# SOUTH HORE KIMBER

VOLUME 49, NUMBER 3 — SOUTH SHORE AUDUBON SOCIETY

#### NOVEMBER 2018

#### **NEXT MEETING**

Dolores Rogers & Bill Belford

DATE:	Tuesday, November 13, 2018
TIME:	7:30 р.м.
PLACE:	Freeport Memorial Library
	144 W. Merrick Rd. (at S. Ocean Ave.)
SPEAKERS:	Isabel Fernandes & Dennis Fleury
TOPIC:	Live Animals
-	

For our next meeting, the codirectors of Tackapausha Museum and Preserve in Seaford will walk around our meeting room while carrying an assortment of animals for us to view up close, photograph, and learn about. A year ago, this included Eastern Screech Owl, American Kestrel, Red-tailed Hawk, Great Horned Owl, Virginia opossum, eastern box turtle, and even a Chilean rose tarantula (in Izzy's palm).

Isabel holds a B.A. in wildlife management from SUNY Cobleskill, is a state-licensed wildlife rehabilitator, is the wildlife care coordinator at Sweetbriar Nature Center, and is an arachnophile with an international collection of spider specimens.

Dennis holds a B.A. in education from Cortland State University, is a state-licensed wildlife rehabilitator and veterinary assistant, and has been rescuing and advocating for animals since he was a youth. He was the Wildlife Rescue Center of the Hamptons' education director.

Both once worked for Audubon New York at the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary, and both received SSAS's Elliott Kutner Conservation Award at our 2016 annual dinner. 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 and Sy Schiff reviewed in the previous *Skimmer.* This meeting's book is *BirdNote: Chirps, Quirks, and Stories of 100 Birds from the Popular Public Radio Show,* edited by Ellen Blackstone.

**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 Hwy.

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BRING COFFEE MUGS TO OUR MEETINGS.

- SHADE-GROWN COFFEE PROTECTS RAINFORESTS!

**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.

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# NEW YORK NEW JERSEY HARBORS AND TRIBUTARIES STUDY: CONSTRUCTION AND DESTRUCTION

Brien Weiner

In response to coastal storms that have severely impacted our region, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has developed the New York New Jersey Harbors and Tributaries Focus Area Feasibility Study (NYNJHAT), the goal of which is to investigate measures "to manage future flood risk in ways that support the long-term resilience and sustainability of the coastal ecosystem and surrounding communities, and reduce the economic costs and risks associated with flood and storm events." The study, which is in the process of scoping an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), is evaluating five alternatives that combine structural and non-structural measures, and a no-action alternative, for an area that covers parts of the New Jersey coast, the Hudson Valley, New York City, and western Long Island Sound. Close to home, this includes Jamaica Bay and the Rockaways. The measures include beach nourishment, levees, floodwalls and seawalls, and storm-surge barriers.

The critical environmental value of this area, which covers 2150 square miles, cannot be overstated. The wetlands provide critical habitat for vulnerable aquatic and terrestrial species, the small islands serve as breeding sites for birds, over 300 federal- and state listed species occur [including Piping Plover, Red Knot,



Roseate Tern, Least Tern, Common Tern, seabeach amaranth, and several species of sturgeon, sea turtle (Loggerhead pictured), bat, and

marine mammals], and it lies within the Atlantic Flyway for migratory birds.

NYNJHAT includes alternatives that call for massive in-water barriers that could critically harm the region by restricting tidal flow, blocking the migration of fish, and trapping sediments and contaminants (the area includes several Superfund sites). Further, the storm-surge water deflected from the barriers has to go somewhere; one neighborhood's barrier becomes another neighborhood's flood. Finally, with gates to allow passage of ships, the barriers would not protect against inevitable flooding from sea level rise.

A separate Rockaways and Jamaica Bay project, for which SSAS provided comments in December 2016, included a storm-surge gate that has now been moved to NYNJHAT. In addition, the cautions that we urged in the other components of that project apply here: beach "nourishment" prevents formation of overwash habitat, which provides optimal habitat for Piping Plover and other shorebird species, and it reduces their prey base. Overwash also provides storm protection benefits by accumulating sand and contributing to barrier island development and marsh creation. Constructing or enhancing hardened structures along the shoreline can alter sand transport and actually increase erosion — degrading and destroying beach habitat.

Of further concern with NYNJHAT is the short time for public comment given to sketchy descriptions of the alternatives. It is imperative that USACE provide a thorough environmental impact study with ample time for public review. Managed retreat from the coast where possible needs to be considered: strategies such as voluntary buyouts, converting flood zone properties into natural areas that serve as buffers during future storm events, living shorelines, and preventing further development of flood zones should be evaluated. Managed retreat is the only strategy that will reduce direct impacts to communities and reduce long-term economic impacts from storm damage.

SSAS is providing public comments on the scoping process, the deadline for which is **November 5**. Comments received before that date will be incorporated in the EIS; comments received after will be included with the comments in the public review of the EIS, which is expected in January. For USACE's description of the NYNJHAT project, a PowerPoint presentation on the alternatives, and the address for sending comments, see http://www. nan.usace.army.mil/Missions/Civil-Works/Projects-in-New-York/New-York-New-Jersey-Harbor-Tributaries-Focus-Area-Feasibility-Study/. For Riverkeeper's petition objecting to storm-surge barriers and urging a thorough environmental review, see https://secure3.convio.net/river/site/Advocacy?cmd= display&page=UserAction&id=552.

Please add your voice: NYNJHAT is a massive project that requires a massive response to protect our birds and wildlife, our environment, and our communities.

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# GET DISCOUNTED AUDUBON CALENDARS FROM SSAS

At our walks and meetings we'll be selling Audubon calendars at a bargain price of \$11 apiece.

The 12-inch by 28-inch (when opened) "Songbirds & Other Backyard Birds" Picture-a-Day Wall Calendar (list price \$15.99) features a photograph and related text at the top, plus smaller images throughout the unusually tall grid. Samples of its 28 pages are at https://www.pageaday.com/brands/audubon.

This year we're also offering the Audubon Nature calendar (list price \$14.99), which "spotlights stunning landscapes from around the world."

## BEST FIVE DAYS FOR AN AMAZON SMILE DONATION TO SSAS

From **October 29** to **November 2**, AmazonSmile will increase the donation rate on all eligible smile.amazon. com purchases (their "largest bonus promotion to date").

SSAS is now registered with AmazonSmile, where Amazon normally donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases to charities selected by customers. Prices are the same as at the main Amazon site, so please support us via https://smile.amazon.com/ch/23-7300504.



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### **3 I ST ANNUAL WATERFOWL SURVEY**

Bill Belford

The waterfowl survey dates for the 2018-2019 season are Saturdays, December 8, January 12, February 2 & 23, and March 23. Our group visits the various ponds in southern Nassau County from Valley Stream to Massapequa Park. Volunteers can help out for a few hours or the whole day. Call Bill Belford at 385-1759 for more information and/or to volunteer.

\*\*\*\*\* THE BOOKCASE Attracting Wildlife to Your Backyard Frank Scoblete

It is raining.

My office is three-quarters windows so I am surrounded by nature. Trees and bushes are my landscape.

I see my three squirrel-proof Sky Café bird feeders right over the top of my computer, their roofs dripping the rain away from the seeds, and, yes, some birds are happily eating those very seeds. Don't let anyone tell you that birds won't eat in wet weather. I eat in wet weather; you eat in wet weather; birds eat in wet weather.

Which brings me to Attracting Wildlife to Your Backyard: 101 Ways to Make Your Property Home for Creatures Great and Small by Josh VanBrakle.

I have wildlife coming and going throughout my property: possums, raccoons, mice, lizards, those damn voles

and their holes; in addition to countless squirrels of the gray, black, and





rust variety (my wife the

Beautiful AP and I once saw a white one). Sometimes we see rabbits too. And birds, species after species of beautiful birds at

our feeders, in our bushes and on our trees.

I also have those horrible outdoor cats, some feral, some let out by their owners. Those cats are responsible for the death of over a billion (yes over a billion!) birds a year. I like cats... indoors.

Now, the author Josh VanBrakle is a research forester and he lays out most of what a person needs to know to attract and keep wildlife on private property: from planting native plants, getting rid of invasive species, and choosing which trees to plant and where to plant them, to how to create and care for a rather large pond of half an acre or more.

He even recommends attracting bats to your property to kill off mosquitoes. And bring in the bees in order to pollinate recommended plants (bats help pollinate plants too).

Do I think this is a good book and worthy of a read? Yes, I do, especially if you have the land necessary to put in place his recommendations. Still, many of his insights actually do fit those of us whose properties do not live up to the proper size required for a half-acre or more pond.

For example, if invasive species of plants have possessed your property, he gives you a step-by-step method for exorcising such demons.

In truth, I do not want to attract deer or moose or bears or bobcats or mountain lions to my property; just birds. I particularly do not want to attract those aggressive, vicious cats.

Wild nature is not so wild as it once was. One of the greatest saviors of our wildlife is, in truth, us. So welcome the wild ones into your civilized life.

Visit Frank's web site at www.frankscoblete.com. His books are available from smile.amazon.com (including for Kindle), barnesandnoble.com, and in bookstores.

NAT'L AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP STATUS (844) 428-3826 

# 木大 WELCOME NEW MEMBERS 木大

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., usually on the second Tuesday of the month (third Tuesday this February), 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 bird walks. 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 last month's Skimmer are: Bellmore..... ю,

Richard Baumann, Vincent Co
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## HEMPSTEAD LAKE STATE PARK Response to the Environmental Assessment and Negative Declaration

#### Brien Weiner

2550 to 2850 trees removed from Hempstead Lake State Park (HLSP). Loss of wetlands. Fragmentation by trails. That is what the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery (GOSR) has found to have "No Significant Impact" in their just-released Environmental Assessment (EA) of their proposed changes. (See https://stormrecovery. ny.gov/environmental-docs, scroll to Rebuild by Design, choose Living with the Bay Project.) The removal of trees from the dams, according to a report by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will leave roots to decompose, potentially compromising the integrity of the dams and leading to catastrophic flooding downriver. In addition, the tree removal will include healthy stands of native oak and cherry trees, and can take place in March, when HLSP is a hot spot for migratory birds and breeding grounds for Great Horned Owls.

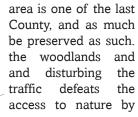
The HLSP project, by its magnitude, meets the criteria of the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) to require a thorough Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). In the document Hempstead Lake SEQRA part 2, GOSR admits to "Moderate to Large Impact" in construction where depth to water table is less than 3 feet, in dredging more than 100 cubic yards of material from a wetlands or water body (2500 cubic yards), in construction within or adjoining a freshwater or tidal wetland, in creating turbidity in a water body, in affecting water quality of any water bodies within or downstream of the site, in modification of existing drainage patterns, in changing floodwater flows that contribute to flooding, and in repairing dams. Regarding birds, GOSR admits to Moderate to Large Impact in "substantial interference on nesting/ breeding, foraging or overwintering habitat for the predominant species that occupy the project site."

According to Audubon's Important Bird Area (IBA) website, "Hempstead Lake is one of the most important sites on Long Island for wintering waterfowl, with buildups beginning in late August and peaking in the late fall and winter. At peak times, the numbers run into the many thousands with the following species present: Gadwall, American Wigeon, American Black Duck, Mallard, Northern Shoveler, Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Canvasback, Lesser Scaup, Common Merganser, Hooded Merganser, and Ruddy Duck. Of these, the most numerous are the American Black Duck, Mallard, and Lesser Scaup. While the American Black Ducks and Mallards move in and out all day, the Lesser Scaup (which in some vears have totaled several thousand) stay on the lake continuously. This is also one of the most important sites for migrant land birds on Long Island. A normal day reveals 50-75 species of birds during a leisurely morning stroll. In addition, approximately 17 species of shorebirds have

been observed foraging at the north end of the lake when water levels go down. Large numbers of Common Terns and some Forster's Terns use the area as a feeding and bathing site in late summer."

Federal floodplain and wetlands laws (Executive Orders 11988 and 11990) require that practical alternatives be considered in order to avoid adverse impacts. In Appendix M of the HLSP EA, GOSR considered only a proposal with significant alterations and a net loss of 1.72 acres of wetlands, and a no-action alternative, in their required eight-step process of wetlands analysis. As we have repeatedly commented in letters to GOSR, the North Ponds currently provide valuable and rare wetland habitat of shallow open water and mudflats that are used by an abundance and diversity of shorebirds, wading birds, and dabbling ducks. Dredging and increasing water capacity may flood the habitat and make it unusable by these atrisk species. There is no guarantee that the new wetlands will provide suitable habitat. The expansion of trails and creation of viewing points around the North Ponds is gratuitous destruction of habitat and removal of native vegetation that provides crucial food and shelter for birds, including Bald Eagles and Great Horned Owls (pictured).

The North Ponds wild areas of Nassau as possible, should Further fragmenting wetlands with trails area with recreational purpose of increasing



removing nature from the equation. GOSR's response, in a letter to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) in October 2018, inadequately states that the floatables collector will improve water quality. First, floatables collectors do not address the issue of flooding and disturbing valuable habitat. Second, the alternative of locating the floatables collectors upstream where floatables enter the watershed is not considered. GOSR cites bureaucracy as the reason, but it is insanity to spend taxpayers' money to clean up what should be prevented at its source; moreover, floatables collectors will not catch microplastics and other toxins that enter the watershed with the floatables. And in storm events, large volumes of water will overtop the collectors, the floatables with them. We need a thorough EIS to assess alternative solutions that minimize adverse impacts.

Regarding cleanup of contamination, GOSR is short on details. From documents provided by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, we know that the more thorough the cleanup, the greater the cost, but the greater the environmental benefit. The documents state that the most financially feasible cleanup is a limited one, yet GOSR has allocated money for a multi-million dollar Education Center and a kayak launch that do nothing to improve water quality or mitigate flooding. GOSR has not considered repurposing an existing building to serve as an Education Center, which would have the benefit of leaving no additional footprint. In total, additional trails, parking, and the Education Center will result in 8 acres of impervious material.

One third (\$35 million) of the funding for the Living with the Bay (LWTB) project to mitigate flooding along the Mill River is being spent on HLSP, yet HLSP lies outside the flood zone. Of course, what happens at Hempstead Lake affects the entire Mill River, but then GOSR claims that HLSP is a functionally independent project and admits to segmentation of HLSP from LWTB. Segmentation is prohibited by SEQRA. We need a thorough EIS to assess the cumulative impacts of HLSP on LWTB.

We hope that GOSR will take our comments and those of the CAC for LWTB into consideration. Failure to prepare an EIS will result in backlash from the community and a loss of confidence in the Governor's Office. The public perception will be that GOSR does not care about preserving our environment for the benefit of wildlife and people. SSAS will continue to advocate and take action to protect our flagship birding site, one of the last and largest areas of open space in Nassau County, and a NYS IBA.

*News Flash from Your Editor:* This *Skimmer* was at the printer when GOSR extended the EA comment deadline to **November 2**. See https://stormrecovery.ny.gov/ sites/default/files/crp/community/documents/LWTB\_ Hempstead%20Lake\_FONSI%20NOIRROF.pdf (p. 3) for e-mail and mailing addresses, and write to them!

Contemporary Hearing Aids

As a member of the Audubon Society, we know how important it is to hear the high frequency chirps and other sounds of the birds.

Sometimes a hearing loss in the same frequencies as the birds' sounds can prevent you from hearing the sounds you enjoy.

I



Call us to schedule a hearing test and experience all that you might be missing with our exclusive "Try before you buy."

> Please call (516) 200-1582 "Let the sounds of the beautiful birds be the music to your ears"

Mention this ad and receive 10% off the purchase of a pair of premium hearing aids.

hearbetterny.com New Hyde Park

## **BROOKSIDE PRESERVE FALL CLEANUP**

On **Sunday, November 18**, starting at 1 P.M., SSAS will have its fall cleanup at Brookside Preserve, rain or



shine. Brookside is a 20-acre freshwater wetland, woodland, and upland area owned by Nassau County that SSAS rescued from development and manages. PDF files of our trail guide and children's freshwater wetland guide can be downloaded from www.ssaudubon.org. The preserve is located on the Freeport-

Baldwin border, 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 work gloves and spend an hour or two with us.

# FREEPORT LIBRARY'S NEWEST BIRD BOOKS FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN

*Editor's note:* In August we received the following letter from library director Ken Bellafiore regarding our annual donation: "On behalf of the Freeport Memorial Library, I would like to thank you and the members of the South Shore Audubon Society for your generous donation of \$500. As you suggested, the funds will be used to increase our collection of nature-oriented books. All materials purchased will have a bookplate added as a note of thanks. The books that have been purchased are listed below."

*Firds of Prey: Hawks, Eagles, Falcons, and Vultures of North America* by Pete Dunne with Kevin T. Karlson

Songbirds of North America by Noble S. Proctor, Ph.D.

← Parrots by Ruth Bjorklund

Animales del mar en peligro by William B. Rice

← Parrots of the Wild by Catherine A. Toft and Timothy F. Wright

Sibley Birds West by David Allen Sibley

Birds of Prey of the East: A Field Guide by Brian K. Wheeler
 Field Guide to the Birds of North America (Seventh Edition)

by National Geographic

← A History of Birds by Simon Wills



The Wonder of Birds by Jim Robbins
 The Meaning of Birds by Pegasus Books

← Far From Land: The Mysterious Lives of Seabirds by Michael Brooke

The Homing Instinct by Bernd Heinrich

Just and Their Feathers by Britta Teckentrup

✓ Owls of the World by Heimo Mikkola

Tenguin Day: A Family Story by Nic Bishop

- Ostriches by Kate Riggs

→ Warbler Wave by April Pulley Sayre with Jeff Sayre

The Enigma of the Owl by Mike Unwin and David Tipling You can use **encore.alisweb.org** to request that any of these books be reserved for you at your own library via an interlibrary loan.

OUR E-LIST http://groups.yahoo.com/group/ssas\_list

#### YELLOW LAWN SIGN WOES

Guy Jacob

Whenever I walk my golden retriever around my neighborhood, I pay special attention to the yellow signs that warn me to keep away. And I only too happily oblige. We head straight for the street and avoid the sidewalk altogether. Those signs warn us when our neighbors have pesticides sprayed on their property.

Those lawn signs have been required since 2001 in New York State because of The Neighbor Notification Law.



PESTICIDE This law is in effect only in counties that have adopted a local law to opt into the Neighbor Notification Law in its entirety and without any

changes. The following counties have "opted in": Albany, Erie, Monroe, Nassau, Rockland, Suffolk, Tompkins, Ulster, Westchester, and all five boroughs of New York City.

Without doubt, there are certain circumstances that warrant pesticide applications, e.g., when invasive species are present, but such situations are the exception, not the rule. We typically should worry more about the harmful effects of pesticides than what they're intended to kill. There is no such thing as a poison used to kill weeds, fungi, or bugs that poses no threat to humans, pets, and wildlife. If it's meant to kill any living plant or creature, rest assured it could harm you, your children, your neighbors, your dogs, your cats, and birds, bats, and sundry other wildlife that visit your property.

Oblivious to any threat, Anna, my 11-year-old golden retriever, saunters along, and I gently halt her as we pass those yellow posted warnings. I peer carefully at their lawns from a safe distance and wonder why my neighbors have chosen once again to open their wallets even while they risk their health and the well-being of those they love. Not one of their lawns is without the same mixture of interspersed weeds as any other property in the neighborhood. I've never once applied pesticides, and my lawn looks similar to all others in the neighborhood. Weed seeds are wind-borne and dropped by birds and other wildlife. No herbicide application is going to prevent what wind and wildlife will eventually return to your lawn. Instead, safely minimize weeds by pulling some out by hand and then frequently adding grass seed to your lawn in order to crowd out the weeds.

If your landscaper is the one who applies the pesticides, ask him why. Landscapers profit from pesticide applications and often do it as regular "maintenance" rather than for any substantial reason. Create a written contract with your landscaper that details what he can and cannot do, so you're in control.

Homeowners also seek to rid themselves of bees and mosquitoes. But lack of information and fear can drive us to make costly decisions that do more harm than good. Remove all standing water that serves as a breeding ground for mosquitoes. Spraying your property isn't

going to stop them from migrating to you from your neighbor's property. Bees are not your enemy - quite the contrary, indeed. Over three-quarters of wild flowering plants need pollination to develop their fruits. Moreover, pollinating insects like bees improve or stabilize threequarters of all crop types globally. Bee populations are in decline, and we should be working to rescue them for our own benefit, not further destroy them with pesticides.

Decisions we make as consumers have impact. The more well-informed we are, the wiser our decisions will be. For more information:

http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8529.html

https://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/pests/ public notification law.htm

http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/42920.html

Buy a Pesticide Sign from Us. If you have a pesticide-free yard and are proud of it, SSAS has Pesticide Free Zone signs available for \$10; contact Marilyn Hametz at 799-7189 or MWHametz@optonline.net.



\*\*\*\*\* UPDATE ON THOSE BLUE. VISUALLY POLLUTING **TOURISM SIGNS** Jim Brown

Will they stay or will they go? It has been reported (Newsday, September 29, 2018 — "Signing off on sign deal," by Joan Gralla and Robert Brodsky) that the remaining large blue tourism signs erected along our parkways are not scheduled to be removed right away. The signs were supposed to be removed by September 30, or New York State would lose \$14 million in federal highway funds. A deal was struck between the Cuomo administration and the Federal Highway Administration that funds would not be withheld and the signs could remain - for now. The Newsday reporters note that New York will begin a new tourism campaign, though "details about the coming campaign were sparse." Apparently the new campaign will involve similar signage to what now exists, along with "regional motherboards." Motherboards are the extra-large signs that appear first to the driver, announcing four succeeding "follow-up" signs appearing later.

Additional reporting by the Rochester area's Democrat and Chronicle (Jon Campbell, October 2, 2018, "I Love NY signs: 80 percent to be removed from highways") affirms that most of the offending signs will eventually be removed from highways under the terms of the agreement struck between the federal and state government. "Motherboard" signs will mostly remain at the borders of different state regions and the "follow-up signs" will be "relocated at major NYS parks, Path Through History sites, text stops and rest stops to help drivers find these attractions"

The entire written agreement has not yet been released by the feds or the state, but it seems that most of the signs will be removed from highways and placed elsewhere. The South Shore Audubon Society, and other environmentally conscious Long Islanders, opposed these tourism signs early on. SSAS urged our members almost two years ago to send the following message to Governor Cuomo:

"These signs, a part of the 'I Love NY program,' aside from being a distraction for drivers and not in conformity with Federal Highway Administration guidelines, serve no compelling function. These large blue signs also detract from the environment, creating unnecessary dis-

traction and visual pollution along some of Long Island's most beautiful byways. Interjecting this type of excessive and inappropriate advertisement into the



environment only harms what it aims to support — the enjoyment of our natural world." Thanks to all our members and friends who took action at that time!

Let's hope that the deal struck between the Federal Highway Administration and New York State finally accomplishes the removal of these ill-advised, distracting blue signs from our highways, especially from our scenic Long Island parkways. Let us also hope that any removed signage is carefully relocated so as not to detract from other scenic areas, especially our parks.

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**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.

# BOOKS FOR BIRDERS IOOI Secrets Every Birder Should Know R. U. Abyrdar II and Sy Schiff

The "introduction" begins with "The most important thing you need to know is that birdwatchers are crazy." This month's book starts here. From that beginning you're in for a wild ride! The title is *1001 Secrets Every Birder Should Know: Tips and Trivia for the Backyard and Beyond.* The author is Sharon "Birdchick" Stiteler. This book attempts to help us enjoy birds more, with insights into both bird biology and behavior. You also will learn the secrets that drive us to watch them in the first place! You will learn, in addition, the secrets to turning your backyard into a hot all-bird action bar scene! (Sy's review begins now...).

As I began to read, the author got my attention immediately! WOW!!! I stopped to think, I didn't believe that anything could top that first sentence! The first thing a crazy person says is that they're sane! The author's not and I'm not, so I guess birders are OK, although strange at times.

Anyway, back to this book review. The book consists of ten chapters covering various aspects of bird life and biology in small paragraphs and sentences. Most are straightforward, some obscure, and some surprising. The subtitle says "Tips and Trivia," etc., and that covers it. While the bulk is a repeat of stuff you might already know, it is presented in a quick acting, staccato sprint like a comedian's patter. The examples cover mostly American but also British birds, probably a ploy to make this book salable on both sides of the pond.

Every aspect of bird life and bird study is covered. There are "1001" bits of information, but I don't think I would call any of them secrets. Scattered throughout are bold statements under the title, "Bird Busting." Herein are various comments about bird subjects, followed by an exposition debunking the legends and misinformation in popular custom, all nicely put. The chapters cover habitats, territory, nesting, feeding, baby birds, migration, and

other topics. Some chapters end with suggestions for vacation trips for the family as a follow up to information already covered. Finally, a full chapter gives a review of places to visit to get the best birding at various



locations in each month of the year. Then, each month ends with a list of birding festivals for the period. These places are not all in the USA. So, besides information, the book can serve as a birder's suggested national and international travel guide.

The glossary is interesting and a must read, not a boring list of stuff. The explanations are in conversational language, not dictionary definitions. So, there are a bunch of facts repeated in a relaxed manner, in keeping with the tone of the book (see the opening paragraph).

The book is richly illustrated throughout with a lot of very fine photographs. Although there is lots of information, this is not a reference guide, just a ton of stuff to read in small to medium doses. (Sy ends here.) Read it... ENJOY!!!

✓ BIRD WALKS ✓

Joe Landesberg

All walks (held on Sundays except for the first walk below) start at **9** A.M.; no walk if it rains or snows or temperature is below 25°F. Call me at 467-9498 in case of questionable conditions or for other info. Check **www. facebook.com/SSAudubon** (you don't need to have a Facebook account) for cancellations, changes, and lists from recent walks. Directions and lists of what we've seen in recent years are at ssaudubon.org.

Sat., Oct. 27	Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside
Nov. 4	Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern
	State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
Nov. 11	Massapequa Preserve (LIRR N.E. lot)
Nov. 18	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
Nov. 25	Point Lookout Town Park, S.E. corner (and
	Lido Preserve afterwards)
Dec. 2	Alley Pond Park (76th Ave. parking lot)
Dec. 9	Hempstead Lake State Park (see above)
Dec. 16	Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner

# 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. 

# Donations to SSAS are always welcome! \$

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