

PROTECTOR'S OF PINE OAK WOODS



**STATEN ISLAND'S
LAND CONSERVATION
ORGANIZATION**

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TO THE CALENDAR**

WINTER/SPRING 2006

SPECIAL CALENDAR INSERT: FREE NATURE WALKS FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS!

ENVIRONMENTALISM IS A SHARED PURSUIT WITH KNOWLEDGE GAINED FROM MENTORS

THE REFLECTIONS OF A YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST

BY PHIL BROWN

Ed. note: The following remarks were submitted by Phil Brown at the request of Protectors President Richard Buegler, after Phil attended the 2005 Land Trust Alliance Rally. Dick received the annual American Land Conservation Award at the Rally.

IT WAS AN HONOR TO BE A PARTICIPANT at the 2005 Land Trust Alliance Rally this past October in Madison, Wisconsin. Rally is a collection of land trust and conservation organization representatives from across the country, complete with a diverse selection of workshops, guest speakers, regional celebrations, and field trips geared towards every type of participant. It is the single greatest annual conservation event in the U.S. Professionals and volunteers converged to share land protection strategies, exchange tips, and gather inspiration for the challenges ahead. Guest speakers Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., a "celebrity" of environmental law and policy, and Bruce Babbitt, former Secretary of the Interior in the Clinton administration, led the way with new ideas and calls for action against the current administration, which continues to decimate the natural environment through irresponsible actions and the weakening of environmental legislation. Field trips explored exemplary natural areas, wildlife refuges, and inspirational landscapes. My personal highlights of the weekend include Kennedy's inspirational call to action, exchanging ideas with others who face similar challenges, observing reintroduced and critically-endangered whooping cranes at a national wildlife refuge, and of course, sharing in a great honor for Staten Island.

As a native Staten Islander now living in New Hampshire and working for New Hampshire Audubon, I independently learned that Protectors' president, Dick Buegler, was to receive the highest award for a volunteer in the conservation field. On the second night of a four-day event, speakers included the Governor of Wisconsin and the Mayor of Madison, both of whom are staunch supporters of conservation. And then Dick Buegler spoke. His standing ovation was only rivaled by that of Kennedy's. Witnessing the honor bestowed upon Dick was a tribute not only to him, but to all of Staten Island's conservation community, which has fought for many decades for the preser-

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**PRESIDENT'S LETTER
(GUEST CONTRIBUTOR)**

**PROTECTOR'S OF PINE OAK WOODS
SPRING MEMBERS MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 30 ♦ GREENBELT NATURE CENTER
700 ROCKLAND AVENUE (AT BRIELLE AVE),
6:30 P.M.-9 P.M., ADMISSION FREE**

TRAILSIDE TREASURES OF SPRING

- 6:30:** Doors open: Refreshments and registration; View the exhibits
- 7:15:** Introductions and Announcements
- 7:30:** Slide show of our Island's natural beauty through stunning photography
Speak with Protectors hike leaders and learn first-hand about the habitats of those areas they return to time and again.
- 9:00:** Closing remarks and raffle

**Call (718) 761-7496 for more information.
We strongly encourage car-pooling to this event as parking is limited.**

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THE REFLECTIONS OF A YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST

(continued from page 1)

vation of green spaces for wildlife and people. As Dick spoke to the audience of 2,000 from every state and several countries, his message made me realize that I am a direct product of Protectors' many successes. I came to know Protectors 15 years ago at age 10, through the Natural History Section of the Staten Island Institute of Arts & Sciences, which I had joined primarily because of my avid interest in birds. Through Protectors' education, and from birding across Staten Island, I realized that our green spaces were diminishing rapidly, and that they required a multifaceted approach from the public in order to be preserved.

From my South Beach block to Blue Heron Park, development and other anthropogenic threats were decreasing the biodiversity of our forests, fields, and wetlands. I often measured this decline in terms of birds, but have since learned to measure biodiversity in innumerable ways, through my education at Cook College—Rutgers University and professional sources. No longer did the glossy ibis flock to a wet patch at the end of my street during migration, nor did the numbers of American toad bound across the driveway with a warm spring rain. The wet patch is now arid, as the creek which fed it has been channeled, and I haven't seen a toad on Cambria Street in 10 years. Something irreversible was, and still is, occurring across Staten Island and much of the northeast. It is our challenge and right to halt this unnaturally-fast decline of ecosystems and loss of biodiversity across the globe, throughout the country, in our state, and in our neighborhoods.

Fortunately, Protectors has engaged in numerous methods which have led to conservation not only in Staten Island, but in many other areas due to its mentoring and support of youngsters over the years. In 1995, at age 15, I was lucky enough to attend a Protectors-sponsored DEC ecology camp in the Catskill Mountains, a week-long camp where kids my age from all over New York State learned about ecology through experiential education. The camp was a learning and growing experience, as we hiked four days over the high peaks, observed wildlife, like bear and porcupine, shared experiences in nature, and began to form real environmental and career goals. For me, it was an introduction to larger and wilder places than my native Staten Island could ever show me. The view from 4,180-foot Slide Mountain—green spaces for tens of miles in each direction—inspired me to work to preserve these larger intact ecosystems. Hopefully, kids will continue to find inspiration through this program for generations to come.

Results of Protectors' work is now evident in New Hampshire, through my career as a natural resource manager and conservationist. New Hampshire Audubon shares the same vision as Protectors—to protect the natural environment for wildlife and people. I perform my role as Sanctuaries Manager by protecting and enhancing over 8,000 acres of premier natural habitats in New Hampshire through wildlife management techniques such as ecological restoration, invasive plant control, forestry management, protection of habitats through enforcement of conservation easements and ensuring proper uses of conservation land, and education through field trips, instructional workshops, and outreach programs. My challenge in New Hampshire is clear. By being proactive in conservation and acting ahead of the curve, we can retain the biodiversity and natural heritage that we are so fortunate to have.

Imagine what could have been without the long-time dedication through the advocacy and education by Protectors—there might not have been an eternally-protected Mount Loretto, wild with everything from bobolinks and wood ducks to black racers and white-tailed deer. We might have been driving on a highway right through the heart of today's Greenbelt, the largest remaining mosaic of forests in all of NYC, full of rare plants and animals. Luckily, over 3,000 of Staten Island's finest acres remain home to innumerable residents of the natural world, and we have these special places to learn from, enjoy, and further protect from still, other threats. It is our mission to protect this land, as Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. urged, closing his speech at Rally with a Native American truism: "We do not own this land; we are simply borrowing it from our children."

FREE NATURE WALKS TO POND AND PARK FOR CHILDREN AND PARENTS

WITH EXPERIENCED NATURALISTS—ALL ON STATEN ISLAND!

NOTE: THE SYMBOL (♦) INDICATES THIS WALK RECEIVED FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM THE NYC ENVIRONMENTAL FUND.

Saturday, February 4, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

♦ Winter Birds at High Rock Park with Howie Fischer—Join Howie at the Nevada Ave. parking lot for a two-hour stroll with woodpeckers (downy, red-bellies and others), blue jays and dark eyed juncos, white throated and fox sparrows and gold and house finches. Find out which birds walk up the trunk and which go down head first. Overhead may be one or two soaring red tailed hawks. Bring your binoculars and the children and enjoy the wintry woodlands at High Rock. We might even see the red spathed flowers of skunk cabbage, already melting their way up through the winter snow and ice. Find out how they can do that. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Sunday, February 5, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

♦ Winter Shore Birds at Great Kills Park with Howie Fischer—Join Howie again at Gateway National Recreation Area for a special treat of the birds on the beach and the birds out on the water. Meet at the park entrance at 9 a.m. opposite Buffalo Street where the runners and walkers start out, and carpool with the bus riding walkers. Shore birds could include all different sorts of gulls and possibly flocks of white birds with black backs, the snow buntings and their friends, the horned larks, the only birds with black bibs, black moustaches and tiny black horns. Out in the water we might see a harbor seal or two, plus long tailed ducks, common golden eye and bufflehead sea ducks as well as common and red throated loons. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Saturday, February 11, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

♦ Long Pond, Tottenville's newest Pond Park—A one-to-two-mile tour of the woodlands, ponds and wetlands in the Long Pond Park area. Take a leisurely two-hour stroll with naturalist, science educator and columnist, Clay Wollney. Share Clay's reminiscences of his childhood roaming this area and learn of its natural history, the seasonal changes and the succession of habitats that has occurred over the years. Meet at PS 6, on Page Avenue and Academy Place about 3 blocks NW of Hylan Blvd. For more information call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Saturday, February 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

♦ Forest Restoration Workshop—High Rock, from Nevada Avenue to Hour Glass Pond. Meet in the Nevada Avenue parking lot at High Rock. If you are late, walk along the Loosestrife Swamp and take the right trail towards Hour Glass Pond. Gloves, plants, tools and refreshments are provided. We will check on our Highbush Cranberry plantings as well as remove all the new invasive vegetation. We will plant some shrubs if the ground is not frozen. Tools, as well as shrubs and trees are provided by a grant from the NY Environmental Fund. Refreshments are also provided. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information.

Sunday, February 12, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

♦ Miller Field Shorebird Walk, with S. I. Museum Nature Section—Wear your warmest clothing, and bring your binoculars. We will be walking along the beach front in search of rarities such as white-winged gulls, and shorebirds such as purple sandpipers. Wear appropriate footwear for walking on sand, and in the cold temperatures. Meet at the gravel parking lot at the end of New Dorp Lane. Call Seth Wollney at (718) 619-5905 for more information.

Sunday, February 12, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

♦ Winter Wonders of Mt. Loretto—Perhaps a hundred times you've wanted to explore the park's meadow vistas and dramatic cliffs overlooking Prince's Bay. Today is your chance to finally experience Mt. Loretto's winter finery. Join Arleen O'Brien and share the idyllic beauty of this exquisite 360-acre park. Enjoy the fascinating behaviors and intriguing plumages of fresh and saltwater birds. Search for winter sparrows and finches in the meadows, and in the surrounding brush, look for your favorite feathered friends. Meet in the Mt. Loretto parking lot on Hylan Blvd. opposite the CYO building. Public transportation: R train to 86 St., Brooklyn. Take #79 bus. Switch to #78 bus in Staten Island, which stops at the park's entrance/rest area. Total bus time averages an hour. Bring binoculars and dress warm. **Reservations are required for walk to occur.** If you welcome car passengers, please let Arleen know. Reserve at arleen.obrien@worldnet.att.net, or call 917-502-8826.



Sunday, February 12—Snow or Wolf Full Moon, 4:45 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.

Sunset Moonrise Walk at Mt Moses—Sunset is at 5:28 p.m. and moonrise is 28 minutes earlier at 5:00 p.m. It takes the moon another 20 minutes to rise above the hills of High Rock so we should see moonrise at about the same time as sunset. Meet at the entry road to Eger Home at intersection of Rockland and Meisner Avenues. Bring a light refreshment to share with others and a flashlight for each person in your group. Be sure to bundle up the children. The walk is barely fifteen minutes each way. On the way to the intersection see the hundreds of shrubs, trees, wildflowers and grasses in their third year of growth that DEP planted in the flood control system that has worked well so far in moderately heavy rains with no signs of erosion. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information.

Sunday, February 19, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

♦ Winter Birds at Blue Heron Park with Seth Wollney—Join naturalist Seth Wollney for a tour of one of his favorite parks, Blue Heron. This park offers great birding opportunities, so bring your binoculars. The trails might have some snow, or be a little wet, so wear appropriate footwear. Meet outside the Visitors' Center at Blue Heron Park on Poillon Avenue. For more information call Seth at (718) 619-5905.

Important Disclaimer—While we strive for safety, the activities of Protectors of Pine Oak Woods ("Protectors") have certain uncontrollable hazards which each participant undertakes and for which each participant is responsible. Neither the leader nor the substitute leader is responsible in any way whatsoever for any of these hazards. All participants assume the responsibility and risks of hiking and participating in Protectors events, and release Protectors, its leaders or substitute leaders, from any liability whatsoever for any loss, damage to personal property, or injury, however caused, of any kind, nature, and description.

Saturday, February 25, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- ◆ Conference House Beach: Life in the Intertidal Zone—We'll begin by beach-combing the high tide line to see what nature's debris has to tell us. As the tide goes out, we'll move into the intertidal zone to see what living things survive in this challenging but rewarding habitat. A variety of crabs, snails, clams, worms and small fish are likely to be discovered. It's going to be muddy so dress appropriately. Meet at the Conference House parking lot. For more information phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.



Sunday, February 26, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

Winter Tree Identification Workshop—Von Briesen Park. How can you tell a maple from an oak—without leaves? It's all in the trunk. Join Hillel Lofaso on this easy walk and get to know a tree up close. This is suitable for families with small children. Dress warmly. Meet at the parking lot at Bay Street and School Road. Call (646) 284-5434 for more information.

Monday, February 27, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

- ◆ Owl Prowl and Woodcock Sky Diving at Mt Loretto—Join our expert owl prowler, Cliff Hagen, as he uses his realistic owl call mimics to coax local screech and great horned owls to nearby overhead trees so that they can be spotted with strong beams and encouraged to call back. Cliff has added the spectacular nocturnal courtship display of the secretive American woodcock to his evening, early spring, owl prowl. The male woodcocks strut on the ground, take off singing and circling up and round, then suddenly dive down from high, with a bubbling, warbling sound to meet their mate on the ground. Bring flashlight and strong beam. Meet in the Mt Loretto parking lot on Hylan Blvd. opposite the CYO. For more information phone Cliff at (718) 227-8839.

Sunday, March 5, 12 noon to 3 p.m.

Greenbelt Nature Center to Meisner Dam and Moses Mt.—Join Hillel Lofaso for a pre-spring walk along the white Buck's Hollow trail to the Meisner Dam and then Moses Mt. Bring beverage and snack. Some minimal wet walking. Meet at the Greenbelt Nature Center parking lot at Brielle and Rockland Aves. Call (646) 284-5434 for more information

Saturday, March 11, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

- ◆ Forest Restoration Workshop—Egbertville Ravine in the Greenbelt. Meet at the entry road to the Eger Home at the intersection of Manor Road and Rockland Avenue. We walk to the entrance of the white trail off London Road near Meisner to continue our removal of the English Ivy Ground cover. For those who don't want to pull and uproot, there are another batch of trees up the road that have Ivy beginning to smother them. Gloves, plants, tools and refreshments provided Call Dick Buegler for more information at (718) 761-7496.

Saturday, March 11, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

- ◆ Long Pond, Tottenville's newest Pond Park—A one-to-two-mile tour of the woodlands, ponds and wetlands in the Long Pond Park area. Take a leisurely two-hour stroll with naturalist, science educator and columnist, Clay Wollney. Share Clay's reminiscences of his childhood roaming this area and learn of its natural history, the seasonal changes, and the succession of habitats that has occurred over the

years. Meet at PS 6, on Page Avenue and Academy Place about 3 blocks NW of Hylan Blvd. For more information call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Sunday, March 12, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

- ◆ Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve (with SI Museum, Nature Section)—Meet at the Park Headquarters for a fun and exciting walk through the historic woods of Staten Island's only State Park, considered a remnant of a Pine Barrens. Seth Wollney will discuss the unique history and habitat of the park. Bring along binoculars, you never know when a rare bird will show up! You may also see one or two relatively mature American Chestnut trees, one blighted, the other still free of the chestnut blight. For more information call Seth at (718) 619-5905

Sunday, March 12, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

- ◆ Conference House Park—Join Seth Wollney for a walk through the woods of Burial Ridge, and along the beaches of Tottenville. Bring your binoculars along. Birding this time of year can be very interesting as the winter visitors linger, and the spring migrants start to show up. Meet at the parking lot at the end of Hylan Blvd. For more information call Seth at (718) 619-5905.

Tuesday, March 14, Lenten or Sap Full Moon, 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Sunset Moonrise Walk at Mt Moses—Sunset is at 6:02 p.m. and moonrise is 7 minutes earlier at 5:55 p.m. It takes another 20 minutes to rise above the hills of High Rock so we should see moonrise after sunset. Meet at the entry road to Eger Home at intersection of Rockland and Meisner Avenues. Bring a light refreshment to share with others and a flashlight for each person in your group. Be sure to bundle up the children. The walk is barely fifteen minutes each way. On the way to the intersection see the hundreds of shrubs, trees, wildflowers and grasses that DEP planted in the flood control system that has worked well so far in moderately heavy rains. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information

Saturday, March 18, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

- ◆ Conference House Beach: Life in the Intertidal Zone.—We'll begin by beach-combing the high tide line to see what nature's debris has to tell us. As the tide goes out, we'll move into the intertidal zone to see what living things survive in this challenging but rewarding habitat. A variety of crabs, snails, clams, worms and small fish are likely to be discovered. It's going to be muddy so dress appropriately. Meet at the Conference House parking lot. For more information phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Sunday, March 19, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

- ◆ Early Woodland Migrants at High Rock Park—Greet the first of the phoebes and the tiny kinglets on their return from the neotropics. Migrating ducks will return to the ponds. Join Howie Fischer f or this pre-spring introduction to migrating birds. The robins, blue jays and cardinals should greet you and from the swamps, the call of the male spring peepers, a true tree frog. Also look for the emerging and already blooming skunk cabbage Meet in the parking lot at the end of Nevada Avenue. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Sunday, March 26, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

◆ Early Migrants at Clove Lakes Park—Five species of Woodpeckers may greet you; downy, hairy, red bellied and flickers. Clove Lakes Park is a superior bird watching park with woodland birds in the hills and water fowl on the ponds including herons, night hawks, ducks and grebes. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Monday, March 27, 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

◆ Owl Prowl and Woodcock Sky Diving at Blue Heron Park—Our expert owl prowler, Cliff Hagen, has added the spectacular nocturnal courtship display of the secretive American woodcock to his evening, early spring, owl prowl. Bring flashlight and strong beam. Meet in front of the Blue Heron Park Visitors' Center. For more information phone Cliff at (718) 227-8839.

Thursday, March 30, 6:30-9:30 p.m.

TRAILSIDE TREASURES OF SPRING

Protectors' Semi-Annual Spring Meeting—Protectors has established itself as one of the all-round outdoors organizations on Staten Island. Join us in an armchair tour of the treasures of spring in the many parks on Staten Island through stunning photography. In the new Greenbelt Nature Center on Rockland Avenue, at the intersection of Brielle Avenue. Meet and talk with walk leaders, Protectors' Board and many other fellow members and guests. Refreshments and raffle of a treasured Bernard Paul bird wood carving. Call (718) 447-2220 for more details.

Sunday, April 2, 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Wolfe's Pond Park from Forest to Shore—Can you imagine a more beautiful place than Wolfe's Pond Park with its forest of ancient trees, freshwater lake and wild shore? It has it all. Join Hillel Lofaso on this enchanting 4-hour, moderately paced walk as we take in the plants, birds and insects of early spring and explore the different habitats and dune ecology. Meet at the parking lot by the restrooms at the end of Cornelia Street off Hylan Blvd. Bring lunch and beverage. Call (646) 284-5434 for more information.

Saturday, April 8, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

◆ Forest Restoration Workshop—Buck's Hollow in the Greenbelt—Meet at the entry road to the Eger Home at the intersection of Manor Road and Rockland Avenue. We walk the quarter mile down the trail to our working location at the crossing of the Blue and White Trails. Gloves, plants, tools and refreshments provided. We will plant additional shrubs under the dying Norway maples, check on our Elderberry and American Elm plantings as well as remove all the new invasive vegetation. Call Dick Buegler for more information at (718) 761-7496.

Saturday, April 8, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

◆ Long Pond, Tottenville's newest Pond Park—a one-to-two-mile tour of the woodlands, ponds and wetlands in the Long Pond Park area. Take a leisurely two-hour stroll with naturalist, science educator and columnist, Clay Wollney. Share Clay's reminiscences of his childhood roaming this area and learn of its natural history, the seasonal changes, and the succession of habitats that has occurred over the years. Meet at PS 6, on Page Avenue and Academy Place, about 3 blocks NW of Hylan Blvd. Phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Sunday, April 9, 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

All Day Botanical Tour of Bloodroot Valley and High Rock Park—Meet with Torrey Botanical Society at 10 a.m. on the Passenger Pickup Ramp of S. I. Ferry Terminal or at 10:30 a.m. at Manor Rd. side of S. Wagner High School. This could be the peak of the blooming of hundreds of native Bloodroot. Lunch and beverage are a must. Call Dick Buegler, (718) 761-7496 to make reservation or arrange car pool

Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

◆ Mt. Loretto—With S.I. Museum Nature Section—Spring has Sprung! A walk along the roads at Mt. Loretto can be very rewarding this time of year. Plants are starting to wake from their winter dormancy, and migrating birds fill the air with song. Meet at the Kenny Rd. parking lot. Call Seth at (718) 619-5905 for more information.

Sunday, April 9, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

◆ Clove Lakes Park with Howie Fischer—Meet at the Martling's Avenue Bridge to look down onto the canopy of trees below the waterfall. This is one of the easiest birding spots on the island. We can expect kinglets, water thrush, pine warblers and yellow bellied sap suckers. Then walk up the hill a short distance into the park and find another world of birds. Bring your binoculars—and the children, who should love the excitement of the color and song. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Thursday, April 13, 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Grass or Egg Full Moon

Sunset Moonrise Walk at Mt Moses—Sunset is at 7:34 p.m. and moonrise is 17 minutes later at 7:51 p.m. It takes the moon another 20 minutes to rise above the hills of High Rock so we should see moonrise about half an hour after sunset. Meet at the entry road to Eger Home at intersection of Rockland and Meisner Avenues. Bring a light refreshment to share with others and a flashlight for each person in your group. Be sure to dress for a cool evening. The walk is barely fifteen minutes each way. On the way to the intersection, see the hundreds of shrubs and trees getting ready for spring flowering. DEP planted them along with grasses and wildflowers in the flood control system that has worked well so far in moderately heavy rains. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information.

Saturday, April 22, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

◆ Conference House Beach: Life in the Intertidal Zone—We'll begin by beachcombing the high tide line to see what nature's debris has to tell us. As the tide goes out, we'll move into the intertidal zone to see what living things survive in this challenging but rewarding habitat. A variety of crabs, snails, clams, worms and small fish are likely to be discovered. It's going to be muddy so dress appropriately. Meet at the Conference House parking lot. For more information phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Saturday, April 22, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Wildflowers Galore at Bloomingdale Park—See Staten Island's second best spring wildflower display in a 2 mile stroll of a mature forest along a classic meandering stream. See hundreds of Spring beauties and thousands of May apple in bloom as well as trout lily and Canada Mayflower. Meet at the intersection of Maguire Avenue and Drumgoole Road West. Wear sturdy shoes



and bring a light refreshment. For more information call Dick Buegler (718)761-7496.

Sunday, April 23, 1 p.m. to 3:30 pm

◆ Corson's Brook Woods, Staten Island's Greatest Secret—Celebrate Earth Day with a visit to a magnificent native wildflower display. See tens of thousands of white spring beauties, hundreds of trout lily in bloom, plus wild leek, Canada mayflower and skunk cabbage galore. Meet on Forest Hill Road, corner of Jasper St., opposite rear entrance road to the Petrides campus. Expect some wet walking. Few places can match this superlative display of tree, shrub, wildflower and fern biodiversity in 21 acres. It also has the rare bladdernut, corn lily, zigzag goldenrod and dwarf ginseng. Few people other than Dick know how to find this site. Please bring cameras. For more information phone Dick Buegler, (718) 761-7496.

Monday, April 24, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m.

◆ Owl Prowl and Woodcock Sky Diving at Sharrott Avenue Beach in Pleasant Plains—Join our expert owl prowler, Cliff Hagen, as he uses his realistic owl call mimics to coax local screech and great horned owls to overhead trees so that they can be spotted with strong beams. Woodcock has a spectacular noisy diving flight. See Feb 27 for full description. Bring flash light and strong beam. Meet in the new parking lot at the end of Sharrott Avenue, just north of Mt Loretto on Hylan Blvd across from Resurrection Cemetery. For more information phone Cliff at (718) 227-8839.

Sunday, April 30, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

◆ Clove Lakes Park Spring Bird Migration Under Way—Bring your binoculars with you for an exciting walk down along the stream which flows towards Marling's Pond, while learning the basic field marks of these little jewels of the spring. Meet at the Marling's Ave bridge. Call Seth at (718) 619-5905 for more information.

Sunday, April 30, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

◆ Migrating Spring Birds at Clove Lakes Park—Join naturalist/educator Mike Shanley, of Blue Heron Park, for a tour of Clove Lakes Park, Staten Island's best bird observation locale. We'll start at the Marling's Avenue Dam where the water spilling down and the stream flowing under the insect laden forest below are major bird attractions. This includes migrating warblers, and many resident bird species in the tree tops as we look down. Then we'll wander up the sledding slope to see what other bird species are there. The tour may finish with a walk around the pond to view the large number of water fowl including numerous ducks, geese, grebes, mergansers and often herons. We may see two dozen or more species. Park and meet at the Marling's Avenue Bridge. For more information phone Mike at (917) 753-7155

Saturday, May 6, 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

37th Annual Spring Ten Mile Walk of the SI Greenbelt—Ten moderate miles at a comfortable pace. See rich woodlands, wonderful distant ocean vistas and the blooming of the Pinxter Azalea, Highbush Blueberry and Canada Mayflower. Meet at the foot bridge leading to the Clove Lakes Café. Bring lunch, beverage and sturdy walking shoes as well as camera, binoculars and field guides.. We go in all weather but walk shortened if high pollution levels occur. Call Dick Buegler (718)761-7496, Chuck Perry (718) 667-1393 or Herman Zaage (718) 727-0772 for more information.

Sunday, May 7, 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Clay Pit Ponds State Park/Preserve—Trees and Wildlife in a mini Pine Barren. Find out why Protectors urged the preservation of this parkland and how we got our name in 1975. It has rare pine trees, two rare southern oak species, fence swift lizards, and a few rather unusual wildflowers, nothing like our Greenbelt forest. Meet at the park office at the end of Carlin Avenue, off Sharrott's Road in Rossville. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information.

Tuesday, May 9, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

◆ Sunset Owl Walk at Conference House Park (CHP)—Join Naturalist/educator Mike Shanley for a wildlife tour of the Conference House Park before and after sundown (8:01 p.m.). Mike will include the history of the site, the archeology that has unearthed Native American artifacts and burial sites and the state rare hackberry forest. Mike will mimic owl calls to attract screech and great horned owls. There is also a chance of seeing common nighthawks, chuck-will's-widow, and whip-poor-wills as well as bats. Sunsets at CHP can be spectacular. A flashlight will be helpful to return to your car or bus stop. Bring a light refreshment or beverage for the evening. Meet at the parking lot at the very end of Hylan Blvd in Tottenville. For more information phone Mike at (917) 753-7155.

Friday, May 12, 7:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. — Milk or Planting Full Moon

Sunset Moonrise Walk at Mt Moses—Sunset is at 8:04 p.m. and moonrise is 12 minutes earlier at 7:52 p.m. It takes the moon another 20 minutes to rise above the hills of High Rock so we should see moonrise shortly after the sunset. Meet at the entry road to Eger Home at intersection of Rockland and Meisner Avenues. Bring a light refreshment to share with others and a flashlight for each person in your group. Be sure to bring the children. The walk is barely fifteen minutes each way. On the way to the intersection of Rockland, see the hundreds of shrubs, trees, wildflowers and grasses that DEP planted in the flood control system that has worked well so far in moderately heavy rains. We should be able to see the Pinxter Azalea and Dogwoods in bloom. Call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 for more information.

Saturday, May 13, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

◆ Forest Restoration Workshop—Greta Moulton at High Rock. Meet in the Nevada Avenue Parking lot at High Rock. If you are late, walk to the first bend of the entry road and follow the yellow trail to the green trail to our working location. Gloves, plants, tools and refreshments provided. We hope to plant additional shrubs and trees as well as remove invasive vegetation. This site also has a large English Ivy infestation near the Manor Road crossing. Call Dick Buegler for more information at (718) 761-7496.

Saturday, May 13, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

◆ Long Pond, Tottenville's Newest Pond Park—a one-to-two-mile tour of the woodlands, ponds and wetlands in the Long Pond Park area. Take a leisurely two-hour stroll with naturalist, science educator and columnist, Clay Wollney. Share Clay's reminiscences of his childhood roaming this area and learn of its natural history, the seasonal changes, and the succession of habitats that has occurred over the years. Meet at PS 6, on Page Avenue and Academy Place about 3 blocks NW of Hylan Blvd. For more information call Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825 .

Sunday, May 14, Mothers' Day, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

◆ Migration in Full Swing at Clove Lakes Park — By this time of the month most of the migrants are “in”, and easy to find! Join Seth Wollney for a walk along the stream, and through the woods of Clove Lakes Park, in search of rarities while learning the basic field marks of the more common migrants. We will also be learning some of the different songs and calls of the birds whenever possible. Meet at the Martling's Ave. bridge. For more information call Seth Wollney at (718) 619-5905.

Saturday, May 20, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

Greenbelt Wildflowers and Mt Moses Spring Forest Vista — Join Dick and our photographer Sandra in a stroll around the Meisner Ave pond at the foot of Lighthouse Hill that is the delight of wildflower fanciers and a boon to native frogs and sandpipers. The pinxter has already bloomed there but dogwoods and more are to come. Then walk easily to the top of Mt Moses for the grand view to see what spring looks like from above. Then see the beautiful rare fringe tree atop Mt Moses that is a wetland, southern, stream bank tree that will bloom in late May or early June. Meet at the bottom of the entry road to the Eger Home where we can easily park. Pack a light lunch and a beverage. For more information phone Dick Buegler at (718) 761-7496.

Saturday, May 20, 12 noon to 2 p.m.

◆ Conference House Beach: Life in the Intertidal Zone — We'll begin by beachcombing the high tide line to see what nature's debris has to tell us. As the tide goes out, we'll move into the intertidal zone to see what living things survive in this challenging but rewarding habitat. A variety of crabs, snails, clams, worms and small fish are likely to be discovered. It's going to be muddy so dress appropriately. Meet at the Conference House parking lot. For more information phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or Clay Wollney at (718) 303-7825.

Sunday, May 21, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

◆ Serene Mt Loretto at the Peak of Migration — We have the opportunity to visit the field birds, the woodland birds, the migrating shore birds and water fowl all within a short distance. Up in the trees above you can see the colorful orioles and below the steep cliff, out in the bay, the black, double crested cormorants. Mt Loretto has its own breeding birds as well, for it's a safe place to raise winged offspring. Be sure to check that small pond at the base of the hill below the Cardinal's retreat. We often find night herons and egret hanging out there. And be sure to keep checking the skyline for hawks, kestrel and osprey. Meet in the Hylan Blvd parking lot directly across from the Mt Loretto CYO building. If you are early, there are many birds in the nearby shrubs and trees. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Sunday, May 21, 9 a.m. to 12 noon

◆ Migration Marvels of Great Kills Park — Join Arleen O'Brien to explore the dramatic changes in the park since her winter explorations. Bask in the warm weather while listening to the tunes of “migrating musicians.” In the woods, look for gleaming vireos, restless warblers, hawking flycatchers, and search the marsh for stalking herons and scrambling peeps. Great Kills is a pretty park with 575 acres, which includes woods, fields, beaches, cliff, ponds, a tidal marsh, bay and harbor. Meet in the parking area off Hylan Blvd. opposite Buffalo Street. Public transportation: R train to 86 St., Brooklyn. Take #79 bus to the park's entrance. Bus ride averages 30 minutes. Bring binoculars. **Reservations required for walk to occur.** If you welcome car passengers, please let Arleen know. Reserve at arleen.obrien@worldnet.att.net, or call (917) 502-8826.

Sunday, May 21, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

◆ Conference House Park, Late Bird Migration and Horse-Shoe Crab Love — Join Seth Wollney for a walk through the woods, and fields of Conference House Park in search of late neo-tropical migrants. After this leg of the walk we will go to the beach in hopes of finding horse-shoe crabs as they come to the beaches to mate. Meet at the parking lot at the end of Hylan Blvd. Call Seth for more information, (718) 619-5905.

Sunday, May 28, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

◆ Serene Mt Loretto and its breeding birds — Howie Fischer is expert in the breeding birds of Staten Island. We know that the orchard oriole, as well as many other songbirds breed here. The Willow flycatcher has been seen for many years as well. But even if you are not much of a birder, it's exciting to see the colorful birds like the orioles and the indigo bunting that have been identified there. The view out toward the ocean and the Jersey shore makes the whole trip worthwhile. Once you visit this Unique Area (it is not called a park) you'll want to return frequently to know it better. Meet at the parking lot on Hylan Blvd. opposite the CYO building. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

Sunday, May 28, 12 noon to 4 p.m.

Southwest Latourette: Where History and Nature Meet — Latourette Park is the largest component making up our Greenbelt and it has seen historic events played out over the centuries from Revolutionary War fortifications and spies to 18th and 19th century American life. Walk Old Mill Road and up the banks along the blue trail and take in the expanse of Richmond Creek. Meet at Historic Richmondtown parking lot on Clarke Avenue off Arthur Kill Road. Bring lunch and beverage. Call Hillel Lofaso at (646) 284-5434 for more information.

Sunday, June 4, 8 a.m. to 10 a.m.

◆ Mt. Loretto and late breeding birds — A second chance to join Howie Fischer who patiently points out the birds he sees and gives you interesting observations of their habits, their songs and their breeding. We know that the orchard oriole, as well as many other songbirds, breed here. The Willow flycatcher has been seen for many years as well. But even if you are not much of a birder, it's exciting to see the colorful birds like the orioles and the indigo bunting that have been identified there. The view out toward the ocean and the Jersey shore makes the whole trip worthwhile. Meet at the parking lot on Hylan Blvd. opposite the CYO building. For more information phone Howie at (718) 981-4002.

PROTECTOR'S BUSINESS MEETINGS

Wednesday, February 1, March 1, April 26, June 7

Executive Board Meeting — 7 to 9 p.m., 80 Mann Avenue.

Wednesday, February 22, March 15, May 10, June 21

Protectors Board Meeting — 7 to 9 p.m., The Art Lab, Snug Harbor. Come see us planning. Important decisions are often made at the meeting. Refreshments served. For more information, phone Dick Buegler (718) 761-7496 or any board member.

PROTECTOR'S ADVOCATES PROTECTION OF SHARROTT'S ROAD SHORELANDS AREA

THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT HAS BEEN APPROVED by the Board of Directors of Protectors of Pine Oak Woods. It was sent to the Regional Open Space Committee for inclusion in the comments to the "New York State Open Space Conservation Plan—2005".

Protectors of Pine Oak Woods heartily endorses efforts to preserve as open space the areas of the Sharrots Road Shorelands and Port Mobile Swamp Forest and Tidal Wetlands nominated by The Trust for Public Land for open space preservation as described in the "Draft New York Open Space Conservation Plan—2005". Because of the accelerated development of Staten Island's west shore, we believe that it is imperative to secure those open spaces with high ecological and recreational value before they are forever lost to development, and therefore are calling the attention of our two thousand members to the state and fate of these shorelands and their inclusion in the New York State Open Space Conservation Plan.

Because properties in this area have recently witnessed a spurt in development, Protectors especially urges that priority be given to securing those areas that are not in some way currently protected as wetlands or by other restrictions that maintain their open space status. We feel that the shore area between Sharrots Road and Androvette Road is especially at risk. Securing this property now would preserve a resource that could provide public waterfront access for scenic views and passive recreation. The Sharrots Shorelands lie midway between Conference House Park and the forthcoming Fresh Kills Park recreational areas, and there are no waterfront parks in this area of Staten Island. Preserving this area as public open space would also prevent further isolation, encroachment and fragmentation of the ecologically valuable wetland areas to the immediate east and west.

Also of concern is the healthy swamp forest that has grown around the Kinder-Morgan (Port Mobil) tank facility and the associated ponds and wetlands that drain Tappans Creek from Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve to the Arthur Kill. This area presents a unique wildlife environment of small ponds and substantial wood and shrub regrowth over a clay-sand substrate that presents an opportunity for preservation by acquisition or conservation easement.

Taken as a unit, the Sharrots Road Shorelands and Port Mobil Swamp Forest and Tidal Wetlands present an opportunity to expand the area protected by Clay Pit Ponds State Park Preserve with adjacent city or state parkland. Protectors of Pine Oak woods applauds the foresight to register them in the Master Plan and supports making their acquisition as public land a priority.

—Don Recklies, Conservation Co-Chair



Spartina, fiddler crabs and shorebirds make up a rich habitat along this stretch of the Arthur Kill at Sharrots Road Shorelands.

S.I. GREENWAY: ITS TIME HAS COME (PART I)

PROTECTOR'S BOARD HAS DECIDED that it needs to study the status of the planned Staten Island Greenway and seek ways to advocate for its implementation. Here is the first part of a two-part article dealing with the promise and roadblocks of that greenway. Part I deals with the concept and history of Greenways. Part II will address the different components of Staten Island's Greenway and their status.

Greenways have captured the public imagination in cities across the United States for a century at least. In his book, *Greenways for America*, commissioned by the Conservation Fund of Washington, DC, environmental activist and author Charles E. Little attributes the birth of the greenway movement to Frederick Law Olmsted in 1865. But the concept and construction didn't really take off until the 1960s in the name of open-space preservation, incorporating the rails-to-trails movement, which sought to convert old railroad rights-of-way to trails systems.

Greenways help provide and link habitats

Although we think of greenways as having an important recreational function, when planned properly, greenways also provide vital ecological protection.

When designing a greenway, it is important to consider what impact it will have on natural processes. Jonathan M. Labarre, author of *How Greenways Work*, says a greenway functions in six basic ways:

- as habitat for plant and animal communities
- as a conduit for plants, animals, water, sediment, and chemicals;
- as a barrier preventing movement;
- as a filter allowing some things to pass while inhibiting others;
- as a source for animals or seeds which move to other parts of the landscape; and
- as a sink for trapping sediment, toxins, or nutrients.

Planners should identify which ones are most important to the site. For exam-

(continued on page 9)

ple, in a heavily developed area, a greenway can offer scarce habitat. Severely fragmented landscapes would benefit from a greenway designed to be a conduit allowing animals to reach isolated protected areas. A greenway which is along a river should be planned to filter excess nutrients from surrounding lands (in which case it also acts as a barrier preventing movement of sediments and a sink storing them). One proposed along an abandoned rail bed in the Midwest can act as a source of native prairie grasses.

Greenways encourage other form of transportation

A greenway has also been generally defined as a multi-use pathway for non-motorized transportation along natural and manmade linear spaces such as rail and highway rights-of-way, river corridors, waterfront spaces, parklands and, where necessary, city streets. The Hudson River Greenway in Manhattan is one such example. It is situated along the West Side Highway on the eastern banks of the Hudson River. It gives pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers and skaters access to the waterfront as well as a quick way to get uptown.

—Hillel Lofaso

PROTECTOR'S ROLE IN GREENBELT CREATION REMEMBERED

Ed. note: Protectors' President Richard Buegler drafted this history as part of his submission to the 2005 Greenbelt Gala Journal, honoring the Greenbelt Conservancy.

PRIOR TO THE FOUNDING of the Greenbelt Conservancy in 1989, before there was a Staten Island Greenbelt Park, Mayor Koch decided to sell unused city real estate to meet a 1979 NYC financial crisis. He chose some Farm Colony properties including the less than 8-acre Great Swamp at Sea View, too small to be considered for wetland designation mapping by DEC which would give it protection.

Sylvia Zaage and I remapped it one afternoon finding more than 25 acres of various wetland types including swamp meadow, fern swamp, shrub swamp and tree swamp. On the basis of that study, NYS DEC agreed to map it as designated wetlands.

Early in 1980, at a member's suggestion, Protectors leafleted at the SI Ferry terminal to protest the sale of any potential Greenbelt properties.

That prompted an offer by a young lawyer, Paul Hollender, to represent Protectors, pro bono, in a suit against Mayor Koch

and the Health and Hospitals Corporation, owner of the property, thus blocking the sale of Greenbelt lands. As a youth, Paul had walked many of the 1960's Staten Island Greenbelt walks, sponsored by SIGNAL, the Staten Island Greenbelt Natural Areas League. Protectors agreed to sue. Then Paul filed the first of many such future actions by Protectors.

In response, Mayor Koch, on the recommendation of Robert Wagner, Jr., chairman of the NYC Planning Commission, requested that the Staten Island Office of City Planning perform a study to investigate the possibility of creating a SI Greenbelt Park. That study was completed by Thomas Paulo, now Commissioner of Staten Island Parks, but then a staff member of SI Planning.

In 1984, Protectors was invited to a ribbon cutting of the newly created Staten Island Greenbelt, across the street from the entrance to Pouch Boy Scout Camp on Manor Road. The first Greenbelt sign was soon erected at that site and the Greenbelt was safely on the way to its present greatness, with the Great Swamp included.

—Richard Buegler

CLIP AND MAIL

PROTECTOR'S OF PINE OAK WOODS



STATEN ISLAND'S LAND CONSERVATION ORGANIZATION

ARE YOU A MEMBER? HAVE YOU RENEWED?
YES, I WANT TO HELP STATEN ISLAND'S FINEST REMAINING NATURAL AREAS AND SEE THE GREENBELT PROTECTED.

Please enroll me as a member in the following category:

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 - \$100.00...Donor (includes 2 lapel pins)*
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Dear Members,

We thank all of you who faithfully renewed your memberships in 2005. As you may have noticed, your membership card states that your renewal goes to March of the following year, regardless of what month you sent your dues. If your mailing label has the date March, 2006, or a previous year, please renew when March comes around. We need your support to continue our work! We wish you a joyful 2006!

NEW MEMBERS: Denise Caruselle, Joe Cipriano, Marilyn Curcio, Fran Curiazza, Carmel Fusco, Susan Gooberman (Trees, NY), Edith Goren, Cindy Goulder, Kristen Ohlson, Shore Walkers, Zvi Spiler, Barbara Trees

NEW LIFE MEMBERS: Chris Iannace, Lenore Miller (for her outstanding work that helped Dick receive the prestigious American Land Conservation Award)

PROTECTOR: Matthew Miner

DONOR: Dr. Janis D'Angelo, Dennis & Marie Dell'Angelo, Vincent DiTizio, John & Inge Konther, Adele McMahon, Enid Mitchell, Monica Platt, Ted & Arlene Timmons

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ORGANIZATIONS: Greenbelt Conservancy, NRDC (Eric Goldstein), Natural Resources Protective Assn., Shore Walkers, Richmondtown and Clarke Avenue Civic Assn., SE Annadale Woodlands Assn.

SPECIAL DONATIONS: Joel & Judith Berger, Mildred Broderidge, Mr. & Mrs. John Grandinetti, Mariko Perry, Eleanor

Pripadcheff, Mr. & Mrs. John Ross, Paul C. Schwartz (Life member); \$125 from Henry Stern and the Henry J. Stern & Robert F. Wagner, Jr. Fund.

SPECIAL THANKS:

- To Bernard Paul, who again donated his popular carved birds to the raffle at our semi-annual meeting.
- To Jeanne Swadosh, for her special contribution in memory of her father
- To Hillel Lofaso, for his dedicated work and financial contribution to maintain Protectors' website, www.siprotectors.org.
—Sylvia Zaage (sylhz@earthlink.net)

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

MISSING OUT?

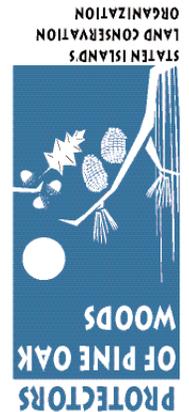
We prepare a fascinating field report on what we come across on our walks, and we'll e-mail it to you for your reading pleasure. Just send your e-mail address to Sylvia Zaage at sylhz@earthlink.net and put "Subscribe to PPOW" in the subject line.

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SAVE THE DATE: PROTECTORS SEMI-ANNUAL SPRING MEETING
THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 6:30 P.M.-9 P.M.
GREENBELT NATURE CENTER

JOIN US ON ONE OF OUR NATURE WALKS! SEE INSERT INSIDE



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