



to treat your windows externally, or as temporary measures until they are treated, you can try leaving blinds partially open or closing curtains and shades to reduce the appearance of transparency, or applying some other internal solution. However, you should take a look at your windows from the outside every hour or two, starting in the early morning, to see if your solution is visible or hidden by reflections. Curtains and shades can actually enhance reflections. Finally, move indoor plants away from windows, and place feeders directly on windows.

Recent studies have confirmed that bird-friendly designs can reduce collision deaths by 90% or more. For example, the Javits Center, with its glass-covered 760,000 square foot exhibition hall, was one of the deadliest buildings for birds in New York City; renovations incorporating bird-friendly designs reduced bird collisions by 95%. According to their architect, Bruce Fowle, the costs were “probably under a dollar” more per square foot. In addition, the Javits Center now sports a green roof that serves as a bird, bee, and bat sanctuary. More than 100 nests and 26 species of birds have been identified on the roof.

Artificial lights can also be fatal to migrating birds. The majority of birds migrate at night, and artificial lights attract them and can cause them to collide with windows and walls, or to circle in confusion until they land in exhaustion and are subject to other urban threats. Lights Out is a national effort to encourage building owners, managers, and residents to turn off unnecessary lights when they are most likely to affect migrating or nocturnal birds. In New York City, the annual 9/11 Tribute in Light traps thousands of birds during peak fall migration; since 2010, temporarily turning the lights out when bird density exceeds 1000 and allowing the birds to disperse has resulted in only two known bird fatalities.

**Proposed Legislation for You to Support.** With growing public awareness of the problem, progress has been made in introducing legislation to reduce bird–building collisions, but the legislation itself has run up against walls or been watered down. At the federal level, H.R. 919, the Bird-Safe Buildings Act, would require newly constructed, acquired, or significantly renovated federal buildings to comply with bird-friendly façade measures such as external shades, netting, and UV-reflective glass to limit bird-collision deaths. An added provision, however, makes an exception for undefined “significant cost.”

At the state level, S.25/A.4055, the Bird-Friendly Buildings Council bill, is out of committee in the Senate and will be voted on soon. The bill proposes an 11–15 member bird-friendly buildings council “to promote the use of bird-friendly building materials and design features in buildings; research the magnitude of problems facing birds colliding with buildings; identify existing and emerging products, technologies and concepts to reduce or eliminate bird mortality from building collisions; and develop public awareness.” The council would establish rules and criteria, and send its recommendations to the

Governor, the Senate majority leader, and the speaker of the Assembly “for their consideration of being codified in state law.”

The state bill was met by skepticism from politicians and opposition from the construction industry, which doesn’t bode well for the federal bill, given the current climate of deregulation in Washington. Objections include raising the costs of construction, especially for property owners when more affordable housing is needed, and strain on regulatory agencies. No bill would be effective unless it required retrofits, since the majority of bird fatalities are caused by existing buildings, but retrofits may be more expensive than new construction. The bills are seen to pit birds against people, and the birds are sacrificed to nonnegotiable building costs.

Such objections are short-sighted. The proposed council, which could include legislators and representatives from bird conservation organizations and the building industry, could award grants to New York State glass manufacturers to produce bird-safe glass, provide a process to certify glass as bird-safe, and demonstrate that retrofits are possible and affordable.

Hopefully, New York City will lead the way for New York State. On March 28, the Bird-Friendly Glass bill was introduced to the Committee on Housing and Buildings of the New York City Council. This bill would require that 90% of all glass installed on newly constructed or altered buildings be treated to reduce bird-strike fatalities. New York City would join San Francisco and Toronto as cities that passed bird-friendly building legislation.

Bird–building collisions are a problem for which we need to think globally and act locally. Birds bring us the spring — they pollinate our flowers, control our insect pests, and beautify our backyards and parks. To help the birds who so help us, we can treat our windows, turn off our lights, ask our neighbors and building managers to do the same, and, above all, urge our elected officials to make these simple acts law.



## NOMINATIONS FOR THE 2019–2020 BOARD

At South Shore Audubon Society’s general meeting on **May 14**, officers will be elected for our next fiscal year and directors will be elected to three-year terms. All members attending that meeting may nominate candidates from the floor and vote. The SSAS Nominating Committee (chaired by Frank Scoblete, with Alene Scoblete and Jim Brown) recommends the following candidates: Michael Sperling, president; Brien Weiner, vice president; Joe Landesberg, treasurer; Alene Scoblete, recording secretary; and Guy Jacob, director.

**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 a cost of \$594.08.

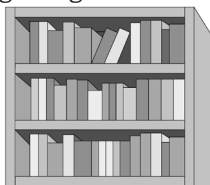
**THE BOOKCASE**  
**The Delightful Horror of Family Birding**

*Frank Scoblete*

Americans are not big buyers of books loaded with short stories, essays, or multiple poems presented to us by somewhat obscure poets. Actually, in America just about all poets, except for the ones taught in high school and college classes, are obscure.

I can't speak for Europeans, who are constantly speaking about themselves, but the American literary market shuns big books loaded with short pieces. Magazines, the sacred shrines of the short piece, are dying now, but short stories and books of essays have already dug their graves.

Even in the world of nature writing and, yes, even within our particular focus with birds, we tend to like our feed grain to be of one type per book. Give us a tale that hangs together from beginning to end and we are satisfied if the tale can hold our interest. Yes, some encyclopedic books those books must for the reader to stay interested. Give me a full book about owls (thank you very much), but not one about various readers' appreciation of what they are individually experiencing with those owls.



Now this predilection for longer pieces has pushed to the side those books that contain enlightening, entertaining, and important information that can delight us if we only give such works a chance to tickle our fancy.

One such book, composed of wonderful essays (don't you dare stop reading this article because I used the word "essays"), is by Eli J. Knapp and is titled *The Delightful Horror of Family Birding*. Knapp is a college professor and a bird lover since his youth, when he encountered his first birds. More important, this man is a father opening the world of nature and of birds to his soon-to-be-savvy children.

Now, most books that feature children can be vacuous, since most kids are dull, at least in my opinion, and their great discoveries are rather pedantic. Today our children would rather watch a sunset on their phones than in the actual sky. Not so with Knapp's children. His kids are looking at the world because they are in the world.

Knapp's essays often speak powerfully about the beauty inherent in birds and, of course, in the natural world, and his kids happily pick up on that. It is fascinating to watch a parent lead his children to an appreciation of the rich world around them.

The book is funny; the essays hang together with crisp, sharp language and imagery. I think you will find the "horror" of family birding to be anything but horrible. Give it a try.

Visit Frank's web site at [www.franksoblete.com](http://www.franksoblete.com). His books are available from [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) (including for Kindle), [barnesandnoble.com](http://barnesandnoble.com), and in bookstores.

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

*Wendy Murbach*

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:

- Baldwin ..... Rosemary Kracke
- East Meadow ..... Ellen Denzler
- Farmingdale ..... Frances Feil, Suzanne Gruber
- Floral Park ..... Mary Falco
- Franklin Square ..... Dawn Valte
- Freeport ..... John Gumbs
- Garden City ..... Goldman Associates, Edward A. McCoyd, Sally Warinner
- Hicksville ..... Carolyn Drab, Patricia Fichtelberg
- Levittown ..... Mike Dwyer, Ed Rudloff
- Massapequa ..... Robyn Shockley-Santiago
- Merrick ..... James T. Behrens, Jr.; Theresa M. Jones
- Oceanside ..... Dr. Sharon Duritzo
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New Hyde Park

## OUR PLASTIC PROBLEM AND ITS SOLUTIONS

*Guy Jacob*

Waste is a pervasive problem that degrades our air, landscapes, and marine environments in numerous ways, but plastic bag waste is particularly problematic because about one trillion bags are produced every year.

People get way more plastic checkout bags than they know what to do with. A typical consumer gets about 300–500 plastic checkout bags a year from grocery stores, department stores, pharmacies, etc. Even when customers purchase a single item that can easily be carried out by hand, cashiers will stuff it in a bag. And the ones that don't get piled up in some drawer often make their way to all the wrong places.

I shake my head in disbelief when I see litter scattered throughout my community. Don't litterbugs see the same debris that I see? They must know that they've contributed to the problem, but apparently are unfazed by it. It speaks to the heart of people's values.

It's difficult to control littering. Given the demands of law enforcement, litter is not a top priority, and it's often perpetrated out of the view of police officers. People who litter don't generally concern themselves with law enforcement, because there isn't enough law enforcement to control it.

Though a lot of plastic bags end up in our environment from litter, plastic bags also blow out of trash cans, recycle bins (where they shouldn't be placed anyway, as most municipalities don't accept them), and landfills. The ones that don't escape often get burned in incinerators, which contribute to air pollution. Ash residue left in the combustion chamber generally is taken to a hazardous-waste landfill.



80 percent of seabirds have plastic in their stomachs. More than just birds, all our marine mammals and turtles are threatened by plastic bags. Moreover, printing on plastic bags requires toxic dyes that could threaten marine organisms. During summer months, sea bathers brush up against plastic waste, a stark reminder about how much we're decimating our marine ecosystem.

Moreover, plastic comes from fossil fuels. When fossil fuels are transported and processed, they release carbon dioxide and methane, which are greenhouse gases that are driving climate change. The polyethylene that makes plastic bags is derived either from refined oil or cracked natural gas. Six percent of the oil produced globally goes towards the plastic manufacturing industry. The more business consumers give to the fossil fuel industry, the less likely that these multinational companies will seek opportunities to change their business model to renewable energy sources.

Trash must meet its match! The four "Rs" are germane to waste minimization: *Refuse, Reduce, Recycle, and Rot.*

There are ways each of us can help solve this problem individually. When I do my part, I don't feel like I'm being inconvenienced. Rather, I know that I'm contributing to a cleaner, safer environment for all of us.

It is a misconception that single-use checkout bags are free. The cost of checkout bags is included in the cost of your purchases. Some people bring their own bags when they shop; these folks often subsidize the cost of bags for the shoppers who take them. Some stores credit shoppers a few cents for each canvas bag they bring. Other stores like Trader Joe's enter customers in a raffle for free food each time they shop with their own bags. I've won twice!

I repeatedly reuse the same plastic bags in my home garbage pails. I dump the garbage in a large trash can outside that has a large plastic-bag liner, which also gets reused because I wrap it around the can. In some towns you don't have to put your garbage into a liner; you can just put it directly into your trash can and put that at the curb. You can inquire if your municipality requires a liner. I also transfer garbage from my house pails into cardboard boxes that I keep when I receive deliveries.

You can also use all of the other plastic receptacles you get, including chip bags, dry cleaner bags, packaging from online shopping, coffee bags, frozen food bags, bread bags, etc., for your wet, messier garbage. Just fill and staple or tape shut. You'd be surprised how many other plastic-type packagings you can come up with for your garbage. You can use these other plastic bags and newspaper for dog waste as well.

None of my waste is plant-based food scrapes. I keep three compost bins in my yard, which significantly cuts back on waste. Composting enriches my landscape with remarkable organic material that nourishes all my trees, bushes, perennials, and annuals. All of those food scrapes would have been burned in an incinerator instead of contributing to the health of my soil.

We cannot make decisions about plastic waste based on the actions of the minority who aren't contributing to the problem. We must consider waste in its larger context. Collectively, legislation can be a significant part of the answer. Toward this end, New York State recently passed a ban on plastic bags that goes into effect in March 2020. It allows municipalities to opt into a fee on paper bags. Over time, we're likely to hear that it will have the same waste reduction effect that the ban in Suffolk has had.

For more information, go to <https://greentumble.com/how-are-plastic-bags-made/>.



### **BROOKSIDE PRESERVE**

*Rich Kapsco*

SSAS wishes to thank The Waldorf School of Garden City for their participation in our Brookside Preserve spring cleanup on April 12, during which teachers Antony Yaeger, Deirdre Somers, and John Devaney and 25 of their students put 20 bags to use in honor of Earth Day.

**BE A GOOD EGG**

*Amanda Pachomski*

*Editor's intro:* Amanda is Audubon NY's Long Island Bird Conservation Manager.

Happy spring! Piping Plovers breed from April through August and they need our help to have a safe place to rest, nest, and raise their young. To reduce the threat of human disturbance to nesting birds, we're working with partners to plan "Be a Good Egg" outreach events at priority sites across Long Island. During our outreach events, we'll give out brochures and other educational materials, offer activities for children, and teach beachgoers how they can share the shore with birds. We'll encourage beachgoers to sign the "Be a Good Egg" pledge and therefore promise to stay out of fenced-off nesting areas, keep dogs off of beaches with nesting birds, and properly dispose of or carry out trash. Pledge signers will receive "Be a Good Egg" branded promotional giveaways such as pins, bottle openers, and reusable shopping bags.

Last year, with the help of SSAS, other chapters, and local partners, we successfully encouraged over 2,600 beachgoers to take the "Be a Good Egg" pledge! This year our goal is to get 3,000 pledges signed and we need your help! We're looking for at least five volunteers to please help out with each event. No prior knowledge or experience is necessary; the only requirements are an interest in talking with people and a willingness to spend a day at the beach. We'll provide guidance during the event and new volunteers will be asked to please complete a brief online training webinar ahead of time. Our 2019 outreach events in SSAS's area will take place from 9:30 A.M. - 2:30 P.M. on the following dates:

- Saturday, June 22 at Lido Beach Town Park
- Saturday, July 6 at Jones Beach State Park, Field 2
- Sunday, July 7 at Point Lookout Town Park
- Saturday, July 20 at Lido Beach Town Park
- Sunday, July 21 at Jones Beach, Field 2
- Sunday, July 28 at Point Lookout Town Park

We would greatly appreciate your help at one or more "Be a Good Egg" events this summer! For more information and to sign up, please e-mail [NYcoast@audubon.org](mailto:NYcoast@audubon.org).



**NEW YORK STATE TACKLING CLIMATE LEGISLATION**

*Jim Brown*

As I write this article, climate legislation is being hotly debated in our state legislature. By the time you read this, the debate may already have yielded results and climate legislation passed. Governor Cuomo has his own budget initiatives, and there are two major climate-related bills in the Legislature — the Climate and Community Protection Act (CCPA—A.3876/S.2992) and the New York Off Fossil Fuels/100% Renewable Energy by 2030 Act (A.3565). SSAS supports the Off Fossil Fuels Act, as it seeks the

most rapid transition to 100% clean, renewable energy; the bill also prohibits the building of new fossil fuel infrastructure in our state, such as the planned Williams Pipeline across the New York Bight — additional fossil fuel pipelines and facilities will only lock us into more greenhouse gas emissions. Creating a legislative outcome in Albany has been likened to the process of making sausages. We certainly hope that the legislation that eventually emerges from this messy process is a strong response to the crisis of rapid, human-produced climate change.

Audubon New York, responding to developments in Albany, has asked its members in a recent online action alert "to act on climate change now. New York State needs to pass comprehensive legislation that puts us on the path to combating climate change before it is too late for New York State's birds, people and other wildlife... We must take aggressive steps to combat climate change immediately, and develop a comprehensive strategy for reducing our carbon emissions and a robust plan for adaptation that combats the effects of climate change that we are already seeing in the natural world..."

Hopefully New York's response to climate chaos in the current legislative session will be a strong one. Time is running out for a successful response on behalf of all governments, at all levels, to the threat of climate change. Each new prediction on the rate of temperature change and strength of observable impacts seems to highlight the overly conservative nature of earlier and rosier predictions that implied we had more time to act. The science is unequivocally telling us that innovative, forceful, and concerted action throughout the world is required during the next ten years if we are to keep temperature rise below the dangerous level of 1.5°C. New York State can be a positive example to other states and political jurisdictions everywhere if we pass strong legislation, showing we know that this action is required now, not later.



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## SHOREBIRD VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Town of Hempstead's Department of Conservation and Waterways needs your help in ensuring the protection and survival of Piping Plovers, Least and Common Terns, and Black Skimmers that nest between Point Lookout and Atlantic Beach. Volunteers will help prevent disturbances to nesting areas, will record the presence of plover chicks and any incidents of predation, and can give beachgoers educational literature pertaining to Piping Plovers and terns. Help is particularly needed on evenings, weekends, and holidays from May through August. If you're interested and are able to volunteer regularly, please contact longtime SSAS member John Zarudsky, Conservation Biologist, at 486-5272.

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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.

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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. Check [www.facebook.com/SSAudubon](http://www.facebook.com/SSAudubon) (you don't need to have a Facebook account) for cancellations, changes, and recent lists. Directions and lists of what we've seen in recent years are at [www.ssaudubon.org](http://www.ssaudubon.org).

- Apr. 28 Hempstead Lake State Park (Southern State Parkway Exit 18 south, Field #3)
- May 5 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- May 12 *Happy Mother's Day! — No Walk*
- May 19 Jones Beach West End #2, N.E. corner
- May 26 Hempstead Plains\*
- June 2 Hempstead Lake State Park (see above)
- Sat., June 8 Marine Nature Study Area, Oceanside  
*Summer Break*
- Aug. 18 Norman J. Levy Park and Preserve
- Aug. 25 Mill Pond Park (Wantagh/Bellmore, north side of Merrick Rd.)
- Sept. 1 Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge
- Sept. 8 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. After turning, park on the right along the entrance to Hempstead Plains and its Education Center. See [www.friendsofhp.org/site/index.php?id=9](http://www.friendsofhp.org/site/index.php?id=9) for a link to Google's map.

## OUR NINETEENTH ANNUAL CENTRAL PARK WALK

On **Saturday, May 4**, SSAS is planning to be in Central Park for our annual (weather permitting) early May bird walk. Chris Cooper (who was featured in HBO's 2012 documentary, "Birders: The Central Park Effect," and started birding with SSAS at age 12) has again agreed to lead us through the twisting, hilly maze of the Ramble and adjoining areas of the park.

Over the years, we've recorded from 31 to 70-plus species in under three hours. A year ago we had 52 species, 15 of which were warblers. Highlights included Black-billed Cuckoo, Blue-winged Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak (a pair is pictured), and Indigo Bunting.



The cost of the walk is \$5, which is a tax-deductible donation to SSAS (refundable if we rain out or you cancel in advance). Please send your check payable to South Shore Audubon Society, along with your phone number and e-mail address, to Joanne Del Prete, 20 Ceil Pl., Bethpage, NY 11714-4503 ([jdelprete47@optonline.net](mailto:jdelprete47@optonline.net), phone 433-0739).

Some of us will be aboard the local Babylon line train that is due in Penn Station at 8:07. We aim to depart from Penn's LIRR waiting room at 8:30 to meet Chris outside the Swedish Cottage Marionette Theater (near the 79th St. Transverse) by 9:15. Please buy a MetroCard for the subway. You can bring lunch, buy lunch in the park or elsewhere, or head back home after the walk if you prefer. Joanne's cell (476-3761) will be on that day only. Join us!

\*\*\*\*\*

### WHAT TO DO WITH DISPLACED YOUNG WILDLIFE

Most young wildlife that you come across are not orphaned. The parents are temporarily away finding food or are staying away to avoid attracting predators and will later return. If you are concerned that a bird or animal may be orphaned, watch from a distance for a while to see if the parents return. If you have to chase it, it doesn't need your help!

A nestling songbird is only partially feathered and cannot yet run, hop, or move about easily. It should be returned to the nest. If you can't find or reach the nest, make one from a berry box or strainer (something with drainage), line it with grasses, and secure it up in a tree close to where you found the bird. The parents will continue to feed it.



If you are certain a young songbird is orphaned, leave a message for Volunteers for Wildlife at 674-0982 (during hospital hours) or e-mail [info@volunteersforwildlife.org](mailto:info@volunteersforwildlife.org) (after hours) for assistance and follow the emergency instructions at [www.volunteersforwildlife.org/baby-birds](http://www.volunteersforwildlife.org/baby-birds).



South Shore Audubon Society's  
 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner  
 Wednesday, June 12, 2019



at  
 Pompei Ristorante  
 401 Hempstead Avenue  
 West Hempstead, NY 11552  
 (516) 485-8620  
 www.pompeiristorante.com



Cocktail Hour 6:30 PM  
 Dinner 7:30 PM

\*

College Scholarship Awards

\*

Raffles (books, booze, feeders, gift baskets and cards, paintings, photos, etc.)

\*

Price \$45.00 (Children Half Price)

Includes hot and cold hors d'oeuvres during cocktail hour (cash bar), house wine, soda, salad, pasta, entree, dessert, coffee, and tea.

Mail your dinner registration and check (payable to South Shore Audubon Society) to South Shore Audubon Society, P.O. Box 31, Freeport, NY 11520-0031.

Directions: Southern State Parkway to exit 17N, north on Hempstead Ave. for 1.2 miles.



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 Dinner Registration Form (Please Register by June 1)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people \_\_\_\_\_ Amount enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

**South Shore Audubon Society**  
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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.



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