

## Letter from the Editor

In this issue, we present the winners for the latest IOS research grants (see page 86). The awarding of these grants fulfills one of IOS's core missions: To promote scientific research and education in order to improve knowledge and awareness of birds in Illinois. On the other end of the mission spectrum is this: To encourage others to become interested in birds and birding in Illinois. To that end, IOS sponsors the Illinois Young Birders Club. Neither of these important activities were present when the Illinois Ornithological Society started 20 years ago. (Our actual 20th anniversary date is July 2012.)

As editor of Meadowlark, I'm proud to publish the list of our research winners each year and read about their wonderful research. Virginia Abernathy, for example, is researching the role of ultraviolet light in a bird species' ability to discriminate between its own eggs and those of the Brown-headed Cowbird. Another graduate student, Kelly Van Beek is investigating nesting attempts in two different kinds of fields and she is finding remarkable results. I'm also excited about publishing words from our youngest members, the Illinois Young Birders Club, in the next issue.

It's difficult to believe I've been at this for 20 years, but more importantly, it's exciting to see what IOS has accomplished in these two decades. It's only because of members like you that we are able to expand our horizons. Thank you, one and all, for all you have done for IOS and Meadowlark over the years whether through volunteerism, fundraising and marketing of IOS. It would be great to see more people join us. Call me at 847- 566-4846 if you've got any ideas for Meadowlark or how to help market this great organization, and of course, if you've got the time to help, that would be great. We need all of you and we thank all of you.

*Sheryl DeVore*

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### About Our Cover:

Peter Olson created our cover illustration of Anna's Hummingbird. Peter is the Assistant Director of the Northern Illinois University Art Museum. He has been showcased in more than 100 art exhibits including the highly acclaimed Birds in Art show at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in Wisconsin.

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