SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER

VOLUME 45, NUMBER 4 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY DEC. 2014 & JAN. 2015

NEXT MEETING

John Gaglione

DATE: Tuesday, December 9, 2014
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKER: Samantha Rosen
TOPIC: The Rescue Program of the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation

At our next monthly meeting, education coordinator and stranding technician Samantha Rosen will be discussing New York's only marine mammal and sea turtle rescue program, and the steps taken to rehabilitate and release a marine mammal or sea turtle. We will learn about the seals, dolphins, porpoises, whales, and sea turtle species seen around Long Island, and what the public can do to help the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation save them. Sam grew up in Oceanside and earned her biology degree in Maryland at Salisbury University in 2012. Join us!

Pre-Meeting Book Discussion. Arrive a half-hour early to participate in a discussion led by R. U. Abyrdar II (aka Paul Stessel) of the book that he reviewed in the previous *Skimmer*. This month's book is *Pete Dunne on Bird Watching: The How-to, Where-to, and When-to of Birding* by, yes, Pete Dunne.

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 gas station that borders Sunrise Highway.

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

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NEXT MEETING AFTER NEXT MEETING

John Gaglione

DATE: Tuesday, January 13, 2015
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library
144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
TOPIC: Annual Members' Night

Join us for a get-together of fun, food, and friendship. Show off your talents, hobbies, or skills, whether or not they are bird-related. If you can paint, play an instrument, imitate bird calls, knit, take photographs, sing, or have any other talents or interests, please share them with us. We would also appreciate finger foods from those of you who enjoy the culinary arts.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
Climate Change and Where We Live, Part II: What Is Causing Global Warming?

Betty Borowsky

Last month we showed that the temperature of the earth is increasing, and that it appears that the rate of the increase is accelerating. Just very recently, on November 1, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the United Nations adopted a detailed report (http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/SYR_AR5_LONGERREPORT.pdf) laying out the evidence for global warming and stating the panel's determination that human activities are primarily responsible for it.

You have undoubtedly heard that experts from many related fields say that rapid global warming is being caused by increases in certain atmospheric gases, the so-called "greenhouse gases." The idea is that heat energy from the sun passes through our atmosphere and strikes the earth. Some of the heat is absorbed by the planet, warming the surface of the earth, but some of it is reflected back into the atmosphere. At this point, some of the heat continues into outer space, but some of it is caught by molecules of

greenhouse gases. These gases absorb the heat, then reradiate the heat in all directions, so some of it is redirected back to the earth. This increases the heat load of the planet by adding additional heat energy that would otherwise be lost to space. Thus, the greater the number of greenhouse gas molecules in the atmosphere, the greater the amount of heat that will be bounced back to the earth and, therefore, the warmer the planet will become.

Most of earth's atmosphere is nitrogen and oxygen (about 78.09% and 20.95%, respectively). The third largest component is argon (0.93%). All combined, these three account for about 99.9% of the air. Now these three gases do not capture and redirect heat energy, but the fourth-largest component, carbon dioxide (about 0.039% of the air), does. So it makes sense to look at carbon dioxide as a possible cause of global warming. If carbon dioxide is at least partly responsible for climate change, since the earth's temperature is increasing, then carbon dioxide should be increasing as well.

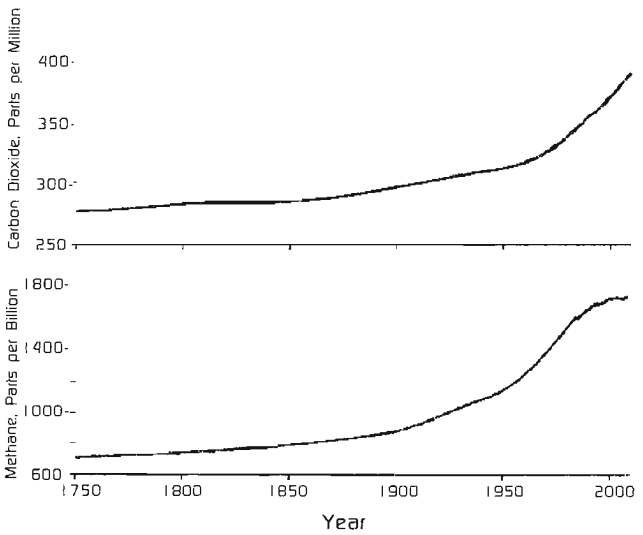
Direct measurements of carbon dioxide have been taken from the top of Hawaii's Mauna Kea, which is about 13,800 feet high and located in the middle of the Pacific Ocean — certainly one of the least-polluted places on earth — since 1958. In addition, direct measurements of carbon dioxide have been obtained from gases trapped in Antarctic ice that extend back thousands of years (http://cdiac.ornl.gov/trends/co2/ice_core_co2.html). The first graph shows how carbon dioxide has been increasing since the mid 1750s. More importantly, though, the last two graphs show that not only has carbon dioxide increased over time, but the rate of its increase closely matches the rate of increase in the earth's temperature.[1]

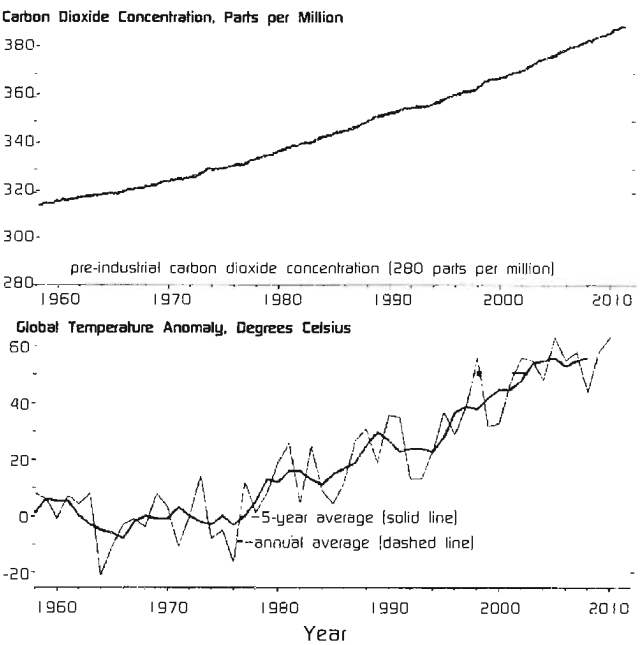
Now the big question: what is causing carbon dioxide (and the other greenhouse gases) to increase? Well — we need to determine where large amounts of these gases might be coming from. By far, the most likely source of atmospheric carbon dioxide is burning fossil fuels. Fossil fuels, including coal and petroleum, are really the partially decomposed remains of living things that have accumulated over millions of years. When they are burned, the carbon that was trapped in the partially decayed tissue combines with oxygen and is released into the air as carbon dioxide.

It turns out that the amount of carbon dioxide and the temperature of the earth began their rapid increases about the time of the Industrial Revolution — the time when industry began to use a great deal of coal and oil. And so the consensus of most experts is that the increase in greenhouse gases is occurring because humans are burning more fossil fuel.

Now carbon dioxide is a really small part of the air — only about 0.039% of the total. The three other main greenhouse gases combined are less than 0.0001%. So greenhouse gases make up a relatively small proportion of the atmosphere. BUT — *that's just why increasing them even slightly can have a profound effect on the heat load of the earth.*

In short, then, the evidence that burning fossil fuels is causing the earth to warm up is so great, and the consequences of ignoring this situation so dire, that we must take steps to reduce our use of fossil fuels immediately.





[1]Other atmospheric gases, such as methane, nitrous oxide, ozone, and water vapor, can also reradiate heat, but make up a much smaller proportion of the air — much less than 0.001%. The first three are increasing as well (see first graph and http://epa.gov/climatechange/ghgemissions/gases/ch4.html). The amount of water vapor in the atmosphere is much more variable than the amounts of the first three, but NASA states that it plays a role in global warming as well (www.nasa.gov/topics/earth/features/vapor_warming.html).

THOUGHTS, NEWS, AND OPINION FROM YOUR CONSERVATION CHAIR

A Post-Sandy Hike to the "New Inlet" on Fire Island

Jim Brown

This past October 24, a few days shy of the second anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, Rich Kopsco, Brookside Preserve Committee chair, and I took a hike in the Fire Island Wilderness Area. We traveled to Fire Island to observe firsthand the impacts of the dramatic 2012 storm, especially to see the breach created at Old Inlet. The hike to the inlet is a bit over 1½ miles long, beginning at the Wilderness Visitor Center at Smith Point.

Before starting our walk, we spoke with a ranger at the Visitor Center, who explained to us that her view out of the south-facing windows of the building had dramatically changed with Sandy, as now she could actually see the ocean from where she worked inside. Before the superstorm dramatically altered Fire Island's topography, large dunes blocked the view. Currently, the broad, panoramic expanse of the Atlantic is seen directly behind the information desk. The area near the Visitor Center that was flattened by the storm is happily witnessing regrowth of beach grasses.

Walking out to the "New Inlet" formed at what has been known as "Old Inlet" was a relatively easy hike. We observed numerous Yellow-rumped Warblers and most spectacularly, large groups of cormorants (pictured) flying in V-formations along the island. Rich and I also came across a vibrant red fox along the trail. We looked at the fox for a while, who also calmly observed the two of us, before he casually left at a slow trot. Reaching the newly formed inlet, we saw a fisherman chasing a fox away from his catch, a large striped bass. The fox, who scampered away, was probably the same individual we had come across earlier.

The new breach or inlet that has bisected the Fire Island Wilderness Area has increased in minimum width by about 100 meters in the last year, to its current width of 350 meters. Water flows very fast through the breach, and we were told that the fishing is very good. That fact probably explains the large number of cormorants we saw during our hike, and it certainly explains the bold presence of the scavenging fox on the beach! The Sandy-created inlet has also improved the water quality of the Great South Bay, and fears of flooding due to the breach along the mainland have proven unfounded. The flushing of the bay due to the new waterway is proving to be a boon to the general environment of the south shore of Long Island. It is fortunate that the recommendation of many environmental organizations — including the South Shore Audubon Society — to keep the breach open and let nature take its course — was heeded.

On the way back to the Visitor Center to end our hike, we walked partway on the actual beach, away from the inland route. We noticed the dunes, but the dunes that remain are not nearly as high as in the pre-Sandy past. The sand on this barrier island has been drastically moved and relocated! Fire Island, located more than 100 miles from the storm's center, experienced 80 mph winds and a storm surge of more than 10 feet. The hurricane dramatically altered the landscape, created a new inlet, lowered and leveled dunes, and set in motion processes that are changing basic ecological relationships in the area.

The naturalness, nevertheless, of changes experienced by Fire Island is described in a bulletin ("Storm Stories") issued by the Fire Island National Seashore and National Park Service: "On October 29, 2012, Hurricane Sandy struck Fire Island National Seashore and changed the lay of the land. Fire Island is shaped by natural processes and, while this storm was record-breaking, it was simply another chapter in natural change on the barrier island."

Editor's note: The two-page "Storm Stories," including photos, is posted at www.nps.gov/fiis/upload/Sandy-Site-Bulletin_Dec-3.pdf.

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.

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	Gary Kassof, Leslie Leber
Bellmore	Debbie Langone, John Nelson, Patricia Schiller, Rebecca Tory
East Meadow	Deborah Linken, Niki Vasiliades
Franklin Square	Stella Hearne, Karen Venezia
Freeport	John Holly
Garden City	Emily Arnone, Laura Bulle
Levittown	Rose Conant, TriciaJoaquin
Malverne	Ann Murphy
Merrick	Diana Carmody, Patricia Deleo
Old Bethpage	Jessica K. Birk
Seaford	Christine Mohr

NAT'L AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201

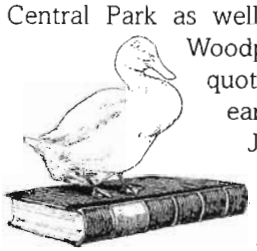
BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

R. U. Abyrdar II

This month, in preparation for the holidays, we're ready for an inspirational book! So I'll be reviewing *The Life of the Skies: Birding at the End of Nature* by Jonathan Rosen, a national bestseller as well as a thoughtful and engaging journey through the land of bird-watching. This book makes a wonderful read following Pete Dunne's fabulous book last month. It is a history of America as seen through the eyes of a dedicated birder, and an eloquent chronicle that meditates on the fact that technology enables us to both preserve habitat and wildlife and, at the same time, contribute to their demise.

Mr. Rosen firmly believes that nature has a diminished "thing." He is always focused on today's paradox: while we are attempting to preserve nature, we are, at the same time, destroying it! He eventually admits to coming to bird-watching because birds reflect back to us an aspect of ourselves. Rosen's wide-ranging intellect creates an elegy to the human condition at a time when wild America is fast becoming a thing of the past. This is more than just a book about birds, it is really a very thoughtful and often unexpected exploration of birding through the lens of history, literature, and loss. This is the pleasure of loving a diminished, yet still seductive, universe. Birding is so much more than just outdoor recreation; its pleasures are, in reality, spiritual!

The author has written a rare and beautiful piece of literature. He writes with astounding insight, wit, and, ultimately, intense compassion. It is both entertaining and compelling. This is an unshowy, profound, and engaging piece of writing. Mr. Rosen talks about birding Central Park as well as looking for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker in Arkansas. He uses many quotes from various poets, writers, and early American birders, such as John James Audubon. Bird-watching is a world of small gestures that reflect on an even larger universe. This is a beautifully written account of birding that, in reality, is about so much more! It's really about being human and the way we relate to the natural world that surrounds us, and the idea that we affect this world even as we observe it. Mr. Rosen is a very compelling writer and I was captivated by his message in this enlightening and spiritual book.



To conclude, the author opines that, "there are two kinds of bird-watchers: those who know what they are and those who haven't yet realized it." To commune with nature in order to be happy is where this extraordinary book attempts to take us. Read it! . . . And ENJOY!!

RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070

OUR TACKAPAUSHA HOLIDAY PARTY

Marilyn Hametz

The South Shore Audubon Annual Holiday Party for Children with the Tackapausha Museum will be **Saturday, December 13**. At the party, from 1 to 4 P.M., we will be providing light refreshments and will have tables for nature crafts. Wildlife demonstrations are included in the party.

If you would like to enjoy the event as a South Shore Audubon **volunteer**, please contact me at 799-7189.

This special event is also a great time to visit the museum with your children or grandchildren. Admission is $5 per person. Children under age 5 are admitted free of charge.

The Tackapausha Museum and Preserve is located at 2255 Washington Avenue (between Merrick Road and Sunrise Highway) in Seaford, telephone 571-7443.

NASSAU COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE 571-6306

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NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER
Corpus Christi Hawkwatch, Texas – More Migrants Than Just Broad-winged Hawks

Joe Grupp

The thousands of Broad-winged Hawks passing the Corpus Christi Hawkwatch in the later part of each September, as described in this column in the last issue of the *Skimmer*, is an unbelievable phenomenon by itself, but numerous other species of raptors and non-raptors alike provide spectacles all their own during the migratory period.

Three species pass each year in significant numbers. Prior to the Broad-wings, Mississippi Kites pass through (averaging 6,400 birds per year). After the Broad-wings, Swainson's Hawks (averaging 5,461 birds per year) and Turkey Vultures (averaging 21,894 birds per year) become the dominant migrants. Other migrant raptors and non-raptors also flood the area at times.

On our visit, when scanning the sky, we came across large numbers of American White Pelicans circling in rising air columns (thermals) as they soared in the sky. They appeared as a uniform flock with all of the birds facing in the same direction at any given time. They produced a spectacle of their own while doing so. The trailing edges of their outstretched wings are black, contrasting with the white leading edge and the white of the bird's body. The result of that combination was a distinctive, dramatic, black-and-white pattern across a portion of the sky, especially when the flock was backed by a dark cloud. More dramatic yet was that the pattern of the formation changed as the birds turned together in their thermal. When the circling birds' sides faced us, the formation seemed to disappear from the sky. The changing pattern drew "oohs!" and "aahs!" from watchers on the platform. Some of the pelicans will remain in the general area and others will travel further south, as American White Pelicans winter along the Gulf and Pacific Coasts, some as far south as Panama.

In contrast to the American White Pelican, the Anhinga (pictured), in flight and seen from below, appears as a black bird with a long, skinny, sinuous neck; a long, narrow, wedge-shaped tail; and broad, medium-length wings that appear to separate head and neck equally from the tail. The Anhinga is a bird of our southern swamps in summer and migrates towards the equator, passing through Corpus Christi in fair-sized flocks as winter approaches. Each day, a few flocks streamed over us, each bird soaring without a wing beat as it was pushed by the wind. Each individual bird flew at a given distance from those in front, behind, and next to it, producing a very different pattern in the sky than that produced by the pelicans. We just could not take our eyes off them as they streamed over.

One morning, the Anhingas provided a real "treat" for us. It was a treat that we had to be at the right place, at the right time, to see. A fair distance from the hawkwatch platform, in a shrubby small-tree expanse of terrain, an Anhinga rose up, found a thermal, and on set wings began to rise. Then a second did so and then another and another, etc., did the same. They rose and formed a flock of a few hundred birds and drifted off south. It was like watching hundreds of balloons at a festival rising at almost the same time. One after another, the birds seemed to pop above the shrubby tree line and rise higher and higher into the sky. It was our lucky day because soaring birds perch for the night wherever the thermals die out as evening approaches. The previous night, the thermals died out as the birds approached the hawkwatch.

Migrants were not only confined to the air during our stay. Early on our first full morning at the watch, it was pretty quiet so we decided to drive the park road to a small pond where two Roseate Spoonbills were feeding. They left before we got there, so we continued on and were surprised to observe small flocks of Baltimore Orioles at times. Back at the platform, we learned that a day or two before our arrival, hundreds passed through migrating south. We knew we would not see Baltimore Orioles again at home until next spring.

Another of the migratory spectacles took place just off the hawkwatch platform, where strings of hummingbird feeders hung between a few sets of poles. Their purpose was to attract and provide an energy source for the Ruby-throated Hummingbirds that were migrating to their wintering grounds. During our stay, there were always many more hummingbirds around the feeders than I have ever seen in one place at one time before. Their numbers were over 100 at times I'm sure. Wings were a blur as they hovered while feeding; they attacked one another at times; they perched, resting on nearby tree branches — the area was one of constant hummingbird activity. Having seen one or two Ruby-throated Hummingbirds before heading to Texas, I could not help but wonder if any of those at the feeders came from Long Island.

Migration is a phenomenon that every birder is aware of. In spring and fall we bird, hoping to see migrant species that only visit our area as they travel to and from their breeding grounds and those rarities that are blown off course. At Corpus Christi it was all that and a distinct feeling that I was standing in the middle of the flow of migration. AWESOME!

SHOP AT OUR ONLINE NATURE MALL

Our Web site, ssaudubon.org, contains a link to the Online Nature Mall, which automatically gives a percentage of your purchases (10%) to SSAS if visited via the link on our home page. Thousands of products are available, in the following categories: bird software, audio, bird guides, nature books, binoculars, bird feeders, garden, and kids.

THE UNWELCOME RETURN OF THE JONES BEACH HOLIDAY LIGHT SPECTACULAR

Michael Sperling

In mid October, SSAS board members were appalled to see that the Holiday Light Spectacular at Jones Beach's West End, which we opposed during its run there from 2000 to 2005, was being erected for the upcoming season without any evidence of public notification or environmental review. Its final year (or so we thought) saw the "Spectacular" relocated to the vicinity of the Jones Beach Theater in 2006 (Field #5), which is a less objectionable location. The West End is a critical part of the "West Hempstead Bay/Jones Beach West" Important Bird Area, which was one of the first IBAs designated by Audubon New York in the late 1990s.

Your editor e-mailed a request to the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation under the Freedom of Information Law and is awaiting its documents regarding the contract with the corporation that's behind the show this time (Live Nation Entertainment, Inc.), any environmental review, etc. In the past, NYS Parks received 12–15% of the admission fees, some of which was used to pay park police and other staff at the show.

A decade ago, the show included over 100 displays on a two-mile stretch of the road that loops to the West End, with a million light bulbs burning every night for six weeks; the same schedule and distance have been announced this time. The guy wires supporting the up to 30-foot tall by 150-foot wide displays, the miles of high-voltage cables, the large generators, and the broken light bulbs can only be experienced in the daytime, but anyone thinking about attending the show should be able to figure out that a two-mile-long traffic jam consisting of air-polluting and fluid-dripping cars and buses (with as many as 74,000 vehicles in its peak year) is a bad idea.

In 2002, we sent a letter to newspaper editors that included the following: "West End is one of the premier winter bird habitats in our region, home to Snowy Owls, Short-eared Owls, Long-eared Owls, Sharp-shinned Hawks, Merlins, Northern Harriers, Peregrine Falcons, Lapland Longspurs, Snow Buntings (pictured), American Tree Sparrows, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Red-throated Loons, Common Loons, Horned Larks, and Eastern Meadowlarks, to name a few. West End and its environs are one of the few remaining crucial places that our wildlife have left for the daily needs of their lives. The true spirit of the season is about giving. Let's turn out the lights and give the little birds and creatures of West End back their home."

Last time, our opposition resulted in a meeting being arranged by Audubon New York at Jones Beach with the now-retired Albany-based Director of the Parks Department's Environmental Management Bureau and other staff, which eventually led to provisions being added to the renewed contract that prohibited the erection of the show during peak autumn migration (i.e., prior to November 1) and required its quick removal in the beginning of January. Obviously, whoever decided to bring the Holiday Light Spectacular back to Jones Beach chose to ignore our previous concerns; NYS Parks will be reminded about them before the show begins.

EMPTYING AND CLEANING FEEDERS AND BIRD BATHS CAN LIMIT SPREAD OF DISEASE

Editor's note: The following appeared in a press release that was issued by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation back on February 27, 2014.

Salmonellosis or "Songbird Fever" is among the most common diseases associated with bird feeders. Outbreaks can affect many bird species, including cardinals, goldfinches, sparrows, cowbirds, and Pine Siskins. The bacteria can be shed in the bird's feces even when the bird appears healthy. Salmonellosis can spread through contact with infected birds, contaminated seed, seed waste on the ground, or water in bird baths. It is important to note that salmonellosis is a zoonotic disease and can be spread to both people and domestic animals. Other common songbird diseases that are spread through bird feeders are mycoplasma conjunctivitis (an eye infection of House Finches) and trichomoniasis (an oral parasite of songbirds, pigeons, and doves).

A bird feeder surrounded by the various species of birds is a common sight in many residential backyards. Bird feeders can be a safe and enjoyable way to watch birds from the comfort of one's home, but under the right circumstances bird feeders can also be a place where diseases can spread very quickly between birds because of their close contact with each other.

New Yorkers can help curtail the spread of disease in songbirds by emptying and cleaning feeders and birdbaths with hot soapy water at least every two weeks. It is also a good idea to soak feeders in a dilute 10% bleach solution and allow them to dry before rehanging them. Waste seed on the ground beneath feeders should be cleaned up and discarded. Spreading feeders out and relocating feeders periodically can also limit the buildup of waste. Practice good hygiene when cleaning feeders and birdbaths by wearing gloves to handle seed waste and washing hands after performing maintenance. If you observe multiple sick or dead birds at your feeder, please report them to your local DEC office. A list of DEC's regional offices can be found on DEC's website (www.dec.ny.gov).

The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology's Project FeederWatch has a great deal of helpful information about feeding backyard birds at: http://feederwatch.org/learn/feeding-birds/.

BIRD WALKS

Joe Landesberg

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Joe at 467-9498. Directions and lists of what we've seen may be found at ssaudubon.org.

Nov. 23	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 30	Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
Dec. 7	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Dec. 14	Alley Pond Park (76th Ave. parking lot)
Dec. 21	Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north side of Merrick Rd.)
Dec. 28	Pelham Bay Park*
Jan. 4	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Jan. 11	Mill Pond Park
Jan. 18	Hempstead Lake State Park
Jan. 25	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner
Feb. 1	Massapequa Lake**
Feb. 8	Pelham Bay Park*
Feb. 15	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner

*For Pelham Bay Park (where we hope to see owls): Wear hiking shoes — it's a hilly forest walk to the bay. Take Throgs Neck Bridge to I-695 north to I-95 north. Take I-95 to exit #9, Hutchinson River Parkway north. Take first exit #5, Orchard Beach Rd., go past traffic circle, and continue on Orchard Beach Rd. to end. Turn left on Park Dr. to enter park. Go past another traffic circle and enter parking lot through toll gates (free); meet at far left corner of parking lot (northeast corner). See www.mappery.com/Pelham-Bay-Park-NYC-Map for reference.

**For Massapequa Lake (the southern end of Massapequa Preserve), use street parking on westbound side of Merrick Road, west of Lake Shore Blvd.

BACKYARD SURVEY DATA NEEDED!

Joe Grupp

For over a decade, 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.

JOIN SSAS AT MORTON NWR

On **Saturday, January 10**, SSAS's Joanne Del Prete will provide unsalted sunflower seeds (for those who don't have their own supply for backyard bird feeding) and lead us at 10:30 A.M. from the parking lot of the Elizabeth A. Morton National Wildlife Refuge.

As we walk slowly along the 1.2-mile nature trail, we will hold a few sunflower seeds out in our palms and pause for Black-capped Chickadees (pictured) and other species to land on our fingers and grab the seeds, as they've been doing since the days when the Mortons owned the property. Tufted Titmice, Blue Jays, Northern Cardinals, nuthatches, and woodpeckers are among the birds that will approach people at Morton; when we last visited in 2012, even a Wild Turkey followed us.

Bring binoculars for observing the wildlife and for the beautiful views where the 1.2-mile trail ends at the beach (in winter, Long-tailed Duck, Common Goldeneye, and White-winged Scoter are common). Established in 1954 through a donation by the Morton family, the 187-acre Refuge boasts exceptionally diverse habitats, including upland forest, fields, ponds, salt marsh, beach, and lagoon. Much of the refuge is on a peninsula surrounded by Noyack and Little Peconic Bays.

Directions: The Refuge's address is 2595 Noyac(k) Rd., Sag Harbor, NY 11963; phone number 631-286-0485 (for the headquarters at Wertheim NWR). There is a small entrance fee ($4 per car). Take Sunrise Highway (Route 27) to Southampton and turn left onto North Sea Road (County Road 38) toward North Sea for 2.6 miles. Turn right onto Noyac(k) Road and continue for 5 miles. The Refuge's entrance is on the left.

After our visit, everyone's invited to an optional lunch in downtown Sag Harbor. This event will be canceled in the event of rain, snow, or temperatures below 25°F. Call Joanne at 433-0739 for additional info; you can reach her by cell phone on January 10 only (476-3761).

VOLUNTEERS FOR WILDLIFE (516) 674-0982

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

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

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