

Annual Report of the Ornithological Council

Submitted By Doug Forsell and Pat Baird

The Ornithological Council is pleased to provide this annual report covering our activities in 2022. Pat Baird and Doug Forsell are the PSG Representatives, and we serve at the pleasure of the PSG Chair. The OC celebrated 30 years of service to the ornithological community in 2022. The Ornithological Council is a consortium of nine scientific societies of ornithologists, and is an independent nonprofit organization separate from the societies that support it.

The Ornithological Council's mission is to:

- Ensure that the best ornithological science is incorporated into legislative, regulatory, and management decisions that affect birds;
- Enhance the ability of ornithologists to pursue professional activities; and
- Promote the influence of ornithology in public affairs.

Our work focuses on permits, animal welfare issues as they affect ornithologists' ability to conduct research, research funding, and other policies that affect ornithologists and ornithological societies. We greatly appreciate your support of \$5,000 in 2022. Please contact our Executive Director Laura Bies or Doug or Pat with questions or concerns about this report or about any other matter of concern that the OC might help with.

This has been a year of partial recovery from American Ornithological Society pulling out of the OC along with over half of our funding. Increased funding from PSG and some of the remaining organizations has allowed our Executive Director to move from working one day per week to working two days per week.

Major accomplishments:

OC released an updated version of the *Guide to the Permits and Procedures for Importing Bird Products into the United States for Scientific Research and Display*, as a result of recent changes in permitting systems and requirements. The Guide is available as a free resource on our web site BIRDNET.org.

Continued work on our update of the *Guidelines to the Use of Wild Birds in Research*. We are currently in the process of reviewing the literature for new papers published since the 2010 publication of the current edition. New reference lists for each chapter are being made available on BIRDNET.org when completed, and when all chapter updates are ready, a new PDF of the complete *Guidelines* with the new references will be compiled and posted online.

OC Executive Director Laura Bies helped plan and participated in a two-day virtual workshop on "Discussing and Understanding Animal Welfare Challenges in Research and Education on Wildlife, Non-Model Animal Species, and Biodiversity." ([animal welfare workshop](#)). PDFs of the various speakers' presentations are now available [here](#).

OC Director participated in quarterly meetings with the Bird Banding Lab, and regularly meets with USFWS Migratory Birds staff to discuss issues of mutual interest.

OC continued to work with a new National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine committee. Dr. William Bowerman, current Chair of the Ornithological Council, was appointed as one of 13

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members of the Institute for Laboratory Animal Research's new Standing Committee for the Care and Use of Animals in Research.

Wrote comments on the proposed rule that would regulate the use of birds not bred for research under the Animal Welfare Act. Much of the proposed rule deals with standards for housing birds during research.

Due to a lack of resources, last year the OC had to implement a policy of providing direct aid to ornithologists for permitting issues only to those who are members of a society that is part of the OC. Executive Director Bies provided direct help to 15 individuals. Also, given delays in permitting time, Director Bies corresponded with a number of ornithologists via email and the Ornithology Exchange regarding those delays, and with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In November Ellen Paul (former OC Executive Director) and Chris Merkord, the founders and caretakers of the Ornithological Exchange, announced that they wished to step down and if it was to continue the software license and domain name fees needed to be paid, plus they were seeking reimbursement for last year's license fees. These had been covered by some of the societies, but it seemed to have dropped through the cracks. Wilson Ornithological Society stepped in to cover the fees.

The OC uses Ornithological Exchange for Board communications and to keep ornithologists up to date with news and announcements. While several public and private forums exist on the Exchange it turns out the jobs board with 1109 listings last year is used extensively. The OC decided this was too important to let die, and Executive Director Bies is currently managing the site as we evaluate how much time is involved managing the site, and if funding can be obtained from a moderate fee for job postings.

As an example of how the OC communicates with ornithologists, below is a list of the updates, news, and notices issued in 2022. These are always available on the '[News From the OC](#)' forum on Ornithological Exchange. Each time OC posts in the News from the OC forum, the link is sent to the OC society representatives to share with their networks.

Animal welfare workshop recordings available

USGS Director nominated

The Ornithological Council updates its Import Guide

Avian Influenza Update

Administration releases budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2023

COMMENT OPPORTUNITY: Proposed animal welfare regulation for birds

The Recovering America's Wildlife Act Advances in U. S. Senate

USFWS confirms Streaked Horned Lark's threatened listing

COMMENT DEADLINE EXTENDED: Proposed animal welfare regulation for birds

APHIS launching new online permit system

Update from USDA on avian influenza

Williams confirmed as Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

USDA increases avian influenza surveillance

USFWS reopens Red-cockaded Woodpecker proposal

Canadian Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada reassesses the status of bird species

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Update from USDA on avian influenza

Canada updates migratory bird regulations

ESA habitat definition rescinded

Arati Prabhakar nominated as director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy

Survey seeks info on colonial seabirds during the current HPAI outbreak

Recovering America's Wildlife Act passes the U.S. House

New APHIS online permit system launched

OC submits comments on AWA regulation of birds

In case you missed it: New Ivory Billed pre-print available

Bi-State Sage Grouse listing to be reconsidered

Updated avian influenza dashboard

Emperor Penguin listed as an threatened species under ESA

The Migratory Birds of the Americas Conservation Enhancements Act introduced in U.S. House of Representatives

U.S. State of the Birds report released

APHIS to revise fees for import/export permits, quarantines, other services

USDA releases proposed animal welfare regulation for birds

Lesser Prairie-Chicken listed under the Endangered Species Act

Comment period extended on eagle permits

OC comments on APHIS permits

Federal Scientific Integrity Policy released

Proceedings released for animal welfare workshop

OC submits comments on eagle incidental take permits

USFWS updates list of birds protected by MBTA

OC thanks DOI for drone reversal

Thanks for your support of the OC!