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President's Message

Recently I gave a slide presentation on birds and birding at a meeting of a local group of the Sierra Club. As you might expect, the audience loved seeing photographs of warblers and was excited to learn that these brilliantly colored creatures were readily observable in our state. One fellow had himself just started birding within the year, and only a few days before he had seen his lifer Blackburnian Warbler. "How long are these birds here?" he asked. To answer him, I pulled out one of the issues of Meadowlark that I had brought with me to the presentation. We looked up the early arrival dates, the last departure dates, and the date of peak numbers for that year for Blackburnian Warbler. He was impressed with the availability of this information. He also said while looking at our journal, "Wow! A lot of work must have gone into this!"

And indeed he was right. There's a lot of work that goes into Meadowlark, the flagship journal of our organization. But it is work well worth doing. The efforts of our editor Sheryl DeVore and all the people who write articles, contribute photography, compile and edit the seasonal reports, and help with production of Meadowlark yield a high quality final product. We truly have a journal of Illinois bird life that we can be proud of. What makes all this possible is your membership in IOS. Your membership is what supports publication of Meadowlark and all of IOS's other activities. To strengthen our organization and to help it do even more, we need to grow the membership.

You can help achieve this goal. Encourage your birding friends who do not yet support IOS to join. Certainly the benefits of membership alone are worth it, but IOS is decidedly worthy of their support, too. Also, you can raise awareness of IOS within your local birding community. Spread the word! We have a great, statewide birding organization!

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