



# The *OSPREY*

July/August, 2006 – Vol. XXXVI No. 4

## Nature Programs

**Bob Adamo**

Join us for nature programs and membership meetings at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge. Everyone is welcome. (Directions are on our website.)

**Monday, July 10**



**7:15 PM – Nature chat**

**7:30 PM – Chapter news**

**8:00 PM – Speaker Eric Salzman:**

**VIEW FROM WEESUCK CREEK**

Since the 1940's, Eric has been keeping spring and fall migration records, as well as notes on other bird sightings, at the East Quogue property owned by his parents. A chuck-will's-widow Bob Adamo saw at Weesuck Creek in May, 1977 is an example of the many interesting birds Eric has recorded.

**Monday, August 7**

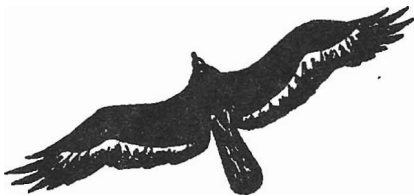


**7:15 PM – Nature Chat**

**7:30 PM – Speaker Bob Horbath:**

**WILDLIFE REHABILITATION**

Bob is a NYC firefighter, in addition to being a wildlife rehabilitator. To illustrate his talk, he will use five or six live birds of prey, including a barred owl and a turkey vulture. Your kids will enjoy this program. (Chapter news will follow the speaker.)



Turkey Vulture

## Horseshoe

## Crab Rescue



**Bob Murray**

On the morning of May 13<sup>th</sup>, a small band of volunteers from our chapter and the Quogue Wildlife Refuge handed out flyers at both ends of Dune Road in Hampton Bays and Quogue. Our purpose was to alert drivers to the fact that horseshoe crabs were on the road and please try to avoid them. We were also there to help the crabs back into the bay.

It was a beautiful morning with shorebirds active in the marsh. Willets were chattering their mating songs, swans and geese were nesting in the tall grasses. A shy glossy ibis pecked away at the weed line, and tight little flights of sanderlings did their acrobatics on the shore line. And there were hundreds of horseshoe crabs.

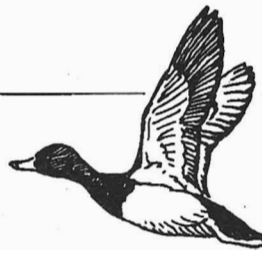
Every year at this time, the horseshoe crabs return to mate and lay their eggs in the sand. When high tide occurs at the time of a full moon, Dune Road floods, and the crabs head for the sand on the dune side of the road. Unfortunately, they get caught high and dry on the wrong side of the road when the tide goes down, and cars run over them.

As drivers stopped to pick up one of our flyers asking people to try to avoid the crabs, I was interested in their comments. Many were conscious of the plight of the crabs and thanked me for trying to help. But a few exhibited the thoughtless attitude most of us are occasionally guilty of. One remark really struck me: "You've got to be kidding. Horseshoe crabs have been around for hundreds of years and will be here long after you and I die."

I could hear the crackle of hard shells breaking as a truck hit some crabs down the road, and I thought about what the man said. As I watched nature's beauty on that day, I wondered if the horseshoe crab really will be here a hundred years from now.

**Editor's Note:** Go to [Audubon.org](http://Audubon.org) to learn about efforts to limit the harvesting of horseshoe crabs for bait. Their eggs are an important food source for shorebirds.

## Field Trips – Steve Biasetti



### BUGS IN FLIGHT

Saturday, July 1

July is an excellent time to look for butterflies and dragonflies on eastern Long Island. Roughly fifty butterfly and twenty-five dragonfly species may be encountered at this time, including various hairstreaks and skippers (among the former) as well as darners and skimmers (of the latter). On this three-hour excursion, we will visit various local sites to search for as many butterflies and dragonflies as possible.

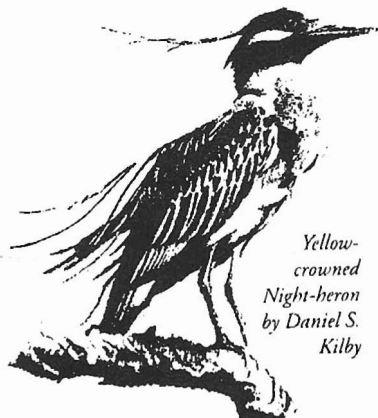
Interested persons should meet at the Riverhead County Center parking lot (off County Road 51) at 9 a.m. Binoculars, preferably of the close-focus variety (< 10 feet), will be needed for the trip.

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### SHOREBIRDS AT CUPSOGUE: PART I

Saturday, July 8

Believe it or not, the so-called autumn shorebird migration begins in early July. The mudflats and marshes of Moriches Bay are reliable magnets for these long-distance migrants. Meet Andy Baldelli at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge parking lot at 7:30 a.m. for a 3.5-hour shorebird search along Dune Road from Cupsogue County Park through Westhampton.



*Yellow-crowned  
Night-heron  
by Daniel S.  
Kilby*

### JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

Saturday, August 5

The Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge is a renowned birdwatching hot spot in the Borough of Queens. In early August, an impressive collection of birds may be found there including glossy ibis, yellow-crowned night-heron, little blue and tricolored herons, cattle egret, laughing gull, Forster's tern, willow flycatcher, marsh wren, seaside sparrow, clapper rail, American oystercatcher, and a variety of migrant shorebirds. On this full-day trip we will explore as much of the Refuge as possible.

We will meet at the Home Depot parking lot in East Patchogue (northeast corner of Sunrise Highway-Route 112 intersection) at 7 a.m. We should arrive at Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge by 8:30 a.m., and participants can expect to return to the Home Depot parking lot by 4 p.m. Please wear comfortable shoes, and pack a lunch, snacks and beverages. Binoculars are essential for this trip; spotting scopes can be a big help.

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### SHOREBIRDS AT CUPSOGUE: PART II

Saturday, August 12

As the summer advances, the age and species composition of shorebirds changes in local tidal waters. Meet Andy Baldelli at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge parking lot at 7:30 a.m. for this repeat performance – a 3.5-hour shorebird search along Dune Road from Cupsogue County Park through Westhampton.

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### AUTUMN ON SHINNECOCK BAY

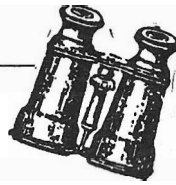
Saturday, September 9

In mid-September, bird diversity is high along the south shore of Long Island. Summer nesters such as egrets, terns, and oystercatchers are still around. Meanwhile shorebird and songbird migrations are heating up. This 3.5-hour tour will coincide with low tide to enhance our shorebirding chances.

We will meet at 2 p.m. in the parking lot at the end of Dune Road in Hampton Bays, on the west side of Shinnecock Inlet.

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*For directions or questions, please contact Steve Biasetti at 631-537-1400 x15 (work), 631-874-4684 (home), or [biafamily@optonline.net](mailto:biafamily@optonline.net) (e-mail). All levels of naturalists -- including beginners -- are most welcome for Eastern Long Island Audubon field trips. ELIAS trips are free to the general public. For longer trips, please come prepared to split travel costs with driver (gas, tolls, etc.).*



## ***Field Trip Highlights - Beth Gustin***

### **Jamaica Bay Wildlife Refuge**

May was a busy month for birders as ELIAS sponsored several field trips to keep up with spring migration. On Saturday, May 6, Steve Biasetti led a trip to Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge. It was a beautiful spring day which yielded some good sightings. Some of the favorites among participants were rose-breasted grosbeak, American redstart, northern parula, ruby-crowned kinglet, and common yellowthroat. In the marshes and mudflats, yellow-crowned night heron, palm warbler, red knot, and American oystercatcher were some of the key species seen. In addition to tallying more than 70 species the participants enjoyed a picnic lunch at the refuge and good company among all who attended.

### **Another Successful Birdathon**

May 13 was a very exciting day for birders from ELIAS and Kaler's Pond Nature center as they ventured into fields, woods, beaches, and marshes for Birdathon 2006. For one team of birders, the day began before sunrise in the hopes of hearing whip-poor-will and Chuck-will's-widow. Unfortunately, these two species did not want to be heard that morning, at least not to this team. The next stop at

Maple Swamp helped us forget that early disappointment by producing brown creeper, ovenbird, common yellowthroat, chestnut-sided warbler, and blue-winged warbler. At around 8:40 AM, we stopped at Bald Hill along CR51 and were treated to a wonderful flock of warblers including prothonotary, black-throated green, black-throated blue, and northern parula. A bit further down the road, Hunter's Garden lived up to its reputation as we tallied yellow-billed cuckoo, pine, blackburnian, and magnolia warblers, scarlet tanager, blue-gray gnatcatcher and indigo bunting to name a few. Several stops in East Moriches produced ruby-throated hummingbird, white-eyed vireo, cedar waxwing, great-crested flycatcher, American oystercatcher, black-crowned night heron and saltmarsh sharp-tailed sparrow. Making our way along Dune Road in the afternoon we heard a clapper rail and saw piping plover, willet, dunlin, sanderling, ruddy turnstone and least sandpiper. Also along Dune Road we came across a dedicated group of volunteers from ELIAS who were helping horseshoe crabs by putting up fencing and handing out informative fliers about the plight of the crabs.

Birdathon ended at different times for each of the participants as some still had energy to look for owls after dark while others were snoozing by dusk. It was a fun and successful day and thanks to all who participated and those who sponsored the teams with donations and pledges!

## **Earth Day Celebration at Quogue Wildlife Refuge**

Refuge Manager Mike Nelson (far left) and an enthusiastic group of volunteers hosted an Earth Day celebration cosponsored by our chapter. (Photograph by Sue Little) In spite of intermittent rain, over a hundred visitors of all ages enjoyed live reptile and raptor shows, games, crafts, hiking, and kayaking. The highlight of the day was watching the

excitement and wonder on the smallest faces in the crowd. They were off to an early start on the road to appreciating nature and learning to protect it. Perhaps they will even be inspired to carry on the tradition of celebrating it every year on Earth Day.



## Volunteer Profile



# ANNETTE OLIVEIRA

Annette set up our website in 1998 and has maintained it ever since. She is also the Program Manager of the Kaler's Pond Audubon Center in Center Moriches.

A Long Island native, Annette currently lives in Mastic. She married in 1979 and had two children, Janice and Jorge Jr. For a number of years, she was a stay-at-home mom, but as her children grew older, she decided to go back to school and earn a degree. A life-long artist, she studied Fine Art and Graphic Design and earned a BA in 2004. She also has a background in photography and digital imaging with experience in the natural and physical sciences.

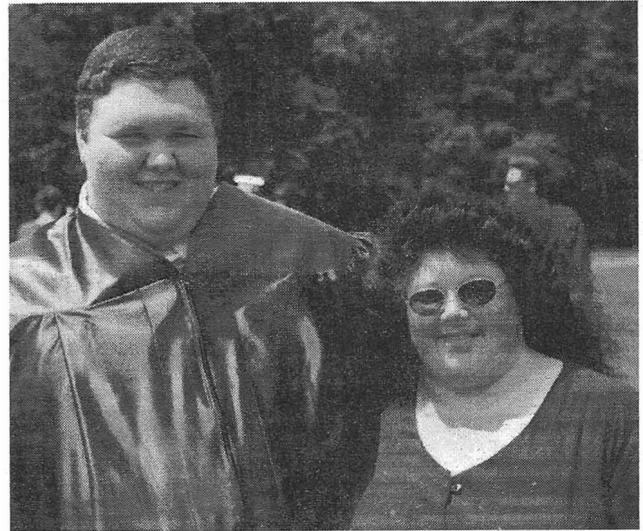
Annette has always loved animals, but her daughter, Janice, is the one who got her interested in birds. When Janice was in middle school, her bus driver gave her a bird song identification tape. She learned every bird call on the tape and would play them for her mother so they could learn the bird calls together. Her daughter's itinerant teacher at the time was Celia Hastings, a Past President of our chapter. Janice was blind from the age of two, and Celia was her Braille teacher. Annette bought a field guide and learned to identify birds by sight, and her daughter became a whiz at identifying bird calls. One day Celia surprised Janice with a membership to the National Audubon Society.

When Annette heard there would be a field trip around the east end of Long Island to count nesting osprey, she decided to surprise her daughter and take her on this trip. The first person they met was Jim Clinton. Since this was their first field trip with Audubon they didn't know what to expect. Jim made them feel very welcome. He explained what they would be doing and seeing that day. Although Janice was blind, she was thrilled to hear the call of a real osprey. Annette says that everyone on the trip made them feel very welcome.

In 1998 the chapter was working on reopening the Nature Center in Center Moriches. Annette volunteered to repaint the sign on the building. Soon after, she was asked to work part time at the Nature Center. In 2003, our chapter turned operation of the center over to Audubon New York, and the name was changed to the Kaler's Pond Audubon Center. Annette has worked there seasonally, since 1998. As Program Manager, she conducts programs for the general public as well as for local Boy and Girl Scout Troups. She also manages the daily operation of the Center and maintains the specimen collections. Recently she completed a revised and updated guide for the Gil Raynor

Interpretive Trail, which is located on the grounds of Kaler's Pond Park.

Annette frequently attends state meetings and receives naturalist training through Audubon New York. In 2005, through the New York Natural History Museum, she trained in a State program to survey the odonates of New York with Paul Novak. The survey will run for the next three years, and they hope to have a guide to the "Odonate's of New York" at the conclusion of the survey.



Annette and her son Jorge, Jr.

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*This is the fifteenth in a series of profiles designed to recognize volunteer contributions and help members get to know the people whose names appear regularly in this newsletter.*

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## *We still have a few hats left -*

For \$18, you can have a hat embroidered with an osprey and "Eastern Long Island Audubon Society." The hats are available in our sales area at the Quogue Wildlife Refuge.

- Baseball caps (size adjustable)
- Bucket hats (one size fits all)

In addition to looking smart, you will be supporting the chapter financially and helping to increase community awareness about our organization.

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## *Field Trips are for Everyone*

People sometimes tell us they would like to go on one of our field trips, but they don't know enough. This is puzzling to us. If you took a course in economics, would you be embarrassed because you didn't know as much as the professor? Of course not. If you took a lesson from a golf pro, would you expect to play as well as he does? Hardly. Then why do people who are interested in birds think they don't know enough to go on an Audubon field trip?

Our field trip leaders have accumulated a lifetime of experience, and they enjoy sharing it. Otherwise, why would they conduct the trips? They could just as easily go birding on their own. On the other hand, many of the people who come on our field trips are novices. They are not uncomfortable. There isn't even a hint of competition, just the pleasure of sharing a few hours in a beautiful setting with others who appreciate nature, and the thrill of seeing birds you may not have seen before.

### **We need your eyes.**

If you are a beginner, it may surprise you to know that you can help. More observers are an asset. All you need to do is call out and point in the direction of something you see. That's why more birds are often identified when the group is larger.

### **What are you waiting for?**

If you are missing out on the fun of being in the field with an experienced guide who knows where to find the interesting birds because you think you don't know enough, we encourage you to try one of our field trips. We think you will be surprised.

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## *Kaler's Pond Audubon Nature Center News*

**Earth and Arbor Day Celebration:** On April 29<sup>th</sup>, we were blessed with great weather. Eighty people came by for the live birds of prey and reptile talk. Sean Mahar talked about Audubon at Home ideas for planting a wildlife friendly yard.

**Girl Scout Badge Day** was attended by 50 girls and parents, who toured the Nature Center and the Gil Raynor Interpretive Trail using our new trail guide. People should stop by and see the wonderful job Annette did on the guide.

**Birdathon** had four teams that saw 154 different species. This included prothonotary warblers, worm-eating warblers, Tennessee warblers, a peregrine falcon, brown creepers, and several interesting sparrow species – vesper, seaside, grasshopper, and salt marsh sharp-tailed. Andy Baldelli's team had the most species with 125. He gets first pick at a Sibley's Guide or a choice of DVDs about birds. Three Birdathon participants were chosen randomly – Alice Osterland, Priscilla Bradley, and Michelle Baron. For prizes, they can choose from Sibley's Guide or birding DVDs including Red Tails in Love, Winged Migration, and Identifying Sparrows. Three donor prize winners will be chosen when all the pledges are in and announced in the next issue.

**The dragon fly survey** is ongoing. If anyone is interested, contact Annette.

**North American Butterfly Census – July 15<sup>th</sup> from 9 to 5:** This will be in central Suffolk County, Steve Biasetti and I will run it again this year. Please join us for enjoyable sightings – many birds are also seen.

**Fall Fundraising Dinner – September 9:** The dinner will be held again this year at the Kuhlman home.



**Weekend programs start in July, and the Nature Center will be open Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.** Please stop by and see the gardens and trail.

We are all saddened by the serious accident of Rich Haley, the NY Audubon Coordinator of Nature Centers. He is in a coma after an accident in the Grand Canyon, and we send our prayers.

Jay Kuhlman (SJKuhlman@aol.com)  
[www.kalerspondaudubon.homestead.com](http://www.kalerspondaudubon.homestead.com)

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## **Warbler Haiku**

Birds in the treetops  
Is that a black-throated blue?  
Oh, my aching neck!

Beth Gustin

# TOWN PERSPECTIVES

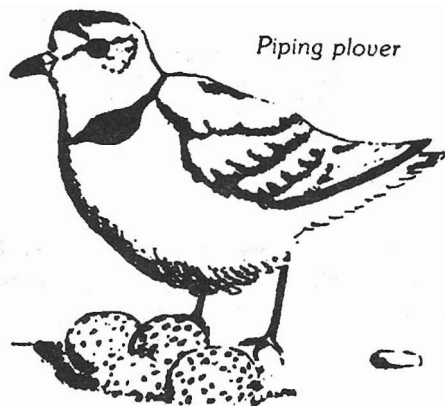


## *Piping Plover Restoration*

Larry Penny  
Chief, East Hampton Natural Resources



In 1986 the piping plover was placed on the federal endangered and threatened species list. About four years prior to that time, naturalists on Long Island began to question the bird's status as a breeder here. The Colonial Waterbird Society came into being, and its members began working with wildlife biologists at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nature Conservancy, and Seatuck. Seatuck was a not for profit ecological organization working out of the facilities in Islip, which were ultimately occupied by the Fish and Wildlife Service biologists who are there today.



The members of the Waterbird Society took it upon themselves to count and map the breeding plovers throughout Long Island's shoreline, then to put together a program to protect them and foster their breeding efforts here. Until that time, the waning osprey population had dominated most of the naturalists' attention, and perhaps rightly so, because its demise was directly tied to the use of insecticides such as DDT, which were put into local waters willy-nilly to combat mosquito infestations. The pesticides worked their way up the food chain and almost crippled the osprey population in eastern North America.

The piping plover is a pale and tiny bird in comparison with the osprey. Just about everybody knew what an osprey looked like. Until the great crash, they nested on utility poles – the first artificial nesting platforms – throughout Suffolk County, particularly on the East End. But very few people

had ever seen a piping plover. If they had seen one, they didn't remember it as being particularly noteworthy. Fortunately for us, a few local naturalists were keeping track of the piping plover and its numbers throughout the World War II years and thereafter until its virtual disappearance on Long Island. Most prominent among them was the late Roy Wilcox who, while a duck farmer raising peking ducks to earn a living in Speonk, monitored piping plover reproduction on the South Shore beaches of Southampton Town and beyond. Indeed, when the members of the Waterbird Society began to put together their plan for the plover's recovery (before it was formally declared as "threatened" by the feds), a review of the literature produced a few scientific reports of importance, the most significant of which was written by none other than Roy Wilcox. Without his ceaseless work and diligence for recording detail over a long period of time, we would have started from "Ground Zero". As it were, his work gave us a foot up.

## *An uphill battle*

After the piping plover received its well-deserved exalted status in 1986, the osprey became number two, and everybody jumped on the piping plover bandwagon, and well they did. In East Hampton Town where I work, efforts to revive the population were led by Russell Hoeflich, then director of the South Fork – Shelter Island Nature Conservancy and a rag-tag handful of volunteers including former town councilman Job Potter. Later two Nature Conservancy stewards took over the work, and their territory grew to include the towns of Shelter Island, the home of the Mashomack Preserve, and Southampton.

It was a slow uphill battle from day one. Ospreys were big magnificent birds that made spectacular dives into the water after which they carried away large silvery fish. They nested in trees and on platforms well out of the way of pedestrians and motorists. They had very few predators. Piping plovers were small and camouflaged and nested on the ground, especially on beaches, which were simultaneously occupied by fishermen, bathers, sunbathers, dogs, and vehicles.

Piping plovers got in the way; ospreys didn't. If you killed an osprey it was a big deal, like killing a bald eagle. If you ran over a piping plover, or your dog gobbled one up out of eyesight, no one knew. Even after they were listed in 1986, it took a long time for conservation officers and fish and wildlife agents to start prosecuting individuals that caused harm to the birds. Crows, gulls, foxes, and feral cats were another problem. Most of the early comeback efforts were thwarted by these predators and others. It wasn't until

someone got the bright idea of putting turkey wire cages over the incubating birds that breeding success began to outstrip breeding failure. These cages called “exclosures” come in different sizes and are widely used up and down the coast, as well as in the prairie pothole areas of the Midwest and southern Canada. They are also used with great success on the California coast for a sibling species, equally rare and also listed, the snowy plover.

At one point in the early 1980s there were fewer than a hundred breeding pairs on Long Island, only 10 to 15 pairs along East Hampton Town's 120 miles of shoreline. The whole of the shoreline of Gardiners Island in the Peconic Estuary, also part of East Hampton Town, didn't have a single successful breeding pair. In the beginning of the recovery program, the “pre-exclosure period,” breeding success was dismal. Roy Wilcox's banding studies showed that parents exhibit extreme site fidelity, and the population of returning pairs managed to hold its own in numbers, but we were lucky if they fledged one chick each or achieved a productivity level one. If predators didn't take the eggs, they took the chicks as soon as they hatched. In one case, a piping plover steward stepped on a nest of two eggs, accidentally crushing both of them. (Needless to say she was much traumatized by the experience, and it affected her work the remainder of the summer.)

Nor'easters and tropical storms also wreaked havoc, washing out stretches of beaches with several nests in the time it takes for a few big waves to crash down and run back into the water. Between 1992 and 2001, at least five plover chicks were killed by four-wheel-drive vehicles.

There is a singular advantage that the piping plover has over the osprey, notwithstanding all the disadvantages. If its eggs get wiped out or chicks are killed early in the game, it will nest again. We have observed pairs breeding for as many as three times, in which case their chicks may not fledge until near the end of August, i.e., after the migration south has already started. There is another advantage. Males share in the incubation. Females have free moments to feed and relieve themselves from the tedium of nest sitting over the twenty-one day incubation period.

In 1995 the Town of East Hampton took over the program lock, stock and barrel. Its Natural Resource Department also looked after the State's piping plovers at Napeague and Hither Hills State Parks. Lucy Miller was the first plover matron, followed by a number of other women biologists: Lisa D'Andrea, Kristin Knobloch, Latisha Coy, and Dawn Wiley. It's demanding work, and you tend to burn out after a few summers. During the breeding season, plover stewards tend to dream about plovers if they're lucky enough to go to sleep because of the worry over them. Latisha is entering her third year, Dawn her second. Southampton Town, under the aegis of the Southampton Town Trustees, took over the program there in 1997.

## *Efforts rewarded*

Since 1995, the number of breeding pairs in East Hampton has risen from about 15 to more than forty, the number of chicks fledged in a summer from less than 20 to 73. Numbers of returning adults and the number of fledges each year on the rest of Long Island have risen commensurately over that 10 year span. The Town of East Hampton spends about 40,000 dollars a year on its piping plover program (which also includes protecting breeding least terns) or about 550 dollars per fledgling. The USFW Service helps out now and then – in the last two years by a 4,000 dollar a year grant administered by the Long Island Nature Conservancy Chapter and the NYS DEC, and Montauk State Parks System provide helpful supplies – fencing and the like.

So here we are, it's June and we are knee deep in another season. Last year a pair of piping plovers nested in the very spot where East Hampton Village puts on its annual July 4th fireworks display. The Village Fathers did the right thing. They put off the event until the Labor Day weekend. This year a pair nested in the same spot, but they nested earlier, and if everything goes as planned, they will have fledged and left the area a week before the event is scheduled to take place. Last year, a few villagers were not so kind. One restaurant owner was so put out that he offered to pay the 25,000 dollar fine so the show could go on. It didn't, but it should occur this year, thus obviating the likelihood of another similarly generous offer.

## *The Brilliance of the East End Spring*

Marty Shea, Chief Environmental Analyst  
Town of Southampton



Our hopes for the East End have been restored again, as each rising sun offers a world anew of fresh spring life and a wondrous syncopation of birds. Amid this exaltation of green, is a finery of native flora, which is tied so closely to the accompanying calls of songbirds, as well as to creation's greater wild kingdom of fabulous waterbirds, fanciful doves, majestic landbirds, and secretive creatures of fur.

Across the broad spanning salt meadows of the Shinnecock and Moriches Bays, each year's flush of marsh grasses offer vital tasty shoots and rootstocks for Canada geese and black duck, while the abundant late summer seeds of cordgrasses are taken by seaside and sharp-tailed sparrows. In freshwater coves and quiet headwaters of the south shore tributaries, patches of duckweed are readily fed upon by coot, teal and

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mallard, whereas canvasback, redhead, and wood duck favor blankets of water lily in our inland ponds.

In moist sunny spots in the Hamptons, the sweet nectar of jewelweed's tubular flowers are a favorite among ruby-throated hummingbirds, with bordering stands of black tupelo offering fruit for brown thrasher, mockingbird, robin, and the uncommon wood duck. Along stream edges and swamplands, red maple groves are critically important to wildlife, as they produce an abundance of buds, flowers, and seeds for red nuthatch, and purple finch, as well as evening, pine, and rose-breasted grosbeaks. No less important is the red maple's food value to furred denizens of the swamp, including southern flying and gray squirrel, eastern chipmunk, and white-footed mouse. Along streamside, the fast disappearing alder groves, with their spectacular catkins, are a favorite haunt of redpoll and goldfinch, while the seeds of the rarely seen wild sweet gum are occasionally selected by purple finch.



The East End's native wetland shrubs, such as spicebush, provide early reddish fruits for veery and wood thrush, with cedar waxwing taking to Aronia's chokeberries. The berries of viburnums, including arrowwood, are eaten by brown thrasher and cedar waxwing, while the elderberries of sunny spots are selected by rose-breasted grosbeak, catbird, yellow-breasted chat, flicker, and eastern bluebird.

Amid the dense tangles and thickets leading away from Long Island's wetland forests are the fruits of the sassafras for catbird, crested flycatcher, and kingbird, as well as a bounty of wild grapes for cardinal, fox sparrow, mockingbird, robin, thrashers and thrushes, cedar waxwing, red-bellied woodpecker, raccoon, and the rarely found eastern skunk. Draped in the edging trees are fruit-bearing virginia creeper vines, which attract eastern bluebird, flicker, mockingbird, wood thrush, brown thrasher, and red-bellied woodpecker. The largely unrespected catbriar, so abundant in our area, is especially vital, with the fruits grabbed by catbird, robin, mockingbird, ruffed grouse, and raccoon. In the deep cold of December, January, and February, holly berries on the South Fork can be an absolute life-saver for the rare wintering eastern bluebird, catbird, hermit thrush, brown thrasher, and yellow-bellied sapsucker, and wild roses, including Virginia and swamp, provide palatable twigs for white-tailed deer.

In the more open areas of eastern Long Island, blackberries sport rich stems and foliage for browsing white-tailed deer, and mouth-watering fruits for catbird, cardinal, yellow-breasted chat, pine grosbeak, blue jay, mockingbird, oriole, robin, fox sparrow, summer tanager, ring-necked pheasant, and ruffed grouse. Eastern box turtles also love blackberries as well as strawberries, both cultivated and wild. Evening grosbeak, robin, brown thrasher, and cedar waxwing will take black cherries in late spring and summer, while mourning doves, robin, and mockingbird can hardly resist the dark purple fermenting berries of pokeweed. To catbird and black-capped chickadee, even poison ivy berries are tasty, as well as to kinglet and white-throated sparrow.

Our dry pine and oak woodlands are hardly barren, as the indigenous heaths, pines, oaks, and bayberries are the mainstay for our native fauna. Pitch pine seeds are eaten by pine warbler, pine grosbeak, and black-capped chickadee, while deer browse on young seedlings and shoots. The great mast crops of the tree and shrubby oaks provide rich energy to southern flying and gray squirrels, along with eastern chipmunk, white-tailed deer, white-footed mouse, and wild turkey. The abundant acorns are no less important to a host of other birds, including grackle, blue jay, white-breasted nuthatch, brown thrasher, red-bellied woodpecker, and where found along hidden ponds and open waters, mallards and wood ducks. The sporadic hickories and beeches also attract squirrels, chipmunks, and tufted titmouse, and the American flowering dogwoods of richer spots offer berries for evening grosbeak, cardinal, wood thrush, cedar waxwing, and eastern cottontail.

Pine barrens birds are particularly tied to black huckleberries, including scarlet tanager, rufous-sided towhee, crossbill, catbird, and pine grosbeak. No less important are the summer blueberries to scarlet tanager, towhee, brown thrasher, veery, and tufted titmouse. Northern bayberry's importance to tree swallows in the fall is widely known, when the waxy fruits are gorged upon for migration energy. Field sparrows will select large fields and openings, where the seeds of the Andropogans, broom sedge, and bluestem, can be found.

**These critical ties between Long Island's native fauna and flora are all testimony to the unprecedented need today to do everything possible to save from the mower, clearer, and cutter, our last great vestiges of native plants.** This requires a conscious decision on the part of us all to discover what lies in our own yards and gardens, and to relish, rather than replace, that unique color, flavor, and glory that wild plants add to our lives. The wild birds and other creatures of the air and earth absolutely depend on the resilience each spring of the native plants that provide their essential food. Their close inter-relation with the native flora of the Hamptons is indeed one of the great masteries of creation and is truly the real brilliance of the East End spring.



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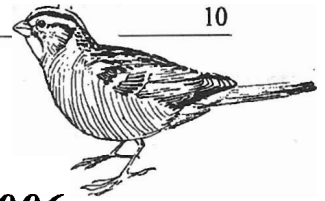
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*Please consider including a bequest to Eastern Long Island Audubon Society in your will or insurance policy. This will help us to continue our mission of education, conservation, and recreation. Thank you for your support.*



## **FEEDER SURVEY RESULTS - APRIL 2006**

SPECIES	# of BIRDS	# FEEDERS VISITED	SPECIES	# of BIRDS	# FEEDERS VISITED
Mourning Dove	194	22	Hairy Woodpecker	9	4
Northern Cardinal	70	22	Red-breasted Nuthatch	7	4
Black-capped Chickadee	73	21	Rufous-sided Towhee	5	4
Common Grackle	295	20	Chipping Sparrow	4	3
Blue Jay	94	20	Gray Catbird	4	3
Tufted Titmouse	56	20	Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	3
American Robin	84	19	Cedar Waxwing	25	2
Downy Woodpecker	36	19	Pine Warbler	4	2
Red-winged Blackbird	237	17	Wild Turkey	3	2
European Starling	201	17	Red-tailed Hawk	2	2
House Finch	94	17	Rock Dove	5	1
House Sparrow	192	16	Carolina Chickadee	2	1
Dark-eyed Junco	68	16	Fish Crow	2	1
White-breasted Nuthatch	29	16	Mallard	2	1
White-throated Sparrow	62	15	Purple Finch	2	1
Red-bellied Woodpecker	22	15	Savannah Sparrow	2	1
American Crow	40	14	American Tree Sparrow	1	1
American Goldfinch	105	13	Brown Creeper	1	1
Song Sparrow	25	12	Cooper's Hawk	1	1
Common Flicker	14	12	Merlin	1	1
Brown-headed Cowbird	96	9	Ring-necked Pheasant	1	1
Carolina Wren	12	7	Yellow-rumped Warbler	1	1
Northern Mockingbird	7	6			

**TOTAL BIRDS 2193**

**TOTAL SPECIES 45**

**TOTAL SURVEYS 22**



### **SURVEY NOTES – Marybeth Stembler**

This is the last survey for the season, and I would like to thank everyone for their participation, notes, comments, and pictures. I hope everyone comes back in October, including Jeanne and Julian Mackay from East Quogue who are new to the survey.

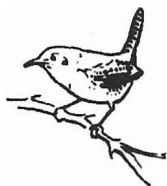
A total of 25 cedar waxwings were seen by Eleanor Grist of Remsenburg and Susan and Jay Kuhlman from Center Moriches. The Kuhlman's also reported 2 fish crows and one merlin. A ring-necked pheasant was seen by Jeanne and Julian Mackay. Cindy Dimaggio of Shirley had 2 wild turkeys. A wild turkey and a chipping sparrow were seen by Mike Walsh of Manorville. Steve Biasetti, also from Manorville, had a chipping sparrow. I had 2 chipping

sparrows, a Cooper's hawk, 2 Savannah sparrows, and one brown creeper.

Steve and Betty Wybenga of Center Moriches reported 2 Carolina chickadees, and between surveys they had 8 cedar waxwings. Phyllis Bronzo from Patchogue had an American tree sparrow. Three pine warblers were seen by Joanne Spitznagel from Shirley. Joanne Hart of Southampton had one pine warbler, 2 purple finches, and a red-tailed hawk. Ruth Levine of Riverhead also had a red-tailed hawk.

Thank you all again for your input. Your remarks are a very important part of this feeder survey. Have a great summer. Good birding, and we hope to hear from you in October.

## Membership Corner



John McNeil

First I would like to thank all our ELIAS Chapter Supporters who read their mailing labels and renewed their membership before I send the July renewal notices. Because of Post Office regulations, I cannot insert any other papers within the newsletters, because this changes the mailing weight and makes the Post Office very unhappy. It also changes our mailing rate.

So the only way I can communicate with the membership without incurring additional cost is to write a short note on your mailing label. **Please take the time to glance at your mailing label for any communications about your membership.**

If you renew early as I suggest on the mailing label, thank you. This saves the cost of first class postage to remind you that your membership is up. Also, if you include your

email address when renewing your ELIAS membership, I can reply via email, again saving the cost of mailing a nice letter.

Last month, some of our east end members received their newsletters later than other ELIAS members. I have no real explanation for this delay. I contacted our mailing Post Office and asked them what could have held up the newsletters. They had no explanation. They did tell me that when they receive the newsletters, they are sent to a central dispensing center that day. They insisted that they send all outgoing mail out on the day they receive it, and they pointed out that it is against postal regulations to hold any outgoing mail at any Post Office overnight.

I try to get the newsletters to our membership before the first members' meeting at the beginning of the month. If you have not received yours, you can always check our ELIAS homepage for the latest information about what is happening.

If you have a membership question, I can be reached at 281-2623 or [jpmcneil@verizon.net](mailto:jpmcneil@verizon.net).

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 ([shmorri@suffolk.lib.ny.us](mailto:shmorri@suffolk.lib.ny.us))

1145 Middle Rd. Apt. 8C,  
 Riverhead 11901

**The next deadline is August 1.**

## Events Calendar

### July

- 1 Field Trip Butterflies – p2
- 8 Field Trip Cupsogue – p2
- 10 Nature Program – p1

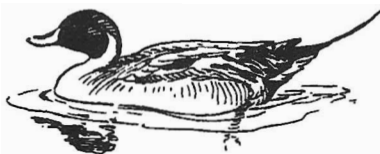
### August

- 5 Field Trip JBWR– p2
- 7 Nature Program – p1
- 12 Field Trip Cupsogue – p2

### September

- 9 Field Trip Shinnecock Bay – p2
- 11 Nature Program

**Annual Benefit Dinner Oct. 18.**  
**See back page.**



*Also see Kaler's Pond  
 NatureCenter events on p. 5.*

**Our Vision in a Nutshell** – To be an inspiration to those who feel a sense of kinship about Long Island by encouraging an appreciation for the natural world and a commitment to the environment.

### CHAPTER MEMBERSHIP

For \$15 a year, you can receive 6 copies of this newsletter. You will also be supporting our local education and conservation activities. (Members of National Audubon who are not chapter members receive one copy of this newsletter per year.)

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*Please consider sending gift memberships to your friends.*

## ***Save the Date for our Sixth Annual Benefit Dinner***

- Wednesday, October 18th
- Indian Cove Restaurant, Hampton Bays

Invitations will be mailed in August, and there will be more information in the next issue. We hope to see you there.

## ***Last Call for National Audubon Members***

If you are a National Audubon member and you have not paid \$15 in chapter dues, from now on you will receive only one issue of this newsletter a year – the September/October issue. If you have already paid chapter dues, your mailing label will identify you as a CHAPTER SUPPORTER, and we thank you for your support.

As we explained in the last two issues, National Audubon gives chapters a negligible share of dues. Consequently, many chapters have found that they need to charge chapter dues to cover the cost of printing and mailing their newsletters.

If you have not paid chapter dues yet, and you would like to receive 6 issues a year, please use the application form

on page 11. However, even if you decide not to pay chapter dues, you will always be welcome at our meetings, field trips, and other events, which are posted on our website.

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