



The Sandpiper

Great South Bay Audubon Society

A Chapter of National Audubon Society

Ecosystem Services: Why they are Important to Human Health!

by Maria Brown, MS, PWS, GISP, Conservation Chair

As I returned from the National URISA Public Health GIS Conference held in Washington DC June 1-3, I was reflecting on the information presented regarding the state of the world's zoonotic disease outbreaks (diseases transmitted from animals to humans) regarding Zika, Ebola, dengue, and yellow fever viruses. Many of the presenters and attendees were epidemiologists and public health/GIS experts, but not ecologists. As I have known for many years just how important ecosystem services are, I began to wonder just how many people truly understand what they are, and why they should care!

The viruses discussed at the conference are all transmitted via mosquitoes, but are harbored in other animals. Most people who live in areas with the potential for disease outbreak by mosquitoes such as Long Island where the potential for West Nile virus is always looming, believe that vector control spraying of larvicides and adulticides are the answer and that "all mosquitoes must die"! That is actually, not a world I would like to live in as mosquitoes provide ecosystem services that humans benefit from.



An ecosystem is a community of different species interacting with one another and with the chemical and physical factors making up its nonliving environment. Ecosystem services are natural services or natural capital that support life on the earth and are essential to the quality of human life and the functioning of the world's economies. Species, which are the natural capital within an ecosystem, provide food, fuel, fiber, lumber, paper, medicine and other products. At least 40% of all medicines and 80% of the top 150 prescription drugs used in the USA were originally derived from living organisms, with nearly 74% derived from tropical plants (Miller, 2014).

The interconnectedness between environmental change and human health are complex to understand because they are often indirect (WHO, 2016). Human health ultimately depends upon ecosystem products and services (such as availability of fresh water, food and fuel sources) which are necessary to promote human health and productive livelihoods. Significant direct human health impacts can occur if ecosystem services are no longer adequate to meet social needs and in the case of mosquito-transmitted diseases can be directly related to climate change and deforestation as the global population increases. Indirectly, and much more complicated to pinpoint, are the changes in ecosystem services which affect livelihoods, income, local migration and may even cause political conflict. These direct and indirect impacts have wide-ranging effects on social well-being and health, as well as availability and access to health services and medicines in both developed and developing nations (WHO, 2016).

In public health, the burden of disease is assessed to compare different health threats for a local or global population. One widely publicized assessment of the global burden of disease associated with changes in the environment concluded that roughly one quarter of the global burden of disease can be attributed to environmental changes and degradation of ecosystem services.

continued on bottom of page 11

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS and MONTHLY PROGRAMS

All GSBAS Activities are FREE
and open to the public.

Join us and bring a friend.

General Membership Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, except May, (which is our Annual Dinner), July & August.

Pre-program refreshments begin at 7:00.

Program begins at 7:30 pm.

Held at Connetquot River State Park Preserve.
See page 3 for directions. Come early to chat with our members and share your birding adventures with us!

Thursday, September 21

Who Doesn't Love Hummingbirds?

Long Island hummingbird expert, Paul Adams will discuss hummingbirds and the Baiting Hollow Hummingbird Sanctuary. Paul is a very personable and knowledgeable speaker, and we're sure you'll enjoy his presentation!



Thursday, October 19

Back by popular demand:

"The Fish Guy"

Chris Paparo spoke about the birds of the sea and shore at our General Membership meeting last April. This time he's back to share his program "Exploring Long Island's Underwater World." Follow Chris on an underwater journey of the waters surrounding Long Island. View beautiful underwater pictures and videos of local fish, crustaceans, mollusks, and other assorted invertebrates while learning interesting facts about each of the organisms.



Tuesday, July 12

Bat Monitoring at Brookside County Park with Maria Brown

(see page 11 for more details)



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: Vera Capogna
vlvcap@yahoo.com

Mailing Chair: Ken Thompson
Thank you to everyone who helps mail each issue.

Illustrator: Steve D'Amato
(as indicated)

Editorial Address:
Sandpiper
GSBAS, PO Box 267
Sayville, NY 11782

The Sandpiper
is published bi-monthly.

Website: GSBAS.org
email: info@GSBAS.org
Webmaster: Eric Larson

Submission Deadline
for next issue
is August 12, 2016
send submissions to
vlvcap@yahoo.com



The Larry Merryman Memorial Library is located at our Brookside Headquarters, 59 Brook St. in Sayville. It can be accessed most Wednesdays and Sundays from 1 to 3pm. Call ahead to confirm someone will be there: 631-563-7716

Welcome New Members!
GSBAS would like to welcome our new members. We're sincerely glad to have you join us and look forward to seeing you at our events and programs.

The Board-Walk by Annette Brownell

We have had a very busy year and I hope you have had the opportunity to participate in some of the wonderful events and trips we have offered. Our calendar year runs from July through June, so for us the 2015/16 year has just ended.

My reflection of this year leaves me smiling. I know I always mention it, but in closing this year I have to say again how very fortunate I feel that to be involved in such an alive, active and tireless group of people known as Great South Bay Audubon Society. Since last July, we hosted backyard birding seminars and monitored bats at Brookside County Park, held a poetry seminar (on a very cold day, which got us a new boiler!), hosted our monthly meetings at Connetquot River State Park Preserve, lead 40+ nature walks, participated in Breakfast and Birding Program with Friends of Connetquot, hosted a few parties (volunteer appreciation in November and Holiday Party in December), held our annual appeal which was very successful – thank you very much! – hosted an art show, our annual dinner fund raiser, cleaned up the park, secured some nice furniture for our library, planned and executed the Larry Merryman Memorial Library Dedication, held our June outdoor program and, finally, participated in the Outdoor Festival at Heckscher State Park. This is not to mention the publication of 6 issues of *The Sandpiper*.

If it sounds like I'm bragging – well, I am – a little, but not on my own account. On the account of all the great people in our group that pitch in and show up with their ideas, expertise in different areas (like how to use a projector), talents (like art show displays) and just offer their time. It's refreshing! And I am fortunate to work with this host of people who enjoy birds, care for nature and the environment and actively add to our chapter.

But, it's not all birds and blossoms. We do need some help. We need people to help out at Brookside County Park, volunteers for the expanding dinner committee and people to help out at our next art show this coming winter. There has been some talk around about having an Audubon family picnic day at the park, playing some bocce ball and just enjoying the comradery we have. (Watch the website for that one.) As the Board of Directors continues to work together to continue to offer high quality events, we love to hear from you with helpful suggestions and ideas.

Aging Well by Harry Anderson

The oldest things on earth are not conscious of aging. There's something in that. Never the less, one day in Syracuse, Sicily, I leaned against a fig tree to retie a shoelace. I was told that the tree was 3,000 years old. I felt like apologizing. When it first germinated, there was no Rome, just seven hills and some obscure villages.

In 1999, bacteria were found in ancient sea salt beneath Carlsbad, New Mexico. The microscopic organisms were revived in a laboratory after being in "suspended animation," encased in a hard-shelled spore, for an estimated 250 million years.

Somewhere in the White Mountains of California, there is a Bristlecone Pine that is estimated to be 5,065 years old. Its exact location is being kept a secret. It started to grow some time before the beginning of the Bronze Age.

In Amityville, a tree in the village had to be cut down a decade ago. If Thomas Jefferson were in town when it was a sapling, he would have had to walk around it.

A Seychelles Giant Tortoise is 182 years old, a Flamingo 83, a Bowhead Whale 130 and an Ocean Quahog clam was dug out the bottom, alive after 507 years.

The oldest documented woman was a Bolivian who reached 123. Here in the United States, Susannah Mushatt Jones is 116 and living in Brooklyn. Jonathan Swift once commented that, "Every man desires to live long; but no man would be old." Apparently Ms. Jones ignored it.

In Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*, the Struldbrugs were immortal, but with a price, "As soon as they have completed the term of eighty years, they are looked on as dead in law; their heirs immediately succeed to their estates; only a small pittance is reserved for their support; and the poor ones are maintained at the public charge . . ." With any luck, they too were not conscious of aging.

That old Bristlecone Pine in California is still there, reminding us again of our own transience.



The Bristlecone Pine is among the longest-lived life forms on Earth.

Great South Bay Audubon Society Activities

General Membership Meetings and Programs

All General Membership Meetings are held the third Thursday of the month (except for May, July and August) at Connetquot River State Park Preserve in the beautiful and historic main building. The entrance is in the back of the building; please park near the garages. There is a handicap ramp at this entrance. Please do not park on the grass or in the circle in front of the building.

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 River State Park Preserve: Approaching from the East, the entrance is on the north side of the Sunrise Highway (Route 27), opposite 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.

Louise Titus Memorial Tuesday Midweek Walks

There are no Tuesday Walks for July and August

Tuesday Sept 06, 9:30, Heckscher SP Meet at the west end of Field 5 parking lot.

Tuesday, Sept 13, 9:30 am, Shinnecock Dune Rd Sunrise Hwy. East to Exit 65 South to Montauk Highway. Go east and follow signs to Ocean Beaches. Cross Ponquogue Bridge and turn left at the traffic light. Go to end of road to parking lot at inlet.

Tuesday, Sept 20, 9:30am, Oceanside MNSA & Jones Beach Southern State Pkwy. to Meadowbrook Pkwy. South to Merrick Road (27A). Go west on Merrick Road a short distance and turn left on Mill Road and bear left (on Main Street) turn right on Atlantic Avenue to Waukena Ave. left to Park Avenue to Golf Drive (brown signs from Atlantic to Oceanside Marine EC)

Tuesday Sept 27, 9:30 am, Jamaica Bay NWR Southern State Pkwy. to Belt Pkwy. to Exit 17, Cross Bay Blvd. South. Continue south for about 2 miles. Look for entrance of refuge on the right (west) side.



Tuesday birders locating a Baltimore Oriole's nest in Hempstead Lake State Park this spring.

photo by Gail DeLalla

Weekend Nature Walks

Saturday August 20, 9:30 am, Baiting Hollow Hummingbird Sanctuary Leader: Annette Brownell (631-336-6790)

Call to RSVP and arrange carpooling (parking is limited) Directions can be found at WWW.LIHUMMER.ORG. It is expected of all visitors to do their homework and study the maps, directions, warnings and instructions at www.lihummer.org.

Saturday Sept 3, 8:00 am, Jamaica Bay NWR Leaders John Gluth (631-827-0120), Steve D'Amato (631-264-8413) Southern State Pkwy to Belt Pkwy to Exit 17, Cross Bay Blvd. South. Continue south for about 2 miles. Look for entrance of refuge on the right (west) side. There are signs for park entrance

Saturday September 10, 8:00 am, Connetquot River SPP Breakfast & Birding Leaders Ken Thompson Edith & Bob Wilson, Helga Merryman. Continental breakfast hosted by Friends of Connetquot. 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 Empire pass.

Saturday September 24, 8:00 am, Robert Moses Hawk Watch & Jones Beach West End Leaders John Gluth (631-827-0120) Steve D'Amato (631-264-8413) Meet at Robert Moses State Park parking field #5 northeast corner.

Young Naturalists Club

Meets first Sunday of the month at 1:15pm, Brookside County Park, 59 Brook St. Sayville*

*The Young Naturalists Club does not meet in July and August

The Young Naturalists Club focuses on learning about nature and stewardship of a natural area. Outdoor activities include crafting nature boxes and pinecone feeders, nature scavenger hunts, hiking the trails, gardening, and maintaining bird-feeding stations. Indoor activities include examining birds' nests and feather displays and special presentations on subjects such as the Northern Bobwhite Quail, local marine creatures, and bird watching. For details on upcoming Young Naturalists Club activities, please email info@gsbas.org or call 631-581-1731, or visit our website: www.gsbas.org. Registration is not required but recommended. Program is free, but donations or joining GSBAS is encouraged.

Rescued Animals are STARS of the Show

An anxious crowd of about 60 people welcomed wildlife rehabilitator Katherine Schelp and two volunteers from STAR (Save the Animals Rescue) to Brookside County Park on June 16. Katherine was very informative and engaging, and obviously passionate about what she does. She shared many interesting stories about encounters she has had with many mammals, birds and reptiles, some with happy endings, some not too happy.

Katherine offered advice on what to do and not to do if you ever come across an injured animal, or witness a turtle trying to cross a road, or discover a baby bird that has fallen out of its nest.

Several animals made appearances and we learned about each of those species: A woodchuck, which is another name for a groundhog; a box turtle –do you know how to tell its age? A few birds of prey: A Screech Owl, a one-winged Long-eared Owl; an American Kestrel, which led to a little talk on falcons and falconry; and two reptiles: a Ball Python and a very unfamiliar reptile species, a Tegu, both are non-native reptiles that were rescued. Katherine explained that they must have been escaped pets, leading to a discussion about the dangers of non-native animals being released into non-native habitat.



Above and below: The Eastern box turtle, which the audience learned, is a species of special concern.



Katherine also spoke of the importance of keeping your cat indoors as well as the piping plover/beach controversy on Long Island.

Refreshments and snacks, compliments of GSBAS were served. This June program is always popular with chapter members and the general community. We already look forward to next year's presentation.

-Vera Capogna



photos by Vera Capogna



Top: Katherine showing the audience a ball python citing clear instructions as to what steps to take in case of a snake bite. Bottom: Long-Eared Owl which can be found on LI.

Young Naturalist Club "Eyes on Owls"

In spite of the heavy spring rains on Sunday, May 1, 2016, members of the Young Naturalists Club found their way to Brookside to participate in a discussion about owls. Gathered around the table, members were able to get a close look at an Eastern Screech Owl, Rufous Morph, shared by Jody Banaszak. The specimen allowed a keen inspection by the members, who noted the intricately patterned

plumage, small size (about 8 inches in length), light weight, yellow eyes and feathered feet with strong talons. Feathers from other species of owls were on display. By comparing the feathers from the owls to those of the seagull, the children were able to note the serrated edge of the owl feathers. This visual representation allowed for a better understanding of how the owl is able to stealthily capture its prey. Children were shown the difference between the ear tufts and the actual ears of the owl and how the ears collect a significant range of sounds, thus distinguishing the exact location of prey. Further discussion of the Eastern Screech Owl included its habitat and how the coloration of the feathers acted as camouflage when perched in specific tree species. A vertical section

of white oak branch with a hollowed center was used to demonstrate how the owls will nest in natural cavities open to the sky. Owl pellets found at Brookside were observed by the members. Bones, beaks, claws and bits of fur and feathers were identified within the oval pellet. Children were able to guess at the many delicacies found within this predator's diet. While listening to recorded trills and whinnies of the owls and using the many reference books from the Brookside library for guidance, each member constructed their own owl. The room was filled with a variety of yet unidentified species including a rare rainbow owl by Vanessa, a long-legged species by Julia, and others created by John, Jake and Scarlet. A beautiful interpretation of a Snowy Owl was crafted by Giana Casazza.

-Janet Gremli



Owl Creations by siblings John and Giana Casazza.

Larry Merryman Memorial Library Dedication

by Vera Capogna

After almost a year of planning, the Great South Bay Audubon Society Library was dedicated to Larry Merryman on June 12. There was a great turnout as most members who knew Larry wanted to attend to honor him.

Jack Finkenberg spoke of his relationship with Larry and the influence Larry had on him and the chapter.

As librarian, I spoke of Larry's influence on me in expanding the library. Larry always offered suggestions as to books and subject matter. This library, as well as this chapter, would not be what it is today if not for Larry.



Above: A new sign hangs on the wall in Larry's memory as Steve D'Amato and Vera Capogna show Larry's favorite bird. Below: left to right: Helga, Lorraine and Ellen listen and record Jack Finkenberg's recollections of Larry and stories of his devotion to nature.

Larry's lovely wife Helga and his two beautiful daughters Ellen Merryman-Cangro and Lorraine Fogarty wrote a touching tribute which I would like to share:

Larry was a teenager when his interest in birds was sparked by Roger Tory Petersen's book "How to Know The Birds". Soon after, he met a group of birders and their influence became the catalyst of his lifelong love of birds and nature. He attended meetings, went on many field trips and was greatly impacted by seasoned conservationists who became his mentors.

Throughout his lifetime, Larry generously shared his knowledge, enthusiasm and deep love of birding and the environment with his family, friends and coworkers, many of whom have gone on to embrace this lifestyle themselves. His respect for education and his endless willingness encouraged others to succeed in the pursuit and protection of nature.

Larry was a herald for things of the natural world and his legacy will live on.

A very nice reception followed as constant reminiscences were passed around. Photos of Larry filled the room. Even the volume of Audubon Birds of America was turned open to Larry's favorite bird, the Great Auk.

Thank you to all who contributed their time and talents to make this event happen. There was buzz around the reception that Larry would have loved this party! We all felt his presence.



photos by Steve D'Amato

May Dinner was a Winner

On May 2 we held our annual dinner fundraiser at Captain Bill's. It's always a terrific time to get together and socialize with members that you might not normally see.

We had a lot of great raffle prizes and Steve D'Amato's painting of the Eastern Meadowlark was stunning! We were privileged to honor Shai Mitra and Patricia Lindsey with the Fran File Award and although Paul Adams from the Hummingbird Sanctuary in Wading River was unable to attend, he was the well-deserving recipient of our Conservation Award.

As always, I thank everyone who helped make this dinner

possible. Throughout the year people collect prizes to donate, solicit businesses, help create prize baskets. It all culminates in setting up for the dinner and helping out that evening. We really have a terrific group of people.

I am very interested to hear from our members as to what they enjoy or what they want to see changed. This is your dinner. Stay tuned for a few changes as we start the process again. We are already accepting donations for next year's dinner. Please consider joining in. There is always room for fresh ideas.

-Annette Brownell

We would like to thank the following people who generously donated prizes to our Annual Dinner (alphabetical order)

Aspatuck Gardens	Alice Heller
Jody Banaszak	Mary Kennedy
Bayport Flower House	Diana Lampasona
Captain Bill's	Anna Lepore
Annette Brownell	Sandra McNeil
Vera Capogna	Helga Merryman
Camile Chernis	Tim Meyer
Ginny Connelly	Lisa Padovano
Country Junque	Rosemarie Pforr
Steve D'Amato	Linda and Bob Puglielli
Andrea DiGregorio	Tom & Mary Plant
family of Joan Elsebough	Fred & Joanne Spero
Jack and Karen Finkenberg	Anna Mae Stein
Methyl Gale	Ken Thompson
Andrea Giordano	Bob & Edith Wilson
Great South Bay Audubon and	John Vullo
board members	Johnna Vullo
Bob Grover	Julianne Wohler
Donna Heisig	Pat Wohler

CHAPTER NEWS

Spring Weekend Nature Walks by John Gluth

Valley Stream/Jones Beach

The chapter field trip to Valley Stream and Jones Beach state parks on April 30 was attended by a combination of regulars and new faces (high school students and their parents), comprising a manageable group of ten.

Despite overnight weather conditions that weren't favorable for bringing migrating birds into our area, we still managed to find a nice number of them at Valley Stream. They included Warbling and Blue-headed Vireos, House Wren, and Wood Thrush, as well as a few species of warbler - Northern Waterthrush, N. Parula, B&W, Yellow, Yellow-rumped and American Redstart. Also of interest were two non-migrants - a sparring duo of female Red-bellied Woodpeckers which engaged in a prolonged bout of chasing and jousting, oblivious to our presence.

After two and a half hours at Valley Stream, a few of us headed down to Jones Beach West End. There we scoped the Short Beach Island sand bar (adjacent to the Coast Guard station) for shorebirds, terns and gulls. But because the tide was well out by then, most birds had dispersed to feed elsewhere. High tide is the best time to see birds loafing/roosting there, between periods of feeding. We did see a couple of recently arrived Forster's terns and a pair of Black Scoter that seemed to have not gotten the memo that winter was over. A brief check of the nearby "hedge" for migrant songbirds was unproductive. Overall it was a fine start to the frenzy - for birds and birders - of Spring migration.

Central Park

GSBAS's annual field trip to Central Park on May 7 drew a substantial group of participants, although it did take longer than usual to assemble (the vicissitudes of finding parking in NYC!).

Our day started under cloudy skies and with cool temperatures, but gradually transitioned to warmer and partly sunny conditions. Over the proceeding six hours we birded the Ramble and environs (Hernshead, upper lobe, "Oven", "Point", "Azalea Pond", "Maintenance

meadow", and Turtle Pond). We tallied 62 species, somewhat subpar by Central Park standards but more than enough to keep us on our toes, anticipating what we'd find next. Among the birds found were 12 warbler species, including Northern Waterthrush, Blue-winged, Nashville, Prairie and Black-throated Green. Other notable birds were Spotted Sandpiper, Veery, Swainson's Thrush, White-crowned Sparrow, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting and Baltimore Oriole.

Even our mid-morning breakfast break at the boathouse featured birds. House Sparrows, Starlings and even a Robin cheekily surrounded us as we ate outside on benches and cafe tables, mooching handouts and darting in for fallen scraps. Other resident species and locally nesting migrants in the park, such as Cardinals, Red-winged Blackbirds and Blue Jays, are also remarkably acclimated to people. Robins breed all over the place, many nests placed in fairly obvious locations. All this adds to the unique charm of birding in Central Park.

Sterling Forest/Bashakill

The chapter's annual two-day upstate trip to Sterling Forest and Bashakill Wildlife Management Area was held May 21-22. There was a threat of rain on both days, but we lucked out and managed to stay mostly dry, which enabled us to find many birds, both expected and unexpected.

Day 1 began with a meetup at Sterling Forest's visitor center from which we caravanned down Long Meadow Road to our first destination, Blue Lake. This location has produced sightings of Golden-winged Warblers on past trips, and this time was no different, with at least two singing birds seen well. Other expected breeding migrants included Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Yellow-Throated Vireo, Worm-eating and Cerulean warblers, and Scarlet Tanager. These species are always much appreciated, but this year they paled in comparison to an unexpected one—Northern Saw-whet Owl. Two juvenile birds were discovered just off the trail not far from Sandy Pond, and stayed in view long enough for all participants to enjoy.

From Blue Lake we traveled up to Ironwood Road where we concentrated our

efforts on the powerline cut. There we were treated to more Golden-winged Warblers, Blue-winged Warblers, and a hybrid of those species—Brewster's Warbler. We also saw or heard Black-billed Cuckoo, Prairie Warbler, Field Sparrow and Indigo Bunting. We wrapped up our time in Sterling Forest at Laurel Meadow, where the highlights were Warbling Vireo and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

Saturday afternoon was spent at Bashakill WMA, walking the "stop sign" trail. As expected, bird activity had diminished by then, but we managed to



One of two immature Saw-Whet Owls spotted at Sterling Forest. photo by Bob Glasser

hear Common Gallinule, Pileated Woodpecker, and Alder, Willow, and Least flycatchers. We saw distant Common Nighthawks and a Bald Eagle from the observation tower, a Mourning Warbler near the eponymous stop sign gate, and a pair of Yellow-throated Vireos near the parking lot. After checking into our motel we had dinner at Giovanni's, our traditional night spot, then gathered near the Haven Road bridge in the gathering darkness, where we enjoyed nighthawks foraging in a light drizzle over the marsh, some flying over the road just above the utility wires. We also heard Eastern Whip-poor-wills and an American Bittern.

We began Sunday morning by birding the stop sign trail again. We tallied Veery, Louisiana Waterthrush, Canada Warbler, and Swamp Sparrow. We then traveled down South Road, making stops at the boat launch, followed by a walk on the Nature Trail. At the former we observed a pair of nestling Bald Eagles, a Red-shouldered Hawk soaring above the opposite

CHAPTER NEWS

ridge, and finally got good looks at a gallinule, which are more often just heard. At the latter we encountered Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Wood Thrush, Blackpoll Warbler and Baltimore Oriole. All told we tallied 76 species for the weekend, but trips like this are about much more than the number of tick marks on a checklist.

Jamaica Bay NWR

On May 28 the seven birders who attended the last chapter weekend field trip until August enjoyed fine weather and some really good birds.

The highlights started early at Big John's Pond, with an adult Barn Owl seen roosting in a tree near the nest box in which its progeny were partially glimpsed. Other birds seen on and around the pond included Wood Duck, Black-crowned Night Heron and Northern Waterthrush. Not too far away, nearer the east pond, we came across a singing Yellow-breasted Chat that, somewhat uncharacteristically, perched out in the open as it unleashed its serenade. We specifically made an effort to find this bird because a friend of the chapter had found it the day before and passed along the intel to us. In between the owls and the chat we spent some time scoping the east pond where we saw some lingering Ruddy Ducks, Glossy Ibis, Forster's Terns and a solitary Brant.

We then headed back to the other side of Cross Bay Boulevard to bird the north and south gardens, followed by some time on north and south ends of the west pond trail. In the gardens we encountered a Yellow-Billed Cuckoo, a White-eyed Vireo, and multiple House Wrens, Common Yellowthroats, Yellow Warblers and Eastern Towhees. Out on the marsh north of the west pond we spied both Tricolored and Little Blue Herons. At the south end of the pond we watched Semipalmated Sandpipers (200+) and scores of Laughing Gulls feeding on eggs recently laid by Horseshoe Crabs, a few of which we saw in the shallow water near the beach. Over the course of the morning we also found Willow and Great Crested flycatchers, Brown Thrasher, American Redstart and Boat-tailed Grackle. It was a very enjoyable sendoff to the Spring weekend field trip season.

A Trip I Will Never Forget

by Jody Banaszak

I am very honored to have been chosen by Great South Audubon to attend Audubon Camp on Hog Island in Maine this June. Maine has been on my bucket list for a long time. I took one ferry and one boat to get there and was very nervous about missing them. My workshop was The Joy of Birding.

First of all, Maine is *beautiful*!! I could almost live there, but all of you would be sad if I left. Hog Island is an island not far from the mainland and has Captain Bill and mate Meg to bring people over. I stayed in the "loft" in the Queen Mary house, practically in the water, with a beautiful view. There was a meeting house, a dining house with an osprey cam, and several other cabins where people stayed.

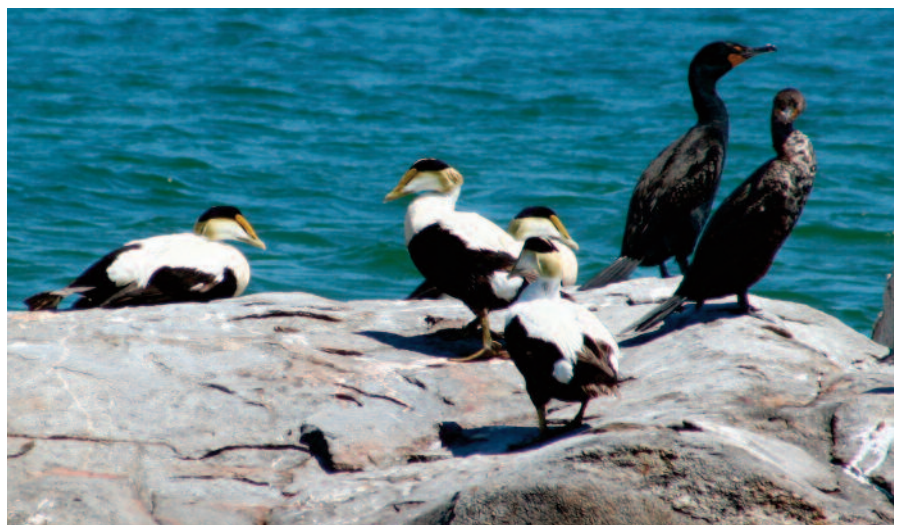
Every day we had a busy schedule: 5:45 bird walk, and one morning with bird banding. I only got up for one of those! Breakfast followed and then a workshop, a boat, or mainland trip, lunch and more workshops, then dinner and more workshops!!

The weather in Maine is very unpredictable. It could be a sunny morning and all of a sudden, with no warning, rain. Of course I usually got caught in it without a raincoat, and when I did bring my raincoat, it was a beautiful,

sunny day. The boat trips could start off foggy or sunny, and then change. The day of my boat trip was nice but windy, which led to a little feeling of seasickness which made it hard to really see the birds with binoculars and take pictures. But it was so exciting to see the puffins, terns, red knots, seals, loons, an eagle's nest and other sea birds. We went on Franklin Island where we had a choice of a bird walk, a sea bird walk or a walk along the rocky shore. I chose the rock walk and learned about the formations of rock which I found very interesting. On one mainland walk, on a pond, in a matter of five to ten minutes, we saw a great blue heron with an eel in his mouth being chased by a bald eagle, who was then chased by an osprey. As all this was happening, a pileated woodpecker came to a dead tree hole with food for her 3 very hungry chicks!!! All in all, we saw 77 species of birds, a lot of them being life birds for me.

I could go on and on about this trip but it would take up the entire newsletter. I therefore decided to present a slide show of my wonderful adventure for the chapter in the fall.

Thank you again Great South Bay Audubon, for sending me on this experience of a lifetime!!!! It certainly was a "joy"!!!!



Common Eiders are "commonly" seen in Maine, as well as Double-crested Cormorants. Photo taken by Jody from one of the many boat rides around the Hog Island area.

CONSERVATION ISSUES

BY BOB GROVER

More Arctic News

In our previous column, we discussed how global climate change, particularly the unprecedented warming of the Arctic, is wreaking havoc with coastal and marine ecosystems there. In this column, we will discuss how this global warming phenomenon is impacting on the life cycle and survivability of one of our favorite migratory shorebirds. In mid to late May of this year, there were ebird reports of several hundred Red Knots on the sand bars at Jones Beach. When I finally got there on May 27th, I was able to count only a dozen, the remainder having continued their amazing 9,000 mile migratory journey from southern South America to the Arctic, where they breed. Nevertheless, I was pleased to be able to view and study this species for the first time in 2016.

In 1989, an impressive 96,000 Red Knots stopped over at Delaware Bay. This is typically the last stop for much of the population on their journey north, with fewer numbers visiting Long Island coastal spots, so they must fatten up to have enough energy reserves to complete the journey and begin the arduous task of breeding. Their preferred food for this last supper is the eggs of Horseshoe Crabs. Unfortunately, as we all know, the commercial harvesting of Horseshoe Crabs has severely depleted this food resource, and most researchers believe there is a direct connection between the dearth of Horseshoe Crab eggs and the dwindling population of Red Knots, which had declined to nearly 12,000 in Delaware Bay by 2007. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has declared the Red Knot as federally threatened.

Now to the Arctic. When the knots ar-

rive, they waste no time in nesting and laying eggs. In mid to late June of each year there is a major snow melt on the knots' breeding grounds, and that nutrient-laden meltwater is the trigger for a burst in primary and invertebrate productivity, which, in turn, sustains the knot chicks. Unfortunately, global warming is causing the annual spring melt to occur earlier and earlier, and the arrival of the knots and subsequent hatching of the chicks is now occurring after the productivity peak. In fact, the spring snow melt is advancing at a rate of one week per decade.

In the May 13, 2016, issue of the eminent journal, *Science*, there is a research report, accompanied by a stunning cover photograph of a Red Knot, that presents research on this very subject, albeit on the population that migrates from the Arctic across Europe and down into Africa. The researchers found that the climate forced timing of the spring melt is resulting in poorly nourished knot chicks. Many of them are smaller, lighter, and exhibit reduced bill length. Upon their arrival on their southern wintering grounds for their first time, their bills are too short to exploit their preferred wintering territory food, a small bivalve mollusk with the Latin name of *Loripes*. Instead, they are forced to feed on a less nutritious, shallower burrowing bi-

valve, *Dosinia*, and the roots of a seagrass closely related to our local eelgrass. This diet change results in an overall fitness reduction, and this does not bode well for the species.

So now we have determined that the unfortunate Red Knot faces serious threats on its summer breeding grounds, during migration and on its wintering territory. That is a bad trifecta, and sadly, the cause of the problem at each stage along the way can be traced back to one cause. Us.



Due to earlier spring melts, Red Knot chicks are forced to feed on readily available and less nutritious food, resulting in poorly nourished birds.

Clean Beaches = Clean Water = Healthy Wildlife

Join the 2016 Ed Davis Memorial Beach Cleanup

Ocean trash ranks as one of the most serious pollution problems of our time. Much more than an eyesore, trash in the water and on the shore affects the health of people, wildlife and economies. Trash in the water harms wildlife that eat it or get trapped in its mess and can injure swimmers and beachgoers.

This year, the Ocean Conservancy is celebrating its 30th anniversary of the International Coastal Clean up, a worldwide collaboration engaging local organizations to clean up the beaches in their geographical location.

Great South Bay Audubon has always been proud to participate in this event. Our chapter works with the American

Littoral Society (<http://www.littoralsociety.org>) to clean up Sunken Forest and Sailors Haven on Fire Island.

Organized by Beach Cleanup Coordinator, Jody Banaszak,

this year's clean up is scheduled for Saturday, September 17. Volunteers meet at the Sailors Haven Ferry Terminal in Sayville. We will depart on the 10:30 am ferry from Sayville and return on the 2:30 pm ferry. There is a snack bar to purchase lunch, drinks or snacks, or you can pack your own.

Help make this year's clean-up another success story. Contact Jody to register:

crabnose88@yahoo.com

or call the GSBAS phone:

631-563-7716



BROOKSIDE NEWS

There has been a lot of action going on this spring at Brookside. Birds flocking at the feeders and calling loud and clear throughout the park, ducks and swans swimming along the creek in unison and squirrels and chipmunks scurrying about.

There also has been a lot of human activity. In addition to our spring clean up we have had many enjoyable events here such as the library dedication and the June outdoor program. (see recaps on these past events)

The County has also been at work installing a new boiler and surveillance cameras. We are hoping these cameras will mean an end to the ongoing vandalism problem and we can spiff the place up even more without the threat of it being done in vain.

Suffolk County Girls Scout Troop 868 has been hard at work, planting flowers along the property. The girls from this troop have been working on their Gold Award and have been donating many hours here—and it shows. Rows of daffodils bloomed beautifully along the edge of the creek on the south side of the property. The garden in front of the main building is coming together nicely. We thank the Troop for their hard work and efforts.

Brookside is a great place to be. The quiet days of the summer are approaching—a perfect time to grab a book or magazine from our library and sit by the creek and just relax. You can even borrow binoculars if you choose.

We are looking for more volunteers at Brookside and encourage members to “come on down” and check us out! Call



Above: Helga Merryman and Jean Rogers working in the butterfly garden. Right: New volunteers, the Paratore family, Karen, Dan and Julia and Grandma Elaine Loeven (not pictured) worked tirelessly raking, pruning and sweeping.

Vera if you are interested in donating a few hours a month: 516-639-5430.

—Vera Capogna

Spring Clean-Up at Brookside

On Saturday, April 23, 2016, members and friends of the Great South Bay Audubon Society joined together for the annual Spring clean-up at Brookside County Park. Despite the cool temperatures and sporadic showers, our group of volunteers magically restored the park using rakes, gloves and lots of enthusiasm. The bushes were trimmed, the lawn was raked, and leaves and branches were removed. Volunteer family members, Karen, Dan and daughter Julia spent time sweeping the front porch and collecting litter. Grandma Elaine worked tirelessly trimming branches and vines from the west side of the main building. The but-

terfly garden looked great after Helga and Jean removed the ground litter of fallen leaves and dead stalks from the previous season to better expose the emerging plants. Members Jody and Janet trimmed the rhododendron bushes to clearly define the parking area while Vera leveled the many piles of mounded dirt near the porch and garden.

Bustling with boundless energy, five year old Julia



was ready for a hike despite a busy day of yard work. Dan, Karen, Julia and Janet traversed the trails, collecting litter and debris along the way. The trails were festooned with unfurling leaves of skunk cabbage, delicate Canada May flowers, and the tiny crimson foliage of newly sprouted poison ivy. Walking through the woods, the signs of bright green leaves on trees and bushes are beginning to unfold, creating a bright contrast against the brown and grey of the tree trunks.

With broad smiles and sore muscles, volunteers had the pleasure to see the transformation at Brookside accomplished by this team effort. Leaving the park, the sunny yellow flower heads of the daffodils dotted along the brook were a joyful reminder of the simple beauty that Nature holds. —Janet Gremli



Girls Scouts from Troop 868 planting daffodils at Brookside. Left to right: Sarah Nolan, Brianna Baldante, Jordan Miglino.

2015 Annual Appeal

Great South Bay Audubon Society

We thank you for your generous support

GSBAS Benefactor

Mrs. Christine Entenmann⁺

GSBAS Patron

John and Joan Rodger

GSBAS Contributor

Mr. & Mrs. James McNeil⁺
Tim Meyer
Jewel Caleira
Rosemary Camilleri
Mr. & Mrs. Kevin Camson
Helen Dalton

James Davidson
Mr. & Mrs. John DeLalla
Mr. & Mrs. Jay Fogarty
Janet Gremli
Mary Griffin
Nancy Grover

Kathleen Kozakiewicz
Theresa Macri
Helga Merryman
William Redshaw
Mr. & Mrs. Randy Schmitt
Karen Schulte

Mr. & Mrs. Donald Sheehan
Salvatore Spizzirri
Emma Tufano
Allen Welcome
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Wilson
Michael Yacobellis

GSBAS Supporter

Rachel Barr
GA Brophy
Maria Brown
Annette Brownell
Marcia Brucculeri
Vera Capogna
Patricia Davis

Mr. & Mrs. John Friend
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Gale
Robert Glasser
John Gluth
Robert Grover
Professor Albert Heiserer, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Henry Kahlke

Alice Heller
Mr. & Mrs. Vincent Latella
Catherine Matteson
John Oberholzer
Mr. & Mrs. Lonnie Pace
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Quick
Diane Reilly

Neil Sumner
Mr. & Mrs. Ken Thompson
Johnna Vullo
Mr. & Mrs. George Wasielek
Wildbirds Unlimited
Dr. Michael Wooster

GSBAS Friend

Mr. & Mrs. William Ziesel⁺
Harry Anderson
Carole Becker
Mrs. Charlotte Blanchard
Mrs. Dina Champagne
Mrs. Betty Conely
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Connolly
Rosalie Costello
Anne Cuneo
Andrea Digregorio
Ellen Edelstein

Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Firestone
Gustave Fishel III
Donald Geyer
Dr. & Mrs. Martin Gorin
Andrew Haimes
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Immoor
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Hand
Noreen Koster
Erwin Krause
Alisa Kremer-Parrott
Ethna Kress

Marie Mandell
Jane Ockers
Astrid Otero
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Puglielli
Joyce Reilly
Robert Reilly
Mr. & Mrs. Artie Sanwald
Bill Schlegel Jr.
Alan Siegel
Mr. & Mrs. James Sorenson
Anna Mae Stein

Mary Stoddard
Mr. & Mrs. J.A. Sullivan
Peter Townsend
Nancy Vaillancourt
Deborah Van Brunt
Antonio Vindell
Sue Yankowski
Patricia Ziegler

GSBAS Donor

Sharon Babington
Mr. & Mrs. James Brucia
Edwin Brunswick
Tim Carroll
David Cassidy
Andrew Felber
Jean Gilman
Mary Kennedy

Ronald Marino
Ronald Mediatore
Frank Perillo
Joe Rogers
Walter Stoeber
Margaret Wachlin
Tove Abrams
Mr. & Mrs. James Carpinone

Theodore Everitt
Jacqueline Flamio
Dr. Peter Lugten
Harry Nicholzen
Lisa Padovano
Thomas Pfaffe., Sr.
William Plackenmeyer
Carol Rivera

Chris Sauerland
Ellie Schotz
Philip Uruburu
Bonnie White
Patricia Olberding
Rory Ward
Elizabeth Borthwick

⁺Denotes those who donated above the category in which they are listed.

Bat Night at Brookside Coming

Once again this summer our Conservation Chair, Maria Brown, invites you to Brookside County Park to “hear” and see the species of bats that call Brookside their home. We will monitor their activity on the bridge as they emerge from their daytime roosting spots to seek out their dinner.

Maria uses computer software that amplifies the sounds of the bats—sounds that humans cannot hear. Her computer screen comes alive with activity and color as the bats approach and fly overhead. It happens fast, so you must be alert. Last year Maria recorded four different bat species. In addition to bats, you’ll never know what the woods of Brookside may reveal in the evening. We have encountered flying squirrels, racoons, and screech owls on these beautiful summer nights.

Bat Monitoring this summer will be on July 12th with rain date on the 13th. Meet at 8:15 at Brookside.

Ecosystem Services *from front page*

ices and capital (Myers et al, 2012). Quantifying the disease burden associated with changes in the structure and function of natural systems presents several challenges. For example, how much of the malaria in the Brazilian Amazon is a result of deforestation, or how much of the cardiopulmonary disease in Singapore is due to forest fires in Indonesia from slash and burn agriculture?

Many of the relationships that Ecosystem Service Analysts are interested in related to disease outcomes involve the loss of a service that provides protection against disease as opposed to the presence of a disease risk. Viewed through a burden of disease lens, the burden is generated by the loss of a protection not the presence of an exposure. As a result, Ecosystem Service Analysts are concerned with calculating the “disease averted” that is associated with a natural system in a particular place (Prüss-Ustün, et al, 2008). For example, the Brazilian Amazon which has undergone extensive human pressures over the past 10 years with extensive deforestation has a high disease burden of Zika virus and a high loss of protection because of deforestation which contributes to high exposure potential to humans. People who migrate into/out of the cities from the Brazilian Amazon region bring that disease risk potential to the higher human populations in the cities. Carriers of Zika are bitten by female mosquitoes when they take a blood meal and then the mosquito transmits that disease to many human individuals each time the female mosquito takes a blood meal. On the other hand, Peru’s Amazonian forests have undergone some of the best protection for all of the Amazonia nations and is still considered a “Zika –free” country. These examples have been presented in the simplest terms possible for the reader to gain a better understanding of how the degradation of ecosystem services and natural capital can contribute to just one human health outcome...disease transmission. The take away message is that changes in the structure and function of natural systems are likely to broadly impact many of the most important public health risks we face globally. These changes are significant drivers in the emergence, distribution, and transmission of numerous infectious diseases. Recent research by Karesh et

Great South Bay Audubon Gear

Shirts, Mugs, Bags and More
For Sale at
www.zazzle.com/sandpiper267



If you need help placing an order, call Vera 516-639-5430
She'll be glad to help you.

al, (2012), highlights the large burden associated with zoonotic diseases and the significant role that land-use change and resource scarcity along with climate change plays in driving the emergence and transmission of these diseases.

So why would I support “not killing every mosquito” if they are such efficient vectors for zoonotic disease? There are 3,500 named species of mosquito, of which only a couple of hundred bite or bother humans. They live on almost every continent and habitat, and serve important functions in numerous ecosystems. Mosquitoes have been on Earth for more than 100 million years and they have co-evolved with so many species along the way. Wiping out a species of mosquito could leave a predator without prey, or a plant without a pollinator. As we try to target the “pests” using adluticides and larvicides we continue to degrade the quality of our environment, and therefore, provide new mechanisms for disease in the future from exposure to chemicals in our air, water, and soil, as well as opening a new niche for other mosquitoes or potential disease vectors to occupy the habitat of the mosquitoes we illuminate and the roles they play in supporting ecosystem services. There are some biologists that believe if we eliminate the biomass in an ecosystem of mosquitoes which are food for birds, bats, and other insects, we could see the reduction in biodiversity by nearly 50% for some species. We need all parts of an ecosystem to operate in balance so that we can live sustainably in a healthy environment. By better understanding the interconnectedness of what we take from the environment as products, how we manage our resources to produce goods and services, and as individuals choose to use those resources in a sustainable way so as not to exploit the environment, will determine how we leave this planet and our environment for future generations. It will begin with education and promotion of Best Management policies for natural resources and land use along with abatement to environmental pollutants that contribute to climate change from all nations. Norway just became the world’s first country to ban deforestation (Pohlman, 2016)...if they can do it, why can’t everyone else?

1.Karesh WB, et al.(2012) Ecology of zoonoses: Natural and unnatural histories. Lancet 380(9857):1936–1945. 2.Miller, G., T. & Spoolman, S. (2014). Living in the Environment. Brooks/Cole Publishers. USA. 3.Pohlman, K. (2016). Norway becomes world’s first country to ban deforestation. EcoWatch. Retrieved from: <http://ecowatch.com/2016/06/08/norwaybans-deforestation>. 5.Prüss-Ustün A, Bonjour S, Corvalán C. (2008) The impact of the environment on health by country: A meta-synthesis. Environ Health 7:7.6.

Great South Bay Audubon Society

Officers

President: (Position Pending)
Vice-president: (Position Pending)
Treasurer: Annette Brownell (631) 665-4405
Corresponding Secretary:
Tim Meyer (631) 346-0198
Recording Secretary: Nicholas Laviola (631) 678-7866

Board of Directors

Jody Banaszak (631) 278-4059
Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969
Steve D'Amato (631) 264-8413
Jack Isaacs (631) 567-7631
Nicholas Laviola (631) 678-7866
Peggy Marsh (631) 667-3556
Tim Meyer (631) 346-0198
Juliane Wohler (631) 581-1731

Committee Chairs

Brookside: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969
Hospitality: Mary Plant (631) 284-3713
Conservation: Maria Brown
Membership: Juliane Wohler (631) 581-1731
Publicity: Helga Merryman (631) 669-6473
Education: Juliane Wohler, Janet Gremli,
Jack Finkenberg
Audubon Activist: Open
Newsletter: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969
Nature Walks: Ken Thompson (631) 612-8028
Programs: Jody Banaszak (631) 278-4059
Librarian: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969
Annual Dinner:
Annette Brownell (631) 665-4405
Mailing: Ken Thompson (631) 612-8028
Email Responder: Vera Capogna (631) 563-4969
Answering the GSBAS Direct Phone:
Steve D'Amato
GSBAS Direct Phone Number (631) 563-7716
GSBAS Email address: info@gsbas.org

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



Great South Bay Audubon Society
PO Box 267, Sayville, NY 11782
A Chapter of National Audubon

Is your membership expiring?
Check the date on the mailing →
label to see.



Great South Bay Audubon Society Membership

Become a member of Great South Bay Audubon Society.
Your contribution will support GSBAS conservation efforts, educa-
tional 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 \$20 ☐ New Membership Senior (62+) \$15
☐ Renewal \$20 ☐ Renewal Senior (62+) \$15

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____



GSBAS Welcomes New Board Member

Tim Meyer has jumped on the BoardWagon with lots of enthusiasm and ideas. Always accepting challenges, Tim has consistently been there when needed, in addition to taking over the position of Corresponding Secretary, which has helped the Board of Directors tremendously.

Tim makes a great addition to our Board and we warmly welcome him.

Volunteer Corner



We would like to thank Mary Plant for all the years she has served as Hospitality Chair. Mary arrived at all meetings before anyone else to start brewing coffee and set up refreshments. Unfortunately, Mary will no longer be able to maintain this position. We hate to see her go and will miss her very much.

We would also like to thank Mary Ann and John Friend for temporarily jumping in and filling in for Mary Plant. It was one less thing the members of the board had to think about and was appreciated very much.

Rick Barnes has been an indispensable help around Brookside. His "vandal proof" birdfeeder pole certainly has done the trick. Rick is also great at repairs and his handiwork is visible inside and out.

Having volunteers such as Mary Ann and John Friend, Mary Plant and Rick Barnes is essential in running an efficient chapter.

**NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
SAYVILLE, NY 11782
PERMIT NO. 108**

**Or Current Resident
Dated Material: Please Do Not Delay**