



# Bird Conservation Network

BCN Annual Meeting—Minutes  
Saturday, January 17, 2009  
Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, Chicago, IL

Attendees: Terry Schilling; Bobbi Asher, CAS; Annette Prince, Mary Lou Mellon, Teri Radke, CBCM; Sigrid Schmidt, Christine Williamson, COS; Glenn Gabanski, Bob Fisher, Eric Secker, DBC; Suzanne Checchia, ENSBC; Mary Anne Harrison, IAS; Joan Bruchman, IOS; Valerie Lewis, Jean Sodemann, Lake-Cook; Judy Pollock, Lee Ramsey, NAS-CW; Pat Prichard, Prairie Woods; Donna Gonzalez, STDunes; Dick Riner, Thorn Creek Aud.; Donnie Dann via phone, TNC

President Bob Fisher brought the meeting to order at 1:07p.m. A quorum was established with 20 reps from 12 member organizations and one at-large member present.

## **Administrative:**

1. The minutes of the November 1, 2008, quarterly meeting were approved as written. The minutes are posted on the BCN website at [www.bcnbirds.org](http://www.bcnbirds.org).
2. The slate of officers for 2009 was presented by Lee Ramsey of the Nominating Committee: Judy Pollock, president; Joan Bruchman, vice president; Mary Lou Mellon, secretary; Glenn Gabanski, treasurer. There were no additional nominations from the floor, so the slate was voted upon and elected unanimously by acclamation. Bob turned the meeting over to new president Judy Pollock.
3. Judy thanked Bob Fisher for his leadership during the past year. One of Bob's innovations was to expand the Executive Committee to include more member reps and committees to get more folks involved with the functioning of BCN.
4. Treasurer's report: Glenn Gabanski distributed the financial report and the proposed budget for 2009. The current checkbook balance is \$950 and there is \$3,000 in a CD. All clubs and individual member's membership fees are due now for 2009 and invoices have been distributed by email or postal mail to all representatives. The budget is balanced, as is required by BCN policy. The \$3000 CD matures in March and rates are down so it won't earn as much as it did in 2008. After a few questions, the budget was approved by voice vote.
5. Memberships: Glenn. Two clubs and one individual member have already paid their 2009 dues. Flint Creek and Park Ridge Audubon will not renew. Park Ridge has closed its doors. Prairie Woods Audubon has rejoined and we welcomed Pat Prichard from that

club to the meeting. BCN membership is expected to be 18 organizations and 4 individuals in 2009.

### **Projects Update:**

1. Bartel Grasslands: Dick Riner. The restoration area at Bartel has recently increased from 375 acres to close to 1000 acres. CorLands has \$4.5 million to restore the wetlands as mitigation from O'Hare. The restoration efforts are on a 10-year plan, including re-creating the headwaters of Hickory Creek.

Dick also reported that Kim Ramirez, BCN rep from Midewin Tallgrass Prairie Alliance, has been chosen as a TogetherGreen fellow for the National Audubon Society. Her conservation project has to do with bird-nest predation and will be based at Midewin and Bartel.

2. New Initiative at Poplar Creek: Lee Ramsey. Stewards are undertaking a new restoration project, working with Cook County FPD, Audubon, and Chicago Wilderness, to increase grasslands at Poplar Creek by removing hedgerows and opening up areas. The new section is to be called Schaumburg Road Grassland.

3. New era of cooperation for Chicago Bird Collision Monitors: Annette Prince. Last fall's migration produced a record number of birds in the city of Chicago: there were 1200 rescued birds (including such surprising species as American Bitterns and Common Moorhens) and more than 2000 salvaged birds (which were turned over to the Field Museum). Notable this season was buildings asking CBCM for help with reducing bird collisions. Rescued birds are taken to Willowbrook Wildlife Center. Rehabilitated birds are banded before their release. Joan Bruchman has received permission to monitor Northwest Community Hospital for bird strikes next spring.

4. Cook Country Trails Committee: Christine Williamson raised the question of whether BCN should join a trail users' task force for Cook County Forest Preserve District (CCFPD) proposed by Friends of the Forest Preserves. The task force will review the current status of CCFPD trails and trail policy with a view toward updating official trail policy with regard to construction, siting, usage and rules enforcement. They have been asked to develop a recommendation at Spring Creek preserve, which has horse, bike and foot trails. Jenny Vogt would be a good person to represent BCN on the task force since she monitors at Spring Creek.. Chris will let Judy know if Jenny is willing to serve.

5. Spring Creek: Judy Pollock for Jenny Vogt. Over 160 acres are being taken out of corn production and are being restored to wetlands by the Cook County FPD and Audubon. Drain tiles are being disabled.

6. Orland Grassland: Judy. The Army Corp of Engineers has started to implement a multi-million dollar restoration project. Their contractors will be disabling drain tiles and expanding the central prairie. A shrubland area is also being restored by the Orland Grassland volunteers.

## **Advocacy: Donnie Dann**

1. Donnie hopes to include regional experts to help on bird conservation issues, in addition to the advocacy committee.
2. Donnie is making an effort to extend the city of Chicago's ordinance that new construction and major renovation projects shall incorporate bird-safe building materials and design features, including, but not limited to, those recommended by the City of Chicago's "Bird-Safe Building Design Guide for New Construction and Renovation" to the suburbs. He is working with Highland Park at present, and when that successfully concludes, plans to extend the effort to other suburban communities.
3. Judy pointed out that a group has formed in Evanston to deal with the proposed offshore turbines for that suburb. Judy and Libby Hill are involved.
4. Christine Williamson introduced the subject of the proposed removal of the Bald Eagle, Henslow's Sparrow and Sandhill Crane from the Threatened Species list by the Endangered Species Board (ES Board) on Jan. 23 in Springfield. Christine discussed the process of deciding about de-listing, presented the background data the proposal was based on from the Bird Technical Committee of the ES Board. Eric Secker contributed the gist of his conversation with Illinois Natural History Survey biologist Mike Ward, who serves on the Bird Technical Committee, including Ward's expressed concern that the data recommending that the Black-billed Cuckoo on the Threatened List was not strong enough. The discussion was extensive.

Motion: The BCN supports the Threatened and Endangered species listing and de-listing recommendations of the Illinois Endangered Species Board. President Pollock will submit comments to the ES Board before the Feb. 6, 2009, public comment period deadline expressing BCN's support for the recommendations.

Moved:

Seconded:

Action: Passed

5. The extension of highway 53 through Lake County has been resurrected, again threatening the existence of Almond Marsh, and BCN will be working to oppose it.
6. The debate over whether to build a golf course at Fort Sheridan will get a public airing in late January when the Lake County Forest Preserve meets to discuss the future of the bluffs overlooking Lake Michigan.
7. Tennis Venue for 2016 Olympics: Terry Schilling. The lakefront park area just north of the Bill Jarvis Migratory Bird Sanctuary has been selected for the tennis venue. A better location for birds would be the Montrose parking lot area. The Olympic Committee will not do an environmental impact study. Glenn will contact Sarah

Beazley to see what role BCN might play through the Bird Agenda to get information from the Chicago 2016 Committee and to provide input into venue siting and environmental issues. Terry will contact Open Lands to find out how we can get more information.

**Publicity:** Judy. We continue to seek people to join the Publicity Committee, the purpose of which is to raise awareness of the activities and accomplishments of BCN.

Glenn raised the subject of Flying Wild, a national middle-school science curriculum that focuses on birds, bird conservation and stewardship. IAS is Flying Wild's local partner. Workshops for potential participants are listed in Appendix B of the November 1, 2008, Quarterly Meeting Minutes. There are workshops coming up in February and March.

### **Monitoring and Research**

1. Bird monitoring. The website is complete. The technical paper regarding the results is still in the works and should be available by the next Quarterly Meeting.
2. Census Future Planning Meeting: Lee. Glenn, Judy, Joan, Eric and Lee joined Doug Stotz and land managers to determine recommendations for future BCN Censuses. Most changes will take effect in 2010. Among recommendations were (1) to link monitoring data to habitat changes (2) to locate species of concern over entire area (3) to solicit monitoring projects, manage differently and monitor for birds and (4) to obtain a permanent science advisor for BCN. Monitors will be sent the information from the meeting.
3. We need a source of funding for future analyses of the database. Lincoln Park Zoo and CTAP (Mike Ward) have indicated willingness to be partners with us (as Chicago Wilderness is out of money).

Bob pointed out that BCN could raise funds for some of the work. Teri Radke, Sigrid Schmidt, Lee Ramsey and Mary Ann Harrison will join Bob on a new Fund Raising Committee.

4. The Bird Monitors Meeting has not been set up. It was suggested that Judy use Doodle.com to find a mutually convenient date.
5. Blitzing and atlasing plans for 2009: Judy. Single-site one-day blitzes will provide opportunity for lots of participation. Teams will be formed, the count made, lunch and the count down should make for fun and good coverage of locations that need attention. Suggested sites: Poplar Creek, DuPage County's Pratt's Wayne Woods, Plum Creek, Thorn Creek, Paul Douglas and a Will County site to be determined by Jim Nachel.

### **Meetings and Events**

1. The Wild Things Conference is Saturday, February 7, 2009.

2. The spring Give Back to the Birds Workday will be at Elsen's Hill in DuPage County on April 4<sup>th</sup>. There will be a guided walk for volunteers from 7:30-9am after which a snack will be provided and then volunteers will remove invasive brush and plant seeds from 9:30 to 12 noon. Participants are encouraged to bring a sack lunch. Joan has a flyer that she passed out and Mary Lou will distribute electronically to all reps for disbursal to their clubs. The event will take place rain or shine.

3. The fall workday location is open. Bob suggested Prairie Ridge State Natural Area, Joan suggested Spring Creek Valley, Donna suggested Hoosier Prairie and Sigrid suggested Bemis Woods.

**Editorial** was deferred to the next meeting, because of time constraints. It will be first at the next meeting.

Expanding our membership to include clubs from other parts of the state was also deferred to the next meeting.

**Other business:** The next meeting was set for April 11<sup>th</sup> at Gibson Woods in NE Indiana. Donna Gonzalez of Save the Dunes will coordinate with Joan to set this up.

Judy asked for suggestions of speakers for future meetings. Mike Ward was suggested, but it is acknowledged that there is little time at quarterly meetings for speakers. Possibly a speaker could come before the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mellon  
Secretary

