

NEW YORK STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.
66TH ANNUAL MEETING, UNIONDALE, NY
2 NOVEMBER 2013

The 66th Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) was held at the Long Island Marriott Hotel in Uniondale, NY, on November 2, 2013. The meeting was called to order at 10:45am. Roll Call of member clubs showed 25 delegates from 16 clubs in attendance and a quorum present. Kathy Schneider made a motion to approve the September 29, 2012, Annual Meeting minutes as published in the December 2012 issue of *The Kingbird*. Andy Mason seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

President's Report by Gail Kirch:

Gail applauded Director Seth Ausubel and the Queens County Bird Club members for stepping up and planning the first Annual Meeting on Long Island since 1990. His QCBC Committee worked closely with other NYSOA Board members, notably Shai Mitra, to put on a very successful and well-attended conference. Gail also hailed the new editors of the newsletter, Richard and Cyndy Tkachuck, who stepped up just in time after Tim Baird's retirement. She noted that getting and retaining new members continues to be a challenge, and that we need to find ways to encourage members of our member clubs to participate in NYSOA. The Young Birders Club continues to grow. Gail asked everyone to encourage young birders to go on our website and see all the advantages of membership. The Board of NYSOA is seeking younger adults to fill positions on the Board and for NYSARC. Meetings between the NYSOA Conservation Committee and representatives from the DEC have not been happening regularly because of DEC budget cutbacks but Kathy Schneider is working on getting a representative at our regular Board meetings. Next year's Annual Meeting will be in Ithaca, hosted by the Cayuga Bird Club. Lastly, Gail introduced the present officers and Board members of NYSOA.

Treasurer's Report by Andy Mason:

Andy provided Balance Sheets of Assets and Fund Balances for 2012 and as of September 2013, and also a Detailed Statement of General Operating Fund Activity as of December 31, 2012. He noted that our balance for September of 2013 was lower than the balance for September of 2012 and that we had a several year deficit. The largest expenditures continue to be for our publications. He encouraged members to renew at higher levels to address this deficit.

Vote on South Shore Audubon Society request for NYSOA membership:

Shai Mitra made a motion to accept SSAS as a member club in NYSOA. Andy Mason seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

NYSOA Elections:

Andy Mason gave the **Nominating Committee Report**. The committee nominated the following 2013-2014 slate of Officers and Directors for election: *The Kingbird* 2013 December; 63 (4)

Kathy Schneider – President
Carena Pooth – Vice President
Janet Allison – Recording Secretary
Andy Mason – Treasurer

Seth Ausubel – Director (2015)
Tim Baird – Director (2015)
Jeff Bolsinger – Director (2015)
Mary Beth Warburton – Director (2015)

Joan Collins made a motion to accept the slate as nominated; John Confer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Gail Kirch announced the following names for election to the 2013-2014 **Nominating Committee:** Mike DeSha (Chair), Bob Adamo, Andy Mason. Tim Baird made a motion to approve the selection; Shai Mitra seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Gail Kirch announced the following names for election to the 2013-2014 **Auditing Committee:** John Cairns (Chair), Irving Cantor, Peter Capainolo. Andy Mason made a motion to approve the selection; Tim Baird seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC):

Leslie Lupo of Region 1 Stony Brook gave a report. Shorebirds on Long Island were heavily impacted by Hurricane Sandy, with decreased counts of nesting plovers and terns. Marsh bird surveys found only Virginia Rails. Bobwhite surveys over the last five years found none at all. The DEC wants to close the season on quails but a change in the law is required. Turkey monitoring including hen survivorship data shows turkey populations are not decreasing on Long Island but are in upstate New York. The DEC in concert with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Town of Hempstead continues to monitor waterfowl and band Canada geese. Waterfowl monitoring shows Brant productivity is still good.

Committee Reports:

Auditing Committee: John Cairns gave the report. The Auditing Committee examined the NYSOA books as of December 31, 2012, and, in their opinion, agree that they present fairly the financial condition of the organization.

Archives: Gail Kirch gave the report. The procedures for Archives are complete in the Organizational Handbook. The 2012 papers are ready to go to Cornell.

Awards: Gail Kirch reported that there were three recipients of the Lillian

Stoner Award this year. Gail also reported that she sent three Certificates of Appreciation to 1) Nancy and Albert Loomis for hosting in their yard birders who came to see the Gray-crowned Rosy Finch; 2) Ralph Tabor for his knowledge, postings, and teaching at the Shawangunk Grasslands National Wildlife Refuge; 3) Andrew Baksh for his efforts to protect and manage Jamaica Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

Shai Mitra announced that this year's John J. Elliott Award for the author of the best *Kingbird* article was Joseph Cherek for an article on "Changes in habitat and breeding birds in a Pitch Pine Oak Heath Rocky Summit community at the Mohonk Preserve, Ulster County, NY."

Conservation: Andy Mason gave the report. The committee (Andy, Joan Collins, John Confer, Gerry Smith) participated in a conference call on October 30 with DEC staff. Discussion included cormorant management, Great Lakes avian botulism, bobcat hunting and trapping, Common Tern management on Niagara River, DEC's Wild Turkey study, hunting of rails and snipe, and DEC representation at NYSOA meetings. Other efforts included continued involvement in the Enterprise Park at Calverton coalition monitoring development proposals for this large grassland habitat in eastern Long Island; continued participation in the Plum Island coalition and efforts to ensure that Plum Island off Long Island is protected rather than developed; writing DEC Commissioner Joe Martens regarding the China City of America project in Sullivan County, near the Bashakill Wildlife Management Area; meeting with DEC Region 7 Lands and Forests staff to discuss management for Golden-winged Warblers on state land; and submitting comments on the draft general management plan for the Gateway National Recreation Area. The committee also prepared columns for *New York Birders* on feral cats in NY State parks; Golden-winged Warbler management; Bicknell's Thrush; and wind development proposals on Amherst Island, Ontario. Mary Beth Warburton is being added to the committee.

Joan Collins gave an update on two constitutional amendments to be voted on in the upcoming Tuesday election. The first involved a land exchange so that mining for wollastonite could be done on Forest Preserve land. She noted that local environmental groups were split on approving this. The second involved the clearing of titles for some private landowners around Finch-Pruyn lands that the state acquired and wanted to open to the public.

Seth Ausubel gave an update on the status of Jamaica Bay reconstruction. The Park Service general management plan gave preference to Plan B, which emphasizes recreation over reconstruction of the West Pond habitat, now a mudflat since Hurricane Sandy. Seth and Angus Wilson are representing NYSOA, in concert with NYC Audubon, to get the Park Service to emphasize wildlife protection instead. He encouraged all to submit comments and sign the petition to repair the West Pond.

County Lists: Carena Pooth gave the report. She emphasized that this was a fun competition for individuals to develop a life list for every county in the state. 97

lists were submitted for 2012. A new feature was added to the 2012 report – total county list ticks. All data is available on the NYSOA website at nybirds.org/ProjCountyLists.html. It includes an archive of all compilations since the project's inception in 1992.

eBird: There was no eBird report.

Field Trips: Kathy Schneider gave the report. Field trips consist of an educational workshop on Saturday afternoon and a field trip on Sunday. Two trips were held in 2013, both well attended. The first was a Canton based, north country loop of St. Lawrence County, led by Joan Collins. The second was near Watertown, where Jeff Bolsinger gave a workshop on Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. Plans for next year include a winter owl or raptor trip, a spring waterfowl trip, and a summer loon trip. Kathy is looking for a co-chair for this committee.

Finance: There was no Finance report.

Membership: Barbara Butler gave the report. There are currently 519 annual members plus 48 life members for a total of 567 individual members, a number that has declined most of the past 10 years, with the exception of 2011. There are 42 member clubs, including the new club, South Shore Audubon Society. Life member Robert Long passed away.

New York State Avian Records Committee: There was no NYSARC report given.

NYS Young Birders Club: Carena Pooth gave the report and thanked the generous partner clubs and individual supporters that make it possible to offer quality monthly field trips to the young birders. This fall marks the fifth anniversary of the club, which now has 40 youth members, 34 supporting adults, and 20 partner clubs. The World Series of Birding is their most important fundraising event, with the money going to the Education Fund. Two teams participated this year, with both limiting their birding to Cape May County. This year we are awarding \$3500 in scholarships to 15 young birders. The club now has its own Flickr group page, where members can upload their own photos. The page was set up and is administered by one of the Youth Members.

Organizational Handbook: Mike DeSha gave the report. The Handbook is almost complete. Mike noted that all the chairs have done a good job in writing up the responsibilities of their jobs.

Publications:

- **NY Birders:** Kathy Schneider gave the report for the editors, Richard and Cyndy Tkachuck. Kathy thanked them for taking over and also creating a new electronic version, which is easier to produce and provides a better

product at less cost. The Board conducted a pilot study with 100 members, sending them both the mailed paper version and the emailed electronic version, and the response was very positive to the e-version. Since the club is running a deficit and the newsletter costs about \$4000 per year, members will be asked if they want to opt-in on this year's renewal statements.

- **The Kingbird:** Shai Mitra gave the report. Because of the impact of eBird, we get information about bird sightings differently now, and some editors of regional reports are bowing out, thinking that the reports are not relevant. He plans to revisit the guidelines for these reports and is looking at changing the focus and format of them. Scientific articles on bird distribution and biology will continue. Joan Collins thanked Shai for doing such a big job well.
- **New York State Checklist:** Carena Pooth gave the report. NYSOA's *Checklist of the Birds of New York State* has been updated to incorporate changes made to the AOU checklist as described in its 54th supplement, published in July 2013. The new NYSOA checklist booklet is available for purchase through the NYSOA website or on the membership renewal form.

Research: There was no Research report.

Website and Information Services: Carena Pooth gave the report. County Listing archives are now all up on the website. A writing section has been added to the NYSYBC website.

Old Business: Gail Kirch announced that the Elon Howard Eaton Memorial Award (not a NYSOA award) for a "significant contribution to the ecology of New York State" will no longer be a state-wide award but will be local to the area around Montezuma NWR only.

New Business: Gail Kirch announced that the 2014 Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Cayuga Bird Club in Ithaca, NY, on September 19-21, 2014. A committee including Donna Scott and Linda Orkin is working on details. On the Friday, the Cornell Lab of Ornithology will host a reception with an open house and tours including the vertebrate collection. For the 2015 Annual Meeting, Jeremiah Smart, president of Hudson Mohawk Bird Club, is working on getting a committee together.

Adjournment: Kathy Schneider made a motion to adjourn; Shai Mitra seconded the motion and it passed unanimously at 12:20pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Janet Allison
Recording Secretary