

Audubon

ADVOCATE

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Audubon New York's top legislative initiatives: Bird Conservation Area amendments and Lead Fishing Sinker Ban top the list of conservation accomplishments in New York State for 2002

Staff Report

THE NEW YORK STATE legislature concluded its 2002 session with the passage of two new state laws that are critical to Audubon New York's conservation agenda. Both the Bird Conservation Area amendments and the ban on lead sinkers were Audubon's top legislative priorities for this year and we played a key role in their passage.

Dramatic expansion of the Bird Conservation Areas program will provide new opportunities to preserve bird habitat in other areas of state-owned lands. Now, as a result of this Audubon supported legislation, additional species and more habitat will be eligible for a

stronger level of protection and management. This legislative initiative was originally a Governor's Program Bill.

Additionally, legislation banning the sale of split shot lead sinkers weighing one half ounce or less was enacted by the State Legislature. This two-year phase out of the sinkers demonstrates New York State's continued commitment to environmental protection and public health. Eliminating the most toxic and dangerous sinkers will have a ripple effect across the nation. Audubon worked closely with the Conservation Council and the Adirondack Council on the initiative.

"When Governor Pataki signed these two pieces of legislation, it represented another strong step forward for conservation in New York State," said David Miller, executive director of Audubon New York.

Audubon applauds the legislative

leadership of Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver, and the ongoing commitment by Assembly Members Steven Englebright, sponsor of both legislative initiatives in the Assembly, and Tom DiNapoli, Chair of the Environmental Conservation Committee. "Lead poisoning is the number one cause of death for certain large waterfowl and is a menace to children," said Assemblyman Steven Englebright. "Banning these deadly lead sinkers will protect our health and ecology."

Audubon also recognizes the leadership of Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno, and the exceptional work of Senate Environmental Conservation Committee Chairman, Carl Marcellino. "Both of these pieces of legislation will have a significant impact on the wildlife and habitat in New York State," said Senator Marcellino.

Audubon continues to tackle tough conservation issues with the support of its members and friends, coming together for conservation.



OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

(L to Right) David J. Miller, Speaker Sheldon Silver, Assemblyman Steven Englebright, and Assemblyman Thomas Dinapoli.

Future of Audubon New York Is Filled With Promise

By Kimberley L. Ray

NEARLY SEVENTY-FIVE AUDUBON Council of New York State representatives and Audubon staff gathered at Kutsher's Country Club in Monticello, New York for another successful bi-annual council meeting. On Friday night, Bryan Swift, Leader of



KIMBERLEY L. RAY

National Audubon's Chief Operating Officer, Dan Beard addresses the Audubon Council of New York State.

DEC's Nongame and Habitat Unit, addressed the crowd about initiatives key to Audubon's mission.

On the following day, Geoffrey Cobb Ryan, Audubon Council of New York State chair and David J. Miller, executive director, led a discussion to rework the Conservation Resolution process, whereby policy resolutions are adopted by Council members to be presented to New York State legislators.

Carole Nemore, director of conservation, gave an overview of Audubon New York's Smart Growth program, and Graham Cox, forest and wetland program coordinator, moderated a panel discussion about the Catskills entitled "From Open Space to Casinos." Featured speakers included: Alan Sorenson, planning director for Sullivan County, John Myers, executive director of the Shawangunk Ridge Open Space Project in Orange County, and George Schuler of the Nature Conservancy.

Steven Kahl of the United States Fish and

CONTINUED ON PG. 3

Inside this issue



AUDUBON NEW YORK

New BCA!

Governor Pataki designates Schodack Island as a BCA. (See story on page 4)



AUDUBON NEW YORK

Logging Q&A

Audubon answers questions about logging practices. (See story page 9)



KIMBERLEY L. RAY

New Developments

Audubon New York hires new development team. (See story page 13)



CORNELL LAB OF ORNITHOLOGY

Pesticides Update

Audubon completes the first phase of a public education effort. (See story page 14)