

YOUR PRESIDENT SAYS

By the time this issue reaches you the 1954 officers will have taken command. Our organization is fortunate to enlist the services of so fine and representative a group of dedicated persons. All the officers are outstanding conservationists in their respective communities and have been active in our affairs for many years, our new president and vice president being among the founders of the Federation. They, as well as our outgoing officers, Mrs. Alice B. English of Amsterdam and Miss Louise Helfer of Watkins Glen, helped to make my own duties relatively easy.

It may not be amiss to summarize briefly the work done by the Federation in the six years since its organization.

Today every regional bird club in New York State is affiliated with the Federation — a total of 29 clubs scattered throughout the State. This is more than twice the number represented at our organization meeting in Amsterdam. Since members of affiliated clubs have full right of participation in Federation affairs without the necessity of being Individual members, it can fairly be said that the Federation represents several thousand persons. Individual members' — whose primary function is to provide much needed financial support — now number over two hundred and fifty. Our membership chairman, Miss Audrey L. Wrede of Brooklyn, is entitled to much of the credit.

Our annual conventions have been remarkably successful. Attendance has been good, and the programs have been varied and of high quality. The field trips and other opportunities to get together have proved invaluable in providing an exchange of ideas for students throughout the State. During the two years of my presidency, the program chairmen, Dr. Minnie B. Scotland of Albany in 1952 and John C. Orth of Bear Mountain in 1953, were so competent that I was able to leave this difficult job entirely to them and to the local committees of the host clubs.

Conservation was one of the basic reasons for our organization. We have been very lucky in our successive Conservation Committee chairmen, Walter Elwood of Amsterdam and Samuel R. Madison of Delmar. The first definite fruit of our efforts was a New York law in 1950 protecting almost all hawks and owls. In 1951 we were forced to fight a difficult but successful battle before the State Legislature to prevent repeal of protection for the Snowy Owl. In 1952 our efforts to obtain a state law protecting the Wood Duck were blocked at the last moment by the forces which we had defeated the previous year. In 1953 our conservation activities were chiefly dedicated to aiding the other conservation groups to obtain the passage by the Legislature of the proposed Ostrander Amendment to the State Constitution, designed to prevent invasions of the Adirondack Forest Preserve. We also helped to obtain the veto by the Governor of an unwarranted statute affecting the skunk. From time to time our members have had their attention called to conservation proposals both in the State Legislature and before Congress and have been advised as to the desirability of writing to their respective legislators. It should be borne in mind that most legislators have little personal interest or information regarding conservation proposals. They thus give great weight to letters received from their constituents.

Professor Hazel R. Ellis of Keuka Park has devoted herself for many years to the chairmanship of the Publications and Research Committee. She

has been collecting valuable information as to the avifauna and areas covered by each of our Member Clubs and has been working with the very active special Committee on the State Bird Book, under the chairmanship of Dr. Gordon Meade.

The publication of the KINGBIRD under the editorship of Allan S. Klonick of Rochester (recently succeeded by Stephen W. Eaton of St. Bonaventure) has served not only an organizational need but has contributed an important medium for ornithological research in our State. Dr. Peter Paul Kellogg of Ithaca kindly offered us regular participation in his weekly radio program, and Ed Seeber, now at Cornell, has been serving as our radio editor to receive material from the Member Clubs.

There are undoubtedly fields of endeavor in which the Federation could be useful if its means permitted. Since dues of Member Clubs are kept very low to encourage affiliation, it is only from Individual memberships that funds for more than the barest minimum of organizational activities have been obtained. Despite its limited budget, the Federation has served and is serving a function not provided by any other organization. This has been achieved through the selfless efforts of our members.

Eugene Eisenmann.

NEW REGIONS EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1953

