

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is important for any organization to periodically step back from the sometimes slow pace of routine activities and reflect on the growth and progress that occurs over the long run. As the Florida Ornithological Society (FOS) enters its tenth year, a brief reflection on our growth, our current status, and our future directions is in order.

The FOS is a young and vigorous organization. Many people contributed time and energy in the throes of nest building and incubation to hatch a viable organization. Those who have been with FOS from the beginning can probably still recall those hectic first meetings. Others helped in the nestling stage to allow the Society to grow. We appreciate Florida Audubon Society for nurturing us through our formative years. We were also fortunate to have dedicated workers who moved us through the fledgling stage and into the maturity and stability of adulthood.

FOS stands today as an independent and proud organization. We have grown to approximately 400 members. We are on a sound financial footing. We have completed 16 issues in eight volumes of our journal, the Florida Field Naturalist. We have published the first in what will be a valuable series of Special Publications. We have published (in cooperation with the Florida Audubon Society) 16 issues of the Ornithological Newsletter. We have held two meetings per year across the State and one in Alabama (with AOS) to facilitate communication and to encourage field research on Florida birds.

This issue of the Florida Field Naturalist marks the continuing growth of our Society. With volume 9, we have moved to a quarterly publication scheduled and settled into a regular schedule for our activities (see last page of this issue). Also included in this issue is our new By-laws adopted on 19 April 1980.

The year 1981 will see work progress towards the publication of the checklist of Florida birds as a FOS Special Publication. Our first special field project, the Florida Scrub Jay distribution survey, is scheduled for completion in 1981 and draws upon the extensive field observational capabilities of our membership. An updated, revised membership brochure will be published by early 1981. Finally, 1981 will see the Society operating on a planned budget.

Looking toward the future, we hope to sponsor additional special field projects that will tap the abilities of our membership and improve our understanding of Florida's abundant bird life. The Society's Articles of Incorporation will be revised to reflect our independent status and current organization, and membership recruitment will continue to be an important concern.

An active, participating membership is the key to the success of any organization. FOS can continue to grow and expand its programs and benefits only if each one of us actively participates in and contributes to all phases of the Society's activities, including membership recruitment. Attend the spring and fall meetings. Contribute manuscripts to the Florida Field Naturalist. Volunteer to help on one of the working committees in an area that interests you. Share any thoughts or suggestions about improving the Society with your Board of Directors. Spread your interest and enthusiasm for ornithology and birding to others and invite them to join us.

The past has seen much progress. Let us not rest on our laurels but let us move ahead, strong and confident, towards a future of continuing progress and accomplishments in our knowledge, understanding and conservation of Florida's avifauna.--William D. Courser.