

Audubon New York: Setting the Statewide Pace for 2020 Vision

By John Flicker

John Flicker is the President of the National Audubon Society

NEW YORK STATE has always been a leader in Audubon. Six years ago, Audubon embarked on a bold plan to increase our conservation capacity at the state and local level by creating a state program in every state. New York was the first to step up with an office in Albany, and a board of volunteer leaders. Since then, Audubon New York has become the leading statewide voice for conservation. Audubon New York's Important Bird Area Program is a national model and led to the adoption of the State Bird Conservation Area law. On Long Island Sound, Audubon New York has led the way in getting hundreds of millions of federal and state dollars to clean-up and restore this great estuary. Audubon New York has worked with Governor Pataki on nearly every major open space acquisition, totaling over 300,000 acres protected over six years, and Audubon New York has been a leader in Smart Growth programs, both locally and statewide.

Audubon's greatest strength is our ability to attract and mobilize at the community level. For over a century, our local chapters have engaged people in conservation education and public policy advocacy. With 30 chapters in New York, Audubon's network of grassroots activists is connected to communities across the state. They fuel Audubon's conservation agenda.

Audubon's 1995 Strategic Plan called on us to build on that community-based heritage with a network of Audubon Centers in each state. Again, Audubon New York took the lead with an ambitious statewide plan calling for 12 centers in the next 10 years. Three major centers have already been launched, including Constitution Marsh Audubon Center, Theodore Roosevelt Audubon Center, and the Prospect Park Audubon Center. Other centers such as Rheinstrom Hill, Buttercup Farm, Knox Farm State Park and the Crusoe Center at Montezuma are in development.

Looking to the future, Audubon is committed to engaging a much broader and more diverse spectrum of people

in conservation. The 2000 census highlighted America's increasing diversity. There is no longer any racial or ethnic majority in New York City, a trend that will continue across the state and nation. We will not succeed with our mission if our organization does not better reflect the face of America. We are starting to address this challenge by establishing Audubon Centers in diverse communities, particularly in urban communities. Once again, Audubon New York stepped up as the national leader with our premier urban center at Prospect Park in Brooklyn. The Prospect Park Audubon Center, with cutting edge exhibits and programs, will reach the greatest diversity of citizens of any center in the history of Audubon.

Since Audubon New York became Audubon's first state office, 25 state offices have now been established across the country toward our goal of a state office in each state. Audubon New York continues to set the pace and to serve as a role model for other states across the country. As you complete a particularly challenging year in New York, you should take great pride in the accomplishments of Audubon New York, and look with optimism on the challenges ahead.



National Audubon Society president John Flicker poses in front of Prospect Park Audubon Center and Boathouse.

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Thomas W. Keesee, Jr., was presented by his widow, Patricia Keesee. Thomas Keesee was instrumental in helping to establish an advisory board for the fledging office in 1996, and in creating by-laws for the establishment of the New York State Board of Directors. Audubon New York was privileged to have Keesee's leadership and expertise.

In its first year, the luncheon drew 150 attendees and raised over \$155,000 to support the programs of Audubon New York. The second Thomas Keesee Conservation Award luncheon will be held in November. Look for details to follow.



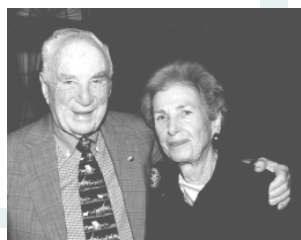
(left to right) Audubon New York Board Chairman Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, Master of Ceremonies and National Board Member Howard Brokaw, Patricia Keesee, Honoree Donal C. O'Brien, Jr., Audubon New York Executive Director David J. Miller and National Audubon Society President John Flicker.



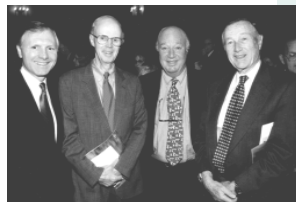
(left to right) Audubon New York Board Chairman Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff, National Board member Gerry Bertrand, Deputy Director for Governor George Pataki Lynette Stark and National Audubon Society President John Flicker.



The O'Brien Clan with Glenn and Devon Olson (far left) of the National Audubon Society.



Longtime fishing mates Joseph F. Cullman and Marian Heiskell.



(left to right) National Audubon Society President, John Flicker, Audubon New York Board Member Oakes Ames, Honoree Donal O'Brien and Alan Weeden.



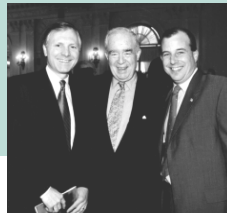
(left to right) Katie O'Brien, Francis Musselman, Donal O'Brien and Alan Weeden enjoy a lighthearted moment.



David J. Miller (left) with Keesee Family.



National Board Member Bill Ross and his wife Nancy.



(left to right) National Audubon Society President John Flicker, Audubon New York Chairman Connie Eristoff and Audubon New York Executive Director David J. Miller.



Donal O'Brien (left) and Dan Lufkin.



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n. 1. A disposition of assets by will
2. A legacy 3. A gift in your will to protect birds, wildlife, and habitat.

As an Audubon member, you have helped define the environmental movement with your past support.

Now, help define the future by including a gift to Audubon New York in your will.

For further information contact:

Shirley Hartman at (518) 869-9731
or shartman@audubon.org

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