

# SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 7, NO. 9

MAY 1977

NEXT MEETING: TUESDAY, MAY 10TH  
8:15 P.M., FREEPORT LIBRARY

GUEST SPEAKER: Mr. Elliott Kutner

PROGRAM: "Warblers, Plus"



SSAS President Elliott Kutner will present a colorful and entertaining slide show on warblers PLUS slides of the birds he has photographed in his backyard and on the Sunday birdwalks. So, don't miss it, TUESDAY, MAY 10, 8:15 P.M., FREEPORT LIBRARY. See you there!

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A very special invitation to all South Shore Audubon members and their friends:



Annual South Shore Audubon Dinner

June 14, 1977

Valley Stream Park Inn

Cocktails 7 to 8 p.m.

Complete Dinner including gratuities \$8.50 each

Main Course ... Sirloin of Beef

(If fish is desired as a replacement please indicate on check)

Our guest speaker will be Otto Hecht, Assistant Professor of Biology at Trenton State College and visiting Professor at the Nature Conservancy at Cold Spring Harbor. Mr. Hecht will present "The Comparative Ecology in the Life of the Great Horned Owl - Suburban vs. Rural". This program will explore the life of owls, in particular the Great Horned Owl, on the North Shore of Long Island as compared to its habitat and life style in Southern New Jersey. If you wish to join us on this special occasion, notification would be appreciated by June 7, 1977. Checks should be made payable to the South Shore Audubon Society and mailed to: Mr. Elliott Kutner, 461 Dunster Court, West Hempstead, N.Y. 11552.

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PATCHES AND DECALS: We now have available colorful patches, showing a Skimmer in flight, to be worn on clothing for \$2.00 along with the car or window insignia decals for 50¢. These are available at all meetings and birdwalks.

The Freeport Library will exhibit the woodcarvings and reverse paintings on glass of SSAS member Marge Fischer during the month of May in the front showcase. Please drop in and see this beautiful handiwork.

President Carter is planning to curtail the use of snowmobiles, motor-cycles and dune buggies on sensitive public lands. The proposal has caused a landslide of letters, calls and telegrams by the users of such vehicles, who are concerned that curtailment will have an adverse effect on their investment. In actuality the President is planning to amend the existing executive order issued in 1972 by President Nixon, which authorized Federal agencies to prohibit the use of off-road vehicles on public lands where they threaten the environment. The amendment will order the agencies to prohibit these vehicles from sections of National Parks, Wilderness Areas, Forests, Sea Shores and other lands where they might cause damage to vegetation, wildlife or Indian artifacts. Vehicle owners contend that the President is moving to keep them out of all but specially designated areas and according to one government official are "screaming and yelling that their American rights are being violated." Yet other recreational functions like fishing, camping, rock hounding, etc., have long been regulated on public domain to insure a balance with nature. If the executive order is to be implemented, then some show of concern must be made. If you believe the President is moving in the right direction, then let him know with a letter.

After eight weeks of investigation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife agents have arrested a 24 year old Southampton man and charged him with the shooting of a bald eagle. As you may recall, the eagle was shot during the late fall on a farm near Bridgehampton, and was believed to be one of a pair wintering at Connetquot River State Park. The agents gave credit to the "tremendous cooperation of the public" in providing leads. The maximum penalty for a first offense is \$5,000, a year in jail, or both.



Paul Butkerei, Conservation

The following are new members to South Shore Audubon. Welcome!

- |                         |                        |                            |
|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Mr. Jimmy Addario       | Mr.&Mrs. W. Hollihan   | Mr. Alan E. Ottenstein     |
| Mr. Leonard Antonucci   | Mr. Glenn Kelly        | Mr. Joseph Popper          |
| Mr. Robert E. Barnes    | Ms. Sharon Kramer      | Mr. Gerard E. Rudolph      |
| Mr. Peter Brierton      | Mr. Nicky Lazaro       | Mr. Ben H. Russer          |
| Mr. Lenny Daniel        | Mr. Gordon Little      | Mr. Mitchell Sakofs        |
| Mr. Richard Deneau      | Mr.&Mrs. V. LoFresto   | Mrs. Phyllis Singer        |
| Miss Sydelle Feuerstein | Mrs. A.K. Lowenstein   | Mr. Kenneth Stone          |
| Ms. Ruth Freidlander    | Miss Florence Mayer    | Mr. Robert Tipton          |
| Miss Ada Greller        | Pat McHugh             | Mr. George J. Vishner, Jr. |
| Mr. Denis Grichenko     | Mr. Walter G. Michaels | Mr. William Watman         |
| Mrs. Ruth Harlow        | Ms. Helen F. Miller    | Mr. Joseph Welsh           |
| G. Hennigar             | Mr. Saul Mines         | Mr. Harry VanMeter         |
| Mr. William Hollweg     | Ms. Nan Niemann        |                            |

Teresa Stoltz, Membership

I have received 21 bird counts from our members for the period Feb. 15 to Apr. 15 - Please keep them coming. Here is the bird count for the last two months.-Ed.

MOURNING DOVE	84	HOUSE SPARROW	277	HOUSE FINCH	132
DOWNY WOODPECKER	<u>12</u>	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	79	AM. GOLDFINCH	4
BLUE JAY	51	HAIRY WOODPECKER	5	TOWHEE	5
BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	<u>13</u>	COMMON GRACKLE	84	SL. COLORED JUNCO	34
TUFTED TITMOUSE	8	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	7	TREE SPARROW	7
WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH	<u>3</u>	CARDINAL	56	SONG SPARROW	22
MCKINGBIRD	24	EVENING GROSBEAK	10	FOX SPARROW	21
STARLING	<u>125</u>	WHITE-THROAT SPARROW	46	PURPLE FINCH	27
YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER	4	ROBIN	21	PINE SISKIN	4
BL. & WHITE WARBLER	<u>1</u>	BL. CHINNED JUNCO	2	WH. CROWNED SPARROW	2
RING-NECKED PHEASANT	<u>1</u>	BOBWHITE	<u>1</u>		

## My Friend - Mr. Bullfrog

During the summer of 1971, while photographing a pickerel weed flower spike at the edge of Big Cub Pond, in Sandown, New Hampshire where my cottage is located, I noticed a bullfrog partially out of water watching me. After finishing taking my pictures, I went to my worm bucket (I use worms to catch horned pout and large mouth bass.) and picked out a juicy night crawler and fed it to Mr. Bullfrog.

As the summer progressed, every morning as I went down to wash myself, there was Mr. Frog waiting for his worm. We soon became fast friends - he even allowed me to pat him on his head and call him Oscar.

Mr. Bullfrog is an amphibian and spends much of his time in the water. Scientifically he is known as *Rana catesbeiana*. If he escapes his predators, he can live longer than ten years.

A female bullfrog, about 8" in size, lays about 20,000 eggs. Not all the eggs hatch and extremely few of those that do ever get beyond the tadpole stage.

The eggs of the bullfrog, with favorable conditions, hatch in three days. They remain as tadpoles for at least two years, possibly three. By that time, the tadpoles have been decimated by their enemies - fish, snakes, and other animals.

The few that survive must now forage on land and elude predators, including larger bullfrogs, skunks, bobcats, owls, and especially racoons, for an additional two - four years before they are ready to spawn.

Learning plays a significant role in the survival of the bullfrog. A frog that survives an encounter with a snake may not be easily approached by another snake. They have learned not to leap into water where large fish lurk.

Frogs are carnivorous, or meat eaters, they feed mainly on small amphibians, worms, insects or smaller frogs (this makes them cannibals).

During the winter months, I miss the croaking of frogs that accompanies late spring and summer months. At our cottage, this is usually the only sound to break the stillness of night except for the occasional hoot of an owl or the scream of a bobcat.

Hopefully, when I return to my cottage this summer, Oscar will be waiting for me to feed him his daily diet of worms and to pat him between his periscope-like eyes. If not, I have a large framed 11 x 14 color print of him to remind me of all the wonderful times we had together.

Gardner E. Gregory

Mr. Gregory is Director of the Gregory Museum, L.I. Earth Science Center, Heitz Place, Hicksville, N.Y. 11801. For information, call (516) 822-7505.

## AT THE THEODORE ROOSEVELT SANCTUARY:

A number of summer programs for both adults and children are planned at the Sanctuary as follows: For Adults: Teacher's Ecology Workshop-June 27-July 1, 8:30-2:00. Ecology projects, curriculum development and field techniques to utilize in the outdoor classroom (marine ecology, zoology, ornithology, botany, geology, etc.) Cost - \$75.00. Adult Field Workshop in Ornithology - July 5-8, 8:30-12:00. Lectures by leading L.I. birders and ornithologists, daily field trips. Cost - \$30.00. For Children: Where's Wallace? Ecology Fun - Kindergarten-2nd Grade, July 18-22, 9:00-11:30. Cost \$25.00. Hop, Jump, Fly-More Ecology Fun, Kindergarten-2nd Grade, July 25-29, 9:00-11:30-Cost \$25.00. Ecology Safari on LI, Grades 3-5, July 18-22, 9:00-11:30, Cost \$25.00. Bats, Birds, Bees, and Other Things that Fly, Grades 3-5, July 25,-29, 9:00-11:30, Cost \$25.00. Ecology Experience in Ornithology, Grades 5-8, August 1-5, 9:00-2:00, Cost \$45.00. Ecology Experience in Linnology Grades 9-12, August 8-12, 9:00-2:00, Cost \$45.00. This group will study local ponds and streams and the life around these environments - for motivated students. All workshops are limited to 15 participants per session. All applications must be in three weeks prior to workshop. For more information, call WA 2-3200.

This is the third in a series of articles by Al Lemke on his visit to South Africa.

## South Africa Revisited

### Part 3 - Skukuza - Lions Before Breakfast

Skukuza, Kruger's largest camp, is located in the southern portion of the park. Being the most frequently visited region, it has the most camps, the most roads and the largest number of accessible waterholes.

All of Kruger is semi-arid low bushveld, with virtually all of the rainfall coming in the summer months, December through March. During the rainy season there is considerable water in large puddles in the bush, whereas near the end of the dry season most of the water is concentrated in the streams and waterholes. This forces the animals out of the bush to the areas where they can be readily viewed, making August to October the best time of year for visitors. However, the rainfall does vary from year to year. Our latest visit, in August of last year, followed a particularly wet summer, and the herds were considerably smaller than during our first stay. But we still saw an excellent variety - giraffes browsing from the tenderest treetop leaves, elephants pushing over trees, ponderous Cape buffaloes, vervet monkeys and chacma baboons, to mention a few. And everywhere many species of antelope, ranging from the 600 pound kudu with his magnificent corkscrew horns (the record pair measured 71  $\frac{1}{2}$ " ) to the tiny 20 pound steenbok with barely noticeable needle horns.

To maximize our game viewing, we got underway as soon as the gates opened shortly after sunrise. Some two hours leisurely cruising brought us to the next camp where we stopped for breakfast. The first morning out, we were thrilled by the sight of three lions feasting on a buffalo they had killed that night. The next morning we returned to the same site. The lions had finished, and hyenas were hungrily devouring the remains, grinding up most of the bones with their amazingly strong jaws. Patiently waiting their turn, a large number of vultures sat nearby. These rather repulsive-looking birds play a vital role in the ecology of any region. When this sanitation squad is finished nothing is left except a skull and maybe a few bones. No rotting meat to spread stench and disease. Scavengers are a crucial link in the chain of life, the climax of nature's balance, so perfectly attuned until man interferes.

Shortly before sunset some fifty loudly chattering banded mongooses, gaily be-decked in black and white stripes, trooped across the road and melted into the deepening shadows of the bush.

A lone bull elephant was playing with two cars which had approached too close.

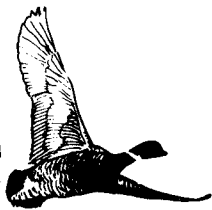
Skukuza concluded our stay at Kruger. As we approached the gate with mixed feelings of regret at leaving this paradise and anticipation of adventures yet ahead, a pack of seven Cape hunting dogs, as if to bid us farewell, escorted our car for five minutes before vanishing into the bush, gone but never to be forgotten.



Al Lemke

South Shore Audubon's Binocular Savings: Anyone interested in purchasing 7x35 or 8x30 Bushnell binoculars should call Joan Butkerei at LY 3-4554 immediately. All items are being sold well below retail costs and have been purchased in large groups to insure savings. Any nominal proceeds are being utilized for South Shore Audubon's programs.

CANOE TRIP: Our June 5th Canoe Trip is all filled up with a very long waiting list....



ON THE BIRDING FRONT:

It's just possible to imagine what the soaring Bonaparte gull might have been thinking as he maneuvered in the April breezes above the bizarre assortment of people picking their way through the tide-surrendered debris along the water's edge. Bundled in fantastic arrangements of down parkas, furry car coats, scarves, boots, mud-soaked sneakers, and wind protective plastic bonnets, they were hardly the picture of the Fifth Avenue Easter Parade. But Easter Sunday it was indeed, and although the wind was brisk, the sky was deep blue and strewn with feathery white clouds. As they gazed upward, the group noticed a magnificent marsh hawk circling in the distance. Viewing the water's edge, a Little Blue Heron disappeared behind the waving sea grass. As the group moved along the spongy salt marsh, they approached a large Common American Egret and several smaller Snowy Egrets fishing along the low tide's margin. The walkers' excitement heightened as the first of several large formations of Cormorants proceeded across the horizon. The gull couldn't have helped but notice the strange objects this entourage was carrying and/or dragging. Besides the usual assortment of binoculars, field books and scopes, hands were juggling copious footage of plastic fishing line, six-pack plastic rings, and jumbo bags filled to the brim with plastic toy scraps, cans, pull-top openers and bottles. What strange collectors, leaving the shells, fanciful pebbles and driftwood and seeking the garbage that could prove hazardous to the diverse wildlife of the area. Although no one saw a Great Blue Heron, one had left gigantic footprints in the still-moist sand. The sun exposed the color of the Greater Yellow Legs probing the marsh with his super beak and the only reminders of the harshness of the previous months were the scattered remains of Brant, Merganser, and Egret. Nature's cycle had returned the birds and the scars of the winter were rapidly disappearing in the new growth.

Joan Butkereiit

Here is a list of the birds seen on the April 10th Bird Field Trip to Zach's Bay. It was a cool, sunny Sunday with between 20-25 birders. Bird count as follows:

- Phoebe
- Glossy Ibis
- Black-backed Gulls
- Greater Yellow Legs
- Red-breasted Merganser
- several Bonaparte Gulls
- several Brant
- Snowy Egret
- Water Pipit
- Marsh Hawk



- Little Blue Heron
- Common Egret
- pair of Mallards
- several Black-crowned Night Herons
- Mourning Dove
- several flocks of Cormorants-high in the sky-changing formation and air currents

Eleanor Glaser

BIRD FEEDER SURVEY-Please keep a log of the # of the following birds at our feeders by the month. The Skimmer deadline is the 15th of each month. Send them to: Pat Davis, 7 Myers Avenue, Hicksville, New York 11801.

MOURNING DOVE	_____	HOUSE SPARROW	_____	HOUSE FINCH	_____
DOWNY WOODPECKER	_____	RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	_____	AM. GOLDFINCH	_____
BLUE JAY	_____	HAIKY WOODPECKER	_____	TOWHEE	_____
BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE	_____	COMMON GRACKLE	_____	SLATE-COL. JUNCO	_____
TUFTED TITMOUSE	_____	BROWN-HEADED COWBIRD	_____	TREE SPARROW	_____
WHITE-BREASTED NUTHATCH	_____	CARDINAL	_____	SONG SPARROW	_____
MOCKINGBIRD	_____	EVENING GROSBEAK	_____	FOX SPARROW	_____
STARLING	_____	WHITE-THROAT SPARROW	_____	PURPLE FINCH	_____
ROBIN	_____	YEL. SHFTD. FLICKER	_____		

JUNE NEWS DEADLINE MAY 15

BIRD WALKS 1977

FIELD TRIPS: Starting time - 9:30 A.M.

No walk if it rains, snows, or temperature is 25 degrees or below. It is suggested that each person on the bird trip carry a knapsack or bag to pick up debris of all types along the walk. That way, we'll be making the sanctuaries more beautiful while enjoying them.

COMING EVENTS

- May 1 - Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- 8 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 15 - West End #2, N.E. corner
- 22 - Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- 29 - NO BIRDWALK
- June 5 - Canoe Trip

At the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary:  
Discovering a Spring Woods  
May 8th, 1:30 P.M.

SSAS Regular Meeting:  
Tuesday, May 10th, 8:15 P.M.  
Mr. Elliott Kutner  
"Warblers, Plus"

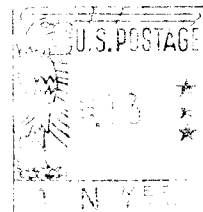
Elliott Kutner, Birding

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