



Board Chairman

By Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff's

The National Audubon Society of New York State Board of Directors approved, this spring, a dynamic and bold strategic action plan. It takes advantage of all of the organizational strengths of Audubon including our focus on birds, wildlife and their habitats through advocacy, sound science and education.



Audubon's conservation agenda has five key components: Audubon Centers; bird conservation; conservation policy and science programs; educational programs; and chapter leadership development.

Audubon already has a solid network of centers. With new projects like the Prospect Park Audubon Center at the Boathouse in Brooklyn and other opportunities being developed, we are well-positioned to establish a network of Audubon Centers in communities across New York state.

On bird conservation, Audubon is the leader. The plan calls for investing in our strengths with an expanded Important Bird Areas program, as well as increased bird conservation research, monitoring

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and educational activities.

On conservation policy and science, Audubon will build upon our wetlands, forest and wildlife campaigns, as well as on our bio-regional efforts for Long Island Sound, the Hudson River, the Catskills and the Adirondacks.

On education programs, Audubon will expand its urban *For the Birds* program to reach city school children across New York state, as well as enhance place-based educational experiences in rural and suburban communities.

For our chapter grassroots network, Audubon will increase its investment in leadership development programs, skills workshops and local conservation partnerships with our 31 chapters across New York state. The chapters are our core and will be strengthened.

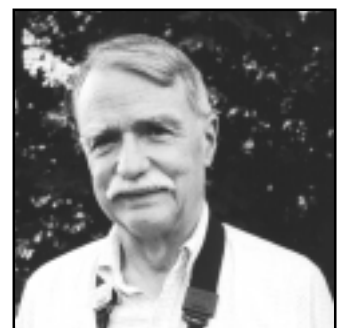
Our strategic action plan for the 21st Century has measurable objectives over the next decade. We will not accomplish all of our goals overnight, but the progress we have already made is simply remarkable. With this new plan in hand, we continue to build upon our successes and move our agenda forward to create a culture of conservation.

I want to thank the members of our state Board of Directors and Stewardship Committee, the leaders of our chapter network, our dedicated staff and all of our supporters for their tremendous work and commitment to the Audubon Cause. I look forward to working with all of you in making this Audubon strategic action plan a reality.

Council Chairman

By Geoffrey Cobb Ryan

Delegates and leaders from 26 chapters participated in the Audubon Council of New York State spring meeting at Saratoga Springs. Two items of particular importance dominated the agenda: National Audubon Society's (NAS) proposed new membership policy and the council's annual legislative resolutions.



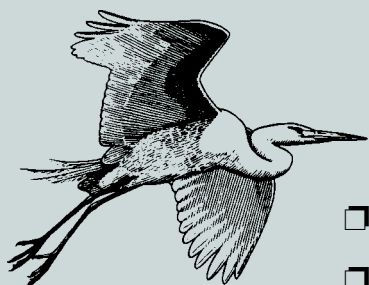
Discussion of the new membership policy occurred at various times during the weekend. In the following week, a committee chaired by Carol Capobianco, prepared a memorandum to NAS board members outlining the concerns expressed at the council meeting. In April, I attended several discussions of the proposed policies at the NAS Convention in California. Many representatives of chapters and councils voiced substantial support for the proposals, and it appears that a somewhat modified version will be presented to the board at a later date. Constantine Sidamon-Eristoff and David Miller, chair and executive director of National Audubon Society of New York State, respectively, were also at the conference, and we have agreed that the state office will establish a staff position whose principal responsibilities will be to assist chapters in the enlistment and retention of members.

The legislative resolution process is the most significant and rewarding aspect of any spring council meeting. It is these resolutions that set the advocacy agenda for the state office and the council; it is these resolutions that support the advocacy efforts of chapters, the council and state office at every level of government — village, town, county, state and federal. This year, the council approved 41 resolutions — some new, some revised and some unchanged from previous years. A review of the 1999 legislative resolutions demonstrates just how important and rewarding this process is. Progress has been made on so many

‘ COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS SET THE ADVOCACY AGENDA FOR THE STATE OFFICE. ’

of the resolutions that I can't report on all of them. A few highlights include: the Shawangunk Nature Preserve (formerly the Galeville Airport) a grasslands habitat that appears to be headed for inclusion as part of the Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge; designation by the state of much of the Kings Park Psychiatric Center on Long Island Sound as the Nissequogue River State Park; designation by Governor Pataki of Hunter Mountain as part of a Catskill High Peaks State Bird Conservation Area; heightened efforts of both Governor Pataki and State Attorney General Spitzer to combat acid rain; and increased funding for work on the Hudson River Estuary, plus a one million dollar study of the proposed Hudson River Research Institute.

These are extraordinary achievements of the Audubon movement at every level - chapter, council and state office. They serve as strong testimony to the value of the resolutions, which represent the environmental initiatives of 31 chapters and 50,000 Auduboners across the state, and particularly to the work of David Miller and his staff at the state office in helping to bring our resolutions to fruition.



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