



BCN Quarterly Meeting Minutes

Saturday, July 21, 2012, 1-4 pm
Spring Valley Nature Center, Schaumburg

Attendees: Bobbi Asher, CAS; Mary Lou Mellon, CBCM; Nancy Tikalsky, COS; Bob Fisher, Glenn Gabanski, DBC; Suzanne Checchia, ENSBC; Joan Bruchman, IOS; Eric Secker, Kane County Audubon; Diane Rosenberg, Lake County Audubon; Valerie Lewis, Jean Sodemann, Lake-Cook Audubon; Brigitte Schmidt, Louis Vassmer, Prairie Woods Audubon; Bob Harrison, Thorn Creek Audubon; Donnie Dann, TNC; Lee Witkowski, Will County Audubon; and Terry Schiller, individual member.

The meeting was called to order by President Joan Bruchman at 1:05PM. A quorum was established with 16 representatives from 13 member organizations and one individual member present. Introductions were made.

The minutes for the April 21, 2012, Quarterly Meeting were approved as corrected by Suzanne Checchia, who noted that in point 9 paragraph 2 under Projects and Initiatives the words “on a tree” should be deleted.

Administration

1. Treasurer’s report--Glenn Gabanski. Copies of the financial spreadsheet and the membership report were distributed.

As of the July 21, 2012, meeting BCN has received income of \$2,121.95 and paid \$635.89 in expenses. Current checkbook balance is \$5,099.49. After subtracting accounts payable BCN has a funds balance of \$4,589.16.

Since the last meeting part of the income was \$50 and \$100 donations from generous supporters. Other income was a \$121.95 donation via PayPal towards the newly launched Redstart Connection fundraising campaign (more about that later).

The report was accepted as presented.

2. Membership report--Glenn. BCN currently has 18 organization and 3 individual memberships.

3. Conflict of Interest Statement--Bobbi Asher. Bobbi presented the first draft of a conflict of interest policy for BCN. She and Bob Fisher will work on a final draft to be presented to the next Executive Committee meeting with the intent that it be distributed by email and voted on at our November meeting. It was determined that to avoid the necessity of every rep signing the statement every year (which is deemed highly unwieldy), the statement can be appended to the BCN Bylaws.

4. Statement of Policy for BCN Roster Use--Joan. The following statement was suggested to head the roster of BCN representatives and their contact information: “**Bird Conservation Network – Member Representatives Directory** This directory is intended for the exclusive use of the members of BCN and for BCN approved business only and may not be used for any other purpose or reproduced in whole or in part without written permission from the BCN Executive Committee.”

Joan plans to consult with Bob Fisher, Editorial Chair, for assistance in revising this. A proposed final version will be emailed to all reps before the next Quarterly Meeting (November 3, 2012).

Advocacy

1. **Chairperson Donnie Dann:** Donnie has sent 13 sign-on letters on behalf of BCN on a variety of state and national bird conservation issues since the last quarterly meeting. Anyone interested in specific details are encouraged to contact Donnie donniebird@yahoo.com
2. **IDNR's Lake Michigan Offshore Wind Energy Advisory Council.** Donnie and Bob Fisher were asked to serve on this Council, the purpose of which was to recommend appropriate criteria for and feasibility of offshore wind development. Bob and Donnie were successful in inserting fairly strong language benefitting birds into the final report, which was completed in June. The report can be found at: <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/councils/LMOWEAC/Documents/LMOWEFinalReport62012.pdf> A reference to this report is to be added to the BCN website.
3. **Donnie appeared on TV Fox News** on March 16, representing BCN and debating a pro lead ammunition advocate relative to a proposed Federal law that would unequivocally allow hunters to use lead ammunition.
4. **Illinois Nature Preserves Commission.** Donnie has been named vice chairman of this organization. The commission's purpose is to dedicate the lands and waters of Illinois that are exceptionally high quality natural areas as Nature Preserves or Land and Water Reserves. The Commission also assists private and public landowners in the protection and preservation of the dedicated property, oftentimes comprising habitats of endangered and threatened species. Well done, Donnie.

Fundraising

1. **Sound Approach Bird Fund**--Mary Lou. The website for this hoped-for grant source says that all funds have been allocated. Mary Lou continues to monitor the website for news that they have found more money.
2. **Trends Analysis**--Glenn. A major goal of BCN is to continue to analyze the ever-growing database of monitoring records for trends in bird populations. Analyses were done in 2004 and in 2007 with good results and it is time to do another. The increased size of the database will now give us even more robust results than previous efforts.

To oversee this project Joan has created the 2012 Trends Analysis Committee and asked Glenn Gabanski to be chair and to recruit other members. Linda Padera, Judy Pollock and Lee Ramsey have agreed to serve. The purpose of the committee will be to discuss with Eric Secker (who, it is hoped, will do the analysis) what needs to be done in this third analysis of the data, to prepare a contract, and then to oversee the implementation of the contract.

Funds to pay for the analysis will come from money raised via the Redstart Connection Fundraising Campaign (see next section) and from our current funds.

3. **Redstart Connection Fundraising Campaign**--Glenn. Following the April meeting, at which BCN voted to do a fundraising campaign with the money raised split evenly between BCN and the Community Cloud Forest Conservation (CCFC), the Executive Committee took several ideas suggested by Judy Pollock and worked out a fundraising plan called The Redstart Connection. Several days before the July 21 meeting a letter explaining the campaign was sent to all the reps so they could learn about it before the meeting. This letter is attached to these minutes as **Appendix A**. The major feature of the campaign is to use a matching fund approach, which is widely believed to be more effective in securing donations. Here are the main steps in the campaign.

A. BCN reps and those who attended a talk about CCFC at the Botanic Garden last April will be asked to make voluntary pledges of any amount.

B. The total amount pledged will then be doubled and announced to monitors, partners, birders, conservationists, and friends as a target. The pledgers, at a rate of 50%, will then match any money donated by these people towards this target. This means that for every dollar donated, the pledgers will add an additional half dollar up to the amount of their pledge. The letter gives several examples of how the 50% match works.

C. To make a pledge send an email to BCN Treasurer Glenn Gabanski at ggabanski@comcast.net. The deadline for making pledges is August 31.

D. The matching period will end November 30 at which time each pledger will be asked to send in their pledge.

E. Payments may be made by mailing a check to BCN or via the PayPal link on either the BCN web page or the Redstart Connection web page.

F. Half the amount donated will be sent by BCN to CCFC and the other half stays with BCN.

Projects and Initiatives

1. **Owl Blitz Winter 2012-2013** Bob suggested the idea. After some discussion about whether owl monitoring via playback is appropriate, Bob was assigned the task of contacting Greg Neise, who presently monitors owls, and others about developing a suitable protocol. Nancy Tikalsky offered to help.
2. **Kane County Kestrel Nesting Boxes.** Bob was contacted by Bob Andrini on behalf of the person who put up the boxes and who wants to band the baby kestrels. Andrini was seeking recommendations on local banders. Mary Hennen was suggested, but it proved to be not feasible for this year. It will be revisited next year.
3. **Red-headed Woodpecker Blitz--Joan.** Final results not yet available at this date., but many volunteers have reported successful nesting RHWOs. The RHWOs in Joan's area, Deer Grove East, fledged at least one juvenile, which she has seen twice during this week. Judy and Lee will be reporting on the full results at the next meeting.
4. **Fishing line tubes--Bob.** The tubes in Du Page County were retrofitted with some sort of cover, but Bob is not current on this. **See Appendix B.** Diane Rosenberg reported that Lake County had a volunteer redesign a new type of lid that closed automatically and they were applied to the tubes. They were apparently successful this year.

Bob recommended that BCN members attend forest preserve board meetings to thank the people responsible for taking these steps. Diane indicated that Lake County Audubon has done this. Mary Lou advised that Steve Silic and Jim Phillips of the fisheries department of CCFPD (who were responsible for putting lids on the tubes at the Cook County fishing lakes) were recognized with Grassroot Conservation Leadership awards at a festive banquet sponsored by Audubon Chicago Region in January.

5. **Asian Longhorn Beetle Monitoring Project** update--Suzanne. BCN was not able to schedule a presentation before the funding for this project ended this month. Suzanne will follow up with Andi Dierich to see if she is successful in getting the funding renewed for another year. If so, we may try to schedule her to speak at a Quarterly Meeting in the future.
6. **Lake Cook Audubon Barn Owl Project--Jean Sodemann.** Mike Wallace, who was heading up this project for Lake Cook Audubon, has taken a job in Alabama, so the project is on hold till someone else steps up to the plate.
7. **Palatine Prairie--Louis Vassmer.** Cyndi Duda & Brian Herner (PWA Prairie Stewards) report the Palatine Prairie is in excellent shape despite the drought. A burn was conducted in very early in spring. Mustard greens, crown vetch, giant phragmites, purple loosestrife, buckthorn are all under control. The golf ball

problem is abating slowly due to a downturn economy and the heat, as fewer people seem to be utilizing Golf Nation, hence fewer golf balls littering the prairie. The dumping of landscape refuse on the prairie has stopped. Soras were seen and heard at the prairie this spring. Common birds are Red-winged Blackbirds and Eastern Meadowlarks.

Louis was sent to Louisiana, compliments of National Audubon, to be the Illinois Flyway Leader. It was a training session with several Illinois reps and those in the Mississippi Flyway. Audubon is establishing a Mississippi Flyway Network to lobby Congress and states regarding conservation issues that may affect migrations. The RESTORE Act passed as part of the Surface Transportation Extension Act of 2012. Louis will continue with various lobbying efforts, training and organizing for National Audubon and working with other flyway leaders on future legislation/projects.

8. BCN Monitor's Bird Walk and Brunch--Joan. It was a cold, rainy morning for the bird walk at Waterfall Glen FP led by Bob Fisher. A number of birders left the walk when the rain began, but 15 brave monitors waited for the rain to stop, continued on the walk and then enjoyed a delicious picnic lunch at Fullersburg FP. Some of the dishes were prepared by members of the BCN Executive Committee. This year we experimented and held the event during spring migration. In spite of the weather, all seemed to have a great time!!

A questionnaire was sent out to all monitors to determine what they would like for next year's event.

Thirty monitors responded:

Question 1--Month preference: 1st choice split between April (36%) and May (35.7%).

Question 2--Day preference: 1st choice either Sat or Sun (53.3%); Sat. only (33.3%); Sun 13.3%

Question 3--Walk or brunch or both? 1st Both (90.3%); walk only (6.5%); brunch only (1 person)

Glacial Park in McHenry is under consideration for the location of next year's outing, with lunch at its attractive new Visitors Center. The date is undetermined. Joan has a list of events already scheduled in April and May 2013 so we can try to avoid as many conflicts as possible.

9. Give Back to Birds Day, Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, May 26--Joan. This was a successful work day with 12 volunteers in attendance. Attendees first enjoyed a tour of Midewin given by Lee Witkowski. For future work days, we need to plan in advance what the work will be and should include two to three options in order to better match the physical capabilities of volunteers.

Judy Pollock made a suggestion during an ExCom meeting that the work days be held only once per year.

10. Give Back to Birds Day, fall 2012--Joan. There had been discussion of an overnight to Emiquon in Fulton County. Not sure if this is still a go.

Other

1. Lee Witkowski: There will be a Hummingbird Festival at Sagawau Learning Center on August 18th, beginning at 8:30am.

2. Mary Lou: Attended a focus group at Crabtree Nature Preserve for developing a master plan for the future of the Cook County Forest Preserve District. Stay tuned for developments.

3. Donnie: One of the major articles in American Bird Conservancy's Bird Calls June newsletter is about BLM taking action on bird deaths from open pvc pipes, which are used on public lands as mining claims markers.

4. The next BCN Quarterly meeting will be Saturday, November 3rd, at Donnie Dann's home. Mike Parr, vice president of American Bird Conservancy, will be our guest speaker. In order to allow plenty of time for this outstanding speaker we will start the meeting a half hour early at 12:30pm. All reps from all member organizations are strongly encouraged to come and enjoy this special opportunity.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:35pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mellon
Vice President/Acting Secretary

APPENDIX A

Fundraising Pledge Appeal to Representatives Letter

Dear BCN representatives,

At our last meeting, we voted to do one year of joint fundraising with Community Cloud Forest Conservation. This fundraising effort, which we are calling The Redstart Connection, will support two projects: doing a new Trends Analysis of our BCN database (last done 5 years ago) and reforestation of 5 acres of cloud forest in Guatemala that is used by many of "our" migrant birds. The Trends Analysis takes our monitors' data and determines what the local population trends are for those birds (for details see <http://bcnbirds.org/trends07/index.html>). With about 12 years of data accumulated, it should be very robust and accurate. Eric has set up a beautiful fundraising page with more information, including links to the Community Cloud Forest Conservation site. You can find it here: <http://bcnbirds.org/redstart.html>. Our plan is to ask for donations from monitors, partners, birders, conservationists, and friends. But we're coming to you, our reps, first, to ask whether you would make a pledge to match donations that we receive during our fund drive. It is known that appeals for funds are more successful if a matching fund is offered. Your pledge would match 50% of a donation received, so that if you pledge \$150 now, we will use it during our fund drive to raise \$300 from others, giving us a total of \$450. Of course, we will set a limit on this offer – the limit will be how much we receive in pledges in advance of our fund drive. For instance if you and fellow reps reply to this email with pledges that total \$2000 in the next weeks, we will say that we can match all donations up to \$4000. We would like to send out an appeal that says something like this: "If we can raise \$4000 by November 30, our reps will contribute another \$2000. So if you donate \$100, our reps will add another \$50." We are also asking for pledges from people who attended the Cloud Forest talk at the Chicago Botanic Garden. We've never asked reps for a donation before, and we certainly don't consider this part of your service. We very much appreciate the time that you give to our organization. But if you do charitable giving and this project appeals to you, we would be grateful for a pledge. Pledges of \$50, \$100, \$250, or any amount you are comfortable with can help us reach our goal. You might consider making the donation a gift in honor of your favorite conservationist (let us know and we'll notify him or her). A benefit of this gift is that half of it goes to plant trees in an appropriate ecosystem, so if you chase birds (or drive to BCN meetings!), this is a great way to offset those carbon emissions. And because BCN is now a 501(C)(3) charitable organization, your donation will be tax deductible for 2012.

Please consider this seriously. Your donation can help us realize an important goal: analyzing the BCN monitoring data and sharing the results with land managers, researchers, and planners to help our local birds. If you'd like to pledge, just send an email saying how much you can pledge to BCN Treasurer Glenn Gabanski at ggabanski@comcast.net. Please make sure your pledge amount reaches him by August 31, because after that we will send the general appeal. We will let you know when we have raised the matching amount and then you can finalize your donation. Thanks so much for all you do!

Joan Bruchman
on behalf of the BCN executive committee

Appendix B

4. Projects and Initiatives--Fishing line tubes: Bob checked after the meeting and learned that the tubes have not yet been installed in DuPage County Forest Preserves, and will not be installed until spring 2013. In the interim DuPage FPD staff are making special efforts to clean up discarded fishing line from preserves with fishing access.

