

**FEDERATION OF NEW YORK STATE BIRD CLUBS, INC.
52ND ANNUAL MEETING
ELMIRA, NY SEPTEMBER 17-19, 1999**

Linda D. Parr
22B Ellsworth Ave., Delmar NY 12054

At 9:12 a.m., Saturday, September 18, 1999, President Valerie Freer called to order the meeting of the Council of Delegates. This meeting in Elmira was the 52nd Annual Meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs, Inc. and was hosted by the Chemung Valley Audubon Society.

A roll call of member clubs conducted by Recording Secretary Linda Parr showed a quorum of authorized delegates was present. 24 of 46 member clubs were represented by 34 delegates. After minor revisions from the floor, the minutes of the 51st Annual Meeting were approved (motion, Manny Levine; second, Norm Stotz). Barbara Butler agreed to prepare any resolutions to be read at the evening banquet.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT, 1999

Valerie Freer presented the following President's Report:

I am pleased to report that the Federation continues to be healthy and vigorous and a leader among state bird organizations. Since the publication of *Bull's Birds of New York State* and the celebration of our 50th anniversary at the annual meeting last year, we have moved ahead with plans for Atlas 2000, and we fully expect to be the first state to complete and publish a second Atlas.

During the past year the Federation:

- Brought in 2 new clubs and reactivated four clubs for a total paid-up club membership of 46
- Used book offers to bring in new members in a membership recruitment drive led by Dave Junkin, resulting in many new members, including 30 at the Kingbird Club level (\$100)
- Developed a new data base of membership and club officer records, including e-mail addresses for most member clubs
- Published two new 1999 editions of the *Checklist of Birds of New York State*, the latest includes 455 species
- Authorized an increase in the number of members of our avian records committee (NYSARC), and appointed two new members including a new chair, with the intent of expanding support for NYSARC among birders of the state
- Implemented the 1998 By-Laws as ratified by member clubs last fall
- Took the new Federation exhibit to the Association of Field Ornithologist's annual meet-

ing in Cape Cod, the Lake Ontario Bird festival, and the American Ornithologists Union (AOU) annual meeting at Cornell. (The Federation donated about 900 *Checklists of Birds of New York State* to the AOU for inclusion in registration packets.

--Continued expansion of the Federation web site, including more frequent updates

Other Federation activities continued, led by our excellent state journal, *The Kingbird*, edited (and made more current) by Manny Levine; and our high quality newsletter, *NY Birders*, edited by Phyllis Jones. Thanks go to both editors, and to Bob Spahn, who as Regional Reports Editor continues to do an outstanding job. Thanks also to the ten Regional editors whose efforts are so critical to the documentation of bird life in the state.

Field Trips, County Listing and the Speaker's Bureau continued to be thriving projects, and our active Conservation Committee continued to represent us on many fronts during the year. Federation leadership continued to participate in statewide conservation efforts in cooperation with other agencies, including the Important Bird Areas (IBA) and the Bird Conservation Area (BCA) projects.

ELECTION OF NEW CLUBS

Delegates unanimously approved the membership applications of the West 11th Street Bird Club, NYC; and the Eagle Institute, Sullivan County. The motion to do so was made by Dick Sloss and seconded by Bill Reeves. This brings the number of paid up clubs to 46.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Sue Adair presented the Treasurer's Report, distributing a detailed 1998 Annual Financial Report. As of December 31, 1998, the total assets of the Federation were \$121,409.71 and there were no liabilities.

Specific fund balances were:

Unrestricted Fund

General Operating	\$22,755.09
General Memorial	48,454.11
Member Clubs Awards	5,000.00

Temporarily Restricted Fund

John J. Elliott Fund	1,260.20
Lillian C. Stoner	9,031.31
Atlas 2000	4,726.73
Bull's Birds of New York State	11,842.77
Life Member	18,339.50

In the General Operating Fund, income was \$18,337.37 and expenses were \$14,984.18 for the year ending 12/31/98. The 1998 year-end total for this fund was \$22,755.09. The excess of income over expenses was \$3,353.19.

A letter has gone out to club and individual donors to the *Bull's Birds of New York State*

fund. A large surplus exists because after fund raising was completed, we received a large DEC grant. Because the donors gave specifically for this project and because the fund is restricted, the Federation is offering donors two alternatives: a prorated refund to the donor, or giving permission to the Federation to retain a prorated share of the contribution in unrestricted funds.

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 December 31, 1998, ..."the financial statements...are presented fairly in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles."

MEMBERSHIP

Valerie Freer reviewed membership in the last year. It is increasing. The major membership drive conducted by Dave Junkin resulted in many members transferring from basic membership to higher levels. There are 730 individual annual members, 46 member clubs, and 74 life members. 71 members chose not to renew.

After reviewing the small number of student memberships, the delegates brainstormed about how to increase this membership category. Dave Junkin took note of several promising ideas for future membership drives. We approved a motion to donate gift Federation student memberships to the youth team members in the Montezuma Muckrace Race. This motion was made by Sunny Gooding and seconded by Tim Baird.

ATLAS 2000 COMMITTEE

Valerie Freer reported that the committee is off to a good start. Its first major accomplishment is the selection of all 10 regional coordinators. The coordinators are: Region 1, Richard C. Rosche; Region 2, Robert Spahn and Dominic Sherony; Region 3, Bard Prentiss; Region 4, Chad Covey; Region 5, Dorothy W. Crumb and Bill Purcell; Region 6, Bob Long; Region 7, Mike Peterson; Region 8, Jane Graves; Region 9, Michael Bochnik; and Region 10, Ken Feustel. The full-time project coordinator is expected to be hired within the next few weeks. Valerie noted DEC's generous support of the Atlas, which includes funds from Return A Gift to Wildlife over the 6-7 year life of the project.

Work will begin on January 1, 2000. We will be the first state to complete a second atlas. Speakers about Atlas 2000 are available to member clubs by contacting regional coordinators or Valerie Freer.

PUBLICATIONS

Kingbird editor Manny Levine reported the publication is in good shape. He noted that expenses are going up because of rising printing and mailing costs. The December issue will feature the 1997 NYSARC report.

Manny commended Phyllis Jones, editor of *NY Birders*, as her editorship comes to an end. Phyllis announced a just-decided-upon plan for the transition of the editor's post to Sue Adair. Phyllis will continue to edit two more issues, then Sue will take over. (This means we must find a new treasurer in 2000.) The second revision of *Checklist of Birds of New York State*, is available. It brings the *Checklist* completely up to date..

CONSERVATION

Committee Chair Mary Alice Koenke gave the following report:

--Double-crested Cormorants: This issue continues to consume more Conservation Committee time than any other issue. NYSDEC released a report, "To Assess the Impact of Double-crested Cormorant Predation on Smallmouth Bass and Other Fishes of the Eastern Basin of Lake Ontario" in March. The report was authored by both DEC's Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife and the US Geological Survey Biological Resources Division. DEC presented its plans for using the report at a n earlier Federation board meeting. Copies of the report are available from DEC.

Permit applications to allow DEC to kill 300 adult cormorants for further research were refused. DEC was given permits to oil eggs at Little Galloo Island this summer and to continue harassment of fall-gathering cormorants on Oneida Lake.

In August, the FNYSBC and National Audubon Society attended a meeting at Sacketts Harbor, where findings from some of the studies being conducted by various agencies were reported. Input was requested to assist with management efforts and achieving Double-crested Cormorant objectives while minimizing "undesirable outcomes". Interested parties from various state, federal, local, and Canadian organizations were also represented.

Also in August, fines and home confinement sentences were given to the ten North Country fishermen responsible for the cormorant slaughter on Little Galloo Island in July, 1998.

--**Teaming With Wildlife (TWW):** The initiative has taken on new life and is closer than ever to becoming law. Two bipartisan bills have been introduced and are now being worked into a compromise bill. The Conservation and Reinvestment Act (CARA)) provides dedicated funds from offshore oil and gas lease revenues for land and wildlife based conservation, education programs, and coastal impact assistance. The Permanent Protection for America's Resources-2000 is another bill and would guarantee about \$2.3 billion every year for the acquisition of public lands by federal and state governments, restoration of national and urban parks, preservation of farmland and open space, preservation of historic buildings, and restoration of depleted fish and wildlife resources. Co-sponsors are making progress toward having a joint bill by September 22. The Senate is

moving more slowly on their versions of these bills. It would be helpful if Federation members ask their congresspeople to support this legislation.. More information is on the TWW website: www.teaming.com

--**Galeville:** The property formerly known as the Galeville Airport and belonging to the US Military Academy (West Point) has been transferred to the US Fish and Wildlife Service. It will be dedicated during National Wildlife Refuge Week in October. Galeville has grassland specialties as well as such species as Short-eared Owl.. It is an NYS IBA. Incidentally, grassland bird surveys were conducted throughout the state this summer to assess grassland bird populations and habitats. They were conducted through the auspices of Massachusetts Audubon. Survey results may be published in a future issue of *The Kingbird*.

--**Jamaica Bay Bike Path:** A workshop was held in August by the National Park Service to bring together proponents of the bike path and others to work out a compromise. However, neither Audubon nor local bird clubs were invited. The only "antis" were Al Ott, Shawn Andres, and Bill Neider. The feeling is that the bike path will go forward due to local interests. Apparently there are plans to build a major sports complex in Rockaway and it is felt that locals would not give up one lane of Cross Bay Boulevard for the bike path.

--**IBAs:** Ferd's Bog will be the next IBA to be dedicated.(on September 25).

--**Bird Conservation Program:** The National Audubon office in Albany was instrumental in adding \$200,000 to the state budget to initiate an integrated bird conservation program. Hopefully two ornithologists will be added to the DEC staff because of this funding.

NYSARC REPORT AND CHANGES IN NYSARC

Valerie Freer gave the following report for committee chair Bob Andrie. Bob Andrie will complete his term as chair at the end of 1999 and will continue to be a member of the committee. The board has already approved an increase in the size of the committee from 5 to 7 members. The new members are Kevin McGowan and Angus Wilson, who will be the new chair. Goals for NYSARC include making decisions more timely, doing more with the reports as an education and learning tool as well as increasing the number of reports of sightings.

WEB SITE

Barbara Butler told us that a web site counter shows visits at a steady level of 4-10 per day. Site updates include information on *Bull's Birds of New York State*, an up-to-date checklist, links to the NY rare bird alert web sites, field trip announcements, and information about developments on conservation issues, including the conservation resolutions from last year's annual meeting. Barbara encourages reports from field trip leaders.

Future developments included featured bird sites and Atlas 2000 information, with a link to DEC's Atlas site. Barbara and others involved are considering adding the capacity for online reports to the regional *Kingbird* compilers.

Valerie Freer thanked and congratulated Barbara for tremendous accomplishments with the web site. She stressed that the site has been set up and maintained at no cost to the club. Valerie described a proposal to list member club officers on the web site and invited opinion from the delegates. After discussion, Valerie agreed that officers will not be listed on the site, but we will list any club representatives that have given their permission to be the e-mail contact for a member club.

AWARDS COMMITTEE REPORT

Committee chair Mary Alice Koenke reviewed the list of awards to be presented at the evening program: the Eaton Memorial, Lillian C. Stoner, John Elliott, and Gordon Meade awards. Also to be presented are Member Club Grants, Certificates of Appreciation, and a new category, achievement in club newsletters. Scott Stoner will chair this committee in 1999-2000.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE REPORT AND ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Chair Bill Reeves announced the following slate of officers and board members for 1999-2000:

President: Mary Alice Koenke

Vice President: Scott Stoner

Recording Secretary: Barbara Butler

Corresponding Secretary: Bill Reeves

Treasurer: Susan Adair

Board Members - term expiring in 2000: Valerie Freer

Board Members - terms expiring in 2001: Sara Kinch, Emanuel Levine, and Richard Miga

There were no nominations from the floor.

Valerie Freer thanked the three members of the committee, Bill Reeves, Mike Peterson, and Dominic Sherony for their work. A motion to cast one vote to adopt the slate as presented was made by Norm Stotz and seconded by Ellie Long. It passed unanimously.

FIELD TRIP COMMITTEE

Bill Lee, committee chair, described the 14 field trips which have been held or are scheduled. Since the last Annual Meeting, (month, location and leaders are identified): 1998 -November, Franklin Mountain, Chris Vreedenburgh; December, Niagara River, joint trip with Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Bill Lee and Willie D'Anna; 1999 - January, Cape Vincent/Point Peninsula, Brian and Mary Wood; February, Montauk Point, John

Fritz; March, Stissing Mt., Barbara Butler; April, no trip; May, North American Migration; June (2 trips), Sterling Forest, John Confer, and Adirondack sites, John Ozard and Rich McDonald; July, Ferd's Bog, joint trip with High Peaks Audubon Society, Gary Lee; August, Jamaica NWR, September, Annual Meeting; October, Montezuma NWR, joint trip with Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club, Doug Steele; November and December, no trips scheduled; 2000 - February: Fort Edward grasslands (Washington County); Galeville to be scheduled.

Bill thanks all those who led trips and invites member ideas and assistance in scheduling and conducting these and future trips. He will continue as committee chair.

RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Chair Charlie Smith announced two research grants will be awarded at the evening banquet.

COUNTY AND STATE LISTING

Berna Lincoln reported that the 1998 report will appear in the next issue of NY Birders. There are 92 participants, and that number is growing. Valerie Freer noted the importance of tying in listing with the Atlas project. This is a good way to cover more remote parts of the state..

ARCHIVES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEES

Phyllis Jones, chair of both committees, states maintaining the archives is ongoing and invites material. 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 1999 issue of *The Kingbird*.

SPEAKER'S BUREAU

Valerie Freer told us that updating the list of those willing to give programs has become an annual project. Anyone wishing to volunteer should contact her, Mary Alice Koeneke, or Phyllis Jones.

FUTURE ANNUAL MEETINGS

Valerie Freer reviewed the list of previously announced future annual meetings: 2000, Eaton Birding Society (Geneva), September 8-10, Holiday Inn, Waterloo; 2001, Onondaga Audubon Society (Syracuse), September 14-16, site to be determined.

ELECTION OF NOMINATING AND AUDITING COMMITTEES

A motion to elect the following nominating committee for the 1999-2000 year was made by Kevin McGowan and seconded by Manny Levine. The nominees were Valerie Freer, chair; Bob Spahn, and John Fritz. The motion passed unanimously. A motion by Dorothy Crumb to elect Norm Stotz, Irving Cantor, and Dick Sloss to the Auditing Committee was seconded by Kevin McGowan and approved by the delegates.

NYS DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION REPORT

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

--Double-crested Cormorants: Following oiling of eggs at Little Galloo Island, DEC was sued by Atlantic States Legal Foundation because "proper procedures were not followed." That suit is pending.

--Bird Conservation: \$200,000 was added for bird conservation initiatives due to the efforts of National Audubon Society and must be spent before March 31, 2000. The agency is developing a spending plan, which calls for hiring 2 permanent biologists who will conduct research and manage the Bird Conservation Areas program, as well as hiring four seasonal/temporary employees.

--Black Terns: data from this year's surveys is being compiled. Contact Laura Somers for further information.

--Grassland Species: Massachusetts Audubon Society conducted a survey of these species in NYS. Results are available from Massachusetts Audubon's website.

--Endangered Species: there will be a new list in November, 1999. Ten percent of all the species in this state are considered rare. Peregrine Falcons continue to breed successfully. This year there were a record 42 pairs, with 79 young. Bald Eagles mirror that success, with 45 pairs and 62 young. There is special concern about the Osprey. The Eastern Bluebird is now off the state list. The Peregrine Falcon has been delisted at the federal level and it is proposed that the Bald Eagle be delisted by July, 2000.

--Habitat Maintenance: Development remains the largest threat to habitat, especially for grassland species.

--DEC's website is now linked with that of the Federation.

OTHER BUSINESS

Berna Lincoln expressed concern at the lack of participation at board and Annual meetings by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and by National Audubon. President Valerie Freer agreed that we should encourage their involvement.

ADJOURNMENT

Following a motion from the floor, the meeting of the Council of Delegates was adjourned at 11:40 a.m.

WORKSHOPS

The following workshops were held on Friday evening, September 17, Bill Evans, *The New York State Towerkill Survey*; Kevin McGowan, *Challenging Identification Problems: Using Specimens to Assist (or Confuse)*; NYS Breeding Bird Atlas Steering Committee, *The Second New York State Breeding Bird Atlas*.

PAPER SESSION

These papers were presented on Saturday afternoon, September 18: David Pindel -- "Call Variation Among Adult Male Barred Owls"; John Confer, Wilmer Fauz, Alison Wright and Shelagh Tupper, "*Managing for the Future of Golden-winged Warblers and Other Shrubland Birds*"; John Van Niel, "*Bird Banding Using the MAPS Protocol*"; and Maxwell C. Wheat, "*Imperiled Birds Need Forceful Poetic Language in the 21st Century*".

BANQUET AND EVENING PROGRAM

Barbara Butler presented a resolution expressing thanks and deep appreciation to the Chemung Valley Audubon Society, the host of this 51st Annual meeting of the Federation. Valerie Freer then introduced club officers and board members and the Atlas 2000 regional coordinators.

During the awards ceremony portion, Certificates of Appreciation were given to Estelle Peterman for hospitality to birders who came to see the Yellow-headed Blackbird, and to Bernice and Don Greenmun, hosts for those seeking the Anna's Hummingbird.

The Lillian C. Stoner Award went to college students Shelagh Tupper and Alison Wright, sponsored by Cayuga Bird Club. Allegany County Bird Club and Buffalo Audubon Society each received a \$100 Member Club Grant Award to develop checklists for their respective areas.

The John J. Elliott Award for best *Kingbird* article was presented to Stan Lincoln for his history of the Federation which was written to celebrate the Federation's 50th anniversary. A new award category for excellence in club newsletters considers size of club membership. From smallest club to largest, the winners were Eaton Birding Society, Naturalists Club of Broome County, Alan Devoe Bird Club, Rochester Birding Association, High Peaks Audubon Society, Ralph T. Waterman Bird Club, and Onondaga Audubon Society.

The Eaton Memorial Award was given to Peter Nye for his contributions to birding and conservation as head of DEC's Endangered Species Unit, especially for the Bald Eagle hacking and Peregrine Falcon reintroduction projects. Bob Andrie received the Gordon Meade award in recognition for his work as chair of NYSARC.

The evening was capped by an excellent program by Scott Sutcliffe ,associate director of the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology -- *Birding In The 21st Century*. He described tools of the trade as he envisions them; birding past the year 2000; and the new building at the Cornell Lab..

Respectfully Submitted,
Linda D. Parr, Recording Secretary

10/15/99

