

WHAT THE FEDERATION MEANS TO ITS MEMBER CLUBS

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All bird clubs from time to time have local problems arise which only they can handle themselves. However, other Federation clubs can often be of help with suggestions from their own experience, or by aiding in contacting local, county, or state authorities on problems which may trouble the local club.

National conservation problems of a general nature are usually well covered by a number of nationwide organizations, such as the National Wildlife Federation, the Wilderness Society, and the Izaak Walton League of America, for example. Those problems relating to bird life in particular are brought to our attention through the National Audubon Society, the American Ornithologists' Union, and the Wilson Ornithological Society. Unless you are on the special mailing list to receive National Wildlife Federation bulletins, there is sometimes a considerable time lag in bringing vital national issues to your attention.

The conservation committee of our own Federation has at times in the past kept each club informed on the status of important conservation issues by means of timely bulletins, and recommended the action which should be taken to benefit the bird life of New York State. At our recent annual meeting in Buffalo it was decided to again initiate the mailing of these bulletins.

It is in the field of specific New York State conservation issues, however, that our own Federation of New York State Bird Clubs has been of very great value to every club, and to every individual interested in the conservation of our bird life. The protection of the Double-crested Cormorant and of the Snowy Owl in the State was successfully engineered by our conservation committee. This active committee then worked for a model law protecting all hawks and owls in the State, and solicited the support of the National and the New York State Grange, The State Conservation Dept., and the Sportsmen's Clubs of the State in this endeavor, which was carried through to a successful conclusion. While many members have aided in these accomplishments, the names of Walter Elwood, Eugene Eisenmann, Stanley Grierson, Samuel Madison, Alvin Whitney, Winston Brockner, John Conway and Mr. Conservation himself in the person of H. Everest ("Hi") Clements, deserve especial mention.

We are indebted to all of our Federation members who selflessly worked for the passage of the protective legislation above referred to, as well as the defeat of the Panther Dam amendment, in which our members were in the forefront of the fight. Conservationists must be constantly on the alert to prevent predatory interests from taking over portions of our state's Forest Preserve bit by bit, and as a group we are so much more effective than we could be as individual clubs. In union there is strength.

Another asset of our Federation lies in the exchange of information between our member clubs. At our annual meetings any delegate can ask for cooperation of other clubs on some pet project, or help in solving a problem, at the Federation's Council Meeting. Sometimes there are symposiums at the Paper Sessions where club problems can be aired and discussed in detail. It is often found that some other club has already obtained

a satisfactory solution to the very problem which one has in mind. The exchange of local publications between clubs of the Federation is another help. I have heard many members say that they appreciate the chance of meeting delegates and other members of clubs, discussing problems with them, and often forming lifelong friendships. Many friends are also made through attending and working with various Federation committees, such as those on Membership, Finance, and Publications and Research, as well as the other committees mentioned elsewhere in this article. I regret that space does not permit me to mention many names of committee chairmen and workers whom I value as friends, and of whom we all owe a debt of gratitude.

The help of the Federation can be sought by any member club on legislation (even though it may be of a local nature), and if deemed beneficial all of the clubs and individual members will be reached either through publication in *The Kingbird*, or if speedy action is needed by means of a bulletin from the Conservation Committee.

The publication of *The Kingbird*, initiated nine years ago, has allowed the dissemination of the knowledge of our New York State bird life to reach all clubs and individual members of the Federation, through the reports of the ten Regional Editors, covering all parts of the State. All members can help in this cooperative effort by advising their Regional Editor of any significant records of the occurrence or of the nesting of various species in our State. Many articles of great interest to New York State bird observers appear in *The Kingbird*. Publication of *Bibliography of New York State Ornithology* in its pages by Dr. Allen Benton has given important information to all bird students. The statewide Waterfowl Count, a cooperative venture initiated by Gerald Rising five years ago, and its comparison with aerial surveys, has been published in *The Kingbird*, and continued by Leo Tanghe in recent years. It takes busy people to get things done. We have been fortunate to have as *Kingbird* editors Allan S. Klonick, Stephen W. Eaton, Gerald R. Rising, and Minnie B. Scotland, all of whom have been outstanding.

Several years ago a start was made in preparation for the publication of a new State Bird Book, which was suggested by Dr. Arthur A. Allen as a project for the Federation. A great deal of the groundwork has been done by the State Book Committee, first under the leadership of Dr. Gordon Meade and later under Robert Arbib, Jr. All Federation Clubs and Individual Members should be proud of the accomplishments of this committee, which among other things determined the divisions of the state to be set up as reporting districts, set standards of Abundance and Frequency of Occurrence, and Criteria for the Acceptance of Records. Certain of this material has been copied or referred to in Audubon Field Notes and other publications.

In an Annotated and Revised Checklist of the Birds of Massachusetts by Ludlow Griscom and Dorothy Snyder, it is stated: "The suggested criteria for the acceptance of bird records adopted recently by the New York State Bird Book Committee of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs (as published in Audubon Field Notes, February 1955: 58-59) seems to the authors an excellent set of rules which might well be adopted in this State.

There is an equally sensible set of criteria for breeding records. If these rules were widely accepted, sight records would be far more reliable and and valuable than they are at the present moment."

The State Book Editorial Board is now taking over from the original Book Committee, and is endeavoring to find an editor, and means of financing this major enterprise. The new State Book will be a lasting tribute to our Federation and its member clubs.

Beside the concrete points brought out in this article, there are certain intangibles which are hard to express in terms of benefits in dollars and cents, but which are nevertheless important. Even though we might have been unsuccessful in obtaining protective bird legislation in the State, the mere fact that we are banded together to fight for what we know are noble purposes gives each of us stature which otherwise we would lack.

We, in Buffalo, feel that the Federation has filled an urgent need for a statewide organization of bird clubs, and that the small expenditures which we have made for club memberships have repaid us several times over.

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ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC. Buffalo, May 20-22

Minutes of the Council Meeting (Condensed)

The thirteenth annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc., was held in the library of the Buffalo Museum of Science on May 21, 1960. The president, Mrs. William G. Irving, called the meeting to order at 9:20 a.m. Twenty-four delegates representing 18 clubs answered the roll call.

The minutes of the 1959 Council meeting were read, amended, and accepted.

Mrs. Dayton Stoner read the Treasurer's report for the year Jan. 1, 1959 to Dec. 31, 1959.

Balance — Jan. 1, 1959	\$ 731.02
Receipts — 1959	1,303.40
Gross total	\$2,034.42
Expenses — 1959	\$1,501.05
Withdrawal for deposit in savings account	200.00
Balance, Dec. 31	\$ 333.37
Balance in savings account on Dec. 31, 1959	\$1,031.94

Reports of appointed committees:

Conservation

Mr. Joseph A. Blake, Jr., chairman, reported the first passage by the State legislature of a concurrent resolution which would permit a private operator to lease Forest Preserve land in Greene County for a ski development. Accepted by the Council were the committee's recommendations to (a) publicize Federation opposition to this amendment, (b) have each member inform his representatives in the legislature of his opposition, and (c) empower the committee to reissue a Conservation Bulletin to cover this and other crucial issues as they may arise.