

**OFFICIAL MINUTES OF THE REGULAR BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING
OF THE FLORIDA ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY.**

Board of Directors Meeting
Friday, October 8, 2010 - 2:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER

The Fall 2010 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Florida Ornithological Society (*FOS*) was held Friday, October 8, 2010, at the Days Inn, 2714 Graves Road, Tallahassee, FL. President Kent called the meeting to order at 2:05 PM after determining that a quorum was present. The following people attended the meeting or a portion of the meeting:

Adam Kent, President	Katie Sieving, Cruickshank Research Committee
Elena Sachs, Vice President	David Stock, Finance Committee
Jim Cox, Secretary	Wes Biggs, Robertson Research Award
Peter Merritt, Treasurer	Brian Ahern
Jerry Jackson, Past President	Eric Draper
Dave Goodwin, Director	Ann Paul
Marianne Korosy, Director	Julie Wraithmell
Jon Greenlaw, Director	Rick West
Tom Engstrom, Conservation Committee	Caroline Stahala
Tom Palmer, Newsletter Editor	
Bill Pranty, Field Observation Committee	

AGENDA

The agenda and meeting packet were mailed electronically to board members prior to the meeting. The agenda was approved without any additions

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The minutes of the Spring Board meeting (held at Marriot Spring Hill Suites, 5115 Indian River Blvd, Vero Beach, FL) and the Spring General Business meeting (held at the Heritage Center and Indian River Citrus Museum, 2140 14th Avenue, Vero Beach, FL). were distributed with the meeting packet. Vice President Sachs moved that the minutes of both meetings be accepted, and the motion passed unanimously.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

President Kent submitted a written report. Kent spent time reviewing Committee appointments and has secured the services of Jerry Jackson as the new editor of Special Publications. Jackson reported that he was editing a revised draft of the Important Bird

Areas manuscript submitted by Pranty and had contacted Painter printers regarding pricing. A key unresolved issue is converting the color figures provided in the manuscript to black-and-white figures to reduce printing costs. Secretary Cox said he could help create black-and-white figures if the GIS files developed by Pranty were available. Editor Jackson said he had received an estimate of \$3110 for printing of 500 copies. Florida of Audubon will be purchasing copies directly for FOS, so a larger print run was recommended.

President Kent spent time helping Tom Palmer develop a new design for the Snail Kite newsletter. Lauren Deaner is assisting with layout, and Kent displayed the new layout at the meeting. All attending thought the new design was a great improvement because the newsletter is one of our most important outreach items. Kent also is working with webmaster Steve Bankert on a new web page design.

Other issues presented by Kent included a possible presentation on *eBird* by Chris Wood (Cornell Lab of Ornithology). The Board suggested scheduling a presentation at the Spring 2011 meeting. The upcoming meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union in Jacksonville (July 2011) also might provide an opportunity to sell FOS Special Publications and other items. Kent planned to look into the cost of renting a table or sponsoring a coffee break at the meeting. Todd Engstrom suggested co-sponsorship a coffee break or table with the Georgia Ornithological Society (or another ornithological society in a southeastern state).

Storage of unsold special publications was discussed without firm resolution. Secretary Cox suggested special publications might be given away to new members to help entice additional birders to join FOS. Kent also said he planned to attend a new conservation initiative on *Landscape Conservation Cooperatives* that was scheduled in late October. President Kent also participated in the September 11 meeting on the Breeding Bird Atlas project organized by Dave Stock. Great progress is being made on this front.

VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Vice President Sachs provided details on the Fall meeting. Over 75 people had registered, and an exciting paper session had been organized by the local Committee that featured presentations from 9 students.

Vice President Sachs said plans for the Spring 2011 were progressing well for a site near Tampa and field trips that would focus on wintering sparrows. Proposed dates for the meeting were March 11-13, which was earlier than normal but seemed acceptable to the Board members. Sachs also recommended increasing the registration fee for FOS meetings, which typically has been kept in the range of \$10-15. Secretary Cox noted that the expenses for the Fall 2010 meeting had been set as low as possible to appeal to FOS members who complain about meeting expenses. Extra efforts had been made to secure "free" facilities for almost all events, but very few of the people who complain about registration fees had registered. The Board agreed that setting the target registration fee in the \$25-35 range was acceptable.

President Kent also mentioned some preliminary discussions with the Alabama Ornithological Society for hosting a joint meeting in Fall 2011. The Board agreed with the concept and encouraged Kent to continue the discussion.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

Secretary Cox completed the following tasks since the last meeting:

- (1) Worked up minutes from the Spring 2010 board and business meetings;
- (2) Updated and distributed Board contact information following Spring elections;
- (3) Organized many aspects of the Fall 2010 meeting and advertised the meeting through various listserves and database of email contacts that I developing for FOS use;
- (4) Participated in on-going discussions regarding the Breeding Bird Atlas project; and
- (5) Distributed committee reports to Board members for the Fall 2010 meeting.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Treasurer Merritt submitted a written report. FOS account balances as of August 26, 2010 totaled \$119,869.38. The balances represented a 4.61% decrease since December 31, 2009. The Fidelity Brokerage Account portfolio was rebalanced on March 26, 2010 and was scheduled to be rebalanced again near the end of September 2010. The cash portion of the Fidelity Brokerage Account was \$13,255.59 after being corrected for a \$2,000.00 check that had not cleared and a \$175.00 deposit not yet received by Fidelity. The cash account had a 7-day yield of 0.11%.

2010 Budget Analysis

A net income of \$4,440 was projected for the proposed 2010 budget. Potentially significant expenses that still remained in 2010 included fall meeting expenses, educational grant, costs of printing the *Florida Field Naturalist* (FFN) and creation of PDF files for articles appearing in FFN. The 2010 budget thus far included (1) membership dues totaling \$9,168.16; (2) Spring meeting expenses that were very close to meeting income (a deficit of only \$46.05); printing expenses (\$4,123.34) for printing volumes 38-1 and 38-2; and (3) \$115.00 in gifts for the Cruickshank and Robertson Awards.

E. O. Painter has agreed to prepare PDF files on an ongoing basis each time FFN is published for a cost of \$2.00 per page. These files are searchable on-line, and this charge would be added onto our quarterly bill. A discussion regarding posting articles on the FOS web page ensued, and Secretary Cox recommended that the organization allow 2 calendar years to elapse before articles were posted on the web. This would result in an average wait of approximately 1.5 years between the time an article was published in FFN and the time at which it was available free-of-charge on the Internet. Bill Pranty recommended informing authors about this policy so they knew in advance that PDF copies would be available for free. Currently, Painter charges authors for PDF versions of their articles. Treasurer Merritt said he would work with the editors of FFN to develop

a policy on this. In addition, E. O. Painter is preparing PDF files for Volumes 34-37 of the Florida Field Naturalist for a flat rate of \$1,100.00.

Proposed 2011 Budget

Treasurer Merritt developed a proposed 2011 budget based on expenditures for recent years (see below). The main difference from the 2010 budget was that the Cruickshank and Robertson awards funds were listed separately to reflect the actual accounting of these funds. The Interest Income/Asset Appreciation values in the proposed 2011 budget reflected a projection of 5% annual increase over the December 31, 2009, balances. The proposed 2011 budget projected a net income of \$3,135. Secretary Sachs moved to approve the proposed 2011 budget, and the motion passed unanimously.

Membership

FOS had 360 members as of August 31, 2010. Thirty new members joined FOS in 2010, but membership was down 2.7% from September 1, 2009.

PROPOSED 2011 BUDGET

OPERATING FUND

INCOME	
Dues	9,300.00
Unrestricted Gifts	900.00
Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	1,107.00
Page Charges	1,000.00
Meeting Income	6,100.00
Total Income	\$ 18,407.00
EXPENSES	
FFN Printing	8,200.00
Postage & Shipping	1,000.00
Operating Expenses	1,000.00
Meeting Expenses	6,100.00
Records Committee	1,200.00
Total Expenses	\$ 17,500.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ 907.00

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS FUND

INCOME	
Sales	100.00
Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	1,301.00
Total Income	\$ 1,401.00
EXPENSES	
Postage & Shipping	20.00
Total Expenses	\$ 20.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ 1,381.00

CRUICKSHANK AWARDS FUND

INCOME	
Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	1,773.00
Gifts	150.00
Total Income	\$ 1,923.00
EXPENSES	
Research Award	2,000.00
Education Grant	500.00
Total Expense	\$ 2,500.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ (577.00)

ROBERTSON AWARDS FUND

INCOME	
Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	761.00
Gifts	100.00
Total Income	\$ 861.00
EXPENSES	
Robertson Award	1,000.00
Total Expense	\$ 1,000.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ (139.00)

ENDOWMENT FUND

Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	953.00
Gifts	75.00
Total Income	\$ 1,028.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ 1,028.00

FRIENDS OF FFN FUND

Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	59.00
Gifts	200.00
Total Income	\$ 259.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ 259.00

LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUND

Interest Income/Asset Appreciation	276.00
Dues	-
Total Income	\$ 276.00
PROJECTED SURPLUS	\$ 276.00

NET INCOME (LOSS)	\$ 3,135.00
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EDITORS' REPORTS

a. Florida Field Naturalist

Editor Scott Robinson submitted a written report. The September issue was mailed in mid-September, and he and Tom Webber planned to send the final volume of 2010 to the printer within the week. The editors reported a satisfactory supply of manuscripts for the next two issues, but not much afterwards. They encouraged board members to find students and colleagues who might have information to submit.

b. Newsletter

Editor Palmer submitted a written report. The new design for the *Snail Kite* looked great and more changes were planned. Palmer noted that there was still a shortage of submissions of articles. The new design may improve the look, but it does not create content. One suggestion has been to include more birding news, but it's unclear who would submit such information. Palmer repeated concerns over the lack of submissions from scientists, and passed along other ideas such as essays on FOS members, a discussion of Florida's changing bird list, updates on the impacts of the oil spill, and information on what the upcoming IBA publication might contain.

c. Special Publications

The IBA manuscript was discussed during the President's report.

d. Web Site

Web editor Steve Bankert provided a written report. He continues to update the site as needed and recently posted the skin quiz from the Spring meeting. He is developing a new website that will include FFN publications. Board members were encouraged Board members to look at a prototype of the new site and make recommendations. Bankert also was still looking into posting of the North American Migration Count information. Vice President Sachs said she would take over coordination of these counts and work out methods for collecting and posting the information on the Internet.

President Kent said he would like to get some help for Steve in designing the new site and perhaps provide some funding for site development. A figure of \$300 was proposed by Chris Burney, another web site developer, and Kent said he would check with Steve Bankert about whether this amount might help.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

a. Archives Committee

No report submitted; no issues known.

b. Bylaws Committee

No actions needed.

c. Conservation Committee

Chair Engstrom submitted a written report. In response to the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, the committee compiled a list of 143 species that could potentially be affected by the spill and posted the information on the FOS web site. Vice President Sachs said the information had been very helpful for agencies working on the oil spill. The Committee planned to focus on 3 additional issues over the coming months: (1) a review of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN); (2) organizing a meeting of potential partners for the Florida Bird Conservation Initiative; and (3) developing field projects that involved FOS members.

d. Editorial Advisory Board.

No report submitted. The dearth activity of this Committee was a concern for several Board members. A key issue is to be on the outlook for a new editor in case Scott Robinson and Tom Webber decide to pass along these duties in the near future. Periodic review and developing recommendations for improving the content provided by FFN also are important functions. Todd Engstrom, a former FFN editor, offered to chair the committee and look into these issues.

e. Field Observations Committee

Bill Pranty sent a report via email just prior to the meeting. He is looking for a new regional compiler for Central Florida but otherwise reported that the Committee continues to provide timely reports to the editor of FFN. President Kent asked whether field reports could be put on the web in a searchable format. Pranty said he was reluctant to post the Word documents he sends to the FFN editor because they contain some reports that are not published. Kent suggested the information would be extremely popular and perhaps the organization could post the files with a clear warning about the contents. Pranty said that Eugene Stoccardo had once attempted to write a program to search through PDF versions of the reports and extract information that could then be searched. Pranty said he would meet with Eugene to discuss this option.

f. Finance Committee

Chair David Stock provided a written report. The Committee noted improvements in the financial health of FOS as a result of increasing stock prices. Funds had increased by approximately 6.5% over the preceding 12 months. The Committee also agree with the budget proposed by the Treasurer for 2011 but warned that the Board should consider awarding smaller amounts for grants in 2011. The Committee also recommended that

separate funds be allocated for website activities and operating costs now that funds from a grant had been expended.

Membership continues to slide and may threaten the long-term stability of the organization. The Committee recommended offering a new member promotion for \$15 and also participating in birding events such as the *Space Coast Birding Festival*. The Committee also suggested that registration fees for the meetings be set ca. 10% above the break point for expenses to create a new source of income. This would place registration fees in the range of \$40-45 per person. Vice President Sachs reiterated the need to increase meeting expenses and said a higher fee would be put in place for the Spring 2011 meeting. Finally, the Committee recommended that responsibilities for membership be reallocated so that the Treasurer can focus on financial matters for the organization. Treasurer Merritt said he could handle both responsibilities during his tenure, but a division of duties might help to recruit a suitable successor in the future.

g1. Helen G. and Allan D. Cruickshank Research Award Subcommittee

The 2010 Cruickshank Research Award led to a rash of emails that (1) suggested improprieties had occurred during the selection process and (2) questioned the criteria used to select recipients. In an e-mail distributed to many Directors and Committee chairs, Chair Sieving provided a firm response that indicated (1) no improprieties occurred and (2) the Committee had gone to exceptional length to provide the Board with a full and unbiased assessment of the proposals received (including posting of proposals on the Internet so they were available for review prior to the board meeting).

Secretary Cox noted that this is not the first time this type of flare-up has occurred, so Sieving also asked the board to provide guidance on how proposals were to be evaluated and who might be eligible for awards. Secretary Cox provided information extract from FOS bylaws and archive materials. The materials indicated there was (1) a stated preference for student awards although professionals and academicians were not precluded from applying; (2) the award also was limited to research projects dealing directly with wild Florida birds; and (3) awardees were encouraged to publish results in *Florida Field Naturalist*.

Based this review, the following language was proposed for advertising the Cruickshank Research Award on the FOS web page:

Overview

The Cruickashank Research Award provides monetary support to investigations dealing with wild Florida birds. Research projects may focus on field studies, laboratory work, literature reviews, museum studies, and data analysis as long as the proposed work contributes to the Florida's wild birds. The following guidelines and review criteria have been developed for this award by the FOS Board of Directors.

- Research projects should deal directly with wild Florida birds.
- The target budget for this award is \$2500-3000 (recent range of largest awards made).
- Students are encouraged to apply; however post-doctoral scientists, non-profit organizations, and other interested parties will be considered for funding with an understanding that preference may be given to students and members of the *Florida Ornithological Society*.

All applications must contain 3 distinct parts.

1. an updated CV with current contact information.
2. a research proposal of up to 10 double-spaced pages (5 single-spaced; excluding references but including figures and tables).

Research proposals must be well-written and contain an Introduction/Background with appropriate literature review; a clear statement of Research Objectives; Study Design; proposed Methods and Materials that include information on the study area and species; a short Synthesis and Significance section at the end emphasizing why funding this project will aid knowledge or conservation of Florida birds.

3. a 1-page Budget showing total project costs and the portion of expenses that the Cruickshank Research Award might cover.

Items 1-3 should be collated in a single PDF file in the order shown and emailed to the Committee Chair with CRUICKSHANK PROPOSAL in the title line.

Applications will be assessed in 3 focal areas

- 1) Basic Biology (new understanding of bird biology in area(s) of specialization);
- 2) Conservation Biology (new understanding of how populations, species, and community patterns and processes might be affected by humans and that might led better methods for protecting wild birds and bird diversity in Florida;
- 3) Management Application (testing of management techniques that foster native bird species, populations, and natural communities).

Proposals must be well written, demonstrate the feasible of success if the award is received, and should be strong in one or more of the focal areas.

Treasurer Merritt moved to adopt the wording in advertising and administering the award, and the motion carried unanimously.

g2. Helen G. and Allan D. Cruickshank Education Award Subcommittee

There were no recommendations of awards from this Committee. Secretary Cox said he would develop a structured timeline for advertising and reviewing future education awards.

g3. William B. and Mary J. Robertson Award Subcommittee

Chair Wes Biggs submitted a written report indicating that no new proposals had been received since last spring's meeting. Treasurer Merritt recommended placing an add in the OSNA newsletter and checking with the Ornithological Societies of North America web site to be sure that availability of the funding source as listed.

h. Membership Committee

No report was submitted. Several ideas (such as development of a Powerpoint presentation describing what FOS does) were discussed, but no official action was taken. Secretary Cox noted that the student paper competition might help to bring in new student members.

i. Nominating Committee

Chair Jim Cox submitted a written report. The Committee recommended that Ms. Caroline Stahala and Mr. Erik Haney be appointed as new Directors to serve out the terms of Adam Kent (now President) and Larry Manfredi (who has not participated since his appointment). Caroline is a graduate student at Florida State University and Erik Haney is a serious amateur who has been attending FOS board meetings since 2005. The appointments were approved unanimously.

j. Records Committee

Secretary Andy Kratter submitted a written report. The Records Committee met at the Florida Museum of Natural History on Saturday, 31 July 2010. The Committee welcomed Ed Kwater to his first meeting and proceeded to review scores of new submissions. Several administrative issues were also worked out. New fields will be added to the on-line submission form (county and nearest city), and the Committee voted to ask Michael Brothers from Ormond Beach to replace outgoing member Sally Jue. The Committee also suggested a few procedural changes to speed up the review process. These changes will be taken up at the next meeting.

k. Ad hoc Committees

Breeding Bird Atlas Committee

Chair David Stock provided a written report describing discussion at a meeting of the Committee held in Gainesville on September 11, 2010. The Committee recommended (1) FOS should take a lead on a second Breeding Bird Atlas for Florida; (2) a bare bones project can be completed for \$26,000 (included cost of a special publication with maps); (3) Rick West would coordinate the field data collection and be assisted by Audubon of Florida, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Committee, and others; (4) data entry and storage could be handled through U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service; (5) a starting date of Spring 2011 was recommended for preliminary field work conducted by a small group of participants with an official public roll-out of field work in 2012; (6) future Spring FOS meetings should be organized to help with block busting; (7) and data collection should take place until 2016 with data analysis completed in 2017.

Vice President Sachs was concerned that the proposed Spring 2011 starting date did not provide adequate time to review materials. Rick West said he could have all materials available by January and the initial year of data collection would involve only a core group of experienced atlas personnel. Dave Goodwin noted that many participants from the previous effort were ready to go and training materials could be developed for new participants starting in 2012. Sachs proposed there be a review of materials in January/February 2011 and the Board formally consider when to start at its meeting in March 2011. Chair Stocks agreed that a review of the materials was needed before FOS could make a final decision and offered to organize another meeting of the Committee to review the materials Rick developed and make recommendations at the March 2011 Board meeting.

CONTINUING BUSINESS

The Board collected \$335 for the student paper competition to be held on Saturday. Approximately \$135 would be used to cover subscription expenses to FFN, and the remaining amount would be award to the top 3 presenters at Saturday's meeting. Each participant would also be given free copies of FOS Special Publications.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Jim Cox
FOS Secretary