

Letter from the editor

Reflections on nine years

Since the founding of IOS nearly a decade ago, I have worked with two Presidents, Eric Walters and Bob Montgomery, and now I'll be working with a third, Geoff Williamson. As we enter a new millennium and another decade of producing *Meadowlark*, the newsletter and other publications, I'd like to reflect on the past and the future. More than 10 years ago, Eric Walters, Dave Johnson, and several other folks sat down to talk about IOS and what we might offer the state's birding community. We had maybe one half-written article, a couple of photographs, a drawing, and someone willing to layout our first issue of *Meadowlark*, my friend, Walter Marcisz. I still remember Dave Johnson and I dancing around when the first issue came out (and I shudder now when I look at it, because there was so much we didn't know about how to put together a journal.) Eric was a dreamer who knew how to make dreams come true (and find photos and drawings and articles and volunteers!) We should never forget our founding president. Without him, we wouldn't be here.

Next came Bob Montgomery. Under Bob's leadership, we focused even more on habitat protection, and we produced a new state checklist (thank you IORC!), a new state field card, and we got a Web site up (thanks to Mary Hennen and the Chicago Academy of Sciences). We also worked (especially Dave Johnson) to improve our membership base. And our Wings Over The Prairie really started to sail — thanks to Denis Bohm, our editor! Bob Montgomery was a witty, caring, professional President, and I shall miss his leadership, and will be forever grateful for his support.

Now, a new President, Geoff Williamson, joins us. As an IOS Board Member, Geoff worked the past few years to raise awareness of IOS as well as secure more funds. His Illinois Big Days in two years have raised over \$1,500. In recent Board meetings, we have also talked about education programs and scholarships for researchers. As our finances improve (thanks to many folks including our treasurer Michael Hogg), Geoff will be an excellent leader to guide us through our next growing phase.

There are so many more people who have made these nine years worth the many headaches. You all know who you are. I don't have space to name you all, but thank you! And hey, folks — isn't it time you got more involved with IOS? Lead field trips. Help organize educational activities. Help with a scholarship fund. Write articles. Take photos. Draw illustrations. Raise money. Write book reports. We need you!

Sheryl De Vore

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