



New York State Ornithological Association 68th Annual Meeting

NEW YORK STATE BIRDERS CONFERENCE: Connecting Birders Throughout the State

Successful Annual Meeting!

The Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club hosted the NYS Birders Conference and 68th NYSOA Annual Meeting on October 2-4, 2015 at the Radisson Hotel in Albany. The event was a great success and full of enjoyment for the 165 participants.

As we arrived at the hotel, our HMBC hosts warmly welcomed us. They were very informative about all the questions we had. They especially gave us good tips on what field trips to join.

My favorite field trips were to Vischer Ferry and the Albany Pine Bush. Vischer Ferry was really beautiful. The vibrant yellow blossoms of Jerusalem Artichoke enhanced the fall foliage.

We had some nice birds including a Wilson's Snipe, but my personal highlight was great looks at a trio of River Otters frolicking in the marsh. The Albany Pine Bush was not particularly birdy, but it was a great opportunity to see a globally rare and unique habitat – inland pitch pine/scrub oak barrens. The Albany Pine Bush Discovery Center there was great and we had the opportunity to talk to resource management staff who told us about the



Jon Dunn pointing out a bird during a field trip, photo by Joe Hernandez

history and conservation of the area.

Overall, 101 bird species were recorded on conference field trips, an amazing total for the date and a tribute to the expertise of the many trip leaders and field trip committee chairs Carol Blackwell and Jim Ries. Among the highlights were Philadelphia Vireo, Cape May Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow and the aforementioned Wilson's Snipe.



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Jeremy Kirchman with several extinct species specimens; photo by Carena Pooth

A big shout-out goes to Jeremy Kirchman and the New York State Museum for their contributions to the conference. All who attended lauded Jeremy's behind the scenes tours of the museum's ornithology labs and bird collection. The Friday night reception in the museum's bird hall was in a wonderful setting and the food was great.



Members enjoying the Saturday night reception; photo by Joan Collins

Jon Dunn's keynote address on wood warblers at the Saturday night banquet was very interesting. George Steele's and Jory Langner's photo identification quiz was an original addition to the banquet proceedings. Rather than bird identification, it included a number of mysterious objects found in the field, and the identification challenge was akin to solving a riddle. It was great fun!



Members enjoying the Saturday night banquet dinner; photo by Joan Collins

There were many great workshops and papers. Great credit goes to all the authors, but my personal favorite was Tom Salo's talk on Golden Eagle Research in Upstate New York. This important research revealed that a large proportion of the eastern Golden Eagle population uses a narrow corridor in which to migrate. This corridor has been proposed for development of wind power projects,



NYS Young Birders Club members enjoying the banquet dinner; photo by Carena Pooth

and the research may help to avoid impacts on the birds. Tom also showed photos and videos of baited wildlife cameras used to track winter resident Golden Eagles. He relayed how his son sent photos of the birds on a deer carcass to his friends, writing "Take a look at my Dad's bird feeders".

Having hosted the 2013 NYSOA Conference on Long Island, I know the enormous commitment and great teamwork required for such an endeavor. Conference leads Jory Langner, Kathy Schneider and all those in the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club who contributed so much to the event should be commended. NYSOA is extremely grateful for their efforts.

I also understand that HMBC made a small profit on the event, a possible incentive to clubs considering hosting future conferences.

As always, the NYSOA conference was a great opportunity to meet new friends and renew ties. I'm looking forward to the 2016 conference, hosted by the Chemung County Bird Club on September 9-11, 2016.

- Seth Ausubel

Highlights of the 2015 Delegates Meeting

Once a year representatives from NYSOA's member organizations meet to conduct the business of the corporation. This gathering, which has come to be called the "delegates' meeting", took place Saturday morning, October 2, 2015 at the NYS Birders Conference in Albany. While the complete minutes will be published in *The Kingbird* some time in the near future, here are a few highlights.

The delegates voted to accept Seatuck Environmental Association as a new member organization of NYSOA. Seatuck is a 501(c)(3) membership organization dedicated to conserving Long Island wildlife and the environment. The NYSOA Board approved provisional membership for Seatuck in July until the delegates could vote, and at the meeting we officially and enthusiastically welcomed them into the fold!

Highlights from the ten NYSOA committees that reported at the meeting included the following:

- NYSOA's best birders were asked to take up the challenge of becoming *Kingbird* Regional Editors so they can learn new and different things about the birds of New York State and share their knowledge with others. Interested members are asked to contact Regional Reports Editor, Bob Spahn, rspahn@prodigy.net.
- Conservation Committee chair, Andy Mason, reported on NYSOA's activities for the last year including our continued involvement in the Plum Island Coalition, the Coalition for Gateway, promoting the restoration of West Pond, and involvement in monitoring development proposals at Enterprise Park at Calverton. The committee also wrote quarterly conservation articles for *New York Birders* and submitted comments to the DEC on a variety of conservation issues of statewide importance.
- Carena Pooth reported that 114 people submitted reports for the 2014 county and state listing competition. For 2015 the reporting form, included in this issue, will include the long-awaited NYS Pelagic Zone.
- The Marketing and Publicity Committee reported that NYSOA now has a Facebook Page that we will use to publicize the organization and its activities.
- The New York State Young Birders Club is thriving, having grown to 54 youth members in 2015 from only 11 in 2008, with the majority from the downstate area.

- The New York State Avian Records Committee (NYSARC) has approved the addition of six new species to the *Checklist of Birds of New York State*, which will be highlighted in a press release later this year. The new checklist booklet is now available.

Outgoing president Kathryn Schneider thanked retiring officers and directors Celeste Morien, Tim Baird, and Jeff Bolsinger for their service to the organization. The delegates elected new officers to one-year terms and directors to two-year terms.

Officers

President	Joan Collins
Vice President	Seth Ausubel
Recording Secretary	MaryBeth Warburton
Treasurer	Andy Mason

Directors 2015-2017

Peter Capainolo
Dawn O'Neal
Carena Pooth
Kathryn Schneider



Tim Baird presents during the Delegates Meeting; photo by Carena Pooth

The delegates elected the Auditing Committee for 2015-2016 including John Cairns, Irving Cantor, and Stephen Chang. Stephen replaces former committee member Peter Capainolo, now a director.

Bob Adamo, a former NYSOA director, will chair the newly elected Nominating Committee for 2016. Janet Allison, former Recording Secretary, and Dominic Sherony, a former *Kingbird* Regional Editor and long-time member, will work with Bob to identify a slate of officers and directors for the 2016 Delegates Meeting. Anyone interested in serving NYSOA should contact them at nominations1@nybirds.org.

Bill Ostrander announced that the 2016 New York State Birders Conference and 69th NYSOA Annual Meeting will be hosted by the Chemung County Bird Club at the Holiday Inn in Elmira, September 9-11, 2016.

- Kathy Schneider

NYSOA Awards

NYSOA presented several certificates and awards in 2015. NYSOA gives certificates of appreciation for a variety of reasons. This year, the Association presented three certificates of appreciation to three households for generously opening their homes to birders coming to see rare birds. These certificates were presented to: Brian White and Connie Soja, who located a Townsend's Solitaire in Erieville, Madison County, in December 2014; Aidan Perkins who found a Bohemian Waxwing in Suffolk County; and Candace Giles who discovered a Varied Thrush in Irondequoit, Monroe County. At the 2015 annual meeting in Albany NYSOA also presented a certificate of appreciation to the Hudson-Mohawk Bird Club for organizing and hosting a tremendous annual meeting and birders conference.

thereby positively influence their desire to pursue birding and ornithology throughout their lives. High school juniors and seniors and college freshmen and sophomores are eligible for the award. NYSOA presented one Lillian C. Stoner award at the 2015 conference. The recipient was Joseph Hernandez, a high school senior from Great Meadows, New Jersey. Joseph is the current President of the New York State Young Birders Club, which nominated him for the award.

The Emanuel Levine Memorial Award, formerly known as the John J. Elliott Award, recognizes the year's best article in NYSOA's journal, *The Kingbird*. *The Kingbird* editor, Shaibal Mitra, presented The Emanuel Levine Memorial Award to Guy A. Baldassare (posthumously) and Joshua Stiller for their article, "Habitat Use and Migration Chronology of Waterfowl on the Upper Hudson River, New York." The article was published in *The Kingbird*, Vol. 64, No. 2, June 2014.

Any NYSOA member or member organization may submit nominations for Certificates of Appreciation or the Lillian C. Stoner Award to the Awards Chair, currently Bill Ostrander, browncreeper9@gmail.com, or to awards1@nybirds.org. Member organizations can also send nominations for the Gordon M. Meade Distinguished Service Award to the Awards Chair. This award is presented to individuals for outstanding service to NYSOA.

- Bill Ostrander

Jeremy Kirchman's Bird ID Quiz



Bill Ostrander presents the Lillian C. Stoner Award to Joseph Hernandez;
photo by Carena Pooth

The Lillian C. Stoner Award was established in 1975 to encourage young people with an interest in wild birds and ornithology to attend NYSOA's fall conference and