



The Sandpiper

Great South Bay Audubon Society
P.O. Box 267, Sayville, NY 11782

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS AND MONTHLY PROGRAMS

All GSBAS Activities are FREE and open to the public. Join us and bring a friend.

Programs are held at 7:00 pm on the third Thursday of each month, except May, which is our Annual Dinner, and July and August. Meetings are held at Connetquot State Park Preserve. **The next general membership meeting to be held at Connetquot State Park Preserve will be Thursday, September 18, 2014.**

See page 3 for directions and nature walk details.

Happy trails to you and good birding too...

I just wanted to take a moment to say "thank you" for the opportunity to serve as GSBAS' President for the past four years. I learned so much not only about birds but conservation and the environment as well. Attending state sponsored conferences and Long Island chapter meetings allowed me to get to know people I never would've had the opportunity to meet. Through the GSBAS' conservation efforts, I got to hold a day old Northern Bobwhite Quail chick and count the tiny heads of newly hatched Eastern Bluebirds. The GSBAS is unique in that we have a hard working Board of Directors and wonderful, supportive members that make being its President an absolute blast! I will carry a piece of this organization and all the people whose paths I have crossed in my heart wherever I go.

With love,
Judy

JUNE OUTDOOR PROGRAM BROOKSIDE!

Date: Thursday, June 19, 2014

Event: *Living With Wildlife on Long Island*
Presenter: Lauren Schulz Eddings,
Volunteers for Wildlife

Time: 6:00 pm Rain or Shine
Refreshments will be available.
Bring a lawn chair or blanket to sit on.

Place: Great South Bay Audubon Society's
Headquarters.
Brookside County Park
59 Brook Street
Sayville, NY

Program Description: Meet a variety of local wildlife learn about their unique adaptations and explore their role in our local ecosystem. Get the inside scoop on why these animals end up needing care from Volunteers for Wildlife's premiere wildlife hospital facilities.
For more information: (631)581-1731, email: info@gsbas.org or visit www.gsbas.org.



Screech Owl
Illustration by Steve D'Amato

Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Great South Bay Audubon Society is to advocate for the conservation of habitats for native birds and other native wildlife on Long Island.

The Sandpiper

Editor: Lenora Daniel

Mailing Chair: Ken Thompson

Illustrator: Steve D'Amato
(As indicated)

Thank you to all those who help mail each issue.

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Deadline for July/August issue is June 10, 2014

President's Message, by Judy Davis, Chapter President

I had the honor and pleasure of representing the GSBAS along with Lenora Daniel and Arlene Rawls at the Audubon Council of New York State Spring Assembly in Saratoga Springs, March 21-23, 2014. We headed up to the assembly a day early in order to attend Friday morning's ANY Centers and Education meeting led by Pam Musk. This also afforded us a chance to meet ANY's new Director of Strategic Communications, Claudette Thornton. Friday evening we attended the presentation, "Tracking the Short-eared Owl" by Glenn Hewitt, DEC.

While Long Island enjoyed a taste of spring, we watched the snow fall lazily from the sky. The inclement weather led those sitting at our table during breakfast to linger rather than head out on the field trips. This impromptu gathering was the highlight of the meeting. We discussed the crow hunting contest, Tom Salo's Delaware-Ostego Golden Eagle project, and the dangers of lead shot used by hunters. Strategies for encouraging the use of non-toxic bullets were discussed.

I always enjoy the chapter round table, where each chapter representative gets 3 minutes to discuss their accomplishments and areas that need improvement. Of interest were chapters who eliminated their print newsletter or reduced the number of issues. One now only reaches 35% of their members and the other noticed reduced attendance at programs. Successful fundraisers were discussed as was the West Pond at Jamaica Bay.

We had a Long Island chapter table at the dinner Saturday night with our special "guest" Larry Federman. It was a wonderful evening spent with wonderful people. Senator Bettie Little received the William Hoyt Environmental Excellence Award and Craig Thompson from the Audubon Society of the Capital Region received the Norm Stotz Award.

The biannual Audubon New York Conferences give us a chance to discuss hot topics with colleagues from across the state as well as to share ideas that we can implement back home to strengthen our chapter and conservation efforts.



Annette Brownell modeling the hooded sweatshirt.

GSBAS gear now available!
Sweatshirts, hats, totes and much more.

Order at www.zazzle.com/sandpiper267

A big thank you to Johnna Vullo and Vera Capogna for creating, maintaining and promoting the online shop.

Spotted Sandpiper illustration by Steve D'Amato.

Great South Bay Audubon Society Activities

General Membership Meetings and Programs

site the Sunrise-Montauk Highway merge. From the west, exit Sunrise Highway (Route 27) at Oakdale-Bohemia Road, cross over Sunrise Highway, merge on to westbound Route 27 and watch for the Park entrance on the right. Meetings are held in the Park building. **Please do not park on grass or in the circle in front of the building. Park near garages in the rear of the building. There is a handicap ramp at this entrance.** Call GSBAS direct at (631)563-7716 for details and updates. **Note:** Join us at 7:00 p.m. for pre-program refreshments and casual conversation. Our bird experts will be on hand to field your questions, discuss equipment and share their favorite birding spots.

Directions to the Connetquot State Park Preserve:
Approaching from the East the entrance is on the north side of the Sunrise Highway (Route 27), oppo-

Louis Titus Memorial Tuesday Midweek Walks *

May 6th, 9 a.m. Belmont Lake State Park. Exit 38 off S.S. Pkwy. Meet in parking lot east side of lake.

May 13th, 8 a.m. Hempstead Lake State Park. S.S. Pkwy to Exit 18 (Eagle Ave). Proceed south to 2nd parking lot. Turn right and then left.

May 20th, 8 a.m. Norman Levy Park. S.S. Pkwy to Meadowbrook Pkwy south to Merrick Rd (27A). Go east on Merrick Rd approximately 1/8 mile and turn right into park.

May 27th, 8 a.m. Massapequa Preserve. S.S. Pkwy Exit 30 (Broadway South) to Baltimore Ave - then take left 2 blocks to Parkside Blvd. Park opposite school.

June 3th, 9:30 a.m. Shinnecock. Sunrise Hwy east to Exit 65S to Montauk Hwy. Go east and follow signs to Ocean Beaches. Cross Ponquogue Bridge and turn left at traffic light. Go to end of road to parking lot on right at inlet.

June 10th, 9:00 a.m. Oceanside Environmental Center and Jones Beach West End. S.S. Pkwy to Meadowbrook Pkwy Exit M9 to Merrick Rd westbound. Turn left at the first traffic light onto Mill Rd. At the end of Mill Rd. turn left onto South Main St, then turn right at the second traffic light onto Atlantic Ave. Stay on Atlantic for approx 2.5 miles, then bear left onto Waukena Ave. At the first traffic light past the country club entrance, turn left onto Park Ave. Just before the end of Park Ave, turn left onto Golf Drive, then make second right onto Slice Drive and proceed to preserve parking lot.

Weekend Nature Walks *

Sunday, May 4th, Central Park. 7 a.m. Leaders: John Gluth (277-9298). Ken Thompson (589-7148) and Nicholas Lavolta (678-7866). 77 St and Central Park West. Come early to get parking spots.

Saturday, May 10th, Alley Pond, Forest Park and Jamaica Bay. 7 a.m. Leader: Mike Cooper (821-2855). Northern State Pkwy to Exit 23 "Cross Island Pkwy, Union Take and Alley Pond Park." Go to Union Take - at light turn right. Proceed to next light (Springfield Blvd) and turn right. Go about 4 blocks to 76 Ave - right on 76 Ave to parking lot on left.

Sunday, May 11th, Connetquot Breakfast and Birding, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Continental breakfast hosted by Friends of Connetquot. GSBAS walk leaders: Edith and Bob Wilson, Ken Thompson, Helga Merryman. Reservations required – call Connetquot River Park Preserve at 581-1072 to register. Registration fee \$4. plus \$8. parking fee per car – unless you have yearly NYS Park pass.

Saturday and Sunday, May 17th and 18th, Sterling Forest and Bashakill. 7 a.m. Leaders: John Gluth (277-9298), Steve D'Amato (516-454-7861), Nicholas Laviola (678-7866). From Tapan Zee Bridge, take I-87 to Sloatsburg Exit 15A, take the exit for Route 72 (Sterling Mine Road -1 mile up Route 17). Continue west on Rte 72 for -3 miles until you reach Rte 84, Long Meadow Rd. Continue up Long Meadow Rd. to Sterling Lake Road, (4 mi.). Turn left there and continue to the park visitor's center on Old Forge Rd. Overnight at Wurtsboro - Days Inn (845-888-2727).

Saturday, May 24th, Jamaica Bay. 8 a.m. Leader: Michael McBrien (758-2350). S.S. to Belt Pkwy to Exit 17, Cross Bay Blvd South. Continue south for about 2 miles and look for refuge sign on right.

Note: Rain and snow CANCELS Midweek and Weekend Nature Walks.

Young Naturalist Club, by Janet Gremli

Dear Ms. Janet,

Ms. Janet how
are you doing?
I hope you are
doing good I
like when I go to
the bird pack
can I have it more
ofin pleases.
I will reale lik it
if you did.

Love _____,

P.S. Write back. Vanessa Roe

Young Naturalist Vanessa Roe's letter of appreciation to Janet Gremli, YNC educator.



Vanessa Roe, her friend Sophia and Janet Gremli creating nests.

On Sunday, April 6, 2014 the Young Naturalists Club (YNC) enjoyed a gorgeous spring day at Brookside County Park. The group of seven youngsters ranging in age from 2 1/2 to 8 years old and nine parents listened to a nature talk about nest building and observed several actual nests. Noting the various similarities and differences in composition, the children created their own nests using recycled paper, yarn, bark, moss and dried grasses. The children then went out to the grassy glade to seek eggs hidden at the woods edge. The children were gleeful as they scampered around finding eggs beneath the dried leaves, hanging branches and within the cavities of long forgotten tree stumps. They collected their eggs and were quick to discover stickers depicting bugs, birds, plants, and flowers that were placed within the eggs. The children then gathered to pursue a hike along the Brookside trails picking up litter along the way. Notable sightings include a great egret, male and female mallards, a Canada goose pair noisily honking their arrival and several turtles glistening in the sunshine while balanced on a log in the west pond.

Please join us!

The Young Naturalist Club meets the first Sunday of the month at Brookside County Park, Sayville NY, at 1:15 pm . Registration is not required but recommended. Please call (631)581-1731, email: info@gsbas.org or visit www.gsbas.org for more information.

Program is free but donations or becoming a member of the GSBAS is strongly encouraged.



Parents and children working hard on their nest building skills.



YNC members hunting for eggs.

The Feed Lot, by Harry Anderson

I was walking across a very large, deserted parking lot. My eyes were scanning the pavement, looking for lost change anyone might have dropped. Probably pathetic, but that's what I was doing. Suddenly, it occurred to me that wild animals spend most of their lives searching the landscape, and like me that day, they frequently come up empty.

A number of years ago, Jonathan Livingston Seagull was a best seller. Richard Bach wrote this fable about a gull who was bored with fighting over food and wanted to become more than it was. Nice for fiction; unobtainable in nature. Fight they must, one way or another.

A significant part of any animal's life involves the quest for food. Unlike us, they don't eat when they want. They eat when they can. Carnivores probably have it hardest. It is easier for less fussy creatures, like eaters of carrion; yet Vultures, soar gracefully for hours on end, searching in vain for road kill.

A hungry animal can trigger ingenuity and uncommon perseverance. Each species can solve feeding problems in unique ways. Crows in major Japanese cities have been observed going out into traffic congestion, nut in beak, dropping it, and waiting for a vehicle to crack it open. Not all dives an osprey makes are successful. But when a fish is trapped in its talons, once airborne, it maneuvers the fish around so it faces forward, making it aerodynamic. Some primates use a stick as a tool to drag termites out of a nest. So much for *Homo faber*, we are not the only tool makers on earth. Watch a large group of starlings feeding on a grass swarth. Those in the rear of the flock will suddenly lift and fly to the front - obviously, if that didn't happen, those in the back would starve. That bird "wave" gives them all a fair chance to feed. Follow a chickadee or a titmouse carrying a seed to a nearby branch and with the skill of a watchmaker, crack the husk to get at what they are after.

The more specialized feeders can't move very far from their native habitats. Pandas need bamboo shoots and Koalas prefer eucalyptus. The fearsome looking 400 pound Mountain Gorilla Silver Back survives on vegetation and cannot travel very far to find it. Cockroaches need us.

Even amoeba and bacteria have to "eat." Viruses maybe not, but then their status in the "Great Chain of Being" is argued.

And we omnivores? We have fast food and slow cookers, and we consume most things below us on the food chain because we believe there is nothing above us. Unfortunately, at times, we forget where we really are in the scheme of things and are consumed ourselves, by Grizzly Bears bacteria or viruses.

Brookside Butterfly Garden Club Report, by Janet Gremli, Chair

I heard this time of year referred to as the "ugly season", when all of the sins of Fall are revealed and before eager greenery covers things up again. I find this time of year to be intriguing, wondering what may be revealed in the garden whether it be a plant, and insect or even an unexpected relic heaved from the earth. The Brookside Butterfly Garden Club held its first meeting of the 2014 season on Wednesday, April 2. Members arrived at 6:00 PM and spent the evening trimming, raking and removing the accumulated mulch left from the past seasons. How wonderful it was to smell the moist soil, to hear the robins singing overhead and to reveal the brilliant green sprouts of primrose all while the sun was beautifully setting beyond the woodlands. Working in the butterfly garden at Brookside is so rewarding this time of year as you imagine the potential to be achieved. Members ended the evening with a feeling of fulfillment and anticipation of what is yet to come.

To be part of this rewarding experience please call (631)581-1731, email: info@qsbas.org or visit www.qsbas.org for more information about becoming a Garden Club member.



A cleaned Butterfly Garden emerging from "hibernation".

Laskowski Fellowship

Our Robert Laskowski Fellowship recipient, Angel Fieseler, was a guest at the 3 April 2014 Board of Directors meeting to sign our fellowship agreement, receive her \$1000 stipend, and update us on her feral cat “Does Feeding Matter?” project. Angel’s original plan was to find ~6 feral colonies with varying management levels. According to her protocol, a managed feral cat colony is one that is fed regularly, is monitored regularly for introduced cats, and actively keeps up with neutering. Unfortunately, Angel found that most colonies on Long Island are fed but not actively monitored and neutered. Now the colonies will be compared using a feeding gradient.

Presently, Angel is looking into six feral colonies for her research. They range from an individual’s backyard with un-neutered but fed cats to a colony rumored to contain 300 cats. It is proving difficult for Angel to find the caretakers for the colonies and then getting their cooperation so she can proceed with her study.

Angel has found LED video collars that are capable of taking photos at night. Each video will provide 2.5 hours of videoing after which time they will detach from the cats. Trapping of approximately 5 to 10 cats from each colony will be staggered to cover varying times throughout the day and night.

In spite of a few obstacles, Angel hopes to begin her study in May with some data analyzed by October. Stay tuned for more information as Angel’s study progresses.



Angel Fieseler receiving her stipend from Judy Davis.

Brookside County Park Cleanup



Boy Scouts busy cleaning!

Saturday, April 12th, was the perfect spring day for our Brookside County Park cleanup. We had ~30 people – Boy Scout troops, Sayville High School students, long time volunteers, and new volunteers – join us for a morning of sprucing up the park. Trails were trimmed, make shift bridges created by vandals were dismantled, bushes were trimmed, and lots of leaves were raked up and brought to our compost pile. All this hard work was followed by a BBQ expertly cooked by Bob Wilson and complimented by food donations from our volunteers. A special thank you goes out to the GSBAS’ treasurer, **Annette Brownell**, who organized this wonderful day. Brookside County Park has never looked better and is in tip-top shape for our June Outdoor Program.

BIRD FEEDER SURVEY: February 2014/March 2014 by Helga Merryman

Looking back over a hard winter, I thought spring would never come, but even though I was a doubter, the birds and flowers know better. Among the signs of spring are a Song Sparrow, who having stored his repertoire all winter is now singing continuously as though on a recorded loop, a Chickadee stuffed with hormones attacking the window of our van for days thinking that his reflection is a rival, even chasing us halfway down the driveway to pursue his enemy, and the birds at our feeders that are starting to change into their nuptial plumage. The flowers note the beginning of spring by bursting into bloom to welcome the extended daylight - Snowdrops, Crocuses, and my Hellebore plant which stays green all winter, are bursting with flowers. Our Witch Hazel tree, thought to be a casualty of winter, burst into bloom in mid-March, a brilliant yellow standing out against the snow that was still to come. Another sign of spring is that our feeder Survey is finished for this season. We were happy to have had 15 participants for the February/March survey including, Azzaretti, Banaszak, Cafarelli, Caruso, Fogarty, Heiserer, Horman, Kremer-Parrott, Merryman, McNeil, Puglielli, Stocker, Thomas, Unterschuetz and Wilson. The 10 areas represented were Babylon, Bayport, Deer Park, East Patchogue, Lindenhurst, Ridge, Ronkonkoma, Sayville, West Islip and West Sayville. I hope it was a happy diversion this winter and wish to thank all who joined in and look forward to hearing from you in the fall.

If you wish to participate for the next survey season look for the instructions and form in the 2014 September-October Sandpiper.

Counts for each species: February #/March#

Red-tailed Hawk 3/0
 Sharp-shinned Hawk 3/2
 Cooper's hawk 3/1
 Rock pigeon 20/17
 Mourning Dove 131/69
 Monk Parakeet 5/1
 Red-bellied Woodpecker 17/13
 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker 3/0
 Downy Woodpecker 27/33
 Hairy Woodpecker 3/6
 Northern Flicker 5/6
 Blue Jay 43/30
 American Crow 17/15
 Black-capped Chickadee 41/35
 Tufted Titmouse 13/6
 Red-breasted Nuthatch 2/0
 White-breasted Nuthatch 5/4

Carolina Wren 17/16
 American Robin 99/188+
 Northern Mockingbird 16/12
 Brown Thrasher 2/0
 European Starling 139/180+
 Towhee 0/0
 Fox Sparrow 15/5
 Song Sparrow 47/35
 White-throated Sparrow 93/35
 Dark-eyed Junco 85/38
 Northern Cardinal 79/66
 Red-winged Blackbird 23/124+
 Common Grackle 17/174
 Brown-headed Cowbird 6/24
 House Finch 43/52
 American Goldfinch 43/52

OTHER SPECIES

Great Blue Heron 0/1
 Canada Geese 0/2
 Black Ducks 5/1
 Herring Gull 0/6
 Belted Kingfisher 2/0
 Tree Sparrow 1/1
 Pine Siskin 3/3
 Chipping Sparrow 2/0
 Cedar Waxwing 30/0
 Yellow-rump warbler 1/4
 Purple Finch 1/1
 Boat-tailed Grackle 5/3
 Hermit Thrush 0/1
 Mallards 35/16
 Tree Sparrow 1/1

Great South Bay Audubon Society

Call Direct: 631-563-7716

Officers

Term 2012-2014

President Judy Davis
(277-5179)

Term 2012-2014

Vice-president: (Position Pending)
Treasurer: Annette Brownell
(665-4405)

Corresponding Secretary:
Genevieve Lee (581-2470)

Recording Secretary
Peggy Marsh (667-3556)

Board of Directors

Term 2013-2016

Arlene Rawls (516-712-9514)
Jack Isaacs (567-7631), Nicholas Laviola
(678-7866), Vera Capogna (563-4969)

Term 2011-2014

Steve D'Amato (264-8413)
Jack Finkenberg (661-1278)

Open Seat

Term 2012-2015

Juliane Wohler (581-1731)
Open Seat

Editor, *The Sandpiper*, Lenora Daniel
(647-5297)

The editor is also on the board.

Committee Chairs

Hospitality: Mary Plant (284-3713)

Conservation: Lenora Daniel

Membership: Arlene Rawls

Publicity: Helga Merryman (669-6473)

Beach Clean Up: Carol Jansh (567-4965)

Education: Juliane Wohler, Janet Gremli,

Jack Finkenberg

Audubon Activist: Open

Nature Walks: Larry Merryman (669-6473)

Programs: Peter O'Connor (466-4360)

Librarian: Vera Capogna

Annual Dinner Chair:

Annette Brownell

Sandpiper Mailing: Ken Thompson

Email responder: Vera Capogna

Answering the GSBAS Direct Phone:

Steve D'Amato

**For wildlife in need of rescue
please call The STAR Foundation
(631)736-8207**

Email us: info@gsbas.org

Great South Bay Audubon Society Membership

Become a member of Great South Bay Audubon Society.

Your contribution will support GSBAS conservation efforts, educational programs
and our stewardship at Brookside County Park. Please make checks payable to

“Great South Bay Audubon Society” and mail to

GSBAS, P.O. Box 267, Sayville NY 11782

New Membership or Renewal \$20

Senior (62+) Membership or Renewal \$15

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone _____ Email _____

- We would like to welcome all new members to our Chapter and those coming into GSBAS from another chapter.
- Guided tours of Brookside are given every Wednesday and Sunday from 1 to 3 p.m. See our facility, walk the nature trails and become acquainted with the history of the property. We are located 59 Brook Street, Sayville. It's diagonally across from Sayville High School.
- Please submit articles, poems, essays or backyard research for our newsletter. Deadline for next newsletter is June 10, 2014
- Call (631)563-7716 If you have any *Sandpiper* questions. Leave a message.

Great South Bay Audubon Society
P.O. Box 267, Sayville, NY 11782
A Chapter of National Audubon

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