

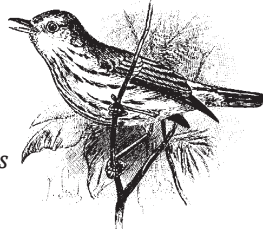


SSAS conducts bird walks there several times a year, and our members visit the park individually all the time. I meet one or more of you almost every time I go there.

So come to the park with us on our formal bird walks, on I Love My Park Day (see Jim Brown's article on p. 6), and, of course, enjoy it on your own. With any luck you will spot one of the glory birds; there are Great Horned Owls, Osprey, Wood Ducks, Common Nighthawks, and Bald Eagles. But even if you don't see one of those, the spring migration will bring you our beautiful warblers with their unique calls and songs, Scarlet and Summer Tanagers, vireos — really, it's a very long list. And some of them will stay all summer: Baltimore and Orchard Orioles, Yellow Warblers, and many others.

This is the season when if you're working indoors you can't focus; and after work it's all you can do to make yourself come indoors to eat and rest, in case you miss something. Maxwell Corydon Wheat, Jr., our Poet In Residence, captured the beauty of the spring migration perfectly in his poem *Fiesta*:

*Comes with warblers,  
waves of warblers  
moving up the continents:  
Yellows [pictured], Bay-breasted  
Black-throated Blues, Greens.  
Myrtles, Magnolias  
flourishing wing-tail skirts of white and yellow,*



*Redstarts flashing flamenco fans of orange and red,  
Chestnut-sideds displaying headdresses of the sun  
Then, Blackburnians  
flown from flames of Aztec fires,  
Prothonotary emblazoned with Inca gold*

I hope you enjoy the season to its fullest.



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**NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2016-2017 BOARD**

At South Shore Audubon Society's general meeting on May 10, officers and directors will be elected for our next fiscal year. All members attending that meeting may nominate candidates from the floor and vote. The SSAS Nominating Committee (chaired by Mike Sperling, with Jim Brown and Marilyn Hametz) recommends the following candidates: Betty Borowsky, president; To Be Announced, vice president; Joe Landesberg, treasurer; Arlene Rawls, recording secretary; Therese Lucas, corresponding secretary; and Brien Weiner and Somebody Else, directors (for three-year terms).

**Directors & Officers Liability Insurance.** In accordance with state law, this paragraph informs our members prior to the election that SSAS obtained D&O insurance for its board at an annual cost of \$868 via a one-year policy from Mount Vernon Fire Insurance Company that went into effect on November 12, 2015.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

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 Memorial Library from 7:30-9:30 P.M. on the second Tuesday of the month (September through May) 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.

Check out the weekly bird walks and other 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:

- Baldwin..... Howard Batsford, Ellen Heldt
- Bellmore..... Gary Strumeyer
- East Meadow..... Joan Levy
- Farmingdale..... Gail Kampfer, Tahitia Kremer, Kathleen Mayer
- Floral Park..... Janet G. Afflerbach, Linda Nicholson, Jack Wille
- Freeport..... Russell Holland
- Levittown..... Lawrence Berke
- Long Beach..... Cindy Bell, Bert Krashes
- Lynbrook..... Kathryn Alessi, Cynthia Ferri, Linda McIntyre
- Massapequa..... John W. Grover, Edward Wernersbach
- Massapequa Park..... Viola Aasen, Edward Fuhrmann
- Merrick..... Edward Caragol, Thomas Mackay
- Oceanside..... Lisa Tobin
- Plainview..... Leona Fein, Frank Siegel
- Rockville Centre..... Austin Akner, Theodora Sacknoff
- Seaford..... Kara Gallagher
- Uniondale..... Yolene Keyes
- Valley Stream..... Marie Caruso, Myong Lee
- Wantagh..... Raymond Cody, Carmel Davanzo, Nancy Kaplan



OUR E-LIST [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas\\_list](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas_list)



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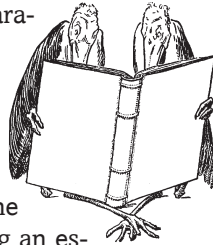
## BOOKS FOR BIRDERS

Avery Scott

*A Message from R. U. Aabyrdar II:* For our final column of the 2015–16 season, we’ve given the honor of this review to our 2016 American Birding Association “Young Birder of the Year,” Avery Scott. Sy and I say “have a wonderful summer; see you again in the fall.”

*The Armchair Birder: Discovering the Secret Lives of Familiar Birds* by John Yow is a unique book indeed. While other books may regale the reader with tales of exciting and interesting birds encountered, Yow’s book is based entirely on the author’s experience with the birds in his backyard, a large, undeveloped property in Georgia; during the course of the book, the author leaves his own property only once. Is Yow’s book a great piece of literature reminding us not to forget the fascinating birds in our own yards, or a boring, dry monotony? Your dedicated reviewer is here to find out!

Yow’s book is organized by season, presenting ten essays per season on the various birds the author has encountered in his backyard. The essays follow the same general structure, opening with a paragraph or so about the author’s own experience with the bird in question, then going into details of the species’ life history, and finally returning to the author’s personal anecdote. This format is helpful in that it allows one to read by dipping in and out, reading an essay here and there. However, this format can be tedious, since it provides the same scientific information for each bird in the same order, causing the book to sometimes feel like a field guide.



The author draws heavily on the ornithological greats such as Arthur Cleveland Bent and John James Audubon, which brings a more informational, factual element to the book. Each essay is accompanied by one of Audubon’s paintings, adding a nice artistic touch. However, at times it feels as if Yow is simply reiterating the research of early ornithologists.

John Yow’s writing style is colorful and he is a master of painting a vivid image in his reader’s mind. His downfall is that he writes about birds that are indeed common on his rural property in Georgia, but fails to acknowledge that the birds he sees in his yard — Bald Eagles and Sandhill Cranes, for example — are not likely to frequent feeders in suburban neighborhoods.

The title of the book — *The Armchair Birder* — is exceptionally accurate, since Yow remains in his backyard for the entire duration of the book. The tone of the book follows suit, as his writing has a very domestic, tame feel to it, which left this reviewer feeling restless and longing for adventure.

*The Armchair Birder* will most likely leave something to be desired for hard-core birders who leave their homes with the specific goal of finding and observing birds. However, it is a fine read for birders who are just beginning to discover birds in their backyards. It will inspire them, bring them scientific knowledge, and cause them to contemplate the lives of the birds that visit their feeders. Surely it is a pleasant read for those just embarking on a path to avian enlightenment.

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**SSAS’s 45TH ANNUAL DINNER**

Join us for another evening of good food, good company, and lots more. Our gathering will be at Pompei Restaurant in West Hempstead on **Wednesday, June 15**. The cocktail hour will begin at 6:30 P.M. Your dinner registration form is inserted in this newsletter.

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**BIRD WALKS**

Joe Landesberg

All walks start at **9 A.M.**; no walk if it rains. Call me at 467-9498 in case of questionable conditions or for other info. Directions and lists of what we’ve seen are at [ssaudubon.org](http://ssaudubon.org).

- Apr. 24      Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
- May 1      Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
- May 8      *Happy Mother’s Day — No Walk*
- May 15      Hempstead Plains\*
- May 22      Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- May 29      Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside
- June 5      Alley Pond Park (76th Ave. parking lot)
- June 12      Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve  
*Summer Break*
- Aug. 21      Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside
- Aug. 28      Hempstead Lake State Park (see above)

\*For *Hempstead Plains*: Take the Meadowbrook State Parkway to Exit M4 (also used for Hempstead Turnpike/Nassau Coliseum). Continue on the exit road to Charles Lindbergh Blvd. west. Go a short distance on the boulevard to the first exit on the right, which is for Nassau Community College’s East Campus parking lots. At the first intersection, you’ll see a sign and parking for Hempstead Plains and its Education Center.

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