

The Huntington Audubon Society

A chapter of the National Audubon Society



killdeer

November - December 2008

Serving Huntington Township and the Neighboring Oyster Bay and Jericho Areas

Refuse to Use Plastic Bags

by Ann Merrill



This summer, to my horror, I learned about the plastic pollution on Midway Atoll, a breeding ground for albatross in the Pacific Ocean near Hawaii. Filmmaker, Rebecca Hosking, so devastated by the number of birds suffering or dead from ingesting plastic, was brought to tears while filming her documentary film. (To learn more, go to www.messageinthewaves.com.) I also found out about the North Pacific Trash Gyre, that contains fragments of plastic caught in swirling ocean currents below the surface of the ocean, hardly noticeable from cruise ships or airplanes even though it's larger than the state of Texas.

Stimulated to do more research on the problem, I discovered that between 500 billion and a trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide each year with only 1% being recycled. Plastic bags take between 20 and 1,000 years to break down in the environment, and since they do not biodegrade, they simply break apart into smaller pieces. Many plastic bags end up in the sea and account for over 10% of the debris washed up on the U.S. coastline. But plastic bags are more than an eyesore. Each year more than 1 million birds, 100,000 whales, seals, and turtles, as well as countless fish become entangled or die after ingesting the noxious plastic. Fortunately, in the last couple of years, a few maverick towns, cities, and counties have started to ban or charge for plastic bags, a move that has reduced consumption by 90% or more in these locations, a move which should be replicated.

I urge everyone to make a commitment to drastically reduce the use of plastic bags. This change will require purchasing several reusable cloth bags, keeping them in the car, and remembering to bring them into grocery stores and shops. I hate to admit how many times I initially left my reusable bags in the car. It wasn't until I made an effort to retrieve them from my car each time I

realized I had "done it again" that remembering them became effortless and automatic. For those of you already using reusable bags for toting your groceries home, I encourage you to replace the flimsy plastic produce bags with mesh or cotton bags. These scrunchable, woven bags can easily be tossed into handbags for impulse purchases and are great for fruit, vegetables, and bulk grains. They may be purchased on many Internet websites such as: www.ecobags.com, www.sacksandsuch.com, or www.reusablebags.com.

Remember, some loose vegetables and fruit require no bagging and can simply be put in your cart. In addition to the above benefits, bringing your own cloth bag also cuts down on America's dependence on foreign oil since plastic bags are made from polyethylene, a thermoplastic made from oil. Please do your part to clean up the planet, one bag at a time!

About Our Bird Seed Sale



Unfortunately, Huntington Audubon is unable to hold our Bird Seed Sale this year. Despite frequent requests, suppliers cannot give us prices for the seed in a timely manner. They simply don't know in advance what it will cost around the time we need the seed. They do know prices have increased dramatically. The terrible spring floods in the Midwest, (remember the photos of Iowa when the Mississippi spread across miles of the Midwest?) decreased planting of seed crops, and the enormous increase in acreage devoted to corn all have contributed to the instability of bird seed prices. Also, fewer suppliers are interested in servicing small purchasers like us.

We hope to resume the sale next year. We thank all of you for your devoted past patronage and your future patronage. We will miss seeing you at the sale. Hopefully next year will be better.

In the meantime, you may want to buy seed from Volunteers for Wildlife at Caumsett State Park. (For information, go to www.volunteersforwildlife.org.)

November Program
Wednesday, November 12
Cold Spring Harbor Public Library

7:00 PM Refreshments
 7:30 PM Speaker

Bird Species at Risk in New York State: What We Know About Them and What You Can Do to Help Them

From endangered species to common birds in decline, there are a number of birds with conservation needs. Prioritizing species for conservation is done by assessing population and range size, threats, and population trends. Trends for most species are available from the Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count. Birds face many threats, but there are also many opportunities for all of us to contribute to their conservation. Conservation biologist Gregory S. Butcher, Ph.D., is Director of Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society.

The mission of the Huntington Audubon Society is to increase community awareness about the environment and to encourage others to enjoy and protect birds and other wildlife in their natural habitats.



killdeer

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You can find us on the World Wide Web at
www.huntingtonaudubon.org.
 E-mail us at **has@huntingtonaudubon.org**.

New York State Young Birders Club
 by Hope Batcheller, age 16, Petersburg, NY

Almost two years ago, I started an online Yahoo! group for the young birders of New York State. Because young birders often feel isolated in a world of older birders, my initial goal was to encourage and connect them.

After the group had been established for a year, I approached the New York State Ornithological Association (NYSOA) about sponsoring an official young birders club. They agreed, and gratefully extended their services for this important effort.

This idea was inspired by the Ohio Young Birders Club (OYBC), which was started in May 2006. Geared for ages 12-18, the OYBC offers field trips, a newsletter, an annual conference, and scholarships for camps and events, all based on input from the young birders. Similarly, young birders aged 12-19 will largely run the NYSYBC, with the support and assistance of adults. NYSOA is currently searching for an adult coordinator, with Carena Pooth helping in the interim. Thanks to her, and others on the NYSOA board of directors, we will soon open official memberships and schedule regular field trips.

Though the club is still in its fledgling stage, we have already held our first field trip – a visit to Jamaica Bay in mid-August, 2008. With a turnout of nine high school-aged kids, excellent leadership by Shai Mitra and Doug Gochfeld, finding a White-faced Ibis, and many bird jokes, the trip was a blast!

The NYS Young Birders Club provides chances for young birders to meet, learn, and bird together in an effort to encourage the next generation of naturalists. As the club continues to grow, we will be searching for adult help of any sort. If you're interested, let us know! In the meantime, if you know any young birders take them birding and tell them about the club.

For more information go to the NYS Young Birders Club website: **www.nysyoungbirders.org**. Here you will find information about the club, links to the NYSyoungbirders listserv, the OYBC, the American Birding Association's young birder programs, and much more.



Visit us on the web
www.huntingtonaudubon.org

Kudos to Charlie Skinas

At the September membership meeting, Charlie Skinas donated another beautifully carved Killdeer to Huntington Audubon. He donated one last spring and it was used as a prize for the person who raised the most money for the Birdathon, Bill Reeves. No decision has been made yet regarding the use of second carving, but it may be raffled off as a fundraiser. The carvings are excellent replicas of the bird we use as the HAS logo. But, of course they have to be, because to win prizes in wood carving, the birds must be anatomically accurate. Charlie has won many ribbons from the Long Island Wood Carvers Association for his wood carvings including the Killdeers and a Goldfinch.

After retiring, Charlie had extra time and took up woodcarving. Formerly a Fort Salonga resident, Charlie now lives in East Northport. He grew up on LI and has fond memories of time spent on the marshes of the island. His interest in carving led him to attend HAS meetings to familiarize himself more with ducks. The duck presentation sparked his interest, extended it to other birds, and he now attends our meetings regularly.

We thank Charlie for generously giving the fruits of his talent to us and welcome his company at our meetings.



Doris Bierhanzl

For the last 18 years Doris has been our publicity person sending announcements of field trips and meetings to a wide range of publications. If you saw one of our field trips or meetings listed in *The New York Times*, *Newsday*, or a local paper, Doris got that information to the publisher. Many of our new members saw such announcements, came and joined our ranks. She is now bowing out of that post.

Doris joined HAS in 1975 and has been active ever since. She served for nine years on the Board of Directors, was Secretary, field trip leader, participated often in Birdathon and the Christmas Bird Count, helped with Bird Seed sale, hospitality, membership, many festivals, wrote letters as an Armchair Activist, and even monitored the tern Colony at Sand City. A BIG thank you to Doris for many, many years of hard work on behalf of HAS.

And Welcome Stephanie Fleice

Stephanie is taking over the publicity duties. She is a new member of HAS, but many of you may know her as she was an educator at Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. She is a Long Island native and a graduate of Queens College with a degree in Environmental studies.



by Simone DaRos

Last spring, Daniel Czap and Zachary Slansky, first grade students at Oakwood Primary Center, presented the HAS Board of Directors with outstanding research projects about the Red Knot migration and the differences and similarities between the Ferruginous Hawk and the Turkey Vulture. In recognition of their work, the Board of Directors voted to provide them with scholarships to attend the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary and Audubon Center (TRSAC) Audubon Adventures program.

Now, as second graders, Daniel and Zachary, are sharing their knowledge and Audubon Adventures experiences with their new classmates and teacher, Mrs. Farkas. They described the trails they explored while searching for replica skeleton bones. They discussed creating Plaster of Paris dinosaur tracks. They shared their excitement about observing a Red-tailed Hawk and an eastern box turtle up close. The boys particularly enjoyed visiting Oyster Bay Cove and observing and handling marine organisms.

It is rewarding to see that Daniel and Zachary value their TRSAC summer experience. It is clear that they love and respect nature and that they enjoy sharing the knowledge and experiences they gained from Audubon Adventures with others.

Oops. Omission

So sorry. We forgot to mention Ann Brosnan's name in the article thanking people who helped with the garage sale in our prior issue. Many thanks, Ann.

December Program

Wednesday, December 10
Cold Spring Harbor Public Library

7:00 PM Refreshments
7:30 PM Speaker

Native Owl Discovery: Live Owl Presentation, Volunteers for Wildlife

Many species of owls call Long Island home. In addition to year round residents, certain northern species migrate to Long Island during the winter. Meet some of Volunteers for Wildlife's resident owls while discovering the role owls play in our local ecosystem, and the adaptations they employ to survive here. An optional short night hike will follow the program. This is a unique opportunity to experience owls in an up-close and personal manner. All ages are welcome. Volunteers for Wildlife is a non-profit, volunteer organization, founded in 1982, dedicated to preserving Long Island's wildlife and natural habitats through education and wildlife rehabilitation.

Taking Chances on Hook Mountain by Stella Miller



It was 5:30 am on October 5, 2008. As I lay deep in slumber, I was startled awake by the shrill ringing of my telephone. I picked up to hear fellow board member, Simone DaRos say, "Stella, it is POURING out." I dumbly replied, "It isn't supposed to be." Simone then offered, "Well it is." Yikes! My field trip to Constitution Marsh the week before had been canceled due to rain and I couldn't believe it was going to happen again. After some discussion, we decided we were going to take a chance and hope that things would clear up. Hope springs eternal, right? Well, thank goodness we did, because we would have missed an amazing day on Hook Mountain!

Most of the participants canceled due to the weather and so it was just Simone, Vinny Pellegrino, and I. I quickly researched some breakfast spots (because when the birding is bad, I always say, "Let's eat!") and we headed up to Nyack for a leisurely breakfast/rain delay. As we drove in the downpour, we wondered at the wisdom of our decision and tried to convince ourselves that although gas is almost \$4 a gallon, there was absolutely nothing wrong with driving to Nyack just to have a meal!

Our first sighting of the day was at the Strawberry Café, as Rosie O'Donnell and two of her children came in for breakfast. It isn't often one observes a celebrity eating breakfast while on a field trip! As we left the café, the rain had subsided. So far so good. Things were working out.

We climbed to the top of mountain and to our dismay the summit was shrouded in a thick fog. Well, we had come this far, we weren't turning back now. For two hours we shivered, froze, and waited. Swaddled in our warm outerwear we kept reassuring each other that it was just a matter of minutes before the fog would lift. Every shift in the wind brought new hope that it would blow out. We kept waiting.

The small group at the hawk watch included a member of North Shore Audubon, Glenn Quinn, his delightful 8-year old son Antonio, and a photographer, Steve Sachs (www.stevesachsphotography.com). As the fog slowly began to lift, we had a sprinkling of Sharp-shinned hawks. Suddenly, a Pileated Woodpecker began calling close by and we were on the hunt. We slowly made our way into the woods looking for the Pileated, and as we did, warblers and other assorted songbirds started appearing. A sudden little wave of birds was extremely encouraging. Although we tried our best, we couldn't find the woodpecker. As we

emerged from the woods onto the summit we were greeted by blue skies and sunshine. The coats, gloves, and hats quickly came off and we settled in to wait for the birds. Like clockwork, they began their race across the sky. By the end of the day, we had observed over 40 Sharp-shinned Hawks, a Peregrine Falcon, Merlin, Northern Harrier, an Osprey, American Kestrels, Turkey Vultures, Coopers Hawks, 3 Bald Eagles, and several Red-tailed Hawks. Hook Mountain is a wonderful place to watch hawks migrate because most of the birds can be viewed at eye level which is more satisfying than the black specks typically seen at other hawk watches.

While we were having our fill of migrating hawks, the Pileated Woodpecker continued to taunt us, calling from one side of the mountain, then the other, always tantalizingly close, but never visible. For hours he was as frustratingly elusive as his cousin, the Ivory-billed Woodpecker. Finally, he flew out directly in front of us, screaming like a banshee. As we stood dumbfounded, we were treated to a fantastic view of this magnificent bird. As far as our group was concerned, this was the highlight of the field trip. Honestly, how could it get better than what we had just witnessed?

Well, there was still more to come! As the day was winding down and we were contemplating taking our leave, a couple of Red-tailed hawks started flying in close. Real close. As in dive-bombing us close. One particular hawk swooped in on us several times and seemed to be having a grand time. What a thrill! It was like the grand finale at a fireworks show.

Our day may have started out gloomy, cold, wet, and miserable, but it ended bright, sunny, and incredibly birdy. Sometimes you just have to spin the wheel and hope for the best. We could have all just stayed in bed that day, but instead, we took a chance and wow, did we hit the jackpot!

Birding Trail Newsletter Available



The Great Florida Birding Trail (GFBT) newsletter will be back this fall. To be published twice a year, the newsletter will cover the GFBT and will also include articles about other wildlife viewing opportunities in Florida.

If you're planning a trip to Florida, visit <http://myfwc.com/recreation/requests.asp> to request an electronic or paper version of the newsletter. The site also includes ordering instructions for detailed Birding Trail brochures, Florida bird lists, trail and recreation guides, driving tours, and other publications of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

Hog Island
by Brent Bomkamp, age 15



At 5:00 in the morning on Saturday, June 21, 2008, my Dad and I departed from our house in Northport for the long drive north to Maine. I was headed to Hog Island, a camp run by Maine Audubon immediately off of the small village of Bremen, Maine in the placid Muscongus Bay. The island's serene and tranquil beauty was first noticed by Mabel Loomis Todd, the wife of a well known Bostonian astronomer and Audubon Society member. She was determined to prevent the islands untouched spruce-fir forest from being logged, and in 1908 she purchased it. After her death, Hog Island was inherited by her daughter, Millicent Todd Bingham, and she donated the island to the National Audubon Society in 1934. The director of the Audubon Society at the time, John Hopkinson Baker, had been searching for a location to place an educational camp. He found it on Hog Island. Since then, Hog Island has been the temporary home of such famous American ornithologists as Roger Tory Peterson, Allan Cruickshank, Rachel Carson, and Kenn Kaufman.

This year the Huntington Audubon Society was gracious enough to provide me with a full scholarship for a week long teen program at the camp. On Sunday the 21st, my Dad dropped me off at the dock on the mainland along with my luggage, and I checked in. Within an hour the boat had taken me and several other campers to the island, and I met some of the kids who had arrived before me. A large adult camp program consisting of about 50 people was occurring at the same time, so the island was bustling with activity. The teen program's instructors gathered all 14 of the teen campers and we discussed our schedule and the various rules and guidelines of the camp. After gathering for a delicious dinner we were introduced to the various instructors at the camp. They included Pulitzer-prize nominated author Scott Weidensaul, elected Secretary of the American Ornithologists Union Sarah Morris, Greg Budney, curator of the Macauley Library of Natural Sounds at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology, and Sue Shuebel, well known authority on seabird biology. After eating and mingling with the other campers, we went to bed.

Throughout the week we traveled to numerous birding hotspots throughout Maine. At Acadia National Park we viewed the numerous species of boreal breeding species found there, and learned about the Peregrine Falcon reintroduction program there from a National Park Service official. We were led through Medomak Village by Scott Weidensaul down a route originally laid out by Peterson and Cruickshank, both of whom were instructors during the early years of the camp. On Tuesday we traveled out to

Eastern Egg Rock and viewed the alcid and tern colony there. We studied numerous Atlantic Puffins, Black Guillemots, and Arctic, Roseate, and Common Terns. We also visited well known warbler breeding grounds such as McClary Road, where Greg Budney let us use a parabola to record the songs of Canada Warblers there. Every night an informative seminar took place, each given by a noted authority on bird behavior or biology.

On Saturday the 28th, after a delicious Maine lobster dinner, it was time to say goodbye and head home. I left Hog Island with a wider view of ornithology and birds in general. Thanks to the generosity of the Huntington Audubon Society I was able to attend this amazing and unique place. My time spent there truly changed my life.

Thanks, Mike Givant
by Mairia Kelly



Mike Givant brought a stack of environmentally related books he didn't need anymore to the September membership meeting. He stipulated they were to be free for the taking. We placed them on a table in the back and people browsed and helped themselves. A young boy, about 10 years old was delighted with one on Fresh Water Fish. I took Field Guide to Shells. Many thanks for your generosity, Mike.



Membership Application

Chapter No. RO2

Membership in National Audubon includes a subscription to *Audubon* magazine and all the benefits of being a local chapter member. As a member of the Huntington Audubon Society, you will receive our newsletter and an open invitation to all our meetings, field trips, and events.

- New National Audubon Society member for \$20 (includes *Audubon* magazine)
- Huntington Audubon Society member for \$20 (does NOT include *Audubon* magazine)

Name _____

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City _____

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Make check payable to:
Huntington Audubon Society

Send your check and application to:
Huntington Audubon Society
P.O. Box 735
Huntington, NY 11743-073



MEETINGS AND ACTIVITIES

Meetings and activities of the Huntington Audubon Society are free to members and nonmembers. Meetings are held the second Wednesday of the month at the **Cold Spring Harbor Library** except for the months of July and August. Our refreshments will be set up and ready for you at 6:45 PM so that you will have ample time for socializing, meeting Board members, and perusing the printed materials available. We're doing this to be sure the program can start promptly at 7:30 and end early enough for us all to exit the building by its 9:00 PM closing hour. Our cooperation and compliance will allow the library staff to close the gate on schedule.

November 2008

Wednesday, November 12, 7:00 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library. *Bird Species at Risk in New York State: What We Know about Them and What You Can Do to Help Them.* From endangered species to common birds in decline, there are a number of birds with conservation needs. Prioritizing species for conservation is done by assessing population and range size, threats, and population trends. Trends for most species are available from the Breeding Bird Survey and Christmas Bird Count. Birds face many threats, but there are also many opportunities for all of us to contribute to their conservation. Conservation biologist Gregory S. Butcher, Ph.D., is Director of Bird Conservation for the National Audubon Society. He has served as editor of *Birder's World* magazine and is an elective member of the American Ornithologists' Union (AOU), past president of the Association of Field Ornithologists, and past chair of the nongovernmental organizations and monitoring committees of Partners in Flight.

Wednesday, November 19, 7:30 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at Cold Spring Harbor Library.

Monday, December 1 – Deadline for the January - February *Killdeer*.

December 2008

Wednesday, December 10, 7:00 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library. *Native Owl Discovery: Live Owl Presentation, Volunteers for Wildlife.* Many species of owls call Long Island home. In addition to year round residents, certain northern species migrate to Long Island during the winter. Meet some of Volunteers for Wildlife's resident owls while discovering the role owls play in our local ecosystem, and the adaptations they employ to survive here. An optional short night hike will follow the program. This is a unique opportunity to experience owls in an up-close and personal manner. All ages are welcome. Volunteers for Wildlife is a non-profit, volunteer organization, founded in 1982, dedicated to preserving Long Island's wildlife and natural habitats through education and wildlife rehabilitation.

NOTE: There is no Board of Directors meeting in December.

January 2009

Wednesday, January 14, 7:00 PM – Membership meeting at the Cold Spring Harbor Library. *From the Bronx to the Andean Steppes: Enhancing Field Conservation Techniques Through Zoo Research* with Dr. Patrick Thomas. How can you collect hair samples from Africa's big cats for DNA analysis? How can you determine whether there is a "downside" to live-shearing wild guanacos as a conservation strategy? How can you assess snow leopard populations by examining their "poop"? The answers to all these questions were gleaned, at least in part, through research in zoos. Dr. Pat Thomas will tell you about these and other examples of how research conducted in zoos can benefit wildlife conservation. Dr. Thomas has been with the Wildlife Conservation Society's (WCS) Bronx Zoo's Mammal Department since 1979. He is currently the general curator and is responsible for supervising the care and management of over 4,000 animals from nearly 500 species.

Wednesday, January 21, 7:30 PM – Meeting of the Board of Directors at Cold Spring Harbor Library.

Birders' Box

The September 14 trip to Greenwich Audubon had a total of 17 birds seen and added 2 to our year's total, the Sharp-shinned Hawk and the Red-shouldered hawk. 41 birds were seen on the September 21 at Jones Beach. Red Knot and Short-billed Dowitcher were added to our year's total that day. We also were treated to a large flock, about 180 or so American Oystercatchers. Really great views. At Hook Mt on October 5, Sharp-shinned, Red-tailed, Coopers hawks, Bald Eagles, Peregrine Falcons, Merlins, American Kestrel, Turkey Vultures, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Pileated Woodpecker, and Raven were seen.

Number of species seen this calendar year on HAS trips is 181.



FIELD TRIPS

Field trips organized by Huntington Audubon are free, unless otherwise specified, and open to the public. Outdoor activities, such as birding and hiking with a group, are a wonderful way to share your interests with like-minded people to learn more about birds and nature, and to enjoy many preserves and natural areas. Newcomers are most welcome. Binoculars and field guides are strongly advised, but leaders usually have some field guides to share. Field trips begin between 8:00 and 9:00 AM at the site and end around noon unless otherwise specified. During spring migration, some field trips may begin earlier. That will be clear in the trip announcement. Directions to the site are published below and on our website. Carpooling is possible, gas and tolls are shared. Contact the trip leader for details. The trip leader is not responsible for arranging carpools, but will provide names of others who are interested in carpooling. Registration is necessary. Call the trip leader by 9:00 PM Thursday for a Saturday trip and by 9:00 PM Friday for a Sunday trip. Be sure to leave your phone number. You may participate if you didn't register, but we will not be able to notify you of any changes or cancellations without your phone number. Dress for the weather realizing you'll be outdoors for long periods of time. Bring water and if the trip is for a full day, bring a bag lunch. Rain or temperature below 20° F cancels. For the comfort and safety of all participants there is no smoking on field trips.

November 2008

Sunday, November 2, 9:00 AM – Rockefeller State Park Preserve/Washington Irving's Sunnyside. Rockefeller State Park Preserve has 180 recorded species of birds and is an IBA. After our walk, we will travel to Washington Irving's Sunnyside for a house tour with costumed guides. Fee for Sunnyside: \$12 for guided tour, \$5 grounds only.

Directions to Rockefeller State Park: Taconic Parkway north to exit County Route 117 Pleasantville. At end of ramp, turn left. Proceed through 3 lights. Preserve entrance is on the left. Approximate travel time from Syosset is 1 hour. Registration is a must. Leader: Stella Miller (516-695-0763).

Sunday, November 23, 9:00 AM – Pelham Bay Park. Look for owls, ducks, and permanent residents. In the past, Barn, Screech, Long-Eared, Saw-whet, and Great Horned Owls have been sighted here.

Directions: Take the Hutchinson River Parkway to the Pelham Bay Park/City Island/Orchard Beach exit. Continue east farther into the park past the traffic circle then veering left to the parking area on Hunters Island. Meet the group there. Leader: Blair Broughton (516-802-5356).

December 2008

Sunday, December 7, 9:30 AM – Field Trip for Families, Elizabeth A. Morton National Wildlife Refuge. Morton NWR is famous for its tame Chickadees. We will provide bird seed. You are almost guaranteed to have Chickadees and Tufted Titmice feeding from your hands.

Directions: Take Sunrise Hwy. (27) east past Shinnecock Canal. Look for North Sea and Noyack sign and bear left on CR52. Stay on CR52, then turn left at light onto CR38. After 1.4 miles on CR38, turn right onto Noyack Road. After 5 miles, turn left into refuge. Parking fee. Leader: Stella Miller (516-695-0763).

Saturday, December 13, 9:00 AM – All Day Trip to Montauk Point and Various East End Spots. Winter

waterfowl abound, including scoters, eiders, loons, gannets, and pond ducks. Leader: Sharon Brody (516 433-5590).

Directions: Take the LIE to exit 70, Manorville. Go south on Rte 111 to Rte 27. Take Rte 27 east all the way to Montauk Point Lighthouse. There may be a parking fee. Meet by the restaurant opposite the parking lot.

Saturday, December 20 – Northern Nassau Christmas Bird Count. Join Audubon members in the oldest continuous citizen science project. Data is used to determine patterns of increases or decreases in winter populations throughout the U.S. All members are encouraged to participate, but it is very important that as many experienced birders as possible join the count. Contact Bill Reeves (631-266-4309). He will explain the time and place.

January 2009

Saturday, January 3, 9:00 AM – North Shore Ponds and Harbors. We will visit several ponds and harbors on the North Shore. See winter ducks as well as permanent resident land birds. Always a fun trip. Leader: Maria Kelly (631 673-0937).

Directions: Take 25A into the town of Huntington. Turn north onto Prime Ave adjacent to Heckscher Park. Park near the museum, either in the lot or on Prime Avenue. Meet in front of the Museum.

Saturday, January 17, 10 AM – Bronx Zoo for Families. The focus of the trip will be Tiger Mountain, snow leopards, and the African wild dogs. Then we will wander the rest of the zoo. Parking: \$10. Entry fees: Adults: \$14, Seniors: \$12, Children 3-12: \$10. Registration is a must. Call Stella Miller (516-695-0763). We will stop for lunch at the Café.

Directions: Whitestone or Throgs Neck Bridge to the Cross Bronx Expressway West to the Bronx River Parkway North to exit 7W (Fordham Road). Once on Fordham Road, the road will fork, bear right up the ramp. At the light, make a left onto Southern Blvd. Follow Southern Blvd to 182nd Street and Bronx Park South. The zoo is on the left.



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P.O. Box 735
Huntington, NY 11743-0735

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November - December 2008



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Out on a Limb by Alex McKay

On November 3, 1998, the voters of the Town of Huntington approved the establishment of a \$15 million Environmental Open Space and Park Fund by an overwhelming 72% margin. Now, just ten years and one day later, on November 4, 2008, Town of Huntington voters will be asked to continue the program with a new \$15 million bond authorization. In 2003, a second ten-year initiative for \$30 million was approved for open space and park and neighborhood improvements. The full \$15 million of the original program has been committed for the purchase of interests in land and park improvements. One-third of the land acquisition funds from the 2003 referendum have been committed.

It is time to replenish the fund and continue the effort by the Town to add to the open space and park inventory, upgrade and improve park facilities, fund neighborhood improvement in areas underserved by parks, and to launch a new “green initiatives” program.

Under the original programs 26 acquisitions have been completed with almost 220 acres protected at a cost of approximately \$12 million. The addition of \$19 million in Suffolk County funds made possible 9 of the acquisitions.

The inventory includes 10 new passive parks, 6 new venues for active recreation, and 14 expansions of existing parklands. Park improvement funding was provided for 60 parks with projects ranging from new soccer and Little League fields to playgrounds, restrooms, picnic tables, historic restorations, signage, landscaping, and handicapped accessibility. Neighborhood improvements included streetscape and lighting, walkways for safety, landscaping, and facade treatments.

A full accounting of the expenditures for the program can be found on the Town of Huntington’s website, <http://town.huntington.ny.us>. Click “On Line Library,” then “Planning and Environment.” Scroll down to “EOSPA Status Report and New Program Recommendations” for a complete summary of the programs.

As a member of the EOSPA committee, I have visited many sites and participated in discussions, evaluations, and recommendations regarding the programs and expenditures. I can assure you, every proposal receives full and complete evaluation and scrutiny. The funds are administered with diligence and care. I unreservedly endorse the new bond referendum and urge your support on November 4th.