

resting of birds following their age-old paths of the Atlantic Flyway. But in passing a resolution urging the Board of Supervisors of the Town of Hempstead to preserve these wetlands, the Federation noted that they were important for more than the maintenance of critically depleted waterfowl.

The resolution also read that the wetlands "provide the nutrients that support the production and nurture of fish and shellfish essential for the metropolitan area's fishing and are vital for the maintenance of the Long Island water table."

It was with similar motivation — multi-motivations — that the Council endorsed the idea of establishing a national seashore on the barrier beach of Fire Island fronting the Atlantic Ocean off Long Island. The resolution, urging passage of H.R. 3693 by Rep. John Lindsey "To establish the Fire Island National Seashore" read in part as follows:

"We feel it represents an excellent opportunity to have within the borders of New York State a park operated by the National Park Service, offering, in the tradition of that Service, as much access as possible for enjoying camping, hiking, fishing, wildlife study and other outdoor activities."

It is important that clubs and members write urging their respective congressmen to support this legislation — to let the lawmakers know that people from throughout the state want a national seashore on Long Island. It should be reported that Senators Kenneth Keating and Jacob Javits have both sponsored legislation calling for a national seashore on that strip.

The New York Forest Preserve, another area having multi-fold importance for the public, including that of water supply, is the subject of a proposed new policy announced recently by Assemblyman Watson Pomeroy, chairman of the Joint Legislative Committee on Natural Resources.

It is similar to the one he unsuccessfully advocated two years ago. The new plan would encourage foot trails, lean-tos and public campsites in the so-called non-wilderness areas, according to the announcement. Mr. Pomeroy also maintained that the "forever wild" concept would remain the fundamental policy.

As bird watchers, we have found ourselves in the forefront of an effort that actually has the effect of rescuing man from the terrible consequences of his own ignorance-blessed foolishness in tampering with the delicate balance of nature — whether it be playing around with sprays or "salvaging" marshes or swamps. The individual who hardly knows what a Blue Jay looks like might benefit greatly from the fight a local bird club launches to save the nesting grounds of some ducks or to save some songbirds from poisons. A generation ago, even bird watchers might have been surprised by the far-reaching consequences of their conservation work.

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* Omissions should be called to the attention of the Bibliography committee: Sally F. Hoyt, Chairman, John B. Belknop, Allen H. Benton, & Kenneth C. Parkes.

FIELD NOTES

Tree Swallow Roost in Orient, Long Island. With Notes on Their Habits Thereto:

The tree swallow roost was first discovered on October 4, 1908. It was a clear typical October afternoon with a light easterly breeze coming over the sea. I was enjoying a late afternoon stroll when my attention was arrested by an enormous gathering of swallows that had collected high above a certain woodlot. I noticed immediately that the many thousands of swallows that filled the air in the vicinity had arrived at this one locality and were maneuvering strangely at an extraordinary height.

They were first observed shortly after sunset and a faint gloom dimmed the air. The birds were exceedingly high and their movements most interesting. The great flock would huddle in a compact bunch, then rapidly spread out into an extensive loose flock. Then, with surprising quickness they would dash together again into a swarming mass. These drill-like maneuvers were repeated time after time as the flock gradually rose upward. Once again the great flock expanded far out and up. They turned, and the entire assemblage rushed to a dense center, where they hovered briefly; then like a huge serpent uncoiling, a narrow column of birds poured downward from one edge of the great flock and with a rushing roar went whirling and twisting with meteorlike speed earthward. The column did not exceed ten feet in diameter, yet thousands upon thousands of swallows poured downward in less than two minutes' time. Approximately two-thirds of the entire flock went down in that first grand descension. The swallows that remained up continued their interesting antics about five minutes longer before descending in like manner, a few of the last remaining up until it was too dusky to distinguish them by sight. It was my first observation of the kind, a spectacular sight to witness and one never to be forgotten. The rushing sound from the many small wings was equal to that of an express train approaching from the opposite side of the woods. I was elated that I had located a swallow roost. Looking westward toward the bright afterglow I could see myriads of swallows streaming through the treetops seeking roosting perches for the night. The noise from the thousands of fluttering wings was likened to the surf on a distant shore and lasted well into the darkness before all became composed. After all the birds had settled down and become quiet for the night, I shook a tree and the commotion that followed the disturbance was startling. Every tree evidently was full of roosting swallows.

The roost consisted of a twenty acre tract of second-growth mixed hardwood trees, fifteen to thirty feet in height, of oak, hickory, sassafras, maple and cherry. Low level farms spread out on the west and north of the roost and salt marshes with salt tidal creeks on east and south.