

FINAL  
New York State Ornithological Association, Inc.  
February 8, 2014  
Hubbard Brook Lodge, Clarence Fahnestock State Park  
2920 Route 9, Cold Spring, NY

The Board of Directors of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc., (NYSOA) met at Hubbard Brook Lodge in Cold Spring, NY, on February 8, 2014. The meeting was called to order by President Kathy Schneider at 9:30am.

Present were Janet Allison, **Seth Ausubel**, Barbara Butler, **Bill Ostrander**, **Carena Pooth**, and **Kathy Schneider**. **Tim Baird**, **Jeff Bolsinger**, Linda Clark Benedict, **Joan Collins**, **Mike DeSha**, **Kevin Griffith**, Andy Mason, **Shai Mitra**, and **Mary Beth Warburton** attended via teleconference.

**Summary of Action Items:**

Approved November 16, 2013, Board meeting minutes as presented. (Item 1)

Approved a motion to invest in the web service Crash Plan Pro at a cost of \$10/month to back-up NYSOA files now held only on the personal computers of individuals. (Item 6)

1. Approval of Minutes: Barbara Butler made a motion to approve the November 16, 2013, Board meeting minutes as presented; Seth Ausubel seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.
2. Treasurer's Report: Andy Mason's report (posted on the boardplus page of the website), includes the Balance Sheet, General Operating Fund Activity, and Fund Balances through December 31, 2013. Andy noted that the \$3700 deficit was a bit better than expected. *Kingbird* expenses were up over the previous year but still below budget. The Stoner Award balance was about \$5900. He may take some funds out of the investment accounts this year to cover cash expenses and avoid going below minimum balances in accounts.
3. President's Report: Kathy Schneider's full report is posted on boardplus. She reported that Angus Wilson was able to represent NYSOA at a meeting regarding the management of Jamaica Bay NWR; noted that Gordon Batcheller of the DEC planned to retire in late 2015; sent a Certificate of Appreciation to the Queens County Bird Club for hosting the 2013 Annual Meeting; wrote membership renewal letters and sent thank you notes to those who renewed at the Kingbird Club level; wrote President's column and article about awards given at the 2013 Annual Meeting for the newsletter; arranged for free meeting space at the Montezuma Audubon Center for the April Board meeting; worked with the Executive Committee to approve the November 2013 Annual Meeting minutes to be published in the March 2014 *Kingbird* ; also worked with the Executive Committee to reappoint Angus Wilson as chair of NYSARC through 2016 and appoint Jim Pawlicki through 2016, replacing Dominic Sherony; and corresponded with new committee chairs to aid them in moving forward. Kathy also discussed the make-up of the Key Contacts Roster and will recirculate the list to make it a more inclusive NYSOA directory that will include all NYSARC and committee members.
4. DEC Report: Bryan Swift discussed the DEC plan to eliminate free ranging mute swans in New York State. Public reaction has been heavily against the plan and he is looking for our public support. There are currently three distinct populations in NY State: on Long Island, in the Hudson Valley, and around Lake Ontario. The Long Island population is stable but upstate populations are growing. Impacts have been seen in lower numbers of other waterfowl and especially in nesting black terns. The plan includes a combination of techniques including preventative measures, bans on import and release and supplemental feeding, rules for private ownership, an egg adding program, and hunting. The plan is already in effect in DEC Wildlife Management Areas but they can't go on private lands unless invited. Discussion involved specific examples and locations of ecological damage done by the swans, why this effort should be a priority now,

whether the effort in resources would achieve the goal (trumpeter swans may simply replace the mutes), and the cost to public good will. It was decided that Andy Mason would draft and circulate a letter summing up our thoughts and concerns.

5. Committee Reports:

Annual Meeting: Seth Ausubel gave the report. About 200 people attended the 2013 Annual Meeting in Uniondale. The final budget is posted on boardplus. The QCBC netted about \$10,500 from the event, about \$7000 of it from donors, including optics manufacturers. They lost a little on the banquet but the raffle did very well. Carena Pooth suggested a donation to NYSOA might be in order since we shared the financial risk in sponsoring the meeting. Seth will discuss with QCBC.

Tim Baird had no update on plans for the 2014 meeting to be put on by the Cayuga Bird Club; he had not yet been able to contact the Tkachucks. Tim will check on whether they plan to keep using the NY Birders Conference brand developed for the 2013 meeting. Kathy Schneider reported that the 2015 meeting to be put on by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club did not yet have a location or a speaker.

Archives: Linda Clark Benedict gave the report (posted on boardplus). In January, she organized all the files she had, prepared information to update the Finding Aid, and delivered it all to the archives at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. She will continue collecting materials from future meetings and asked that anyone with files related to their work for NYSOA, which they feel should be included in the archives, should send them to her.

Awards: Linda Clark Benedict will chair this committee. Kathy will resend her charge to the Stoner Committee to come up with a policy and plan for the number of and basis for awards in future. Kevin Griffith asked that committee members let him know their thoughts on Kathy's charge in advance of a conference call that will be set up soon. We noted a need for better documentation on the procedures and activities of the Awards Committee in the Organizational Handbook. Linda offered to keep notes and do this as she learns the job. This needs to be addressed before the April meeting as letters inviting nominees need to go out in March.

Bylaws: There was no report.

Conservation: Andy Mason gave the report. He will draft a letter on the mute swan issue and circulate it to the Board. Four columns on conservation are scheduled for the newsletter; one on snowy owls will be first. He will get a letter out opposing 10-year permits for eagle take at wind farms. The comment period for the proposed wind development on Amherst Island is still open. Mary Beth Warburton will work with Gerry Smith to develop comments.

County Lists: Carena Pooth gave the report, also posted on boardplus. The deadline for submission for 2013 reports is March 1. So far, 62 have been submitted.

Finance: No budget is yet available in Berna Lincoln's absence. We had about \$1000 less in income last year with expenses about the same. A \$5000 deficit is projected. Kathy would prefer not to raise dues but the deficit needs to be addressed.

Marketing and Publicity: There was discussion of whether the NYSOA motto should be "For the birds and birders of New York State" versus the "Empire State." This was tabled until we can get an opinion from Berna Lincoln. Kathy will organize a field trip to Bashakill the last weekend in March; Mary Beth will organize a proposed field trip on loons in late July or early August including a presentation from Nina Schoch of the Biodiversity Research Institute.

Membership: Barbara Butler gave the report, also posted on boardplus. The report shows a decline in membership since the same time last year, with 194 individuals not yet renewed. Renewal notices for clubs were sent out February 4. Barbara noted that several Board members had not yet renewed. Berna Lincoln recently raised the rates for library subscriptions sent overseas due to the increase in mailing costs and non-U.S. subscribers were notified. Renewals for this year are at the new rates. Bill Ostrander suggested we send renewal notices to those who didn't renew the previous year. Kathy Schneider suggested we reach out to Annual Meeting attendees who were not members with a letter and a free electronic issue of *NY Birders*.

NY eBird: Bob Spahn was away. Kathy will draft an email to John Fitzpatrick of the Cornell Lab to get a contact for us. She will do this before the next meeting.

NYSARC: Angus Wilson not present. No report.

NYSYBC: Carena Pooth gave the report (also posted on boardplus). The annual kick-off meeting was January 19, attended by 16 young birders. Jacob Drucker, NYSYBC alumnus, gave a talk on Peru and parent Sean Murtha gave one on drawing birds. Fundraising for 2013 received a big boost from one member's art exhibition in NYC. Upcoming trips include Shai Mitra at Sterling Forest for golden-winged warblers and a hawk watch at Derby Hill in April.

Organizational Handbook: Mike DeSha noted that he still needs the section on Finance from Berna Lincoln.

Publications: Shai Mitra gave the report. Nothing out of the ordinary in the December issue of *The Kingbird*. The Annual Meeting minutes will appear in the December issue that was published a bit late. Deadline for the April issue of *NY Birders* is March 20. Nothing to report on the NYS Checklist.

Research: Kevin Griffith gave the report. He sent out information on the Rusty Blackbird monitoring program happening this spring, and encouraged others to let him know of other opportunities. Bill Ostrander has received some of the regional surveys from the January Waterfowl Count, and Bryan Swift (DEC) has given him two missing years of data. Shai needs count data by May 1 for inclusion in the June issue of *The Kingbird*.

Website and Information Services: Carena Pooth gave the report. She created historical lists of Stoner, Elliott, and Meade awards and posted them on the website. She created a MailChimp account for NYSOA for more attractive and reliable communications with members. MailChimp makes it easier to send to large lists. For the NYSYBC website, she posted the Flickr-based slideshow shown at the Annual Meeting to the website, created a new page on scholarships, and updated Youth Officers roles and responsibilities on the About Us page.

6. Old Business: Carena Pooth noted that the telephone used to teleconference requires an analog phone line (one was not available at Hubbard Brook Lodge). The cost for a digital converter would be \$80-100. It was agreed that Carena would buy one and bring it to the April Board meeting. She also requested that NYSOA purchase a cloud-based service to back up organizational files that are on the personal computers of Barbara Butler, Andy Mason, and herself. Bill Ostrander made a motion to invest in Crash Plan Pro at a cost of \$10/month to back-up files for organizational continuity. Barbara Butler seconded and it passed unanimously.
7. New Business:

Term limits database: Carena will create a spreadsheet of length of terms of appointment for all Board members and NYSARC appointees. It will be posted to the boardplus page.

Atlas website: Kathy was approached by John Ozard to gauge our interest in creating an online database of the results of the last Breeding Bird Survey, similar to one in Pennsylvania. As the data is already online, we are unsure what this would add to access. The book also includes introductory text plus maps and bird images. NYSOA owns the book rights now and there are existing files. Kathy will ask for more information.

Product marketing: Kathy received a request for NYSOA to allow marketing of bird-related products to its members at a special price. There was interest in considering such selling as a way to raise funds, perhaps at the Annual Meeting or in a “birders’ marketplace” page on the website. Seth noted that, as a not-for-profit group, we could sell up to \$50K per year without having to file a full tax return. This was tabled for future discussion.

Next Board meeting: Saturday, April 5, 2014, at Montezuma Audubon Center.

8. Adjournment: Carena Pooth made a motion to adjourn. Bill Ostrander seconded and it passed unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 1:12pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Janet Allison  
3/28/14