



The OSPREY

September/October, 2008 — Vol. XXXVIII No. 5

NATURE PROGRAMS

Brian O’Keeffe

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

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

Monday, September 8, 2008

Update/Introduction to Group for the East End

by Jennifer Skillbred

Group for the East End is an environmental advocacy and education organization established in 1972. The Group is dedicated to protecting the environment, rural character, and quality of life across the East End. It works to protect the region’s diverse wetlands, bays, forests, coastlines, farmlands and historic community character and provide environmental education. Jennifer is a native of Sag Harbor with degrees from Lehigh and Duke Universities. Her education and professional experience in Aquatic Ecology and Coastal Environmental Management make her an ideal fit for Long Island. Join us to see what is going on and what we can do to help.

Sept. 8th meeting will have the annual election of officers.

Monday, October 6, 2008

Wildlife Photography Safari

by Ivan Rothman

Ivan has been a photographer for over 30 years. His favorite locations are in Africa but he has photographed extensively throughout North America. He has conducted numerous Photosafari presentations including one recently at the Museum of Natural History. He is a physician on Long Island.

Join us for an evening escape during this Photosafari.



Eastern Long Island Audubon Society
Invites you to attend its
Forty-First Anniversary

Annual Dinner

Wednesday, October 22, 2008
at 6 pm

Rock Hill Golf and Country Club
105 Clancy Road, Manorville, NY

Join us for Cocktail Hour (cash bar)
and a delicious Buffet Dinner.

\$45 per person, \$50 at the door

Guest Speakers Michael & Marisa Nelson

will give a presentation on **Birds of Prey.**

They will be accompanied by several of the resident raptors of Quogue Wildlife Refuge.

Raffle includes prizes from:

- H2M Labs, John’s Pools & Spa, Lillian’s Hair Salon & Spa,
- South Fork Natural History Museum, Wild Bird Crossing in Bridgehampton,
- Wild Birds Unlimited in Oakdale,
- Eileen Schwinn, who has offered a personally guided trip of Dune Road and Quogue Wildlife Refuge for “Meet the Bobcat” an upclose introduction to its resident Bobcat

*Thanks to Suffolk County National Bank
for underwriting the cost of the raffle tickets.*

Annual Message to National Audubon Society (NAS) Members

When you joined NAS, they assigned you to a local Audubon chapter. Your local chapter is Eastern Long Island Audubon Society. I would like to extend an invitation to you to become a local chapter member. Many NAS members have chosen to do so in order to keep up with local birding activities and environmental issues facing our area. Being a local chapter member, you will receive six issues of our newsletter, "The Osprey." The cost is only \$15 per year which helps to cover printing and mailing. Please consider joining us as a local chapter member. The membership form is on page 10 of the newsletter.

Our meetings and field trips are always open to everyone at no cost. You can also check our website for current chapter activities.

John McNeil
Membership Chair
Eastern Long Island Audubon Society

PS
Thanks to all who renewed their chapter membership!

Field Trip Schedule



As the fall weather arrives in the next few months, we will be looking forward to the migrations of our feathered friends. I believe that the fall, winter and spring seasons provide the most exciting birding around. You just never know what might appear — sometimes right on your door step. Also, fall migration sometimes comes with some surprises that make our hobby ever more enjoyable. So, I have outlined a field trip program to take advantage of some of the best hot spots during the coming months. Please come join me, as your field trip coordinator, and sometime leader on these exciting adventures.

John McNeil

September 6, 2008

JAMAICA BAY WILDLIFE REFUGE

John McNeil

Catch the wave of shore birding and see the vanguard of the fall migrants at one the best birding areas around with your trip leader John McNeil. We will meet at JBWR parking lot at 9 am for birding around the West Pond. Then, if possible, we will walk over to the East Pond where we will scope out what might be happening on the mud flats. Bring boots because it can be muddy. Remember, bring lunch and water. For more details, contact your trip leader John McNeil at 631.281.2623 at home or on the day of the field trip, mobile telephone is 631.219.8947.

Directions: Southern State Parkway westbound to Belt Parkway. Continue west on Belt Parkway to Exit 175 (Cross Bay Boulevard.) Stay on Cross Bay Boulevard southbound through Howard Beach, crossing over Congressman Joseph P. Addabbo Bridge. About 1.5 miles on your right the center parking lot will appear.

October 18, 2008

SMITH POINT COUNTY PARK

Carl Starace

Participants will meet at the far western end of the "Worlds Largest Parking Lot."

Time - 8:30 am

Length of Walk approx. 2 ½ to 3 Hours.

Please watch the weather and wear appropriate outerwear and don't forget to bring your binoculars and scopes. We will proceed to the Ranger Station for viewing from the upper decks and then hike out into the Wilderness Area watching for migrating songbirds, waterbirds and birds of prey. This is an exciting time of year to be out on the barrier beach so come on out! For more details, contact your trip leader Carl Starace at 631-281-8074 or e-mail him at castarace@optonline.net

Please note: this trip has been scheduled mid-month, instead of the first Sat. of the month, to catch (we hope) the most migrants.

Advance Notice:

November 1, 2008

JONES BEACH STATE PARK & POINT LOOKOUT

John McNeil

**ELIAS hats are available
at meetings & events**



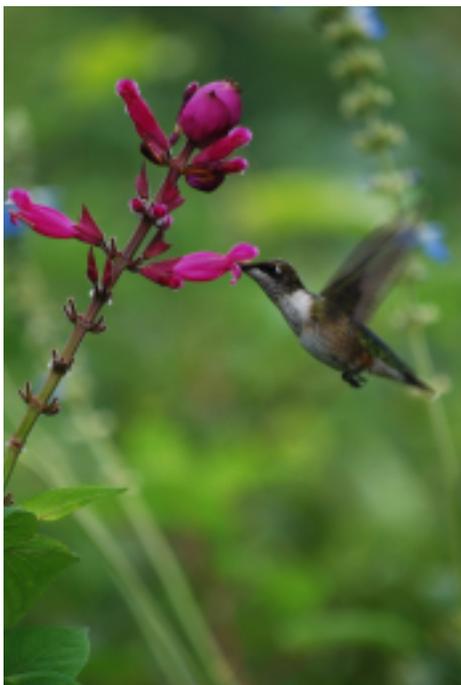
Reports from the Field

Saturday, July 12

Dune Road (Shinnecock Inlet & west)

A great morning was had by all with our field trip along Dune Road. We were treated to observing the following from the inlet west along the ditches: Least Sandpiper, Black-crowned Night Heron, Greater Yellowlegs, Dunlins, Willets, Short-billed and Long-billed Dowitchers, Oystercatchers, Double-crested Cormorants, Great and Snowy Egrets, Tree Swallows, Barn Swallows, Spotted Sandpipers, Semi-palmated Plover, Black-bellied Plover, Piping Plover, Ospreys, Swans, Common Terns, Red-winged Blackbirds, Song Sparrows, Common Yellow-throats to just to name a few of the species seen on our outing.

Thanks to Paul Adams
for the Nature Program
on the Hummingbird Sanctuary



Saturday, August 9

The Islands of Moriches Inlet Field Trip Report John McNeil

You couldn't have asked for a better day. It was sunny with a slight breeze out of the north. The mosquitoes were not biting that much and I would call it a banner day for birding. Eleven members from ELIAS arrived at the parking lot at Cupsoque Beach County Park at 7 am to partake in the walk to the East Island. As we walked to the inlet and to the Island, Andy Murphy arrived by boat, disembarked to join the group.

Swimming along the shallow waters around the island were at least seven (7) Clapper Rails and we were treated to an excellent view of a Little Blue Heron that alighted right in front of us. Off in the distance, Andy Murphy observed a Seaside Sparrow in the grass and flying all around us were Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrows.

In all, we observed 51 species. Among them: Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Great Egret, Little Blue Heron, Snowy Egret, Glossy Ibis, Osprey, Clapper Rail, American Oystercatcher, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Piping Plover, Short-billed Dowitcher, Greater Yellowlegs, Lesser Yellowlegs, Spotted Sandpiper, Willet, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot, Sanderling, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Least Sandpiper, Dunlin, Ring-billed Gull, Great Black-backed Gull, Laughing Gull, Royal Tern, Common Tern, Least Tern, Black Tern, Belted Kingfisher, Purple Martin, Tree Swallow, Barn Swallow, Gray Catbird, Northern Mockingbird, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Boat-tailed Grackle and Brown-headed Cowbird.



Look for ELIAS bumper stickers!



BIRDERS...WE'RE EVERYWHERE!

EASTERN LONG ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

Way Up North, In ALASKA!!



Eileen & Hans on board ship

Eileen Schwinn

WELL, A FUNNY THING HAPPENED while my husband, Hans, our friends, Carol and Bob, and I were on our first vacation to Alaska this past June — I broke my leg. But more importantly, I had a most wonderful trip (no pun intended)!!

While sitting at the beach a year ago, the conversation of wanting to go cruising, sightseeing, and birding to Alaska came up. Before I knew it, planes were booked, a cruise ship was selected, and vacation guides and birding books were purchased or borrowed. We were to spend 6 days “on land”, cruise a week, then end the trip with two nights in Vancouver, British Columbia, before our return. Our departure date — June 10, 2008. It was awfully tough to pack winter-wear (gloves, hats, fleeces, heavy socks) when the outside temps on Eastern LI were creeping past 90 degrees! Our trip began in Anchorage, then by car to Seward. First stop — Potter’s Marsh, a local birding spot, where Arctic Terns were nesting, along with a good number of breeding plumage and behaving Red-necked Grebe, as well as, assorted common to the area shore birds and gulls were seen. Our first moose was also spotted nearby. At the time, we were unaware of the aggressive nature of the moose in general (only previous exposure was to Bullwinkle of Rocky and Bullwinkle fame), and we tried to get as close to the critter as possible. We wondered why the locals weren’t right up there with us, snapping happy shots. THEY were probably thinking, “Stupid Tourists. They’ll see.” The tree root Mr. Moose was chomping on held his

attention more than raising up on his hind legs and swatting us. Note: Do Not Approach the Moose. Can be hazardous to your health.

BY JUNE 11TH, we were happy to have the woolen hats and extra layers of clothing along. We headed out on a 9 hour boat trip through Resurrection Bay, Kenai Fjords National Park, home to Tufted and Horned Puffins, Red-faced and Pelagic Cormorants, Common Murre, Pigeon Guillemot, Marbled Murrelet, Black-legged Kittiwake and Bald Eagles. Also Hump-backed, Orca and Fin Whales, Sea Otters, Steller Sea lions, and Dall’s Porpoise were easily seen. In distant fjords, mountain goats, and black bears could be seen, along with “calving” glaciers. Our boat’s crew collected floating ice from the glaciers to provide frozen margaritas for those who wished for something to keep them warm (??)! The most amazing part of this trip was upon getting back to shore, the sun was way high up in the sky. That was one aspect of the trip we all could not believe — It really seemed like the Land of the Midnight Sun. We took pictures out of our hotel windows at midnight and 2 am — It was like twilight, never really dark at all. It was great, until we started thinking about the flip side — days of almost no sunlight at all in December and January.

We traveled by rail and then bus to Denali National Park. Grizzly bear, Dall Sheep, Snowshoe Hare, Caribou, Red Fox and Lynx added to the Mammal List, while Golden Eagle, Three-toed Woodpecker, Rock Ptarmigan and the State Bird, Willow Ptarmigan, were enjoyed and added to our observations. More impres-



sive and awe inspiring, however, were the mountains. Mt. McKinley, usually obscured by clouds, graced us with a magnificent view — short but sweet! Snow capped and vast, the Mountain loomed over the wilderness which surrounded us. Our guide, who has spent 16 summers leading folks along the roadways of the park, shared his thoughts on the need for preserving the land. Limited and controlled access, no interference with wildlife, this special place must and will remain wild and treasured. We all, silently, took the view in. One day is not enough to see all the park has to offer, but we came away with a sense and spirit of Denali, and wished our stay there could be longer.

The train ride to our ship passed small communities, areas destroyed in the devastating earthquake of 1964, and more birds and wildlife. Life on a cruise ship is a cross between Disney World and a prison. Everything is sort of make-believe but you just can't walk out! We had land stops in skidway, where we hiked, Juneau, where

we hiked, and Ketchikan. Birding was difficult — the best spots are like here, off the beaten path — but we did manage to find Stellar's Jay, Anna's and Rufous Hummingbirds, and for me, my Best Bird, the Varied Thrush! Teasing me and heard at each and every stop, but never seen until our last day in Alaska, the Varied Thrush is a beauty! As far as I was concerned, the trip was NOW a success!

Our final port and last adventures took place in Vancouver. Home to the 2010 Winter Olympics, the city was amazing — glass and steel, construction, construction, and construction everywhere. We did what the tourists do and saw the sights, including a gondola ride to the top of Grouse Mountain (no grouse to be seen, but a neat hawk and falcon show) and a fine sunset dinner at 10 pm! We visited the world class Butchart Gardens, and managed to find Chestnut-backed Chickadee, our First of Trip Osprey, and a Killdeer among the Robins, Ravens and Crows. While packing to catch our flight

back to The Real World, I saw Stellar's Jay, White-crowned Sparrow, House Sparrows, and a European Starling from the hotel window. Not the most exciting birds to end with, but they eased the transition for me to home.

Except for some lost luggage, a bad hotel room view one night, a wrecked car upon arrival at JFK, and my broken leg in Juneau, we enjoyed everything. I'd take the trip again in a heart beat, as would my husband and the friends we traveled with. And, although not the main reason for the trip, birding became the icing on our cake!



Lending a hand, building a nest

Larry Penny

Chief East Hampton Natural Resources

The colonial waterbird nesting season is winding down. Soon all of this year's crop of Piping Plovers, Least Terns, Roseate Terns, Common Terns, Black Skimmers, Oyster Catchers, Herons, Egrets, Gulls, and Ospreys will have finished fledging. Then, before the month is over, some of the fledglings will be on their first and longest flight to points south. Each year is a crapshoot — the returning parents run the gauntlet: nor'easters in the beginning, winged predators and four-footed ones, thunderstorms with drenching rains and tropical storms with huge waves and flooding tides, human disturbances, feral cats and dogs, there are no end of challenges to face and see through.

For the some of the rarest of them, particularly the Piping Plovers, Terns and Ospreys, we humans have engineered ingenious devices to help them through the breeding season. It started in the late 1960s when the Ospreys had reached the nadir of the Atlantic Coast population decline. Someone got the bright idea of putting up nesting platforms with the beginnings of a nest attached to the top. Paul Stoutenburgh on the North Fork was one of the first to employ this method. I fondly remember a day in the spring of 1975 when he and I took an aluminum irrigation pipe out to Nassau Point with a ladder and a nest platform attached. This was far from Paul's first platform erection, but it was my first as I had been in Oregon and California away from Long Island since 1958. There were very few Ospreys nesting along the California and Oregon coast to begin with, no one there was trying to rebuild a population that wasn't there in the first place.

I'm not sure, but I believe that the Nassau Point platform attracted a breeding pair of Ospreys right off. Metal poles, because of the potential for lightening strikes, were replaced by telephone poles set into the ground with a LILCO cherry picker, later locust posts dug in manually by teams of

volunteers. You might say that returning Ospreys "flocked" to these platforms and by the year 2000, hundreds had been put up across the Island and all but a few were regularly occupied. The populations slowly built back up to reach a steady state in the new millennium, but nowhere near its record number extant before the DDT years following World War II when telephone poles on Shelter Island and in Orient and East Marion had nest after nest. There were several productive nests on glacial erratics, some out in the water, and several nests built on the ground of spits, as on Cartwright Shoals at the south end of Gardiners Island.

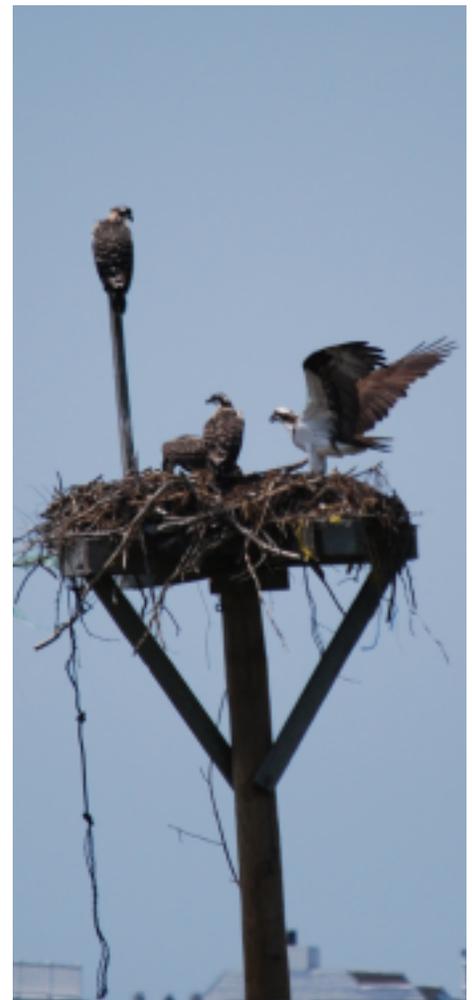
When I was growing up in Mattituck there were four or five regularly used tree nests on the periphery of Mattituck Creek. One in particular in an old oak on Browers Point, across from Wickham Avenue west of the old "Iron Bridge" must have been occupied continuously for more than 15 years. We called Ospreys "fish hawks", the term Osprey was rarely used.

Today you would be hard pressed to find a tree nest in use anywhere up and down the coast. Ninety-nine percent of the ospreys nest on pole platforms erected by humans. Today, in some of the bigger marsh systems along the mid-Atlantic Coast, some platform-pole units are dropped into the marsh from helicopters like spears; they stick in like darts in a dartboard, permanently. Is there a down side to all of this hands-on assistance? It's hard to know. A few osprey pairs still choose to make their own nests in the crotch of a tree. Is such preference passed on culturally from one generation to the next? Or is it mostly genetic. We've come to discover that in the south, Terns near water in the absence of suitable beach habitat have taken to nest on the roofs of mall buildings. Nighthawks have been nesting on flat rooftops in cities for a hundred years or more. When is the last time you saw a purple martin or bluebird fly out of a nest hole in a tree?

We have been using turkey wire exclosures around Piping Plover sand nests for

at least 20 years. It was in 1990 when I helped two Nature Conservancy stewards put one of the first on Long Island up on a beach in East Hampton Town. Some Piping Plover parents don't abide by them. Predators home in on them. In some situations this "marking" by predators is so destructive that empty exclosures, or ones with sitting Piping Plover decoys, are situated away from an occupied nest, which remains unexclosed. This seems to work where predation pressure is heavy.

Whooping Cranes imprint on ultralight planes and following them to the wintering grounds. Will Ospreys become super Pigeons, Piping Plovers, diminutive chickens? We're damned if do, damned if we don't. From the days of Noah we were given this stewardship role by divine intervention. *It's in our genes.*



Conservation Column

"Nobody can do everything but everybody can do something"

Beth Gustin

All of us have either thought about, talked about, maybe even complained about high gasoline prices. Many conversations turn to how oil production can be increased in order to lower prices, but these "solutions" could take years to make a difference in the prices we pay. There are some easy ways for you to reduce your consumption of gasoline, which means immediate savings, and you don't even have to get on the Prius waiting list!

SLOW DOWN! Fuel economy decreases as much as 20% when cruising speeds increase from 55 mph to 75 mph. So if your car gets 25 mpg at 55 mph, it will get just 20 mpg at 75 mph.

- Remove extra weight from your car. An extra 100 lbs. may cost you as much as 1 mpg, so drop those bags of birdseed at home right away.
- Keep your tires properly inflated. Each time you get your oil changed, ask your mechanic to check the tire pressure.
- For any stop that may last more than a minute, shut off your engine instead

of letting it idle. Even though you think you will be at the post office only for a second, the line might be long. When running into the grocery store for just a couple of things, ask your spouse to park instead of idling in the fire lane.

- When the weather gets colder, do not warm up your engine before driving. It is not necessary for your car and it just wastes gas.
- Try to combine your errands into one trip.
- Even if carpooling to work isn't an option, try carpooling to local events, dinners out with friends, and ELIAS field trips and programs.

All of these things take very little effort on our part but collectively can mean big savings of gasoline and money. Imagine the impact that millions of Americans could have by following these suggestions. Significantly lowering demand can reduce the need for increased oil drilling in environmentally sensitive areas. It also lowers the amount of greenhouse gases that are released into the atmosphere. Conservation not only means savings for you and me, but also can have much broader impacts on the environment.



Forest songsters evolved in an early rush

ITHACA, NY- Evolution seems to have happened in fits and starts at least that's what the fossil record shows. From trilobites to pterodactyls, ammonites to Archaeopteryx, scientists find the same pattern: brief bursts of innovation in which a single species, or branch on the tree of life, turns into a cluster of new twigs, then lapses into long stretches ruled by the status quo.

"It's arguably one of the most fundamental questions in all of evolutionary biology," said Dan Rabosky, a graduate student at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and lead author of a new analysis of the problem. "How do species arise? Where does all this biodiversity that we see on Earth come from?"

Rabosky and coauthor Irby Lovette, director of the Fuller Evolutionary Biology Program at the Lab of Ornithology, used DNA analyses to look at five million years of evolution in 25 species of colorful North American songbirds known as wood warblers. They discovered that a flurry of species divergence occurred early on, with many species appearing in just the first million years. The research appears online July 9 in the journal *Proceedings of the Royal Society B*.

"Right after the dinosaurs went extinct, most people are aware that there was a huge explosion of mammal diversity," Rabosky said. "That extinction created lots of ecological 'space,' opportunities for new species of mammals to take advantage of resources.

"What's interesting is that this happened on a continent, where it's ecologically much more complex than an island," Rabosky said.

And besides, four-inch-long, half-ounce forest birds don't leave much of a fossil record. "In fact," Rabosky said, "the vast majority of biodiversity on this planet that we need to explain doesn't have a fossil record. But just by using species that are alive today, and looking at their DNA, we can see the signal of an early explosion of species millions of years ago."



From Kaler's Pond Nature Center

Jay Kuhlman

The Kaler's Pond Audubon Center has been in full swing these past few months. The two weeks of camp style activities were attended by 12 to 15 children. This was ended by a barbecue and concert given by Adam McHeffy and members of his band along with some friends. The Sunday summer fun programs have been well received.

The gardens are doing well attracting many butterflies and other pollinators as well as deer and woodchucks. The Ruby-throated Hummingbird pays daily visits.

We had Pipevine Swallowtails lay eggs and have larvae feed on the Pipevine planted on the fence.

September 29th will be the National Park Cleanup Day. That morning we hope to have a large number of Boy and Girl Scouts and their parents. Then in the afternoon there will be a celebration with games, live reptiles and music celebrating the natural world around us with a focus on how to preserve what we have.

Stop by and say hello or just look and the birds and insects.



Fall is right around the Corner!

John McNeil

AUTUMN IS COMING and this is my favorite time of year. The bird feeders are getting a good cleaning for my first arrivals to my outside Bread and Breakfast or should I say the all-day buffet. In an Internet article on "Fall Bird Feeding" by Diane Porter, she said: "it is best to start in early autumn. Even if you do not see much bird activity around the feeders they are scouting out their winter territories." With the onset of cold weather a bird's calorie requirements increase and knowing where the local supermarket is, is very important. For example, the Downy Woodpecker in a snowstorm must eat a third-to-three quarters of its weight each day to maintain itself in a harsh winter like last year. So...what is the moral to this story? If you start putting seed out early, (I prefer black oiled sun flower seeds myself) the birds will include you on their itinerary and make a note that your place is worth visiting. They'll remember. When the first snow appears they will show up like happy campers, hungry, chirping and chattering, which will bring a pleasant smile to your face while you watch from the warmth of your window. If you happen to have some thick evergreens for shelter in your yard, this will attract Nuthatches, Chickadees and Titmice to name a few. Generally, your yard will attract the most common species but do not be surprised if something rare appears at your door step. A Redpoll maybe? (*I am really dreaming*).

Having a bird book and binoculars near your window will aid in your identification of the most common birds so when one arrives who is not one of your regular diners, you can spot it quickly. If you happen to see a species that is unfamiliar, study it closely noting some of the following: (make a quick drawing with your notes)

- Does it show any splotches or color?
- What kind of beak does it have? What kind of a tail?
- Does it have a crest or crown patch?

- Any discernible pattern such as stripes or rings?
- Any markings around the eye or head or back or breast?
- In flight do you notice any particular characteristic, like gliding or dipping or undulation?
- Do any flashes of white or some other color appear on wings or tail when it moves? Where did you see it?
- What about its shape-is it chunky or slender?
- Does it walk, hop, perch quietly, or flit about?
- Does it say anything?
- What about size? Give yourself some mental image to compare the bird to. Was it about the size of a sparrow (5 to 7 1/2 inches)? A robin (8 1/2 to 10 1/2)? A crow (17 to 21 inches)?

Now it is time to look in your bird book for this new arrival.

Once you get into the habit at looking closely at the birds you will become more proficient in your identification skills. You will start to notice some physical characteristics such as behavior, size and shape of bill. Is the bird a seedeater such as a sparrow or finch? They have short and stubby bills. Cardinals and Grosbeaks with thicker heavier bills can handle large seeds rather than one like Goldfinches that like thistle seed. The scissor like bills of Crossbills enables them to extract seeds from pinecones. The Woodpeckers with their strong bills that can chisel are able to probe barks of trees for insects. Wood warblers are primarily insect eaters catching bugs on the fly with their sharp thinly pointed bills.

What I have pointed out is just the beginning of your bird identification skills. Next, you should get a notebook that you should record your observations in. This way you will have something to refer to in later years as you start to explore the wonders of nature around you.

Other species of birds that started to migrate in the middle of July and into its peak of late August are the shorebirds. These species will start showing up at our front door along the tidal mud flats on Dune Road, Jones Beach, Jamaica Bay and any other likely places where they can probe for food to store in their fat cells for the flight to their wintering grounds. The term *shorebird* is a collective name for Plovers, Sandpipers, and Oystercatchers. By late August they should have all arrived before heading south over the Atlantic in September and October.

One of the easiest species to identify is the American Oystercatcher with its big size and bright orange bill on the mussel beds right under the Ponquogue Bridge in Hampton Bays. Some other large shorebirds that frequent the tidal mudflats are the Willets, Black-bellied Plovers and Greater Yellowlegs. Both are easy to identify, the willets with its flashy white wing patches and the Greater Yellowlegs, well... I think you can formulate what would be the primary identification on this one?

Before closing, while writing this article something came to mind that my mentor and good friend Gil Raynor once said to me. "During autumn note who is feeding birds around your neighborhood. Then when the first snow appears, hit these feeders. Look for Fox Sparrows, Pine Siskin, Evening Grosbeak, Woodpecker and even a lingering Pine Warble. You never know what you might find at these outside dinners."



Feeder Survey

Brian O'Keefe

I would personally like to thank Marybeth Stembler and her late father for laying out the foundation and the collection of this important data.

Beginning on October 5th the Survey will be conducted the 1st week of the month starting on Sunday and ending Sunday.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FEEDER SURVEY

- Define an area containing feeders that you can see all at once from a window. The area should be one you glance at frequently during your daily routine.
- Don't include birds seen off premises.
- Predators perching in or swooping through the count area (not just flying over) may be counted if you feel that they were attracted by the birds at the feeder.
- Record the largest number of each species that you see in your count area during the eight-day count period.
- Do not add counts from previous days together. Be specific with the species name, e.g. we can't use just the name Sparrow, Blackbird or Gull.
- At the end of the count period, record your final tallies and send in the form immediately.

Personal observations and comments are welcome as are suggestions to improve the surveys and reports.

Some observations from last year that I enjoyed and would like to share.

Several nights we heard a Great Horned Owl, softly hooting

On Oct 2, walking at Robert Moses Field 5 there were hundreds of Purple Martins flocking in the parking lot and surrounding dunes. They were gathering and eating for the last time before leaving on their long migration. What a sight.

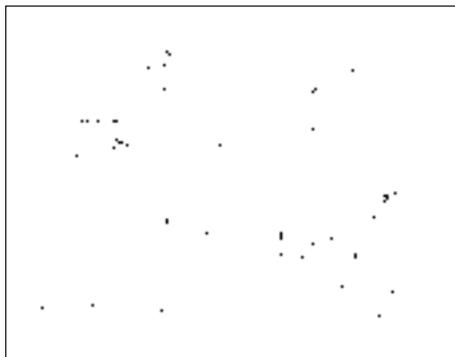
One of my Red-breasted Nuthatches was having a splash in my bird bath!

I am happy to include the 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches, which I haven't seen any around since several years ago — although the White-breasted are in my yard all year round. Also, was very surprised to

observe a Dark-eyed Junco on Oct 7th. This is very early for them to be here! Usually I see them first around Nov. in much colder weather. To me it portends a bad winter, as does the unusually large acorn crop!

While riding my horse in Southaven Park last week I came across a flock of wild Turkeys — about 20 or so, with a number of Toms, hens, and many half grown chicks — must have been a good breeding season!

The Nuthatches have arrived and at times seem to literally take over our feeders. Four Red-breasted Nuthatches at one time on one smaller feeder. The White-breasted are equally active here.



The project was fun! I have included a sketch of a bird I am having trouble identifying.

It seems to me there are many more Juncos this year and that they are staying longer. I am sure I've had more of the other birds than I'm reporting but they don't stay still!

I was happy to see my "resident pair" of Barn Swallows who made the 1st appearance Thurs 4/24, in time to be included in this month's survey! They set up house-keeping in one of the horse's stalls for the past two summers and were in the stall when I saw them so I guess they will nest there again this year!

I included the Cedar Waxwing since they were right next to the feeding station (6/8). They actually fed from the bushes but never perched on any of the feeders.

Survey Dates:

October 5-October 12 2008

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____

Phone _____

_____ Mourning Dove

_____ Northern Cardinal

_____ Blue Jay

_____ House Finch

_____ Black-capped Chickadee

_____ Tufted Titmouse

_____ Downy Woodpecker

_____ White-throated Sparrow

_____ Dark-eyed Junco

_____ House Sparrow

_____ White-breasted Nuthatch

_____ Song Sparrow

_____ Red-bellied Woodpecker

_____ American Crow

_____ European Starling

_____ Common Grackle

_____ Carolina Wren

_____ Northern Mockingbird

_____ American Goldfinch

_____ Red-winged Blackbird

_____ Hairy Woodpecker

_____ Common Flicker

_____ Rufous-sided Towhee

_____ American Robin

_____ Brown-headed Cowbird

_____ Sharp-shinned Hawk

_____ Rock Dove (pigeon)

_____ Gray Catbird

_____ Yellow-rumped Warbler

_____ Red-breasted Nuthatch

_____ Other _____

Please mail immediately after each survey period to:

Brian O'Keefe,
12 Union Ave.,
Center Moriches, NY 11934.

Or to send via the internet, go to:
easternlongislandaudubon.com and

- 1) Click on Chapter Projects
- 2) Click on Feeder Statistics
- 3) Click on To submit via the internet, etc.



On Birds and Books...

Reviews by Eileen Schwinn,
ELIAS President

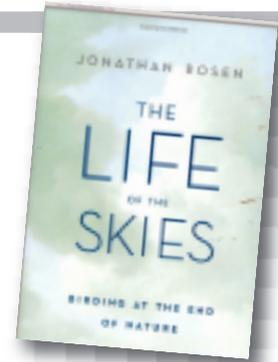
The Life of the Skies - Birding at the End of Nature, by Jonathan Rosen

JONATHAN ROSEN BEGINS HIS BOOK with the statement "... There are two kinds of birdwatchers: those who know what they are and those who haven't yet realized it." He proceeds to integrate the observation of birds into many of life's situations, helping to draw strength in troubled times and pleasure in happier ones. Bird observations are part of the human condition, and while only becoming a "formal" birder within the last 10 years, Rosen credits the past-time with changing the way he sees our country and the world in general. He investigates the historical, literary, spiritual and scientific connections between humankind and birds. In addition to the traditional inclusion of Darwin, Audubon, TR Roosevelt, and the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, Rosen has passages from Robert Frost, Walt Whitman, Henry Thoreau and the Hoopoe.

I found Rosen's chapter on Male vs. Fe-

male brained birders extremely delightful. He asks, "Is birdwatching for girls? Or is it the ultimate manly activity?" Does birding employ the Empathy (female) part of the brain, or the Systematizing (male) part? Men obsess about lists, yet according to the Guinness Book of Records, Phoebe Snetsinger, a female American ornithologist, holds the World's Record. Is birding all about hunting, classifying, and competition? Or is it emotions, nurturing, and conservation? Of course, as with every activity within in a healthy mental life, it's all the above — and both a male and female activity.

Rosen, who's previous publications have been more religious than secular, has a wonderful few chapters on birding in Israel during the spring of 2000. He blends biblical observations with early Zionism and modern day Israeli conditions. In that war-torn region of the world, people are obsessed with borders, but birds are not. I have never read any other account of birding in the Middle East, but the focus and passion of the birding community



which Rosen met with, was inspirational.

The book even includes a rather funny passage on the old hit tune, "Surfin' Bird", which is a happy mix of nonsense and sexual innuendo. It makes one think, according to Rosen, of "...something American.... some deep-seated longing, half high and half low, half carnal, half religious — A fit confusion for something as old and new as birdwatching." The Bird is The Word.

I found The Life of the Skies to be a terrific book, one that can be read over and over. It's well written, meticulously documented, and draws from the familiar as well as the unfamiliar. This may be a good book to purchase and loan out to friends — birders or not! But, be sure to get it back — it's a delight.

I give it Five Feathers!



Chapter Renewal & Membership

For \$15 a year, you will 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.)

Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Make Check payable to:
Eastern Long Island Audubon Society
and mail to:

ELIAS, Membership
PO Box 206
East Quogue, NY 11942-0206



The Osprey is prepared by

Sally Newbert at

PINNACLE GRAPHICS INC.

2 East Moriches Blvd.
East Moriches, NY 11940-1439

631.281.6001
631.206.9257 fax
PGINC@optonline.net

Sending kids to camp

For the last few years ELIAS has sent children and teens to Environmental camps run by New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. This year Jennifer went to Camp Rushford, about an hour south of Buffalo, she wrote to thank us for her experiences:

“At camp we learned ways to help our environment and ways to decrease how much waste we produce. I am already teaching my family these techniques.

We also played games that taught us about the environment. In one, Predator/Prey, we were blindfolded to represent the darkness of night, the predator was a bat that made a sound

and the prey, a mosquito, responded with a sound of his own. This represented how the bat found its food using echolocation.

I would like to thank you again for allowing me to share this wonderful opportunity. It was a great learning experience and a ton of fun. I have many good memories and new friends.”



Coming up

In the next *Osprey*

Mike Higgiston writes about his trip to Arizona

Stock up at

ELIAS Seed Sale –

November 22 & 23

Officers to be elected at

the Sept. Meeting



BARTH'S PHARMACY

32 East Main St.
Riverhead, NY 11901
Barry D. Barth R.Ph.S.P.
(631) 727-2125
Fax: (631) 727-2199

58 Sunset Ave.
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978
Warren B. Poulson R.Ph.S.P.
Lou Cassara R.Ph.
(631) 288-4345
Fax: (631) 288-4363

corcoran
corcoran group real estate



Robert Murray
Licensed Sales Person

robert.murray@corcoran.com
92 Main Street
Westhampton Beach NY 11978
d: 631.723.4410
f: 631.614.3938
m: 631.871.3350

Owned and operated by NRT LLC.

New York Palm Beaches The Hamptons North Fork Shelter Island

“Home of the 99 cent Suet Cake!”



Bird feeders, houses
Bird Seed & accessories

Wild Bird * Garden Center
Plants * Pet * Farm & Feed
We Fill BBQ Tanks



Smith & Hawken®

1122 Osborne Ave.
Riverhead
631-727-3100

Visit Wild Bill's Bird House! @ www.talmagefarm.com

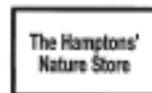
Owner
Bruce Horwith



Manager
Michael Mackey

Bridgehampton
631-537-SEED (7333)

mailing address:
PO Box 2004
Bridgehampton
NY 11932



shipping address:
2044 Montauk Hwy.
Bridgehampton
NY 11932

ELIAS Officers & Directors

President Eileen Schwinn
631-728-8342

Past President Alfred Scherzer

Vice President Beth Gustin

Recording Secretary Chris Schmitt

Correspondence Secretary John McNeil
631-281-2623

Treasurer Evelyn Voulgarelis

Directors Bob Adamo
Ridgie Barnett
MaryLaura Lamont
Robert Murray
Brian O’Keeffe
Chris Schmitt
Dan Wilson

Committees/Projects

Membership and Mailing John McNeil

Conservation Gigi Spates

Programs Brian O’Keeffe

KP Nature Ctr. Liaison Alfred Scherzer

Education Evelyn Voulgarelis

Nature Chats Robert Murray

Hospitality Ridgie Barnett

Feeder Stats Brian O’Keeffe

Field Trips John McNeil

Publicity Peggy Caraher

Webmaster Annette DeGiovine-Oliveira

Bluebird Restoration Gigi Spates

Newsletter Layout & Editing Sally Newbert
eliasosprey@optonline.net
2 E. Moriches Blvd., E. Moriches, NY 11940
631-281-6008

Mark Your Calendars!
September

Sat., Sept. 6

Field Trip: Jamaica Bay see page 2

Mon., Sept. 8

Nature Program: Jennifer Skillbred will discuss the work of the Group for the East End Election of Officers will take place at this meeting see page 1

October

Mon., October 6

Nature Program: Wildlife Photography Safari by Ivan Rothman, see page 1

Sat., October 18

Field Trip: Smith Point Park see page 2

Wed., October 22

Annual Dinner: Rock Hill Golf & Country Club see page 1

Events to watch for in November

Sat & Sun., Nov 22 & 23

SEED SALE



Printed on Plainfield Plus paper which is elemental chlorine free, acid free, and recycled – made with 20% post-consumer waste.

EASTERN LONG ISLAND AUDUBON SOCIETY

From the Barrens to the Bays

Serving Eastern Brookhaven, Western Riverhead & The Hamptons

www.easternlongislandaudubonsociety.org

THE OSPREY

Published by:
Eastern Long Island Audubon Society
P.O. Box 206
East Quogue, NY 11942-0206

Address Service Requested

Please check the date on your label. If your membership is about to expire please use the membership/renewal form on page 10 keep your membership current.

NON PROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 3
Center Moriches, NY 11934
