

VOLUME 44, NUMBER 3 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 2013

NEXT MEETING

John Gaglione

DATE: Tuesday, November 12, 2013

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Freeport Memorial Library

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

SPEAKER: Sean Mahar

TOPIC: Birds and Climate Change: Ecological

Disruption in Motion!

Superstorms, rising seas, warming temperatures — things are a-changing and it's not just the climate. Birds are strong indicators of environmental health and they are starting to show us that the effects of climate change are real and just beginning to be felt. This month's presentation will discuss what this means for conservation efforts and what you can do to combat this urgent threat, based on the latest data from Christmas Bird Counts and other expert analyses.

Our guest speaker, Sean Mahar, is the Director of Government Relations and Communications for our state office, Audubon New York. A graduate of Siena College, he began as the Grassroots Coordinator for Audubon New York in 2002 and now directs the Government Relations program, advancing state and federal conservation policies that protect New York's environment and effectively promote Audubon in the media. Sean is currently focused on securing state and federal investments for the restoration of Long Island Sound and the Great Lakes, leading statewide coalitions focused on protecting these amazing ecosystems. He also focuses on building support for wildlife conservation initiatives in the state, including climatechange adaptation strategies, and received the 2012 Outstanding Conservationist Award from The Wildlife Society in recognition of his efforts.

Throughout his career, Sean has secured passage of numerous state legislative initiatives, most notably the Great Lakes Compact and Smart Growth Infrastructure Policy Act. He has also launched several successful projects, including *Mission: Migration*, a Web-based video

game for children to learn about bird migration, and most recently the *Birds Mean Business* campaign to highlight the economic impact of ecotourism. Sean lives in Troy, NY with his wife Jessica and daughter Stefanie. Join us!

Pre-Meeting Book Discussion. Arrive a half-hour early to participate in a discussion led by R. U. Abyrdar II (aka Paul Stessel) of the book that he reviewed in the previous *Skimmer.* This month's book is *How Birds Migrate* by Paul Kerlinger.

Parking Lots. In addition to the parking lot adjacent to the library, there's a lightly used, well-lit, and fairly close municipal lot on the east side of S. Ocean Ave., on the near (south) side of the gas station that borders Sunrise Highway.



SSAS Mission Statement — The mission of South Shore Audubon Society is to promote environmental education; conduct research pertaining to local bird populations, wildlife, and habitat; and preserve and restore our environment, through responsible activism, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE Climate Change and Endurance

Jim Brown

Recently there have been some very disturbing news items related to global warming and climate change. These events concern the Arctic, where the effects of our rapidly changing climate are having some of the earliest and most visible impacts. Changes in the Arctic are more rapid than elsewhere. Fragile areas are hit first and hardest.

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The first item is a report that this year, due to the melting of ice floes — their usual habitat — approximately 10,000 walruses have crammed themselves into a very small beach on an Alaskan island in the Chukchi Sea, 700 miles northwest of Anchorage. This presents a problem for these large marine mammals, in that stampedes of the

animals can become deadly, especially for the young walruses who can be crushed.

Stampedes result from members of the herd being exposed to noises or activities that scare them. The U.S. Fish and Wild-

life Service is attempting to prevent stampedes and deaths of walruses by keeping planes and people away from the area. The plight of these Alaskan walruses is similar to that of the reports of distressed polar bears, who are similarly losing their habitat to global warming and climate change.

Another recent disquieting news story is that of the 30 Greenpeace activists who have been arrested by Russian authorities off the coast of Siberia for protesting drilling for oil in the Arctic Ocean. Two of the Greenpeace group attempted to scale the first Arctic offshore oil platform that is slated to actually become operational and drill for oil. The attempted peaceful protest was thwarted by armed Russian coast guards and all aboard the Greenpeace ship *Arctic Sunrise* were arrested, taken to Murmansk, held incommunicado, and interrogated. Everyone aboard the ship is currently facing piracy charges in Russia, which carry a possible prison sentence of 15 years. Protests are planned in cities throughout the world to demand their release

As the Arctic Ocean has begun to warm and Arctic ice melt, and as petroleum reserves have been discovered lying under the seabed north of Asian and North American landmasses, the Arctic is now viewed as a source of energy and economic riches. Western companies, such as ExxonMobil and Shell, are partnering with the Russian state-owned companies to search and drill for oil. Offshore petroleum exploration is being pursued throughout the Arctic. The breakup of Arctic sea ice during the summer is increasingly evident, and this warming phenomenon is making the whole exploration and drilling process easier. This would create exponential changes and exponential environmental damage. Let the permafrost be damned — full speed ahead with fossil fuels!

The climate is changing — too rapidly, as we put more carbon in the atmosphere. Some things are not changing: the search for ever more fossil fuel deposits, the quest for profit. Nevertheless, the real human desire to preserve nature is seen in the fact that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is attempting to save walruses from a harmful situation created by humans. This deep concern for our natural world is also evidenced by the brave action of people like the Greenpeace protesters who literally go to the ends of the earth to protect it. This desire to preserve nature is also unchangeable in a sense. It is always there.

It endures. Fortunately there always seem to be people who will stand up for the natural world, a world that we all depend on. In the case of climate change, may our desire for a healthy world be victorious!

November is election time. I urge everyone to participate in the electoral process. All of us who are fighting for a saner world and a healthier environment must evaluate what the different candidates have to say about our need to confront the realities of climate change. Even after the elections, we must continue to press our politicians and office holders to support efforts to move away from fossil fuels and to more fully embrace renewable energy solutions and energy conservation. Creating enduring laws and policies that preserve the environment is now more critical than ever.



Steve Schellenger

All walks start at 9:30 A.M.; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Any questions? Call Steve at 987-8103. Directions and lists of what we've seen may be found at ssaudubon.org.

Oct. 27	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)			
Nov. 3	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner			
	(and Lido Preserve afterwards)			
Nov. 10	Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern			
	State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)			
Nov. 17	Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north			
	side of Merrick Rd.)			
Nov. 24	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner			
Dec. 1	Alley Pond Park (76th Ave. parking lot)			
Dec. 8	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)			
Dec. 15	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner			

SHOP AT OUR ONLINE NATURE MALL

Our Web site, ssaudubon.org, contains a link to the Online Nature Mall, which automatically gives a percentage of your purchases (10%) to SSAS if visited via the link on our home page.

The mall is a division of the Thayer Birding Software company, which is partly owned by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. There are about 10,000 products available in the following categories: software, nature sounds, birds, nature books, binoculars, bird feeders, home/garden, and kids

THEY'RE GOING FAST...

Therese Lucas

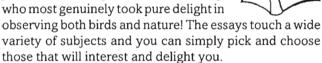
We are selling Audubon calendars at a discount price of \$9. Many have been purchased. So, next time you're on a South Shore Audubon bird walk or at the November meeting, make your choice of Songbirds, Wildflowers, or National Parks, or you might miss your opportunity!

BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

R. U. Abyrdar II

This month I'll be looking at a book that's suitable for gift giving, with the holidays quickly coming upon us! The book I'll be reviewing is All Things Reconsidered: My Birding Adventures by Roger Tory Peterson (herein referred to as

RTP). This is a wonderful, well-written book of essays by RTP, gleaned from that great bird magazine, Bird Watcher's Digest. As you begin to read, you will be able to tell that he was a patient, knowledgeable human being



The author was one of the world's greatest naturalists. Since he revolutionized bird-watching for the masses with his field guide in 1934, he is recognized as the single most important person in all of the bird-watching world! His unique perspective on birding comes to life in these highly personal essays. He relates adventures he had endured during a lifetime of birding and traveling the world to observe and record nature in all of its many guises. These essays, such as "Florida's Hot Spots," "Memories of Manhattan," or "Ecotourism — the New Buzzword," are particularly unique because they remind us that he was an accomplished bird photographer, as well as an extraordinary artist. He was as passionate about his photography as he was about his painting.

These essays were carefully selected for inclusion in this book by the editor of Bird Watcher's Digest, Bill Thompson III, and were written during the last 12 years of RTP's life (1984-1986). In one of his essays, "Bwana Ndege — Return to Kenya," he is birding in Kenya and a headwaiter in a Nairobi restaurant refers to him as "Bwana Ndege," or "Mr. Bird," and so he was! These selections are real gems and display many of RTP's little-known interests as well as fascinating descriptions of his birding adventures in such varied places as Mexico, Africa, and, believe it or not, New York City, especially Central Park. He displays an elegant and precise writing style that I think you will all enjoy. Herein lie some 40-odd columns, illustrated with his own photographs. He once remarked that, "bird photography was his therapy," and judging from his photos, so it was; he really was an accomplished photographer!

As you read his essays, he will be taking us all over the world on his adventures and you will come face-to-face with a wide variety of birds. These adventures are captured in vivid vignettes, perfect for that birder relative or friend during this holiday season. I thoroughly enjoyed those vignettes that I read, and as I read I really got to know this great man. His human touch in these essays make this much more than merely a bird book. He was not just an ornithologist, naturalist, or artist, but simply a remarkably multitalented individual. Even though these essays were written during his twilight years, they portray him as he was, with friends, both of the bird variety as well as the human kind. Written in a very unassuming, down-to-earth style, he will entertain you with these vivid stories! As always, read and ENJOY!! Happy holidays!

····· 秋 WELCOME NEW MEMBERS 秋

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 7:30-9:30 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. 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 since the last Skimmer are:

Atlantic Beach Patsy Roth				
Bellmore Patricia Deleo, Mary Grace Roach, Francesca				
& Theresa Stein				
Bethpage Marianne Pardal				
Commack Margo Beyer				
Franklin Square John Field, Judith B. Schmidt				
Garden City Tom Mc Loghlin				
Hewlett Jaclyn Friedman				
Hicksville Elvira Elella, Suzanne Fallon, Danielle Jump				
Lawrence Elaine August				
Levittown Genna Udda				
Long Beach Rosie Devito, Judith Weitz				
Lynbrook Michael Draper, Mavis Swanson				
Malverne Myra Jawdoszyn				
Massapequa Nancy Depalo, Toba Hartmann				
Massapequa Park Cynthia Clark				
Merrick Mary P. Lambert, Chris McTigue, Chris Rotella				
Oceanside Joseph Book, Matthew Gilbert, Katherine				
Reviaska, John H. Shaw, M. Willard				
Plainview Julie Elson, Lisa Olsen				
Rockville Centre Myrna Kaplan				
Uniondale Hsiow-Yeng Chen				
Valley Stream M. Alan, Leslie Block, Therese Davis,				
Kenneth Stock				
West Hempstead Joseph Mills				
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NAT'L AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (800) 274-4201				

ENVIRONMENTAL PROPOSITIONS

Michael Sperling

There are six statewide propositions on this year's ballot, two of which concern many acres in the

Election Day

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ 🏚 🏚 Adirondacks. According to the League of Women Voters of New York State's Proposition Guide ★ ★ ★ ★ 🏚 🎄 (posted at www.lwvny.org, with pros and cons), they read as follows:

Proposal Number Four: An Amendment. The proposed amendment to section 1 of article 14 of the Constitution would authorize the Legislature to settle long-standing disputes between the State and private entities over certain parcels of land within the forest preserve in the town of Long Lake, Hamilton County, In exchange for giving up its claim to disputed parcels, the State would get land to be incorporated into the forest preserves that would benefit the forest preserve more than the disputed parcels currently do. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

Proposal Number Five: An Amendment. The proposed amendment to section 1 of article 14 of the Constitution would authorize the Legislature to convey forest preserve land located in the town of Lewis, Essex County, to NYCO Minerals, a private company that plans on mining the land. In exchange, NYCO Minerals would give the State at least the same amount of land of at least the same value. with a minimum assessed value of \$1 million, to be added to the forest preserve. When NYCO Minerals finishes mining, it would restore the condition of the land and return it to the forest preserve. Shall the proposed amendment be approved?

Proposition #4 is supported by the NY League of Conservation Voters, Open Space Institute, Adirondack Council, Adirondack Mountain Club, Protect the Adirondacks!, and Adirondack Wild.

The Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club (the chapter for all of NY), Adirondack Wild, and Protect the Adirondacks! oppose Proposition #5, which would set a precedent by revising the Forever Wild clause in NY's Constitution solely for the benefit of a corporation (see http:// saveforeverwild.org); the Adirondack Council and Adirondack Mountain Club, however, support the proposition, which gives NYCO Minerals access to approximately 200 acres of parkland.

TACKAPAUSHA HOLIDAY PARTY

Marilyn Hametz

Our Tackapausha Holiday Party for children will be on Saturday, December 14. To help with this enjoyable afternoon, please contact me at 799-7189 or Marilynexpl@yahoo.com.

NASSAU COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HOTLINE 571-6306

BROOKSIDE PRESERVE FALL CLEANUP AND INVASIVES REMOVAL

On Sunday, November 17, starting at 1 P.M., SSAS will have its fall cleanup at Brookside Preserve, rain or shine. The focus of this cleanup, unless significant rain breaks our drought and provides a fresh supply of litter down

Milburn Creek, will be the curtailment of invasive plants. Brookside is a 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland area owned by Nassau County that was rescued from oblivion and is managed by SSAS; the **NEEDED** adjacent Brooklyn Water Works property, which was

purchased by the County last year, is being added to it. PDF files of our trail guide and freshwater wetland guide for children can be downloaded from ssaudubon.org. The Preserve is located on the Freeport-Baldwin bor-

der, along Milburn Creek; park at the main entrance on Brookside Avenue just north of Sunrise Highway (turn north at the traffic light that's just east of Freeport High School). Please bring pruning shears if possible and work gloves.

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NATURE TALES FROM A WANDERER Hawaiian Backyard Birds

Јое Сгирр

As mentioned in this column in the last issue of the *Skimmer*, we were recently on the island of Oahu in Hawaii, celebrating our granddaughter's wedding. Our stay was for a week and we resided in a rental home with other family members during that time. A nice pool and a small fenced backyard was perfect not only for our relaxation time, but also for observing the local backyard birds, both intentionally or by briefly noticing them as one glanced outside while being involved in other activities, or perhaps while relaxing in a backyard chair or even while taking a dip in the pool. It wasn't long before the various species became familiar to us. By week's end we listed six species that visited the yard.

The most common species was the Zebra Dove, a very small dove that appeared individually or in very small numbers. They were a tannish brown color with a dull light-blue head and a body covered with closely spaced bars. They had little fear of people and one time we had to chase one from our table in an outdoor restaurant, where it then flew off and tried to join diners at another table. It was a bird found in our yard most of the time. Frequently a different dove visited the yard, the Spotted Dove. It is larger than the Zebra Dove, which was very evident when the two species were fairly close together. A white-spotted black patch on the nape (back of the neck) made its identification easy. The most frequent songbird in the yard was the Red-vented Bulbul. It is a sharply crested dark-gray appearing bird whose lighter body color was evident only in the best of light and the red feathers under the tail not always obvious at all. It was in the yard more times than not and also easily identified.

Appearing frequently each day, but less often than the above three species and not there every time we might want to see it, was the Red-crested Cardinal. In appearance it resembled the Northern Cardinal of home except for its color pattern. Its back and wings are dark gray, the front of the head and crest a red that extends onto its white breast in a narrow vee. The white of the breast continues down the underparts of the bird and also wraps around the back of the head and neck. The colors and the patterns they formed were dramatic, and I was always pleased to see the bird. I usually do not have a favorite bird but on this trip the Red-crested Cardinal came pretty close to being one. Seen less frequently was the Common Myna (pictured), which usually did not stay long. A plump dark bird with a distinctive oval yellow eye patch 🐺 formed by a lack of feathers and a bright yellow skin made it another easy identification. Last, but not least, a Northern Cardinal appeared, perched on the branch of a shrub just as it does at home. It only appeared in the yard one time, however.

The six species observed are all introduced species and reflect the effect that human activity has had on the islands. The Zebra Dove is native to Malaya and Australia, and was introduced in 1922. The Spotted Dove is native to Southeast Asia and was introduced in the 19th century. The Red-vented Bulbul is native to India and was widely introduced on many of the Pacific Islands. The Red-crested Cardinal is native to South America and was introduced in 1929. The Common Myna is native to India and was introduced to Hawaii and many other islands in the Pacific Ocean. The Northern Cardinal is native to North America and was introduced in 1929.

The lack of native species in the population of the backyard birds that we observed is a strong reminder of the impact that the influx of humans from beyond the Hawaiian Islands had on the island's avifauna. Not one of the birds observed in that yard was native to the Hawaiian Islands; except for the Northern Cardinal they were all species that we saw in the wild for the first time and may never see again. It was satisfying observing them in the comforts of our temporary home, more so for learning of their significance in the natural history of Hawaii.

VOLUNTEERS FOR WILDLIFE (516) 674-0982

SSAS SENDS NINE FINANCIALLY DISADVANTAGED CHILDREN TO TRSAC'S SLEEPAWAY SUMMER PROGRAM

Belty Borowsky

Once again the South Shore Audubon Society has funded the tuition for a week of summer camp for disadvantaged children. This year (our fourteenth!), the scholarship was offered to children who had been participating in the "For the Birds!" program conducted at the Washington-Rose and Centennial Avenue Elementary Schools in Roosevelt by community volunteers and staff at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center (TRSAC). The program is funded by a grant from the Helmsley Charitable Trust. Briefly, the "For the Birds!" program "teaches environmental awareness and appreciation of nature through the study of birds. During an 8- or 16-week session, students learn about their natural environment through classroom lessons, outdoor field trips, a live bird program, and a conservation project designed to provide bird habitat in the local community. The program curriculum is aligned to New York State's performance standards in Math, Science and Technology, and English Language Arts" (http:// /ny.audubon.org/birds-1).

TRSAC offered the program in Roosevelt because it is a low-income community. All the children who participated in the program were invited to submit an essay explaining why they would like to attend this sleepaway camp, and nine of them were chosen to receive the scholarship.

The best way to get an idea of how much the children gained from their experience is to let them speak for themselves. Below are a few essays the children wrote both before and after they attended camp. I think you will find them extremely endearing and gratifying; at the same time, some of them are simply hilarious. Evidently s'mores was a life-changing experience for many of them. We look forward to offering this opportunity to a new group of children next summer.

Why I want to go to The Summer Sanctuary at the Audubon Center

Hello. My name is I am in Mrs.
's fourth grade class and I am going to tell you the reasons why I would like to go to the Summer Sanctuary at the Audubon center.

One reason I would like to go to the Summer Sanctuary is because I think birds are very interesting. My favorite bird is the Northern Cardinal because I think the birds crest is divine. I also think that when the bird spreads its wings it is very exhilarating because it looks so beautiful when it gets ready to soar into the sky.

Another reason I would like to go to the Summer Sanctuary is that I would like to study birds more in order to find out how does these intelligent birds use its natural resources by its habitat in order to live. I think people should spread awareness about how hurting the environment can lead to hurting birds severely or could lead to taking a birds life away.

Another reason why I would like to go to the Summer Sanctuary is because I think a week in the wilderness can lead to a healthier life and can encourage other kids to go out in nature and play. Kids should also have a nature walk once in a while or a bird watch.

My other reason why I want to go to the Summer Sanctuary is because I want to learn how do birds eat, live, play and give birth to their offspring. I think these topics will be fun to learn about in the future because I love to learn about birds characteristics and I like to learn about the things that inhabit the earth.

My next reason why I would like to go to the campout because I think the activities included at the sanctuary such as canoeing, hiking, bird watching and cooking over a campfire are very fun and exhilarating because I like taking time off from watching TV and playing video games to enjoy nature.

This is why I would to the Summer Sanctuary at the Audubon Center. I hope you like my essay and drawing.

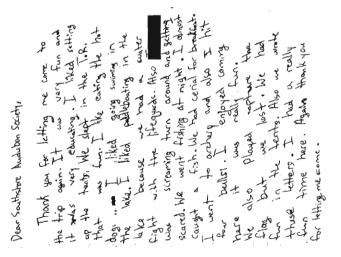
There are many reasons why it would be exciting for me to participate in the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center. There are so many different birds that I have not seen before, like the Pacific Loon or the Hornad Grebe. When I grow up I want to be a veterinarian. I have always wanted unusual pets; when I was four I even asked my parents for a giraffe but they did not think that it would be a good idea to have a giraffe as a pet.

It would be exciting to see all of the birds at the center. I will learn about their habitats and inherited traits. It also want to visit the sanctuary because it is home to many endangered birds and to some of the rarest birds in the world. It would be a great experience for me to learn what happens at the center around the clock. I understand birds need to be protected so they can survive, going on this trip I will learn what I could do to help protect animals from becoming extinct.

At the center I hope to learn about rare birds. I am also looking forward to learning how to take care of animals, which will help me achieve my dream of becoming a veterinarian. These are the reasons why I want to participate at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon center.

Dear South Shore Audubon,

Thank you for choosing me to go on this camping trip. The things I enjoyed were swimming in the lakes and playing games in the Jake In the lake I also liked foodsing the badel boats and steeping it. I liked abing to the General Stoke and getting the target a times. I liked doing archery and withing the target a times. I liked roosting the marshmellows and and making smores and rating them. I like making I my tent and steeping in the tent. I liked taking a shower after going I wim ming at the lake. I liked washing my dishes after we ate food. I also like getting some langur and making a chinesus tain at ase.



SSAS BACKYARD BIRD SURVEY

For several years, SSAS's Research Committee has been conducting a study to document the bird species found in the SSAS area and to estimate their numbers. We greatly appreciate input from anyone that feeds and/or observes birds in their yard or neighborhood.

To participate, simply record the birds that you see in your yard, neighborhood, or at your feeder; the date, time, and the number or approximate number of each species; and fill in the table provided below. If you have more recordings than lines in the table, please attach an additional piece of paper to the table and submit the additional recordings in the same manner. At the end of each month, please mail or e-mail your record to me at the appropriate address listed below, or hand it to me at our monthly meeting. Additional survey sheets are available at SSAS events.

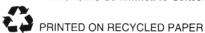
Please do not hesitate to submit your observations, even if you have been able to make only very few. WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

Dates: Fr	rom	to					
Date		Species	No.	Date	Time	Species	No.
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				Submitted by:			
				Address:			
				Please send to: Mr. J. Grupp, Research Chairperson 660 Edgemere Ave., Uniondale NY 11553 or			
						E-mail: Birdstudyjoeg02@aol.c	com

South Shore Audubon Society P.O. Box 31 Freeport, NY 11520-0031

A CHAPTER OF THE NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY

Americans Committed to Conservation



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BECOME A MEMBER OF SSAS Think Globally, but Join Locally!

Option 1. You can join SSAS for a year by sending \$20 payable to **South Shore Audubon Society** using the form below. Our address is P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

Option 2. To join NAS and your all-volunteer local chapter, you can help SSAS by joining Audubon through us for the same price that it costs if you join through NAS (we get \$0 from these dues unless you join through us). Mail the form below and your check payable to **National Audubon Society** to SSAS at the address above. The special rate for the first year is \$20 per household.

Renewing? Please send NAS renewals directly to NAS (the approx. \$3/year we get per member is not based on renewals).

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Yes, I'd like to join: SSAS only	☐ National Audubon too			
NAME:				
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E-MAIL: Chapter Code C3ZR150Z (South Sh	hore Audubon Society)			