

VOLUME 45, NUMBER 7 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

APRIL 2015

NEXT MEETING

John Gaglione

DATE: Tuesday, April 14, 2015

TIME: 7:30 p.m.

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

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

SPEAKER: Don Riepe

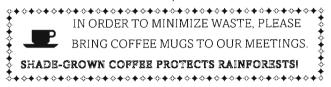
TOPIC: Iceland: Puffins, Glaciers, Waterfalls

Iceland is an amazing place with numerous bird cliffs, volcanic formations, majestic waterfalls, and open space. It's a country of only 325,000 people and lots of seabird colonies. Almost everyone speaks English. There's very little traffic, virtually no crime, good highways, great accommodations, and everyone accepts U.S. dollars and credit cards. Our guest speaker has led seven field trips to Iceland and will show photographs of much of the flora and fauna, volcanic landscapes, glaciers, and overall incredible scenery. Join us!

Don Riepe has an M.S. in Natural Resource Management from the University of New Hampshire. He is currently the Director of the Northeast Chapter for the American Littoral Society, and serves on the Advisory Committee of New York City Audubon and the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance Board. He is co-chair of the Jamaica Bay Task Force and a long-standing member of the Wildlife Hazard Task Force at JFK Airport. His past work included a 25-year career as a resource management specialist and manager of the Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge for the National Park Service. In 2003 he was named the "Jamaica Bay Guardian" by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). An avid photographer, his photographs have been published in many magazines, including National Wildlife, National Geographic, Smithsonian, and New York State Conservationist (published by DEC), and in The New York Times.

Pre-Meeting Book Discussion. Arrive a half-hour early to participate in a discussion led by R. U. Abyrdar II (aka Paul Stessel). This month's book is *Identify Yourself: The 50 Most Common Birding ID Challenges* by Bill Thompson III,

which was reviewed in our February newsletter (Paul took a well-earned break in March).



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Belty Borowsky

Welcome spring! This has been an especially harsh winter in the northeast, and I have never looked forward to spring more. We birders are always eager for spring anyway, of course, because it brings so many spring migrants to our area; but most appreciated, it brings our warblers in their full, exquisite courtship colors and songs. Even if you are new to birding, this poem, written by Maxwell Corydon Wheat, Jr., our Poet-in-Residence, will express what this means for us.

Fiesta

Comes with warblers,
waves of warblers
moving up the continents:
Yellows, Bay-breasteds
Black-throated Blues, Greens.
Myrtles, Magnolias
flourishing wing-tail skirts of white and yellow,

Redstarts flashing flamenco fans of orange and red, Chestnut-sideds displaying headdresses of the sun Then, Blackburnians flown from flames of Aztec fires, Prothonotary emblazoned with Inca gold

We are proud to have Max Wheat as the first Poet-in-Residence of the South Shore Audubon Society. His poems have long expressed our shared deep appreciation of the environment, and the animals and plants that live in it — as well as our struggles to preserve it.

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Max Wheat was born in Geneva, New York, and attended Hobart College there. A post-World War II student, he graduated in 1951 with a major in English and a minor in Education. Max earned an M.A. in English from NYU and an M.S. in Education from SUNY New Paltz.

Max has been an effective leader in two public arenas: writing poems, and encouraging poetry writing and appreciation in others; and supporting environmental conservation on Long Island.

Max has published several poetry books and chapbooks, such as *Art Gallery, Following Their Star: Poems of Christmas and Nature, God-Hawk*, and perhaps his most famous one, *Iraq and Other Killing Fields: Poetry for Peace*, for which the Nassau County Legislature declined to name him Poet Laureate. This decision was effectively reversed by poets on Long Island, however, and he was named the first Poet Laureate of Nassau County for 2007–2009. The poets continue to name the Poet Laureate every two years through the organization they formed under Paula Camacho of Farmingdale, the Nassau County Poet Laureate Society. It is now functioning as the search committee for naming the fifth Poet Laureate, who will assume office in June.

Max is the recipient of many other prestigious honors and titles as well. Among others, he is listed with Poets and Writers, in 1980 he received the first Herman Melville Annual Award from the New York State Marine Education Association, he received the Poetry Prize of Appalachia in 1990, in 1996 the Nassau Association for Continuing Community Education presented him with the Outstanding Teacher of the Year award, in 1998 he received a Certificate of Achievement from the Performance Poets Association, and he was given the Art and Literary Award of the New York State Outdoor Education Association in 2013. He was also honored by the New York State English Council as a Teacher of Excellence. He served as Program Chairperson for the Walt Whitman Birthplace Association and in 2005 was honored with its Long Island Poet of the Year Award.

Max is well-known for his support of the Paumanok Poets; his tireless encouragement of young writers; his writing workshops in the Port Washington and Syosset Public Libraries for Taproot Workshops, Inc. (based at Stony Brook University), which are aimed at participants 55 and older; and for a Continuing Community Education poem-writing course for Farmingdale Public Schools.

In addition to his participation in SSAS, Max is very active in other conservation organizations. He is founder and former editor of *New York Birders*, the newsletter of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs (which became the New York State Ornithological Association after Max's tenure). And putting his two areas of interest together, he conducts nature poetry writing workshops for the Friends of Hempstead Plains at Nassau Community College and the Theodore Roosevelt Nature Center at Jones Beach State Park.

In short, then, we are very pleased to have a poet of Max's stature formally linked to SSAS, and we look forward to many years of promoting, protecting, and, especially, to enjoying the environment together.

Note: "Fiesta" is the only poem in *The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State*, edited by Kevin J. McGowan and Kimberley Corwin, and published December 2008. Available from Cornell University Press.

OUR FIFTEENTH ANNUAL CENTRAL PARK WALK

On **Saturday, May 2**, SSAS is planning to be in Central Park for our annual (weather permitting) early May bird walk. As usual, Chris Cooper (who was featured in HBO's

2012 documentary, "Birders: The Central Park Effect," and traces his birding roots to SSAS) has volunteered to lead us through the twisting, hilly maze of the Ramble and adjoining areas of the park. In previous years, we've recorded 45 to

70-plus species in under three hours (excluding a dismal 31 in 2013). Last year we had 55 species, 15 of which were warblers (including Black-and-White Warbler, pictured).

The cost of the walk is \$5, which is a tax-deductible donation to SSAS (refundable if we rain out or you cancel in advance). Please send your check payable to South Shore Audubon Society, along with your phone number and e-mail address, to Joanne Del Prete, 20 Ceil Pl., Bethpage, NY 11714-4503 (phone 433-0739, jdelprete47@optonline.net).

A group of us will be aboard the local Babylon line train that is due in Penn Station at 8:12; you can look for Joanne on the platform in Massapequa at 7:12 (as of now, only the western half of the station is open, due to ongoing major renovations). We aim to depart from Penn's LIRR waiting room at 8:30 to meet Chris at Belvedere Castle at around 9:15. Please buy a MetroCard for the subway. You can bring lunch, buy lunch in the park or elsewhere, or head back home after the walk if you prefer. Joanne's cell (476-3761) will be on that day only. Join us!

Ntaba African Safaris



Lorraine Bondi

New York Agent/East Coast Agency Director

Join me 10/30/2015 to 11/9/2015 for our Out of Africa Safari.

Optional add-on to Botswana and Victoria Falls 11/9/2015 to 11/13/2015. Lots of birding and the Big 5.

lorraine@ntabatours.com; (917) 653-8430 www.ntabaafrica.com

VOLUNTEERS FOR WILDLIFE (516) 674-0982

SSAS BIRDATHON

Here is your opportunity to help birds and their environment. You can do this easily by joining a Birdathon team or starting one of your own. You may also do an individual Birdathon or sign on to be a donor for one of the participating teams. All monies collected go to the work done for birds and their environment. All team members need is comfortable clothing (layers are good, as temperatures and conditions change as the day goes along), shoes, sunscreen (hopefully), and a variety of food and beverages (no excuses needed for the amount of junk food you pack for energy...).

The Birdathon has been one of the major fund-raisers for South Shore Audubon Society. Pledges can be made for a flat rate or per species (for example, 5¢ per species, with 100 species seen, equals a donation of \$5). If ten American Robins are seen, that counts as one species. Each Birdathon participant collects his/her own list of donors through friends, family, neighbors, and/or coworkers. Once the Birdathon is complete, the total number of species seen by the individual or his/her team is used to calculate the donations to be collected.

This year's Birdathon (our 28th) will take place from 5 P.M. on **Friday, May 8** to 5 P.M. on **Saturday, May 9**. Birding locations are chosen by each team; you can use one location or whatever number of locations you pick. Light or intermittent rain does not cancel the Birdathon. If the Birdathon cannot be held, the rain dates will be May 15 and 16.

Locations and estimated times for SSAS's main team, which in peak-migration years will identify about 130 species in Nassau and Queens in six locations, will be in next month's *Skimmer*. If you have any questions, contact our Birdathon chairperson, Jim Remsen, at 631-957-0949.



Joe Landesberg

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Call Joe at 467-9498 in case of questionable conditions or for other info. Directions and lists of what we've seen are at ssaudubon.org.

Mar. 29	Alley Pond Park (76th Ave. parking lot)	
Apr. 5	Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern	
	State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)	
Apr. 12	Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north	
	side of Merrick Rd.)	
Apr. 19	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner	
Apr. 26	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner	
May 3	Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve	
May 10	Hempstead Lake State Park (see above)	
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CIRE US! http://facebook.com/SSAudubon

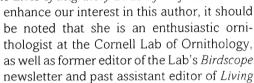
OUR E-LIST http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list

BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

R. U. Abyrdar II

This month the book I'm reviewing is about songbird migration. Since I've already reviewed several books about raptors on migration, I thought it was time to look at our most numerous of feathered friends, the songbirds. So here I go:

Our book for this month is *Songbird Journeys: Four Seasons in the Lives of Migratory Birds* by Miyoko Chu. To



Bird magazine, also by the Lab.

This was her first book. As you read, you'll find it to be the most enjoyable (I think) blend of birding lore and ornithological knowledge that you have ever read. To begin, Ms. Chu conveys the wonder of these bird migrations, which she follows through all four seasons, as well as chronicling the efforts of scientists to track these birds using both new technology and their own unique ingenuity. She suggests that only by following individual birds and understanding where these birds go can we learn how to preserve their much-threatened habitats. In a nutshell, it's all about conservation of habitat and more open spaces.

She begins with "Spring," as birds leave the shores of the Yucatan Peninsula for a nonstop flight across the Gulf of Mexico. "Summer" finds birds busy mating, nesting, and raising young on the abundant food resources that are their ultimate reason for these migrations. In "Autumn" the reverse of their spring trek occurs, although it is rather more leisurely and protracted. Lastly, in "Winter" the birds have reinserted themselves into their off-season habitat. Here they interact with an entirely different group of species from that of their summer neighbors. The author allows us to view her examination of the science of studying migration and enhances the book with stories from the field researchers. If that isn't enough, she adds to her seasonal accounts by supplying us with a list of "hot spots" for observing the birds in that phase of the seasonal cycle. In looking at these songbirds in migration, she touches on some of the hazards that these birds encounter on their perilous journeys.

If there was one thing I missed in reading this book, it was color photographs! A minor thing, perhaps. Read it... and enjoy!!

SSAS Post Office Statement — South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through May by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

THOUGHTS, NEWS, AND OPINION FROM YOUR CONSERVATION CHAIR New York State's Ocean Action Plan

Jim Brown

The State of New York is in the process of developing an Ocean Action Plan (OAP), coordinated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and the New York State Department of State. The plan is described by the DEC as an "effort focused on improving the health of our ocean ecosystems and their capacity to provide sustainable benefits to New Yorkers." The plan will be a ten-year action plan and "together, scientists, resource managers, and a wide range of stakeholders will take stock of New York's ocean-related activities and programs." The DEC further states that the "goal of the OAP is to achieve better-managed and healthier ocean ecosystems that will benefit people, communities, and the natural world."

Public meetings are being held in several New York City and Long Island locations to present and discuss the draft of the Ocean Action Plan. The South Shore Audubon Society, realizing the environmental importance of maintaining a healthy marine environment, has studied the plan and registered comments on key parts of the document with the DEC. Of particular concern to us are the issues of the planned Bay Park outfall pipe, offshore wind farm facilities, and deepwater LNG ports. Our comments were as follows:

"Regarding proposed Action #7, the evaluation of impacts from two sewage treatment outfalls located in ocean waters, we support the plan's goal of systematically and fully studying the environmental impact of the proposed Bay Park outfall pipe on the ocean as well as on the ecology of Hempstead Bay. It is crucial to repair and upgrade the Bay Park plant. However, an ocean outfall pipe would transfer treated sewage directly to the ocean, which is — like the bay — vulnerable to excessive nitrogen loading. Marine life, as well as commercial and recreational use of our coastal waters, could be adversely affected. With an ocean outfall pipe, millions of gallons of treated fresh water would bypass the bay. There is some evidence that the ecology of bays can be adversely impacted by the rerouting of freshwater outfall from the bays to the ocean. Viable, green, forward-looking alternatives, such as land disposal of treated wastewater, might be a solution to an expensive ocean outfall pipe at Bay Park.

"We support proposed Action #31, the integration of avian conservation into research, management, and offshore planning. As the draft Ocean Action Plan acknowledges, it is crucial to study bird populations before siting and building offshore wind facilities. Global warming and the chaotic climate changes it has produced have reached critical levels, and numerous bird species are being adversely affected, some being brought to the brink

of extinction. Wind power, an important form of renewable energy, *properly sited*, will hopefully play an important role in our efforts to conserve bird species throughout the Atlantic Flyway and worldwide.

"In discussing 'Offshore Energy Development' (Section 2.4.3), LNG is mentioned. The South Shore Audubon Society strongly opposes the siting of liquefied natural gas facilities in our coastal waters. LNG should have absolutely no future in our State's energy planning, as this highly polluting fossil fuel source greatly contributes — through its whole cycle of production, transportation, and burning — to global warming. Deepwater LNG ports

will only enable more 'fracking' throughout the United States, a harmful method of natural gas extraction that our Governor has recently banned in our State. LNG harms our environment and our wildlife. We should move away from fossil fuels

and toward the use of renewable sources of energy, such as solar power and wind power, as soon as possible."

The New York Ocean Action Plan can be accessed at

The New York Ocean Action Plan can be accessed at www.dec.ny.gov/lands/84428.html. The comment deadline is/was March 30.

BROOKSIDE PRESERVE SPRING CLEANUP

On **Sunday, April 19**, starting at 1 P.M., SSAS will have its spring cleanup at Brookside Preserve, rain or shine. Brookside is a 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland area owned by Nassau County that was rescued from oblivion and is managed by SSAS. PDF files of the trail guide and freshwater wetland guide for children that we published can be downloaded from ssaudubon.org.

The Preserve is located on the Freeport–Baldwin border, along Milburn Creek; park at the main entrance on Brookside Avenue just north of Sunrise Highway (turn that's just east of Freeport High School). Please bring gloves, rakes or clippers if possible, and friends of all ages.

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

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NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER A Rainy Day Backyard Observation

Joe Grupp

It was on one of those rainy days we had in the late fall or early winter, not long before the snows of late January-February started to fall, that my attention was attracted from the comfort of my dining area to the pretty nasty conditions in our backyard about mid afternoon. There was a pretty steady rain most of the day that started as a drizzle and turned into a soaker. A continual flow of birds were taking advantage of not only the seeds in our feeder, but those scattered to the ground by the feeding birds or dropped by them under a few of the shrubs and hedges in our yard. Many of the birds also found shelter in those same shrubs and hedges when the rain came down pretty hard. The birds were nothing out of the ordinary, just the usual backyard feeder birds. There were birds like the Northern Cardinal, House Finch, Dark-eved Junco, Whitethroated Sparrow, Downy Woodpecker, Black-capped Chickadee, and others.

Outnumbering them and at times dominating them all was the imported House Sparrow. The House Sparrow was successfully introduced to North America around the mid-1800s and now resides just about anywhere we humans do, to the detriment of a number of native species. At times, fifty or more were scattered across the ground and on the feeder, outdoing most other species in the quest for food. As the day progressed and I occasionally looked out the window, I saw that the House Sparrows began to look as if they were soaking wet; their feathers were turning a deep dark brown. They appeared much wetter than any of the other species in the yard.

I left the window I was looking out of after a while, only to be called back to it by the drumming of an exceptionally heavy downpour on the house roof. The rain was

coming down in very large windblown drops at an extraordinary rate and the yard was just about empty of birds. The very few that remained seemed to be struggling to find shelter in the shrubs while two House Sparrows

were trying hard to stay out of the rain under the slight roof overhang of my hopper-type feeder. I was riveted to the window, both by the ferocity of the windblown rain and by the birds looking for shelter. My wife was doing the same from a back-door window when she called me over to the door.

Our back door opens onto a porch whose door to the yard is a few steps away. Above the frame of the porch door is a narrow ledge that supports three small glass panes between the roof and the frame. Through the glass panes could be seen six House Sparrows trying to stay out of the rain using the shelter provided by a slight overhang of the porch roof. We were amazed to find them there, as in all the years we have lived in our house never did we

see a bird perched there or even make an attempt to do so.

Our amazement didn't stop there, because as we were watching a strong wind blew the rain towards the porch door and the birds backed away from it until they were pressed up against the glass, spreading their feathers upon it. The wind gusted a few more times, blowing heavy rain droplets towards the birds, and each time the birds backed up as far as they could, pressing up against the glass, again forcing their feathers to spread out on it, in an obvious attempt to stay out of the rain.

While watching the House Sparrows, a single bird of a second species caught my attention because it was the only active bird in the yard during the downpour. I noticed it as it flew to the feeder, picked up a seed, and went to a tree branch to consume it. I quickly realized that it was a Black-capped Chickadee. A chickadee is a very small bird and the drops of rain were quite large and multiple. I watched it make a number of trips back and forth to the feeder, wanting to see what would happen if a windblown large drop of rain hit it. Never once did a drop seem to do so and the bird's feathers looked the same as they would on a nice sunny day.

When the rain let up a bit, the birds became as active again as they were before the downpour. The sparrows looked as wet as they did before and the chickadee as dry. I left the window surprised and intrigued by what I had witnessed.



EARTH DAY SHORELINE CLEANUP (Sun., April 26, 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.). Meet at the Jamaica Bay Refuge center and help clean the refuge for migrating shorebirds and horseshoe crabs. Bring gloves and wear boots.

SPRING MIGRATION WORKSHOP – JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE (Sat., May 2, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M.). Learn about bird migration and hike trails with Don Riepe. See warblers, tanagers, terns, herons, osprey, many other species. Photo presentation & walk. To reserve, contact Don. Free.

JAMAICA BAY ECOLOGY CRUISE (Sat., May 30, 3 P.M. to 6 P.M.). Learn about the history, management, ecology, and wildlife of the bay aboard the 100' boat "Golden Sunshine" leaving from Pier 2, Sheepshead Bay. See nesting egrets, herons, ibis and many other species. Cost: \$55 includes narrated tour of backwater marshes, wine & cheese, fruit, snacks. To reserve, contact Don.

MONTAUK SPRING WEEKEND (June 5-7). Hike the "Walking Dunes," Lighthouse Beach, Montauk Bluffs, and Shadmoor State Park. Cost: \$395/person includes 2 nights lodging (double occ.) at luxurious Manor House, 5 meals, 5 guided hikes, 2 evening programs, and star watch.

For information and free field trip brochure, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 474-0896, donriepe@gmail.com, 28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693; www.littoralsociety.org.

55AS'S 44TH ANNUAL DINNER

Join us for another evening of good food, good raffles, and good company! Our gathering will again be at Pompei Restaurant in West Hempstead on **Tuesday**, **June 9**, with the cocktail hour beginning at 6:30 P.M. The registration form will be inserted in next month's *Skimmer*.

BACKYARD SURVEY DATA NEEDED!

Јое Сгирр

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 email Birdstudyjoeg02@aol.com.

REVISED MUTE SWAN MANAGEMENT PLAN PROPOSED

Editor's note: The following is a March 9 press release from the NYS DEC.

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) today released a revised Mute Swan management plan with significant changes after considering the diverse public comments received on a first draft released in January 2014. DEC is accepting public comments on the revised plan through **April 24**.

The Mute Swan is a nonnative, invasive species brought to North America to beautify estates in the late 1800s, but birds that escaped or were released established feral populations that are competing with native wildlife for aquatic food plants and nesting areas. The revised draft Management Plan for Mute Swans in New York State is available on the DEC website (www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7076.html).

"Wildlife management can present challenges in trying to balance conflicting interests, such as when a beautiful bird has undesirable impacts," DEC Commissioner Joe Martens said. "This revised plan remains committed to minimizing the impacts of Mute Swans on wildlife dependent on wetlands for their habitats, while being sensitive to public concerns about how and where that is accomplished."

During the review process, DEC met with a variety of

statewide stakeholder groups, including the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, Ducks Unlimited, NYS Fish and Wildlife Management Board, Humane Society of the U.S., NYS Conservation Council, NYS Invasive Species Advisory Committee, and USDA Wildlife Services.

"These organizations displayed a tremendous amount of professionalism in voicing their concerns while demonstrating a willingness to listen and seek solutions that would be broadly accepted," Commissioner Martens added. "As a result of this thoughtful public input, the plan is greatly improved."

Notable changes to the plan include:

- ① A revised goal focused on minimizing swan impacts, rather than eliminating all free-flying swans;
- ② A regional approach that recognizes the distinct differences in history, status, impacts, and management opportunities for Mute Swans between downstate and upstate regions of New York;
- 3 A new strategy to permit municipalities to keep swans at local parks and other settings pursuant to local swan management plans, as long as certain conditions are met.
- 4 A commitment to full consideration of non-lethal techniques, including egg-oiling and placement of swans in possession of persons licensed by DEC, except where immediate removal of swans is necessary to protect public health or safety; and
- ⑤ A more succinct summary of the impacts Mute Swans can have, citing additional scientific studies.

The revised management plan describes nine strategies that DEC believes are necessary to achieve the plan goal. Key strategies include public education and outreach to inform people about the history and impacts of Mute Swans in New York; banning the importation, commercial trade, propagation, and release of Mute Swans; allowing municipalities to develop local Mute Swan management plans in cooperation with DEC; and continued efforts by DEC to reduce wild Mute Swan populations, especially in upstate New York where they did not occur before 1980.

Comments on the revised draft Mute Swan plan may be submitted in writing through April 24 to: NYSDEC Bureau of Wildlife, Swan Management Plan, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-4754 or by e-mail to Wildlife@dec.ny.gov (please type "Swan Plan" in the subject line). DEC's summary of and responses to public comments on the earlier draft plan are also available on the DEC website.

In addition to Mute Swans, DEC is concerned about many other invasive species in New York, including aquatic invasive plants, zebra mussel, emerald ash borer, Asian carp, and Eurasian boar, to name a few (see www.dec.ny.gov/animals/265.html). For more information about invasive species in New York, and DEC's efforts to prevent and control them, go to the New York Invasive Species Information website (http://nyis.info).

** WELCOME NEW MEMBERS **

Wendy Murbach

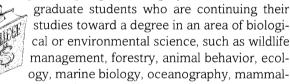
SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to local bird populations, wildlife, and habitat; and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

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SSAS COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Betsy Gulotta

Thanks to the much-appreciated support of longtime member Evelyn Bishop, South Shore Audubon Society is again offering the \$750 Jerry Bishop Environmental Scholarship this spring to college juniors, seniors, or



ogy, or ornithology. Our annual college scholarship program began in 1994 and was named in memory of Jerry two years later. For information, call Betsy Gulotta at 546-8841 or send e-mail to betsy.gulotta@ncc.edu. Applications are due by **April 30**.

PLASTIC BAG RECYCLING & ORGANIC LAWN CARE

Editor's note: The following questions and answers come from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation's collection of "Myth Busters," which is archived at www.dec.ny.gov/public/45772.html.

Q: Supermarkets accept only plastic grocery bags for recycling — right?

A: Actually, you can now bring a lot more.

Since January 1, 2009, larger retail and grocery stores in New York State must make collection bins for plastic bag recycling available to customers in a visible, easily accessible location. In addition to plastic shopping bags, most stores also accept:

Plastic retail bags with string ties and rigid plastic handles removed

- Plastic newspaper bags
- → Plastic dry-cleaning bags
- → Plastic produce bags
- Plastic bread bags
- Plastic cereal bags
- Plastic frozen food bags
- Plastic wrap from paper products (paper towels, etc.)
 - Plastic stretch/shrink wrap
- → Plastic zipper-type bags with plastic closing mechanism removed

All materials must be clean and dry, with all food residue removed.

These items cannot be recycled with plastic bags:

- Plastic bags with strings, rigid plastic handles, closing mechanisms, or food residue
 - Plastic soil or mulch bags
 - Plastic bubble wrap
 - Plastic food containers
 - Plastic bottles

So if you forget your reusable shopping bags on occasion, no need for a huge guilt trip. Next time just remember to bring them to the store, along with your plastic bags and wraps for recycling.

Q: A beautiful lawn requires synthetic fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides?

A: No. no and no.

The beauty of any lawn is more than "turf deep." Lawns maintained with repeated fertilizer and pesticide applications may look perfect but this perfection is achieved at the high cost of soil vitality, environmental quality, and human health, and will vanish without continual chemical fixes.

Studies have shown that the chemically dependent lawn is more prone to disease and less able to handle stresses from drought, heat, and insects. In addition, lawn chemicals and toxins build up in soils, leach into our water supplies, kill non-target species such as bees and birds, and can be absorbed by children and pets.

To get a lush, green lawn that is not dependent on chemicals, start by building healthy soil. Healthy soil is alive, containing fungi, insects, earthworms, and many living organisms too small to see such as bacteria, microbes, and protozoa. Synthetic fertilizers kill these invisible but essential organisms.

Get the soil's nitrogen and pH tested. Growing lawns need nitrogen, half of which can be supplied just by leaving grass clippings on the lawn. The rest can be added by top-dressing with compost or the addition of slow-release, organic forms of nitrogen. Slow-release fertilizer does not "burn" the grass, as it must be broken down by soil bacteria before it becomes available. Good sources are blood meal, cotton seed meal, and fish meal.

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

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Americans Committed to Conservation



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Freeport, NY

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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 these 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.

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