

ATLANTIC CURRENTS

Newsletter of the Atlantic Audubon Society
P. O. BOX 63, Absecon, N. J. 08201

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Editor: E. Bristow

with this issue of the Newsletter, we are undergoing a transition which will hopefully provide improved communication with our members as well as making each issue more interesting. Your constructive comments will be appreciated.

PROGRAMS

- March 23: N. J. Nongame and Endangered Species Program presented by biologist Joan Galli.
- April 27: Peru. A look at an outstanding birding area by members John Danzenbaker and Jim Akers.
- May 25: "Alaska" A personal look at an area of great concern to Audubon this year by Ralph and Marion Bartlett.

FIELD TRIPS

- March 26: Birding at Brigantine Refuge. For beginners and advanced birders. Meet at 8 AM in the refuge parking lot.
- April 16: Birding along Great Bay Blvd. in Tuckerton. Spring migration should provide some good birding. Meet at 8:30 AM at the beginning of Great Bay Blvd. just off Rt. 9.
- April 29-May 1: Delmarva Weekend. A repeat of our very popular spring trip. We will camp near Ocean City Md. Motels for those not camping. See note below.
- May 14: Spring Warbler Search. Local areas, location and meeting time to be announced in the next newsletter.
- May 22: Canoe Trip on the Mullica. See note below for vital details.
- June 4: Flower walk with Gil Cavileer. Place and time to be announced next issue.

Special Notes:

1. Weekend camping trip in April is open to all. Reservations for campground must be in to Fred Hamer by April 16. We will need to know how many, what kind of equipment - tent, trailer, etc. Sign-up sheet will be at March meeting. Trip will include Pokomoke Swamp, Ocean City area, Chincoteague and Assateague Refuges, Blackwater Refuge, and Bombay Hook Refuge if you last that long. If you are not camping, there are motels in the immediate area- you make your own arrangements. We will provide details on where to meet, etc to all who sign up as well as full driving directions.
2. Canoe Trip in May. Trip from Jackson Road to Goshen Pond and Atsion Lake. The deposit of \$10 for canoe rental must be in by April 24th to reserve a canoe. Refund due to cancellation cannot be guaranteed. Meet at Atsion Lake on Rt 206 in parking lot across street from dam at 9AM. Bring lunch, plastic bag with clothing change, and rope to tie things fast to canoe in case of! Send money or call Shirley DeMill for information: 126 Collins Ave, Pleasantville, 08232 or phone 641-7039. Change of location due to water conditions is always a possibility.

ALASKAN ISSUES

(Marion Bartlett -chairman)

As citizens concerned about wilderness and natural areas, we have the unique opportunity to participate in efforts to preserve Alaska's wildlands. Those of you who saw the program on Alaska and received the brochure in reference to the Alaska Coalition Bill know how valuable these lands are. Won't you write letters NOW to these people:

Senators Harrison Williams and Clifford Case
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20510

Hon. William Hughes
House Office Building
Washington, D. C. 20515

The following is an example of the type of letter which will help. Please phrase it in your own words, since identical letters annoy Congressional staffers and are much less effective. They reason that if you really care about an issue, you would not use a form letter. (Editor's note: This applies to any letter you may write to members of Congress, President, etc.)

Sample: As a life-long conservationist, I am writing to urge you to take an active interest in the Alaska National Interest Lands issue which will be facing you in the 95th Congress.

The Alaska Coalition, comprised of conservation groups from all over the lower 48 states and Alaska will once more be supporting legislation to set aside lands in Alaska for future generations to enjoy.

Please co-sponsor this important bill (S. 500, HR-39) which has already been introduced by (Senator Jackson or Congressman Morris Udall) and push hard for an early date for hearings on this important measure.

Thank you very much.

You should receive a reply from each individual to whom you send this letter. The National Audubon Representative in Washington, Steve Young, would appreciate it if you would send replies or copies thereof to his office at 1151 K. St., N. W., Washington, D. C. 20005. This is needed now!!! Your children and grandchildren will thank you.

RESOURCE MATERIALS

Through the cooperation of Bill Stahl and the Stockton College Library, we now have a special place to keep the publications we receive. If you are interested in any of the following material, see Bill at the library during normal hours. The following publications are now on file:

New Jersey Audubon News, Highlands Audubon Society Newsletter, Lenapeland Log (Morris Highlands Audubon Soc.), The Oak (Summit Nature Club), Jersey Shores Audubon Society Newsletter, Lincoln Trails Audubon Soc. Newsletter (Ky), Blue Goose Flyer (Nat'l Wildlife Refuge Ass'n), Mullica River Study Team Newsletter, and its successor, Pine Barrens News.

Other publications will be added to this list if necessary.

HELP WANTED

We are now able to open these pages to any of our members who have items of interest to share with the group. Such things as reports of trips, interesting sightings, observations on natural phenomenon, etc. will be considered for inclusion. Please prepare copy typed, double spaced, and send to editor at 325 S. Shore Rd, Absecon, OR 001. Publication will depend on general interest and space available at editor's discretion.

WILDLIFE ART SHOW

Our first endeavor was more successful than we had hoped, especially with some of the many problems which arose to plague us. Attendance was good, we made a small profit from sales, but most importantly we had 27 artists who entered works in the show. Response has been so good that we are looking forward to another effort next year. The show was judged by John Amato Petale, PhD. and most of the prize winning pictures were on exhibit at the Northfield branch of the First National Bank of Absecon through his kindness.

Ribbons were awarded as follows:

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|---------------|----------------------|--|
| Carving: | 1. Fred Hamer | Greater Shearwater |
| | 2. Scott Smith | Canvasbacks |
| | 3. Joan Wolf | Gull with Chicks |
| Graphics: | 1. Peg Keough | Peregrine Falcon |
| | 2. Richard Downs | Pintail |
| Oil/Acrylics: | | |
| | 1. Gary Livelsberger | Wading Great Egret |
| | 2. Peg Keough | Snow Geese at Dawn |
| Watercolor: | | |
| | 1. Margaret Hiatt | Time of Courtship (Egrets) |
| | 2. Peg Keough | Marsh Hawk |
| | 3. Fred Hamer | Golden Eagle |
| Photography: | | |
| | 1. Lynne Corn | Owl and Beetle |
| | 2. Ralph Bartlett | Goose with Young |
| | 3. Edgar Bristow | Welcome to My Pad (Pine Barrens Tree Frog) |

Our thanks to all those who participated in the show and to those who helped with the many details of getting ready and clearing away at the end.

BIRD COURSE

Once again we are offering our Beginner's Bird Identification course at the Brigantine Wildlife Refuge, Oceanville, N. J. First lecture will be on March 17, 1977 at 7:30 PM. Cost is a \$5 donation to the Sanctuary Fund or a valid 1976-77 hunting license. Series will consist of 9 lectures plus 7 field trips. Even if you miss the first lecture because this reaches you after March 17, you are still welcome to join at the next session on March 24. Content will include basic ornithology as well as field identification with primary emphasis on birds of South Jersey.

CLEAN-UP PROJECT

We are again going to tackle the clean-up of the Jeffers Landing Road area which was started last year. Exact date is yet undetermined, but we ask that you plan to lend a helping hand when the time comes. This time we expect to have the equipment needed to do a thorough job thanks to the Army Reserve unit from Northfield. There is much that has to be picked up by hand so be there when the call comes. Boots and gloves are recommended. George Bassett is now utilizing this area for a course given through the Mainland Regional Adult Evening School and we hope to develop some school use of this area as well as Audubon use.

ENDANGERED SPECIES

Our conservation committee recently journeyed to Trenton to present information on Least Terns and Black Skimmers in an effort to get these species listed on the New Jersey Endangered Species List, which is now being revised. It appears at this time that their efforts were successful - and a big thank you to Jerry Schoneberger, Jim Akers, Mark Pokras, Karen Richter, and Fred Hamer! Efforts will be made this summer to again post and protect colonies of these birds in this area, and plans are underway. Help will again be needed to "birdsit" these colonies so that disturbance can be kept to an absolute minimum. Please plan to spare a few hours when the call comes later this spring. In conjunction with this program, our education committee is preparing a program to be presented in the schools prior to the nesting season. We are hoping that we can reach those children who live in the vicinity of these colonies as well as their parents. Experiences last year suggested that the children can be a great help in keeping their peers away from the nesting birds.

EDITORIAL

There appeared in the Atlantic City Press of March 11, 1977 a statement by a local official concerning future use of the wetlands within the limits of Atlantic City with the statement quoted "Sooner or later we are going to need help to make some kind of beneficial use of part of the wetlands". Obviously he along with other political leaders and developers have not yet learned that wetlands are among the most productive and beneficial areas known, even though they just appear to be doing nothing. Studies have shown that healthy wetlands produce 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 times the nutrients of an equal area of the richest farmland in the midwest. Wetlands are the nursery or growth area for 70 per cent of our commercial catch of fish, crabs, shrimp, lobster, and shellfish. Many of the ocean species feed on the produce that is washed out the estuaries. Boating industries are dependent on these areas because of their relation to both commercial and sport fishing. Many species of game birds such as ducks and geese are dependent on the marsh for reproduction and development, not to mention the many non-game species. Wetlands serve as a protective device against wave action- absorbing the brunt of storms and high tides which would otherwise act on man's static structures. They also replace themselves after damage at no cost to the taxpayer. Many of the plants can be used for other purposes, and work is now going on to determine whether some of these may be useful in producing more food. Salt hay has been used for years for feed and mulch. Overfishing and ocean dumping have already caused great economic hardship along the coastal areas of New Jersey, and further destruction of our wetlands for any reason will ultimately lead to even further loss of jobs that are related to the above mentioned areas.

If you know any political leaders who will be involved in decisions concerning the wetlands of our area, please ask them to find out the facts before they rush into decisions that may have very drastic long term effects that will destroy those values that make the shore so attractive to residents and visitors alike.

FROM OTHER SOURCES

Audubon Leader: Houston Audubon Society has taken the initiative to coordinate efforts to re-establish the endangered Brown Pelican to its former habitat along the Texas Gulf coast. Using injured birds that can't be released (from the Sun-coast Seabird Sanctuary in Florida), they hope to breed healthy young which can be released in the wild, now that pesticide levels are falling to more tolerable levels.

SPRING IS THE GROWING SEASON

Atlantic Audubon Society is now looking for new members. This concentrated drive will extend until May 1 and we ask that each member try to think of one person not now a member of Audubon who might enjoy being part of a great conservation organization. Invite them to join - a personal invitation to a meeting, an offer of a ride if possible, - all will help us grow.

Send us the name with address and phone number if known, and we will send out to them an application blank and a copy of our newsletter to acquaint them with our programs and goals.

Remember that a strong organization can offer a strong voice where it can best be heard - in our governing councils and bureaus.

We would also like to extend to those new members a cordial welcome and a warm invitation to take part in any and all activities of the chapter. Please introduce yourself at meetings and field trips - we love to put faces to all the names on our mailing list. To those friends who have renewed their membership, we say a big thank you. It's the continuing membership that really keeps us going.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The Atlantic Audubon Society is a chapter of the National Audubon Society, both independent non-profit organizations. As a joint member of both organizations, you are entitled to a subscription to AUDUBON magazine and to Atlantic Currents. Meetings and field trips are open to anyone, member and non-member alike.

Your dues, which you pay to National Audubon, are partially returned to the local chapter to support our activities. In addition, we raise funds through various activities and sale of several items.

The chapter has its own patch which may be purchased from our Ways and Means chairperson, Sherri Hamer. There are also bumper strips, some small field guides and daily bird checklists.

For participation in the work of the various committees, we suggest that you speak to the appropriate chairperson:

Conservation: Jim Akers 266-7859
Education: Mark Pokras 652-7655
Field Trips: Fred Hamer 641-7438
Ways and Means: Sherri Hamer 641-7438
Membership: Pat Bristow 641-4670

FINAL NOTE

The various media have been filled to overflowing with evidence of environmental disaster after environmental disaster in recent months. Not only in this country, but worldwide happenings pile one upon the other. In spite of this, there are still many, many people who cannot see beyond the end of their nose as far as where we are headed. The voice of you and me and any other person who is willing look ahead to the future we shall leave to our children and grandchildren must be raised in protest until common sense becomes common.