OUTH HORE KIMMER

VOLUME 31, NUMBER 2 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

OCTOBER 2000

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Torma

Nassau Budget Problems. We have seen it before with other branches of our government: When elected public officials have budget problems, they start laying off workers. Since they find it difficult to pink slip people involved with safety and health, it is the "nonessential" positions that bear the brunt of the layoffs. This usually means that parks, recreation, museums, and preserves are the worst hit.

When Nassau County announced the layoff of 350 workers, I began to think about Tackapausha Museum and Preserve. I cannot be sure, but these layoffs could have a negative impact on the preserve. If enough workers leave the Department of Recreation and Parks, it could cause decreased hours of operation or even the closing of the museum. The members of the South Shore Audubon Society can help prevent this from happening.

The first thing we can do is visit Tackapausha. An increased attendance will display public support for the museum. You can also attend upcoming events at Tackapausha. By attending these events, you not only support South Shore Audubon; you might be helping Tackapausha stay open.

Halloween Party. On **Saturday, October 28**, SSAS will hold its annual Halloween Party at Tackapausha. This children's party will feature programs and arts & crafts for kids. Have them bring a T-shirt to create wearable art.

Covered Dish Dinner. On **Saturday, November 4** we are planning to have a covered dish dinner at Tackapausha. The cost of admission is a covered dish to share with the other guests. We will get a behind-the-scenes look at the operation of the museum.

Holiday Party. Our annual holiday party will be held on **Saturday**, **December 16** at Tackapausha. The emphasis of this party is on giving. This party has children making gifts for the birds. They make pinecone feeders with peanut butter and birdseed. They also make strings of popcorn and cranberries for birds to feed on. The party also has programs and games. This is a special family event.

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Tuesday, October 10, 2000

TIME: 8:00 P.M. ②

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)

SPEAKERS: Bob Young & Sonny Squiciarino

TOPIC: Birds of Prey

Our October program is a live presentation featuring a Red-tailed Hawk, a Peregrine Falcon, a Harris's Hawk, a Great Horned Owl, a Snowy Owl, and hopefully a Merlin.

The program will be presented by Bob Young, a sixyear General Falconer, and Sonny Squiciarino, a Master Falconer for thirteen years. Both falconers have permits for rehabilitation of raptors and to use these birds for education. Among the subjects to be discussed by the falconers are the sport of falconry and its historical background, and the knowledge that falconers use to rehabilitate raptors and to reintroduce them into the wild. They will also tell us about the ecology of raptors and how birds of prey help protect our health by eating potentially disease-carrying prey.

Mr. Squiciarino works full time and Mr. Young part time at JFK Airport, keeping the runways clear of birds. They will share their experiences helping to keep the runways safe for aircraft.

Photography will be allowed and a background will be set up for that purpose. So join the South Shore Audubon Society for an evening with Mr. Young and Mr. Squiciarino and their birds of prey.

Pre-Meeting Birding ID Class: Bring a field guide, join Scott Oglesby at 7:30, and hear more about birds of prey.

in order to minimize waste, please

BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS

Earth Day. Earth Day will be celebrated at Tackapausha on April 21, 2001. We are planning a day that will be filled with environmental programs and other events to make it a special day.

We Need Your Help; Please Volunteer. We are looking for talented people who have a skill or craft that can be shared with other people. We are trying to set up workshops at Tackapausha. If you have a skill or craft, let me know and we will work to set up a workshop. Call me for details.

★X WELCOME NEW MEMBERS ★X

Wendy Murbach

One of the wonderful perks that you get from an Audubon membership is the chance to be a part of your local Audubon Chapter, South Shore Audubon Society.

You are automatically a valued member of this active and friendly chapter, so please come out to the next meeting at the Freeport Library from 8–10 P.M. on the second Tuesday of the month to hear what you can do to help preserve your local environment's health and viability, to hear about local issues that you can help to solve, and to see an interesting program.

Whether you are a beginning birder or someone with a large life list, you will enjoy our weekly Sunday bird walks led by Elliott Kutner, birder extraordinaire. Check out the special events that are mentioned in this *Skimmer*. Attend them yourself, and bring your family and friends too.

You are warmly invited to be an active participant in this vibrant all-volunteer organization comprised of persons who, like you, care about the earth we live on, about our local environment, and about the creatures that live alongside us.

Our new members	this month are:
Glen Oaks	Mrs. Robin Lugo
Levittown	Robert A. McGlinchey
Lynbrook	Kathy Kobishyn
Massapequa	Alan King
Merrick	Winifred Gwaltney
Rockville Centre	Mr. Arthur Goldstein
Seaford	Mr. & Mrs. M. R. Severino
Wantagh	Janet Hanson, Stephen Hoffman
West Hempstead	Anne Matzner
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SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education, and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

SSAS Post Office Statement — South Shore Skimmer is published monthly from September through December and February through May by South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

BUDGET 2000-2001

Brookside Preserve	2000
Camp Scholarships	
College Scholarships	
Conferences/Council Meetings	
Conservation	
Donations	
Drinking Water Letter	
Education	
Festivals	
Insurance	900
Library Custodians	300
Library Donations	
Library Overtime	500
Membership	400
Miscellaneous	1000
Office Space	450
Publicity	200
Refreshments & 13	400
Secretary	150
Skimmer	6500
Speakers	1000
T.R. Sanctuary Camp Scholarships	5000
Total	
	-



Explore the coast with the

AMERICAN LITTORAL SOCIETY

JAMAICA BAY SUNSET CRUISE (Sat., Oct. 14, 4-7 P.M.). Learn about history & ecology of Jamaica Bay Refuge aboard the 96' Dorothy B VIII. Peak raptor & waterfowl migration time. See Snow Geese, Oystercatcher, Peregrine Falcon, Sharp-shinned & Cooper's Hawks. Cost: \$35 includes wine, cheese, snacks. Leaders: Mickey Cohen, Don Riepe.

NEW YORK AQUARIUM (Nov. 4). Join us for a 2-1/2 hour "Behind-the-Scenes" tour and see beluga whales, walrus, penguins, sea otters, sharks, local & tropical fish. Visit "Discovery Cove" and "Sea Cliff" exhibits. Cost: \$15 (kids \$10). Call Don.

ASSATEAGUE FALL WEEKEND (Nov. 8-12). Visit Chincoteague Refuge and see wild ponies, Bald Eagle, Sika deer, Tundra Swan, Snow Geese, gannets, etc. Cost: \$275 covers 3 nights at Refuge Motor Inn, guides, Saturday seafood dinner, marsh boat tour, Safari back dune tour, evening slide program & star watch.

COSTA RICA (January 16–28, 2001). Visit Monteverde Cloud Forest, Carara Coastal Rainforest, Ocotal Beach Resort, Tabacon Hot Springs & Spa (Arenal Volcano), and more. Call Don for info.

For information and free field trip brochure, call/write Don Riepe, (718) 634-6467.
28 West 9th Road, Broad Channel, NY 11693

JAMAICA BAY BIKEWAY UPDATE

Michael Sperling

In May, an Environmental Assessment Design Approval Document was issued by Gateway National Recreation Area regarding the proposed Cross Bay Boulevard segment of the Rockaway Gateway "Greenway." Veteran Skimmer readers have already seen several articles about this ongoing attempt to turn several acres of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge into bicycle-friendly pavement.

The public comment period for the above document took place during the summer, when most birding and environmental groups, including SSAS, are inactive and don't publish newsletters. The SSAS board voted to op-

> pose Gateway's proposed action and the alternative options provided in the document except for the no-action one. On August 3, New York City Audubon Society hosted a meeting with representatives from Great South Bay Audubon Society, Hudson River Audubon Society Westchester, North Shore Audubon Society, SSAS, and our state field

office. We unanimously agreed to support the no-action option and to oppose the others; there was considerable discussion about whether to accept a less-damaging compromise not included in the document, but there was no consensus on that. We agreed that a full environmental impact review is needed, and that the proposed federal and state funding sources are inappropriate and may be challenged in court if necessary.

The options proposed in the document, with numbers corrected via a June 11 errata sheet, are as follows.

Alternative 1998: Replace the existing 5-foot wide sidewalk with a sinuous 12-foot wide pathway 9,092 feet long, back and forth across the refuge's boundary. Total width would be 16 feet, including two 2-foot shoulders. The space between the pathway and the curb would be revegetated as a buffer and screen from the street. The on-street bike lane would be retained. Net loss of 3.0 acres of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge shrub-thicket habitat.

Alternative 2000 (Proposed Action): Replace the existing 5-foot wide sidewalk that's 5 feet west of Cross Bay Boulevard's curb with a 10-foot wide pathway 8,831 feet long, beginning 9 feet from the back of the curb. Total width would be 12 feet, including two 1-foot shoulders, and would intrude 10 feet into JBWR (the refuge begins at the edge of the existing NYC-owned sidewalk). The space between the pathway and the curb would be revegetated as a buffer and screen from the street. The on-street bike lane would be retained. Net loss of 2.02 acres of habitat.

Alternative 2000, Option b: Same as above, but beginning 7 feet from the back of the curb. Net loss of 1.62 acres of habitat.

Alternative 2000, Option c: Same as above, but beginning 5 feet from the back of the curb. Net loss of 1.22 acres.

No Action. No alterations to existing layout; retain onstreet bike lane. Remote possibility New York City may reconstruct sidewalks (on both sides of Cross Bay Boulevard) as part of maintenance program. No immediate plans for renovation or improvement. No loss of habitat.

The \$1,250,000 to be spent for this proposed destruction of Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge habitat would come from the federal ISTEA program (75%) and from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's Jamaica Bay Damages Account (25%).

ISTEA (pronounced "iced tea" and recently renewed as TEA-21) is the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act, passed by Congress in order to support alternatives to commuting by automobile. ISTEA funds are supposed to be used to principally benefit commuters, not recreational users; the En-

vironmental Assessment Design Approval Document acknowledges that the "Greenway" would be recreational.

The Jamaica Bay Damages Account is the result of a NYSDEC lawsuit against Exxon; the consent decree requires that its funds be spent for "restoring, replacing, or acquiring of the equivalent of any natural resources determined to have been injured, destroyed, or lost as a result of the release of hazardous substances from the landfills."

When Gateway National Recreation Area was created by Congress in 1972 and absorbed the NYC-owned JBWR, Congress declared that "the Secretary (of Interior) shall administer and protect the islands and waters within the Jamaica Bay Unit with the primary aim of preserving the natural resources, fish, and wildlife located therein and shall permit no development or use of this area that is incompatible with this purpose."

As this Skimmer goes to press, the staff at Gateway NRA is analyzing the public comments received regarding the May 2000 Environmental Assessment Design Approval Document. One of those comments is on SSAS letterhead and covers all the points mentioned above. We'll keep you posted. Next time you're at JBWR, take a look at the area closest to Cross Bay Boulevard; your money could be spent to pave it.

********************************* Seed - Feeders (516) 694-2180 Houses - Baths Books - Gifts WILD BIRD CENTER "NEW YORK'S LARGEST WILD BIRD SPECIALTY STORE"

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CONSERVATION EDUCATION REPORT

Bellu Borowsku

This summer, South Shore Audubon Society conducted its day camp scholarship program for disadvantaged youngsters for the third year in a row. The chapter funds one week of day camp at National Audubon's Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary in Oyster Bay for children from our catchment area. This year, we worked with the Rockville Centre School District to send children from the Rockville Centre/South Hempstead/Lakeview area (last year we sent children from the Baldwin School District, and the year before that from the Roosevelt and Hempstead School Districts).

This was probably the most successful year we've had. Experience from previous years helped us avoid some logistical problems, we had more chaperons, and the school district administrators were especially helpful. Before I go any further, let me thank the people who helped us this year.

First and foremost: we gratefully acknowledge the generosity of the Old Navy Company, which donated a bus and driver to take us to and from TR Sanctuary.



Without this assistance, we could not conduct this program. I especially thank Vicky Seeley, who arranged for the bus, and our very

patient bus drivers. The bus stopped at five different stops before going to the Sanctuary, and a few times we had to come back to a particular stop to pick up a child who was late. These wonderful drivers were willing to accommodate anything we needed done, as long as it was safe.

- ₩ We thank Dr. William H. Johnson, School Superintendent of the Rockville Centre School District, for approving of and facilitating our working in the district.
- A special thank you to Ms. Trudy Lubitz, Secretary to the Superintendent, who worked with the social workers and teachers at the five elementary schools in the district and with the Middle School to identify eligible children.
- → We thank Director Marilyn England and the staff and counselors at the Sanctuary, especially Assistant Director Jay Teyan, who accommodated our needs as the list of campers grew and shrank as we approached the week of the camp.
- Thank you to SSAS's Chris Schmitt, Maureen Rube, and Alice Blaustein, our chaperons, who accompanied the children on the bus, tried very hard to make sure that they were all picked up, and made sure the children were safe and comfortable.
- And last, but not least, thank you all for your support. I know you would be as gratified as Chris, Maureen, Alice, and I were to see how much the children enjoyed their camping experience.

Now let me tell you some of the things that happened during the week of camp. When the children get to the

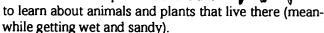
camp on the first day, you can see how tentative they are. Not fearful, so much as realizing that they are in a VERY unfamiliar environment and trying to figure out what it's all about. Their expressions are very clearly: "Good Lord; what IS this place?" (I actually have videos of this.) Near the beginning of the first day, you hear: "How many days will we be going?" And, especially in the beginning, the older ones are concerned about getting their clothes dirty, and perhaps are feeling that some of the activities are undignified for persons of their mature age (some were 13 years old).

But by the end of the first day, most of the children understand that while this is certainly a different experience, it is great fun, and most of them really get into it (I've got that on tape too). Two comments from that first day were: "When are we going to the beach?" and "I can't wait to see what we're going to do tomorrow." And my VERY favorite, when we were walking back to the bus: "We went FISH-ING today!" You need to understand that they didn't actually catch anything. But some of these kids have never done any of the things associated with fishing: preparing the bait, the hook, the rod; learning where you might have some luck; watching the water to see what happens. Stuff most middle-class kids take for granted.

What do the children do when they get there? There might be running games, a version of "tag" in which some

of the children are poachers, some are game wardens, and some are the animals at risk; there might be a presentation about "the animal of the day." Maybe a giant millipede, or lizard,

or vulture is brought out and the counselor tells everyone about it. There might be a trip to the beach to collect shells or other things that have washed up on the shore and



This year I noticed that the Sanctuary counselors had developed conservation/environmental themes for their activities and games. And this was fun too. My favorite comment from one counselor, addressing a younger group who were decorated with face paint and paper head-dresses, was: "OK — Nissequogues line up on the left, Shinnecocks on the right!"

I begin working on this along about January. First I identify a community in our area with a relatively large number of low-income families. (I try to work with only one community a year, just because transportation becomes so difficult when pickup sites are far from each other.) Then I get in contact with the superintendent of the school district that serves that community. I need her or his authority to reach the teachers, who will ultimately select eligible children. Then the superintendent has to set the administrative wheels in motion that will authorize teachers to do these selections. I frequently work with many persons during this period: administrative assis-

tants, social workers, and so forth. Principals and social workers at the elementary schools must participate, and then the principals have to get in touch with the teachers, who identify the children for us. Our criteria for eligible children are: 1) that they really are in financial need, 2) that they are likely to enjoy and appreciate the experience, and 3) that they be entering the third through sixth grades. So far, this has worked out well, although in reality I believe we have not reached the MOST needy families (there are real barriers to this which I will discuss in a later article).

Along about May, when I am getting frustrated by all the problems I have trying to reach parents, and then getting them to send in their medical forms, I decide this is the very last year I'm going to do this. But then I meet the

children, and see how sharp they are, and see how much fun they have. And I get all fired up and enthusiastic again, and start planning for next year. If you would like to participate in this program and, especially, if you have some suggestions for increasing the number



of children we reach, please call me at 764-3596 or stop and talk to me at one of our meetings. These are very, very nice kids. We need to reach more of them.

BIRD WALKS

All walks start at 9:30 A.M. except for Pelham Bay; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Elliott at 486-7667.

Sept. 24 Oct. 1	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot) Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Oct. 8	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Oct. 15**	Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
Oct. 13	
	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Oct. 29	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 5	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Nov. 12	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Nov. 19	Pelham Bay for Owls (pull over to street
	on extreme right after going through
7	Throgs Neck Bridge toll; meet at 9 A.M.)
Nov. 26	Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
Dec. 3	Hempstead Lake State Park (Exit 18, first
	lot south of Southern State Parkway,
	south end of lot)
Dec. 10	Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
Dec. 17	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Dec. 24	Season's Greetings — No Walk
Dec. 31	Happy New Year — No Walk
** Traffic	Advisory: We've recently learned that due to

**Traffic Advisory: We've recently learned that due to the Discover Long Island Bike Tour, the Meadowbrook and Loop Parkways will be closed till noon on October 15. Use the Wantagh Parkway to get to Zach's Bay and celebrate the end of NYS Parks' toll season.

FALL BIRD FESTIVAL REMINDER

SSAS's second annual Fall Bird Festival is/was **Saturday**, **September 23**. There are/were 9 A.M. field trips at Oceanside's Marine Nature Study Area, Brookside Preserve, Tackapausha, Jones Beach West End 2, and Massapequa Preserve; a photography workshop at 9 A.M. at Cow Meadow Preserve; and programs and arts & crafts at Tackapausha Museum till 4 P.M. Scheduled programs include an SSAS slide program at 10 A.M., "Understanding Your Bird Guides" with Scott Oglesby at 11, Tom Torma's "Enjoying Birds of LI" slide show at noon, Elliott Kutner's "A Walk on the Tide Line" film at 1, and TR Sanctuary's live birds of prey at 2. The usual Tackapausha admission will be charged, \$2 for adults and \$1 for children. Need more info or directions? See last month's *Skimmer* or call Tom Torma at 378-4723.

On **Sunday**, **October 29**, from 9:30 A.M. until 2:30 P.M., SSAS will be in Tackapausha's parking lot (on Washington Avenue in Seaford) for our annual end-of-daylight-saving-time birdseed sale. Preorders are recommended & appreciated, and are due October 11, so please send e-mail to mssperling@compuserve.com or call Michael Sperling at 541-0805 (evenings) for an order form if you don't have a copy of last month's *Skimmer*.

We will be selling black oil and striped sunflower, mixed seeds, cracked corn, sunflower chips (no shells), peanut hearts, safflower, niger (thistle), and self-hanging and non-self-hanging suet cakes. Help will be needed and much appreciated on the sale date; no purchase required to volunteer!

If you'd like to become a member of National Audubon and your all-volunteer local chapter (that's us), please mail the following form and your check payable to us to South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031. The special rate for the first year is \$20; \$15 for students and seniors.

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NAME:	
ADDRESS:	
E-MAIL:	-1
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HELP INVENTORY OPEN SPACES

Michael Goldsmith

How would you like to help inventory the few remaining open spaces in Nassau County? Your efforts might lead to the preservation of that land.

The Nassau County Legislature and the Nassau County Planning Commission are in the process of developing an open space plan for the county.

As phase one of the project, the firm Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc., has been commissioned to draft up an inventory of all the open spaces in the county. While they have done an excellent job and have been very receptive to the input of civic and environmental organizations like SSAS, there are still some fairly sizable vacant or undeveloped properties (720 to be precise) that have not been adequately inventoried.

"What we are looking for," said Bridget Duggin of Frederick P. Clark, "is a field analysis of these vacant or undeveloped properties, particularly those near significant resources or trails or parks. The next step is to use the evaluation process to rank the properties. Those with higher ranking are to be targeted for acquisition. The properties will be acquired through a bond act, federal programs, or conservation easements."

Since July, David Künstler and I have been assisting in the project. Bridget has provided us with several maps showing the properties to be examined, as well as their tax map numbers. The smallest are 2 acres and so far the largest has been over 30 acres. She gave us some field data sheets to complete, as well as some film to photograph the properties. I have no scientific background and leave the identification of flora and fauna to David. As an attorney, my main contribution to the cause has been to visit the County Clerk's office and print up the appropriate tax maps to assist us in locating the properties, as they do not come with addresses.

So far, David and I have trespassed on some very spectacular land. In Cove Neck, we explored some quality



Appalachian oak-hickory and oak-tulip forest. One property ended in a steep slope, which we climbed down to a beach. Another property was behind an abandoned old mansion and after walking through about an acre of English ivy, we

came upon a mature chestnut—oak forest, where we saw a Red-eyed Vireo and a hawk.

On a solo expedition, David explored a 36-acre property on Muttontown Road near the Muttontown Preserve. He said he saw a pond that might have been a breeding ground for frogs and other herps.

David is a walking field guide and I have learned quite a bit from exploring these properties with him. However, if you are just an amateur like me, you still can complete the field data sheets. There are properties all over the county that need to be inventoried. So if you or anyone else you know likes to go hiking on unfamiliar land and want to help in this worthwhile project, you can call Bridget Duggin at Frederick P. Clark Associates, Inc., at 516-364-4544 or 914-967-6540. If you need any help figuring out the location of the properties, feel free to give me a call (my number is on the back of the Skimmer) and I will be happy to help you out at the County Clerk's office.

Mike Andersen

After two and a half days of promising scouting, all our preparation and anticipation led up to the moment the clock struck twelve on the 15th morning of April 2000. Standing next to my teammates Jessie Barry of NY, Evan Obercian of NJ, and Scott Yanco of MA, I waited for the first sound to ring through the night. We had all been chosen to compete in the Great Texas Birding Classic, a birdathon created to raise money for habitat preservation and conservation along the Texas Coastal Birding Trail. We were selected to the Leica/ABA Tropicbirds, a youth birding team cosponsored by Leica Sport Optics and the American Birding Association. We competed on the final day of this three-day competition in the Upper Coast Section. All money raised by our team benefited ABA's education and youth birding programs.

Acting as our guides, teachers, and friends were two exceptional birders from Cape May, NJ, Michael O'Brien and Louise Zemaitis. Both were key to our success during our stay in Texas. Their tireless scouting efforts as well as Michael's ability to drive countless miles at odd hours of the night were crucial to our big day. On the day of the Classic, however, none of their skills could be put to use; thus all the identifications were up to us.

Amidst the monotonous drone of mosquitoes and frogs came the first avian sound of the night. Emanating from the marsh was the poodle-like barking of Black-necked Stilts. Ten anxiety-filled minutes after midnight, we finally tallied a bird. Shortly after, we had heard many of our hoped-for night birds at Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.

Throughout the remainder of the nocturnal morning, we added few to our list. However, upon sunrise we were in the Piney Woods of extreme East Texas, hoping for many specialty breeding birds of such habitat. Soon enough, we heard Bachman's Sparrow and Brown-headed Nuthatch, and shared in the sighting of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers with five other teams at their nest site. A wave of migrants, including 40 Orchard Orioles plus many southern breeding warblers, added to our list nicely.

At precisely 11:00 A.M., the clouds broke and the temperature soared. Not long after, the hawks began to fly. Kettles of Broad-winged Hawks with a few Mississippi Kites were quickly tallied before we left for the Beaumont area.

En route, we pulled out a number of Swainson's Hawks from the sky while Evan scoped a distant Red-breasted Merganser in a ditch. Arriving at Tyrell Park, we all caught a second wind and began running down trails. Sora on our right. Singing White-crowned Sparrows to the left. Quick, Swamp Sparrow here. Osprey overhead! Tyrell added no less than 14 species during mid-afternoon, including two Northern Shovelers (pictured) that Evan picked out of a mixed flock of flying ducks.

We were finally making our way into the southern half of our route, always drawing closer to the famed High Island. Our shorebird ponds had all but dried up in the heat of prior days, thus leaving many holes to fill for Bolivar Peninsula later that evening. A staked-out Eurasian Collared-Dove plus a bonus Merlin and we were on our way to High Island.

"Nighthawk!" yelled Jessie from the back of the car. We promptly got out in time to catch a glimpse of this nocturnal bird flying about in the middle of the day.

Surprisingly, Boy Scout Woods, an Audubon sanctuary on High Island, held many birds for us. Due to the south winds, we had not expected to see many migrants here. Upon entering the woods, we found a Lawrence's Warbler — one of the most beautiful birds of the day; however, since it is a hybrid, we could not count it towards the day's total. An amazing bird nonetheless. Walking through both Boy Scout Woods and Smith Oaks Woods, we added ten new birds to the list, including a long-awaited Sedge Wren calling from the marsh grass at Boy Scout. Ten new birds at four o'clock in the afternoon was an amazing feat on a big day!

Bolivar Peninsula — the home stretch. Our first stop was Rollover. Here an impressive assortment of water birds congregated on the sandy flats: gulls, terns, herons, and shorebirds. Almost everything was new at this point, since we had not spent any time in such habitat early in the day.

As we continued heading to Bolivar Flats Shorebird Sanctuary, we made frequent stops on side roads to pick up birds such as Seaside Sparrow, Clapper Rail, and

Green-winged Teal (pictured). In hopes of a repeat performance from last year's competition, we visited a field that yielded a LeConte's Sparrow to last year's team. This field held no sparrow;

however, it did provide brief looks at our only Painted Bunting of the day!

Progressing swiftly toward the flats, Evan picked out our first White-tailed Kite. A sigh of exhilaration and relief ran through the car. We couldn't possibly have missed this spectacular raptor. Shortly after the kite, we remembered a Western Kingbird we had seen on a roadside wire two days prior during scouting. After missing him yesterday evening, we figured he must have moved on. Driving by at

50 mph, we all checked the wire and shouted in unison, "There it is!" By far the easiest bird of the day (even Rock Dove proved a bit elusive for some).

By the time we made it to the expansive flats of Bolivar Shorebird Sanctuary, we needed very little. Seabirds were nonexistent that day, despite the south winds. We searched and re-searched every shorebird to no avail. Returning to the car, we realized we still needed Snowy Plover. A long drive up the beach to the east finally revealed the sandy-colored cousin of the Piping Plover.

By nightfall our list stood at 197, one behind last year's team. Certainly not a bad score, considering each bird earned about \$60 for ABA. A number of traffic jams slowed us down to the point where we had to return to the hotel. A desperate search for Common Loons by moonlight proved fruitless. But wait! We never counted the Horned Lark we saw at Bolivar Flats...198!

Returning to the hotel that night, we all shared a sense of exhausted elation. After signing and submitting our checklist to the judges, we finally got our first real sleep in two days. I think I can speak for us all by saying we certainly learned a great deal about birds and birding.

Editor's Note: Mike Andersen, now an out-of-state college freshman, served as Youth Representative on SSAS's board and participated in many of Joe Grupp's duck surveys. We sponsored his team, wish him well, and hope he visits SSAS when he's in our territory.

Brookside Preserve is a 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland area owned by Nassau County and managed (and rescued from oblivion) by SSAS. With help from a state grant, we published a trail guide and an educational freshwater wetland guide. We continue to add plantings for wildlife, do cleanups, lead field trips, and have committee meetings. Earlier this year we filed and settled the first lawsuit in our chapter's history, helping to protect the preserve from construction planned on its southern border. The preserve is located on the Freeport–Baldwin border, along Milburn Creek.

The Brookside Preserve Committee will be meeting (or met) on **Tuesday, September 26** at 7:30 P.M. at the old Merrick Library Wing (on Merrick Avenue at Kirkwood Avenue, one traffic light south of Sunrise Highway, northeast corner). For details, call committee chairperson Betsy Gulotta.

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WEB PAGE www.audubon.org/chapter/ny/southshore
<b>****************************</b>
NASSAU COUNTY POLLUTION HOTLINE 739-6666
<b>****************************</b>
RARE BIRD ALERT (212) 979-3070
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AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201
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James Remsen, Jr., Birdathon Co-Chairperson (pager number)	516-517-7538		
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Mary Jane Russell, Armchair Activist Chairperson	516-766-7397		
Diane Singer, Publicity (5 to 8 P.M.)	516-561-6118		
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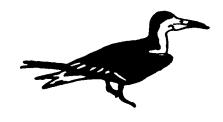
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