



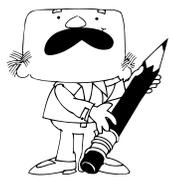
Jamaica Bay is at risk from the Williams Pipeline, which would not only carry fracked gas under NY Harbor to the Rockaways to increase our reliance on fossil fuels and fuel our climate crisis, but could also contaminate coastal communities, marine life, and priority shorebirds with mercury and copper. Williams was initially denied a water quality permit but allowed to reapply.

Finally, Jones Beach, where a bike path and Energy and Nature Education Center are under construction at West End 2, is being considered as a future site for transmission stations for offshore wind energy. Jones Beach is also being studied for beach fill, berms, bulkheads, and storm surge barriers in a possibly futile effort to mitigate flooding from the sea level rise and intensifying storms of our climate crisis.

The Hempstead Lake, Massapequa Preserve, and Jones Beach projects provide examples of a trend, if not a policy, at all levels of government to appropriate public land for industrial purposes. This is alienation of parkland and illegal, but government agencies find fewer obstacles to using public rather than private land. A further travesty in the case of the Navy Grumman plume is a ten-acre recharge basin, basically a sand and gravel pit, to be located in a wooded area of Bethpage State Park and not at the source of the contamination on the Navy Grumman property. Even if an industrial facility is for environmental remediation, it does not compensate for the loss of extremely limited natural areas on Long Island. However worthy the ends, they do not justify the means if our open space is sacrificed for expedience. The path of least political resistance now will lead to greater environmental problems later.

So what did SSAS do on its summer vacation? On Massapequa Creek, a committee comprised of Mike Sperling, Jim Brown, Marilyn Hametz, and myself compiled extensive public comments on the potential harm to the ecology of Massapequa Preserve in augmenting the flow of the Creek, the changes in both water quantity and quality that pose risks to birds and habitat, and the alienation of parkland by building a treatment facility. We formed a coalition with Sierra Club, Water for Long Island, Nassau Hiking and Outdoors Club, Open Space Coalition, and Save the Great South Bay for further public comments and future actions.

On the Williams Pipeline, SSAS joined the Long Island committee of the Stop the Williams Pipeline Coalition, which participated in generating 25,000 public comments opposing the pipeline. The committee also circulated an organizational sign-on letter to demand that Governor Cuomo ban the pipeline, which netted 48 signatories at the time of this report. In addition, SSAS and over a dozen other environmental groups cosponsored a rally in front of State Senator Todd Kaminsky's Rockville Centre office on August 14 to urge him to oppose the Williams Pipeline and,



indeed, any new fossil fuel infrastructure in New York State. Kaminsky is Chair of the Senate Environmental Conservation Committee and was a cosponsor of the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act, which Cuomo signed into law (see Guy's article). It would be the height of hypocrisy for NYS to approve both the CLCPA and the Williams Pipeline.

On Hempstead Lake State Park (HLSP), we are waiting for a delayed revision of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project, after which we will determine if legal action is necessary. So far, the federal agencies involved in issuing permits (Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Housing and Urban Development) and the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation have held the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR), which oversees the project, to rigorous standards, and the project is reported to be in disarray. Further, NYS Parks' Long Island Regional Director, George (Chip) Gorman, told us that a contact told him HLSP is on hold and will be a different project when the revised EA is issued. This suggests that GOSR will have to reduce the scale of the project due to the time limit on the Sandy recovery grant for it. Nevertheless, to prepare for a possible court challenge, we have retained an environmental attorney who has secured an impressive lineup of experts to go to bat for us. David Stern, Co-Chair of the Citizens Advisory Committee for the project, an expert in water resources engineering and the winner of this year's Elliott Kutner Conservation Award from SSAS, has volunteered to help us prepare the challenge and to provide testimony, defraying the costs of a lawsuit.

For those of you who followed the Great Horned Owls nesting at HLSP, SSAS objects strenuously to the project's proposal to remove the trees in the area where they nested. The owls are proof that the trees provide valuable habitat; moreover, removal of the trees may destabilize the Hempstead Lake dam. We are pleased to report that our young owls remain in the area and are doing well after a dramatic episode in which the owlets fell out of their nest, were treated for injuries by the Horvaths (this month's guest speakers), and returned to a nearby tree in a nest-like box. You can visit WINORR on Facebook to see photos and support the wonderful work that they do.



On Jones Beach, we are watching and waiting, as the proposed structures are in a study stage and other alternatives are being considered. Ideally transmission stations should be located on already industrial sites, and flood mitigation should use living shoreline measures and not hardened structures.

Here are a few more developments that threaten our open space:

Although not on public land, the Willow View Estates subdivision project in Woodmere threatens to place 285



## STORY WITH A HAPPY ENDING

Jim Brown

The news regarding climate change, and attempts to combat it, has been mixed lately. Severe impacts of rising temperatures have been recorded this summer from Greenland to Brazil to Europe. On the other hand, New York State passed a climate bill, though not strong enough, but at least it is something.

Obviously, the fight against climate chaos has no ending yet. It's an ongoing issue, the result — success or failure — remaining unknown. Many issues that South Shore Audubon deals with are like that — in process. These include protecting habitat in our Important Bird Areas like Hempstead Lake and Jones Beach, protecting Long Island shorebirds, safeguarding our aquifers, preserving open space from overdevelopment, and controlling invasive plant and animal species.

On a personal level, as one of the chapter's Conservation Co-Chairs, I routinely deal with issues in process, often with no end in sight — often contentious or combative issues at that. That is why in this month's *Skimmer* column



I'd like to highlight a conservation issue I faced this summer with an ending — fortunately a happy ending. Although I've sometimes given Audubon members and friends limited advice on how to deal with young birds that might need help, this summer I discovered an American Robin nestling, in apparent distress, on our own front lawn.

After assuring myself that it was in fact a nestling — not able to survive on its own outside the nest — and not a more independent fledgling, I put the bird back in the nest. Prior to discovering the bird on the lawn, I was not even aware that there was a nest in our front yard! Over the course of about two days, I put the young bird back in its nest — I used a stool to reach the nest in the tree — five or six times. I actually lost count. Each time I put the bird back, I was dive-bombed by the Robin parents. I began to wonder if I was doing the right thing, but it was indeed a helpless nestling and I just couldn't bring myself to leave it to die on the lawn.

At wits' end, I asked for help. SSAS' other Conservation Co-Chair, Brien Weiner, suggested I call the Horvaths, directors of WINORR. It was indeed the best advice. After contacting Cathy Horvath, Gail and I packed up the little bird and drove the nestling to Massapequa. I was happy to learn from Bobby, Cathy's husband, that the bird was indeed a Robin fledgling, could not survive on its own, but should be fine with time. He believed the bird may have been serially bullied out of the nest for some reason. I learned from Cathy just a few days ago that the little bird was successfully released.

Maybe not on a par with the planet-endangering issue of climate change, the crisis faced by the Robin nestling (and me!) was ultimately a welcome occurrence this

summer. Unlike so many things we deal with, this issue had an ending and a happy ending indeed!

The Horvaths do a great job. For their work in animal rescue and rehabilitation—preserving wildlife—they were awarded in 2012 the first SSAS Elliott Kutner Conservation Award. More information on their rescue and rehabilitation work can be found on their Facebook page. For wildlife rescue they can be reached at 293-0587.

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## PLUM ISLAND UPDATE

*Editor's note:* SSAS was a founding member of the Preserve Plum Island Coalition ([www.preserveplumisland.org](http://www.preserveplumisland.org)). The 840-acre island is about a mile from Orient Point and includes the Animal Disease Center. In 2008, Congress snuck in a provision that Plum Island be sold to partially fund the relocation of the center to Kansas. The following two stories are excerpted from the coalition's e-mailed summer newsletter:

Members from both shores of Long Island Sound, both sides of the aisle, and both chambers have been working hard to repeal the mandated sale of this ecologically significant island for years. There are currently multiple pieces of legislation in the Senate and House, including an amendment to the Homeland Security appropriations bill that would repeal the statutory requirement to sell Plum Island and encourage the Department of Homeland Security to limit any future use of the island to research, education, and conservation. Another piece of legislation would halt marketing of the island.

The New York State Assembly and Senate unanimously passed Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Protection Area legislation establishing a protection area in NYS-owned waters around Plum, Great Gull, and Little Gull Islands. This new legislation recognizes the zone as important for sea turtles, whales, porpoises, and seals (a harbor seal is

pictured), and it is designed to not negatively impact fishing.

The bill directs the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to bring together the expertise of a broad range of organizations and individuals, including marine researchers, museums and academics, state agencies, and local governments. This advisory committee will consider how the archipelago and the waters surrounding it are interconnected, and then develop recommendations for protection measures.

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## HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS

The recipients of our annual graduation ceremony scholarships, arranged by Joe Landesberg, were Brandon Davidson from South Side H.S. in Rockville Centre, Cindy Petrizzo from Baldwin H.S., and Fay Lloyd Thomas from Freeport H.S. We congratulate all three and wish them success.



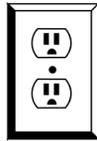
# CLIMATE LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY PROTECTION ACT SIGNED INTO LAW IN JULY

Guy Jacob

Like a dream come true, New York State has just passed clean energy legislation that sets ambitious targets for moving our state off of fossil fuels. It's one of the most comprehensive pieces of legislation in the world, and will serve as a model for every state in our union as well as countries around the globe.

Highlights of the law include the following:

- 70% of our state's electricity must come from renewable energy by 2030, and 100% of the state's electricity supply must be emissions free by 2040.
- 9000 MW of offshore wind must be up and running by 2035.
- 6000 MW of solar energy must be installed by 2025.
- Energy consumption will be reduced by 185 trillion BTUs via a 23% increase in energy efficiency.
- 3000 MW of energy storage capacity must be installed by 2030.
- There will be a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in absolute terms from 1990 levels by 2030 and an 85% reduction by 2050.



These ambitious goals were the result of more than three years of organizing by the over 180 grassroots organizations within the NY Renews coalition ([www.nyrenews.org](http://www.nyrenews.org)). Presenting testimony at public hearings, attending meetings with elected officials, sending e-mail, attending rallies, participating in organizational meetings, writing letters, publishing letters to the editor, and networking made the difference.

Some grassroots organizations were pushing for even shorter timelines than the ones advocated for by NY Renews. On the other hand, several large national environmental organizations with chapters in NY resisted NY Renews' call for specific time frames and targets, but in the end we moved these large groups, and, most importantly, we moved the NYS Legislature and Governor Cuomo to act. We must now work diligently to ensure that the law's promises are kept, as it will be no easy task ahead.

Compromise hurts when you understand what is at stake, but it was compromise that brought the Governor's pen to this legislation. Even though the goals of the CLCPA are more limited than we might have hoped for, any honest assessment will conclude that reaching the goals of the legislation will be one heavy lift. It will not be easy to move New York's economy off of fossil fuels. We must, therefore, urge and support Governor Cuomo every step of the way forward.

Passage of the CLCPA is a milestone that presents hope for New York's clean energy future. The legislation's main shortcoming, however, is that it failed to include a ban on

new fossil fuel infrastructure projects. Allowing such projects to move forward would be counterproductive and hypocritical. Like oil and water, fracked gas infrastructure and comprehensive climate legislation don't mix. Natural gas is a nonrenewable fossil fuel, like oil and coal.

The most egregious project is the proposed 23-mile long Williams Northeast Supply Enhancement (NESE) Pipeline, which would decimate New York Harbor and lock us into dependence on fossil fuels for decades to come. We must continue to advocate for the end of fracked gas infrastructure even as we urge our state to invest fully in a clean energy future.

For more information and to sign a petition, visit [www.stopthewilliamspipeline.org](http://www.stopthewilliamspipeline.org).



## THE AUDUBON MURAL PROJECT

The Audubon Mural Project is a collaboration between the National Audubon Society and Gitler & \_\_\_ Gallery (yes, the underline is in their name) to create murals of climate-threatened birds throughout John James Audubon's old Harlem-based neighborhood. The project is inspired by the legacy of the great American bird artist and pioneering ornithologist, and is energized by Audubon's groundbreaking Birds and Climate Change Report (<http://climate.audubon.org/sites/default/files/Audubon-Birds-Climate-Report-v1.2.pdf>, issued in 2014), which revealed that at least half of all North American birds are threatened by a warming climate. The project commissions artists to paint murals of each of the report's 314 species, of which 117 have been done so far.

A link to a printable March 2019 map showing 76 mural locations can be found at [www.audubon.org/amp](http://www.audubon.org/amp), where you can also find photos of 83 murals. The same page has a link for information about New York City Audubon's monthly 10 A.M. tours, led by a professional guide who you can also hire separately, that visit 30 mural installations on a Sunday morning, along with John James Audubon's final resting place. Once you're in Manhattan, you can also visit the New-York Historical Society's Birds of America gallery, which features the mural project along with John James Audubon's original watercolors.



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**THE BOOKCASE**  
**Mrs. Moreau's Warbler: How Birds Got Their Names**

*Frank Scoblete*

My 13-year-old grandson has a book review due in two weeks based on a book he read this summer – or, rather, was supposed to read. I asked him how the book was coming along. He told me that he didn't actually read it; he'd write the review based on the cover.

Based on the cover? "Yeah, Grandpa Scobe, I've been getting A's writing about the covers for all my book reviews." Such are kids; such is American public education; such is genius – my grandson!

Why read the book? Just pen some stuff based on what you read on the cover — I never thought of such a thing. Here I am — for decades — writing book reviews on books I've read thoroughly. I'm writing between 500 and 1,000 words about entire books, trying to figure out what to say to capture in such short word length what often these books are about. How silly of me.



I am now letting a little child lead me in my review of *Mrs. Moreau's Warbler: How Birds Got Their Names* by Stephen Moss.

The cover asks us, "What's in a name?" Basically everything. Birds have some of the most lyrical, most ridiculous, most awe-inspiring names. Take the "wheat-ear" which has nothing to do with ears of wheat in any of wheat's incarnations. The name means — if you are easily offended then skip to the next paragraph — white-arse (white-ass). Yep! Such a distinctive name in our age of racial consciousness.

How's this? The Dartford warbler, once named, was never seen in Dartford again. So what's in that name? Evidently not loyalty.

On bird walks with the South Shore Audubon Society I've asked some of our astute bird observers how did this and such a bird get its name? Sometimes they know; sometimes they don't. What's in a name, many people will ask; well, I think a lot. Sometimes everything. You are, perhaps, what we call you.

Birds have been named after positive things (Sunbird) or negative things (go-away-birds). Some have very long names (Rwenzori Double-collared Sunbird); some have very short names (Ou).

States in the United States have birds named after them (Mississippi Kite and Hawaii Akepa), while some are named after man-made objects (Ovenbird and riflebirds).

Natural elements, metals, gems, and precious stones have their share of birds named after them, as do mythological figures such as Lucifer. Indeed, birds have even been named after other animals and insects (frogmouths and antbirds). Royalty has its share of bird names too (Emperor Penguin). For all I know, you have a bird named after you.

Final disclosure: I am not my grandson. I didn't review just the cover; I read the whole book. It is fascinating and takes us on a journey into the past and into the world where you saw a bird and could assign it a name. Fun reading!

Visit Frank's web site at [www.frankscoblete.com](http://www.frankscoblete.com). His books are available from [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com), [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com), as e-books, and in bookstores.



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**FREE GUIDED NATIVE GARDEN WALKS**

On Wednesdays through September 4, from 10 A.M. to 11 A.M., the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary & Audubon Center (134 Cove Road, Oyster Bay, NY 11771) is offering free guided walk-through tours of their new native demonstration gardens. You can learn about the history of the sanctuary, the native plant species used in the gardens, the birds and wildlife that they attract, Audubon's Plants for Birds program ([www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds](http://www.audubon.org/plantsforbirds)), and how to source and use native plants in your own gardens. For more information, call 922-3200 or send e-mail to [trsac@audubon.org](mailto:trsac@audubon.org).



**33RD ANNUAL NEW YORK STATE BEACH CLEANUP**

The Northeast Chapter of the American Littoral Society is the sponsor of the annual NYS Beach Cleanup, whose purposes are to clean the shores and document what litters them, to compile data to devise strategies to combat pollution, to increase public participation in solving the problem of pollution, and to increase public awareness and appreciation of the coastal environment.

See [www.nysbeachcleanup.org](http://www.nysbeachcleanup.org) for a list of cleanups scheduled for various dates (mostly Saturday, September 21) at Lido Beach, Long Beach, Jones Beach, Hempstead Lake State Park, and throughout New York.



**SECOND THURSDAY IN OCTOBER**

Please note: Due to Yom Kippur, our October monthly meeting is scheduled for two days later than usual, on **Thursday, October 10**.



**VOLUNTEERS FOR WILDLIFE (516) 674-0982**



