin Park, 1601 Marcus Avenue, at the corner of New Hyde Park Road. A third hearing will be scheduled if needed. The objectives of the first hearing were as follows:

- * Pursuing how to safeguard our water supply from pollution, overuse, saltwater contamination, and other threats.

- * Presenting expert testimony regarding aquifer threats and conditions.

- * Seeking to address the concerns of the public at-large.
- * Focusing on the need to increase water protection through public discourse.

"It is important now, more than ever, for Long Island to come together to find a solution to this concerning issue," says Legislator Spencer. "Salt water, pollution, and other factors are contaminating the water we obtain from the



aquifer every day and we cannot let any more time pass. Action must be taken now to establish a serious management plan to ensure the future of this essential natural resource!"

Because the quality of Long Island drinking water has decreased substantially over the past few years, everyone agrees that action is necessary to preserve and protect the aquifers from future contamination, saltwater intrusion, and overuse. Issues brought up [at the first hearing] included pharmaceutical contamination, U.S. Geological Survey monitoring, existing plumes that have rendered some wells useless, and a potential new power plant proposed, among others. A report will be issued jointly by the Legislators by the end of the year to recap the issues and recommended solutions.

Those interested in listening to the audio recording of the meeting should call our office. A Web page is being developed with the link to the recorded meeting. For further information or if you have questions, please call (631) 854-4500.



*Explore the coast
with the*

**AMERICAN
LITTORAL SOCIETY**

HAWK WATCH AT FORT TILDEN (Sun., Oct. 7, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.). Meet at Bldg. 1 in Fort Tilden, Queens for a hike along the beach & dunes and visit to the hawk watch platform during peak migration time. Great views of NYC Harbor, ocean, and bay. Contact Don to reserve. Free.

ASSATEAGUE SEASHORE — CHINCOTEAGUE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE (Nov. 1-4). A weekend of great wildlife viewing along the Delmarva Peninsula. Visit Cypress Swamp and Bombay Hook Refuge on the way home. Cost: \$395/person includes 3 nights lodging, guided hikes, Safari Bus Tour of refuge backwater area, seafood dinner on Saturday night (all the oysters you can eat), plus a visit to a cypress swamp and Bombay Hook Refuge. Please send deposit of \$100 to NYC Audubon, 71 W. 23rd St., Ste. 1523, New York, NY 10010. Car pooling.

NATURAL HISTORY OF LONG ISLAND CONFERENCE (Fri., Nov. 16, 8:30 A.M. to 5 P.M.). A full day of speakers on various natural history topics and concerns to be held at Brookhaven National Laboratory plus many field trips held on Sat., Nov. 17. Contact Don for info.

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

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

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
Americans Committed to Conservation



DATED MATERIAL



WWW.SSAUDUBON.ORG

U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
 Permit No. 1181
 NONPROFIT
 Freeport, NY

**2012-2013 OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND
 COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS**

- Jim Brown, President & Conservation 432-8156
- Marilyn Hametz, Vice President & Publicity 799-7189
- Joe Landesberg, Treasurer 536-4808
- Don Temple, Recording Secretary 420-1244
- Therese Lucas, Corresponding Secretary
- & Greening of Long Island 221-3921
- Jonathan Staller, Director (6/15) 708-1150
- Paul Stessel, Director (6/15) 295-5174
- Steven Schellenger, Director (6/14), Field Trips
- & Brookside Preserve Co-Chairperson 987-8103
- John Gaglione, Director (6/13) & Programs 731-5012
- Richard Kopsco, Director (6/13) & Brookside
- Preserve Co-Chairperson 825-6792
- Betty Borowsky, Education 764-3596
- Gail Brown, Hospitality 432-8156
- Anne-Marie Conn, Electronic Communications ... 671-7685
- Joseph Grupp, Research 481-4208
- Betsy Gulotta, College Scholarships 546-8841
- Wendy Murbach, Membership 546-6303
- James Remsen, Jr., Birdathon 631-957-0949
- Dolores Rogers, Welcoming 599-1224
- Michael Sperling, *Skimmer* Editor 221-3921

BECOME A MEMBER OF SSAS
Think Globally, but Join Locally!

Option 1. You can join SSAS for a year by sending \$20 payable to **South Shore Audubon Society** using the form below. Our address is P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

Option 2. To join NAS and your all-volunteer local chapter, you can help SSAS by joining Audubon through us for the same price that it costs if you join through NAS (we get \$0 from your dues unless you join through us). Mail the form below and your check payable to **National Audubon Society** to SSAS at the address above. The special rate for the first year is \$20 per household.



Renewing? Please send NAS renewals directly to NAS (we now get \$0 for all NAS renewals).



Donations to SSAS are always welcome! \$_____

Yes, I'd like to join: SSAS only National Audubon too

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

 _____ (Zip+4)

PHONE NO.: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Chapter Code C2ZR150Z (South Shore Audubon Society)

