ATLANTIC CURRENTS

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

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An excellent turnout greeted Audubon VP George Porter for his excellent program on frogs and toads. The meeting was further enhanced by the presence of regional representative Dick Martyr on his first official visit to the chapter. Dick presented our permanent charter and George Porter put the icing on the cake as he presented the check for $1000 representing our winnings in the membership Challenge Grant contest of last spring. Our November program featured Joe Delasantro and a very interesting program on Australia, particularly the area around his relatives place.

Our field trips thus far have been varied. The canoe trip in September was a smashing success as we whipped down the Oswego "white water". October's trip to Cape May was rather damp and most gave up fairly early. It was of marked interest to your editor, as several of us got to see the Pine Barrens Gentian. Novembers trip to the Brigantine Refuge was a good one although the turnout was less than expected. Many thousands of snow geese are now present, along with Canadas, many ducks, and of special interest was the large numbers of ruddy ducks seen, especially after the disastrous effects of the oil spills in the Delaware of the last couple years. Also seen was a golden eagle, and a second was seen later by several people who extended their trip to the Oyster Creek area.

NOTICE: HELP WANTED -

We have planned a cleanup operation of the beautiful bog on Great Creek Road in Oceanville to take place on November 29th at 10 AM. The bog is located about ½ mile west of Route 9 on Great Creek Road (this is the road coming out of the Refuge if you are not familiar with the area.) We suggest that you wear boots if you have them as many areas are very wet, although there are areas that do not require them. Time involved will be about 2 hours or less depending on the help available.

Future Program Notes: January program will again feature the members night that was so popular last year. Anyone who has favorite nature slides he would like to show is welcome and urged to bring same to share. Other items of special interest in the nature field are also welcome (we'll use these in between slides). We must ask that you keep slides in groups of 10-12 although you may bring several such groups. This is to ensure that everyone who brings slides will have time to show at least the one group. We will allow as many as we have time for, depending on interest.

CHRISTMAS BIRD COUNTS:

We will be participating in 3 counts this year- Oceanville on Dec. 20th, Tuckerton on Dec. 27th and Marmora, which is our count, on the 4th of January. If you are interested in participating in any or all of these counts and have not yet given your name to one of the people noted below, please contact them in the near future so that you can be fitted in to one of the parties.

Oceanville -	Ed Bristow	641-4670
Tuckerton -	Ben Hiatt	296-4016
Marmora -	Jim Akers	266-7859

Arrangements have been made for a get-together following the Oceanville count and tentative plans are in the works for the Marmora count.

PATCHES: We hope to have our own patch available by the time of the January meeting. One batch was completed but a gross error was made in the color by the maker and they had to be returned for a new production. Price will be $1.50 when we get them in.

HELP YOUR ENVIRONMENT:

For your New Year's resolution list, may we suggest that you add the following suggestion made at our last board meeting. When out on a walk, a field trip, or whatever, carry a trash bag with you and pick up what you can carry out for proper disposal. Every little bit will help to produce a cleaner environment, and your example may help to prevent future litter.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER:

There will be legislation coming up in the near future in both the House and Senate to establish the National Wildlife Refuge system as a separate entity within the Dept. of the Interior on an equal footing with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, Fish and Wildlife, etc. This will effectively separate this area from the Fish and Wildlife services. Due to budgetary cuts and recent changes in the general thrust of activities of the Fish & Wildlife service, the refuge system has been getting the short end of the stick resulting in the loss of some units, depletion of personnel, inadequate funds to maintain present refuges and to develop those already obtained but not yet reaching their full potential. Current legislation (H.R. 5512) was just passed making it impossible for the Interior Dept. to transfer units from one service to another as they attempted just recently, without first obtaining congressional approval. This should insure that there will be sufficient public notice so that public pressure can be brought to bear. We therefore recommend that you write to the Secretary of the Interior, and Senators Case and Williams, as well as Cong. Hughes (who was most helpful on H.R. 5512) supporting this concept. Reasoning is that with a definite budget that will not be deployed to other aspects of the Interior Dept. programs, the refuge system can allocate funds to carry out their function of developing and preserving the various habitats needed for survival and growth of our wildlife populations. In conjunction with this, there is a new organization that can use your support if you can spare the cash- The National Wildlife Refuge Association. This group has been established to help watchdog legislation, support the refuge system in any way possible, and perhaps raise funds to carry out functions that might not otherwise be possible. An associate membership costs $10.00. Their address is NWRA, P. O. Box 124, Winona, Minnesota 55987.

RECOMMENDED READING and/or GIFTS FOR CHRISTMAS:

1. The Pleasure of Birds - Compiled by Les Line, available from Nat. Audubon. This is a fascinating collection of articles and pictures from Audubon magazine.
2. History of Wildlife in America - a National Wildlife Federation production. Provides an interesting look at the effect of wildlife on the development of this country and the effect of development on wildlife.
3. Habitat Guide to Birding: Thomas McElroy. A different way to approach field identification. Especially useful to the novice or moderately experienced birder.

REMINDER: Membership in the Atlantic Audubon Society is a joint one with the National Audubon Society. If you are receiving this newsletter without any prior warning, it is because you have been listed as a joint member when you paid your dues to National. Likewise, if you know of anyone in this area who is a member of National Audubon and is not receiving this newsletter, please let us know. Although we are notified when new members join usually, there is an occasional slip-up along the way. Any questions in this regard should be sent to Pat Bristow at our P. O. Box and she will endeavor to straighten things out.

Along the membership line, National Audubon has offered to provide free to anyone who obtains 3 new members, a copy of AUDUBON ILLUSTRATED HANDBOOK OF AMERICAN BIRDS by Edgar Reilly, edited by Olin Pettingill. (Value $12.95) This offer will only be available as long as the books hold out or to about March 1976. The following conditions must be met- the 3 new memberships must be paid for and submitted together along with the name of the individual who is to receive the free book. Applications and money must be sent to the membership chairman who will forward same to National. All catgories of membership count including gift memberships and each is counted as one unit (family of three only counts as one unit). Send completed groups to Pat Bristow, P. O. Box 63, Absecon, N. J. 08201.

It is now time to fill those feeders and hang the suet, etc. Our wintering birds are appearing in good numbers and it will brighten up your residence to have the fine assortment of flying ornaments around to decorate your trees and shrubs. Already we have seen evening grosbeaks, pine siskins, white-throated sparrows, house finches, and juncos. Other observers have reported dickcissels in their yards. Snow buntings, horned larks and lapland longspurs as well as purple sandpipers and ruddy turnstones have been seen in the south end of Brigantine Island and around the jetty there. Some of our unusual gulls will be turning up so make it a point to visit some of these places.

Best wishes for a happy holiday season.