



The OSPREY

May/June, 2008 — Vol. XXXVIII No. 3

Nature Programs

Brian O’Keeffe

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 or Main Event

MONDAY, MAY 5, 2008

RED KNOTS & HORSESHOE CRABS An Improbable Relationship

Red Knots rely on the fertilized eggs of Horseshoe Crabs to fuel their extreme migrations. The decline in Horseshoe Crab populations has caused an exponential decline in Red Knots. How do we find the balance between man and nature? Published population models of the Red Knot indicate that the bird will be at or near extinction in 2010. If steps are not taken to protect our unique ecosystems they may disappear forever. Come and watch *Crash: A Tale of Two Species* and discuss what we are doing and can do to help prevent this tragedy!

MONDAY, JUNE 2, 2008

Membership Drive FUNDAMENTALS OF BIRDING

According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, there are currently 51.3 million birders in the US. Come and learn the fundamentals of good birding: location, equipment, and etiquette. Experienced birders will be on hand to give tips and tricks and share unusual sightings. If you are already a member and have a friend or neighbor that has expressed an interest, bring them. A \$15 membership entitles you to become a member and receive our bimonthly newsletter THE OSPREY. This is a GREAT organization, and its members know all the good birding spots. Membership with this fun and lively bunch is a really good idea.

Concern Grows

ELIAS joins Coalition

Try to tell your friends that they are going to build a ski mountain in Riverhead. Watch their faces as you say Riverhead Resorts. They usually look at you like you are insane. What they want to say is: “have you lost your mind?” Although these plans have received some media coverage I bet most Suffolk County residents have missed the news.

Current development proposals threaten 800 acres of rare grassland habitat as well as the LI Pine Barrens, Suffolk County Special Groundwater Protection Area, Peconic Estuary watershed and the LI Sound watershed.

In 1998, the Navy turned over the Enterprise Park at Calverton (EPCAL) to the Town of Riverhead. Today this parcel is facing a number of extremely large development proposals, including a group of eight major themed resorts, a 90-acre man-made lake, a man-made indoor ski mountain, ATV parks, and additional industrial development outside the current industrial core.

The resorts alone could bring 1.5 million people to the site each year. Most will exit the LIE at the William Floyd and proceed to Rt 25 to reach the site.

It would be like a plug clogging the entrances to both the North and South

Fork. If you thought there was enough traffic now. Think about adding another million + cars. The environmental and community impacts caused by development of this magnitude would surely effect the entire region, from air quality to daily commutes and higher municipal expenses!

Environmental Impact

Environmental impacts include: water pollution from increased sewage and traffic. Because of the proximity to the sole source aquifer, the protected Pine Barrens, this intense development will decrease the county’s air quality. A development of this size will also increase the demand on LI’s energy suppliers and water supply (imagine what it will take to maintain an indoor ski mountain in the summer).

In addition, the destruction of the rare grassland habitat, relied on by endangered/threatened species will be immeasurable. It will also threaten the freshwater wetlands, and have negative impacts on the Peconic estuary and LI Sound watersheds.

Impact on the Quality of Life in Suffolk County

Some of the quality of life impacts in-

Continued on page 10



**On May 20th and June 18th
the two highest tides of the spring are
expected. Tides that may wash the
Horseshoe Crabs onto Dune road.
Please be aware, and try to avoid them.**

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As of April 4 three Short-eared Owls were still flying over the EPCAL Grasslands (they should be migrating north soon). In addition to the SEOWs, a Northern Harrier, a Kestrel and at least 2 singing, Eastern Meadowlarks were observed or heard. On patrol that evening were Leslie Lupo, Jim Clinton, Sr., a fellow from the DEC and myself. According to Leslie & Jim, there were at least 2, and probably, 3 SEOWs seen the night before. As each day reaches farther into the spring, one can only wonder where this exciting ride will lead.

As Carl Starace reminds us...**FOR THE WILDLIFE AND OUR QUALITY OF LIFE, SUPPORT PRESERVATION OF THE GRASSLANDS.**

Bob Adamo



Field Trips



Saturday, May 3, 2008

Terrell River Country Park

Trip Leader: **Beth Gustin**

Join us for a 2-3 hour walk through the varied habitats of Terrell River Country Park as we look for early migrants and resident species including warblers, towhees, thrushes, and shorebirds. Hopefully we will also see the Great Horned Owls and Cooper's Hawk that have nested in the park in recent years. We will meet at 7:00 AM at the trailhead, located on the south side of Montauk Hwy., opposite the Kaler's Pond Audubon Center and Flight 800 Memorial Park in Center Moriches. Contact trip leader Beth Gustin for directions and questions. 631-848-9883.

Saturday, May 17, 2008

Upstate: Bashakill Marsh/ Delaware + Hudson Canal Trail

Trip Leader: **Carl Starace**

Bashakill Marsh is the largest freshwater marsh in southern NY State, both it and the D+H Canal Trail are outstanding sites to see spring migrants. Join us, meetup is 7:30 am at Bashakill Marsh. For directions and more info go to the ELIAS website. Carl's e-mail is castarace@optonline.net, phone is 631-281-8074. This is really a beautiful area just to gaze upon.

Sunday, May 18, 2008

William Floyd Estate

Trip Leader: **MaryLaura Lamont**

MaryLaura Lamont will be our trip leader for the Spring Migration Bird Walk at the William Floyd Estate. The Estate has a varied habitat of woods, fields; creeks and marsh which bring in thousands of migrating birds to the lands of the Estate. This will be a 3 hour walking tour and will cover approximately 3 miles – round trip. This is the peak of the spring migration for birds, particularly the neo-tropical species such as warblers and vireos. Bring binoculars. Mary-Laura may be reached at 631-722-5542 if you need additional details. We will meet at 9 AM at Main Entrance Gate on Park Drive. For information and directions call the Floyd Estate at (631)399-2030.

Saturday, June 7, 2008

Maple Swamp

Trip Leader: **Andy Baldelli**

Andy Baldelli will guide us on one of nature's wonderland. Maple Swamp is like a catch basin for spring migrants and has been a breeding ground for many warblers and vireos. We will catch the tail end of the spring migration with this tour. We will meet at 8 AM at the County Center parking lot off of Route 51 in Riverhead. Bring water and snack and please wear appropriate clothing because of ticks. Contact John McNeil at 631-281-2623 or e-mail jpmcneil@verizon.net for any questions regarding this field trip.

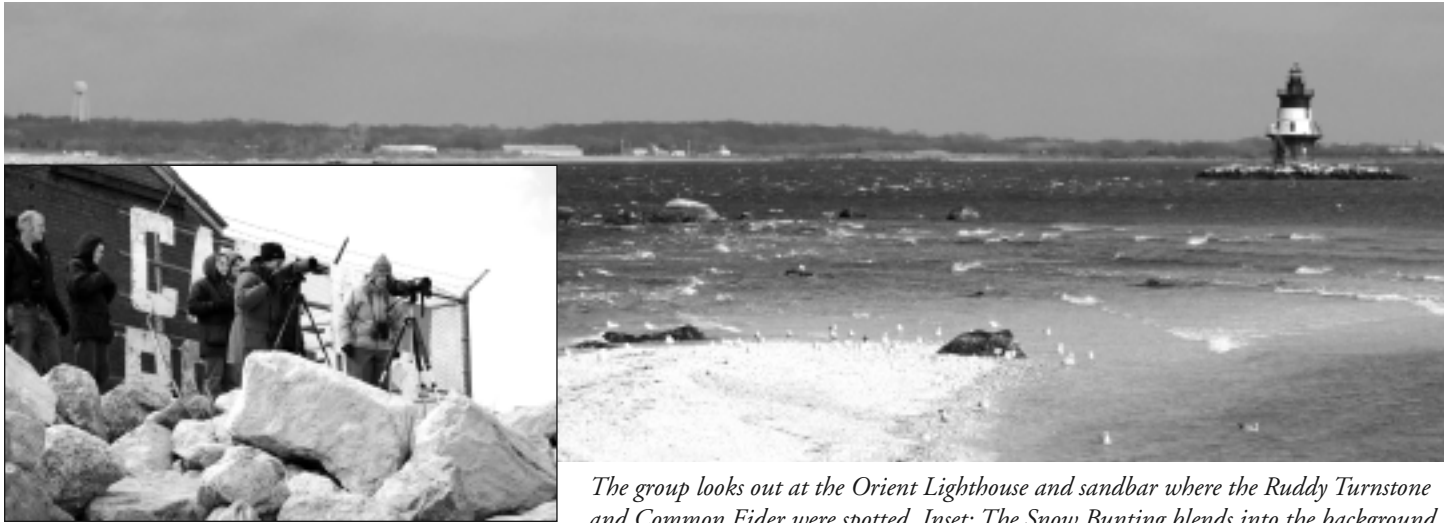
Please join us for these exciting field trips!

All levels of naturalist — including beginners — are most welcome on Eastern Long Island Audubon field trips.

All trips are free to attend.



Report from the Field

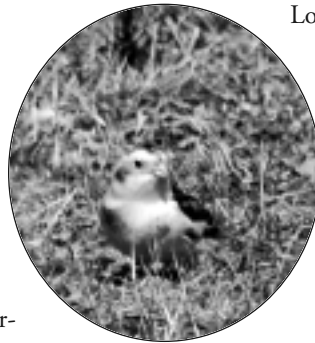


The group looks out at the Orient Lighthouse and sandbar where the Ruddy Turnstone and Common Eider were spotted. Inset: The Snow Bunting blends into the background.

ORIENT POINT, MARCH 1, 2008

Report by Beth Gustin

Morning rain did not deter eight intrepid birders from heading to Orient Point for the March field trip. The first stopping point, Marratooka Lake, did not disappoint as several species of waterfowl were seen including Pied-billed Grebe, Northern Shoveler, Green-winged Teal, Lesser Scaup, American Coot and Hooded Mer-



ganser. Other stops along the way produced American Widgeon, Long-tailed Duck, Common Loon, and Northern Harrier.

Sunshine finally greeted the group at Orient Beach State Park, as did a pair of Snow Buntings in lovely winter plumage and a small flock of Sanderlings. Additional species seen at Orient Point County Park were Common Eider, Great Cormorant, and Ruddy Turnstone. A total of 49 species was seen, not bad for late winter. Thanks to MaryLaura Lamont for leading this trip!



BAYARD CUTTING ARBORETUM, APRIL 5, 2008

Report by Sally Newbert

Iam sure that everyone of us have been longing for a that first blast of Spring. So I know we were all grateful when, despite the rainy forecast, the sun came out and made it a shirtsleeve kind of day. It also was a good day to see the Osprey.

There was an Osprey nest visible not far from the parking lot, and on the chimney of the mansion. Although difficult to believe it seemed like the Osprey nesting on chimney had young already. We



could see something small moving in the nest, way to early, but there sure seemed to be a little head there.

The other nice find was an Eastern Phoebe (right). Usually the first of the insect eating flycatchers to come back. Several Woodpeckers were spotted including a Downey, Red-bellied and a Flicker.

Thanks to John for leading this trip!



Conservation Column

Beth Gustin

Nobody can do everything but everybody can do something

Warm weather is here, time to open our windows, let fresh air in and tackle our Spring Cleaning. It is important to know that many cleaning products are more harmful to the environment and ourselves than the dirt and germs we try to get rid of. Some of the harmful ingredients that are found in common cleaning products are:

Petroleum - a nonrenewable resource found in many conventional dish and laundry detergents.

Phthalates - found in the fragrances used in detergents and fabric softeners, these chemicals have been linked to cancer and reproductive-system harm in animal lab tests.

Chlorine bleach - proudly displayed as an ingredient in many scouring powders and cleaning solutions, this chemical is highly caustic (can burn skin and eyes) and when combined with other chemicals that go down our drains, can become toxic.


There are many alternatives to using conventional cleaning products. Baking soda,

lemon juice, cornstarch, vinegar and toothpaste can be used as ingredients in home-made cleaning products. Here is one recipe for a good all-purpose household cleaner:

Combine ½ cup of white distilled vinegar with ¼ cup of baking soda in ½ gallon of water. Mix well and pour into a spray bottle.

Other recipes can be found on the internet. (Google "Household cleaner recipes")

A simpler way is to purchase ecofriendly products. Seventh Generation has an extensive line of cleaners that really do work and can be found at many stores including Target. Ecover is another brand and is sold at Wild By Nature in Hampton Bays and smaller natural food stores such as Wholly Natural in East Moriches. Bon Ami is a non-chlorine bleach scouring powder, also found at Wild By Nature. These are just a few of the environmentally friendly products that can be found in local stores.

Remember, "clean" does not smell like artificial lemons, green apples, wildflower meadows or pine. These scents may indicate that you're using more chemicals than you really need. Try cleaning your home the more ecofriendly way, it's good for you and the environment. 

Kaler's Pond Nature Center

Jay Kuhlman

The Kaler's Pond Audubon Center will start their outdoor programs after the four indoor programs conclude with the Earth Day/Arbor Day celebration and planting in the gardens surrounding the nature center.

Adam McHeffy will be back to lead the summer programs which are in the process of being finalized. We will be working with the local schools, IGHL, Girls Scout and Boy Scout troops and have more details in the July/August *Osprey*.

In the meantime, the bird feeders have been active during the winter and attract a good variety of species. Please drop by for a look at the center and grounds. We are looking forward to the Birdathon and some walks during warbler migration.

www.kalerspondauduboncenter.org 

New Hats are now available!



They can be purchased at ELIAS meetings & events


Membership Update John McNeil

FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO WELCOME all new and returning members to Eastern Long Island Audubon. I personally would like to thank those members who renewed by looking at the expiration date on the rear of their newsletter. If you have not renewed, please do so. You may use the Membership/Renewal form on page 10. This will save ELIAS expensive postage if I have to send out renewal notices.

The Spring Migration is already upon us and the birding has just begun. So...if I might make a good suggestion, first check out Dianne Taggart's web page, "http://www.libirding.com." This site is devoted to various birding activities & bird watching on Long Island. The "sighting and reports" menu selection is usually updated daily and worth checking before heading out on your birding activities. Reports are submitted by local birders making the rounds to local hot spots that might be in your area and being armed with this information will add to your viewing pleasure.

Bird watching is a great hobby that will be with you for the rest of your life. Even if you do not get out often, you always spot something of interest and wherever you go.

The Spring Migrations are now here and it is time to dust off the binoculars, call some friends, head out, and get some exercise. Remember to bring your binoculars and bird book. But before heading out, check Dianne's web site for the latest bird sightings so you can make a suggestion of where to go and impress your non-birding friends of your local knowledge. They might be so impressed that they will buy you lunch?

You can always give it a try. 

John


Save the Date!


Birdathon - Saturday, May 10th


Welcome to Eastern Long Island Audubon Society's twenty-fourth annual Big Day of Birding! Set for Saturday, May 10th, this event will pit any and all birdwatchers against the elements – sun, wind, rain, sleep (or lack thereof) - in an effort to count as many bird species as possible within a 24-hour period.


Why do we do this? Just for fun? Well, partly – after all, it is a lot of fun. But the main impetus for counting birds on May 10th is to raise money for our organization. The Birdathon is an important fundraising event for Eastern Long Island Audubon, allowing us to sustain our programs in environmental education, conservation advocacy, and nature appreciation. Additionally, the Birdathon will raise money for the Kaler's Pond Audubon Center, so that this worthy institution may continue its efforts in environmental education and appreciation.


What can you do to help?

 **First**, you can sponsor our birdwatching teams by making a financial pledge for each bird species seen or heard. Usually, our totals range from 160 to 180 species.

 **Second**, you can make an outright donation to the Birdathon.

 **Third**, you can form a team of your own to count the birds. The rules are simple: let us know beforehand that you will be participating; only count birds of whose identity you are certain, and confine your explorations to Suffolk County. You are welcome to participate for as long or as short a time period as you would like on May 10th.

 **And fourth**, you can join one of our teams out in the field for part or all of the day. All levels of birdwatchers—including beginners—are invited to participate in the Birdathon.

 If you would like to take part in any of the ways mentioned – or have questions about the event – please contact Beth Gustin (roogus@aol.com or 631-848-9883).

Birdathon – May 10, 2008

Please accept my pledge of:

5 cents per species

10 cents per species

20 cents per species

50 cents per species

\$1 per species

Other _____

Please accept my donation of _____ My check is enclosed.

Checks should be made payable to *Eastern Long Island Audubon Society*

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Please mail this Birdathon coupon to:

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



Do you know who you heard this morning?

Did you go out in your yard this morning and hear a new song? Did you go for a walk and hear one of the new migrants? This quiz, most appropriate for the Spring-time and the early morning chorus, is from: *What Bird Is This? The Birdwatcher's Quiz Book*, by Henry Hill Collins, Jr. (copyright 1961) and contributed by Eileen Schwinn.

Knowing a bird's call or song is one of the easiest ways to identify it. Some birds have highly distinctive voices. Certain songs and calls by onomatopoeia have given rise to bird names. Here are some of the best know.

Match the species with the description of its voice by putting in the box the key letter of the species.

Description

- 1. A brusque FEE-bee
- 2. A carol, cheerily cheer up, cheerily cheer up.
- 3. A catlike mew
- 4. A clear whistled poor BOB WHITE
- 5. A crisp, clear peet-weet from low over the water
- 6. A distinctive, easy-to-learn, but variable which IS it, which IS it, which IS it?
- 7. A dry, pleasing drink your TEA-E-E-E or drink YOUR tea-e-e-e
- 8. A loud, clear whistle, wheat, wheat, wheat, what-cheer, what-cheer, what-cheer
- 9. A loud cry, KillDEEER
- 10. A loud ringing teaCHER, teaCHER, teaCHER, more accurately, you're rich, You're Rich, YOU'RE RICH
- 11. A nasal yank, yank, yank
- 12. A noisy shriek, jay, jay
- 13. A pleasing oo-long TEA
- 14. A rich, bubbling bob-o-link, bob-o-link, spink, spank, spink
- 15. A set of clear whistles, Old SAM PEAbody, PEAbody, PEAbody
- 16. A sweet, plaintive PEE-week, PEE-a-WEE
- 17. Call, a chick-a-dee-dee-dee
- 18. Caw, Caw
- 19. Per-CHICK-o-ree, from top of rise in bounding flight
- 20. Sweet, sweet, sweet, I'm so sweet (from the May garden, orchard, or streamside shrubbery)

Species

- a. Black-capped Chickadee
- b. Blue Jay
- c. Bobolink
- d. Bobwhite
- e. Cardinal
- f. Catbird
- g. Common Crow
- h. Eastern Goldfinch
- i. Eastern Phoebe
- j. Eastern Wood Pewee
- k. Killdeer
- l. Ovenbird
- m. Redwing Blackbird
- n. Robin
- o. Rufous-sided Towhee
- p. Spotted Sandpiper
- q. White-breasted Nuthatch
- r. White-throated Sparrow
- s. Yellowthroat
- t. Yellow Warbler

Answers on page 10

It never fails!

Larry Penny

Chief East Hampton Natural Resources

March went out like lion. The Canada Geese went with it. Before they left they had practically denuded the winter rye cover crop on between along the Sag Harbor–East Hampton Turnpike and the high school and neighbors to the southeast got a mouthful of dust, not harmless dust, but old potato field dust containing 35 parts per million of arsenic and half as much lead. Ospreys returned to East Hampton at the end of the second week in March. During the last week several pairs were already working on their nests. Piping plovers started showing up around March 15, the heralding of another kind of March Madness. Oystercatchers broke the end-of-winter silence of the Accabonac Harbor marshes at about the same time.

Because of the cold, spring peepers were a little late, they started singing in the Grace Estate Nature Preserve on March 22nd, Emerson Hasbrouck heard them in calling in a drain near his house in Wading River for the first time on the evening of the 28th. As of this writing they had not yet started up in Montauk which is one of the last places on Long Island to warm up. The wood frogs, spotted salamanders and blue-spotted salamanders (the last, only in Montauk) come into the ponds to breed at the same time. The southern leopard frog, which used to join in a week or two later, alas, has been silent for many a year now. The marbled salamander larvae, spawned in the early fall after rains filled their wet hollows, are already well on their way to losing their gills; they play catch with the fairy shrimp.

Flocks of 20 to 30 wild turkeys are to be found everywhere throughout the town, from the Southampton line to Montauk Point. Their population size must have reached a thousand or more; in several areas

they now appear to be more common than deer. People in the Northwest Woods south and east of Sag Harbor are now visited more often by wandering turkey flocks and wandering deer. You can't miss their sign, they scratch everywhere, they even scratch up lawns. Since deer and turkeys have similar winter diets, one wonders if the turkeys aren't displacing the deer?

It is the lek* season and where in colonial times heath hens, partridges and turkeys used to strut their stuff, on the South Fork, at least, its only turkey strutting time these days. Spring is announced in another way, one with a grizzly aspect. Road kills, which were scarce in the winter months when many mammals are lie-abouts, shot up astronomically. Raccoons, cottontails, opossums and gray squirrels bit the dust in near record numbers, even a couple of muskrats bought it. One day back and forth to work on different roads, about ten miles each way, I counted five fresh road kill squirrels. Are they out looking for mates or for food, or just changing territories?

One of the first wildflowers—wild in Europe, i.e.—to bloom was the little mustard, whitlow-grass, *Draba verna*, delicately misting grassy swards and road edges forming a white haze only a few inches tall. The mustards, most of them weeds, are always among the first to flower, mints and sunflowers (dandelions and the like) come along shortly after.

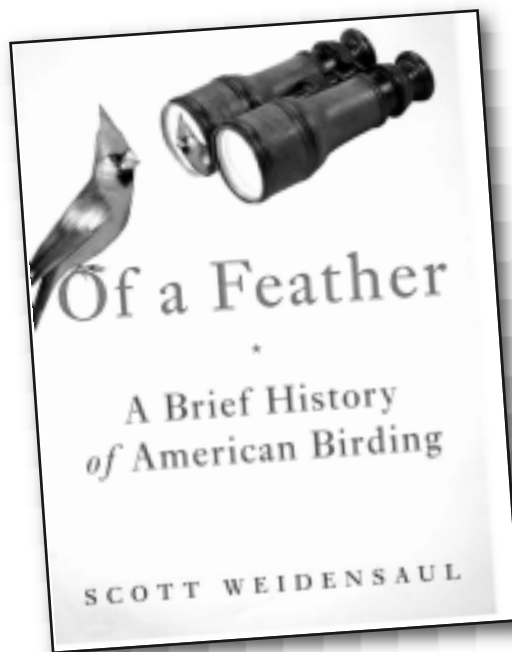
In two weeks the blueberries will be sporting their drooping tiny white and pink bell like flowers, then it's the shads, beach plums, dogwoods and mountain laurels, each on the heels of the other. At the end of that run, the warblers will pass through, the orioles will start singing and spring will have sprung. *It never fails.*

**Editor's note: A lek is a gathering of males, for the purposes of competitive mating display. Leks assemble before and during the breeding season. The same group of males meet at a traditional place and take up the same individual positions on an arena, each occupying and defending a small territory. They spar with their neighbors or put on extravagant visual or aural displays (mating "dances" or gymnastics, plumage displays, vocal challenges, etc.). From Wikipedia.*

On Birds and Books:

Of a Feather

by Scott Weidensaul



A Review by Eileen Schwinn

Some have estimated that tens of millions of Americans are out there observing birds. Once an eccentric hobby, watching birds has turned into “something so completely mainstream it’s now (almost) cool”. In his recently published book, *Of a Feather*, Scott Weidensaul, provides an easy to read and easy to enjoy history of American birding.

Weidensaul begins with the arrival of the first European settlers, awed by the diversity of the avian community. It progresses as the history of America progressed – with early ornithologists being frontiersmen and soldiers. A bird in the hand is worth two in a bush is not only an expression, but the way

earlier bird “scientists” went about their studies before the use of “opera glasses”. Being a marksman was just one skill early birders needed. Weidensaul’s collection of antidotes and reports are far from the dusty halls of conventional education and museums. He shows the reader a group of a dedicated individuals and their obsession with recording and collecting their specimens under sometimes extreme and dangerous conditions.

I found Weidensaul’s chapter on “Angry Ladies” especially enlightening. The mid 1880’s fashion craze of millinery “decorations”, was costing an estimated 200 millions birds a year. Finally, a group of New England society matrons recognized the

useless slaughter and began working toward conservation efforts and the expansion of birding clubs. A decade later, the change of heart by a former hunter, established what is now the largest and longest-running wildlife census in the world – The Christmas Bird Count. Weidensaul covers the post World War II explosion of big name birders, the need for portable, user friendly birding guides, and the just plain mainstreaming of the love of birds, making it what it is today – that wonderful obsession which gives so much to each of us to enjoy in our own way.

Weidensaul’s book, *Of a Feather*, is both informative and entertaining, and a must-read for every birder – or non-birder!

I give it Five Feathers!

Look for ELIAS bumper stickers!



Restoring Southampton's Wild Places

Marty Shea, *Chief Environmental Analyst, Town of Southampton*

It's becoming increasingly popular among East Enders—local governments, private landowners, and landscape professionals alike—to try and restore the “greener pastures” and wild places of yesteryears that once graced virtually all of our waters and lands. This dedication towards recreating Eden is certainly cause for newfound optimism, not only because of the wider community recognition of the great ecological stewardship cause, but because of the unprecedented opportunities for nature to heal in Southampton Town.

General attitudes about conservation, including public awareness and concern for environmental restoration, are perhaps stronger today than ever experienced before on the East End. This widespread support is helping to provide the vision and science for habitat restoration and enhancement initiatives in Southampton. It is also assisting in securing and sustaining the necessary funding, including significant monies from both public and private hands.

Yet, while admirable, habitat restoration is unfortunately fraught with difficulties, both in terms of trying to accurately and scientifically define what original ecological community existed and with respect to knowing whether it's better to try and actively restore an area or simply leave nature alone to heal

on its own. The restoration picture is also complicated by so many unanswered questions, including, among others, the mysterious roles of soil micro flora and fauna in the natural habitat regeneration process, and why native plant and animal species will quickly return to certain restored areas, while never repopulating other nearly identical restored lands.

Perhaps the most defining element of genuine ecological restoration is the need to adhere strictly to a program where methods and practices mimic, as close as possible, natural ecosystem biodiversity regeneration processes and regimes. Doing otherwise can wreak havoc with the natural system, the consequences of which can be a variety of well-intended conservation and management measures, which too often fall far short of achieving the greater wildland preservation and restoration goals.

To avoid such blunders, these are some basic restoration principles, which one should keep in mind whenever contemplating habitat restoration on the East End. These include, among others the following elements.

First, natural systems are fairly resistant to change and are oftentimes able to recover naturally, once the disturbing activity is eliminated or removed. While the natural recovery process is slow, it is usually more

logical to allow natural re-vegetation processes to occur on their own, so long as there is solid evidence that the soils and other conditions are conducive to the re-establishment of the original native community and plants. Restoration planning therefore requires experienced judgment, in particular, the ability to tell the difference between reversible and irreversible change. Assessment of soil conditions is especially critical, as the type and intensity of soil impacts is probably the single most important determinant, with respect to whether or not the original ecosystem will truly come back.

Second, bear in mind that restoration continues to be a learning process, as hard science regarding complete and successful ecological restoration techniques, is still, unfortunately, lacking today. Recent efforts with respect to reforestation, wetlands reclamation, and native plant propagation have increased our knowledge regarding seed collection and germination; however, much still needs to be learned about other natural vegetation regeneration processes and the resiliency of the various ecosystems that bless our Town. Even less is known about the population status of indigenous animals, and about whether or not reintroduction of locally extirpated or missing species is possible at all.

ELIAS Members on the Road

Beth Gustin

On a recent trip to Florida to visit my dad, my sister and I were able to sneak away for a day of birding. These photos were taken at various stops along the Great Florida Birding Trail around Tampa and St. Petersburg.



Nonetheless, this apparent lack of knowledge should not deter one from undertaking natural recovery plans for local areas in need of restoration, as there are many types of projects, which can be safely implemented without significant ecological risk. Additionally, there is much that can only be learned through the act of doing, such as the extent of physical soil and vegetation manipulations needed, to allow site specific natural regeneration processes to re-occur.

Perhaps more importantly, restoration is an important tool for furthering stewardship, as those who participate in wildland recovery projects are almost always able to walk away, with a renewed appreciation and respect for those natural areas, which they worked so hard to restore. For this reason, community-based volunteer-driven projects should continue to be supported and encouraged, as it is only with the aid and enlightenment of the public, that the East End's long term restoration and ecological stewardship goals can possibly be achieved and sustained.

Thirdly, always bear in mind that the greater goal of restoration is not simply short term natural aesthetic enhancement of individual disturbed sites, but rather elimination of the ongoing forest fragmentation, habitat damage, invasive species, pollution, and other significant human impacts, which are increasingly putting all of the natural habitat values and benefits at risk. Consequently, restoration efforts need to focus not only on reclaiming small highly disturbed areas, but on bringing back the health and vigor of inter-connected regionwide ecosys-

tems over the long term as well. Accordingly, meeting the challenges of natural systems recovery will require a multitude of management approaches, all of which must be pursued, in concert, if we hope to truly achieve the greater biodiversity conservation, and sustainable human use goals for the East End.

These approaches can vary from site to site, and can run the gamut from introducing a handful of native locally grown plants to a disturbed private residential landscape, to re-establishing hundreds of acres of pine barrens forest or wetlands on expansive protected lands. Both types of restoration projects are important, however, it's really the larger initiatives, which, if done properly, will make the difference in terms of ecosystem biodiversity recovery and connectivity regionwide. That's because so many of our uncommon and rare plants and animals need large tracts of pristine unfragmented habitat in order to perpetuate and survive. Large sites can also be more effective in firmly re-establishing local indigenous plant populations, as they allow for greater production and dispersal of native seed.

Nevertheless, small rehabilitation projects, such as restoration of overcleared land and wetland buffers on individual private parcels, should not be dismissed as being unimportant due to their size. That's because even small projects can help eliminate fragmentation, as well as aid in re-establishing animal movement or migration corridors, across highly developed sections of East End towns. Certain animals may only

need small areas to re-establish their populations locally, for instance, certain butterflies and moths. For migrating birds, even tiny patches of native plants can make a big difference, as they provide additional areas to rest and refuel. Restoring lawn areas to natural vegetation can also mean less pesticide and fertilizer applications, with cleaner air and groundwater being an indirect beneficial result.

Small-scale rehabilitation projects can also serve as useful demonstrations of the kind of benefits, which could result, if both large and small scale restoration strategies are pursued. They can provide vehicles for teaching others about ecosystem restoration values and can cumulatively add up to significant restored habitat acreage regionwide. Lastly, by bringing back original native habitats, restoration initiatives can help retain a community's identity and sense of place, thereby, maintaining and improving our quality of life.

Despite all of the obstacles and challenges, the Hamptons continues to be the perfect place to encourage and undertake habitat restoration, and will, I believe, lead the way for future generations to embrace our wild places and bring us one step closer to restoring biological connectivity, both with respect to natural areas and our relationship with our land. Wild places stir our hearts in a way that simply can't be fulfilled by the greatest of the Hamptons' manmade attractions, and for that reason alone, all of us should wholeheartedly support the worthy ecological restoration cause.



From left to right: an Osprey with a fish, 2 White Ibis, with a Glossy Ibis in the middle a Brown Pelican and 2 Sandhill Cranes. We would like to make this a regular feature. Contact The Osprey if you would like to share your travel photos.



Continued from page 1

clude: destruction of rural character, greatly increased traffic on currently congested roads, possible widening of small community roads or creation of new roads, increased demand on community services (i.e. ambulance, police, fire). These resultant costs for residents of all the adjoining towns are not covered by the massive amounts of money Riverhead plans to take in.

ELIAS has had a continued interest in maintaining this unique grassland habitat. ELIAS members have been at the grasslands observing the Short-eared Owls, and other threatened and endangered species for many years. In addition members have volunteered and maintained Bluebird trails on the site .

You Can Take Action!

Right now Riverhead stands to gain \$155 million dollars from just one of these developments, yet they are currently leading the environmental review. It is essential that we protect our local environment and regional quality of life. Please advocate for a new comprehensive environmental review to be completed by an impartial agency with a regional perspective, such as the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Please support a thorough baseline inventory of the entire site to be completed by the New York Natural Heritage Program, this step will make it clear which areas of the site are not appropriate for development.

- Contact the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and ask them to request lead agency status in the environmental review for all EPCAL development. (Pete Grannis Commissioner NYS DEC (625 Broadway Albany, NY 12233; 518-402-8545).
- Riverhead Town voters please contact your Town Board members and let them know your concerns with these proposed developments.
- For those outside of Riverhead, contact your town officials and let them know that these proposed developments will have regional impacts that they should be dis-

cussing with their colleagues in Riverhead.

- All Long Islanders: Contact your state, and federal representatives to let them know that these expansive projects are of great concern to you.
- If you are a member of an organization that would like to join the Coalition for Open Space at EPCAL. Call Jennifer Skilbred (Group for the East End) 631-537-1400 x18 or email her at jskilbred@EastEndEnvironment.org, or Trish Pelkowski at The Nature Conservancy, her email is ppelkowski@tnc.org

To date, the Coalition for Open Space at EPCAL includes: The Nature Conservancy, Group for the East End, Peconic Baykeeper, Audubon NY, ABCO, Eastern LI Audubon Society, Four Harbors Audubon Society, Great South Bay Audubon Society, Huntington Audubon Society, North Fork Audubon Society, North Fork Environmental Council, North Shore Audubon Society, Open Space Council, Open Space Preservation Trust, Ridge Civic Association, South Shore Audubon Society, LI Trail Lovers Coalitions, The Linnaen Society of New York, Long Island Botanical Society, and Pine Barrens Society.

Note: If you would like to see all of the plans, or see a list of backers, check out Riverhead-resorts.com.



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.
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ANSWERS

To the bird song quiz on page 6

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. i | 15. r |
| 2. n | 16. j |
| 3. f | 17. a |
| 4. d | 18. g |
| 5. p | 19. h |
| 6. s | 20. t |
| 7. o | |
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| 9. k | |
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BREEDING BIRD CENSUS

June 7 through 22

Our Audubon chapter has been conducting, on its own, an annual breeding bird survey since 1975, 32 years of statistics totaling at least 213 species, and forms, over those years. We intend to go for the 33rd time this June, and would enjoy some new company to sprinkle in with our experienced volunteers. As with the Christmas counts, we need as many ears and eyes as possible to pick up on birds as we search through various habitats. The Breeding Bird Census covers the same circle as the annual Central Suffolk Christmas Count, roughly from a bit west of Mastic, up through Brookhaven Lab, east through part of Riverhead and along the south shore to the western part of Westhampton. This large circle is broken up into a number of territories so that each "party" of birders has only part of the responsibility for the whole census. In the last several years we have held the census for a little over two weeks to encompass three weekends so that each party has ample time from which to choose to cover their territory. The dates this year are Saturday, June 7 through Sunday, June 22. Joining a group for a few hours or half a day can be helpful. If you are interested in joining this year's census, please contact:

Gigi Spates 765-1436
gspates@optonline.net



THE OSPREY

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*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.*

Mark Your Calendars!

May

Sat., May 3

Mon., May 5

Sat., May 10

Sun., May 17

Sun., May 18

Field Trip: Terrell River - p 2

Nature Program: Red Knots & Horseshoe Crabs - p 1

ELIAS Birdathon & International Migratory Bird - p 5

Field Trip: Upstate: Bashakill Marsh/

Delaware + Hudson Canal Trail - p 2

Field Trip: William Floyd Estate - p 2

June

Mon., June 2

Sat., June 7

Sat., June 7 - Sat., June 22

Nature Program: Membership Drive

Fundamentals of Birding

Field Trip: Maple Swamp - p 2

Breeding Bird Count

Events to watch for in July

Sat., July 12

Field Trip: Dune Road



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