

Audubon New York Partners with WE ACT

By Lynn Tiede

LAST SPRING Audubon New York began collaborating with West Harlem Environmental Action (WE ACT) to create a teacher-training program. WE ACT is a non-profit organization that works to improve environmental health, the quality of life, and to secure environmental justice in predominantly African American and Latino communities throughout New York City.

As with other historically underserved and disenfranchised communities, community access to green space and wildlife is limited in Harlem. Residents are also disproportionately exposed to certain pollutants,

including indoor hazards such as lead-based paint and outdoor hazards such as diesel exhaust. WE ACT has been funded by the Environmental Protection Agency to (1) implement a scientifically sound, culturally sensitive educational training program highlighting community environmental issues for Upper Manhattan middle and high school teachers and their students to improve teaching skills, environmental literacy, and problem solving at the neighborhood level, (2) demonstrate through this model project that a collaborative partnership can effectively work with the school system to enhance science curricula with an environmental component and (3)

encourage students to pursue environmental careers through a student-scientist mentoring project.

Approximately 20 teachers began (8) two hour training sessions in January to learn about important local issues: (1) Wildlife in the City; (2) Green Space; (3) Water Quality & Conservation; (4) Disease & Environmental Health; (5) Air Quality; (6) Waste Management; (7) Green and Sustainable Living.

Teachers will also learn about city organizations that address these issues, and stewardship or research projects that could be undertaken by their classes. Participants will develop their own lesson plans for activities they can complete with their students. If time and schedules permit, these 20 teachers will be asked to share information learned with additional staff at their schools through school based workshops or in services.

At the end of the year, participating students will attend an environmental student summit where they will share their projects, interact with their peers, teachers, and environmental experts. Program results will be disseminated

to Harlem community residents, organizations, and elected officials, as well as to educational, scientific, and health professionals.

During the training, students will be encouraged to pursue environmental careers. Fifteen neighborhood students with a demonstrated interest in math, science, and community service from junior high and high schools will be nominated by teachers for a related program to help prepare them for environmental careers. Students in classes of teachers participating in training will have a greater chance of being selected for this special summer program.

This training program is an initial step toward introducing Audubon's work and developing closer bonds with middle and high school teachers and residents of Upper Manhattan. Audubon New York is sharing its educational expertise with WE ACT to create the program. Through this collaboration, Audubon New York wants to establish links between its conservation priorities and the environmental issues faced by inner city communities.

AUDUBON NEW YORK'S UPCOMING EVENTS!

February 2002 19 - 22

Come join us for the Winter Nature Camp at Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary. Campers grades pre-K through 6 will explore various topics concerning winter wildlife and environmental issues. For more information call Karl Brummett at (516) 922-3200.

March 2002 4 & 5

The Lake Ontario Bird Festival is scheduled for 10AM-5PM at Yogi Berra's Jellystone Park Resort. The event is FREE and open to the public. Festival attendees can choose between four bird oriented programs and special activities for children. For more information contact Janet Clerkin at (315) 349-8322 or janet@co.oswego.ny.us.

8-10

Audubon New York's Spring Council meeting will occur at the Gideon Putnam in Saratoga Springs, NY. For more information or to make a reservation please call Daphne Lumpkin at (518) 869-9731.

April 2002 26

Join us for the opening of the newly renovated Prospect Park Audubon Center. The ribbon cutting ceremony is scheduled for 10AM. For more information call Shirley Hartman at (518) 869-9731.

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Theodore Roosevelt Audubon Center and Sanctuary will hold its annual Gala at the Nassau Country Club in Glen Cove, Long Island. To purchase tickets or receive information on leadership packages, call development officer, Devon Daniel or director Marilyn England at (516) 922-3200.

May 2002 1- 25

Birdathons will be held throughout the month. For more information about Capital District birdathons call (518) 869-9731 or contact your local chapter for information.

31-June 1

The 10th Annual New York Land Trust Conference "Public-Private Partnerships for Land Protection" will occur at the Gideon Putnam Hotel in Saratoga Springs, NY. For more information contact Geri Angeles at (518) 587-0774 or www.gangeles@lta.org.

Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary Plans a *Bully!* Gala 2002

Join US!

On Saturday, April 27, 2002 the Theodore Roosevelt Sanctuary will hold its fourth annual *Bully!* Gala at the elegant Nassau Country Club, in Glen Cove, Long Island.

Proceeds from the event go toward underwriting the sanctuary's education and avian research programs. Tickets are \$250 each. To purchase tickets or to receive information on leadership packages call development officer Devon Daniel at (516) 922-3200.



PHOTOS BY KIMBERLEY L. RAY