



ILLINOIS ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Publisher

Illinois Ornithological Society

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President's Message

Dear Members:

In several of my President's Messages I have written that IOS is a volunteer organization; i.e. we do not have an executive officer or paid staff. We have become the organization that we are today due to the willingness of a wonderful group of people who have stepped forward as volunteers to put together our publications, organize our scholarship program, run our weekend meetings and lead our field trips.

In this message I have both a complaint and an appeal.

First, the complaint. Every so often a member has a beef about our offerings. It happened again recently. The member feels IOS is not doing enough or isn't doing things the way the member would like things done. Instead of contacting the IOS leadership directly with his complaint, he posts on IBET. We support IBET and would love to become its institutional sponsor – there is a home for IBET at IOS Sue and Michael whenever you want to pass on the reins – but as of now many of its members are not IOS members. As a result we have a public spat with people on the defensive instead of what could be constructive feedback. The member had some great ideas, which, with his help, we are working to incorporate.

Now, the appeal. If you have an issue with IOS or a suggestion for how we can improve our offerings, instead of posting on IBET, send me or another member of our leadership team an e-mail with your suggestion. There is contact information with e-mail links at www.illinoisbirds.org/contact.html.

So, what is my message? We welcome your ideas and will give them serious consideration. We also need volunteers to help us grow our offerings. Right now we need help with our web site. We have a number of ideas to enhance the web site, but have been stymied for lack of html/xml skills. There is no shortage of ideas for web site accessible data on Illinois birds that could be added to the web site if we had access to database and web skills. Any volunteers out there?

On a closing note, I want to thank Tropical Birding for their generous donation of a birding tour in Ecuador as the raffle prize at our Annual Meeting. Our dinner speaker, Melinda Knutson from the USGS Science Center won but declined the prize. On the redraw Roberta Bohm won. Roberta requested that we offer the prize again to benefit our scholarship fund. Our thanks go to Tropical Birding, Melinda and Roberta for their generosity.

See the next issue of *Wings Over The Prairie* for more information about the scholarship program and opportunities to contribute.

Good birding.

Michael Hogg,
President

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