



GUIDELINES FOR REGIONAL FUNDING

Each region receives an annual Capitation Grant of \$3 per member with a minimum of \$350 per region.

The purpose of the Capitation grant is to cover essential expenses such as printing and stationery and venue hire for meetings, as well as funding any other items or activities that promote and advance the objectives of the Society within the region. While many regions, particularly the larger ones, appear to have sufficient financial resources to function in this way, RRs are encouraged to approach Council if more money is required for their region.

Uses for regional funding include:

1. Promotion of the Society within the region

The operation of the Society, especially communication with members, meetings, local projects and other field activities, depends largely on the leadership of the Regional Representatives. They are essentially the public face of the Society at local level, and regional activities are the key to our future health as an organisation.

Recent examples of promotional activities include:

- The Auckland region purchased display material for advocacy events including T-shirts for members to wear at events, a Birds New Zealand banner and display panels. Other items to be purchased include a gazebo, and preparation of study skin specimens of introduced and unprotected native birds such as Spotted Doves and Spur-winged Plovers for public display.
- As part of the Wild Dunedin Festival the Otago Region led guided birding sessions at Tomahawk Lagoon and distributed Birds NZ information.
- Auckland and South Auckland members participate in public events introducing people to shorebirds at Ambury Regional Park bird roosts.

Development of promotional materials does not need to be confined to each region. Where practical adjacent regions could consider joint projects and the pooling of resources.

The issue of attracting suitable speakers to regional meetings is currently under discussion within Council and in some regions. Assisting with travel costs for a speaker should be seen as a legitimate use of regional funds.

2. Encouraging membership

This is an ongoing process related to section 1 above.

3. Regional projects

All regions have, to varying degrees, a range of regional projects. Some, such as Beach Patrols, are part of a national scheme while others are specifically local. Travel costs in some regions can be quite significant, and at least partial reimbursement for such costs should be seen as a legitimate use of regional funds.

4. Assisting with travel to Birds New Zealand conferences

The costs of travel to conferences can, for some members, be a significant barrier particularly in cases like Te Anau or Far North. Over the years a number of regions have provided assistance for students. Auckland for example supported two student members to attend annual conference and will continue to do so. However students need not be the sole focus of such assistance.

If cost of travel to conference is a barrier for an RR, reimbursement of some of those expenses should be seen as a legitimate use of regional funds. Note: Expenses incurred on Council and RR meeting business are covered by central funding (see "Guidelines: Reimbursement for Expenses").

5. Supporting and expanding the Young Birders initiative

The advent of the Young Birders Group is an extremely welcome development for the Society. Youth camps have proven to be an ideal way to stimulate and foster this interest, producing a core of young people who we hope will provide future leadership for the Society. There is potential for all regions, regardless of how small, to identify and encourage individuals for whom this group may appeal. RRs could consult with members of the Young Birders on likely candidates revealed through their social media networks. In an age of websites and social media, geographical isolation should no longer be a barrier to participation in a national group.

But birding can be a strongly social activity and getting together with other like minds appeals to all of us. In addition to annual Youth Camps, a way of fostering, consolidating and expanding their interest and engagement with birds may be to facilitate periodic gatherings of Young Birders around the country, such as during school holidays or long weekends. For example the Young Birders who live in reasonable proximity to Pukorokoro Miranda are regular visitors to the bird roosts, on what are clearly enjoyable and rewarding occasions. Facilitating periodic visits by others from elsewhere in the country would be beneficial. The same applies to other regions that could conceivably host such gatherings. For example Wellington Region supports a regional junior birders program that has included a two-night field trip to Kapiti Island. Assistance with travel costs may be a valid and rewarding use of regional funds.

Other funds

Several regions currently hold substantial cash reserves, in some cases received through bequests. Regions are reminded that according to the Society's constitution:

14.16 All monies or other property held by the regions are to be held on behalf of the Society according to such conditions and procedures as the Council shall determine and the annual financial accounts for a region are to be audited by the Treasurer of the Society.

In situations where they are currently not being utilised, and where appropriate in relation to any caveats on a bequest, regions holding larger cash reserves may consider making transfers to national funds, such as the Project Assistance Fund. For example Nelson recently transferred \$9,000 to the PAF as it was not being used.

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