

Port Authority Visits RWA Environmentors



Christopher Zeppie and Sandra Dixon speak to the Kappa VI students about their work.

Employees of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey (PANYNJ) visited the Rockaway Waterfront Alliance, prior to the holidays, and discussed its wildlife management program with an Environmentor After-School class of Kappa VI students.

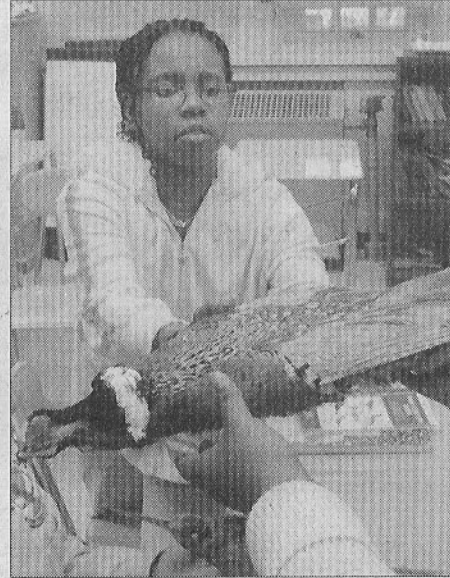
Weeks later the harrowing US Airways Flight 1549 that landed on the Hudson River on January 15, clearly illustrated the dangers of airline traffic mixed with the surrounding wildlife habitat; in this case the path of the Canada goose.

Christopher Zeppie, Director of Environmental Policy and Programs; Sandra Dixon, Program Manager for Government and Community Relations; and Laura Francoeur, Wildlife

Biologist in charge of Airport Operations led the group of students and showed a presentation of some animals and birds that make the surrounding wetland their home and the tactics they must use to control this area for safe air travel.

The students had a chance to see many of the animals that had been captured and discussed the concerns associated with having an airport located in a shoreline habitat. PANYNJ's wildlife management program does a great deal to reduce bird strikes by managing bird populations, insect control and water management.

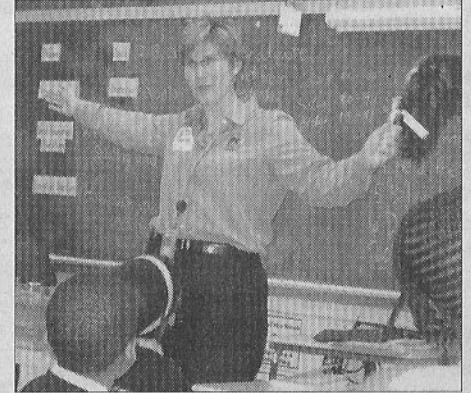
"It was a rare opportunity for the students to speak directly with the Port Authority employees and learn of



Kappa VI student Vivian Ogu takes a look at a pheasant, one species that makes its home along the shoreline.

the tremendous work they do to address public safety," said RWA educator, Zakhia Grant. "Many thanks go out to Christopher Zeppie, Sandra Dixon and Lisa Francoeur for coming to Far Rockaway to lead a class, as the recent crash brings to light the serious issues they must address every day in trying to protect both the environment and safety for the public who travel by air."

The students will follow up in the spring with a rare opportunity, a visit with the falconers at JFK Airport. They will learn firsthand about the many people involved in keeping the airways safe.



PANYNJ biologist Lisa Francoeur demonstrates the wing span of some of the birds that make Jamaica Bay their home.



Kappa VI student Shalimar Torres looks at a bird specimen.