

to you, having more vectors and reservoirs increases the chances of transmitting the virus.

The best way to avoid West Nile Virus is to get rid of the areas where vector mosquito larvae breed. Being proactive starts with an inspection around your home and yard. Create a list of locations to check as you remind yourself of all the areas you need to look at.

Dump out standing water from containers in the yard, including recycling bins, bottle caps, cans, tires, boats, and tarps.

Clean debris from rain gutters early in spring and check them regularly. If you are unable to clean them, ask your landscaper or pest control technician. A huge number of mosquitoes can result from clogged gutters.

Clean, filter, and treat pools. Empty children's pools; turn them over when not in use. Keep pool covers clean by propping them up to drain water.

Encourage natural enemies like goldfish and mosquito fish in ornamental pools. Dragonflies and damselflies are mosquito predators. Construct the goldfish pond properly. Large goldfish are unable to reach the sloping edge of the ponds where mosquitoes breed, so be sure your pond has vertical sides. A pond fountain will also reduce mosquito breeding.



Change the water in birdbaths and fountains twice a week.

Protect yourself against mosquitoes. Cover yourself with loose-fitting and lightweight clothing from dusk to dawn. Use insect repellents properly, especially with children. Read the label and follow precautions. Keep household screens in good repair and do not prop open windows and doors.

These are suggestions that will hopefully protect us from the West Nile Virus. If we reduce the number of breeding locations, we might also reduce the need to spray with harmful chemicals and thereby help protect the environment.

I'd like to thank the Nassau County Cornell Cooperative Extension and Dr. Tamson Yeh, Ph.D. for the information found in this article.

BIRD WALKS
Elliott Kutner

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains. Any questions? Call Tom Torma at 378-4723 while Elliott recuperates from a double bypass.

- Apr. 22 Zach's Bay Parking Field #4, N.E. corner
- Apr. 29 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- May 6 & 13 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- May 20 & 27 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- June 3 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- Aug. 12 & 19 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Aug. 26 Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)

SSAS WALK IN CENTRAL PARK

On **Saturday, May 5th**, we will meet at Belvedere Castle at 9 A.M. (unless it rains) to explore the lakes, ponds, meadows, forests, and spring-migration species. Joanne Del Prete has once again recruited NYC Park Ranger Robert DeCandido, Ph.D., to ably lead us through Central Park. Bob recently returned home after spending a month studying raptors in Malaysia. Bring your lunch or join a group lunch afterwards. Joanne will meet SSAS members at any of the following locations:

- 1) LIRR station in Massapequa (Broadway and Sunrise Highway). We will take the 6:58 A.M. train, which is scheduled to arrive in Penn Station at 7:55 and makes local stops through Rockville Centre;
- 2) before 8:15 A.M. at Penn Station (LIRR Waiting Area), after which we'll head to the 8th Avenue subway's C train;
- 3) Belvedere Castle (mid-Park at 79th Street) by 9 A.M. Joanne suggests that you call her at 433-0739 if you want to join us at Massapequa or Penn Station so we can look for you.

Belvedere Castle can be reached at 212-772-0210; touch-tone LIRR schedule info is available at 516-822-5477.

Last Year's List. On the first Saturday in May last year, our outing coincided with the best spring migration weekend in Central Park. We saw the following and more.

Warblers: Black-and-white, Black-throated Blue, Blackburnian, Blackpoll, Blue-winged, Chestnut-sided, Hooded, Kentucky, Magnolia, Prairie, Prothonotary, Wilson's, Yellow, Yellow-rumped, and Yellow-throated; Ovenbird, Northern Parula, American Redstart, Louisiana Waterthrush, and Northern Waterthrush

Sparrows: American Tree, Song, Swamp, White-crowned, and White-throated

And: Red-winged Blackbird, Gray Catbird, Brown-headed Cowbird, Northern Flicker, Least Flycatcher, Boat-tailed Grackle, Common Grackle, Rose-breasted Grosbeak (pictured), Red-tailed Hawk (nesting above an apartment window), Green Heron, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Eastern Kingbird, Black-crowned Night-Heron, Baltimore Oriole, American Robin, Mute Swan with cygnets, Scarlet Tanager, Wood Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Warbling Vireo, Downy Woodpecker, and Red-bellied Woodpecker



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SURVEYOR WANTED

Michael Sperling

As most of you know, in March of last year SSAS reached an out-of-court settlement in our first-ever lawsuit. We had sued Water Works Realty Corp. and Nassau County in order to protect Nassau County's 20-acre Brookside Preserve (which is managed by SSAS and is on the Freeport-Baldwin border just north of Sunrise Highway) from damage to be caused by a nursing home that would be built zero inches from the preserve's southern border. We went to court after the lame-duck Republican-led County Legislature voted to sell an emergency access right-of-way through Brookside for \$750 without issuing an environmental impact statement or getting the State Legislature's approval for its alienation of parkland.

One provision of the court settlement gave SSAS a conservation easement protecting 8,732 square feet between the west bank of Milburn Creek and the nursing home's reconfigured parking lot. Our easement, however, would be lost if and when Water Works Realty Corp. sells the property to another developer, which they were already under contract to do when we filed suit.

Well, a year's gone by and Water Works Realty's deal with the other developer has reportedly fallen through and it's now possible that they'll end up developing the property themselves. So SSAS is seeking a surveyor to map out our conservation easement. A pro bono surveyor would be our first choice, of course, but we'd also like to hear from anyone who would be willing to map the easement at a bargain price. Please call me at 541-0805 after 7:30 P.M. if you'd like to contribute your services for the benefit of Brookside Preserve and SSAS's checkbook.



SSAS FOURTEENTH ANNUAL BIRDATHON!

James Remsen, Jr.

This year, SSAS will conduct its fourteenth annual Birdathon! SSAS raises funds through the Birdathon by having members get cash pledges for each species of bird identified during a 24-hour period in May, when the spring migration is at its height. Due to the recent decision by National Audubon to sharply decrease the amount of financial support given to chapters, the Birdathon takes on new importance; it is one of our major sources of additional income. Many of you have been very generous with your time and pledges in recent years; last year netted approximately \$3000 for the chapter and we thank you! We hope you will continue and increase your gift of either time or pledges this year.

Mark the dates on your calendar — **Friday, May 11** from 5:00 P.M. until **Saturday, May 12** at 5:00 P.M. — and join one of our intrepid leaders (or go it alone, in which

case you choose the turf). Rain dates will be one week later at the same times.

Please note: In the event of questionable weather, I will decide whether or not to cancel the Birdathon by 3:00 P.M. on Friday, May 11. If you have any uncertainty about whether it will be postponed, please call me no later than 3 o'clock on May 11. This may save unnecessary trips.

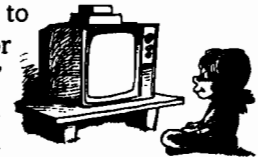
We need Birdathon prizes! As we have done in the past, we wish to make everyone who brings in at least one pledge (sponsoring yourself counts) eligible for a prize drawing to be held at our annual dinner. However, as of now we have very few prizes. If you would like to donate a prize, please contact Jim Remsen. What we would really like to do is give some kind of reward to everyone who takes part, but we will need suggestions or donations to do this. Please see me at meetings if you can help!

Our schedule of starting places and leaders is as follows:

Friday, May 11: Meet Ken and Karen Wenzel at Mill Pond, Merrick Road, Wantagh/Bellmore (5:15 P.M.); Paul Butkerei at Jones Beach's Coast Guard Station (5:00 P.M.); or Joe Grupp and Jim Remsen at Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot, 5:00 P.M.).

Saturday, May 12: Meet Ken and Karen Wenzel at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge at 8:00 A.M.; Paul Butkerei at the Ryan Building behind Mercy Hospital at 6:00 A.M.; or Jim and Doreen Remsen at Mill Pond, Merrick Road, Wantagh/Bellmore at 5:45 A.M. Please try to notify me or Doreen Remsen before the Birdathon if you plan to go with one of these groups so they will know how many people to expect.

If you aren't going with a team, why not try your own Birdathon? Do a variation on the usual theme of seeing as many species as you can during the count period. Use your imagination. Limit yourself to your backyard, a favorite park or preserve, or even a "couch potato" Birdathon. (For this one, you count as many bird species as you can on television during the 24 hours. Yes, people have really done it, but we suggest you make it clear to your sponsors if you decide to give it a try!)



Sponsors are the heart of the Birdathon. These are people who agree to give you 25¢, \$1.00, or any amount for each species you see (they may also give you a flat pledge not based on number of species). Ask anyone you know, and don't forget yourself!

Pledges are due no later than Monday, June 11 to be eligible for prizes, which will be awarded at our annual dinner (assuming we can get enough prizes!). You can submit pledges on bird walks, or mail them to me (address below). If you have questions, call me or speak to me at meetings. If you need extra pledge forms, I can supply them, too. Let's make our 2001 Birdathon special by raising more funds than ever! Good luck!

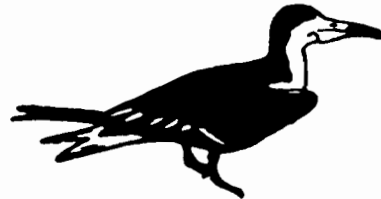
Birdathon Chairperson: James Remsen, Jr., 8 Venetian Blvd., Lindenhurst NY 11757.

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