

# **THE BI-MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE GREAT SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY!**



**by Jody Banaszak**

Hello, my little birding friends! Hope this newsletter finds you enjoying the birds and the nice weather, although it's been a bit hot and muggy. The birds probably don't care. I was watching a mother starling feeding her baby, who looked like an adult, suet from my feeder. I felt he could have eaten it himself, but I'm not a bird! I saw a lot of osprey nests with babies this summer. It's amazing how they build their nests, and they go back to the same ones every year after coming back from another state. The eagles took over the osprey nest this year in Sayville and had what looked like 2 babies. The eagles never win the fight for the nest but this year they did! We had some good bird walks this spring and part of the summer. Thank you to our leaders, Ken, Mike, Jack, Vera and John. They sure know their birds.



We'll start having our speakers and walks in September. I can't wait. I wish we could find someone to speak on how birds make their nests and why they are all different. If you know anyone let me know.

You all know how I feel about litter bugs. Well, I was reading an article in the paper about people fishing and how it affects the birds. An osprey got tangled in a fishing line that was in the lake and drowned. A swan had a fishing line with a hook wrapped around its neck and had to be saved. The article said there are hundreds of calls about birds being tangled in fishing lines and hooks every year by kids and adults who go fishing in these lakes. Some people get their lines with hooks tangled in trees and are left hanging in the air or water. The birds don't see these lines. Fishermen should take responsibility for these things and their children should learn about the rules before they go fishing so these birds aren't hurt or killed.

If you see an injured bird in a lake, pond or bay call the DEC regional wildlife office. 631-444-0200. Call them during the week, as they are closed on weekends. Karen is also a rehab person, and you can call her at 631-848-9112. Hopefully you don't need to!

Enjoy the rest of the summer and happy birding!!!



## *That Was a Life Bird*

*by Annette Brownell*

Serious (and sometimes not so serious) birders keep life lists of first-time or unusual bird sightings. They say, "That was a life bird."

Well, I have a life word – collaboration – the process of two or more people, entities, or organizations working together to complete a task or achieve a goal.



It is a vital and rewarding concept, especially for organizations like ours that are continually fighting the tide of indifference, convenience, and political big money. This is why, when the opportunity presents itself to collaborate with like-minded organizations, it's important to seize that opportunity.

Here are two recent such times:

### **Phragmites Pull with Seatuck**

Great South Audubon enjoys a nice working relationship with Seatuck Foundation. That relationship doesn't happen automatically—or as they say these days "organically" (whatever that means). Our relationship is something that we have chosen to foster. At one point, that relationship was nearly ruined by some bad attitudes. Both Seatuck and GSBAS made efforts to repair the damage.

We have volunteered at their events (mostly Annette and Jody), they have lent us games for our events, they allow us to use their space for meetings, we advertise their programs, and we support their initiatives with letters of support or by speaking to legislators.

On May 31, Seatuck hosted a phragmites pull at West Brook, over in the field where the dam broke. We advertised the event on our social media. I took a half day from work and volunteered. It was a terrific learning experience and fun to meet people who showed up from as far as Shelter Island. I wish more people from our organization had come out in support of such an important and extremely slow-to-make-progress environmental task.

### **Ferry Cruise to Bug Lighthouse**

The executive director of East End Seaport Museum coordinated a nice opportunity for our Audubon to collaborate with them and North Fork Audubon on a cruise to Bug Lighthouse at the mouth of Gardiner's Bay. It was a big and expensive undertaking for EESM as they offered a \$20 discount per ticket, needing 50 people to make the trip financially feasible. We hoped to dock at the lighthouse and go ashore to observe nesting seabirds, both on the

rocks and on the mainland. However, the water and wind were too rough to allow us to dock, so the captain took us on a nice cruise down the coast. It was a fabulous introduction to the Museum, which is very well-curated. I recommend it.

Because of my Seatuck experiences, I was not completely unfamiliar with some of the information there on Menhaden fish and their environmental and historic importance.

We had about nine people from our Audubon group sign up, and we hope that if we decide to make this an annual event, more people will join.

Alarming fact – According to a recent statistic, many members of the squirrel family—red squirrel, flying squirrel, chipmunk, prairie dog, and marmot—are on the federal threatened list. The western gray squirrel was just placed on the endangered list last November. Not good. What are we doing?



## ***Wildlife Wonders: Live Animal Event at Great South Bay Audubon Society***

***by Karen Andres***

We had a beautiful night for the Live Animal Event at Brookside County Park on June 20th. The sun was shining, and the bugs left us alone. This was my first event here with Audubon and I was delighted to see an assortment of families of all ages here. There were even a few 3 generation families which is nice to see. The crowd of just over 30 settled in with blankets, chairs and snacks in preparation for the event just before the stars of the show arrived.

Our stars came from Sweetbriar Nature Center's Wildlife Rehabilitation Center. Each one was unique in their own way and will not survive outside in the wild. Our first star was an Eastern Box Turtle named Turtle Town. This turtle was fast and walked all over the grass quite quickly. One fact that I picked up on was that the turtle's shell is made up of a substance similar to our nails. Our presenter walked around with the turtle so we could touch his shell to feel its texture.

Box Turtles get their name because of a little flap on their abdomen which allows them to retreat and clam up so to speak when threatened. Eastern Box Turtles are the most common land turtles found in the Long Island Central Pine Barrens. They are omnivores and eat a variety of foods found in their habitats like slugs, mushrooms, berries, earthworms, snails, beetles, crickets, pinky mice, plants and bugs of all sorts. What can we do to help our friendly Box Turtle? Rethink how you treat your lawn with pesticides. Chemicals affect animals, and turtles are no different. Very often turtles with ear infections are brought to Sweetbriar, something directly caused by chemicals/pesticides. They are known to put their heads in water and rub their heads in wet grass thus causing problems with their ears. Turtle numbers are declining on Long Island mainly due to loss of habitat. Long Islanders pride themselves with having perfectly manicured, leafless lawns which, although beautiful to look



at, present a problem for turtles due to their need for leaves to hibernate in.

Next up was a sweet little Screech Owl named Turnip. The eastern screech owl or eastern screech-owl is a small owl that is relatively common in Eastern North America, from Mexico to Canada. This species resides in most types of woodland habitats across its range and is relatively adaptable to urban and developed areas compared to other owls.

We met a beautiful Red Tail Hawk with an interesting story. Stitch is about 26 years old and was picked up by a driver on the Sunken Meadow Parkway northbound. A driver spotted him and blocked both lanes with his car and without gloves, blanket just his bare hands picked up the injured bird and brought him to Sweetbriar. Traffic is said to have been backed up for an hour. Stitch must have known this man would save him. Stitch lost one eye in his accident as well as half a wing. When Stitch was brought in, he didn't have his mature tail feathers which has enabled Sweetbriar to estimate his age. He has been a resident there for 25 years.

To switch it up we then met Indigo, an Opossum, Indigo was found as an accident victim along with his mother. If it is believed he was the runt of the litter. Sweetbriar rehabilitated both mom and baby separately. Indigo being raised by humans essentially is not able to go into the wild and just loves his handler. This was evident by the way Indigo climbed all over him while he was talking. He did calm down when his comfy bed was produced which enabled us to pet him. Some interesting facts about Opossums, they are very resistant to rabies, their lower body temperature (94–97° F) may make it difficult for the virus to survive in their bodies. Opossums are also cleaner than other animals, grooming themselves with their tongues and paws, and eating over 90% of the ticks they encounter. They have the most teeth of any mammal, 32 on the top and 32 on the bottom. Don't worry about getting bit by one though they don't have strong jaws. They are also in the same family as Kangaroos, yes, they are marsupials and carry their young in a pouch.

Back to the birds to finish off the show. Welcome Chance, the Great Horned Owl, Chance was born with a birth defect that injured one eye and is unable to hunt for his food. The great horned owl, also known as the tiger owl or the hoot owl, is a large owl native to the Americas. It is an extremely adaptable bird with a vast range and is the most widely distributed true owl in the Americas. They do not build their own nests but will take over a hawk nest or nest in a hole in a tree. The females are larger than males and you cannot hear them in flight which makes them stealthy hunters.

Last but not least the finale of the show was a beautiful Barn Owl, He was a showstopper. Barn owls are not really owls; they often live in barns and other old, abandoned buildings, so keep an eye out for them there. Barn Owls don't hoot the way most other owls do; you can listen for their harsh screeches at night. They have a cream-colored face that is somewhat heart shaped. A beautiful bird if I must say so.

After any and all questions were answered about animals and rehabilitation were done it was time to pack up and go home. I was going to say that the kids in attendance enjoyed the event the most but I think all in attendance had a great time. I strongly suggest that everyone attend next year's event.

***Photos by Jody Banaszak***



# SUBMITTED BIRD PHOTOS



**Clapper Rail with Chick**



**Hooded Warbler**



**Bluebird**



© JOHN GLUM



**Veery**



**Lisa Nasta**

**Yellow Warblers**



**Joe Abrams**

**Blue Heron**



**Lisa Nasta**

**Blue-Gray Gnatcatcher  
on Nest**



**Joe Russo**

**Osprey Nest**



**Donna Ricci**

**Baby Swallows Under  
Eave of Concession at  
Field 2, Robert Moses**

**CLICK HERE TO SUBMIT PHOTOS**



**Tuesday Nature Walks 2024 - 2025**

**Tuesday Sept 03, 9:30 Connetquot River SPP**

Meet in the parking lot near the entrance booth. May require an entrance fee of \$8.

**Tuesday, Sept 10, 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. We meet at the ocean overlook parking area south of the road.

**Tuesday Sept 17, 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) Maybe ending at Jones Beach.

**Tuesday Sept 24, 9:30 am Suffolk County Farm**

350 Yaphank Avenue Yaphank NY. Take Sunrise Highway to exit 57N, Horseblock Rd. Bear right onto County Road 21, Yaphank Ave. Travel approximately one mile to the Cornell Cooperative Extension on left. Turn left onto the entrance road. Take

your first right and follow down and meet at the visitors parking area on your left.

### **Thursday, Sept 21, 7:30**

#### **Tuesday Oct 1, 9:30 St Joseph Campus Brentwood**

Take Sunrise Highway to Brentwood Rd. north approximately 2.5 mi look for the main entrance. Meet in the parking lot in front of building 4.

#### **Tuesday Oct 8, 9:30 am Robert Moses SP**

Meet in Field 5 at the northeast corner.

#### **Tuesday Oct 15 9:30 am Avalon Preserve**

Rte. 25A to Village of Stonybrook, at Carriage Museum, 25A turns right do not turn right, but proceed straight ahead on Main St. to Harbor Rd and park in legal spots by Grist Mill.

#### **Tuesday Oct 22, 9:30 am Jones Beach West End**

Meet in the parking lot at the Marina near the Coast Guard Station.

#### **Tuesday Oct 29, 9:30 am Blydenburg CP**

Entrance on Veterans Highway just west of the Route 347 merge. Use Blydenburgh entrance not Greengate Park entrance. Meet in the parking lot at the boat ramp area.

#### **Tuesday Nov 5, 9:30 am Sunken Meadow SP**

Meet in the main parking lot in front of the main pavilion near the traffic circle.

### **Weekend Nature Walks 2024 - 2025**

#### **Saturday Aug 17, 8:00 am Connetquot River SPP**

Southern State Pkwy to Belt Pkwy to Exit 17, Cross Bay Blvd. South. Continue south for about 2 miles. Look for the entrance of the refuge on the right (west) side. There are signs for park entrance. (Knee High boots are recommended.)

#### **Saturday, Sept 14, 8:00 am Connetquot River SPP Bird and Breakfast**

Reservations required 4\$ at Eventbrite.com search #NatureAdventure, Plus parking fee per car - unless you have a yearly Empire pass.

#### **Saturday Sept 21, 8:00 am Robert Moses Hawk Watch & Jones Beach WE**

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) Maybe ending at Jones Beach.

#### **Saturday Oct 12, 8:30 am Caumsett SP**

Take Sunrise Highway to Brentwood Rd. north approximately 2.5 mi look for the main entrance. Meet in the parking lot in front of building 4

#### **Saturday Nov 2, 8:30 am Suffolk County Farm**

350 Yaphank Avenue Yaphank NY. Take Sunrise Highway to exit 57N, Horseblock Rd. Bear right onto County Road 21, Yaphank Ave. Travel approximately one mile to the Cornell Cooperative Extension on left. Turn left onto the entrance road. Take your first right and follow down and meet at the visitors parking area on your left.

#### **Saturday Nov 9, 9:00 am Morton NWR**

Sunrise Highway east past Shinnecock Canal. Look for a North Sea Road Noyack sign and bear left on CR52. Stay on CR52 and then turn left at light onto CR38. After 1.4 miles on CR38, turn right onto Noyack Road after 5 miles turn left onto refuge.

#### **Saturday December 7, 9:00 am Montauk**

Rte. 25A to Village of Stonybrook, at Carriage Museum, 25A turns right do not turn right, but proceed straight ahead on Main St. to Harbor Rd and park in legal spots by Grist Mill.

## MONTHLY MEETINGS

Seatuck Environmental Center 550 S Bay Ave, Islip, NY 11751 7PM

**September 19**

**October 24**

**November 21**



---

On May 23rd, Wild Birds Unlimited in Oakdale hosted a special presentation at its store located at 911 Montauk Hwy. The event was centered around creating a backyard bird habitat, with expert Brooke guiding attendees through the five essential components needed to transform their yards into bird-friendly sanctuaries. Attendees learned how to use native plants and strategically placed feeders to create a relaxing haven for both birds and humans.



In addition to the educational aspect, Wild Birds Unlimited dedicated a portion of its sales from that day to support the Great South Bay Audubon Society (GSBAS).

Thank you to everyone who joined Wild Birds Unlimited and contributed to our cause. Together, we are making a difference for our feathered friends and enjoying the beauty of nature right in our backyards.

**The GSBAS is so grateful to Wild Birds Unlimited for their amazing support.**





Hello Great South Bay Audubon members and friends: We are ready to start a wonderful birding season with many activities. We are planning hikes, a dinner, a festival, and presentations related to birding, nature and the environment.

In order to present these activities, we depend on the dues and donations of members and others. In the past people paid dues when they joined. This will still be the case. However, in order to better have members know whether they paid or not, all dues are now due in February. I understand that members for the most part have been unaware of this new policy.

We encourage our participants and former members to please send in your membership dues at this time. You can access a membership application or pay through Pay Pal by going to our website [www.greatsouthbayaudubon.org](http://www.greatsouthbayaudubon.org)

**Thank you and have a wonderful birding season!**

<b>Great South Bay Audubon Society Membership</b>	
As a member of the Great South Bay Audubon Society you will receive our award-winning, bi-monthly newsletter "The Sandpiper"! Membership also includes access to the beautiful Brookside County Park, with 8 acres of trails for guided nature walks, ponds and waterways, wildlife including deer, foxes, and wild turkey, and the unique opportunity to connect with a community of like-minded individuals with a wealth of knowledge on Long Island's native species.	
Annual Membership \$20 Renewal \$20	Annual Membership Senior (62+) \$15 Renewal Senior (62+) \$15
Name _____	
Address _____	
City _____ State _____ Zip _____	
Phone _____ Email _____	
PO Box 267 Sayville, NY 11782	

---

## GREAT SOUTH BAY AUDUBON SOCIETY LEADERSHIP

**President:** Jody Banaszak 682-278-4059

**Vice President:** Open

**Treasurer:** Annette Brownell 631-260-8089

**Recording Secretary, Artist in Residence:** Steve D'Amato. 631-264-8413

**Board Members:** Steve D'Amato, Robert Bender, 631-921-0591, Karen Andres, 516-769-3604, Suzanne Wittenberg 631-889-1949

**Committee Chairs:**

**Brookside Coordinator/Garden:** Karen Andres 516-769-3604

**Hospitality:** Open, **Programs:** Annette Brownell 631-260-8089

**Publicity:** Open, **Newsletter/Marketing:** Spirit of Huntington

**Nature Walks:** Ken Thompson, **Star Foundation:** Save the animals rescue 631-736-9207

---

*For the people who do not use or have a computer, we will still have a printable copy of the bi-monthly newsletter available upon request.*

*They cost \$4 each. We ask that you pay \$24 in advance. Please send checks made out to the GSBAS, PO box 267, Sayville, NY 11782.*

***Click to Subscribe to Our Newsletter***



631.563.7716 | P.O. Box 267, Sayville NY 11782

[greatsouthbayaudubon@gmail.com](mailto:greatsouthbayaudubon@gmail.com)

[greatsouthbayaudubon.org](http://greatsouthbayaudubon.org)

The 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.

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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!