



ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

President's Message

Dear Members:

On the weekend of April 25-27 the IOS Annual Meeting was held at Giant City State Park in southern Illinois in conjunction with the Birding Fest of Southernmost Illinois. As many of you know the Birding Fest runs a day-long Birding Blitz each year to raise funds for the conservation of the Cache River Watershed.

This year seven teams competed in various categories and included our very own IOS Northern Shrikes: Sheryl DeVore, Susan Kaley, Jeff Smith and Jenny Vogt. The IOS Northern Shrikes joined other teams of prominent birders with heavy IOS membership.

The rivalry of Keith McMullen's Hot Shots and Steve Bailey's Hooters for top honors continues with the Hot Shots recapturing the title with a tally of 163 species in blustery conditions. The total species from all seven teams hit over 190 species! All told the teams raised more than \$4000 for the Friends of the Cache. We will be adding to that total with a contribution of half of the net proceeds from our Annual Meeting.

Our banquet speaker, Dr. Jeff Hoover of the Illinois Natural History Survey gave a very informative and entertaining presentation, which discussed some interesting discoveries arising from multi-year studies of cowbird predation in the Cache River Watershed. Jeff also showed us how a simple stratagem of building gully plugs stopped adjacent wet lands from draining into the Cache River resulting in dramatic increases in the breeding success of species such as the Prothonotary Warbler. The Birding Blitz pledges and the IOS contribution will be spent on building more of these gully plugs.

I am sure I speak for all in attendance in saying that we had another great Annual Meeting professionally run by our Annual Meeting Chair, Jeff Walk and excellent field trips on Saturday and Sunday organized by Field Trip Chair Travis Mahan and led by blitzers Travis, Steve Bailey, Vicki Lang-Mendenhall, Keith McMullen, Rhonda Rothrock, Dan Williams and Geoff Williamson despite early starts after a sleep-deprived Blitz on Friday, and Trevor Hinckley and Don Mullison.

At the Banquet we announced this year's IOS Grant Program winners. You will read in more detail about the awards in a forthcoming issue of the Meadowlark. We were delighted by the record number of applicants this year and were able to make five grants of \$500 each as a result of the generosity of and support from the DuPage Birding Club and Karen and Bob Fisher with Vicky Sroczynski and her husband John Burke, the latter group in memory of their friend Jerry Kumery.

Good birding.

Michael Hogg

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