

# SOUTH SHORE SKIMMER



SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

VOL. 11, NO. 1

SEPTEMBER 1980

## MEETING

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9  
FREEPORT MEMORIAL LIBRARY  
8:15 P.M.

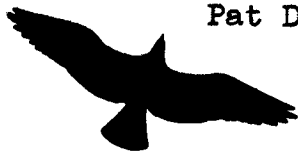


GUEST SPEAKER: Bill Robinson  
"Birds of Prey"

Raptor expert Bill Robinson will present his magnificent "Birds of Prey" film plus live surprises!

We are delighted to have Mr. Robinson as our first guest speaker of the new season and expect a big turnout. Don't miss it!

Pat Davis



## HORIZONS II

We will hold our Environmental Fair, Horizons II, on Sunday, November 16, 1980, 1-5 P.M. at Adelphi University's Ruth S. Harley University Center in Garden City.

Please contact Pat Davis at 822-6189 if you would like to display your arts and crafts or if you can help with the displays and programs.

See page 5 for details on the program.



## Terns Threatened

Thomas Torma

The return of the common terns to West End Beach is an event to which many of us look forward every spring. Unfortunately, it is an event we might not be enjoying for too many more years. The West End Tern Colony is in trouble!

According to Rich Cremer, who bands most of the birds in the colony, there are 6,000 to 8,000 common tern eggs laid in the colony every year. About 75% of these hatch, and 3,000 young terns become mature enough to fly.

It is when the young terns begin to fly that the slaughter usually starts. The young birds look for a runway for takeoff and landing. The highway that goes through the colony is ideal, except for the speeding cars that kill 750 to 1,000 young birds a year. One year 1,500 birds were killed on the road. Rich has actually seen cars go off the road to chase the birds. Traffic laws must be enforced if the colony is to survive.

This year there was no large bird kill on the highway. Most of the young birds never developed enough to fly! Predation by rats, squirrels and domestic pets has just about wiped out the colony. For some reason, rats have been numerous at West End this year. There has been an increase in the number of squirrels as well.

Domestic pets, like the stray cat seen in the main part of the colony by park police, also wiped out a large

(continued on page 2)

# USING YOUR BINOCULARS

Barbara Lucey Tancredi

In this issue, I shall attempt to give the reader a brief explanation of "what all the numbers mean" on your binoculars, and how to focus them properly.

Your binoculars have a number followed by an "X", which stands for "times." For example, 7X means the glasses magnify the bird you are observing seven times. Thus, a bird 700 feet away will appear to be only 100 feet away with a pair of 7X binoculars. An 8X glass brings the bird even closer. Some binoculars are 10 power or 10X. These, however, are quite difficult to hold steadily as any vibration or movement of your hands is also greatly magnified.

Light enters the binoculars through the objective lens. The width of these lenses is measured in millimeters and this number follows the power number. Generally it is either a 35, 40 or 50. The larger the number, the more light enters the objective lens. This creates a wider beam of light entering your eyes through the opposite end or ocular lens. The width of this beam is called the "exit pupil." It is also measured in millimeters and can be found easily by dividing the width of the objective lens by the power. Thus, a pair of 7X35 binoculars has a exit pupil of 5 mm; a pair of 7X50 binoculars has an exit pupil of slightly more than 7mm. The birder who birds in the early morning, at dusk, or in hazy, darkened conditions might prefer a pair of 7X50 binoculars because of the extra brightness. For standard, all purpose use, 7X35 binoculars seem to be the most useful.

You are now ready to put your binoculars up to your eyes and begin focusing. First, if you do not wear glasses, make certain the eye cups are extended. If you are going to wear

glasses, fold down the eye cups so that your glasses are as close to the ocular lens as possible. This will permit the widest possible beam of light or "exit pupil" to reach your eyes. Most binoculars have a center focusing wheel or lever and a separate calibrated focus for your right eye to allow for differences in the vision of your eyes.

Turn the center focusing wheel or lever as far out as it will go. Place the binoculars up to your eyes. Take a lens cap and cover the right objective lens. Do not close your right eye. Find an object on which to focus and turn the wheel or lever until you can see it clearly with your left eye. Now remove the lens cap and place it over the left objective lens. Do not close your left eye. Using the separate calibrated focus for your right eye, look at the same object and turn the wheel until you can see it clearly. Notice where you have set the right eyepiece. Each time you use your binoculars, set them at the same calibration. Now remove the lens cap, bend the hinge adjustment until your eyes look through the center of each ocular lens. Now you may simply focus with the center wheel, depending on how far away your subject is from you.

## TERNs (cont. from p. 1)

portion of the colony. This cat killed both young and adult birds. The occupants of the Coast Guard station at West End have pet dogs they allow to run loose in the area. These dogs run through the colony crushing eggs and later killing young chicks. According to Rich Cremer, the result of all this is that only about 200 chicks matured enough to fly.

Humans don't help much either. Many fishermen cut through the colony to get to the inlet side of the island. They disturb the colony and often step on eggs or young birds.

If this colony is to be saved, present laws must be enforced. We can no longer tolerate drivers who speed or pet owners who allow their animals to run loose in the area. The public must be educated as to the value of these birds. Finally, the state and private individuals must begin to take an active role in saving this colony.



For a report on rare birds in this area call (212) 832-6523

# The Living Coast

from a  
National Audubon  
News Release



While National was adding a new sanctuary to its holdings, Mother Nature was taking away one of the old ones. The Alexander Sprunt Jr. Sanctuary, a sand-split island off the Charleston, South Carolina coast has become a casualty of natural forces. This preserve encompassed 250 acres when it was dedicated as an Audubon sanctuary in 1975. But a year ago seas from Hurricane David cut through it, and shifting currents began washing away the sand. Now the former island is completely under water at high tide, and its colonies of royal terns and brown pelicans can no longer nest there.

Nevertheless, the story has a happy ending, and a moral. The same ocean currents that were eroding the Audubon island were building a new one some 15 miles to the north. Emerging first as a sandbar several years ago, the new island--appropriately called Bird Key--has now become vegetated, and the homeless pelicans and terns have moved in. It is state land, and state wildlife officials are protecting the birds. The pelicans are one of only two colonies of this endangered species in South Carolina. This season, on Bird Key, the pelicans fledged 4,000 young.

The moral is one that Audubon members have been preaching in support of the pending federal legislation on coastal zone management and protection of barrier islands: Don't try to stop shifting sands from shifting, for they are part of a dynamic coastal ecosystem. Let them move with the changing currents, and they will continue to produce healthy beaches, dunes, marshes, and nesting areas. Try to anchor them with groins and bulkheads, and the system will be destroyed.

## AUDUBON WILDLIFE FILM/LECTURE SERIES

In cooperation with the South Shore Audubon Society, the Town of Hempstead will continue its informative Audubon Wildlife Film/Lecture Series.

October 15 — Tom Sperling "Superior Land of the Woodland Drummer"

November 5 — Kent Durden "Gifts of an Eagle"

December 16 — Charles Hotchkiss "Wilderness Trails"

January 28 — Frank Heimans "What Have You Done To My Country"

All Performances will be at 8:15 pm. in the Town Hall Pavilion, Hempstead. Admission - free - but tickets are necessary.

For tickets, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope, specifying date, program and number of tickets desired to:

Audubon Lecture Series  
Hempstead Recreation Division  
200 N. Franklin Street  
Hempstead, NY 11550

## A WEEK AT GREENWICH

Ruth Grossman

I just got back from a week at the Audubon Ecology Workshop in Greenwich, Connecticut which far exceeded my expectations! Did I like it? -- I loved every moment. It stretched my mind - my legs, too.

We were a group of 24 men and women (from twenty to sixty-plus), many biology teachers, a minister and his wife, a psychiatrist, a fireman -- everybody was cooperative, bright, enthusiastic and lots of fun.

We began with breakfast at 7:15. A bell tolled for all activities, a good loud "bong" (I pulled the rope once). The instructors were highly competent professionals. The subjects included wild flowers, birding, ferns, insects, weather predicting and many more. We were out mornings and afternoons through fields and woods and ponds and streams. We had a full day at the beach at low tide discovering and identifying marine life. We had a picnic lunch and then a swim.

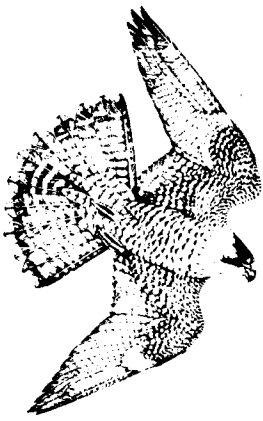
We went for an early bird walk at 7:15 without breakfast. About 9 A.M. we turned a bend and there was the staff with tables set up for hot cereal, bacon and eggs fried on a grill and coffee. Delicious!

Our last afternoon we went dashing off to pick up hidden vials containing questions to test our newly acquired knowledge. Then, for the evening social, each group (we were broken up into sixes earlier) had to dream up a short skit or other entertainment. My group parodied our instructors - kindly, I hope. My topic was "How to Stuff a Stick," as we had sat through a talk (and a good one, too) on preserving small birds and animals.

Then at 10:30 P.M. I joined a group under the stars. It was a beautiful night. In the stillness of the woods, Larry called and got a response from a saw-whet owl!

Home again, I'm faintly hostile to radio and television. I had forgotten they existed.





The New Paltz  
Peregrine Falcon Foundation  
INC.

June 28, 1980

Heinz K. Meng  
President  
Victor Hardaswick  
Vice President  
Charles Keene  
Secretary  
Jack Potter  
Treasurer  
Louise Rappleyea  
William Robinson  
Andrew Simmons  
Directors

Dear Pat + Roger:

many thanks to the  
South Shore Audubon Society  
for their generosity. We are very  
low on funds and the check was  
most welcomed.

I'll be on the David Letterman  
show next Wed, July 2 - 10-11:30 AM  
Ch. 4 - live from NBC in New York.  
I'll have some falcons along +  
should have about a 10 minute spot.

Hope you can watch.

Sincerely  
Heinz Meng

SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

HORIZONS II

CELEBRATES THE YEAR OF THE COAST

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 1980

1:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY  
GARDEN CITY, NEW YORK

1:00-2:00 P.M.

Gary Simpson and Ken Buddington  
"Energy Tips for the L.I. Homeowner"

Asa Starkweather  
"Birds of Long Island"

2:00-3:00 P.M.

Jack Pangburn  
"Learn How to Take Professional-Looking  
Wildlife Pictures at our Photography Workshop"

The Whaling Museum  
"The History of the L.I. Whale and Its  
Uncertain Future"

3:00-4:00 P.M.

Elaine Butkereit and Gloria Cohen  
"Teaching Children the 3 E's (Ecology,  
Energy, Environment)"

Mike Smiles  
"Understanding the Complexities of Our  
L.I. Marine Environment"

4:00-5:00 P.M.

Bill Robinson  
"Birds of Prey" - A Special Raptor Program

The Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary will present a special Children's  
Program from 3:00-4:00 P.M.

There will be a special display area with arts and crafts, taxidermy,  
rocks and minerals. Representatives from several environmental groups  
on the South Shore will be present.

ADMISSION: \$1.00 PER PERSON (CHILDREN UNDER 12 FREE)

## FIELD TRIPS

Starting time - 9:30 A.M.  
No walk if it rains, snows or temperature  
is 25 degrees or below

- SEPT. 7 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge  
14 West End #2, N.E. corner  
21 West End #2, N.W. corner  
28 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary
- OCT. 5 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge  
12 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary  
19 West End #2, N.E. corner  
26 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- NOV. 2 Zach's Bay, Pkg. Fld. #4  
N.E. corner  
9 Tobay, J.F.K. Sanctuary  
16 West End #2, N.W. corner  
23 Pelham Bay-meet at Throg's  
Neck Bridge toll-9:00 A.M.

## OFFICERS

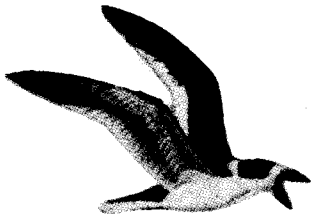
P. Davis-President 822-6189  
7 Meyers Ave., Hicksville 11801  
T. Torma-Vice-Pres. 223-7947  
921 Van Buren St., Baldwin 11510  
E. Kutner-Birding IV 6-7667  
461 Dunster Ct., W.Hempstead 11552  
T. Stoltz-Membership LY 3-4554  
10 Lincoln Pl., Lynbrook 11563  
A. Orens-Editor 431-9537  
282 Greenway Rd., Lido Beach 11561

OCTOBER NEWS DEADLINE  
SEPTEMBER 19

**BINOCULAR SAVINGS** are available through the club. Save 30% to 50%  
on Bushnell and Bausch and Lomb binoculars and scopes. See us at  
meetings and birdwalks or call the committee members listed:  
Barbara Tancredi 11 A.M.-1 P.M. 775-1790  
Bill Herzog 7 P.M.-9 P.M. 791-7886  
Asa Starkweather 599-5824  
Joan Butkerei 593-4554



**SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY**  
**P.O. BOX 31**  
**FREEPORT, N.Y. 11520**



**FIRST CLASS MAIL**