

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS
ANNUAL MEETING
SARATOGA SPRINGS, NEW YORK
October 31 - November 2, 1986

The 39th annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, hosted by the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, was called to order on Friday, October 31, 1986, at the Gideon Putnam Hotel in Saratoga State Park by President Harriet Marsi at 3:00 P.M. Thirty-four member clubs answered to the roll call. Berna Weissman read the minutes of the 38th annual meeting, which were accepted and filed.

The President's report was given by Harriet Marsi; the report is filed with these minutes. Stan Lincoln read the treasurer's report, which was accepted and filed. The membership report was given by Myrna Hemmerick. She reported that the membership had dropped from 816 to 738, which could be due to the increase in dues. Those members may rejoin as they have in the past. There was some discussion regarding the need for better communication to Member Clubs about membership in the Federation of individual birders and its benefits. Emanuel Levine suggested that a representative of the Federation visit each club to talk about the Federation. It also was suggested that the Federation's name be changed to include "Birders and Bird Clubs." The auditing committee report by Irving Cantor was accepted and filed with these minutes.

The Federation's waterfowl census report was given by Walter Sabin. There was agreement by Walt and DEC that Brant, scaup, and goldeneye are decreasing in numbers.

Dick Sloss announced that Gregory P. Winter from the Alan Devoe Bird Club will be the recipient of the Lillian C. Stoner award this year. Laura and Neil Moon will receive the John J. Elliott award.

Ron Dodson, the Atlantic Regional Representative of the National Audubon Society, spoke. He was very excited about the direction that Peter Berle, the new director of Audubon, is taking - hiring more staff, being concerned with more state issues, and working more with local clubs. He talked about the education and research being done on colonial water birds, the forthcoming survey of Black Terns in upstate New York State, the increase of Bald Eagles, the network of cavity nest boxes for bluebirds which has now produced more than 4500 birds, and the New York Loon Conservation Program. About 100 volunteer or "loon rangers" will work at various points such as canoe rental places. A survey of loons in winter also will be on the agenda. More television programs are coming up and more educational programs for youth. Ron urged us to vote for the Environmental Quality Bond Act on Election Day. He also urged our help to establish and keep National Energy Efficiency Bills in place. He also emphasized the need to keep the Wild Bird Law in place. He discussed plans in Canada to divert rivers and other bodies of water flowing into James Bay, which will adversely affect shorebirds. The Audubon Society wants an environmental impact statement on this matter. More clearly defining the purpose of "Return a Gift to Wildlife" fund was another of his concerns.

Next Commissioner Henry Williams was invited to speak. Always enthusiastic, he suggested that a DEC report be given each year at the Federation's annual meeting. He described his efforts to focus attention on Proposition 1, the "Environmental Quality Bond Act," to clean up hazardous waste sites across the state, even through a bicycle trip across the state. We were urged to voice support for this very important issue. He talked about the issuance of special wildlife licenses for the removal of "nuisance" wildlife, rehabilitation, and similar activities. He views Breeding Bird Atlas as a valuable and significant document. He hopes to see more money going into the "Return a Gift to Wildlife" program. The Ridley Sea Turtle project research was mentioned. He is committed to the challenge of the Fish and Wildlife Resource management. In response to some questions, Commissioner Williams said that his committee used emergency powers to stop the use of diazinon on golf courses and sod farms. He hopes that with groups working together, the Essential Habitats Bill will become a reality in this session. The Forest Products Association is coming into agreement with other groups concerning this bill.

Bob Arbib volunteered to be on the Resolutions Committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:15 P.M. and was reconvened at 9:15 A.M. on Saturday, November 1.

Peg Gerson reported for the conservation committee. Peg stressed the fact that diazinon is listed under many other names on insecticides. There will be a push to pass the Essential Habitats Bill next year. The Wild Bird Bill is still intact although the pet industry is against it. Peg also urged a vote for the Environmental Quality Bond Act. Gordon Meade pointed out the value of Permanent Representatives conveying important messages like these to their clubs. Allan Klonick mentioned that conservation chairmen should do likewise. Harriet Marsi was commended for communicating well with member club Presidents. Charles Smith noted possible problems of spreading ourselves too thin by responding to all environmental issues. He suggested that we should be most concerned with problems that have a clear identity with birds, although it was brought out that birds and environmental issues are related in many indirect ways as well. We heard lots of suggestions and a good discussion for the Executive Committee to consider.

The New York State Avian Records Committee report was not given due to Bill Vaughan's absence because of illness.

Deputy Commissioner Ivan Vamos of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation was introduced. Mr. Vamos talked about the problems of preserving, managing, and interpreting areas such as Saratoga State Park, which is under the direction of Dr. Tom Cobb. Some state parks get thousands of visitors each year. As more parks are acquired by the state, there are more concerns. With less staff and minimum wage standards, help is harder to get. The state is forced to let other groups maintain some "areas." Mr. Vamos appreciates expertise from individuals regarding state park concerns. Input is strongly considered by the administrators of the park system.

The slate of officers for 1987 was accepted and elected.

Paul DeBenedictis discussed *The Kingbird*. He happily announced that Linda Armstrong has volunteered as Region 8 Editor. He still desperately needs editors for Regions 9 and 10. Paul has guidelines available for potential *Kingbird* Editors. He is collecting data on "arrival and departure" dates for birds to be announced in the next issue of *The Kingbird*.

Max Wheat discussed *New York Birders*, which is now printed six times per year. *New York Birders* is a very important communication to Federation members. Its purpose is inform members about the business of the Federation and about birding in New York State. Max is finding and using more good pieces from club newsletters. More publicity is needed regarding this publication. Club members are encouraged to write for their own newsletters as well as for *New York Birders*. He has a guideline available for the asking.

Dick Sloss presented the changes for the bylaws. Both he and Stan Lincoln answered questions about these amendments. There was much discussion regarding whether or not *ex officio* members should have the right to vote. An affirmative vote was taken that we amend the bylaws as recommended.

As we approach the 40th anniversary of the Federation, Gordon Meade would like photographs of past meetings.

Gordon reported that the Breeding Bird Atlas is nearing completion and suggested that individuals thank Commissioner Williams for DEC cooperation and contribution of funds and other essential help.

Charles Smith talked about Project Birdwatch. A participant's fee of \$7.00 is a possibility for the specialized form that will be needed to get the project started.

Iring Cantor and Richard Sloss were renominated for the 1987 Auditing Committee. It was moved and seconded that the present nominating committee serve another year.

Under other business, Harriet Marsi extended an invitation to clubs present to consider hosting the 1989 annual meeting. Bill Lee passed on the information regarding the modest rate the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club paid for liability insurance based on the average number of persons usually attending one event. Charles Smith read a draft of a letter addressed to Governor Mario Cuomo concerning the "Return a Gift to Wildlife" fund. The letter pointed out that only 8% of the money is being used for new projects, that money used to pay salaries is a misuse of the fund because the fund is not intended to subsidize core DEC ongoing activities. More money for these core activities needs to be allocated from state general purpose funds rather than depending on money from "Return a Gift to Wildlife." There was a consensus of support for concepts of the letter. A motion was made and seconded that we unanimously support Charlie in this effort.

President Harriet Marsi adjourned the meeting at about 12:15 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,
Marilyn Schindler, Recording Secretary



Assembled here are all but three of the living Past Presidents of the Federation, all of whom are holding a sculpture made by Miriam ("Mickey") Levine. This token of appreciation was presented to each of the Past Presidents in attendance in recognition of their service to the Federation. From left to right are: Allan Klonick, Gordon Meade, Allen Benton, Winston Brockner, Robert Arbib, Kenneth Niven, Stephen Dempsey, Harriet Marsi, Morgan Jones and Charles Smith. Kneeling in front are Richard Sloss and Martin Borko. [Since this picture was taken, two Past Presidents have died: Kenneth Niven (November 17, 1986) and Robert Arbib (July 20, 1987)]