SOUTH HORE KINNER

VOLUME 50, NUMBER 7— SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

APRIL-AUGUST 2020

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, April 14, 2020 TIME: 7:30 P.M. PLACE: ONLINE SPEAKER: Ken Elkins TOPIC: Nature's Symphony

Join Zoom Meeting:

Meeting URL: https://audubon.zoom.us/j/139626916

Phone: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 876 9923

Meeting ID: 139 626 916

MEETING AFTER NEXT MEETING

DATE:	Tuesday, May 12, 2020
TIME:	7:30 р.м.
PLACE:	ONLINE
SPEAKER:	Ken Elkins
TOPIC:	Bird Nests

Join Zoom Meeting:

Meeting URL: https://audubon.zoom.us/j/765794097? pwd=dTh6TC9rVWR6VXNGSXdFQnUwQkFqUT09

Phone: +1 312 626 6799 or +1 646 876 9923

Meeting ID: 765 794 097

Password: 974914

You can click on links to the Zoom meetings from the SSAS website under Next Monthly Meeting or from the SSAS Facebook page.

SSAS is delighted to offer our members online programs, graciously hosted by expert Ken Elkins, so that we can remain connected to nature and to each other as we practice social distancing to limit the spread of COVID-19. Each program is appropriately timed with the music of spring migration and the magic of nesting and raising young. Ken will answer your questions after each presentation.

NATURE'S SYMPHONY: There's a lot to look forward to in spring, including the welcomed hullabaloo of birdsong. Listening to the soundscape around us, we'll take note of familiar neighborhood voices, distinctive migrant songs, and the wonders of nature's lesser-known musicians: frogs, toads, mammals, and insects.

BIRD NESTS: We see birds as they're feeding and hear them singing, but their lives in and around the nest are



hidden high in the trees or dense in the brush. The feat of building a nest is impressive, and we'll explore some of the most unique and creative nest builders. Then we'll also get a glimpse into their secret lives of feeding and

raising their young.

Ken Elkins is currently Community Conservation Manager for Audubon CT. His interest in birds started when he was ten years old, while watching the birds at his grandmother's feeders in Vermont, and he has been obsessed ever since. After earning a degree in Environmental Biology and Interpretation from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, he held the position of Director of Education for the Connecticut Audubon Society before moving on to National Audubon. Ken co-developed the nationally recognized Bird Tales program and training materials with dementia care specialist Randy Griffin, and he trained over 100 dementia care staff and volunteers to implement it. Ken is also past President of the Connecticut Ornithological Association and is a Regional Coordinator for the 2018-2020 Connecticut Bird Altas project. Join us!

BIRDING DURING THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

The following is excerpted from the National Audubon Society's article Birding is the Perfect Activity While Practicing Social Distancing at https://www.audubon.org/ news/birding-perfect-activity-while-practicing-social-distancing First, spending time in nature can serve as a form of social distancing, the strategy epidemiologists are recommending to limit spread of the virus. Of course, social distancing doesn't work without the distance part, so this only counts for open spaces that you can reach while avoiding close contact with others.

For these reasons, don't go with a group of friends. Continue to avoid public transit if you can. And remember that those aged 60 and up or with chronic ailments may be at greater risk of serious illness. If that sounds like you (or people around you), or if you live in an area with an outbreak, please be extra cautious and keep an eye on what your local health department advises.

We aren't suggesting an involved all-day outing. Maybe it's just walking to an uncrowded neighborhood park, or driving yourself to some nearby woods. If those options aren't available to you, even just gazing out your window and closely observing any birds you see can help.

Birding, like other outdoor pursuits, can also be great for mental health. There's a growing body of scientific evidence indicating that contact with nature can ease anxiety and provide an all-around mood boost. With rising fears and palpable tension in the air, we can all benefit from this calming influence.

If you're a seasoned birder, now's the time to take comfort in an activity you love. You might find that birding alone offer a distinct kind of pleasure. And if you're not yet into birds, this is actually a pretty great time to begin -- spring migration is about to heat up, and you'll be so glad you started paying attention. Or, if you're adjusting to a new work-from-home setup, take an afternoon break to sneak in a few minutes of on-the-clock, out-the-window birding. We won't tell.

Truth is, nobody knows what's next or how this is all going to shake out. The best we can do is follow the guidance of public health professionals, be good to ourselves, and look out for each other.

So: wash your hands. Call your loved ones. And, if it's an option, look to the birds.

SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY CANCELLATIONS

To limit the spread of COVID-19, SSAS has cancelled all bird walks, in-person meetings, and events until further notice. Please check our Facebook page, our website, and the Skimmer for status updates.

If you go birding, follow National Audubon Society guidlines: keep a distance of six feet from other people, bring hand sanitizer, and do not share binoculars or spotting scopes. If you lend optics, disinfect them them afterwards. Keep in mind that some parks, such as the Norman J. Levy Preserve in Merrick and the Marine Nature Study Area in Oceanside, are closed indefinitely. Check websites or call ahead for closures. State Parks are open and free of charge but facilities are closed. Jones Beach West End is being used as a drive-thru COVID-19 testing center (by appointment), and is not open to the public. If a park is crowded, choose another park or another time to visit.

RESOURCES FOR THE SOCIALLY DISTANCED BIRDER

For those of you who are social distancing at home, we've compiled a list of resources for the distraction and comfort of keeping connected with nature. As the oftquoted Emily Dickinson wrote, "Hope is the thing with feathers."

The following list of websites was compiled with the help of Paul Stessel. The web cams can be addictive -- indeed, as Paul says, "like watching a soap opera!" For those working from home, be warned that they may provide a little too much distraction.

Audubon provides a "birdy care-package" of baby bird pictures, funny bird videos, "better know some birds" information, soundscapes, bird ID tips, project ideas, birdinspired art and much more: https://www.audubon.org/ joy-of-birds

The Cornell Lab's All About Birds offers live cams, birding instruction, virtual birding, online courses, and things to do for teachers and parents: https://www.allaboutbirds. org/news/how-to-make-these-next-few-weeks-a-littleeasier-courtesy-of-birds

Explore.org lets us explore the world with live cams that cover everything from bird nests to the Northern Lights. They also have compiled teacher lesson plans.

Birdwatcher's Digest lists Ten "Birdiful" Ways to Cope with Social Distancing that are productive and educational, and enable us to share birding with friends and family. (Editor's note: I recommend no. 7: finding a time, a route, and a patch for a daily bird walk and observation: it's amazing what you'll find! See https://otwtb/birdwatchersdigest.com/backyard-birding-time/ten-birdiful-ways-tocope-with-social-distancing

Parents and teachers looking to engage children can visit the websites of the Alley Pond Environmental Center and National Wildlife Federation for resources. There are many other organizations also offering free resources for community science while we keep social distance.

An excellent suggestion comes from SSAS member Franklin Rothenberg: donate seeds from your collection to stay-at-home botany students, i.e., neighbor to neighbor. You may make a child into a lifelong environemental steward!

SCOBE SQUAWKS: BIRDS DEFEAT VIRUS Frank Scoblete

So you've been wandering through your house or apartment, looking to elevate your life from this coronavirus pandemic that has changed everything for every one of

us. If you have kids, you are at the stage where you are considering building a catapult and shooting them into "the wild blue yonder."



Stop! I think I can help you, and maybe even your pre-jettisoned kids, by offering

a reading list for you to check out. Most of the books are available on Kindle or as e-books but one isn't -- but so what? A good read is worth a good amount of money!

Wings for My Flight: the Peregrine Falcons of Chimney Rock by Marci Cottrell Houle (available on Kindle): My favorite bird book of the 61 that I've read thus far. (Editor's note: it's my favorite too.) It is a gripping true-life story. I've read it twice.

Wesley the Owl by Stacey O'Brien (available on Kindle): A woman, an owl, and love. A fun, heartwarming, and instructive story about the saving grace between a human and an avian. My second favorite bird book.

The next books are in no particular order but all of them are worth a read:

The Genius of Birds by Jennifer Ackerman (available on Kindle): If you have a parrot, you know how intelligent birds can be. This book will take you through the best and brightest of the winged world.

Fastest Things on Wings: Rescuing Hummingbirds in Hollywood by Terry Masear (available on Kindle): Hummingbirds are amazing creatures but life in the big city can be rough on them. Terry tells fascinating tales of how she has worked to save hundreds of birds in deep danger.

The Delightful Horror of Family Birding by Eli J. Knapp (available on Kindle): He loves birds; he loves his kids. This book combines them.

A Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration by Kenn Kaufman (available on Kindle): The farthest that I ever drove was eight hours, a few hundred miles in total. Now look at how far birds can go -- amazing! This book shows you what migration is all about. I would never have made it as a bird.

Mrs. Moreau's Warbler: How Birds Get Their Names by Stephen Moss (available on Kindle): I have always been fascinated by names. This book is a fun read that explores where our favorite birds came to be called what they are called.

Birds of Prey: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, and Vultures of North America by Pete Dunne with Kevin T. Karlson (avail-

able on Kindle): I make no bones about it: I love raptors! They own the sky. They are the true royalty of birds. Pete Dunne takes us right inside their world.

Birds' Eggs by Michael Walters: No, kids, these are not eggs to be thrown on Halloween. Eggs come in all colors and varieties. Beautiful look at the beginnig of a bird's life.

Visit Frank's website at www.frankscoblete.com. His books are available from smile.amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com, on Kindle or as e-books, and in bookstores.



WILD BIRDS UNLIMITED IS NOW OFFERING FREE DELIVERY

SHOREBIRD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Town of Hempstead's Department of Conservation and Waterways needs your help in ensuring the protection and survival of Piping Plovers, Least and Com-

mon Terns, Black Skimmers, and American Oystercatchers that nest between Point Lookout and Atlantic Beach. Volunteers will help prevent disturbances to nesting areas, and will record the presence of plover chicks and any incidents of predation. If social distancing permits, volunteers can also educate



beachgoers on sharing the shore. Help is particularly needed on evenings, weekends, and holidays from May through August. If you're interested and are able to volunteer regularly, please contact longtime SSAS member John Zarudsky, Conservation Biologist, at 486-5272.

This is an excellent opportunity to observe the many personalities and daily dramas of our beach-nesting birds, and to see rare terns and sandpipers as they pass through, with occasional sightings of dolphins and whales -- all while social distancing. Volunteers will be needed more than ever, as reduced staff will result in more uninformed behavior by beachgoers that puts birds at risk.

OSPREY CAMELOT

Will the Queen have two lovers like last year? Will her heirs survive their rivalry? Watch the new Jay Koolpix Osprey Cam at Marine Nature Study Area, now LIVE ONLINE. (The MNSA cams continue to operate even though the Study Area is closed.) In addition to sharing his wonderful photos with us, Jay generously donated the Osprey Cam to MNSA and made a donation to SSAS that will be used to install a Purple Martin house at MNSA too. You can link to the Osprey Cam and MNSA's live Peregrine Cam from the website below. At the time of this writing, the Ospreys are occasionally mating and the Peregrines are sitting on four eggs: https://sites.google.com/view/marine-naturestudy-area/cams/mnsa-live-cams

For swashbuckling adventure and heartwarming family values, you can also read David Gessner's Return of the Osprey: A Season of Flight and Wonder, and, Soaring with Fidel: An Osprey Odyssey from Cape Cod to Cuba and Beyond.



For a Peregrine page-turner, try Alan

Tennant's On the Wing: To the Edge of the Earth with the Peregrine Falcon.

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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COMMUNITY BAG DONATION

SSAS has been selected as the beneficiary of the @StopandShop Community Bag Program! Each time the \$2.50 reusable bag is purchased at the Stop & Shop at 460 Franklin Avenue in Franklkn Square or 905 Atlantic Avenue in Baldwin during the month of April, we will receive a \$1 donation. After April, we can still receive a \$1 donation if customers specify South Shore Audubon on the Giving Tag.

SSAS thanks the following donors for their generous contributions to the Michael Sperling Memorial Fund (our work on Mike's memorial will resume after the coronavirus pandemic is over):

All Booked Up ASME: The American Society of Mechanical Engineers Audubon New York Genesee Valley Audubon Society Louise Harrison Northern New York Audubon Society

SSAS thanks the following donors for their contributions beyond our membership fee to help us continue our mission:

Elizabeth Bailey Dorothea and Peter Bruno Genevieve Cameron Mary and Steve Greenfield Diana Ihman Bruce Kopit Jeanne Peta Pearl and Seymour Weinstein

SSAS NOMINATING COMMITTEE

In accordance with our bylaws, any member in good standing may suggest candidates for officers and directors for the fiscal year that will begin on July 1. Due to the COVID-19 emergency, our election cannot take place until we can safely hold in-person general membership meetings. If you are interested in helping to lead SSAS, please contact committe chairperson Betty Borowsky (764-3596) or committee members Jim and Gail Brown (608-1446)..

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FRACKING WASTE: A RADIOACTIVE NIGHTMARE Guy Jacob

Most of us would associate fracking with methane gas, a greenhouse gas that is up to 84 times more potent than CO2. That fracking robs us of a clean energy future is not novel news. But few of us are familiar with the radioactive risks that fracking also presents. And while fracking itself is illegal in NY, both fracking infrastructure and fracking waste present a clear and present danger to the Empire State.

Fortunately, there's a bill in our state legislature that would bring this toxic nightmare to an end. Senator Todd Kaminsky (D-Long Beach) moved the Fracking Hazardous Waste Bill (S.3392 May/A.2655 Englebright) out of his Environmental Conservation Committee on March 3, and sent it to the Senate Finance Committee. When we met with Kaminsky on March 6, he was expecting a full Senate vote of approval within one month.

In 2019, the Senate passed the same bill, but the Assembly never acted on it. Had the Assembly passed it in 2019, dangerous human and wildlife exposure to toxins and radioactivity from fracking waste could have been averted this year. Instead, by continuing to categorize fracking waste transported into New York as nonhazardous, our state endures the immoral lead of a federal exemption that plagues each state that doesn't say "enough is enough." Because of our state's legislative inaction, NY has tied its own hands against protecting its citizens and its environment.

TOXIC Because the fossil fuel industry is exempt from disclosing its chemical fracking concoctions, we only have information from companies that have voluntarily revealed their fracking recipes. Many of these chemicals, including benzene and toxic heavy metals, are known or suspected carcinogens. What's worse, when the watery chemical mix makes its way back to the surface as waste, it brings with it Naturally Occurring Radioactive Materials (NORM) that were hidden deep in the earth. This is a long kept secret of the fossil fuel industry. According to a 1982 paper written by the American Petroleum Institute's Department of Medicine and Biology, "Almost all materials of interest and use to the petroleum industry contain measurable quantities of radionuclides that reside finally in processing equipment, product streams, and waste."

How much radiation is safe and how much are we being exposed to? Brine, or liquid waste water from oil and gas production, contains two primary isotopes of radium: radium-226 and radium-228. Named after French scientists Marie and Pierre Curie for their landmark research into the nature of radioactivity, a picocurie is a measure for the intensity of radioactivity contained in a sample of radioactive material. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission's industrial discharge limit for each radium isotope is 60 picocuries per liter. The EPA sets 5 picocuries per liter as the safe drinking water limit for these isotopes, and the EPA also defines levels of radium-226 and radium-228 above 60 picocuries per liter as radioactive. While radium-226 and radium-228 levels in brine at multiple oil and gas extraction sites are much higher, the most potent radium levels are found in brine from the Marcellus Shale in Pennsylvania: 28,500 picocuries per liter. Therefore, radium coming out of Marcellus is 475 times the dangerous radioactive limit set by the EPA!

Drill cuttings are rock and other earthen material brought to the surface during the drilling process in preparation for fracking that also contain NORM. However, the NY Department of Environmental Conservation does not regulate NORM as radioactive waste and permits its disposal at municipal solid waste landfills. Radium-226 is the main radionuclide of concern in NORM. It is water-soluble with a half-life of 1,600 years, which means it accumulates in landfills and waterways where waste is discharged and where runoff from roads makes its way into bodies of water.

Even though fracking itself was banned in NY five years ago by Executive Order, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PA DEP), between 2011 and mid-2015, nearly 600,000 tons of solid oil and gas waste and over 23,000 barrels of liquid waste were sent from the Keystone State to NY landfills. What's more, over 335 tons and 1,320 barrels of fracturing fluid waste was disposed of at NY landfills between 2011 and 2013, along with another 970 barrels of produced water (brine) from Marcellus operations. Produced water from Marcellus wells also contains varying amounts of carcinogenic chemicals left over from fracking. Three landfills in NY still accept solid oil and gas waste from PA. Moreover, according to PA DEP data, one landfill has also accepted over 473 tons of "unused fracturing fluid waste" between March 2017 and September 2018.

To add insult to injury, these industrial wastes are used to keep road dust down and for de-icing winter roads, thereby smearing toxins and radioactivity on our highways and wherever precipitation causes these contaminants to migrate.

This is cognitive dissonance on steroids!

The consequences of fracking coalesce into the perfect intersection of multiple environmental dangers, the compound effects of which spell trouble for our future. From earthquakes to poisoning our groundwater, our rivers and lakes, our forests and private property, to robbing us of a clean energy future, to exposing all of us to carcinogenic pollutants, fracking spares nothing on its path to profits.

Likewise, there is simply no justificaton for supporting a ban on fracking and its waste without also advocating for a rejection of all fracking infrastructure. Neither fracking, nor fracking infrastructure, nor the hazardous waste it generates belongs anywhere in NY.



Accepting this waste and allowing its lethal voyage through our environment is immoral and must be stopped. The time has come to send S.3392/A.2655 to Governor Cuomo's desk.

This month we present a very appropriate book, one on spring migration! The author is none other than Kenn Kaufman. It was released just a few months ago and the title is Season on the Wind: Inside the World of Spring Migration. A perfect time to lie back and read this fine book! Kenn's birding life is now spent in northern Ohio next to Lake Erie. This area is sometimes called "the warbler capital of North America." Kenn is very well known by birders and nature lovers alike. He has written many fine guides and nature books that are prized by many! The book covers the biridng life of this region, which is near Magee Marsh and home to the "biggest week in North American birding!!" It

is on the Mississippi Flyway and draws a vast number of migrating birds in the spring. (Sy's review begins now!)

An interesting book of a personal narrative of one birder's view of his local migration experience.

Kaufman moved from his home in Arizona to the southwestern shore of Lake Erie in Ohio (as he says, he met a girl from there and married her). The location, as opposed to Point Pelee on the north shore, was on the south shore and just as exiciting but less well known. He starts by discussing locations for concentration and fallout of birds. He then gets around to the prime place on Lake Erie where he has relocated.

<u>Naka</u>ù

The place is almost a perfect spot and he explains in great detail the whys and wherefores. The details also include why the location is a great birding spot amid prime waterfront property and how it continued. A story in itself. Included is the efforts to place a huge wind farm on the site and the the efforts to stop it at least temporarily. There is a good bit about wind turbines, their negative effect on the environment, and big corporations' thrust to get them up. Very interesting!

But the main part of the book is about the movement of birds coming in waves from the south on weather fronts and the fallouts that occur when the wave hits the waters of the lake. He goes through the steps taken to help and accomodate the throngs of birders coming to see them. There is now the mile long "Boardwalk" that covers an area offeing phenomenal looks at birds low down, at close range. It confines the visitors to a pleasant place and keeps the surrounding area from being trampled by hordes of people. A 700-car parking lot is at one end. Mind boggling.

A ten-day birding festival came into being. How and when and what it means to that part of Ohio is covered.

Millions of dollars to the economy. Thousands of people come from all over the country plus significant foreign visitors. Kaufman's involvement in all this comes through.

As mentioned in my first sentence, a lot of the book is about his personal interaction with the migrants. So there is talk of warblers and thrushes and night flights and now radar tracking. His interaction with a Kirtland's Warbler and the use of Twitter to get the word out is all in the new birding experience. In some respects, the book is all over the lot, but it comes through as his personal experience with birding. An interesting guy with an interesting book.

(Paul says:) I'm back, so read it and enjoy!

HEMPSTEAD LAKE STATE PARK UPDATE Brien Weiner

As of this writing, the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation has not approved permits for tree removal or wetlands work for the Hempstead Lake State Park (HLSP) Project, nor has it responded to SSAS comments. Our comments focused on failure to meet DEC standards for dam repair and on inadequate and corrupted testing for toxins, as well as destruction of habitat in one of only two NYS designated Important Bird Areas in Nassau County. The HLSP Project has the potential to cause dam failure, catastrophic flooding, and watershed contamination -- consequences that are beyond irony for a coastal resiliency project funded with a Sandy recovery grant. They reflect the tragedy of a systemic failure of our environmental laws.

Indeed, to make a bad situation worse, on March 26, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a sweeping relaxation of environmental rules in response to the coronavirus pandemic. The EPA stated, "In general, the EPA does not expect to seek penalties for violations of routine compliance monitoring, integrity testing, sampling, laboratory analysis, training, and reporting or certifiation obligations in situations where the EPA agrees that COVID-19 was the cause of the noncompliance and the entity provides supporting documentation to the EPA upon request." This is in addition to rolling back the Clear Air and Clean Water Acts, the National Environmental Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and many other envioronmental laws -- rollbacks that preceded the coronavirus pandemic.

There will be health and economic consequences stemming from environmental degradation that will persist long past the pandemic, even if rules are restored. Inaction on the environment has filtered down to all levels of government as state environmental legislation and budget funding are stalled and even local recycling programs are suspended.

And paradoxically, our open space is more precious to us than ever as we practice social distancing. We need it for our physical and mental health, for exercise and relief from anxiety. HLSP hangs in precarious balance as an oasis of green in a suburban sea of gray, for both people and wildlife. Its trees anchor a complex ecosystem, an example of which was provided by longtime SSAS member John Holly in a letter to Governor Cuomo:

"Picture how you would feel if your Grandchild were bitten by a rodent while playing in the Park. This scenario is a possibility in Hempstead Lake State Park. Natural predators like Hawks and Owls keep areas, like our parks, free from rats that gravitate to poison-free spots like trash con-



tainers near playgrounds. The State has scheduled the cutting of hundreds of trees in Hempstead Lake State Park, habitat of Great Horned Owls. If the trees go, so will the Owls, leaving the rats to proliferate. There is no environmental reason to cut down these trees. Not only are the trees habitat to Owls and Hawks and Songbirds, but trees are essential to our air quality."

Although SSAS can provide comments on deficiencies in the Environmental Assessment of the HLSP Project, we need grass roots action to move our leaders. We need to let them know what HLSP means to us in this time of social distancing and to the many migratory and nesting birds that are about to fill the park. We need to tell them that the trees attract birds and birders and other nature lovers who will provide a much-needed boost to the local economy in the aftermath of COVID-19. Remind them of all the birders, photographers, and residents who travelled to HLSP last year to watch the heartwarming and almost heartbreaking drama of our nesting Great Horned Owls. Our owlets, who were injured when they fell out of their nest, were saved because people knew when to step in and when to step back -- people in harmony with nature.

So with thanks to John, we can follow his lead and write to or call Governor Cuomo, State Senator and Environmental and Conservation Committee Chair Todd Kaminsky, whose district includes HLSP, and other local officials. We can write letters to the editors of our local newspapers. The Governor's Office of Storm Recovery cancelled a March 30 meeting with the project's Citizens Advisory Committee and declined to hold the meeting online, but they stated that work on the HLSP Project continues. Ignoring public input and bulldozing their way forward predates COVID-19.

Our health and our families are our priorities, and our environment is essential to both. We're in this together and we need to make our voices heard.

PLUM ISLAND REPRIEVE

The Preserve Plum Island Coalition, of which SSAS is a member, reached a milestone in December, when, for the first time since Plum Island was put on the auction block in 2009, a Plum Island protection bill made it through both the House and Senate and was signed by the President. Plum Island has been given a one-year reprieve from sale to the highest bidder. In the meantime, the Coalitoin continues to work with stakeholders to prepare a plan for Plum Island's Reasearch and Conservation Districts, and to call on Governor Cuomo to protect Plum Island from sale.

Plum Island provides critical breeding and foraging grounds for over 200 bird species, including listed species such as Piping Plover, Roseate Tern, and Common Tern. In addition, as many as three hundred Harbor and Grey Seals haul out on Plum Island during the winter months. For more information and a petition to save Plum Island, visit www.preserveplumisland.org.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Wendy Murbach

Our new members since the Dec. 2019-Jan. 2020 Skimmer are: Garden City Margaret A. Menger

Guiden City mininguietti niengei	
Long Beach Michae Cohn	
Lynbrook Robert J. Florio, Barbara Andrzejewski	
Merrick Rita C. Hines, Mary J. Baker,	
Lorraine Glass	
North Bellmore Christine Schaefer	
Wantagh Dan Turner	

DARK SKIES

Our cities and suburbs glow at night, and our artificial lights are fatal attractions for migratory birds. They cause birds to collide with buildings, to be diverted from their course, and to become exhausted flying around lights like moths near a flame. Fortunately, there are programs like Lights Out, a national effort to reduce this problem.

Artificial lights also confuse turtle hatchlings trying to reach the ocean, distract bats, and cause salamanders to be less active searching for food and to experience lower reproductive rates. Tree frogs stop calling for mates. Insects are fatally drawn to light and declining insect populations negatively impact all species that rely on them for food or pollination. Nocturnal animals sleep during the day and are active at night, and light pollution turns night into day.

Artificial light at night negatively affects human health too by suppressing melatonin production and altering our circadian rhythm. This increases the risk for obesity, depression, sleep disorders, diabetes, breast cancer and more. Nighttime lighting also increases energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions.

So this spring, help our birds, our environment, and our community by only using lighting when and where it is needed. If safety is a concern, install motion detector lights and timers. Properly shield all outdoor lights. Keep your blinds drawn to keep light inside. And sleep well.

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



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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 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.

Donations to SSAS are always welcome! \$_____

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