



Bird Conservation Network

BCN Quarterly Meeting Minutes
Saturday, July 18, 2009
James "Pate" Philip State Park, Bartlett, IL

Attendees: Chris Van Wassenhove, CAS; Carolyn Marsh, CAS; Annette Prince, CBCM; Mary Lou Mellon, CBCM; Nancy Tikalsky, COS; Glenn Gabanski, DBC; Eric Secker, DBC; Suzanne Checchia, ENSBC; Joan Bruchman, IOS; Dolph Williams, Lake-Cook; Diane Rosenberg, Lake County Aud.; Judy Pollock, NAS-CW; Lee Ramsey, NAS-CW; Dick Riner, Thorn Creek Aud.; Donnie Dann, TNC; Terry Schilling.

A quorum was established with 16 representatives from 11 member organizations and one individual member present.

The meeting was called to order by President Judy Pollock at 1:03pm. Judy extended a welcome to the three new representatives at the meeting: Dolph Williams of Lake-Cook, Nancy Tikalsky of COS, and Carolyn Marsh of CAS.

Administrative:

1. The minutes of April 11, 2009, quarterly meeting were amended by Carolyn Marsh to include the words "on behalf of Chicago Audubon Society" and were accepted as amended.
2. Treasurer's report--Glenn Gabanski. As of July 18, 2009 the BCN checkbook has a balance of \$2,584.25. After taking into account known expenses yet to be paid this year and the \$3,000 CD, BCN has a funds balance of \$5,278.25. This gives us an estimated \$1,302 of taxable income in 2009. According to BCN fiscal policy we need to spend this amount to avoid paying taxes in 2009.

The \$3,000 CD was rolled over on July 3 into a 7-month CD at 0.75% interest. By the time it matures on February 3 it will earn us a little over \$15.00 in interest. Perhaps at that time the rates will be higher.

Earlier this month BCN received a generous donation of \$500 from Jeff and Arlene Koziol. This is the third time the Koziols have given to BCN to support the work we do on behalf of birds. BCN is very grateful for their support and will put their money to

good use. A formal letter of thanks will be sent acknowledging their donation.

The 2009 dues have been paid by all current members. Our membership stands at 19 organizations and 3 individuals.

Projects Update:

1. Single Site Blitzes—Judy. The eight blitzes were successful and provided good species and habitat information to the stewards and land managers of the sites involved. A lot of fun was had by the many participants and only the DuPage County Blitz had to deal with pouring rain. Judy congratulated and thanked all those who ran the blitzes.

2. Poplar Creek Blitz—Lee Ramsey. Jenny Vogt headed up this extensive effort. She organized 10 teams, each with at least two birders and one plant person, for the event. Lee mapped segments of Poplar Creek broken down by habitat and each team was assigned segment(s) and covered as much of its assignment as possible. The goal was to tally all the birds in each segment and to connect them with habitat types and any habitat problems that might need to be dealt with. Jenny obtained donated food for the post-blitz lunch at head steward Sheila Hoyos' home, which participants enjoyed in air-conditioned splendor. Bird data has been entered in BCN eBird; combined bird and habitat data will be kept in a file now being prepared by Erin Jones for the Audubon-Chicago Region office.

Land managers will be contacted re the focus of future blitzes--should we have another year of single site or move on to woodlands?

Advocacy:

1. 2016 Olympics cover letter. Judy read the proposed cover letter to be used for transmittal of the earlier approved 2016 Olympics Position Paper (see minutes of April 11, 2009, Quarterly Meeting, **Appendix A**). It was moved that the letter be adopted.

Carolyn Marsh commented that it is BCN policy and practice that all position statements include a comment identifying any member clubs that do not support a given statement or policy.

The letter was accepted by voice vote. COS and CAS abstained.

2. Chicago 2016 Environmental Advisory Council. Judy has been invited to join the advisory council. She will report to BCN reps on the advisory council's actions.

Terry Schilling announced that there was to be a Lakeview Citizens' Council meeting on Monday July 20th, where Chicago 2016 and No Games Chicago would be given equal time to present their views. Details were to be distributed to member groups as soon as possible after the BCN meeting.

3. Wind Turbines. There was a motion to accept the position paper titled Minimizing the Impact of Wind Turbines on Lake Michigan's Wildlife, authored by Eleanora DiLiscia, Libby Hill, Matt Cvetas and Judy Pollock. The motion was seconded and it was passed by unanimous voice vote. The paper will be posted on the BCN website at www.bcnbirds.org under the BCN Green Papers tab on the left side of the opening page.

4. Kane County Forest Preserve—Joan Bruchman. Meadowdale International Raceway Preservation Association (MIRPA) will hold an antique auto show at Greater Raceway Woods, in Kane County, Dundee Township, in fall of 2009. MIRPA has requested use of an existing maintenance road to transport the cars from Route 31 to the show site. This road passes through Dundee Township and Kane County Forest Preserve land. The township rejected the request but MIRPA then approached the Kane County Forest Preserve for permission to not only use the road but to also make improvements. The issue was reviewed at a recent meeting, 6/25/09, of the Forest Preserve Utilization and Planning Committee, where it was decided that nothing would be done for this event and any others at Raceway until the idea could be studied in relationship to the goals and objectives of the Forest Preserve. The issue is essentially dead for this fall but needs to be followed in the event MIRPA or other organizations make a similar request.

BCN is preparing a letter of concern which will be sent to Forest Preserve Commissioners and will advise clubs to do the same if the issue reemerges.

Update on 7/22/09: Since the 6/25/09 Forest Preserve Utilization and Planning Committee meeting (where it appeared that this issue was not going to be considered for fall 2009), this issue has now been put back on the agenda for a meeting to be held by the same committee on 7/30/09.

BCN is preparing a letter of concern which will be sent to all the BCN reps asking them to encourage all their club members to send letters to the Forest Preserve Commissioners. BCN will also send a letter to the commissioners on behalf of the coalition.

5. Advocacy Chair—Donnie. Letters and emails of BCN support are sent out several times weekly by Donnie. It was suggested that clubs might be interested to know what action is being taken by BCN on their behalf. The advocacy letters can be archived on the BCN web site so they may be accessed by those who are interested. Eric Secker, web master, will look into setting that up with input from the Executive Committee.

6. Bird Agenda Meeting, June 17, 2009—Glenn. Three presentations featuring how various organizations are implementing the Bird Agenda opened the meeting. They are described in the appended notes from the meeting (**Appendix B**).

Miscellaneous Issues

1. Fund Raising: This newly formed committee headed by Teri Radke had a number of

questions. It was pointed out that fund raising is not part of BCN's mission and that it might conflict with our member organizations' efforts to raise money. Also since BCN is not a 501C3 organization, donations would not be deductible. The committee requested definition of the amount needed and purpose for which the funds are to be raised. This subject was referred to the Executive Committee.

2. BCN Grants—Judy. Of the three grants that BCN has applied for, one has had some action. The Midwest regional office of Fish and Wildlife wants to support our efforts to engage land managers and stewards in bird conservation. They are also interested in whether we could consider extending our monitoring throughout the state.

3. Bylaws Change—Donnie Dann. It was moved and seconded that we accept the bylaws changes that were circulated to all reps prior to the meeting. In discussion it was agreed that the words "where appropriate" should be deleted from the additions to the bylaws. The motion was accepted as amended by unanimous voice vote. The amended bylaws will be posted on the BCN website (found below the Minutes).

4. Membership Vote—Donnie. It was moved and seconded that Peoria Audubon Society be accepted for membership in BCN. The club was voted in by unanimous voice vote.

Meetings and Events

1. Give Back to the Birds Day, fall 2009. Joan reported that Baker's Lake has been selected for seed collection. The date is to be determined. For promotion of this workday, it was suggested that we feature it in Habitat Herald, the monitors' newsletter, Birders Forum as well as on IBET. It goes without saying that we hope BCN reps will promote it to their clubs.

2. Forest Preserve Trails Committee. Joan has agreed to take over this from Jenny Vogt. The second meeting was postponed so there was no report.

3. Bird Monitors Brunch. Joan has offered to look for a site for this annual event for this fall. Suzanne Checchia suggested that the brunch honor (i.e., pay for the meal of) the organizers of the blitzes. Other monitors would be invited to come and pay for their own meal.

4. Birding along the Fox Festival. A group of birders in the Dundee Township area, led by Dave Poweleit, are planning a birding festival for next year named "The Fox and the Birds." They have invited BCN to participate. Eric Secker will be the BCN contact person.

Web Site Changes

Eric is updating the web site to make it more accessible for non-BCN users.

Eric also reported that the revisions on our new brochure are nearly completed. Once the changes are approved, more brochures will be ordered.

Other Business

1. BCN Stationery Update--Chris Van Wassenhove. A revised letterhead prepared by Chris has been sent to members of the Executive Committee for consideration. It looks very good. A few suggestions were made for minor revisions. Terry commented that the stationery would look even better if the Bobolink were in color. Chris will revise the letterhead and then send it to Terry for insertion of the color artwork.

2. New business—Terry. The lakefront green paper on the web site needs updating. Terry plans to remove the flyway concept, update the plants list and make the paper more accurate re migrating birds. He will work with his co-author Christine Williamson.

Also Audubon is finishing a grassland green paper that we may want to use as an update on the web site. Further discussion was tabled until the next BCN meeting.

3. The next quarterly meeting will be Saturday, October 31st at the home of Jackie and Donnie Dann, from 1 to 4 pm. Donnie welcomes those who would like to come early to watch the lake for migrating waterfowl prior to the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary Lou Mellon
Secretary

Appendix A

To: Chicago 2016 Olympic Committee

The Bird Conservation Network supports the Olympic Committee's efforts to use the Olympics to promote good bird conservation. Attached is our **Position on the Proposal to Host the 2016 Summer Olympics in Chicago**. We welcome the opportunity to provide this input to the Committee.

Within the broad framework of the BCN Position Paper, we currently have a specific concern regarding the 2016 plans, as we now understand them. That concern revolves around the first of the 3 key facets of BCN's position: **Protect Lake Michigan and the shoreline parks.**

We believe locating the Tennis Center around the Waveland Tennis Courts in Lincoln Park is an inappropriate choice, as it will directly damage bird habitat on and around the Jarvis Bird Sanctuary. Better options are available. Similar acreage is available in the area bounded by Wilson, Simonds, Lawrence and Lake Shore Drive – a location less likely to inflict direct or ancillary damage to either the Jarvis or Montrose Bird sanctuaries.

A second concern relates to the last principle contained in BCN's position paper: **Fund Park Restoration after the Olympics.** Though we have heard much

about restoration and enhancement plans from Olympic Committee representatives, we can find no mention in the Bid Book of any mitigation, restoration, or habitat improvement funding. This lack of detail regarding the amount and source of such funding is a source of grave concern to our coalition. We encourage the 2016 Committee to develop specific funding commitments to address this crucial issue.

We look forward to being an active participant in the planning process, as it goes forward.

Appendix B

Bird Agenda Meeting on June 17, 2009

The meeting started with three presentations showing how various groups are implementing the Bird Agenda.

The first was a presentation by Lyndon Valicenti (Chicago Department of Environment) on the Urban Forest Agenda. The City created an Urban Forest Agenda to promote and protect trees in the City and to manage them sustainably. It recognizes bird habitat as a benefit of trees and suggests that trees be placed in a way that will not result in bird collisions with buildings. The PowerPoint is available upon request. BCN might consider asking the DOE to present this PowerPoint at a future meeting.

The second presentation was by Zhanna Yermakov on Chicago Park District (CPD) Projects. CPD is doing an impressive array of things to promote and protect birds in our parks. A few highlights include:

- tinted windows at field houses to reduce collisions,
- Wooded Island Restoration Plan,
- bird and bat boxes (with bats at Jarvis!),
- 63rd Street Beach dune and swale rehabilitation,
- Eugene Field Park wetland just received funding!

A printed copy of the PowerPoint presentation was available at the meeting.

The third presentation was by Lincoln Park Zoo on the South Pond project. Steve Thompson presented their plans for the South Pond project, whose goal is: "*Naturalistic pond environment to pique environmental curiosity through participation in scientific field work and promote the role of science in the conservation of natural environments in the Chicago area.*"

Steve provided an overview and some detail on the hydrologic, landscaping, educational, and bird-related aspects of the project. Bird-related highlights include:

- Naturalizing the pond will create an environment more conducive to dabbling ducks.
- Gulls are currently not present.
- There are about 60 Black-crowned Night-Herons nesting on the island in the pond and LPZ is working diligently with IDNR and others to ensure they are not disturbed.
- 3 Great Egrets were seen with nesting material in early June but were not seen again.
- 2 Cattle Egrets were seen early in the season.
- They expect the project to be completed in the summer of 2010, depending on the weather.

More information can be found in the Lincoln Park Zoo magazine that was passed around at the meeting.

Other topics discussed:

Wind Policy.

Chicago Department of Zoning and Planning (DZP) is seeing more and more wind turbine projects proposed and will update the zoning code to include wind turbines, solar farms and other renewable energy sources. Renewable energy installations are not included in the current zoning code. Meetings will be held with stakeholders to understand the impact turbines might have in the City, including on birds, to ensure that the code will permit appropriately placed turbines.

The Bird Agenda group was asked to help provide scientific justification that the river courses and the Calumet area should be off-limits for tower turbines for bird-safety. Important Bird Areas and endangered species can help serve as justification for the Calumet area. The group is going to look for radar images showing the density of birds in certain locations (river and Calumet) in Chicago.

Bird Houses.

The City has installed 3 birdhouses – one Purple Martin house at CCGT and one at Hegewisch Marsh, both monitored and maintained by volunteer stewards. One Wood duck house was installed at Edgebrook Woods near CCFPD Volunteer Resource Center, which Friends of the Chicago River is monitoring and maintaining.

Chicago Dept of Transportation (CDOT) field guide/swallow issue.

Last year a bridge was being painted while swallows were nesting. Annette Prince (CBCM) raised the issue and they halted painting until after nesting season. This year CDOT bridges division made a field guide manual that instructs workers to not disturb nests protected by the MBTA, such as swallows. They also removed the spikes on the Diversey Bridge that swallows like to nest on.

Bird-friendly buildings.

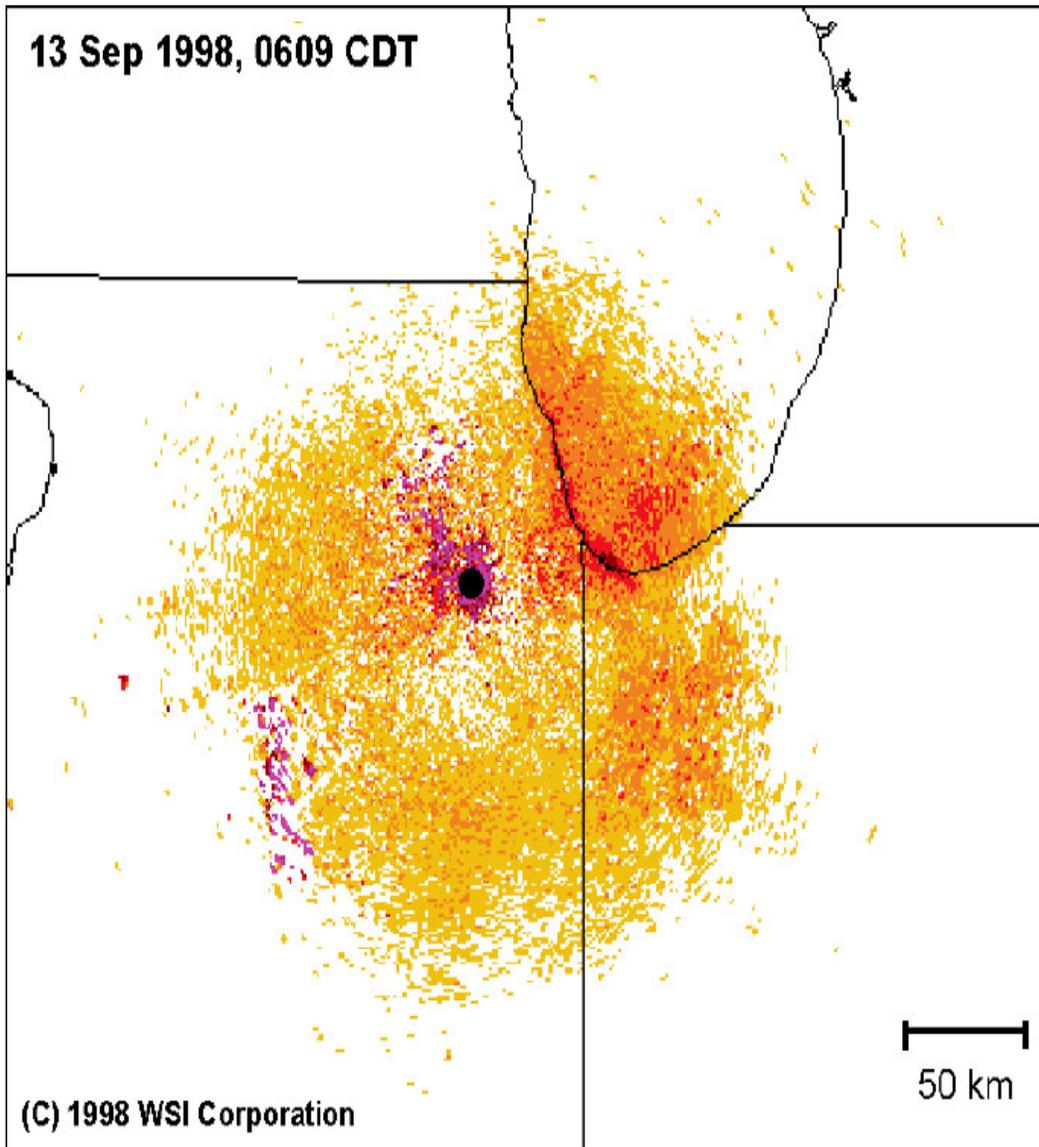
Members of the Bird Agenda have asked when the City will make bird-friendly building a policy. The reply from DOE was they don't want to pass an ordinance just for show, and have all the buildings be built the same way they are now. There are two ways to change the way city buildings are built – changing the Chicago Standard (for City buildings like police stations, etc.) and changing the building code (for all other buildings). With help from BA members the city will work to include bird-safe design, in the next version of the Chicago Standard. In the meantime, we are doing other things to promote bird-safe building, including:

Bird-safe design is one of the options in the revised version of Chicago Green Homes Guide (like LEED for Chicago Homes). They are available on the City's website:

http://egov.cityofchicago.org/webportal/COCWebPortal/COC_EDITORIAL/ChicagoGreenHomesGuide_v2.pdf

Lights Out is included in the Green Office Challenge; hopefully bird-friendliness more generally will be included too. Thanks to Annette and Judy for their help with this.

http://www.chicagogreenofficechallenge.org/pages/lights_out/21.php



The red areas show higher concentrations of migrating landbirds in this early morning radar picture of fall migration over Lake Michigan.