



The **OSPREY**

July/August, 2007 – Vol. XXXVII 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.)

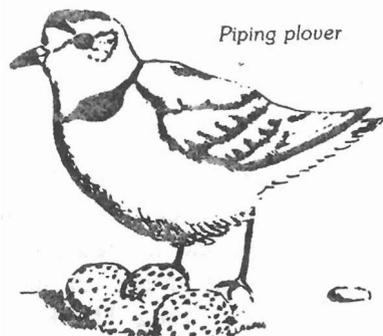
7:15 PM – Nature Chat
7:30 PM – Chapter News
8:00 PM – Speaker

Monday July 2

BREEDING BIRDS OF EASTERN LONG ISLAND
Eric Salzman

Eric Salzman, noted composer, author, and editor of *Birding Magazine*, will present a program on his study and tracking of the changes in our local bird life over the past half century.

Eric records his birding observations in his column on the website www.birdingmagazine.com. He has been an engaging guest and friend of ELIAS in the past, and we are sure to be enlightened by his newest program.



Piping plover

Monday, August 6

NYS BREEDING BIRD ATLAS
Kim Corwin

Kim is Coordinator of the New York State Breeding Bird Atlas and Co-Editor of the upcoming publication of the Atlas 2000 results. This talk will highlight the changes recorded during the years 2000 – 2005 compared with our first statewide Atlas Project from 1980 – 1985.

It is hoped that the Atlas publication will be available by 2008, and I urge all our members to get this book. I and many other ELIAS birders have referred to it numerous times over the past 20 years. Along with *Bull's Birds of New York State*, the Atlas is a must for your avian reference library.

**Save the date for our seventh annual
get together.**

Benefit Luncheon

Sunday, October 21 from 1 – 5 PM

- Indian Island Golf Course
Restaurant on CR 105, Riverhead

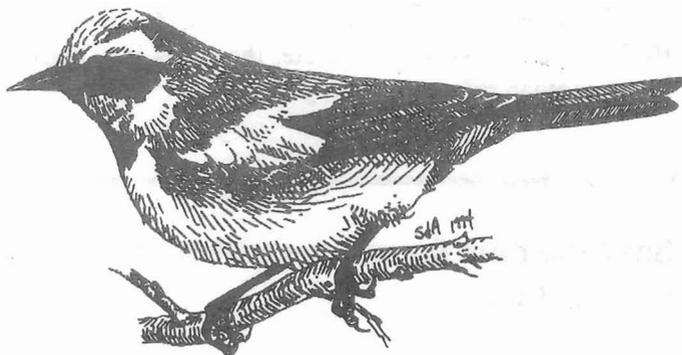
Please mark your calendar and join us for a cocktail party (cash bar) and buffet lunch. There will also be a raffle. Peg Caraher and Ridgie Barnett are chairing this event.

The ticket price, menu, speaker, and other details will be in the next issue of this newsletter.

Field Trips

Saturday, July 7, 2007 Breeding Birds of Hunter's Garden

The spring migrants have moved on, but the forest at Hunter's Garden remains home for many breeding birds. Join us for a 2 ½ - 3 hour hike to see who these summer residents are. We will meet in the parking area of Hunter's Garden, off of County Road 51 at 7:30 AM. Please be prepared to do some hiking, as we plan to cover lots of ground on this trip. Bring binoculars, water, snacks, and come tick-prepared (tick repellent, long pants). Call trip leader Carl Starace at 281-8074 if you have questions or need directions to Hunter's Garden.



Reports from the Field

April 7: North Fork to Orient Point – Beth Gustin

Beautiful early spring weather brought several birders out of hibernation for the April field trip to Orient Point. Some early migrants and breeding birds were seen as well as lingering winter species. Variations in plumage were observed in several species including long-tailed duck and ruddy turnstone.

Saturday, August 18, 2007 Islands of Moriches Bay

Participants will be transported by boat for a 2 1/2-3 hour visit to Bird Island and Gull Island in Moriches Bay. These islands are home to thousands of breeding gulls, terns, black skimmers, and boat-tailed grackles as well as a variety of wading birds and shorebirds. There is also a rookery of egrets and herons on the islands. Early migrants are likely to be seen on this trip as well. Binoculars are essential, spotting scopes can be helpful. We will meet at Silly Lily Fishing Station in East Moriches at 7:15 AM. Silly Lily is located at the very end of Adelaide Avenue off Montauk Hwy.

Important information for this trip:

- **Please reserve your spot on this trip by calling Beth Gustin at (631) 848-9883.**
- **There is a \$10/person charge for this field trip, which pays for the transportation to the islands.** You can pay Beth on the day of the trip.
- Be prepared to get your feet wet when getting off of the boat – wear waterproof shoes or bring a small towel to dry off.
- Dress for the weather! Wear sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat.
- Bring water and snacks.

Please join us for this exciting field trip! Thanks to Gary at Silly Lily for making it possible.



Forty-four species were seen. Highlights include wood duck, greater yellowlegs, green-winged teal, American oystercatcher, and horned grebe. Several common eider on the rocks jutting out into Plum Gut were a rare and exciting sighting. Thanks to field trip leader Mary Laura Lamont.

May 5: Dune Road – Beth Gustin

Another beautiful spring day for the ELIAS field trip! Bob Murray led about 15 birders along Dune Road. Highlights from this trip included short-billed dowitcher, peregrine falcon, black-bellied plover, ruddy turnstone, and common loon. Participants also enjoyed watching ospreys in action as the birds displayed their awesome fishing skills. Thanks Bob.

May 23: Hunter's Garden - Eileen Schwinn

This trip to Hunter's Garden and the Town Biking Trail (both off Route 51 in East Moriches) was led by Bob Adamo. The goal was migrating warblers. Although this has been an unusual spring for birds,

we were rewarded immediately by an indigo bunting (singing) and a scarlet tanager pair flying directly overhead. Other treats included yellow-billed cuckoo, veery, ovenbird, great crested flycatcher, orchard oriole, Baltimore oriole, red-eyed vireo, blue-grey gnatcatcher (on a nest), and willow flycatcher.

While standing in the Bike Trail parking lot recapping our day and saying our good-byes, one sharp eyed birder spotted that rarest of rarities – a bobwhite. Others caught a glimpse as the bird disappeared into the brush.

The photo taken by Andy Murphy shows why we suffer what is commonly called “Warbler Neck” at this time of the year. Also note that even with (collectively) ten thousand dollars worth of optical equipment, sometimes you still just need to use your eyes.



Photo by Andy Murphy

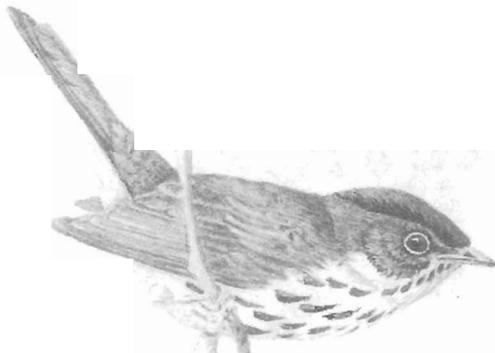
Please join ELIAS on future field trips. Guaranteed good company and perhaps some really good birds.

The Adventures of a Birdathon Team

Beth Gustin

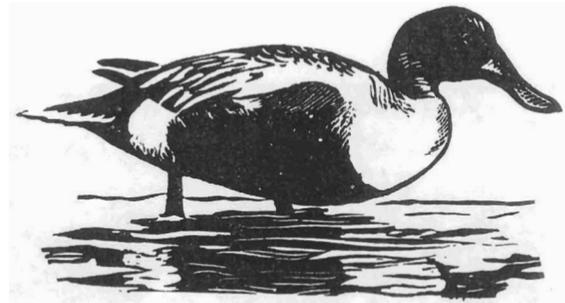
Birdathon 2007 began at 4:30 AM on May 12 with team leader, Jay Kuhlman, starting the day along with Michelle and Greg Baron, Sharon Gilbert, Richard Kaskan, and me. The first stop before dawn was the pine barrens at Gabreski airport. The towhees were singing when we arrived, and it was only a few minutes before we heard the call of the whip-poor-will. Shortly thereafter, the chuck-will's-widow started singing and didn't seem to mind that we birders were only about ten feet away. It was quite a treat to be so close to the bird as it continued its pre-dawn song.

5:30 AM – We made our way to Maple Swamp with high hopes of tallying many species of migrant and resident wood warblers. Heading into the forest, we saw orchard oriole and northern parula. The songs of the ovenbird and wood thrush invited us deeper into the woods, and we picked up several more species including magnolia, pine, chestnut-sided, black-and-white, and blue-winged warblers. High in the treetops, we spotted a male and female scarlet tanager, and to our delight a summer tanager appeared. A gorgeous male rose-breasted grosbeak was the icing on the cake at this spot.



Ovenbird

9:30 AM – A pit stop at the Kuhlman's to pick up Susan Kuhlman and our favorite canine birder, Pearl. Next we headed to Terrell River and tallied great and snowy egrets, black-bellied plover, glossy ibis, and American oystercatcher. Several duck species were also seen – gadwall, green-winged teal, and northern shoveler. As we were looking at the ducks, a flock of black skimmers put on their synchronized flying show, sailing back and forth across the water in near perfect unison. A chilly breeze coming off Moriches Bay encouraged the team to make its way back into the woods.



Shoveler

Heading north along the trail, we stopped at what we hoped was an active Cooper's hawk nest. After a few minutes of speculation on whether we were really seeing a hawk's head through the branches, an adult Cooper's hawk flew from the nest and confirmed the sighting. The woods at Terrell River also yielded white-eyed and red-eyed vireos and black-throated blue warbler.

1:30 PM – Hoping to pick up some more duck species, we took a short detour to Eastport Pond, but all we were able to add there was a ruddy duck.

2:00 PM – We drove to Hunter's Garden in search of additional wood warblers and other woodland species. The forest there was quiet, although we did get a nice look at a northern waterthrush and another pair of scarlet tanagers. Black-throated green warbler was also tallied.

On our way back south along County Road 51, we spotted an American kestrel, and thanks to the hawk-like vision of team member Richard, we had a nice long look at an eastern kingbird perched on a sign in one of the fields. A short visit to Pine Meadow quickly gave us a field sparrow.

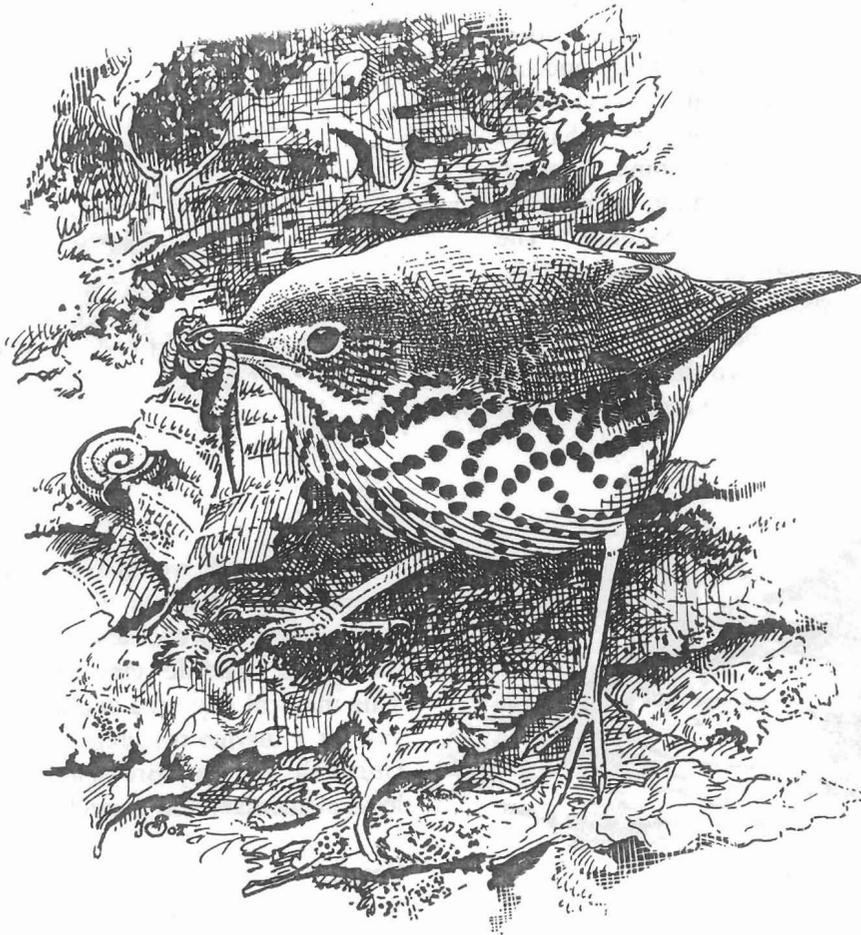
4:00 PM – We made our way to Dune Road, our final destination. On the ocean side, we spotted surf scoter, northern gannet, and the opposite of a gannet, a tiny piping plover on the beach.

Common and roseate terns were seen flying above

the bay, while in the marsh, we found seaside sparrow and boat-tailed grackle.

6:30 PM – Weariness set in, and we decided to call it a day. After splitting up as a team, I stopped at Pepperidge Lake on the Eastport/East Moriches border and watched northern rough-winged swallows feed in the evening sunlight.

Jay came through once again this year with several last minute species including American redstart, green heron, ruddy turnstone, and yellow-billed cuckoo.

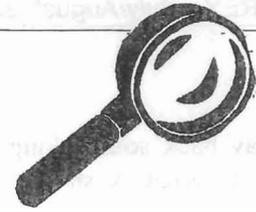


Wood Thrush

Birdathon 2007 was another success from a birding and fundraising standpoint. Four teams of birders saw a total of 136 species. A complete list of species can be seen on the ELLAS website.

We all had a fun day, enjoyed beautiful weather, and met some new birder friends. Thanks so much to everyone who sponsored us by donating money, and to all the birders who were in the field tallying species.

TOWN PERSPECTIVES

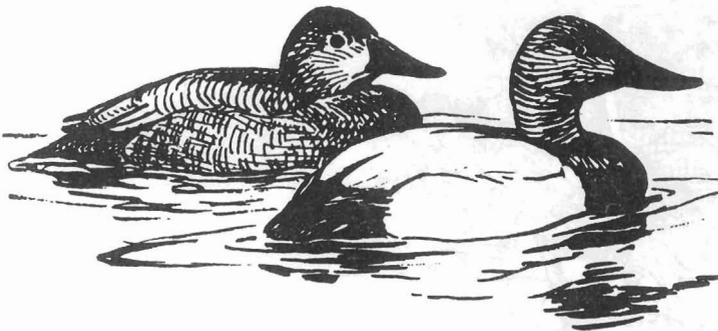


The Shinnecock Bay Marine Park and Preserve

Marty Shea, Chief Environmental Analyst
Town of Southampton

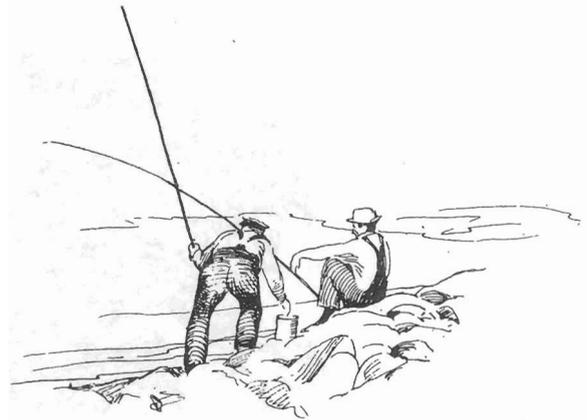


The grandest of our south shore bays, the Shinnecock, reigns supreme as a marine ecological wonder and a mainstay of Southampton Town's economic vitality and maritime traditions. Critical with regards to environmental sustainability and our very quality of life, this enormous bay resource supports the east end economy through enhanced land values, tourism, fishing, shellfishing, hunting, birding, wildlife watching, swimming, snorkeling, kayaking, and other water-based recreation. The marine wetlands host thousands of birds and wildlife, as well as a plethora of wetland flora, marine fishes, and shellfish. Add to this the phenomenal panoramic views, and one can hardly believe that creation has blessed us with such a magnificent paradise in which to live.



What better place to create what may be Long Island's first marine park, a refuge for fish and wildlife, baymen, and visitors stretching thousands of acres and nearly five and a half miles along Dune Road. That's the current vision of Southampton Town – to restore and protect the waters, wetlands, fisheries, and marine ecosystem of Shinnecock Bay through the establishment of a Shinnecock Bay Marine Park and Preserve.

The Town's goal is to balance compatible human activities, including the historic uses of shellfishing and hunting, with ecosystem-based management and strategic planning for the marine reserve. The marine park would benefit greatly from annual funding from the Town, thereby ensuring adequate monies for long term preservation and management activities including, among others, ongoing restoration of shellfish, finfish, and eelgrass beds.



The marine park would also unite different groups – baymen and other old time users of the bay, along with modern day eco-adventurists, such as kayakers, snorkelers, wildlife viewers, and bird enthusiasts. This magical bay area could also become a premier site for a marine research station, both for the State University at Stony Brook at Southampton, as well as local elementary and secondary schools.

Conceived originally in 1970 by the Town of Southampton Master Plan, the once envisioned "West Bay Environmental Preserve" would today be established as a Marine Park and Preserve extending westward along the back barrier bays for a distance of 5.3 miles from the commercial fishing port at Shinnecock Inlet to the easternmost marshes of the Village of Quogue. Stretching 2,500 feet out across the bay waters north of Dune Road, the 2.2 square mile park would embrace one of the greatest spans of shallow bays, marshes, and shoals on Long Island's east end.

While the planning process is just beginning, the Shinnecock Bay's transition to a distinct Bayway destination and Marine Park within Long Island's South Shore Estuary Reserve would establish the area as a noteworthy marine research center and a phenomenal natural attraction, where visitors can see the unique wonders of the wild salt meadows, shallow bays, and magnificent barrier island, including marsh birds, harbor seals, marine turtles, and other wildlife. Moreover, the park would also be a place where interpretive stations, trails, and catwalks could tell a unique story of present day baymen and the historic maritime traditions of fishing, shellfishing, hunting, and sailing, since the earliest native American presence and colonial settlements.

Working with a diverse group of stakeholders, the Town of Southampton believes that an ecosystem based management plan can be developed jointly with the Southampton Trustees for the Shinnecock Bay that will help ensure that this priceless wild resource of ours endures forever. The end result of this process, we believe, would be much improved management strategies and policies that ensure stronger protection for both marine ecology and compatible human uses of this most priceless portion of the South Shore Estuary Reserve. For these reasons, we urge your support for this venture, as we look forward to the Shinnecock Bay Marine Park's creation in the years ahead.

Trails and Ground-Nesting Birds

Larry Penny
Chief, East Hampton Natural Resources

If one includes the Paumonok Trail, there are more than 100 miles of walking and biking trails in East Hampton. If you add the ones in the County and State parks and those on Peconic Land Trust and Nature Conservancy lands, there are probably well over 200 miles. Some of the trails, such as those in Hither Woods and on Barcelona, have been used for a hundred years or more. Miles of new trails are added each year.

These trails become more and more popular with each passing year. They are used by individuals and formal trail walk groups. Notwithstanding ticks,

mosquitoes, deer flies, and chiggers, people come from all over Long Island to travel East Hampton's trails. **They are especially well traversed during the spring and summer, at times when ground-nesting birds are breeding.** These birds include towhees, ovenbirds, hermit thrushes, bobwhites, wild turkeys, whip-poor-wills, and chuck-wills-widows.

Breeding bird surveys carried out in 1994-95 and 2004 indicate that the numbers of ground-nesting birds have been decreasing. Whip-poor-wills have diminished extremely, to the point where only one or two pairs were found nesting last year. When I first came to work in East Hampton in 1983, there were more than one hundred pairs of whip-poor-wills breeding from the Southampton Town line all the way to Montauk Point.

There are many reasons other than people regularly using trails to partially explain the demise of the whip-poor-will and the turn down of other ground-nesters locally. There are feral cats, foxes, raccoons, black racers, diseases, and lost habitat as a result of development pushing farther and farther into large tracts of raw land. There are house lights and driveway lights, loud music, automobile noises and the like throughout much of the night. There are very few quiet pitch black darkneses remaining of the type that I used to know as a boy, while growing up on eastern Long Island.



East Hampton Town has enacted a strong anti-light ordinance and is working on reducing ambient noise. **But just to see if the expanding network of trails and increased number of trail users is having an effect, we are starting an experiment to find out.** We will pick two areas of ground-nesting bird habitat with well-worn trails and one or two control areas of similar habitat but without trails to see if the numbers of ground-nesters are greater in less trod areas.

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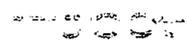
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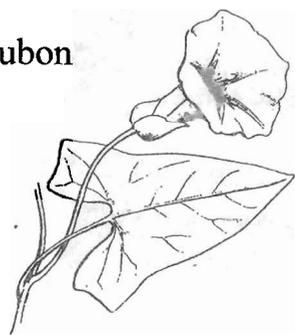
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This newsletter reaches over 500 households, primarily in the Townships of Riverhead, Southampton, East Hampton, and Brookhaven. Our readers are a target audience for nature-friendly businesses. For rates contact Eileen Schwinn at 631-728-8342 or beachmed@optonline.net..

Turn your love of nature into a legacy

Please consider leaving 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 nature appreciation. Thank you for your support

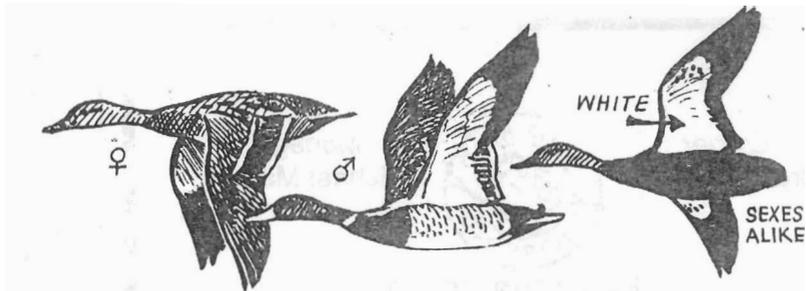


Identifying Ducks

Source: US Dept. of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service

Look for distinctive shapes, colors, and actions. Consider habitat and time of year.

In summer, drakes molt into "eclipse" plumage and resemble hens. A few drakes, notably teal, remain in eclipse all fall. Immature drakes also look like hens.



MALLARD

BLACK DUCK



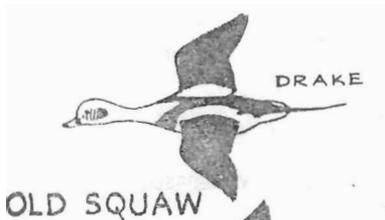
HEN : BROWN.
 DRAKE : GREEN
 HEAD, BROWN
 BREAST, GRAY
 BODY, BLACK
 RUMP.



BROWN HEAD.
 BLACK BODY.

DRAKE IS THE ONLY
 DUCK WITH A NARROW
 WHITE NECK RING.

WHITE UNDERWING
 VERY CONSPICUOUS
 IN FLIGHT.



OLD SQUAW



SURF SCOTER



AMERICAN SCOTER



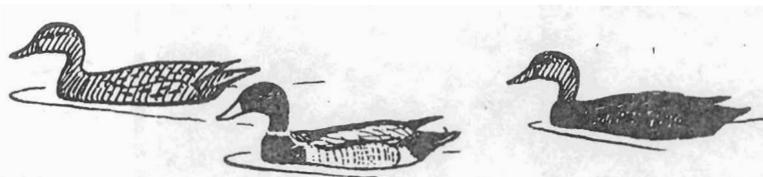
WHITE-WINGED SCOTER



AMERICAN MERGANSER



RED-BREASTED MERGANSER



GOLDENEYE

HEN : BROWN HEAD;
 GRAY BODY.
 DRAKE : BLACK
 AND WHITE

BUFFLEHEAD

HEN : DARK GRAY
 AND WHITE.
 DRAKE : BLACK
 AND WHITE.



WINGS "WHISTLE" IN
 FLIGHT, A SOUND
 AUDIBLE FOR
 SOME DISTANCE.

ONE OF OUR SMALL-
 EST DUCKS. USUALLY
 IN VERY SMALL
 FLOCKS.



Kaler's Pond Audubon Nature Center



Recent Developments

About 70 people attended the Earth Day/Arbor Day program, where they made pine cone bird feeders, saw raptors, and received a free tree. The bird blind was finished by Eagle Scout Konrad Grossman. The butterfly and wildlife gardens are growing and expanding.

Butterfly Count

This year, the Butterfly Count will be held on Sunday, July 1. If you are interested in participating, contact me or the Nature Center. This is a day time

event to conduct a census of the butterflies in the area covered by the Central Suffolk Christmas Bird Count.

Other Summer Activities

In conjunction with Brookhaven Town, we will have nature programs on Thursdays from 10 until noon (June through August) and Saturdays from 10 until noon (June through September). There will also be hikes on Sundays at 1 PM. Check the Kaler's Pond website for details, or call the Nature Center.

Adam McHeffy is running the programs while he is home from college. He brings a lot of talent and enthusiasm.

J Kuhlman (SJKuhlman@aol.com)

www.kalerspondaudubon.homestead.com

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 Al Scherzer, Past President – 728-2898
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 Dan Wilson, Director (9/08)
 Ridgie Barnett, Director (9/08)

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 Feeder Survey, Brian O'Keeffe
 Field Trips (open)
 Publicity, Peggy Caraher
 Web Master, Annette Oliveira
 Bluebird Restoration Gigi Spates

Please consider sending gift memberships to your friends.

NEWSLETTER EDITING & LAYOUT

Shirley Morrison
 772-794-4578 (shirmor@earthlink.net)
 7300 20th Street, No. 536
 Vero Beach, Fl 32966

The next deadline is August 1

Events Calendar

July

- 2 Nature Program – p 1
- 7 Field Trips Hunter's Garden – p 2

August

- 6 Nature Program – p 1
- 18 Field Trip Moriches Bay – p 2

**SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR
 BENEFIT LUNCHEON
 OCTOBER 21.**

Also see Kaler's Pond Nature Center Events on page 11.

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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Conservation Column

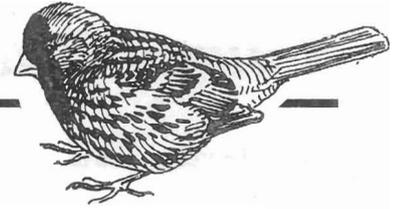
Beth Gustin

“Nobody can do everything, but everybody can do something.”

This new feature in *The Osprey* will offer a conservation tip that many of us can do in our daily lives.

You may already practice these things in your daily routine, or they may be something new, or something we simply need to be reminded to do. Just remember, every small act of conservation becomes BIG when lots of us do it! Thanks.

Many of us know that we should conserve electricity in our homes. But how many of us **always** turn the lights off in a room when we leave it? This may be one of the simplest things we can do. Let's do it!



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