

Tanager singing its leisurely song from a treetop? Knowing that these were inhabitants of a swamp made it impossible for me to view it solely as a mosquito-infested place whose only value was to be drained and filled for development. I began to see it, and all wetlands, as incredibly productive habitats worthy of protection.

Going on bird walks with South Shore Audubon as an adolescent showed me birds that I knew about only from books. Ospreys, Ruddy Turnstones, and Scarlet Tanagers came off the pages and were real to me. The Blue Jays, Cardinals, American Goldfinches, and other more familiar birds I had known up until then were not the only birds to be seen on Long Island. I still had to make a long jump from birder to environmentalist, but the seed was planted by Elliott Kutner, Paul Butkereit, and the other birders of South Shore who made me feel welcome and part of a community.

This openness has always been one of our chapter's strengths. It has nurtured many a fledgling environmentalist and hopefully will nurture many more. I am grateful that we have such an organization to pursue this ongoing task. Happy Thanksgiving to all of you.



BROOKSIDE PRESERVE SHAPE-UP 🌲

Betsy Gulotta

Join us for the fall shape-up at Brookside Preserve on **Sunday, November 7th** at 1:00 P.M. Activities will include trimming trails, planting small trees and shrubs, cleaning up litter, and other maintenance chores.

Being mostly woodland, Brookside Preserve should be gleaming with fall foliage, so plan on taking a stroll while you are there.

Brookside Preserve is located on Brookside Avenue in Freeport, just north of Sunrise Highway and the LIRR (Brookside & Sunrise intersect near Freeport High School). South Shore Audubon Society is the manager of this County-owned parcel of freshwater wetland, which includes Milburn Creek, woodland, and upland field habitats. We are actively engaged in a long-term management plan, which involves preservation, maintenance, and restoration projects. Our goals include developing the Preserve into an outdoor environmental educational facility for the community.



BINOCULARS, SCOPES, AND FIELD GUIDES

Binoculars, spotting scopes, and field guides are sold by SSAS year-round at competitive prices and make splendid gifts for Christmas, Chanukah, and New Year's. Joe Lancer has supplies of Bushnell 8 x 42 binoculars (endorsed by National Audubon Society and specially designed for bird-watching) and Golden Guides to the Birds of North America, plus a Bausch & Lomb catalog. For information, call 536-6574 (7 to 9 P.M.) or look for Joe at our meetings and walks.

BIRDING IN FLORIDA'S SOUTHERN ISLANDS

Michael Higgiston

To me, the Dry Tortugas is one of the most exotic locales to go birding within the confines of the Lower 48. The regularly occurring species in the Tortugas and the Keys, as well as the possibilities for Caribbean strays, make this area a must see for the traveling birder.

We met in May at Miami Airport and proceeded on the three hour drive through the Keys, with our destination that night being Key West, where we were to meet our boat. We had plenty of time, so we were able to check out some rare bird sightings along the way. There had been reports of a Bahama Swallow roosting under an overpass on the road we were traveling; unfortunately, the bird was killed by a car scant days before we arrived. We stopped to examine a flock of White-crowned Pigeons and were rewarded with good looks at a Gray Kingbird. Further on, we stopped for a snack and went looking for warblers flitting about in the trees on the side of the building. We received another bonus bird in the form of a very patient Eurasian Collared Dove, perched at the top of a telephone pole.

We continued our journey along Route 1 until we stopped for dinner at Sugarloaf Key, which is not far from Key West. Along the way, the road became only a bridge between keys and we saw many pelagic species, including Brown Pelican, Osprey, Double-crested Cormorant, White Ibis, Least Tern, and Swallow-tailed Kite. We had dinner at the Sugarloaf Lodge's restaurant and 25 birders ordered key lime pie for dessert. We attempted to find an Antillean Nighthawk, but were unsuccessful as it was too late in the evening to see the bird in action. It's best to stake out the area about an hour before dusk. We went on to Key West to meet the *Yankee Freedom*, which would be our home for the next three days.

We cast off at about 11 P.M. and enjoyed the view as our boat slipped out of the harbor. While we slept, the captain piloted the boat 70 miles west into the Gulf of Mexico, so when we awoke we found ourselves anchored just off

Garden Key in the Dry Tortugas, the site of Fort Jefferson National Monument. After breakfast on board, we were free to explore the fort. The fort covers the entire key and was built to protect American interests in the Caribbean from the British, but was outdated before it was completed. However, it is a land trap for migrating birds



crossing the Gulf of Mexico and that is its value to birders. Immediately adjacent to the dock were two trees that this day were dripping with Cape May Warblers. After enjoying this view, we entered the fort. There is a freshwater fountain inside the compound that is a magnet for thirsty birds. We took vantage points near the fountain and enjoyed good

looks at Eastern Kingbird, Red-eyed Vireo, and all those warblers — Northern Parula, Yellow, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Black-throated Blue, Palm, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Redstart, Ovenbird (pictured here), Northern Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroat.

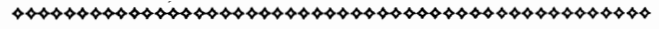
After spending time at the fountain, we hiked around the inside of the fort. It had a number of trees and a large grassy area in the middle. We saw Bank and Barn Swallows, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Catbird, Blue Grosbeak, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Northern Oriole, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, and Bobolink. We climbed to the top of the fort and were afforded a view of nearby Bush Key, a nesting site for Sooty Terns, Brown and Black Noddies, and Magnificent Frigatebirds. After lunch on board, we repeated our morning's activity until dinner. All day, a strong warm breeze blew and made things so comfortable. After dinner, most retired early.

We birded Fort Jefferson in the early morning of our second day and then left around 10 A.M. to visit Loggerhead Key. On the way there, we saw Masked and Brown Boobies, Magnificent Frigatebird, and Royal, Sandwich, Roseate, and Sooty Terns. Because the trees at Loggerhead Key are not native species, the birds aren't as numerous as one might expect. Nevertheless, we saw Worm-eating Warbler, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Prothonotary Warbler, and Orchid Oriole. We also saw two male Shiny Cowbirds, an endemic parasitic West Indies species, now seen more and more in South Florida, which is not good news to the nesting species there. In the afternoon, we made several attempts to locate a Black Noddy on Bush Key, where it sometimes roosts amid the hundreds of Brown Noddies. The bird was there, but unfortunately three Peregrine Falcons kept disturbing the flocks of noddies and it proved quite impossible to see the Black Noddy. The crew treated us to a barbecue on the beach for dinner; we saw a Common Nighthawk fly by and enjoyed seeing the sun set into the Gulf.

Our last day based at Garden Key saw the crew attempt once more to find the Black Noddy, but they were unsuccessful. We cast off and headed for the Gulf Stream to look for shearwaters, storm petrels, and Bridled Terns. Birds were uncommon on our trip back to Key West, but we did spot Audubon's Shearwater and Bridled Tern. Upon arrival at Key West, we saw an immature dark morph Short-tailed Hawk, which is quite an unexpected find in South Florida in May. We spent the rest of the afternoon following up reports of a Bahama Mockingbird. We found it in a park near the beach in Key West. This was certainly the rarest bird of the trip on U.S. soil. Dinner soon followed, as did the key lime pie, and then we ventured out on our second attempt for the Antillean Nighthawk. We drove to a spot on Sugarloaf Key that the nighthawk was known to frequent, and sure enough we were treated to some wonderful flight calls and displays.

The final day of our tour took us into many marshy areas of Sugarloaf Key to locate Black-whiskered Vireo and Mangrove Cuckoo. The vireo was relatively easy to find and

allowed us close-up looks as it moved about in trees close to the road. The Mangrove Cuckoo was another story. The tour guides were quite persistent and patient and it went right down to the wire, as we had a 2-1/2 hour drive to the airport and the elusiveness of the cuckoo made for more than a few mad dashes through the terminals to make flights home. We did see the bird perched in the open and all did arrive in time at the airport. Although this was a large tour group, we did have two guides and the close proximity which everyone was forced into on the boat made the atmosphere one of a summer camp or college dorm. Certainly it is a trip that you must take sometime.



THEODORE ROOSEVELT SANCTUARY

134 Cove Road
Oyster Bay, NY 11771
(516) 922-3200

Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Bird Sanctuary is owned by the National Audubon Society and operated by the Community and three local Audubon chapters, including South Shore Audubon. The following programs are open to the public. Space is limited and registration is required. All program fees are required at the time of registration.

Thursday, November 4th (7 P.M. to 9 P.M., ages 12 and up)
— *Birds of Prey and TRS Raptor Banding Project*. Live birds of prey, their natural history and adaptations, and a discussion of our raptor banding station and research, with slides. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

Saturday, November 6th (1 P.M. to 3 P.M., ages 5 and up)
— *Winter Animal Life*. Join our naturalist to discover what happens to wildlife in winter. Learn tracking and see live mammals, birds, and reptiles. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.

Wednesday, November 17th (7 P.M. to 9 P.M., ages 12 and up)
— *Owl Prowl*. The ever-popular discussion with live owls about their habits and adaptations. It is followed by a guided walk to search for wild ones. TRS members \$5, nonmembers \$7.

Sunday, November 21st (2 P.M. to 4 P.M., ages 5 and up)
— *Native Americans*. Come and find out how the original inhabitants of Long Island lived. Make corn cakes, discover wild foods, see a wigwam, paint your face, and have a great time. TRS members \$3, nonmembers \$5.



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AUDUBON ACTIONLINE (202) 547-9009



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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

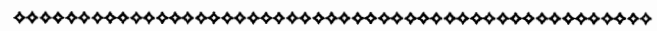
Marion Yavarkovsky

Welcome to our newest members. All of our activities, meetings, and events are for your enjoyment. Please join us and become active members of our chapter.

[For information on joining the South Shore Audubon Society, please call our Membership Chairperson, Marion Yavarkovsky, at 379-2090. The best time to call is after 4 P.M., Monday through Friday.]

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FEDERAL LAW REGULATING FISHERIES TO BE REAUTHORIZED

Marilyn England

[Editor's Note: The following originally appeared in the recently published Summer 1993 issue of *Living Oceans News*, a newsletter of National Audubon Society's Living Oceans Program, 550 South Bay Avenue, Islip, NY 11751. Marilyn England is Grassroots Organizer for the program, whose mission is "to restore abundant marine wildlife and healthy habitats in our oceans and along our coasts."]

If the 1980s raised the public's consciousness about our planet's disappearing rainforests, the 1990s may be remembered as a period of awakening to the plight of the oceans and their most neglected inhabitants. While oil spills, ocean dumping, and "saving the whales" have received widespread public attention, systematic mining of marine fish has gotten far less attention from the conservation community and the general public.

Evidence that the tide may be turning was found in a recent issue of *Newsweek* magazine. *Newsweek* editors ranked overfishing among the top five environmental concerns facing our world. This is good news for the oceans and for the fish, and is especially timely as we move through the reauthorization process of several key pieces of national conservation legislation, including the Endangered Species Act, Marine Mammal Protection Act, Clean Water Act, and the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act.

Of these four federal laws meant to protect our wildlife and regulate the use of major natural resources, the Fisheries Conservation Act, commonly called the Magnuson Act for short, is the least well known because, for the most part, dealing with declining fish populations has not been high on the national agenda. The mind-set that fish are commodities rather than wildlife populations, and the failure of the Act to

define and prevent overfishing, have created a wildlife conservation crisis in our oceans.

Fish Caught in Management Abyss. Enacted by Congress in 1976 to curtail foreign overfishing near U.S. coasts, the Magnuson Act created federal authority to manage the nation's fisheries, claimed the area out to 200 miles from shore as the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the U.S., and set up eight Fishery Management Councils to write regulations governing domestic fishing within the EEZ. The intent of the Act was to Americanize the fisheries by controlling or eliminating foreign fishing along our coasts, and to conserve the fish. Only the first goal was accomplished.

The void left by the departing foreign fleets soon overflowed with domestic fishers who, under the council system of self-regulation, drifted inexorably toward fulfilling Garrett Hardin's maxim: "under conditions of overpopulation, freedom in an unmanaged commons brings ruin to all." Better known as the "tragedy of the commons," conservation in the highly competitive fishery "commons" is not in a fisher's own best interest if someone else will catch the fish he or she leaves behind.

One of Magnuson's major flaws is that it leaves the fox guarding the henhouse. Much damage has occurred because the eight Fishery Management Councils created by the Act have failed to prevent overfishing because they are composed largely of fishers and representatives of commercial and recreational fishing organizations with economic interests in the fisheries (the commons) acting in their own short term economic interest. Few council members have training in managing natural living resources, yet the councils are in charge of managing the living marine resources of the United States. Under the council "management" system, many of the nation's most economically important fisheries are seriously depleted or overfished, which consequently disrupts the oceans' biological systems. Of the nation's commercially valuable fish species whose status has been assessed by the U.S., more than half (57%) are overfished. In New England alone, the cost of overfishing is estimated at \$350 million annually from lost potential catches and 14,000 lost jobs. Nationally, squandered fishery potential costs \$3 billion a year.

In fairness, the councils should not shoulder the blame alone. The National Marine Fisheries Service, which oversees the councils and must sign off on fishery management plans, is undermotivated, underfunded, and undermined by politics. Foot dragging, and in some instances a paralysis of will, has allowed many of the oceans' most magnificent creatures, e.g., giant bluefin tuna, swordfish, marlins, and many sharks, to become severely depleted. And just as serious, the conservation community has historically neglected fish, focusing instead on the more visible mammals, turtles, and birds.

Other problems not addressed by the Act include by-catch (the catching and discarding of unwanted fish and other marine animals), which in some fisheries exceeds targeted catch ten to one, and habitat loss, which is considered to be

responsible for up to half of the decline in our fish populations, with staggering economic consequences.

Speaking for Fish. Clearly, these and other abuses must be immediately addressed by strengthening the law that was intended to conserve living marine resources in perpetuity for all Americans. An improved and stronger Magnuson Act is pivotal to ensuring a future for fish and fishers alike. Magnuson can work, but only if conservation is put back into the Act. In the past, virtually unopposed industry-favored amendments weakened Magnuson's ability to fulfill its conservation mandate. Now, for the first time, the fish have a voice — us — to speak on their behalf. Audubon has joined the Center for Marine Conservation, Greenpeace, the National Coalition for Marine Conservation, and the World Wildlife Fund on the steering committee of the Marine Fish Conservation Network, a new broad-based alliance of conservation and fishing interests dedicated to reforming fisheries management for their long-term sustainability. As its first priority, the Network has targeted the Magnuson Fisheries Conservation and Management Act for reform as the Act moves through the federal reauthorization process this year.

What Needs to Be Done:

- ✚ Define and prohibit overfishing clearly within the Act
- ✚ Protect and restore habitat
- ✚ Mandate rebuilding of depleted fish populations with specified targets and timetables
- ✚ Mandate a national policy to reduce by-catch
- ✚ Improve management of large pelagic species (sharks, billfish, tuna), especially by allowing domestic management to be stricter than that allowed by international commissions
- ✚ Require that new gear be tested prior to use in the fishery
- ✚ Diminish conflicts of interest on the fishery management councils
- ✚ Promote an approach that favors conservation when data are uncertain
- ✚ Increase appropriations for the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- ✚ Encourage limited entry into particular fisheries
- ✚ Improve public participation in fishery management

Your Opportunity. This reauthorization is your opportunity to help rebuild America's fisheries and ensure that future generations will experience the extraordinary diversity, abundance, and beauty in our living oceans.

Make your voice heard during the reauthorization of the Magnuson Act. Write your own Congressperson and the chairpersons of the key Congressional Committees, urging them to support strong legislation to protect and rebuild America's fisheries. Write to: The Honorable ..., U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, DC 20515. [Two Long Island Congressmen are on the key Committee on Merchant Marine & Fisheries, Nassau's Peter J. King and Suffolk's George Hochbrueckner. The Chairman of the Committee is Gerry E. Studds of Massachusetts. The Chairman of the Subcommittee on Fisheries Management is Thomas J. Manton of Queens.]

BIRD WALKS

Elliott Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M. except Pelham Bay Park; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

- Oct. 31 Hempstead Lake State Park (Peninsula Blvd.)
- Nov. 7 Tobay JFK Sanctuary
- Nov. 14 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- Nov. 21 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Nov. 28 Pelham Bay Park for Owls (pull over to street on extreme right after going through Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet at 9:00 A.M.)
- Dec. 5 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)

MY LIFE LIST

Betty Borowsky

Let me apologize beforehand — there are more “I’s” per square inch in the following article than anything seen in recent memory. However, life lists turn out to be very personal, and I really tried to get rid of as many “I’s” as I could without destroying the meaning. (Why, that’s three in the last sentence alone.)

Ever since I started bird-watching, I have recorded the date and place of the first time I identified a new bird. Of course, there are lots of ways to keep a life list (there is also the possibility of not keeping one at all, perhaps the least frustrating option), but my list is sort of a “personal best” endeavor. It has never been my objective to set a world’s record, but to count up the number of birds I’ve been able to identify and try and remember the first time I spotted a particular species. I’m not about to make a special trip to see a bird which was blown off course or something, just to add it to my list. Also, I won’t put a species on my list unless I feel that I’ll be able to recognize it again, myself.

What I like to do is identify a bird in its preferred habitat, and watch its natural behavior. The advantage to this approach is that it allows you to identify birds in ways other than just what they look like. For example, you come to know what birds are most likely to be present at Zach’s Bay in the fall. Then, by looking for specific behaviors and/or vocalizations, you can zero in on proper identities.

Until recently, I kept notes in my field guides, next to the birds’ pictures, which is very unscientific — I really didn’t know how many I had identified, since I have field guides for different parts of the world and scribbles in many of them. So, I decided to put all this on a database. Well, it took forever to get that information into the computer, because I had left notes to myself not only in the field guides, but on various checklists and on sundry scraps of paper. The process was significantly slowed because I stopped to remember the occasion when I spotted the bird. Since I am generally having a good time when I am bird-watching, compiling that list brought back good memories.

To my great surprise, I found that I had only identified 298 birds in my entire life (including pigeons). Now, mind you, I am very particular about whether I add the bird to the list — I need to be convinced that it is in fact the right bird, and that if I had to I’d be able to identify it again. It can’t be an expert saying “look at that speck over there; that’s a Willet” or something. I need a clear view, with book in hand, key features duly noted. Nevertheless, it seemed to me, upon finishing this project, that I must have forgotten to write down *something* or other. Surely I’d identified more than 298 birds in my entire life!

Well, I have gone over that list a few times now, and that’s the number as best as I can determine.

On the up side, however, the advantage of being so picky is that there are still plenty of birds to add to the list. There are all those confusing fall warblers, all those indistinguishable Empidonax flycatchers, and all those sandpipers that elude identification. There are also some birds that are easier to spot. For example, just a few weeks ago I heard an unusual song outside my back door and identified a Carolina Wren. Looking at my list (now duly organized in alphabetical order), I found I had never written it down. Well. 299.

19¢ ESTUARIES POSTER

Michael Sperling

For a free poster entitled “Our Estuaries Are Alive!,” send a postcard to U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region II, Marine & Wetlands Branch, 26 Federal Plaza, New York, NY 10278. The 22 x 32 inch full-color poster is primarily an outline of the New York metropolitan area’s shorelines, identifying the Hudson, Hackensack, Passaic, and East Rivers; Long Island Sound; Raritan, Sandy Hook, Jamaica, and Upper and Lower New York Bays; the Atlantic Ocean; and the surrounding states and counties. Inserted in the main drawing are the prominent title of the poster, an outline map of all of Long Island that serves to identify Peconic Bay, and captioned photographs of a Monarch butterfly, Laughing Gulls, a Mallard, a Black-crowned Night Heron, a young fisherman with a captured bluefish, and a rock crab. At the top of the poster are five sentences about our estuaries.

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BACKYARD BIRD FEEDING, PART TWO (Questions About Feeding Wild Birds)

Editor's Note: The following is excerpted from a 24-page booklet available from the Consumer Information Center, P.O. Box 100, Pueblo, Colorado 81002, that was published in 1990. For a \$1 service charge, you can order up to 25 different free booklets, including four on outdoor birds and others on topics of interest to environmentalists. See last month's *Skimmer* for the first part of this article.

☞ *How long does it take for birds to find a feeder?* Sometimes it can seem like forever. It may take more time for birds to find window feeders than hanging or pole-mounted feeders. If you're impatient, start with a feeder full of hulled sunflower [sunflower hearts]. If that doesn't get their attention, wrap aluminum foil around the top of the feeder hanger. Sometimes all it takes is the reflection of light on the foil to catch their attention.

☞ *My feeder is full of seeds. I haven't seen a bird in months. Am I doing something wrong?* When birds desert your feeder, it may be simply that a lot of natural food is available nearby, or something may be wrong, such as your seeds are spoiled or your feeder contaminated. Throw the seeds away and wash the feeder. Take a look at where your feeder is placed; be sure it's not vulnerable to predators.

☞ *Won't birds' feet stick to metal feeders and perches in the wet winter weather?* Birds don't have sweat glands in their feet, so they won't freeze onto metal feeders. There's no need to cover any metal feeder's parts with plastic or wood to protect birds' feet, tongues, or eyes.

☞ *Do wild birds need grit?* In the winter, you may see flocks of birds along roadsides after the snowplows have passed. They're after the grit. Birds have no teeth to grind their food. The dirt, sand, pebbles, and grit they eat sits in their crop and helps grind up their food. Adding grit to your feeder is helpful year-round, but particularly in the winter and spring. Crushed eggshells do the same thing and in the spring have an added benefit — they provide extra calcium during nesting season.

☞ *Won't suet go "bad" in the summer?* In the winter, raw beef fat from the local butcher is all you need for your suet feeder. When temperatures rise, raw fat can melt and get rancid. It's safer to use commercially rendered suet cakes in the spring and summer months. Rendering, boiling the fat, kills bacteria. And yes, it's okay to feed your woodpeckers year-round. They will visit your feeders all summer long and they'll bring their babies.

☞ *How close to your window can you put a feeder?* Birds will come right to your window. Sometimes it takes a while for them to overcome their initial reluctance, so be patient. Don't worry that a feeder on the window will cause birds to fly into the window. Birds fly into the window because they see the reflection of the woods. Window feeders and decals can help break up the reflection.

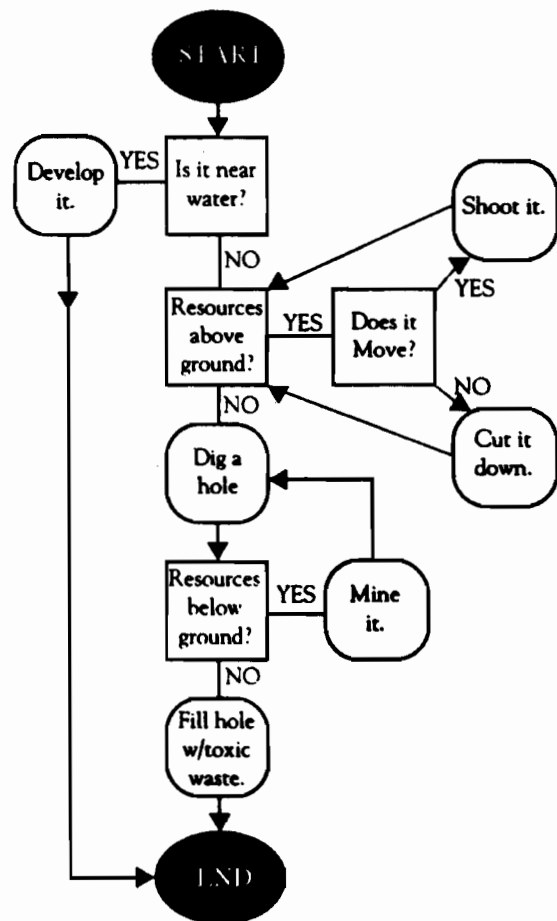
☞ *I bought a bag of sunflower seeds early in the spring. Over the summer I noticed first worms, then moths. What can*

I do to keep the bugs out? It's natural for moths to lay their eggs in sunflower seeds. The eggs lay dormant as long as the seeds are stored in a cool dry place. In the summer, seeds get hot and the eggs hatch. The best way to avoid this problem is to buy seeds in smaller quantities, or store your seeds in a cool, dry place. It also helps to know where your retailer stores the seed; an air conditioned storage unit is the better choice. Insects will also lay their eggs in burlap bags; don't buy seed in burlap bags. Don't buy seed in paper and plastic bags with patched holes; that may be a sign of insect or rodent infestations.

MULTIPLE USE WORKING FOREST ALGORITHM

Michael Sperling

I found the following wonderful flowchart in the Winter Solstice 1992 issue of *The Northern Forest Forum*, an independent journal published "to promote sustainable natural and human communities in and beyond the northern forest region." The Forum receives funding from National Audubon Society as part of its campaign to protect the forests of New York and New England. The flowchart was credited to Mitch Lansky and accompanied a review of his book *Beyond the Beauty Strip: Saving What's Left of Our Forests*.

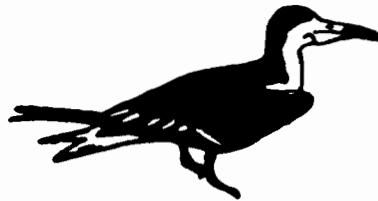


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