

BCN Quarterly Meeting Minutes
Saturday, July 25, 2015
Sagawau Environmental Learning Center

Attendees: Roberta Asher, CAS; Mary Bernat, guest; Joan Bruchman, IOS; Suzanne Checchia, ENSBC; Donnie Dann, TNC; Emma England, Lake Cty Aud; Bob Fisher, DBC; Glenn Gabanski, DBC; Jerry and Connie Henrick, Midewin Alliance; Libby Hill, ENSBC; Vera Leopold, TWI; Mary Lou Mellon, CBCM; Steve Mitten, Loyola IES; Luis Munoz, COS; Judy Pollock, IOS; Annette Prince, CBCM; Rita Renwick, Will Cty Aud; Diane Rosenberg, Lake Cty Aud; Terry Schilling, at large; Nancy Tikalsky, COS; Jenny Vogt, NAS-CR; Christine Williamson, COS

The meeting was called to order by President Mary Lou Mellon

The minutes of Saturday, April 11, 2015, were approved without corrections or amendments.

Treasurer's Report - Glenn Gabanski

Copies of the financial spreadsheet were distributed. A summary follows.

Income YTD	Dues: \$1,550
	Grants: \$1,100 (IWPf Grant from last year)
	Donations: \$2,877 (\$1,823 from COS for LaBagh restoration)
	Total: \$5,527
Expenses YTD	Licenses, etc. \$10
	Dues to IEC: \$150
	Postage/Supplies: \$30.16
	Printing: \$215.50 (BCN brochure)
	Conf. Calls: \$72.40
	LaBagh restoration: \$1,823.11
Misc. \$150	(Design of BCN Brochure)
	Monitor CDs: \$174.06
	Monitor Brunch: \$161.77
	Total: \$2,739.79

Net Income: \$2,739.79

Checkbook balance: \$6,616.93

Membership Report – Glenn Gabanski

All member groups have renewed for 2015.

Educational presentation - Bob Fisher

Perspectives on the breeding birds of the Chicago Wilderness region, based partly on the results of 15 years of BCN breeding bird surveys. Ask Bob for a copy of his presentation for more details.

CONSERVATION ISSUES

Urban Treaty Grant – Donnie Dann, Mary Lou Mellon, Judy Pollock

A \$50,000 grant was received for the second time by the Chicago Urban Treaty Alliance, which was matched by Chicago Park District, said Pollock. Most of CPD's donation will go to the Burnham Wildlife Corridor, including public outreach. \$1,000 of CPD money will go toward assisting BCN with developing a migration monitoring protocol; BCN is matching that amount. About \$15,000 will be spent on shrub plantings as part of the LaBagh Woods restoration work by COS and Friends of the Chicago River. A small amount of money will be spent to further enhance habitat at small migratory hot spots. Administrative and process issues remain to be sorted out.

Advocacy - Donnie Dann

Illiana Tollway: A federal court and Governor Bruce Rauner put a stop to the proposed tollway.

Piping Plovers: BCN signed on to American Bird Conservancy's letter demanding protection for Piping Plovers nesting on Hatteras Island, NC.

Pipe-induced mortality: BCN signed on to American Bird Conservancy's letter demanding that open pipes used for oil and gas exploration be capped to prevent bird deaths.

Federal Bird-safe Buildings Act: BCN signed on to American Bird Conservancy's letter supporting Representative Mike Quigley's proposed legislation to make buildings safer for birds.

Illinois Animal Control legislation: BCN expressed its opposition to the bill by letter. The bill passed, but it is no worse than the current law in regard to feral cat Trap Neuter Release programs.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act: BCN supported efforts of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to strengthen the MBTA. An amendment to the budget bill would have cut funding for the protections of the act, but public opposition pushed the amendment's author to withdraw his proposal.

October Oak Awareness Month: BCN signed on to IOS's letter to Gov. Rauner asking him to support an effort to designate October as Oak Awareness Month and to support the planting of oak trees in appropriate habitats across the state.

Sage Grouse Protection Act: BCN signed on to National Audubon Society's letter opposing measures of the new legislation.

Highland Park Bird-friendly Ordinance: In an informal vote, the Highland Park City Council unanimously agreed to require that new commercial, industrial and multifamily buildings be constructed using bird-safe techniques. A few administrative issues still are being dealt with, but the city council is likely to have regulations in place before BCN's fall meeting.

Waukegan Beach: The mayor of Waukegan has proposed to clear vegetation and level dunes habitat on the city's public beach. Dann has contacted many birders, conservationists and political officials in an effort to stop the proposal. He suggested that a big letter-writing campaign is needed. Christine Williamson suggested that if the letter-writing campaign doesn't work, a call-in day of action that will swamp the city's switchboard might also be effective. Williamson will write a letter to the editor of the Chicago Tribune.

Birding the Cook County Forest Preserves – Judy Pollock

The CCFPD wants to promote birding in its preserves with a special focus on finding new audiences. Pollock was hired by the CCFPD to run the program, which will begin in 2016. She will contact local bird clubs about activities they might be willing to offer as part of the program.

Possible activities: new birder walks; competing birding big years at different forest preserves; focus on developing Spanish-language birding walks; outreach to different community organizations; support development of younger adult birders; create a "birding leader bank" to lead field trips; primers for how to bird various CCFPD preserves; a new bird checklist; a series of conservation bird walks, which will be co-sponsored by US Fish and Wildlife Service and CCFPD.

Bob Fisher moved to have BCN co-sponsor the conservation walks. The motion was seconded and passed.

PROJECTS & INITIATIVES

Common Tern Nesting Colony at Great Lakes Navy Base – Donnie Dann

The nesting colony was not successful because of high Lake Michigan water levels, strong northeast winds and ATV damage to inland nesting areas. Dann said the Navy is amenable to creating a floating nesting island on a barge and he is pursuing this action.

Piping Plovers nested on the beach east of the Johns Manville property in Waukegan and hatched four chicks this summer. The first nesting success in 40 years!

Bird Monitors Appreciation Brunch and service awards – Joan Bruchman

27 bird monitors attended the May 2 appreciation event. A birding walk and brunch was followed by service awards. Suzanne Checchia, Donnie Dann and Stan Stec each were thanked for at least 15 years of service as BCN survey monitors. Larry Bahr and Marilyn Schmidling were honored for 10 years of survey work.

The Wetlands Initiative Hennepin Wetlands BioBlitz Report – Vera Leopold

More than 100 people participated in the 24-hour blitz and much new information was collected about the biota of the site. The preliminary estimate of the total species seen is 635. 108 species of birds were found.

Hummingbird Festival at Camp Sagawau – Rita Renwick (see attached press release)

Lake County Audubon Fundraising project – Diane Rosenberg (see attached flyer)

A fundraiser concert is planned for Sept. 27 at O'Toole's in Libertyville from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. to support the group's conservation and nature education activities. The entry fee is \$10 and donated goods will be given away as door prizes

DuPage County – Bob Fisher

An agreement in principle has been made between DBC, DuPage County Forest Preserve District and Waste Management to hold off on mowing the Green Valley closed landfill until Aug. 15 at earliest to benefit grassland nesting birds. A survey of grassland nesting birds is being done this year at Mallard Lake landfill in preparation for a later mowing schedule there next summer. Fisher suggested that BCN member groups check closed landfills in their areas to see if they can influence the owner/manager to delay mowing until after grassland birds are done nesting. DPCFPD will begin an American Kestrel nest box program in the winter of 2016 and will assist with monitoring the nest boxes.

COS Big Year and LaBagh Restoration – Luis Munoz and Nancy Tikalsky

COS has raised close to \$10,000 for LaBagh Woods restoration, said Tikalsky. To date, the COS LaBagh Big Year effort has found 158 bird species.

Munoz said about 250 shrubs will be planted at LaBagh in the fall; seed collection also is planned. There will be workdays every two weeks.

Cook County Forest Preservation Millennial Celebration

BCN will lead beginning birder walks at Deer Grove East, Thatcher Woods and Skokie Lagoons Sept. 25 and 26. Mellon suggested that BCN consider acquiring binoculars for use in the many field trips member groups will be leading in the future.

CCFPD Gateway Master Plan – Mary Lou Mellon

Mellon attended a meeting that the CCFPD held to come up with ideas for “gateway signs” that will entice people to use the preserves more.

BCN Facebook page – Mary Lou Mellon

Join! Like the page! Get us to 1,000 likes ASAP!

BCN Website updates have been completed.

Updating the Green Paper about lake front bird habitat – Terry Schilling

Schilling and Williamson will update the 1999 paper before the end of the year.

The next meeting will be Saturday, October 24, 2015 at Crabtree Nature Center, Barrington, IL, at 1PM.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Williamson, Recording Secretary



Press Release



Contacts: Lee Witkowski, Will County Audubon Society (630) 257-5025
Mike Konrath, Forest Preserve District of Cook County (630) 257-2045

Hummingbird Festival in Cook County Forest Preserve

Lemont, Illinois, July 1, 2015 – Will County Audubon Society (a chapter of Illinois Audubon Society) and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County are sponsoring a hummingbird festival on August 15, 2014 at **Sagawau Environmental Learning Center** in Lemont, Illinois. This event will be held from **8:00 AM** until 3:00 PM.

The highlight of the festival will be the capture and banding of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, our smallest North American bird. This hummingbird banding will be conducted between the hours of **9:00 AM and Noon only**. Vern Kleen, one of only three licensed hummingbird banders in the state of Illinois, will conduct the capture and banding operations. Vern will provide details about the life history of hummingbirds, why they are banded, and how one can “adopt” one.



This festival is one of many that Vern conducts throughout the state but it is the only one in the Chicago area. Details of the hummingbird festival can be found at the Illinois Audubon Society (IAS) web site (www.illinoisaudubon.org).

Vern is a retired avian ecologist. However his “retirement” consists mainly of guiding statewide, national and international field trips, banding hummingbirds and other resident and migrant birds, and administering a “Stamps for Wildlife” program for IAS.

As you enter Sagawau Environmental Learning Center, you will experience the hummingbird migration route. If you complete this route, you will be given a raffle ticket which makes you eligible to win a hummingbird feeder. There will be a new, special exhibit this year: *Poisons at Home!* It will highlight the need for everyone to be more aware of how many toxic products are used and discarded in an unregulated way, affecting the environment, wildlife, pets and humans. There will also be humming bird arts and crafts for kids, viewing the *World of Hummers*, the humming bird slide show, hummer movies and live hummer viewing. Please be aware that some activities are weather dependent. Not all activities are available at all times.

Sagawau Environmental Learning Center is located at: 12545 West 111th Street, Lemont, IL 60439, (630) 257-2045

Directions: 100 yards east of Archer Ave., or four miles west of LaGrange Rd. on Rt. 83 near Lemont, Illinois.

Food vendors will not be present at the Hummingbird Festival but you are welcome to bring snacks and beverages (no alcohol), and water. Clean, indoor restrooms are available.

THE Fall Fundraiser

**Benefitting Programs, Audubon Adventures,
Birdscaping, and Scholarships**

FEATURING: Barrelhouse Chuck Blues Band
Barrelhouse Chuck, award-winning world-famous Chicago Blues Player,
The Great E.G. McDaniel on bass, Harmonica Todd, and Thaddeus
Krolicki on drums.



Save the Date: Sunday, September 27th 2 to 5 PM

**Tickets: \$10.00
at the door.**

**CASH BAR/
FOOD
AVAILABLE**

DOOR PRIZES
Donated by area
supporters.
See
lakecountyaudubon.org
for special details.

O'TOOLE'S
Upstairs Lounge
412 N. MILWAUKEE
Libertyville
2-5 PM