

MINUTES OF THE WCAS BOARD MEETING OF JANUARY 20, 2005

The board of the Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society met at the home of Nancy Howell in Middleburg Hts. to discuss leadership succession and what type of activities WCAS will be involved in the future. In attendance were Tom and Mary Anne Romito, Terri Martincic, Nancy Howell and Kit Birch.

1. Tom began the meeting by asking everyone to brainstorm ways to ensure leadership succession in WCAS. It was decided that we would review the membership lists of WCAS and the Kirtland Bird Club to identify any possible candidates for president and vice president before the meeting adjourned.
2. Tom also asked what we thought would happen if no volunteer stepped forward to take the position of president. It was generally agreed that WCAS would continue, but it would not expand and go forward and might eventually flounder altogether. An alternative of having a monthly rotating acting president among board members was discussed as a last resort.
3. Terri brought a rough draft of her pocket native/non-native plant list that will be printed with grant money from Audubon At Home.
4. Kit asked if the monthly program and field trips should be the main focus of WCAS, and suggested we become more involved in environmental problems impacting birds. National Audubon already has an "Armchair Activist" program set up and puts out monthly bulletins describing what members can do to help achieve various goals. Terri and Kit agreed to work on this together in the future.
5. Terri brought to our attention that the Artic National Wildlife Refuge is once again being considered for drilling and suggested we draft a letter of protest listing some of the 125 birds that depend on this site for breeding purposes. Tom will do this using the Armchair Activist letter format and hand them out to any interested members at our next meeting.
6. Tom reminded us that Jerry Tinianow told us in the past that chapters need to be involved in a conservation project, which we currently do not do. Nancy told us she knows four possibilities for WCAS to be active in: Rocky River Watershed group; Dike 14 group; Stearns Farm group; West Creek Farm group. These are all good suggestions, but none were decided on and we will have to discuss this issue again.
7. It was suggested that more money be spent on speakers for our monthly meetings who could provide more in-depth knowledge about bird and/or habitat conservation issues. Having a catered dinner with a "big name" speaker was also discussed. No specific recommendations were made; need to peruse in future. Mary Anne said we have more money than usual in the treasury right now because of the last of the dues-sharing money from the National Audubon Society; but we have to be careful with what we spend because in the future we will only have grant money available.
8. The board agreed to delay joining the Bird Conservation Alliance for another month...
9. Terri suggested we become a "Friend of the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge" as encouraged by Audubon.

10. The board reviewed all the names on the membership lists and each member will call a few to invite them to future board meetings. It was decided also that we will make a list of board positions, with a brief description of each one, to be made available at future meetings to help encourage interested members. We will also talk to members about possibly joining the board at monthly meetings and at the June picnic.