

FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.
50TH ANNUAL MEETING
ROCHESTER, NY 25-27 SEP 1998

At 9:14 a.m., Saturday, 26 Sep 1998, President Valerie Freer called to order the meeting of the Council of Delegates for the 50th Annual Meeting of the FNYSBC, Inc. hosted by Burroughs Audubon Nature Club, Genesee Ornithological Society, and Rochester Birding Association. The minutes of the Annual Meeting of 12-14 Sep 1997 mistakenly reported that meeting as the 50th. Actually that was the 49th. A roll call of member clubs conducted by Recording Secretary Linda Parr showed a quorum of authorized delegates was present. The minutes of the 49th (sic) Annual Meeting were published in *The Kingbird* [48(2)120-129]. A motion to accept the minutes as read made by Mary Alice Koeneke and seconded by Charlie Smith was approved. Barbara Butler and Mary Alice Koeneke agreed to prepare any resolutions to be read at the evening banquet.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1998

On the occasion of our 50th Annual Meeting, I am pleased to report that the Federation continues to be a healthy and vigorous organization. The past year has been a very active one, and there have been many accomplishments by the many dedicated workers in this organization. The publication of *Bull's Birds of New York State* leads the list of accomplishments of the Federation. The Publications Committee under the skilled leadership of Manny Levine showed unparalleled commitment and remarkable perseverance to successful completion of this outstanding publication. The gratitude of the Federation Directors, individual members and member clubs go to the Committee: Manny Levine, Stan Lincoln, Berna Lincoln, and Dick Sloss.

Activities of the Federation during the past year include:

- celebration of our 50th anniversary with this special meeting and the publication of the history of the organization, researched and written by Stan Lincoln.
- implementation of governance by an 11-person Board of Directors as called for in the 1997 by-laws, and further polishing of the by-laws to clarify board procedures
- revision of NYSARC Guidelines (for the first time since 1987.
- an Awards Committee produced new awards and led fund raising to bolster the Stoner Award.

—A membership recruitment drive led by Dave Junkin used book offers to bring in new members.

—Initiation of a Speaker's Bureau, a new service to member clubs, listing over 30 speakers for club programs.

Other Federation activities continued, led by our excellent state journal, *The Kingbird* and our high quality newsletter, *NY Birders*. Thanks go to *Kingbird* editor Don Windsor, Regional Reports editor Bob Spahn, Highlights editor Willie D'Anna and the ten Regional editors whose efforts are so critical to the documentation of bird life in the state. Thanks go as well to the *NY Birders* editor, Phyllis Jones.

Field trips and county listing continued to be thriving projects, and our active Conservation Committee represented us on many fronts during the year. Federation leadership participated in statewide conservation efforts in cooperation with state agencies, including the Important Bird Areas (IBA) and Bird Conservation Area (BCA) projects.

During this next year the Board of Directors will turn their attention to the Atlas project, publish a revision of the *Checklist of the Birds of NYS*, work toward increasing both individual and club membership, and will use our website for greater service to our member clubs.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Berna Lincoln presented the Treasurer's Report, distributing a detailed 1997 Annual Financial Report. As of 31 Dec 1997, the total assets of the Federation were \$102,841.95, liabilities \$3,764.20.

Specific fund balances were:

Unrestricted Funds

General Operating	24,335.69
General Memorial	42,927.80
Member Clubs Awards	5,000.00

Temporarily Restricted Funds

John J. Elliott	1,317.10
Lillian C. Stoner	2,640.92
Atlas 2000	4,573.60
Bull's Birds of New York State	(56.86)
Life Member	18,339.50

In the General Operating Fund, income was \$17,071.85, expenses \$12,876.83. The 1997 year end total for this fund was \$24,335.69. The excess of income over expenses was \$4,195.02 of that project. Because *Bull's Birds of New York State* had just been published, the treasurer presented a special report. Total revenue from two sources, DEC Gift to Wildlife and member donations was \$30,415. Expenses total \$17,370. President Valerie Freer noted the generous level of member financial support for the book.

There are 626 individual annual members, 40 member clubs, and 80 life members. There were 53 fewer members than at the end of 1996.

In conclusion, Valerie Freer expressed great appreciation for the work that Berna Lincoln has done as treasurer.

Dick Sloss reported for the Auditing Committee, comprised of Irving Cantor, Norm Stotz, and Dick Sloss. The committee's report stated that, upon examination of the financial statements of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. as of 31 Dec 1997, ..."these financial statements fairly represent the financial condition and the operating results of the Federation for the period indicated."

BY-LAWS REVISION

Member clubs ratified the change of the number of the Board of Directors to eleven, as approved by last year's Council of Delegates. Changes also specify the duties of the board. The revisions include a major revision of the ratification process for changes to the by-laws. The process has been streamlined so that changes will be approved by the Directors and Council of Delegates. The requirement for ratification by member clubs at a subsequent annual meeting has been dropped.

A motion, made by Bob Budliger and seconded by Charlie Smith to accept the by-laws as revised, passed unanimously. These changes will be final when ratified by the member clubs.

PUBLICATIONS

Don Windsor noted that *The Kingbird* is now produced through desktop publishing. There is a new format for Regional reports. Don has organized a meeting of the Regional editors at this Annual meeting. He also encourages letters expressing opinions

Phyllis Jones, editor of *NY Birders*, pointed out highlights for the year.

The revised *Checklist of the Birds of New York State*, compatible with the 7th edition of *The A.O.U. Check-list of North American Birds*, is nearly ready. Publications Chair Manny Levine said it is awaiting final approval by NYSARC.

The Federation history written by Stan Lincoln especially for this meeting will be published as a special issue of *The Kingbird*.

CONSERVATION

Committee Chair Mary Alice Koeneké gave the following report:

The cormorant issue was the most evident conservation issue for this past year. The Federation was represented at several meetings about this topic, including a public hearing sponsored by Assemblyman Bragman and Congressman McHugh in Syracuse in December, 1997, NYSDEC sponsored workshops in Watertown in January, and an August meeting about the Oneida Lake harassment experiment. The committee provided a display about cormorants for the vendor area at this meeting.

The Jamaica Bay NWR proposed bike path has also been an active issue for the Federation and the committee encouraged the signing of petitions on that issue. The most recent issue, expected to be in the forefront in the coming months, is that of migratory bird kills at communications towers. Monitoring on a volunteer basis has begun at some towers in central NY and if successful, may be expanded to other areas of the state next year. There will be an article on the concerns about these towers and a proposed program in an upcoming issue of *NY Birders*.

The Federation continued its statewide presence on conservation issues with Valerie Freer's participation on the Bird Conservation Areas (BCA) Advisory Committee. The committee proposed resolutions on the following three topics for passage by the delegates: Jamaica Bay NWR Bike Path, Bird Mortality At Communications Towers, and Double-crested Cormorants. After delegate review and suggested minor revisions, motions to approve each respective resolution were unanimously passed by the delegates.

NYSARC REPORT AND NYSARC GUIDELINES REVISIONS

Charlie Smith reported that the committee expects shortly to issue decisions on reports thru the end of 1996 and is working hard to clear up the backlog.

Manny Levine reported that NYSARC guidelines revisions have been printed in *The Kingbird* and are now being implemented.

AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee chair Mary Alice Koeneke reviewed the list of awards to be presented at the evening program: the Eaton Memorial, Lillian C. Stoner, John J. Elliott, and Gordon Meade awards. Also to be presented are Member Club Grants and a new award, Certificates of Appreciation, for special contributions by the public or others to the experience of birding.

Bob Budliger, who is leading a special effort to shore up the fiscal base of the Lillian C. Stoner Award, announced there were contributions to date of \$1,595 from individuals and organizations. He encouraged attendees who haven't already done so to make a contribution.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chair Bob Budliger announced the slate of officers and board members for 1998-99 Annual Meeting

President: Valerie Freer

Vice President: Mary Alice Koeneke

Recording Secretary: Linda Parr

Corresponding Secretary: Bill Reeves

Treasurer: Sue Adair

Board Members - terms expiring in 1999: Dave Junkin, Sara Kinch, and Manny Levine

Board Members - terms expiring in 2000: Tim Baird, Barbara Butler, and Kevin McGowan

There were no nominations from the floor.

Valerie Freer thanked the three members of the committee, Bob Budliger, Gail Seamans, and Charlie Smith for their work.

A motion to cast one vote to adopt the slate as presented was made by Ellie Long and seconded by Ann Vogt. It passed unanimously.

FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Bill Lee, committee chair, described the committee's goal of having one field trip in each month. There were nine trips conducted or scheduled : January, Watertown -cancelled due to ice storm; February, Mongaup Reservoir, Denise Hilton and Scott Stoner leaders; March, Stissing Mt., Barbara Butler leader; April, Derby Hill, Bill Purcell leader; May, Letchworth State Park, Doug Bassett and Dave Junkin leaders; June, Doodletown Road, Phil Meisner leader; July, Lake Placid, Sean O'Brien leader; August, Jamaica Bay NWR, Walter Ellison and Nancy Martin leaders; September, Orange County Sod Farm, John Tramontano leader; October, no trip scheduled; November, Franklin Mt. Hawkwatch, Chris Greenberg leader; December, Niagara River, Bill Lee leader; and January, 1999, Cape Vincent.

Bill invites member ideas and assistance in scheduling and conducting these and future trips. He will continue as committee chair.

WEBSITE

Barbara Butler described much progress on this new initiative for member service. The site has been up since January, 1998. The server is hosted by Cornell University. There has been member feedback, all good. Available on the site are a list of member clubs and links to their websites, a list of field trips, listings of Regional *Kingbird* reporters, information on conservation issues, on *Bull's Birds of New York State*, and the form for reporting sightings to NYSARC.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

Chair Charlie Smith described the primary activity as coordinating the work of nearly 90 volunteers to monitor the state's breeding bird populations through the statewide Breeding Bird Survey (BBS). At the beginning of 1998, there were only 9 BBS routes unassigned. Seven of these unassigned routes were accepted by volunteer observers. Unassigned routes for which observers are needed for 1999 are Route 108, Ellenburg (northwestern Clinton County), and Route 212, Orange Lake (northwestern Orange County). This success in assignments gives the potential for the best coverage since the NY BBS routes began in 1965. Another major task of the committee chair has been to begin preparation for the upcoming

ing Atlas 2000 Project, the second NY breeding bird atlas which will begin in 2000. Charlie is exploring a number of options for organizing, funding, and developing survey methods for this project. It is expected that a project work group will be named later.

COUNTY AND STATE LISTING REPORT

Berna Lincoln reminded delegates of the availability of the form for reporting county listings. It appears in the January (1998) issue of *NY Birders*. She encouraged more participation, noting the fun of seeing the listings. She clarified one point — the county to be listed is where the bird was sighted, not the county of residence of the observer. Don Windsor described the patches that are available for anyone who has 200 or 300 species for the state.

ARCHIVES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Phyllis Jones, chair of both committees, thanked the Rochester sponsoring clubs of this meeting for contributing the documents of Winston Brockner, an early Federation President, to the archives. Cornell University continues as the site of Federation archives. Phyllis and the other members of the Bibliography Committee, Barbara Butler, Valerie Freer, Walt Sabin, and Don Windsor, have compiled the citations which will appear in the December issue of *The Kingbird*.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Bill Lee reviewed the list of previously announced future Annual Meetings: 1999, Elmira-Chemung Audubon Society, 17-19 Sep, Riverview Holiday Inn; 2000, Eaton Birding Society (Geneva), 9-11 Sep, Ramada Inn and Convention Center; 2001, Onondaga Audubon Society (Syracuse), date and site to be determined. Bill Lee will continue to serve as coordinator of the schedule.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be 14 Nov 1998 in Loch Sheldrake.

ELECTION OF NOMINATING AND AUDITING COMMITTEES

A motion to elect the following nominating committee for the 1998-99 year was made by Bob Budliger and seconded by Jane Graves. The nominees were Bill Reeves, chair; Mike Peterson; and Dominic Sherony. The motion passed unanimously.

A motion by Charlie Smith to elect Norm Stotz, Irving Canter, and Dick Sloss to the Auditing Committee was seconded by Phyllis Jones and approved by the delegates.

RESOLUTIONS

The Resolutions Committee appointed at the beginning of this session agreed to craft a resolution to be presented at the evening program, thanking the three host clubs for an excellent meeting. The group also will also present the final versions of the conservation resolutions voted on earlier in this session.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION REPORT

In the absence of Bob Miller, DEC's representative to the Federation, Peter Nye gave the report from DEC. Key points are:

— In August, the governor announced the designation of four Bird Conservation Areas (BCAs): Doodletown/Iona Island, Buckhorn Island Marshes, Eastern Lake Ontario Marshes, and David Sarnoff Pine Barrens Preserve. With these designations, the program is up and running. More designated areas will follow.

— A new publication, *New York Wildlife Viewing Guide* may be purchased from DEC.

— DEC is very involved in the issues of the cormorant population in the eastern Lake Ontario region, including a study of smallmouth bass and other near shore fish, results of which will be available in December. Population surveys on Little Galloo Island show 5,839 nesting pairs, down 23% from 1997 surveys, and down 30% from 1996 figures.

— A statewide survey of Black Terns showed 202 breeding pairs, down 18% from a 1994 survey.

— Return A Gift To Wildlife funding is declining, probably because of the availability of four other tax donation alternatives. The difference in funds available for DEC projects caused by the 25% decline in donations

in 1998 (compared to donations for 1997) was picked up by the Conservation Fund.

—Record numbers of two “Endangered” species, Peregrine Falcon and Bald Eagle continue. There were 36 nesting pairs of Peregrines counted in 1998, 6 more than in 1997. Bald Eagles had five more nesting pairs than in 1997, 40 pairs compared with 35 pairs. The Peregrine Falcon is being federally delisted as an “Endangered” species because of its comeback. Observations of another important raptor species, Osprey, shows similar numbers of nesting pairs as last year. There are problems on Long Island of birds not fledging young, perhaps due to food shortages.

—Major revisions to the lists of “Endangered” and “Threatened” species are expected. DEC’s website (www.dec.state.ny.us) shows the current lists.

—The Teaming With Wildlife initiative has a new major strategy that calls for using fees from leasing offshore oil and gas sites to finance nongame programs. This conservation legislation is now included in the Conservation and Reinvestment Act (HR701/S25).

OTHER BUSINESS

Bill Lee expressed interest in obtaining low cost liability insurance for field trips. He has concerns about the risk of not having such insurance if someone decides to sue. Valerie Freer agreed to explore the topic.

Charlie Smith announced the annual AOU Meeting, 12-14 Aug 1999, Cornell University, Ithaca. He invited contributions to help pay the costs of student participants to the meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting of the Council of Delegates was adjourned at 12:03 p.m.

WORKSHOPS

The following workshops were held simultaneously with the morning delegate’s meeting: Brett Ewald, Hamlin Beach Lake Watch, 5 Years and Counting; Jeff Wells, Bird Conservation for Birders: the NYS Important Bird Areas Program; Bob Marcotte, The Birds of Badgerow:

How the Little Park Around the Corner Became an Important Bird Area; and Sharon Skelly, Less Common Gulls of Western NY.

PAPER SESSION

These papers were presented on Saturday afternoon: D.V. Chip Weseloh, Laird Schutt, Glenn Barrett, and Jamie Reid — "Continued expansion of Great Black-backed Gull nesting on the lower Great Lakes"; John Bull, "Problems for wintering Dickcissels"; Elizabeth Brooks, "Capture times of passerines on the south shore of Lake Ontario during spring migration"; Sharon Skelly, "Studies of three Black Tern colonies in the Braddock Bay WMA"; Bryan I Swift and Paul Hess, "Comparison of winter waterfowl surveys in New York"; Dominic F. Sherony and Brett M. Ewald, "The fall migration of Red-throated Loons on Lake Ontario"; Patricia Martin and Douglas Bassett, "Warbler mapping in Letchworth State Park"; and Maxwell C. Wheat, "Celebration [of] 50 Federation years with poetry".

BANQUET AND EVENING PROGRAM

Among the introductions made by emcee Dominic Sherony were these very special guests: Ann Meade, daughter of Gordon Meade; John Bull, author of the original *Birds of New York State*, as well as 39 of the nearly 80 authors who contributed to the current *Bull's Birds of New York State*. During the awards ceremony portion, the Lillian C. Stoner Award, went to college student Matt Sarver, sponsored by Cayuga Bird Club and to high school student Brandon Click, sponsored by the Buffalo Ornithological Society; the Eaton Award, to John Bull and Manny Levine; the John J. Elliott Award (for best *Kingbird* article), to Eric Salzman for his article on Bell's Vireo, September, 1997 edition; Gordon Meade award, to Stan Lincoln and to Berna Lincoln for their outstanding and distinguished service to the Federation.

Rockland Audubon Society received a \$100 Member Club Grant Award for its *Checklist of Birds of Rockland County*. Certificates of Appreciation were given to: the Harold Hoyt family for hospitality to birders who came to see Lewis's Woodpecker; the Don Teede family, hosts for those seeking the Lazuli Bunting; John "Mike" Peterson, High Peaks Audubon Society, for service and dedication to member clubs; and to the organizers of the Montezuma Muckrace—Marva Gingrich, Bill

Grough, Charlie Rouse, John Van Neal, and Jeff Wells.

The awards were followed by the presentation of resolutions. Barbara Butler presented a resolution enthusiastically thanking the host clubs for providing this Annual Meeting. She also presented final versions of the conservation resolutions reviewed in the delegates meeting.

The evening was capped by an excellent program by Kenn Kaufman, who explored the travels of birds and of humans from a variety of viewpoints.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda D. Parr, Recording Secretary

