

## EDITORIAL

### SHOULD THE ASSOCIATION CHANGE ITS NAME?

Beginning in 1980 the Northeastern Bird-Banding Association changed the name of its principal organ, the journal *Bird-Banding*, to the *Journal of Field Ornithology*. The change in name reflected the broadened perspective of the journal, a perspective encompassing not only bird-banding but all of field ornithological research as well. The journal has clearly prospered, publishing not only first-rate original research papers, but also a highly read recent literature summary which ranges over all topics of interest to field ornithologists.

NEBBA's bylaws describe the purpose of our organization as "the study of birds and their habitats, especially by means of bird-banding, and the dissemination of information thereon." I believe that NEBBA has grown dramatically beyond its initial focus on bird-banding, which, as the bylaws state, was never NEBBA's *exclusive* focus. I am wondering if it would not be appropriate for our organization's formal identity to evolve in the same way that our journal's identity has evolved. *JFO* was formerly *Bird-Banding*. Perhaps it is time to consider the possibility of renaming our organization the *Association of Field Ornithologists*, to indicate our broadened focus and perspectives.

I believe that renaming the association the *Association of Field Ornithologists* would in no way reduce the significance of bird-banding as a part of the association's reason for being. What it would do is to attract a larger national audience to the association, which, with continually increasing publishing costs, will be necessary to maintain sufficient resources to permit continuation of an expanding quality journal. Like the Wilson and Cooper societies have done, I believe NEBBA could take on and prosper from a national posture but nonetheless maintain a regional affiliation with the northeast.

At its recent annual meeting in Chevy Chase, Maryland, the NEBBA council, at my urging, discussed the proposal that the association consider a name change to the *Association of Field Ornithologists*. Council members aired both the pros and cons of the suggestion. Council believed that the proposal contained sufficient merit to seek opinions from the membership at large. I hope you will write to me and express your opinion concerning this proposal. I, as well as others on the NEBBA council, look forward to hearing from you, the membership.

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