

Membership Committee of the Waterbird Society

2013 Annual Report

Membership:

Brian Palestis, chair (bpalesti@wagner.edu)

Larry Bryan (lbryan@srel.edu)

John Brzorad (John.Brzorad@lr.edu)

Liz Craig (ecraig@nycaudubon.org)

Susan Elbin (selbin@nycaudubon.org)

Tommy King (Tommy.King@aphis.usda.gov)

Dave Moore (Dave.Moore@ec.gc.ca)

Heidi Scherr (hscherr@sfu.ca)

Nellie Tsipoura (nellie.tsipoura@njudubon.org)

2012-2013 Committee Activities:

Developed language for the creation of an Emeritus membership category. The Waterbird Society Council has sent the proposed bylaws changes to the Society's full membership for approval.

Sent out emails to 199 lapsed members, those who were members in 2012 but not in spring 2013. These emails served two purposes: 1) To remind those who may simply have forgotten to renew. 2) To get helpful feedback on why individuals don't renew. Typical responses to the letters were answers like: I forgot to renew/plan on renewing soon, or decided not to renew because of money. Many individuals did renew after the letters went out. Several responses specifically mentioned retirement as a reason for not renewing, which supports the need for an Emeritus Member option.

Data on membership trends were collected from OSNA and compared to previous years (see below)

Provided information on membership status/contact information to David Shealer, chair of the Nominations Committee; Chip Weseloh, chair of the Future Meetings Committee; and Mike Erwin, chair of the International Awards Committee.

Coordinated with the hosts of the Vancouver NAOC to confirm membership status of attendees and surveyed the membership to estimate attendance at the Society's luncheon at the NAOC.

Society Membership Numbers and Trends

Total members, 2013: **582**

Membership data is available from OSNA going back to 2006, and the 2013 total is, by far, the lowest in this time period (see Figure 1). The numbers in 2012 and 2013 were collected at a similar time of year (June and July, respectively), therefore the decrease from 669 members in 2012 to 582 in 2013 appears to be real. This result continues a downward trend in membership numbers, although the decrease may

be slightly less stark as Figure 1 suggests, because of differences in when the numbers are from in other years (end of year vs. mid-summer) and the large, short-lived peak following the Barcelona meeting. Perhaps the Germany meeting will also result in a peak, as more European scientists join the society.

International membership has decreased dramatically: Only 20% of our members are from outside the U.S. and Canada, compared to numbers between 27 and 30% over the previous three years. International membership is down from a high of 39% following the Barcelona meeting and will likely increase again, at least in the short term, because of the Germany meeting.

Membership in different countries/regions:

United States	410 (70.4%)	
Canada	53 (9.1%)	
Continental Europe	54 (9.3%)	Spain with 14, no others >7
East & South Asia	23 (4.0%)	Japan with 15, no others >3
U.K. + Ireland	11 (1.9%)	
Australia + New Zealand	9 (1.5%)	
Mexico + Central America	8 (1.4%)	
South America	6 (1.0%)	
South Africa	3 (0.5%)	
All others	5 (0.9%)	

Online-only journal access continues to increase in popularity among our members. This year 38% of our members are online-only, compared to 21% in 2007.

2013-2014 Proposed Work of the Committee:

Requests for Council Action:

Issues to be discussed and/or voted at Council meeting:

Perhaps there should be a larger discount for online-only membership. The difference in membership fees is only slightly reduced for online-only membership (\$60 for print & online, \$55 for print only, \$50 for online only). The difference seems small, given costs of printing and mailing. Online membership also indirectly brings in revenue above the membership fee through hits on the BioOne site. Students do get a bigger discount (\$60 print & online, \$45 print only, \$30 online only).

Figure 1: Membership numbers since 2007. The peak in 2008 represents the increase in membership with the Barcelona meeting (fall 2007).

