

FINAL

New York State Ornithological Association, Inc.
February 4, 2012 Board Meeting Minutes
1099 Powderhouse Road, Vestal, NY

The Board of Directors of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) met in Vestal on February 4, 2012. The meeting was called to order by President Gail Kirch at 9:35 a.m.

Present were, **Tim Baird**, Barbara Butler, **Mike DeSha**, **Gail Kirch**, **Victor Lamoureux**, Berna Lincoln, **Shai Mitra**, Bill Ostrander, **Carena Pooth**, **Kathy Schneider**, and **Bob Spahn**. **Joan Collins** and **Andy Mason** attended via teleconference.

Summary of Action Items:

- Approved November 5, 2011 board meeting minutes. (Item 1)
- Approved the proposed 2012 General Operating Fund Budget. (Item 4)
- Approved taking Vermont Center for Ecostudies grant money out of the General Memorial Fund. (Item 4)
- Approved holding at least one meeting a year in Albany. (Item 6)
- Approved publicizing the Purple Martin Housing Project in *New York Birders*. (Item 6)
- Approved Gail Kirch, Andy Mason, and Kathy Schneider as the Executive Committee. (Item 6)

1. **Approval of Minutes** – Kathy Schneider made a motion to accept the November 5, 2011 meeting minutes with changes. Shai Mitra seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.
2. **President's Report** – Gail Kirch gave the report. She wrote letters to members and clubs regarding gift memberships and renewals. She wrote thank you letters to new members and to existing members who increased their membership donation. NYSOA received a request to publicize the Audubon camps held in Maine, and Gail informed them we do not do advertising for other organizations. Bill Ostrander will take over analysis of the NYS DEC Waterfowl Count data. Gail met with The Owego Treadway Inn and Conference Center regarding the Annual Meeting and gave them a \$100 deposit to schedule a room from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. on September 29, 2012. Gail talked with Bill Lee and he will ask his club in Albany to host the 2015 Annual Meeting. She also asked Bill Ostrander and Joan Collins to speak with their respective clubs about hosting Annual Meetings in 2013 and 2014.
3. **Treasurer's Report** – Andy Mason gave the Treasurer's Report. The 2010 audit is completed and in order. Andy presented the Balance Sheet and the Detailed Statement of General Operating Fund Activity through December 31, 2011.

4. Committee Reports

Archives – Linda Benedict gave a written report. She has been traveling to Cornell and is working on becoming familiar with the archives. Berna Lincoln suggested she talk to Phyllis Jones and Brenda Best about her questions on what items need to go in the archives and questions about the indexing used by the Library. Gail Kirch will email the request that Linda speak with Phyllis Jones.

Awards – Gail Kirch had no report.

Bylaws – Bob Spahn gave the report. The Bylaws states that a director can only serve two consecutive terms and elsewhere states that a director may be elected by the Board to fill out a term replacing a director. It does not clearly state that this partial term counts as the first of potentially two consecutive terms. Bob believes we should interpret it that way (as has been done in the past).

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Conservation – Andy Mason gave the report. Andy wrote a Conservation Column for *New York Birders* titled, “Dollars for Birds” on the state budget situation. He plans to send a message of concern to legislative leaders about the lack of funding for DEC projects. Joan Collins received the DEC draft Spruce Grouse recovery plan. Comments are due by March 1st. The Double-crested Cormorant control issue comes up for federal renewal this year. The Conservation Committee will closely monitor this issue.

eBird – Bob Spahn gave the report. He is still trying to meet with Chris Wood at Cornell. Bob would like to talk with Chris about eBird records and screening filters. One of the issues is how to vet records input to eBird. Shai Mitra said there is no consistency between people screening records. The current monthly filters do not work especially well during migration, since expected sightings change much more rapidly than monthly. Screeners can change the filters as they see fit. Shai is concerned that eBird is viewed as a substitute for *The Kingbird* or NYSARC. Kathy Schneider mentioned some of the NY eBird help links are currently broken.

A suggestion was made that the NYS List Serve should mention reporting rare birds to NYSARC on the bottom of their posts. Carena Pooth suggested we should talk to Chris Tessaglia-Hymes about adding the NYSARC message to NYS Birds List Serve posts. Andy Mason mentioned the possibility of NYSOA hosting the NYS Birds List Serve instead of Cornell.

Finance – Berna Lincoln gave the report. The committee proposed a 2012 General Operating Fund Budget. Berna went over the income and expense parts of the proposed budget. The committee took out the Muckrace line item this year. Kathy Schneider made a motion to approve the proposed 2012 General Operating Fund Budget. Gail Kirch seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. The committee recommends the \$1000 grant to the Vermont Center for Ecostudies (VCE), previously approved, come out of the General Memorial Fund. Bob Spahn made a motion to take the Vermont Center for Ecostudies grant money out of the General Memorial Fund. Mike DeSha seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Marketing/Publicity/Field Trips – Kathy Schneider gave the report. Kathy announced that Richard and Cyndy Tkachuck joined the committee after attending the gull field trip in January. She provided a written report from the committee conference call. The committee would like to get member clubs to put the NYSOA logo on their websites. Kathy needs board members to let her know who the web masters are for each club. Berna Lincoln suggested asking for the name of the web master on the club renewal forms. Berna will make this addition. Cyndy and Richard Tkachuck are working on a NYSOA coffee mug. Kathy would like a drawing of an Eastern Kingbird in addition to the NYSOA logo on the mug. She will ask Sue Adair to do the drawing. Kathy asked board members to make note of their local newspaper nature writers so we can send press releases to them.

Joan Collins asked Pat and John Thaxton to do a workshop/field trip up Whiteface Mountain for high elevation species in early July. Kathy is looking into Derby Hill for a spring field trip/workshop. Tim Baird commended Kathy for doing a great job organizing the successful gull workshop/field trip in January.

Membership – Barbara Butler and Berna Lincoln gave the report. There are 574 individual members, 49 life members, and 44 club members. There was a question about how often the online membership list will be updated. Kathy Schneider feels it would be helpful to have a known schedule for when the online list is updated. Barbara Butler added club name and club position to the mailing address. (So a member who is a club president and an individual member can see why they are receiving two

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issues.) Dues notices: 109 email renewal notices were sent on January 17 and 375 paper renewal notices were sent on January 25. Thirty-four have responded to email renewals (~30%). One hundred sixteen responded to the paper renewals (~same rate as email so far). Second notices will go out in mid-March. Carena Pooth suggested a second email renewal go out sooner – maybe two or three weeks. Berna held up the renewal notices until January (from Dec.) since members only received 2 *Kingbird* issues last year.

Nominating Committee – Joan Collins gave the report. She put a notice in the January *New York Birders* issue with Nominating Committee members' contact information, and asked for nominations from members. Berna Lincoln will send Joan additional information. Joan needs to have more info on where meetings will be held before asking people to join the board.

NYSARC – No report. Angus Wilson needs to know the publishing deadline for the 2010 Annual Report. Shai Mitra would like the report by April 15th. Tom Burke and Willie D'Anna's terms expired on December 31, 2011. Gail Kirch will find out if they are interested in being appointed for another term.

NYS Young Birders Club– Carena Pooth gave the report. Saw Mill River Audubon sponsored the annual kickoff meeting on January 15th at Croton Point. It is always the best attended meeting of the year. The young birders recently went on a trip to the NYS Museum and had a tour with Jeremy Kirchman. Benjamin Van Doren's research paper is a finalist in Intel's National Science Talent Search (1900 entries and 40 finalists are left). There are currently 30 youth members. Seventy percent of the members are 15 years old or younger now. Carena provided a chart showing where the young birders live. Six members live outside of New York State. This year, the young birders won first prize in the Superbowl of Birding in western Massachusetts.

Organization Handbook – Mike DeSha gave the report. Mike updated the table of contents.

Publications – Tim Baird and Shai Mitra gave the report. Tim will send out the January issue of *New York Birders* soon. Tim still needs a replacement as Editor. Tim needs articles by late March for the April issue.

Shai Mitra reported the December issue of *The Kingbird* is at the printers. The March issue of *The Kingbird* will not have the 2010 NYSARC report. Deadlines are always 6 weeks before the issue month. Shai will keep the board updated on when issues are being sent out. He is aware of the threshold in number of pages that causes the postage to go up and will try to work within that threshold to keep postage costs down. The printer will use a paper envelope to mail *The Kingbird* to eliminate problems with the print on the cover being damaged both by the printer handling and by the post office. Berna Lincoln brought up additional problems with the stapling.

Research – Victor Lamoureux gave the report. He is receiving questions in email originating from the NYSOA website.

Website & Information Services – Carena Pooth gave the report. See written report for website updates.

County Lists: Carena Pooth has gotten very positive feedback from members on keeping the project going. Sixty-two people submitted 2010 data before September last year. Members have until March 15 to submit 2011 data.

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Doug Gochfeld requested that NYSOA put his Long Island cell phone SMS text RBA directions on the NYSOA website. Carena Pooth will coordinate with Doug and handle it in a fashion similar to the way we list listservs and rare bird alerts.

5. Old Business:

Annual Meeting 2012: (Sept 29) A discussion about field trips was held. The 2009 one-day Annual Meeting had staggered field trip times. Field trips will be held in the morning followed by lunch. There will be a speaker during lunch. The Business Meeting will be held at 1:30 p.m. The room should be rented from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. We had a discussion of possible speakers and equipment needed. Andy Mason and Joan Collins offered to bring LCD projectors. The luncheon buffet option was selected.

6. New Business:

Location of future board meetings: Andy Mason made a motion to hold at least one meeting a year in Albany. Kathy Schneider seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved. Kathy Schneider will look into Montezuma for the July meeting.

Purple Martin Housing Project: Tim Baird provided information regarding Celeste Morien's request for NYSOA to publish information about the Purple Martin Housing Project in *New York Birders*. Carena Pooth made a motion to publicize the Purple Martin Housing Project in *New York Birders*. Shai Mitra seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

Eliminate Board and BoardPlus mailing lists and combine into BoardPlus only: The consensus was that the Board list is needed in exception cases involving sensitive or confidential information, so it will not be eliminated. It was agreed that the nominating committee should be removed from the Board list but will remain on the Boardplus list. Carena Pooth will change the settings so each reply goes only to the sender rather than the entire distribution list.

Executive Committee: The committee members will be Gail Kirch, Andy Mason, and Kathy Schneider. Shai Mitra made a motion to approve Gail Kirch, Andy Mason, and Kathy Schneider as the Executive Committee. Bob Spahn seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Review of mailings to member/member clubs before sending: Topic tabled until the next board meeting.

7. Adjournment - Shai Mitra made a motion to adjourn at 3:01 p.m. Victor Lamoureux seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Collins
Recording Secretary