

NEW YORK STATE ORNITHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC., 74th ANNUAL MEETING, OCTOBER 2, 2021

The 74th Annual Meeting of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc. (NYSOA) was held via Zoom on Saturday, October 2, 2021. (This year's annual meeting was hosted by the Southern Adirondack Audubon Society which provided a Zoom tour and presentation by the Kelly Adirondack Center before the Saturday morning delegates meeting, and a Friday evening Zoom program about the effect of climate change on Northeast montane birds by Jason Hill of the Vermont Center for Ecosystem Studies.)

President Shirley Shaw called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. Instead of a roll call of club names, the Secretary confirmed that a quorum—10% of the possible number of delegates—was present. Greg Lawrence made a motion to approve the draft minutes from the 2020 annual meeting, which had been circulated previously. Jerry Thurn seconded the motion, and it was approved unanimously.

President's Report – Shirley Shaw

Shirley Shaw summarized her report which was presented in full on pages 8-10 in full meeting documents. She noted that it has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as NYSOA board president the last two years.

[To access the full meeting documents which will be referenced through these annual meeting minutes, visit: <https://nybirds.org/docs2021/>].

Treasurer's Report, Finance Committee Report, and Audit Report – Mary Jane Dugan, Andy Mason

(10:05 AM) The full text of these three reports is available on pages 11-15 in the annual meeting documents. Mary Jane first highlighted the results of the 2020 Audit Committee report on page 15. The 2020 NYSOA Audit Committee report stated, "We have examined the financial statements of the New York State Ornithological Association, Inc., as of December 31, 2020, as provided to us by the Association's Treasurer, and in our opinion, these statements present fairly the financial condition of the Association on December 31, 2020, and the results of its operations for the year then ended." Members of the Audit Committee were Stephen Chang, Thomas Burke and Peter Capainolo. Mary Jane then summarized the Treasurer's Report highlighting the General Operating Fund Activity on pages 13-14. She noted that there was an approximately \$12K shortfall in budgeted income, with \$18,684.97 received income compared with \$30,810.00 budgeted income. However, on the expense side, actual expenses of \$23,420.42 were significantly less than the budgeted \$ 30,464.00 resulting in an excess of expense over income of \$4,885.45. This was attributed to various impacts from the COVID pandemic. We also published five issues of *The Kingbird* in 2020 in order to catch up instead of four per year which does impact expenses. *The Kingbird* comprised 70% of NYSOA expenses in 2020. Ongoing *Kingbird* costs will also be mitigated

by subscribers choosing the digital edition instead of paper. Andy Mason noted that there was nothing more to report from the Finance Committee.

DEC Report – Ashley Meyer (for Matt Palumbo)

(10:10 AM) Shirley noted that the full text of NYSDEC's report to NYSOA was listed as a separate document. This document is also available at <https://nybirds.org/docs2021/>.

Ashley reported on behalf of Matt Palumbo. The above report from Matt reviewed all the grant-funded projects underway in the Avian Unit including US Fish & Wildlife Service projects. Ashley offered some additional highlights and updates. The species listing status is still under review. To see which species are being considered for a change of status, review the submitted DEC report. The grassland bird strategy is being finalized for a five-year period covering how DEC will undertake and approve grassland management and restoration along with its partners. Partners include USDA and USFWS as well as Cornell Lab of Ornithology, Ducks Unlimited, and Audubon New York. To request copies of the grassland bird strategy, contact Ashley Meyer who is the DEC coordinator for this work. NYSDEC is reviewing energy siting projects with nearly 70 projects submitted. The endangered and threatened species mitigation bank fund allows for large-scale renewable energy projects to pay a fee to offset unavoidable impacts to listed species. These are largely in grassland habitats. The hope is that the mitigation funding will help NYSDEC meet goals for grassland habitat work and mitigate impacts to the Golden Eagle. Nicole Campbell, another new avian biologist, will be working on these renewable energy projects. For follow up questions, email Ashley Meyer at ashley.meyer@dec.ny.gov. The single chat question asked why Rusty Blackbird is not a listed species in New York. Ashley asked for an email follow up so that she could look further into that question.

New York Breeding Bird Atlas – Kathryn Schneider

(10:18 AM) Kathryn Schneider, co-chair of the Atlas Steering Committee, substituted for Julie Hart along with Andy Mason to report on the NYSOA Atlas Fund. The full report is on pages 22-24. Andy Mason asked to report on the financial matters first. The Atlas 2020 Fund was established by NYSOA to accept and disburse funds for the Atlas that are outside of the funds that the Atlas receives from other governmental sources. As of the end of June 2020 quarter, there was about \$30K in the Fund. Kathy notes that she is a last-minute substitute due to Julie's illness. Julie did submit an extensive report found on pages 16-24. Kathy illustrated highlights of this report with a screen share of the data table on page 16, as shown below.

Highlights noted were a 54% increase in atlasers with 1,510 in 2019 and 2,310 in 2020; two new species confirmed breeding in NYS; and overall excellent participation by birders in New York. An online kickoff meeting was held in April with breakout rooms that were very popular, and this same technique was also used in the bi-monthly Atlas town halls. The outreach subcommittee set up themes

for the year to focus on coverage gaps such as nighttime species, cryptic species, and grassland species. The Atlas Insider has 2800 subscribers and comes out monthly between March and August. NYSOA members are encouraged to review these since there is great content on New York bird species and the Atlas project. A Big Atlas Weekend was held at the end of June in coordination with other ongoing breeding bird atlases in Maine, North Carolina, and Maryland-DC.

Metric	2021	2020	Increase
Atlasers	2,330	1,510	54%
Total person-hours	4,405,997 (503 yrs)	2,595,470 (296 yrs)	71%
Unique hours	186,293 (21 yrs)	108,766 (12 yrs)	71%
Complete checklists	248,289	104,746	137%
Total observations	4,348,987	1,800,000	142%
Species confirmed	217	215	1%

Over 1000 atlasers (435 in NY) participated in this weekend event and made 6169 confirmations (records of confirmed breeding). Each state organized challenges that focused efforts on Atlas goals. Winners received a free course from the Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology Bird Academy. There was also an interstate competition to select an overall winner—the Maine BBA—that received a trophy. Everyone involved thought it was a fun and successful event and we hope to expand to other Atlas projects in 2022. See the Atlas website for details: www.ebird.org/atlasny. Regional coordinators are working on plans for 2022 for coverage gaps and training needs in their areas and developing block profiles to tempt birders to cover certain blocks. The sponsor a species project was very successful bringing in over \$30K in donations. Additional assistance with development and fund raising is still being sought. Two new groups are being formed. The Data Review Working Group will work in the winter to review data. Original observations will not be removed but breeding/behavior codes will be reinterpreted. A second group will be working on the final product whether it will be a book and/or a website and how to fund it in consultation with likely users of the Atlas data. Julie is available to answer questions by email as always at: Julie.Hart@dec.ny.gov. There is still a need for additional regional coordinators.

Delayed until later in the meeting, Bob Spahn added additional comments which are summarized here. In Bob’s observation, nearly all of the numbers in the BBA Summary Table presented are actually not directly relatable to the BBA due to the data input methodology in place. The final numbers will not be known until after the data are reviewed and corrected which will involve considerable effort. Bob urged that knowledgeable birders volunteer to help the BBA Records Review Committee currently being established.

Awards – Jerry Thurn

(10:30 AM) Shirley thanked Bill Ostrander for serving as the Awards Chairperson for several years. Jerry has now stepped into that role. Jerry has been reviewing the statewide rare bird alerts to be able to send out certificates of appreciation to property owners who have supported rare bird observers. Jerry reviewed the various awards that NYSOA presents and offered his email address for any questions (geraldthurn@gmail.com). Shirley noted that our award presentations were paused by our having virtual annual meetings and that we hope to resume awards in 2022.

Emanuel Levine Memorial Award – Shai Mitra

(10:35 AM) Details were offered on page 25 of the meeting documents. Shai noted that this award is given annually for the best article that year in *The Kingbird*. The award for 2020 is being given to NYSARC for their presentation of the 2017 report in *The Kingbird*.

The Kingbird Report – Shai Mitra

(10:37 AM) Details were offered on page 25 of the meeting documents. Shirley noted Shai's work as editor of *The Kingbird*. Last year was a major milestone to initiate digital publication. This has been a great success with a bit of a learning curve with some members accidentally selecting digital, but these were worked out. Many people seem to enjoy getting this publication digitally, saving printing and mailing expenses for NYSOA. Credit was given to Carena Pooth for encouraging this move. We did publish five issues in 2020 and will do that again in 2021 to catch up with the backlog of the publication. Credit was given to Patricia Lindsay's ongoing work in many aspects of *The Kingbird* production. The regional editors were also thanked for their valuable work.

New York Birders Report – Joan Collins

(10:43 am) Details were offered on pages 26-27. Joan reported that this past year, we published 60 pages across the quarterly issues with a focus on the Atlas featuring excellent content from Julie Hart. Andy Mason's content was also appreciated as were the articles by young birders. Profile pieces are popular as are the state and county listing reports. The annual winter finch forecast will be in the next issue. Book reviews are especially welcome as are reviews of birding apps or equipment. Thanks to Carena Pooth and Kathy Schneider for proof reading. Joan encouraged people to choose the digital option for the colored photos and especially the many weblinks. The paper version also lags by several weeks behind the digital version in distribution. The digital version also saves the NYSOA printing and mailing costs. Joan noted that this will be her seventh year as editor but then she will take a break by the April 2022 issue so a new editor is being sought.

Bylaws – Bob Spahn

(10:47 AM) Details are on page 28. Bob did an overview of the work of the bylaws

committee to consider potential changes, noting that none were urgent and some needed board discussion. He referred to page 28 for details. Bob highlighted the conflict of interest requirement maybe needing reduction from all special committee members to only special committee chairs. The other issue is whether the bylaws should reflect a faster way of making bylaw changes. Currently four months prior to a meeting, changes would be presented with a lag between annual meetings. The bylaws committee feels that bylaws should not be rapidly changed. The next issue is regarding virtual annual meetings which are currently allowed under NYS law for membership meetings until the end of 2021. Unclear is how this might affect the option for hybrid or Zoom delegate meetings in 2022 and beyond.

Field Trips Report – Greg Lawrence, Joan Collins

(11:00 AM) Greg reported on behalf of Mary Beth Warburton, saying that there are plans underway for a winter field trip in the Adirondacks. Julie Hart has agreed to come as our speaker for a gathering sometime in February. Joan noted that Julie and her husband are confirmed and said that Julie gave an excellent talk in 2020.

Checklists, County & State Listing – Carena Pooth

(11:04 AM) Details are on pages 29 and 30. The AOS 67th supplement came out in June. The main change is Mew Gull now split as Common Gull and Short-billed Gull. Passerines were reshuffled from shrikes to waxwings. Changes are already made on the online checklist. The NYSARC checklist added an asterisk for Trumpeter Swan breeding, spotted by Julie Hart. This was another record year with 132 County Listing participants. The compilation is on the website on the county listing page. The life list record for New York State which has sat at 446 for years was finally broken by Gail Benson with a total of 450.

Website and Information Services – Carena Pooth

(11:10 AM) Details are on pages 31 and 32. The biggest change was transitioning NYSOA membership management from spreadsheet record keeping to an online web-based system that allows administrators to make changes online, with the big benefit of members being able to access their own profiles and make their own updates. Membership payments and donations are being handled by AffiniPay instead of PayPal. The goal next year is to get both *New York Birders* and *The Kingbird* digital editions online for downloading. Another goal is a NYSOA article library online for club newsletter editors to download shared content. Carena also noted the most popular items on the website are the field checklist, the CBC calendar, NYSARC pages, county and state listing pages, *The Kingbird* archives, and the “About Us” page. Thanks were given to Carena for all her work setting up Wild Apricot. Carena, in turn, thanked Pat Aitken and Joan Collins for their responsiveness and assistance throughout the project.

Conservation Report – Andy Mason

(11:11 AM) See the report on page 33. Shirley noted Andy's submitted report since he was no longer online, and also noted that Andy sent an email to member clubs asking them to get in touch with him about any local conservation concerns.

Marketing/Publicity Report – Brian Dugan

(11:11 AM) The report is on page 34. An order of 2500 postcards has been received. Contact Brian if you want a supply. An additional order for 1,000 business cards has also been received, as a scaled down version of the postcard. A screen share showed the NYSOA Zazzle items now being offered, linked from the www.nybirds.org website. Alliance for America's Fish & Wildlife website (www.ournatureusa.com/) now lists NYSOA with our logo and is linked to our website. The same linkage is also on the NYSDEC website.

Membership – Pat Aitken

(11:16 AM) Report on page 35. As of September 21, we have 41 member organizations with a check still pending from Queens County Bird Club to bring us to 42 organizations. Some small decline in individual memberships are likely due to the transition to better membership tracking.

New York State Avian Records Committee – Willie D'Anna

(11:18 AM) The report is on page 36. Willie was not present. Shirley noted that two openings will be coming up on the committee next year.

New York State Young Birders' Club – Emily Van Gelder

(11:21 AM) The report is on pages 37-39. Emily gave an overview of the information presented in the report. Carena praised the club coordinators for their work.

Waterfowl Count – Bill Ostrander

(11:27 AM) The waterfowl count was held January 16-26, 2021. More than 353 volunteers counted nearly 400,000 birds. The 2022 dates will be January 15-23. Regional coordinators are needed for Regions 3 (Finger Lakes) and 9 (Lower Hudson Valley). Email Bill at browncreeper9@gmail.com. Data collection via Excel spreadsheets will be compiled regionally and then returned to Bill, as before.

Election of Officers and Directors

(11:30 AM) The slate can be found on page 40. On behalf of the nominating committee, Tim Baird presented the following slate of nominees for officers and directors:

Officers: (one year terms) President: Pat Aitken, Vice President: Andy Mason, Treasurer: Mary Jane Dugan, Recording Secretary: Anne Swaim

Directors: (Terms ending in 2022) Sean Camillieri, Joan Collins
(Terms ending in 2023) Craig Braack, Mike Cooper, Benjamin Van Doren, Greg Lawrence
Brian Dugan offered a motion to approve the slate, seconded by Barbara Butler. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously. Shirley offered congratulations to all those elected.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Shirley Shaw presented the following committee nominees:

Nominating Committee: (Term ending in 2022) Joan Collins (Chair), Anne Swaim, Bob Adamo

Auditing Committee: (Term ending in 2022) Stephen Chang (Chair), Thomas W. Burke, Pete Capainolo
Greg Lawrence offered a motion to approve the slate, seconded by Jerry Thurn. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

None.

New Business

(11:36 AM) Shirley noted specifics for the 2022 meeting to be hosted by Onondaga Audubon, likely at hotel in Liverpool with intent to hold the meeting in person. Anne Swaim asked that future meetings not be held on mornings during prime migration. Pat Aitken agreed and said we should also plan for evening board meetings via Zoom six times a year for two hours on the third Thursday of every month. Our next regularly scheduled board meeting was requested to be held on Thursday, December 9. An email to the board will follow up on board meeting scheduling.

Adjournment

(11:41 AM) A motion to adjourn was made by Bob Adamo, seconded by Steve Melcher. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Swaim, Recording Secretary

Attendance: 2021 NYSOA Annual Meeting October 2, 2021

Thirty six delegates registered for the meeting; of those, 31 were present, 28% of possible delegates.

Future Annual Meetings

2022: Onondaga Audubon Society, 2023: Saw Mill River Audubon Society.