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Society of Canadian  
Bulletin of The Ornithologists

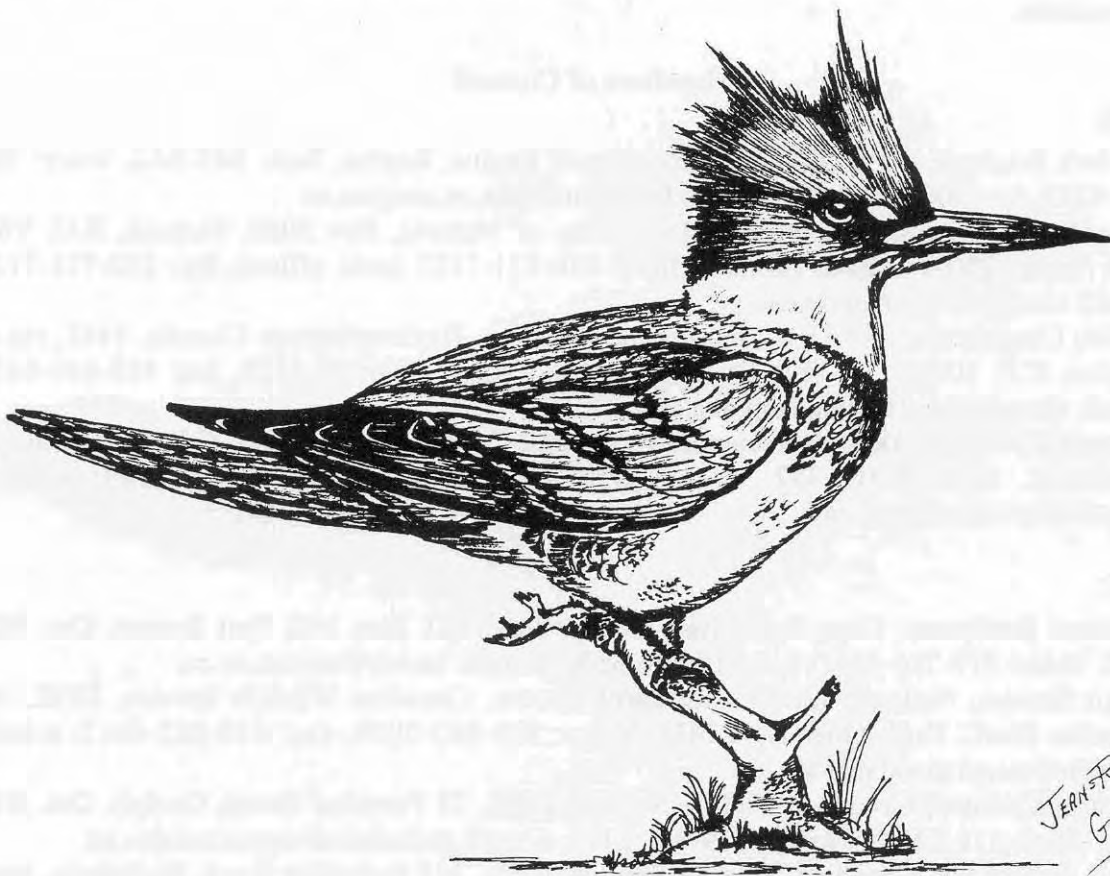
# PICOIDES

Bulletin de la  
Société des Ornithologistes du Canada

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“Ready for the plunge!”  
Drawing by Jean-Raymond Gallien

*Picoides* is “fishing” for new content too.

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**Society of Canadian Ornithologists**  
**Société des Ornithologistes du Canada**

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## 1997 S.C.O. ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE - PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO

Following the successful conference in Fredericton, New Brunswick, this past summer, S.C.O. began plans for the next one. On **7-9 August 1997**, we will gather at Trent University, in Peterborough, Ontario. The beautiful Trent campus will provide an agreeable setting for what should be another stimulating and exciting gathering. A symposium is planned on links between research and monitoring of bird populations, a growing focus of avian conservation efforts in both Europe and North America. The conference also will include oral and poster papers on any topic of avian biology, a closing banquet, and field excursions.

Queries concerning the scientific program should be directed

to:

Erica Dunn (program chair),  
Canadian Wildlife Service,  
100 Gamelin Blvd.,  
Hull, Québec K1A 0H3  
voice 819-994-0182  
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e-mail [DunnE@msmls5.sid](mailto:DunnE@msmls5.sid).  
[ncr.doe.ca](mailto:ncr.doe.ca)

or to:

Raleigh Robertson (co-chair),  
Dept. Biology,  
Queen's University,  
Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6  
voice 613-545-6140  
fax 613-545-6617  
e-mail [RobertsR@biology](mailto:RobertsR@biology).  
[queensu.ca](mailto:queensu.ca)

Other queries about the conference should be directed to Erica Nol (chair, local organization), c/o Biology Dept., Trent University, Peterborough, Ontario K9J 7B8. voice 705-748-1640; fax 705-748-1205; e-mail [enol@trentu.ca](mailto:enol@trentu.ca).

## ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE of the SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS

University of New Brunswick  
Fredericton, N.B.

23-26 August 1996

**Conference Sponsors:** Canadian Forestry Service (Forestry Canada)  
Canadian Wildlife Service (Environment Canada - Atlantic Region)  
Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network  
University of New Brunswick



**PROGRAM** (as it occurred - hence changes from advance hand-outs)

**FRIDAY, 23 AUGUST 1996**

0900-1230	<b>REGISTRATION</b> .....MacLaggan Hall foyer S.C.O. Executive Council Meeting* .....MacLaggan Room 125 C.W.S. Songbird Committee* .....Carleton Hall 218 * <i>(by invitation only)</i>
1230-1400	Lunch .....Students' Union Room 26
1400-1410	<b>CONFERENCE OPENING</b> .....MacLaggan Room 105 S.C.O. President <i>David N. Nettleship</i> U.N.B. Dean of Science <i>Israel Unger</i>
1410-1730	<b>SYMPOSIUM I - EFFECTS OF FOREST MANAGEMENT</b>
1410-1500	<b>Plenary Address 1:</b> <i>John M. Hagan</i> (Manomet Observatory) "Birds, forestry, and public policy: integrating economic and ecological goals in industrial forestry"
1500-1520	Discussion
1520-1530	Organizational announcements
1530-1600	Coffee/Tea Break .....MacLaggan Room 102
	<b>SYMPOSIUM I (continued)</b> .....MacLaggan Room 105
1600-1620	Impact of strip-cutting on birds - <i>J.-P.L. Savard &amp; G. Falardeau</i>
1620-1640	Shelterwood logging and bird communities in Algonquin Park, Ontario - <i>A. Kingsley &amp; E. Nol</i>
1640-1700	Pairing success of male ovenbirds in forest fragments and contiguous forest within an industrial forest landscape - <i>Dwayne Sabine</i> .
1700-1720	Development of a strategy for implementation of the national Partners in Flight - Canada program - <i>Greg Filyk</i>
1720-1730	Discussion
1730-1830	Welcoming Reception (no-host bar) .....MacLaggan Room 102
1830-1930	Dinner .....Students' Union Room 26
2000-2130	<b>FILM PRESENTATIONS</b> .....MacLaggan Room 105 <i>James Murray</i> (Executive Producer, CBC-TV "The Nature of Things") "On a Wing and a Song" (songbirds of the forest) "Connecting Flights" (shorebird migrations)

**SATURDAY, 24 AUGUST 1996**

0730-0830	Breakfast .....Students' Union Room 26
0900-1230	<b>SYMPOSIUM II - POPULATION TRENDS</b> .....MacLaggan Room 105
0900-0945	<b>Plenary Address 2:</b> <i>Spencer Sealy</i> (University of Manitoba) "Twenty-year population trends of forest-edge birds in Manitoba: effect of cowbird parasitism, migratory status, and geographic scale"



0945-1000	Discussion	
1000-1020	Forest bird population trends (1988-1994) determined by the Ontario Forest Bird Monitoring Program - <i>D.A. Welsh, M.D Cadman &amp; H. Dewar</i>	
1020-1040	Seasonal atlassing in the context of conservation issues - <i>A. Cyr</i>	
1040-1100	Coffee/Tea Break	MacLaggan Room 102
	<b>SYMPOSIUM II (continued)</b>	MacLaggan Room 105
1100-1120	Sizable breeding populations of threatened Cerulean Warblers inhabit maturing second-growth forest in eastern Ontario - <i>J.Jones &amp; R.J. Robertson</i>	
1120-1140	Nest-site selection and reproductive success of Cerulean Warblers in south-eastern Ontario - <i>C.J. Oliarnyk &amp; R.J. Robertson</i>	
1140-1200	Successional change in northeastern United States and its effect on the Golden-winged Warbler - <i>J.L. Confer &amp; J.L. Larkin</i>	
1200-1220	The first year of a breeding bird census at Mount Uniacke, Nova Scotia - <i>L.P.M. Payzant and L.A. Payzant</i>	
1220-1230	Discussion	
1230-1400	Lunch	Students' Union Room 26
1400-1530	<b>SYMPOSIUM III - EFFECTS OF FOREST CONVERSION</b>	MacLaggan Room 105
1400-1420	Effects of forest fragmentation on woodland birds in southern Ontario - <i>M.J.W. Austen, C.M. Francis, D.B. Brenner &amp; M.S.W. Bradstreet</i>	
1420-1440	Use of successional forest by wintering migratory birds in Mexico - <i>A.L. Smith &amp; R.J. Robertson</i>	
1440-1500	Habitat Requirements of Bicknell's Thrush in Eastern Canada - <i>S.B. Holmes, E.A. Nixon &amp; A.W. Diamond</i>	
1500-1520	The effects of habitat fragmentation on the productivity of ovenbirds in southern Ontario - <i>D. Brenner &amp; E. Nol</i>	
1520-1530	Discussion	
1530-1600	Coffee/Tea Break	MacLaggan Room 102
1600-1730	<b>SYMPOSIUM IV - FORESTRY ISSUES IN BRITISH COLUMBIA</b>	MacLaggan Room 105
1600-1620	Population studies of Marbled Murrelets at Desolation Sound, British Columbia - <i>F. Cooke</i>	
1620-1640	The structure of cavity-nesting bird communities in British Columbia before and after forest cutting - <i>K. Martin &amp; R.F.Holt</i>	
1640-1700	Modified environments and colonising species: a clear-cut philosophy? - <i>R.F. Holt</i>	
1700-1720	Global status of Alcidae: a family in trouble - <i>D.N. Nettleship</i>	
1720-1730	Discussion	
1730-1830	Reception (no-host bar)	MacLaggan Room 102
1830-1930	Dinner	Students' Union Room 26

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- 1930-2100 **RTD: Partners in Flight Canada - the need for a**  
research working group - *Judith Kennedy, Chair* .....MacLaggan Room 102
- 2000-2200 **POSTER PAPERS** .....MacLaggan Hall foyer  
**RTD: Important Bird Areas for Seabirds** .....MacLaggan Room 125  
**FILM PRESENTATIONS** .....Biology Room 146  
*Peter Verner* (Producer, CBC-TV "Land and Sea")  
"Puffins" and "Bicknell's Thrush"

SUNDAY, 25 AUGUST 1996

- 0730-0830 Breakfast .....Students' Union Room 26
- 0900-1210 **SYMPOSIUM V - RESEARCH APPROACHES** .....MacLaggan Room 105  
0900-0945 **Plenary Address 3: Keith Hobson** (Canadian Wildlife  
Service) "Tracing diets and origins of migratory birds  
using stable isotope techniques"
- 0945-1000 Discussion  
1000-1020 Using hierarchical models of neotropical migrant birds  
for environmental assessment - *R.J. O Connor*
- 1020-1040 Identification of functionally important avian body-  
masses across scales of spatial resolution - *R.D. Otto*
- 1040-1100 Coffee/Tea Break .....MacLaggan Room 102
- SYMPOSIUM V (continued)** .....MacLaggan Room 105
- 1100-1120 Forest bird productivity and resource use at local and  
landscape scales in a commercially managed forest in  
northwestern New Brunswick - *P. McKinley & J. Gunn*
- 1120-1140 Late autumnal avian migrants at two large savannas,  
northwest Florida - *D.B. McNair & T. Engstrom*
- 1140-1200 Raptor injuries in Atlantic Canada: species, sources  
and rehabilitation potential - *E. Kew & M. Kew*
- 1200-1210 Discussion
- 1210-1230 **SYMPOSIUM VI - COMMON LOONS** .....MacLaggan Room 105  
Problems associated with the comparison of water-bird  
abundance (biomass) in bodies of water, expressed in unit  
surface area - *J. Kerekes*
- 1230-1400 Lunch .....Students' Union Room 26
- 1400-1510 **SYMPOSIUM VI (continued)** .....MacLaggan Room 105  
1400-1420 High mercury levels found in Common Loons breeding in  
the Maritimes. - *N. Burgess, A.W. Diamond, N. Benjamin, J.*  
*Kerekes, M. Duggan, H. Vogel, D. Evers & J. Kaplan*

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- 1420-1440 Effects of mercury and acidified lakes on the breeding behaviour and reproductive success of Common Loons - *J.J. Nocera*
- 1440-1500 Reproductive success of the Common Loon on a small oligotrophic lake in Fundy National Park, New Brunswick - *D. Clay & H. Clay*
- 1500-1510 Discussion
- 1510-1645 **SYMPOSIUM VII - SEADUCK ISSUES** .....MacLaggan Room 105
- 1510-1530 Trends in sea duck numbers in eastern North America - *F.P. Kehoe*
- 1530-1600 Coffee/Tea Break .....MacLaggan Room 102
- SYMPOSIUM VII (continued)** .....MacLaggan Room 105
- 1600-1620 Predation by Common Eiders on intertidal invertebrates: community consequences? - *D.J. Hamilton & T.D. Nudds*
- 1620-1640 Survival of Common Eider ducklings in the Bay of Fundy - *K. Mawhinney & A.W. Diamond*
- 1640-1645 Discussion
- 1645-1730 **S.C.O. GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING** .....MacLaggan Room 105
- 1800-1830 **BANQUET RECEPTION** .....Garrison Room,
- 1830-2200 **BANQUET DINNER CELEBRATION** .....Lord Beaverbrook Hotel
- 2000 **Banquet Speaker: Jim Wilson** (Past President, Saint John Naturalists' Club)  
"Birding Manitoba!" (slide & sound presentation)
- 2100 **1996 Doris Huestis Speirs Award presentation to James Murray**
- 2200-2400 Farewells and festivities

MONDAY, 26 AUGUST 1996

- All Day **Field Trips** (Coordinator: *Graham Forbes*)  
Pelagic cruise - seabird and whale watching (Bay of Fundy)  
Ferry trip and birding on Grand Manan  
Birding in and around the Bay of Fundy



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## Scientific Program

A.W. Diamond (Chair) & D.N. Nettleship (Co-chair)

### ABSTRACTS

[listed alphabetically by first author; presenter underlined - except poster papers; e-mail for corresponding author(s)]

**Plant and bird diversity in the forested habitat of four Islands of the St. Lawrence estuary.** *Jean Bédard & André Nadeau* (Société Duvetnor, P.O. Box 305, Rivière-du-Loup, Qué. G5R 3Y9) and *Jean-Pierre L. Savard* (Service canadien de la faune, P.O. Box 10100, Sainte-Foy, Qué. G1V 4H5; e-mail: savardjp@cpque.am.doe.ca). (poster paper)

We quantified the composition and structure of forest plant and bird communities on four islands located in a 200 km section of the St. Lawrence estuary. Birds were surveyed by the point-count method (40 points per island, 75 m radius, 10-min duration, 3 counts per station) and plants and trees with transects and quadrats. Deciduous trees dominated the forest with shade-intolerant species (aspen, paper birch) replacing shade-tolerant ones (sugar maple, red oak) on the most easterly islands. Plant richness was highest on Ile aux Oies (81 species) and Ile du Bic (82), lower on Ile-Verte (62) and extremely low on Ile-aux-Lièvres (39), likely a result of heavy grazing by snowshoe hares. There was a sharp discontinuity between Ile aux Oies and the other islands in terms of vegetation. Ile aux Oies had a typically southerly deciduous community whereas the other islands had a more boreal forest community. Some species of birds decreased in abundance downriver (from west to east: Veery, Ovenbird, Black-throated Green Warbler, Red-eyed Vireo), others upriver (Alder Flycatcher, Winter Wren, Philadelphia Vireo) and a few were found mostly on the most westerly Islands (Swainson's Thrush, Nashville Warbler, Tennessee Warbler). The abundance of cowbirds and egg predators was low on most islands. Simple biotic factors had a great influence on the diversity of bird and plant communities.

**The effects of habitat fragmentation on the productivity of Ovenbirds in Southern Ontario.** *D. Brenner & Erica Nol* (Watershed Ecosystems Graduate Program, Dept. of Biology, Trent University, Peterborough, Ont. K9J 7B8; e-mail: enol@trentu.ca).

We tested the hypothesis that small woodlots were sinks for breeding Ovenbirds (*Seiurus aurocapillus*)

by examining pairing, hatching and fledging success of Ovenbirds in woodlots ranging in size from 0.45-454 ha, and one large continuous forest area. In small woodlots pairing success was <25% whereas in large woodlots most males were paired. Smaller woodlots also had lower hatching and fledging success: 6 nesting attempts were required to produce a single fledged young, as opposed to 1 in the large woodlots. In the continuous forest area, hatching and fledging success were 100%. Cowbird parasitism was greatest in small and intermediate-sized woodlots and rare in large woodlots. Predation rates did not vary with woodlot size. Small woodlots contained less food in the litter, indicating a possible cause of the low pairing success in those woodlots. Ovenbirds appeared to choose nesting sites within fragments that contained a sparser shrub layer and a denser canopy layer than random sites, and large fragments may have contained more of these suitable nesting sites. We conclude that woodlots less than 50 ha in core area result in virtually no productivity for Ovenbirds in southern Ontario, despite the high density of singing males.

**Reproductive success of the Common Loon on a small oligotrophic lake in Fundy National Park, Canada.** *Douglas Clay* (Park Ecologist, Fundy National Park, Dept. of Canadian Heritage, P.O. Box 40, Alma, N.B. E0A 1B0; e-mail: douglas\_clay@pch.gc.ca) & *Heather Clay* (New Brunswick Agriculture, Fredericton, N.B.)

Wolfe Lake, Fundy National Park, is marginal Common Loon (*Gavia immer*) habitat due to its small size (10 ha) and its low primary productivity. Winter populations of Common Loons on the New Brunswick shore of the Bay of Fundy have increased while those on the Nova Scotia shore show no change. This increased winter population may indicate an expanding range in New Brunswick. A pair of Common Loons has nested on Wolfe Lake every year since 1989. The production from this pair has been 1.3 fledged young per year. In order to manage human interference of the loons and their chicks, 7 recommendations were made. The primary requirement is for an ecosystem management plan for the East Branch watershed area.

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**Successional Change in northeastern United States and Its Effect on the Golden-winged Warbler.** *John L. Confer & Jeffery L. Larkin* (Biology Dept., Ithaca College, Ithaca, New York 14850, U.S.A.; e-mail: confer@ithaca.edu)

Farmland abandonment, the precursor of shrub and forest regeneration, has occurred in most of eastern United States and southeastern Canada. Temporal patterns of abandonment vary. As examples, in New Hampshire abandonment began about 1830 and has declined to nearly zero while in upstate New York farmland decline is now common. Golden-winged Warblers select, and have higher nesting success in, early succession habitat. Accordingly, the golden-wing and other species of shrub habitat have tracked the pattern of farmland use. In northeastern United States, birds of field and shrub are declining as farmland abandonment has greatly declined. The maintenance of shrub species will require a value system that favours maintenance of a diversity of successional stages and some suppression of forest maturation.

**Population studies of Marbled Murrelets at Desolation Sound, B.C.** *Fred Cooke* (Chair of Wildlife Ecology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6; e-mail: fcooke@sfu.ca)

Marbled Murrelets are notoriously difficult to study during the breeding season mainly because of their habit of nesting in inaccessible nest sites in old-growth forests. Because they have been declared a threatened species throughout much of their range, it is crucial to find imaginative ways of studying their nesting season biology in order to provide useful information for the conservation of the species. Two simple technological developments have given us new tools for studying the murrelets. Firstly, an effectively floating mist-net developed by Canadian Wildlife Service biologists (G. Kaiser et al.) allows us to catch large samples of birds during the summer months in the inlets where they feed and provision their chicks. Secondly, we have utilised a simple DNA sex probe which allows all birds caught to be sexed non-invasively. Some of the findings of our study, which commenced in 1993 and is planned to continue for four more years, will be presented; and some of the conservation implications will be explored.

**Seasonal atlassing in the context of conservation issues.** *André Cyr* (Dép. de Biologie, Univ. de Sherbrooke, Qué. J1K 2R1; e-mail: acyr@courrier.usherb.ca) & *Jacques Larivée* (ÉPOQ, 194 rue Ouellet, Rimouski, Qué.)

For the first time in North America, maps were produced for a large area showing the distribution of all bird species during 4 seasons. Data covering 21 years were used to produce the Atlas saisonnier des oiseaux du Québec. The data base used is ÉPOQ (Étude des Populations d'Oiseaux du Québec). It currently contains over 3 million records of birds, and between 10 and 12 thousand new checklists are compiled every year. Seasonal bird distributions were compared with isotherms of climatic boundaries, and vegetation domains and range expansion were studied. Also, species richness was found to be higher in spring and fall than during other seasons. Despite the fact that richness is related to sampling effort in general, richness varies from area to area between seasons. Richness of species that are more vulnerable or limited in space shows up in many places that differ from those with high total richness. Future conservation programs need to consider seasonality and groups of species for sound global conservation practices. From long-term analysis of the data, conservation issues need also to emphasize the global communities within habitats, instead of prioritizing mainly the conservation of single species within habitats.

**Population trends of woodland birds using data from the Canadian Breeding Bird Survey, 1966-94** *Connie M. Downes and Brian T. Collins* (National Wildlife Research Centre, Canadian Wildlife Service, 100 Gamelin Blvd., Hull, Québec K1A 0H3).(poster paper)

Data from the Canadian Breeding Bird Survey were used to examine population trends in woodland birds. Trend estimates and annual indices were calculated for all woodland species combined as a group (120 species for Canada overall). Population trend estimates for the woodland guild are calculated for Canada overall, and for 7 ecozones over the periods 1966-94, 1966-79, 1980-94 and 1993-94. The proportion of individual species increasing or decreasing was also calculated. Over the entire period of the survey (1966-94) the estimates for all woodland birds combined showed few statistically significant trends; only the Prairie ecozone showed a significant increase ( $p < 0.05$ ) in population. However, during 1966-79 significantly increasing population estimates were detected in 4 ecozones and for Canada overall. This contrasts with the 1980-94 period in which there were no significant increases or decreases. Annual indices for woodland birds show high year-to-year variation although population size did not differ significantly over the course of the survey. Population trends for individual species of woodland birds varied;



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60% of the species showed increasing population trends in Canada in the period 1966-94. The data suggest that woodland bird populations are highly variable across the country and that populations must be monitored over the long term to determine patterns.

**The effect of two types of hardwood forest harvesting on snag characteristics and on their utilization as woodpecker feeding sites.** *Frédéric Doyon* (Groupe de Recherche en Écologie Forestière, Univ. du Québec à Montréal, C.P. 8888, Succ. Centre-ville, Montréal, Qué. H3C 3P8; e-mail: d317651@er.uqam.ca), *Jean-Pierre Savard* (Service canadien de la faune, Ste-Foy, Qué.), *Daniel Gagnon & Jean-François Giroux* (G.R.É.F., Univ. du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Qué.) (poster paper)

Snags are crucial habitat elements for woodpecker foraging. In this study, we compared snag characteristics and utilization as feeding sites by the woodpeckers (Picidae) in strip-cut, in selection-cut and in unmanaged hardwood forests. This was fulfilled by surveying 270 sampling stands (400 m<sup>2</sup>) in which we recorded the species, diameter, height, decay, and feeding utilization of 1,312 snags (dbh > 5 cm). Woodpeckers were also surveyed at those sampling stands during two years. The density and basal area of snags were significantly higher in the unmanaged forest, for all snags or only used ones. The mean and the distribution of the dbh, height, and decay of snags were similar between the three forests. Used snags were bigger, shorter and more decayed than non-used snags. Snag production did not differ among the forests but the snag utilization was higher in the selection-cut forest and lower in the strip-cut forest despite no significant difference in woodpecker abundance or composition. Beech, aspens and basswood were the most preferred species for woodpeckers' feeding, whereas balsam fir, hop-hornbeam and white ash were avoided. These results are precious for stand silviculture prescriptions in integrated resource management.

**Landscape level effects of human disturbances on the dynamics of bird communities in the boreal mixedwood forest of Abitibi, Québec.** *P. Drapeau* (G.R.É.F., Univ. du Québec à Montréal, C.P. 8888, Succ. Centre-ville, Montréal, Qué. H3C 3P8; e-mail: R36541@er.uqam.ca), *A. Leduc, J.-F. Giroux, Y. Bergeron* (G.R.É.F., Univ. du Québec à Montréal, Montréal, Qué.), & *J.-P. Savard* (Service canadien de la faune, Ste-Foy, Qué.) (poster paper)

Human-caused fragmentation of forests is increasing in the boreal forest of eastern Canada.

Consequences of these changes on vertebrate communities at the landscape scale are poorly understood. We investigated the relationships between landscape structure and breeding bird communities in the Abitibi boreal mixedwood forest, Québec. Birds and local habitat conditions were sampled in 459 sites in three contiguous landscapes: a natural boreal mixedwood forest that is mainly ruled by fire and insect outbreaks, a commercially harvested forest and an agricultural landscape. Landscape metrics (composition and spatial configuration) characterizing the context surrounding each sampling site were computed. Bird communities were affected by human disturbances at the landscape level. Comparisons of community structure parameters indicated that the overall g-diversity was higher in human-disturbed landscapes than in the natural landscape. This result reflected the addition of bird species associated with early successional habitats created by logging and agriculture (increase in b-diversity) rather than an increase of the stand a-diversity which remained the same in each landscape. Birds associated with late-seral stages were less abundant in the human-disturbed landscapes than in the natural forest. The length of bird species composition gradient was shorter for the natural landscape than the two human-disturbed landscapes. Relationships with explanatory variables revealed that these differences were associated with the larger gradient of habitats that resulted from logging and agriculture, but also with a transition in the composition of the forest cover from a boreal mixedwood forest in the natural landscape to a forest dominated by a deciduous cover in the agricultural landscape.

**Development of a strategy for implementation of the National Partners in Flight-Canada Program** *Greg Filyk* (Natural Legacy Environmental Consulting, 41 Bramblegrove Crescent, Ottawa, Ontario K1T 3G2).

The goal of Partners in Flight-Canada (also known as the Canadian Landbird Conservation Program) is to ensure the long-term viability of populations of native Canadian landbirds across Canada. It is recognized that achieving this goal will require cooperation among many agencies and organizations at regional, national, and international levels. A National Working Group has formed, which is currently examining its role and direction to assist landbird conservation. The author has been contracted by the Working Group to explore how the national program could support regional efforts; to identify potential national partners,



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alternative program models and potential linkages with existing programs, and to explore the possibility of a national conference on landbird conservation. This presentation will introduce the project and explain how SCO members can become involved in the strategic development of the national program, through the contribution of their knowledge, experience and advice.

**Effects of forest fragmentation on woodland birds in southern Ontario.** *Madeline J. W. Austen, Charles M. Francis* (e-mail: cfrancis@nornet.on.ca), *Michael S. W. Bradstreet* (Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. N0E 1M0) & *Dawn B. Brenner* (Trent University, Peterborough, Ont.).

We examined the effects of patch size and regional forest cover on bird species richness and abundance in four study areas in southern Ontario. Each area was divided into two subareas with moderate (30-38%) and low (11-23%) regional forest cover. Fixed-radius (100 m) point counts were conducted in 287 woodland patches, divided among four size categories based on core forest area (0-5, 5-10, 10-20 and >20 ha). Core forest area (>100 m from the edge), forest cover and composition within a 2-km radius (local forest cover), and regional forest cover (within each study area) were estimated using data from LANDSAT satellite imagery. Total species richness differed among study areas and subareas, but did not vary significantly with core area or local forest cover. However, richness and relative abundance of forest-interior species (as classified from the literature) were significantly reduced in woodlots with smaller core areas and less local forest cover, and there was a tendency for lower species richness in subareas with lower regional forest cover. On an individual basis, all species classified as forest-interior showed trends for greater abundance in larger woodlots and areas with greater local forest cover. In contrast, forest-interior/edge species richness was greater in areas with less local forest cover. Individual species classified as "interior-edge" showed tendencies to be either forest-interior or edge species. These results were not changed after controlling for differences with patch size in the proportion of coniferous and deciduous forest cover. This study shows that while large forest tracts are important for forest-interior bird species, smaller tracts also support a diverse bird community and may be valuable for some species.

**Birds, forestry, and public policy: integrating economic and ecological goals in industrial forestry.** *John M. Hagan* (Manomet Observatory,

P.O. Box 1770, Manomet, Mass. 02345, U.S.A.; e-mail: jhagan@aol.com).

Forests managed primarily for forest products dominate the northeastern North American landscape. These forests also serve as important habitat for both resident and migrant bird species, as well as many other plant and animal species. Trends in forestry, silviculture and, most importantly, human demand for forest products play a key role in shaping forest habitat. To successfully integrate avian conservation into landscape planning, biologists need to gain a working understanding of these non-biological factors, and a much better understanding of how forestry affects bird populations in both positive and negative ways. With this understanding we are more likely to find mutually agreeable strategies for managing forests in ways that meet economic and ecological goals for the long term. However, scientific knowledge alone is insufficient. An understanding of how society makes decisions is equally important because the public often is the ultimate decision-maker. This presentation will be an account of one ornithologist's 5-year exploration of the biology of an industrial forest in Maine and the public policy web that surrounds it.

**Predation by Common Eiders on intertidal invertebrates: community consequences?** *Diana J. Hamilton* (Huntsman Marine Science Centre, St. Andrews, N.B. E0G 2X0; e-mail: dhamilton@uoguelph.ca) & *T.D. Nudds* (Dept. Zoology, Univ. of Guelph, Guelph, Ont. N1G 2W1).

Effects of predation and disturbance on intertidal communities are well documented. However, waterfowl are often neglected in intertidal community studies because they are viewed as transient or not sufficiently numerous to have an effect. We examined the role of Common Eiders (*Somateria mollissima*) as predators in an intertidal invertebrate community in Passamaquoddy Bay, New Brunswick. Eiders are present here year-round and feed heavily on blue mussels (*Mytilus edulis*), a dominant intertidal invertebrate. We erected predator exclusion cages in disturbed (simulating wave action) and undisturbed areas of mussel beds. We sampled invertebrates from cages and control areas from 1994-1996. Total biomass, species richness, and diversity were compared among treatments, disturbance levels, and times using ANOVA. During the first year, ducks reduced invertebrate biomass by nearly 50%. Effects appeared more quickly in undisturbed areas, but persisted longer at disturbed sites. Blue mussels were the most strongly affected species, but others were also influenced by eider predation, or through indirect

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effects. Size structure of the mussel population was strongly influenced by both predation (eiders are size-selective predators) and disturbance (through compensatory growth). Common Eiders are important members of this community, influencing both biomass and size distribution of their main prey, and indirectly influencing the abundance of other species.

**Hatching synchrony/asynchrony in Mountain Bluebirds.** *Percy N. Hebert* (Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2N2; e-mail: phebert@cc.umanitoba.mb.ca) (poster paper)

For most altricial birds, incubation begins prior to clutch completion, such that eggs within a clutch hatch asynchronously (over a period of more than 24 hours). Most hypotheses relating to the adaptive significance of hatching asynchrony imply that hatching synchrony is maladaptive or costly. Thus, it is of particular evolutionary interest that some altricial birds (e.g., Mountain Bluebird *Sialia currucoides*) exhibit hatching synchrony (first- and last-hatched siblings hatch less than 24 hours apart; pers. obs.). This study (1994 and 1995), through experimental manipulation of hatch spreads, examined the significance of hatching synchrony in a population of Mountain Bluebirds nesting near Virden, Manitoba. Nestlings from experimental asynchronous broods did not exhibit greater fledging mass or size compared to nestlings from unmanipulated synchronous broods. Adults with asynchronous broods did tend to make more feeding trips. However, these differences in parental effort were not reflected in adult mass (when nestlings were 12 days old). These results suggest that hatching synchrony in Mountain Bluebirds may not be maladaptive. Several aspects of Mountain Bluebird natural history may reduce the pressures selecting for the evolution of hatching asynchrony.

**Tracing diets and origins of migratory birds using stable-isotope techniques.** *Keith Hobson* (Canadian Wildlife Service, 115 Perimeter Drive, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7N 0X4; e-mail: hobson@sask.usask.ca).

Measurements of naturally occurring stable isotopes of several elements found in foodwebs are being used increasingly to address a number of ecological questions, particularly those involving nutrient flow and food-web structure. However, only during the last decade has the potential of this technique been realized by avian ecologists, and there exists a multitude of potential applications in this field. In this paper, the use of stable-isotope applications to avian ecological studies are reviewed. In particular,

emphasis is given of the use of  $^{15}\text{N}/^{14}\text{N}$  measurements to delineate trophic position in marine systems and  $^{13}\text{C}/^{12}\text{C}$  and  $^{34}\text{S}/^{32}\text{S}$  measurements to establish sources of nutrients in avian diets. Recent applications of the measurement of deuterium isotope ratios (D/H) in feathers to trace origins of migratory songbirds will also be presented. When combined with DNA analyses, the stable-isotope approach holds great promise for linking breeding and wintering areas of neotropical migrant birds and other migratory organisms.

**Modified Environments and Colonising Species: A Clear-cut Philosophy?** *Rachel F. Holt* (Centre for Applied Conservation Biology, 270-2357 Main Mall, Univ. British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z4; e-mail: rholt@unixg.ubc.ca)

Current forestry practices radically modify the landscape, particularly by increasing the frequencies of early seral stages of forest. Although detrimental to some species, the changed landscape provides new habitat for other species. This study examines the population demography of two secondary cavity-nesting species, Mountain Bluebirds (*Sialia currucoides*) and Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*), colonising clear-cuts in British Columbia. Experimental addition of nest boxes had two effects: (i) it increased the local population size of both species and (ii) it expanded the age range of occupied patches. Nest-site availability was the primary limiting factor in newly clear-cut patches, but vegetation structure was increasingly important in determining patch occupation in older patches. Nest depredation levels varied consistently between patch age categories: with 87% mean nest predation in newly clear-cut patches, and 31% in patches 6-25 years old. These predation levels result in highest productivity realised in the older patches. However, the patterns of patch colonisation suggest both species are making habitat selection decisions without adjusting for the patterns of predation in this novel habitat. This work has obvious implications to forest management practices.

**“Why Seabirds should like Computers”, or in other words “Environmental determination of seabird distribution off eastern and Arctic Canada”.** *Falk Hüttmann* (ACWERN, Faculty of Forestry & Env. Management, P.O. Box 44555, Univ. of New Brunswick, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 6C2; e-mail: k9wk@unb.ca) (poster paper)

Studies of animal distribution present key scientific questions in animal ecology. As seabirds are highly mobile and spend most of their life offshore,



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seabird studies demand a multidisciplinary approach (e.g. ornithology, oceanography, bathymetry, ecology). The three-year research project tries to explain seabird distribution by oceanographical factors, using the PIROP (Program Intégré des Recherches sur les Oiseaux Pelagique) database, a unique source of seabird observations of continuous surveys for the whole Canadian east coast (Gulf of Maine to the Canadian Arctic) which covers data in 1966-1992. Digital data sets on the marine environment, based on satellite images and databases from different research and government agencies, will be analysed. A Geographical Information System (SPANS-GIS) will be used, allowing for advanced exploratory data analysis (EDA) and advanced statistical testing, such as classification and regression trees (CART), Bivariate Point Patterns, and Factor Analysis. The results obtained will be evaluated with other datasets, such as the Bay of Fundy transect data, Manomet data and others. Besides conservation recommendations and better explanations of seabird distribution at sea, a compiled digital dataset for the Canadian east coast in a standard exchange format will also be available for future marine environmental management purposes.

**Sizable breeding populations of threatened Cerulean Warblers inhabit maturing second-growth forest in eastern Ontario.** *J. Jones & Raleigh J. Robertson* (Dept. of Biology, Queen's Univ., Kingston, Ontario K7L 3N6; e-mail: robertsr@biology.queensu.ca)

The Cerulean Warbler (*Dendroica cerulea*) is considered to be one of the most threatened of North America's breeding warblers. In eastern Ontario, however, the conservation prospects for this species are good. Firstly, our study examining the regional distribution of Cerulean Warblers has shown that the population of this species in eastern Ontario is possibly much larger than previously realized. Secondly, certain land management strategies (e.g., maple syrup production) appear to be compatible with the habitat requirements of Cerulean Warblers. This second point is extremely important as the conservation of this species in eastern Ontario is dependent on the awareness and cooperation of individual landowners. To further public involvement with the conservation of Cerulean Warblers in eastern Ontario, researchers at Queen's University have formed the Cerulean Warbler Monitoring Project (CWMP). Preliminary results of the aforementioned studies and thought on the future of Cerulean Warbler research in Canada will be presented.

**Problems associated with the comparison of water-bird abundance (biomass) in bodies of water, expressed in unit surface area.** *Joseph Kerekes* (Canadian Wildlife Service, DOE, Queen Square, 5th Floor, 45 Alderney Dr., Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 2N6; e-mail: kerekesj@ns.ec.gc.ca)

Recent studies indicate that water-bird abundance (biomass) in lakes could be predicted from total phosphorus concentration, similar to the well-established phosphorus-chlorophyll and phosphorus-fish relationships. However, there are some problems that have to be considered before an empirical relationship, useful to predict aquatic bird abundance, from phosphorus concentration could be developed. One such problem arises when bird abundance is expressed in terms of density (birds/unit surface area). Large bodies of water may support more birds than smaller ones in total, but they have a smaller number when expressed in terms of unit surface area of the lake. Five-year data from a population study of Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) and Common Mergansers (*Mergus merganser*) on thirty oligotrophic lakes (ranging from 0.2 to 25 km<sup>2</sup>) in Kejimikujik National Park, Nova Scotia, are used to illustrate the problem.

**Abundance and distribution of fish-eating birds (1988-1995) in Kejimikujik National Park, Nova Scotia.** *Joseph Kerekes* (e-mail: kerekesj@ns.ec.gc.ca), *Michael Duggan, Robert Tordon, Gabe Boros, Duncan Bates & Monique Bronkhorst* (Canadian Wildlife Service, DOE, Queen Square, 5th Floor, 45 Alderney Dr., Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 2N6) (poster paper)

The 7-year breeding population database obtained in 40 lakes in Kejimikujik National Park (385 km<sup>2</sup>) confirmed that the successful breeding of fish-eating birds such as Common Loon and Common Merganser is controlled by the amount of fish available in a lake which is in turn controlled by the nutrient supply (phosphorus) in the lake. The number of territorial loon pairs remains stable (~39 pairs) while the number of chicks fledged may vary annually (mean: 11.3, range: 5-18). A large number of the non-breeding loons spend their summers in the ocean. The relative closeness to the sea coast (~40 to 60 km in two directions) ensures that all the suitable loon territory in these lakes is soon filled when they become vacant. This may give a partial explanation of the low ratio (0.29) of loon chicks/territorial (residential) pair in Kejimikujik compared to other continental populations (>0.5) distant from the sea. Some of the annual fluctuation of breeding success may be the result of



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changes in water levels during the nesting period, but other less-known factors (e.g. predation by Great Black-backed Gulls) are probably at work as well. The total number of Common Merganser broods is usually stable from year to year (mean: 13.4, range: 2-16).

**Raptor injuries in Atlantic Canada: species, sources and rehabilitation potential.** *Elaine Kew & Michael Kew*

(Atlantic Raptor Rehabilitation Centre, Head St. Margaret's Bay, Site 5, Box 7, RR 1, Boutillier's Pt., N.S. B0J 1G0; phone: 902-826-7430) The Atlantic Raptor Rehabilitation Centre, a volunteer care facility established in 1982, treats injured birds of prey and releases them back into the wild after recovery. A total of 173 injured raptors, comprising 17 species, has been cared for between 1982 and 1995. Birds were brought to the centre from locations throughout the Maritimes by federal and provincial wildlife authorities, bird and nature organisations, and by the public. Most injuries were caused by humans, directly or indirectly, ranging from shot and trapped birds (e.g., Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Northern Harrier, Osprey, Peregrine Falcon, Great Horned Owl, Snowy Owl, Barred Owl) to window, pole and car strikes and abandoned immatures (e.g., Northern Goshawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Merlin, American Kestrel, Boreal Owl, Long-eared and Short-eared Owls, Northern Saw-whet Owl), though some were from natural causes. Medical and convalescence requirements vary between species and type of injury, with most birds receiving care for periods of 2-4 months, some for up to one year. Birds are maintained in small to large outdoor pens in a secluded and quiet environment, essential for recuperating raptors. Post-release care to certain species such as young Bald Eagles and Ospreys is also provided for a short period when required. Rate of recovery and release back into the wild of injured birds has been 75% over the 14-year period.

**Shelterwood logging and bird communities in Algonquin Park, Ontario.** *Andrea Kingsley & Erica Nol* (Watershed Ecosystems Graduate Program, Dept. of Biology, Trent Univ., Peterborough, Ont. K9J 7B8; e-mail: enol@trentu.ca)

The effect of uniform shelterwood logging on breeding bird populations in white pine (*Pinus strobus*) stands was examined on the east side of Algonquin Park, Ontario, in the springs of 1995 and 1996. Ten-minute point counts were used to determine diversity of resident breeding birds. Stands were divided into four treatments: cut 1986-1995, 1978-1986, 1968-1978, and old cut (trees not cut after

1940). Bird species richness was not significantly different between the plots. However, 83% of all species recorded occurred in old-cut treatment whereas less than 70% occurred in cut treatments, which indicates that old-cut stands provided greater richness in the forests than cut stands. For vegetation, tree basal area and percent cover of species in different height layers of the forest (canopy, sub-canopy, 5-10m, 2-5m, <2m and ground) were recorded, and preliminary data indicated that the most recently cut stands lacked the sub-canopy layer but contained a dense shrub layer and associated bird species (e.g. Chestnut-sided Warbler *Dendroica pensylvanica*, Mourning Warbler *Oporornis philadelphia*), whereas some species (e.g. Black-throated Green Warbler *Dendroica virens*) occurred more frequently in old-cut stands with greater mid-canopy cover.

**The structure of cavity-nesting bird communities in British Columbia before and after forest cutting.**

*Kathy Martin* (Canadian Wildlife Service, Delta, B.C.; e-mail: kmartin@unixg.ubc.ca) & *Rachel F. Holt* (Forest Sciences, 270-2357 Main Mall, Univ. British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z4; e-mail: rholt@unixg.ubc.ca)

We investigate the hypothesis that cavity-nesting bird communities are structured in nest webs analogous to food webs, where inter-specific and intra-specific interactions are centred around nest-site availability, forest composition and forest structure. One set of sites in north-central interior British Columbia is composed of mixed and pure deciduous and coniferous forests and supports over 30 species of avian cavity nesters (9 species of woodpeckers, 4 species of weak excavators and 19 secondary cavity-nesting ducks, passerines and birds of prey). We measured bird richness and abundance using point counts, and taped calls for woodpeckers and owls, across a range of habitat types. We found significant positive correlations between primary and secondary cavity-nesting birds, and significant negative correlations between both groups with weak cavity excavators. None of these three groups were correlated with open-nesting forest birds on the plots, rejecting our null hypothesis of common habitat preferences. In contrast with our previous site, a nest web constructed for cavity nesters in a coniferous forest fragmented by forest cutting was much diminished in richness and abundance with less than 10 species (principally 4 species of excavators and 2 species of secondary cavity-nesters). We examine qualitative and quantitative features of the nest web structure in these two forested sites.

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**Survival of Common Eider ducklings in the Bay of Fundy.** *Kim Mawhinney* (e-mail: N9BI@unb.ca) & *Antony W. Diamond* (ACWERN, Univ. of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 45111, Fredericton, New Brunswick E3B 1J7)

During the summer of 1995, a pilot study was conducted to examine the post-hatch and brood ecology of the Common Eider with specific reference to movements, habitat use and behaviour of both adult females and ducklings on the Wolves Archipelago in the Bay of Fundy. However, exceptionally high depredation rates by Great Black-backed Gulls on eider ducklings precluded the study of post-hatch brood amalgamation as only 12 of the 3,000 ducklings produced in this colony fledged. In 1996 a limited gull control program through a combination of culling and reduced gull production was initiated in an attempt to increase duckling recruitment. Breeding pairs of Great Black-backed Gulls were eliminated on two of the five islands in the Archipelago and Great Black-backed Gull clutches were prevented from hatching on two of the other islands. The absence of chicks did not reduce adult Great Black-backed Gull depredation on eider broods and only 8 ducklings fledged in 1996. Brood surveys flown in 1995 and 1996 suggest that low duckling production was not only associated with the Wolves Archipelago, and that duckling production in the Bay of Fundy has declined considerably over the last decade, despite stable number of breeding pairs.

**Forest bird productivity and resource use at local and landscape scales in a commercially managed forest of northwestern New Brunswick.** *Pete S. McKinley* & *John Gunn* (ACWERN, Univ. of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 45111, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 1J7).

Two 50 km<sup>2</sup> study landscapes have been established on the freehold land of Fraser Inc., in northwestern New Brunswick. One of these landscapes represents Fraser's typical harvesting approach, which has resulted in a mosaic of highly contrasting stand types. The second landscape is a reference area that has not recently been heavily managed; cover types are more uniform. Both landscapes vary in time since harvest, volume removed, tree and shrub species composition, and overall vegetation structure. Avian resource use data have been collected for several forest bird species on two landscapes nested within the reference area. The same species have been monitored in the continuum of forest types present. The data include foraging sites, foraging maneuvers, display sites, nest sites, and

fledgling habitat use. Point-count censuses have been conducted at 192 points on the reference area with 4 visits per station. The productivity of a focal species, the Black-throated Blue Warbler, has been monitored on the reference area. A combination of nest location, pairing status, and observations of food-carrying and fledgling presence has been used to determine avian productivity.

**Late autumnal avian migrants at two large savannas, northwest Florida.** *Douglas B McNair* & *Todd Engstrom* (Tall Timbers Research Station, Route 1, Box 678, Tallahassee, Florida 32313-9712 U.S.A.)

Thirteen species of grassland birds comprised 93% of all new captures in mist-nets during late autumnal migration (1 October to 30 Nov 1995) at two large savannas, Apalachicola NF, northwest Florida. Henslow's (*Ammodramus henslowii*), Swamp (*Melospiza georgiana*), and Grasshopper (*A. savannarum*) sparrows accounted for 74% of all captured grassland birds. The mean daily capture rate was 7.6 birds (range: 1-18). Most birds captured were Hatching Year (87%), had low mass and little fat; almost all were caught just before official sunrise, as they descended into savannas after an overnight flight. Recapture rates were low, suggesting that few individuals used these savannas as stopover sites. However, Henslow's Sparrows caught during migration used these two savannas as overwintering sites, based on later recaptures. Other species, e.g., Marsh Wren (*Cistothorus palustris*) used these savannas as temporary diurnal refugia. Pre-sunrise mist-net sampling has potential to monitor the most numerous grassland migrants, especially the secretive Henslow's Sparrow.

**Global status of Alcidae: a family in trouble.** *David N. Nettleship* (Canadian Wildlife Service, DOE, Queen Square, 5th Floor, 45 Alderney Dr., Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 2N6; e-mail: nettleshipd@ns.doe.ca)

Virtually all extant alcid species have undergone widespread decreases in population size and range during the first half of this century, reductions that began during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Some of these declines continue today. The fate of the recently extinct Great Auk should serve as a warning to all of how rapid and final the disappearance of a species can be. At present, there are four species at serious risk, one globally threatened, the Japanese Murrelet with no more than 6,000 breeding birds worldwide, and three globally near-threatened species — Marbled Murrelet, Xantus' Murrelet, Craveri's Murrelet — the latter two with populations under



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10,000 individuals. It is very likely that Xantus' and Craveri's Murrelets will soon be reclassified as globally threatened. Of equal concern is the increasing vulnerability of several other species including Razorbill, Black Guillemot, Ancient Murrelet and Whiskered Auklet, all of whose populations are relatively small and in various states of decline over their world ranges. In the short term, the prognosis is far from encouraging as almost all species (where sufficient information is available) indicate declining numbers with only certain regional or local populations in equilibrium or showing slight increases. The family is very vulnerable to human-induced perturbations, either directly or indirectly, clearly exemplified by the recent status of its present 22 member species: four species globally threatened or near-threatened, 12 species known to be decreasing in numbers (including threatened and near-threatened species), nine species varying between stable to decreasing through their range, and only one species believed to be relatively stable at present (Dovekie).

**Effects of Mercury and Acidified Lakes on the Breeding Behaviour and Reproductive Ecology of Common Loons.** *Joseph J. Nocera* (Dept. Biol./ACWERN, Acadia University, Wolfville, N.S. B0P 1X0)

Mercury contamination and acid lake water may influence the breeding behaviour of Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) and their reproductive success by reducing prey availability, prey-capture rates, or altering loon time-activity budgets. Analyses of loon blood in 1995 revealed that loons in Kejimikujik National Park (Nova Scotia) had the highest blood mercury levels of any loon population in North America. Also loon reproductive success in Kejimikujik is low compared with other sites in North America. A comparative investigation of loon behaviour across a range of lakes that exhibit variation in mercury levels and pH is being conducted in Kejimikujik and the Lepreau Crown lands (southwestern New Brunswick). The development of a behavioural catalog of pre-hatch and post-hatch behaviours of breeding loons and seasonal behaviours of residential non-breeding loons on these lakes may help determine the effects of mercury and pH on loon behaviour and reproductive success. Preliminary results from 1996 observations suggest that there is a difference in the time budgets of loons between the two sites. But observations also indicate that

reproductive success in Kejimikujik is once again characteristically low.

**Using hierarchical models of neotropical migrant birds for environmental assessment.** *Raymond J. O'Connor* (Dept. of Wildlife Ecology, 238 Nutting Hall, Univ. of Maine, Orono, Me. 04469-5755, U.S.A.; e-mail: oconnor@apollo.umanfa.maine.edu).

Surveys of breeding bird populations were conducted between 1991 and 1995 on some 185 lakes in the northeastern United States (New England, New York, and New Jersey). The relative frequency of neotropical migrants around these lakes were well-predicted by classification and regression-tree (CART) models incorporating watershed and shoreline habitat variables. Significant predictor variables include the extent of forest in the watershed and the extent of forested suburbia around the lake shore, modified by a strong latitudinal effect. The relative size of the neotropical migrant guild in the lake communities provided a significant component of an index of the environmental quality of the lake.

**Nest-site selection and reproductive success of Cerulean Warblers in southeastern Ontario.** *Catherine J. Oliarnyk & Raleigh J. Robertson* (Dept. of Biology, Queen's Univ., Kingston, Ont. K7L 3N6; e-mail: robertsr@biology.queensu.ca).

According to the U.S. breeding bird survey, Cerulean Warblers have experienced an average decline of 3.4% per year over the past two decades. Little is known about the life history and habitat requirements of this threatened species, especially at the northern limits of its range. A two-year study of a population in the Frontenac Axis of southeastern Ontario demonstrated high levels of reproductive success in this area. A total of 27 nests was found over two years, with 74% of pairs successfully fledging at least one young. There were no incidents of brood parasitism by Brown-headed Cowbirds and nest failure due to predation was 14.8%. Principal components analysis and discriminant function analysis of 24 habitat variables showed significant habitat differences between successful nests and unsuccessful nests, and between successful nests and non-nest sites within a territory. This study furthers the recommendations of earlier work suggesting Cerulean Warblers require large tracts of mature forest by identifying tree size and relative canopy density as features of a mature forest associated with successful reproduction.



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**Identification of functionally important avian body-masses across scales of spatial resolution.**

Robert D. Otto (Faculty of Forestry and Environmental Management, Univ. of New Brunswick, P.O. Box 44555, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 6C2; e-mail: t66b@unb.ca)

Methodology developed by Holling (1992) to produce body-mass distributions of co-occurring species was used to analyze bird survey data from two landscapes in New Brunswick. These landscapes differed in spatial pattern, as measured by fractal dimension, at five different scales of resolution and extent. Recurrences of particular body-masses as centres of clumps in body-mass distributions were analyzed. Of 108 total body-mass clumps identified in various distributions, all were centred on eighteen (18) different body-masses. Further, only four (4) body-masses centred 61 of 108 (56.5%) body-mass clumps. Evidence presented indicates that certain body-masses might be functionally more important than others, and that body-mass distribution methodology might provide a useful way to identify functional indicator species and functional groups of avian species.

**The first year of a Breeding Bird Census at Mount Uniacke, Nova Scotia.**

L. Peter M. Payzant (Sr. Control Systems Engineer, Nova Scotia Power, P.O. Box 910, Halifax, N.S. B3J 2W5; e-mail: peter.payzant@nspower.ns.ca) & Linda A. Payzant (P.O. Box 2, Waverley, N.S. B0N 2S0; e-mail: aa095@ccn.cs.dal.ca)

In 1996, the Halifax Field Naturalists began what is expected to be a long-term program of monitoring population densities of breeding birds in a 12-ha forest plot at Mount Uniacke, Nova Scotia. The technique in use is the Breeding Bird Census, as first recommended by the National Audubon Society in 1937. These censuses use the "spot-mapping" technique to count the breeding birds on a measured plot of land, which is expected to remain undisturbed. Yearly censuses thus attempt to monitor changes in species populations independent of alterations to breeding habitat. After the first year of field work, we have initial figures for some species, but other species will have to wait for the next field season. The most abundant species detected included Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (*Empidonax flaviventris*), Hermit Thrush (*Catharus guttatus*) and Bay-breasted Warbler (*Dendroica castanea*). Some species including Solitary Vireo (*Vireo solitarius*) appeared to have only one pair present in the plot. Other expected species such as White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) and some warblers were not detected. Subsequent years'

field work will require an earlier start and more frequent visits.

**Pairing success of male Ovenbirds in forest fragments and contiguous forest within an industrial forest landscape.**

Dwayne L. Sabine (New Brunswick Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit, Univ. of New Brunswick, Bag Service 44555, Fredericton, N.B. E3B 6C2)

Forest fragmentation has been identified as a possible factor contributing to population declines of neotropical migrant birds. Several species have been shown to be intolerant of habitat area reduction, and are often absent or present at low densities in forest fragments. Reproductive success may also be diminished in fragments. Most research to date has been conducted in landscapes dominated by agriculture and/or urbanization. This study examined pairing success of a forest-interior bird species in fragments (2.5-38.5 ha) and contiguous forest (20,400 ha) within an industrial forest landscape in southern New Brunswick. Pairing success and territorial density of male Ovenbirds did not differ between fragments and contiguous forest. This suggests adverse effects of fragmentation might be more a function of landscape matrix type than of fragment size.

**Impact of strip cutting on birds.**

Jean-Pierre L. Savard (e-mail: savardjp@cpque.am.doe.ca) & Gilles Falardeau (Service canadien de la faune, 1141, rte de l'Église, P.O. Box 10100, Sainte-Foy (Québec), Qué. G1V 4H5)

We measured bird abundance and richness in six types of habitats by the point-count method (144 stations, 24 per type, 10-min duration, 75 m radius, 3 counts per station) and the spot-mapping method (12, 10-15 ha plots) in 1994 and 1995. The six habitats included: (i) control forest (no cuts); (ii) young strips (cut in 1989-90); (iii) medium-aged strips (cut in 1984-85); (iv) old strips (cut in 1979-81); (v) final cuts (inter strip cut); and (vi) clearcuts. All strips and inter-strips were 20 m wide. Bird response to strip-cutting was varied with some species responding positively (White-throated Sparrow, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Common Yellowthroat), and others negatively (Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Red-breasted Nuthatch). The highest bird abundance and richness were associated with young strips and the lowest with clearcuts. Several species declined as strip age increased (Hermit Thrush, Solitary Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker) whereas others increased (Black-throated Blue

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Warbler, Ovenbird, Canada Warbler). Species associated with final-strip cuts and clearcuts included the Alder Flycatcher, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow and Mourning Warbler.

**Twenty-year population trends of forest-edge birds in Manitoba: effect of cowbird parasitism, migratory status and geographical scale.** *Spencer G. Sealy* (Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Man. R3T 2N2; e-mail: sgsealy@ccm.umanitoba.ca)

Changes in abundance were examined between 1976 and 1995 of 18 species that breed in a continuous forest-edge habitat at Delta Marsh, Manitoba. This community is parasitized by Brown-headed Cowbirds (*Molothrus ater*) and is composed of acceptor and rejecter species, as well as short- and long-distance migrant species. Delta Marsh supported a high density of nesting birds, but over 20 years nesting density declined significantly. Eleven of 18 species declined significantly, two species increased significantly, and five species fluctuated in abundance over time. Declines were not associated with acceptor/rejecter status as the number of acceptor and rejecter species that declined did not differ significantly (7 versus 4). More long-distance migrant species declined than short-distance migrants (8 versus 3), but the difference was only marginally significant. Population changes at Delta Marsh were not reflected on a wider scale, as only Gray Catbirds (*Dumetella carolinensis*) declined significantly and three species (Least Flycatcher *Empidonax minimus*, Western Kingbird *Tyrannus verticalis*, Song Sparrow *Melospiza melodia*) increased significantly in Manitoba. The results suggest that population trends at Delta Marsh are due to localized effects, possibly changes in habitat structure and prey abundance. Cowbirds cannot be implicated as a cause of these localized declines because the same number of acceptor and rejecter species declined.

**Use of successional forest by wintering migratory birds in Mexico.** *Andrea L. Smith & Raleigh J. Robertson* (Dept. of Biology, Queen's Univ., Kingston, Ont. K7L 3N6; e-mail: robertsr@biology.queensu.ca).

Although migratory forest birds spend up to nine months of the year on neotropical wintering grounds, relatively little is known about their ecology in this region. The increasing rate of deforestation in the tropics has been identified as a possible factor

contributing to recent declines in migratory songbird populations, but habitat use by migrants on the wintering grounds remains largely unquantified. In agricultural areas migratory birds may use a mosaic of habitats at different stages of regeneration. However, over much of their tropical range, migrants are experiencing a loss of successional habitat diversity, as the rotational fallow period becomes shortened because of increased human population pressures. This study examines the distribution patterns of migratory birds in successional forest, and investigates the relative importance of different stages of successional habitat for two species of migrant warbler — American Redstart and Magnolia Warbler. Preliminary results indicate that little variation in bird composition exists between early, mid and late successional forest, despite distinct differences in vegetation structure. The focal species maintain equal densities across forest type, which may be influenced by similar insect resource characteristics amongst the three successional stages.

**Forest bird population trends (1988-1994) determined by the Ontario Forest Bird Monitoring Program.** *Dan A. Welsh, Michael D. Cadman & H. Dewar* (Canadian Wildlife Service, 75 Farquhar St., Guelph, Ont. N1H 3N4; e-mail: cadmanm@aestor.am.doe.ca)

The Ontario Forest Bird Monitoring Program (FBMP) is an on-going program of the Canadian Wildlife Service (Ontario Region). Monitoring sites are in large, fairly mature, unmanaged forests. Sites are distributed in a wide variety of forest types, with approximately even numbers on the Boreal Shield and Mixed Wood Plain Ecozones. Sites consist of 5 monitoring stations 200 m or more apart. Up to 160 sites (800 stations) have been monitored in any one year. At each station, ten-minute, unlimited-distance point counts are undertaken twice in the breeding season by experienced volunteers. For the period 1988-1994, sample sizes were adequate to determine trend in 73 species: 35 showed an increasing trend (9 significant), and 38 showed a decreasing trend (8 significant). In the Boreal Shield Ecozone, sample sizes were adequate to determine trend for 62 species: 36 increasing (10 significant), and 26 decreasing (9 significant). In the Mixed Wood Plain Ecozone, sample sizes were adequate to determine trend for 53 species: 20 increasing (2 significant) and 33 decreasing (9 significant). Implications of the program's results are discussed.



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## REPORTS FROM 1996 ANNUAL MEETING/ RAPPORTS DE LA REUNION ANNUELLE DE 1996

Note: Of the reports following, only those of Treasurer, Membership Secretary, and Editor of *Picoides* were presented to and formally approved by the S.C.O. Council in Fredericton. The other reports were received later; subjects of most had been discussed at the Council meeting. In future, minutes of the Council meeting and of the Annual General Meeting may be published in *Picoides*, if this is considered desirable.

### A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT - FREDERICTON AND BEYOND

The wonders of Fredericton remain, two months after this history-making event. How fortunate it was to be present at the University of New Brunswick for our four-day annual meeting, 23-26 August 1996, and to be there as your president. The meeting's grand success, both as a forum for our science and a means of sharing and exchanging ideas and concerns, was exciting and stimulating beyond all expectations. It makes me look forward to the attainment of our Society's other goals and the joy of working with each of you during my presidency and beyond.

When I prepared my first communication as president in spring 1996, I promised to address and encourage discussion of pressing problems facing our Society. The completion of our first annual meeting with a full scientific program in Fredericton goes a long way in confirming our collective belief in the need and place of a such a platform for dissemination of information on birds in Canada (for details, see *SCO Program and Abstracts*, above). The theme of biology and conservation of forest birds, supplemented with mini-symposia and contributed papers on many other aspects of avian biology, drew 78 official registrants, with numerous non-registered observers bringing the total number of participants above 100. Most gratifying was the strength of the scientific papers presented — 37 oral and poster presentations — including several by students, and the high energy levels displayed by attendees throughout the meeting. Discussion was rampant everywhere between formal sessions, in the halls and coffee lounge, through evening special-interest group gatherings and round-table-discussions to the relaxed bird film and art presentations. We are especially grateful to Karen Allaben-Confer and Robert Lyon for displaying their magnificent bird artwork throughout the meeting, and to Jim Murray, executive producer of CBC-TV's "The Nature of Things", and Peter Verner, producer of CBC-TV's "Land and Sea", for screening their outstanding film productions on Canadian birds. Needless to repeat our indebtedness to Tony Diamond, who chaired both the Scientific

Program and Local Organizing committees, and to his outstanding team of helpers, as well as the excellent support provided by our conference sponsors: Canadian Forestry Service (Forestry Canada), Canadian Wildlife Service - Atlantic (Environment Canada), Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network, and the University of New Brunswick. The all-day field trips to Grand Manan and the Bay of Fundy were fitting endings to a magnificent S.C.O. experience in Fredericton.

The next annual conference of the Society will be held 7-9 August 1997 at Trent University in Peterborough, Ontario. A special symposium is being constructed to elucidate the linkages between research and monitoring of avian populations. The Scientific Programme Committee is chaired by Erica Dunn, and Erica Nol will chair the Local Organizing Committee. Remember those dates, and don't miss this one and the memories (for details, see notice above).

We also have to move on several other fronts. Several of these tasks were identified in my first message, and with the subject of annual meetings they form a package of initiatives I expect to concentrate upon through 1996 and 1997. Let me review some of them briefly, to keep you informed of your executive council's activities and direction. The hope is to enlist your interest, support, advice and participation in these activities.

\* **Publications** — As outlined earlier, the S.C.O. publications committee and interested parties are pursuing the possibility of establishing a scientific journal for dissemination of information on biology, conservation and management of birds and their habitats in Canada. The committee's current activities are focussed on financial and editorial requirements of an avian science journal, preparation and publication of proceedings of the Fredericton "Forest songbirds" symposium (editors: A.W. Diamond and D.N. Nettleship), and continued development of our bulletin *Picoides* (see Editor's report, below). The committee's



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structure has changed; Henri Ouellet stepped down as chair, but continues as a member, with Spencer Sealy joining the working group, and D.N. Nettleship as interim chair. We invite anyone interested in working with us on these critical initiatives to contact the chair or any committee member.

\* **By-laws** — The By-laws Committee, under the chairmanship of David Hussell, continues its difficult assignment (see progress report below). The objective is to simplify the structure of council by reducing the number of councillors to nine and extending their terms in office to three years. This, with the setting of our fiscal year to correspond with the calendar year, will ease the task of the nominating committee (under the responsibility of the vice-president) and enhance the efficiency of council operations. Recommendations in the form of amendments, where necessary, will be distributed to all members for their comments and approval early in the new year.

\* **Conservation** — The establishment and operation of a conservation committee is a high priority item (see some initial thoughts by the Editor, below). Initiatives already underway, through our associations with Bird Studies Canada, Canadian Landbird Conservation Programme, North American Banding Council, will be reviewed and possibly redirected within an integrated conservation plan. The process will involve an operation mandate for the committee that will allow key conservation issues to be identified and addressed. This plan will require input and effort by all of us, to ensure that it serves the needs of birds in Canada. It must also be compatible and coordinated with certain activities of the Ornithological Council (in U.S.A.) to attain the broader conservation goals across the Americas. Please participate in our efforts to produce a committee design and operation plan that accomplishes the conservation aims and objectives of our Society.

\* **Finances** — Thanks to solid financial caretakers and advisors over the years, our Society has achieved a sound financial position. Our solvency requires the expertise of members such as our current Treasurer Tom Dickinson and financial advisor David Hussell. We are reviewing our finances with the purpose of producing an even better financial plan for the future, one that will take us into the new millennium on a sound financial footing. Much of our agenda, to facilitate increases in our knowledge of Canadian birds and their ecological requirements, can only be achieved with a solid resource base. Your council will

provide further details soon (see also, Treasurer's summary report, below).

\* **Archives and History** — A long overdue subject is establishment of a permanent archives procedure and location for our Society. Presently, files and documents are responsibility of the president, resulting in movement of several boxes of materials at intervals (corresponding with the 2-year terms of most presidents). Any thoughts on how and where to establish a permanent home for our Society's records are most welcome. Associated with this is the need for a fixed address for the Society and the creation of a Permanent Secretary's position to oversee general operations of the Society. Council may elect to form a work group to attack these questions, but help is needed. Please join in on this important exercise, to establish a repository and safeguard our Society's history.

The above are some of the major initiatives and activities of your executive council. One principal need remains, that of communication and meeting the needs of members. I urge you to communicate with your council. Give us ideas, identify needs, and offer solutions and suggestions for action. The overall aim is to provide a service to our members and thus to increase the likelihood of accomplishing goals important to the national ornithological community and the birds of Canada.

I look forward to the months ahead, to working with all of you in achieving our shared vision of our Society, and to ensure that it satisfies and hopefully exceeds the needs of each member. Good birding in the winter months ahead — whether through field activities or at the desk analyzing data — and be sure to let me have your views, advice and counsel on our Society's future.

David Nettleship

Lundy Lodge  
Head of St. Margaret's Bay  
Nova Scotia

S.C.O. FINANCES AND MEMBERSHIP/  
LES FINANCES ET LE NOMBRE DES MEMBRES S.O.C.

FINANCES (condensed from 1996 report and 1995 financial  
statement by T.E. Dickinson, Treasurer S.C.O.)

Opening bank balances and investments (3 January 1995) - .....total \$21,080.94

Income

- Donations .....- \$ 260.00  
- Membership .....- 2,476.87  
- Interest .....- 631.72

.....total \$ 3,368.59

Expenditures

- Awards (2 Taverner, Speirs 1/) .....- \$ 1,297.00  
- Picoides (fall '94, spring, fall '95) .....- 2,850.49  
- Brochure production & printing .....- 262.20

.....total \$ 4,409.69

1/ The Baillie Award will not show on our books; LPBO handles payment directly,  
and transfers funds to cover our expenses (not received until 1996).

Closing bank balances and investments (31 December 1995) - .....total \$20,039.84

(Audited by F. Huston 9 August 1996)

Assets declined by \$1,041.10 in 1995. Membership renewals were mostly in 1996, often including 1995 as well. Interest was lower owing to a new semi-annual payment schedule; 1996 should be higher as a result.

The invoice for fall '94 Picoides was received late and thus paid in 1995. The spring '96 issue (not shown herein) cost more than any before. Brochure costs (which will recur) were an additional expense. Unless unforeseen expenses arise, our net assets should continue to grow through 1996.

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MEMBERSHIP (condensed from lengthy report by  
N.J. Flood, Membership Secretary)

S.C.O. membership remained stable in the past year, with 275 entries on the current mailing list (through 19 August 1996), including 9 libraries and 4 groups. As in recent years, about 40% (111 "members") were in arrears by one or two years (paid through 1994 or 1995, not yet renewed for 1996). However, 21% (58) were paid up beyond 1996, some for several years in advance, showing faith in the long-term survival of the Society.

Geographic distribution of S.C.O. membership was (last year in parentheses): Nfld. 5 (5); N.S. 6 (7); N.B. 12 (10); Que. 35 (37); Ont. 82 (83); Man. 17 (16); Sask. 22 (22); Alta. 31 (33); B.C. 36 (32); Yukon & N.W.T. 5 (5); U.S.A. 18 (19); Overseas 6 (6). [Ed.

note: Lack of P.E.I. members, remarked on in recent reports, is expectable; few professionals and serious amateurs in that province are active in bird work - as distinct from nature conservation.]

Various questions posed to the S.C.O. Council last year, not dealt with in Cincinnati owing to lack of a quorum, were reiterated as still needing answers. Most of those queries dealt with approaches for increasing membership of S.C.O., including a more obvious focus on bird conservation. Nancy believes the latter would be a major attractant for volunteer bird observers (who comprise the largest "pool" of potential S.C.O. members).

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1996 DORIS HUESTIS SPEIRS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING  
CONTRIBUTIONS IN CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGY

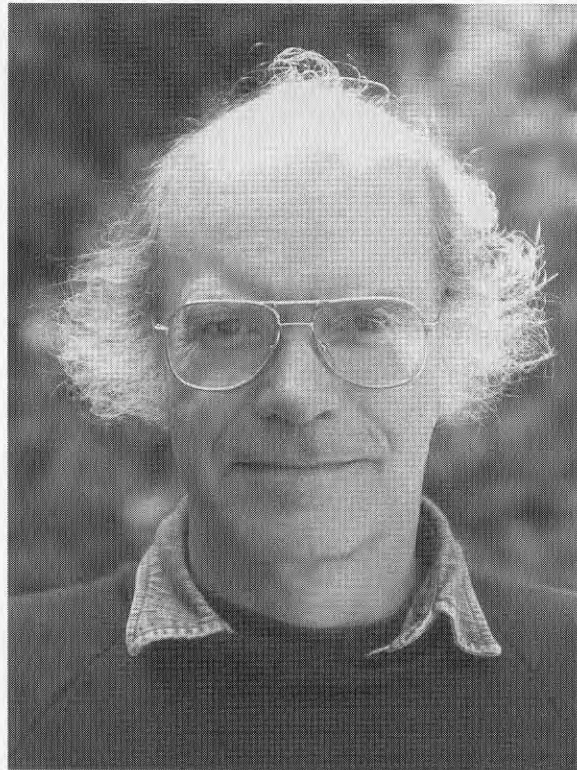


Photo from CBC Files.

At its 15th Annual Meeting on 25 August 1996, held at Fredericton, New Brunswick, the Society of Canadian Ornithologists presented its Doris Huestis Speirs Award to **James Murray**, Executive Producer and guiding light of the world-renowned natural history television production unit “The Nature of Things” of Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC). Mr. Murray’s modesty and deliberate effort towards non-exposure often give no inkling of his outstanding accomplishments in dispersion of knowledge and understanding of avian science and the conservation of birds and their habitats in Canada and elsewhere. The continued existence of “The Nature of Things” for 37 years, as Canada’s premiere science television program, with audiences often exceeding one million viewers weekly, is a testament to Mr. Murray’s skills as producer, developer of a distinguished team of film-makers, and public educator.

James Murray began his professional broadcasting career in 1957 as a radio producer with CBC, moving to television in 1960. He discovered his *milieu* in 1961 when he joined “The Nature of Things”, with its

challenge of an endlessly fascinating range of science topics to explore and develop for public consumption. That fascination has remained throughout his 35-year association with the unit, the last 22 years as Executive Producer. During that time, Jim Murray explored a diverse range of subjects on living systems and the need for greater understanding and protection of many of them from the threats of our ever-growing technological culture. Themes ranged from broad sweeps of issues such as the philosophical critique of the human place in nature in “A Planet for the Taking” to the minutiae of subjects like the infrastructure of a single cell or the structure of a feather. Although wide-ranging in his interests, the subject of birds — their diversity, biology and conservation — always held a special place with him. Messages of his films are often global in context, but the focus was largely North American, on environmental issues and species ranging from the raptors, shorebirds and seabirds of the eastern Canadian arctic to the communities of wetland waders and forest songbirds in our more southerly climes (see list below). These careful examinations of the world of birds and the impact of



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human activity on them and other life-forms have made Jim Murray a world figure as one of Canada's most respected science film producers and environmental commentators.

Mr. Murray has been honoured for his science, natural history and conservation achievements worldwide. His production of "A Planet for the Taking", an eight-part series that explored historical and cultural roots of our relationship with nature and the consequences of that relationship, won enormous popular and critical acclaim around the world, including the prestigious United Nations Environment Program Medal and the World Environment Festival Award. Recently, he was executive producer of several specials on conservation issues of international importance including "Amazonia: The Road to the End of the Forest" (1989), "Sea of Slaughter" (1990), "James Bay: The Wind that Keeps on Blowing" (1991), "A Climate for Change" (1992), "Trading Futures: Living in the Global Economy" (1993), "Water: to the Last Drop" (1994), "The Dammed" (1995), and "Food or Famine" (1996). These broad overviews and those more directly related to birds and their habitat have culminated in major achievements. Under his leadership, "The Nature of Things" science film unit won the Gemini Award for Best Documentary Series on Canadian Television four times since the award's inception in 1986.

James Murray himself has been honoured with numerous awards, including ones for natural history. He received the "Conservation Award of the

Federation of Ontario Naturalists" and "The Canadian Science and Film Association Award" for his exceptional contribution to science films in Canada, as well as two "Wilderness Awards" for his film productions "Darwin and the Galapagos" and "The Living Arctic". Furthermore, in 1988 he received the North American Association for Environmental Education's prestigious award for "Outstanding Service to Environmental Education", and in 1991 at the Wildscreen Festival in Great Britain he was chosen to receive the "Outstanding Achievement Award".

The Society of Canadian Ornithologists' prestigious "**Doris Huestis Speirs Award for Outstanding Contributions to Canadian Ornithology**" is presented to honour outstanding lifetime achievement in any discipline of Canadian ornithology. Although contributions in scientific research are most likely to be recognized by the Society, the award is also presented to persons or organizations that have contributed to ornithology in other ways such as conservation, public education, bird art and the popularization of ornithology. **James Murray**'s work more than satisfies these criteria from several viewpoints. His contributions to avian conservation and public education are exemplary and of immeasurable value. The Society of Canadian Ornithologists, and all its members, take great pleasure in presenting the "1996 Doris Huestis Speirs Award" to **James Murray** for his outstanding contributions to ornithology and the birds of Canada.

## Film Productions about the Biology and Conservation of Birds by James Murray, 1967-1996.

1967 DARWIN AND THE GALAPAGOS (P)\* - 5-part series on Charles Darwin and the flora and fauna of the Galapagos Islands with focus on birds (3 hours).

1969 AUDUBON (P) - biography of John James Audubon (1 hour).

1970 THE EVERGLADES (EP)\* - habitats and fauna, particularly migratory birds (30 min).

1970 POINT PELEE (EP) - an oasis of birds and people (30 min).

1971 THE LIVING ARCTIC (P) - special on arctic ecosystems with focus on birds (2 hours).

1972 GROUSE COUNTRY (EP) - an overview of the ecology and behaviour of grouse (30 min).

1973 PUFFINS, PREDATORS AND PIRATES (EP) - a detailed examination of the interactive behaviour of gulls and puffins (30 min).

1973 ELLESMERE LAND (P) - birds and mammals of Arctic Canada (30 min).

1975 ARCTIC ISLANDS - A MATTER OF TIME (EP) - special on the need for conservation of arctic fauna and habitats based upon the findings of the Canadian Committee of the International Biological Programme (1 hour).

1976 THE FUNKS - ('special consultant') A "hot-spot" for seabirds in the northwest Atlantic and oil development (30 min).

1978 THE GANNETS OF BONAVENTURE (P) - reproductive performance and toxic chemicals (30 min).

1978 HUMMINGBIRDS (Science Magazine; EP) - the marvels of the hummers (10 min).

1978 ROGER TORY PETERSON: PORTRAIT OF A BIRD-WATCHER (P) - the life and art of the master bird-watcher (1 hour).

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- 1979 ISLAND OF THE MOON (EP) - the unique fauna of Madagascar and its birds (1 hour).  
1979 ARCTIC OIL (P) - the threat of offshore petroleum developments to communities of marine birds and mammals in Arctic Canada (1 hour).  
1981 BIRD EGGS (Science Magazine; EP) - structure and function of eggs (10 min).  
1981 A NATURAL TURN OF EVENTS (EP) - the Leslie Street Spit and bird colonization (15 min).  
1982 DIVING BIRDS (EP) - physiology and behaviour of diving birds (15 min).  
1982 LONG POINT (EP) - a special place for birds and other life-forms in Lake Erie (1 hour).  
1983 HIGH FLIGHT (EP) - its purpose and attainment (15 min).  
1983 BLUEBIRD TRAILS (EP) - present status and conservation requirements (15 min).  
1984 BIRD MAPPERS (EP) - the distribution and abundance of birds (15 min).  
1984 PRAIRIE WATERS (P) - waterfowl wetlands in Canada (1 hour).  
1984 WHERE THE BAY BECOMES THE SEA (EP) - the food web of the Gulf of Maine and Bay of Fundy with emphasis on birds (30 min).  
1985 A PLANET FOR THE TAKING (EP) - a special eight-part series serving as a critique of the human place in nature and the impact of technological man on living systems and the world (8 hours).  
1985 DUCKS IN DANGER (EP) - conservation and management of waterfowl in North America (1 hour).  
1986 GOSHAWKS (EP) - dynamics and biology of an aerial predator (30 min).  
1987 THE SEA RAVEN (EP) - the plight of cormorants in Canada (30 min).  
1987 HOME OF THE BIRDS (EP) - Audubon's Labrador, the St. Lawrence northshore (1 hour).  
1987 BORNE ON THE WIND (EP) - the aerodynamics, flight and conservation of eagles (30 min).  
1988 PUFFINS & PREY (EP) - the importance of keystone fish species such as capelin to colonial seabirds and impacts of commercial fisheries (30 min).  
1988 BIRD HOSPITAL (EP) - rehabilitation of injured birds (30 min).  
1988 RIVERS TO THE SEA (EP) - biological activity and importance to waterbirds (30 min).  
1989 FALCONS BY THE SEA (EP) - marine cliff-breeding raptors (30 min).  
1989 HOW A BIRD FILLS THE BILL (EP) - feeding and foraging (30 min).  
1990 SEA OF SLAUGHTER (EP) - special historical critique of 400 years of human overexploitation of living things in the northwest Atlantic (2 hours).  
1990 HERSCHEL: AN ISLAND OF FLOWERS IN A SEA OF ICE (EP) - the natural history and birds of an island in northern Canada (30 min).  
1992 CONNECTING FLIGHTS (EP) - the migratory pathways of shorebirds in Canada and the Americas (1 hour).  
1994 ON A WING AND A SONG (EP) - the songbirds of Canada, their biology and conservation (1 hour).  
1995 WHERE THE HERON FINDS ITS HOME (EP) - the biology and behaviour of the Great Blue Heron (1 hour).  
1996 VANISHING WETLANDS (EP) - the disappearance of wetlands and what it means to birds (1 hour).  
1996 PELICANS AND CORMORANTS: PRAIRIE SCAPEGOATS (EP) - interactions between fish-eating birds and commercial fisheries (1 hour).  
1996 EAGLES UPDATE (EP) - present status and recent changes of eagle populations (1 hour).

\* (P, Producer; EP, Executive Producer)

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[The Doris Huestis Speirs Award Committee of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists was chaired in 1996 by David N. Nettleship, with members A.W. Diamond and (past chair) S.G. Sealy.]

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[Note: Student Research Awards announced in 1996 were reported in the preceding issue of *Picoides*, and are not repeated here, although they form part of the 1996 Annual Meeting reports.]

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The S.C.O. Council, meeting in Fredericton, voted to make two awards for best student presentations at the annual conference. Birgit Braune, Gilles Chapdelaine, and Keith Hobson (chair) judged the 1996 presentations. Awards were made to Catherine Oliarnyk, and to Kim Mawhinney and Diana Hamilton (tied). [see program abstracts above for details of those papers]

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## EDITOR'S REPORT/RAPPORT DU EDITEUR

Since my last report (August 1995), two issues of *Picoides* were published, 8(2) in November 1995, and 9(1) in June 1996. The latter issue was the largest - and costliest - yet published, with 24 pages exclusive of covers and inside-cover listings. As usual, nearly all material received for *Picoides* was published in some form, often edited. More material, of most kinds, will help make our bulletin more significant to Canada and to ornithology. A more inclusive bulletin will cost more to publish, as we cannot hope for lower unit costs of printing without a much larger S.C.O. membership. The limited feedback received suggested that recent issues were judged acceptable (or better) by our membership. If you too liked *Picoides*, show it to bird people who aren't currently S.C.O. members. We

need their support and input too.

I have been *Picoides* Editor for three years and, if re-appointed, I am prepared to continue as Editor for another 2 or 3 years (unless my eyes give out). With help of the Council and S.C.O. members, I expect to see *Picoides* become more important and useful to all of us. Please bear in mind that the job of *Picoides* Editor is neither full-time nor well-paid, and that someone else will have to take it over, sometime in this century. Any assistance with *Picoides*, now or in future, will help our Society to further ornithology in Canada.

A.J. Erskine  
(Editor, *Picoides*)

## (Interim) REPORT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

New SCO Councillors need to be elected to replace the following due to retire on 31 December 1996: Tony Diamond (New Brunswick), Mark Brigham (Saskatchewan), Alan Burger (B.C.), Gilles Chapdelaine and Raymond McNeil (Quebec). The Nominating Committee, chaired by Vice-President Tony Diamond, is preparing a slate of potential councillors, and will be distributing a postal ballot to members towards the end of November.

## REPORT OF BY-LAWS COMMITTEE

(i) *Terms of Officers and Councillors.* The By-Laws provide that ordinary Councillors can serve up to two consecutive terms of 2 years (each from the end of one Annual Meeting of the Council to the end of the second following Annual Meeting of Council). Officers may serve up to three consecutive terms in the same office, except that the President and Vice-President may not succeed themselves. Terms as an officer do not limit the number of terms that may be served as a Councillor or vice versa.

There is plenty of scope in the By-Law for continuity on the Council. An individual could remain on Council indefinitely by changing offices or by alternating between being Officer and Councillor. The problem of lack of continuity in the Council lies with the Nominating Committee, and not with the By-Law. Nominating Committees have ensured continuity in the positions of Membership Secretary, Treasurer, and Editor of *Picoides*, but have not sought commitments of more than 2 years among ordinary Councillors. Generally, a completely new slate of Councillors was nominated to replace those completing a first term. Longer commitments to the Society could be encouraged by inviting Councillors who performed

well to accept re-nomination.

(ii) *S.C.O. Constitution.* The Constitution consists of 3 By-Laws, No.1 relating to general affairs of the Society and the others relating to financial matters. Also extant is a document labelled "Working By-Laws" (last revised 1989) that was created because By-Law No.1 was so unclear on certain points that it was not useful as a guide for the Society's business. It is not stated whether that working document was formally approved and adopted by Council. Obscurities in By-Law No.1, not all clarified in the "Working By-Laws", relate to the number of Councillors, the election of Officers, and duties of Officers. Cleaning up By-Law No.1, so that it can stand alone (without need for supplementary interpretation), will be a major undertaking (only recently begun). We can continue to conduct business of S.C.O. satisfactorily if we agree to follow the procedures outlined in the "Working By-Laws" until formal amendment of By-Law no.1 is accomplished.

(condensed and slightly edited) David Hussell (chair)

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## S.C.O. Endowment Fund Policy

The "Working By-Laws" (mentioned above) include an "Endowment Policy" (last revised 1988). This needs clarification, to:

- (i) determine what proportions of the current investment capital belong to the Speirs, Taverner, and general accounts;
- (ii) spell out the objectives of the endowment and its constituent funds, and restrictions on their uses; and
- (iii) establish accounting procedures in accordance with the revised policy.

Of these, item (ii) will take the most time and discussion.

## Call for Nominations - DORIS HUESTIS SPEIRS AWARD

The Speirs Award is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding contributions to Canadian ornithology. If you wish to nominate someone, please contact:

Society of Canadian Ornithologists, Speirs Award, c/o Dr. D.N. Nettleship, Canadian Wildlife Service, DOE, Queen Square, 45 Alderney Dr., Dartmouth, N.S. B2Y 2N6 (see inside cover for phone, fax, and e-mail).

## Call for Applications - 1997 STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS

Applications are invited for two Taverner Awards (up to \$500 each) and one Baillie Award (\$1,000) for 1997.

Taverner Awards are offered by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists to honour Percy A. Taverner

and to further his accomplishments in increasing knowledge of Canadian birds through research, conservation and public education. The awards are aimed at people with limited or no access to major funding, regardless of professional status, who are undertaking ornithological work in Canada.

The James L. Baillie Student Research Award is open to any student conducting ornithological research at a Canadian university. It honours the memory of James L. Baillie and will support field research on Canadian birds. The James L. Baillie Student Research Award is funded by Long Point Bird Observatory from proceeds of the Baillie Birdathon, and is administered by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists.

A single application may be made for both awards, but only one award can be won by an applicant in a given year. Taverner Awards are given only once for the same project; Baillie Awards only once to the same person. However, past winners of either award may apply for the other. Funds are not awarded for stipends.

Application procedures have changed from those used in previous years. All applicants must use a standard application form, which may be obtained by contacting the chair of the committee. Completed applications must reach the following address before 15 January 1997:

Dr. M.R. Lein, Chair,  
S.C.O. Research Awards Committee,  
Dept. of Biological Sciences,  
University of Calgary,  
Calgary, Alberta T2N 1N4

Awards will be announced by 1 April 1997. For application materials or additional information, contact M.R. Lein: PH 403-220-6549; FX 403-289-9311; EM mrlein@acs.ucalgary.ca.

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CONSERVATION REPORT (some thoughts by the Editor on what might appear under this caption - when a committee and the needed information are assembled)

This first attempt could be restricted to defining scope for future reports, or summarizing the background (players, rules, past efforts). The bird-interested public probably has wildly inflated expectations of how much bird conservation governments and NGOs have achieved and can achieve, using recent resource levels. A whole book of valid excuses could be assembled to explain why things are as they are, in this field, but some brief introduction is unavoidable.

Bird conservation, in general, is a cause that most people favour, but it doesn't translate readily into jobs, dollars, or votes (=power). Birds are diverse, mobile, and sometimes startlingly adaptable. No one response of "birds", to any particular environmental insult, can be defined. Even closely related species often react differently. The vast majority of effort in bird conservation is assembling information on the birds involved and their likely responses to recent initiatives that alter some parts of the environment. Rigorous proof of any particular response may take years, as with the effects on birds of fenitrothion in forest-spraying. **We cannot afford to wait to prove each case, while more habitat is lost and new toxic substances are developed each month.**

Long familiarity in the field with bird species and communities gives bird scientists some confidence in predicting effects of some environmental changes. Qualified predictions relative to birds seldom translate directly into reversal of major economic initiatives. A bird conservation report inevitably dwells mainly on surveys of populations, survival and recruitment, and habitat use, and on building cooperative networks in support of the remedial actions suggested by our tentative conclusions on impacts. Assembling, sifting, and ranking the bird-related activities of federal and provincial governments, NGOs, universities, and individuals takes months or years, and summarizing them in a few pages may be impossible. The Canadian Wildlife Service provides coordination and secretariat services for efforts by many groups, as do Bird Studies Canada (B.S.C.)/Long Point Bird Observatory (L.P.B.O.) and the Canadian Nature Federation (C.N.F.), and many other agencies are also involved. Some attempts to summarize ongoing activities have been mentioned in recent issues of *Picoides*: Canadian Landbird Conservation Program (C.L.C.P.); Important Bird Areas program (I.B.A.); *Bird Trends*; wildlife research chairs in British

Columbia and the Atlantic Provinces; workshops on monitoring of landbirds; Breeding Bird Survey (B.B.S.); C.O.S.E.W.I.C. reports.

Bird conservation initiatives often are focussed on particular species-groups - waterfowl, seabirds, shorebirds, or landbirds. Some international actions involving Canada have been in place for decades, Migratory Birds Convention (with the U.S.A., 1916), Ramsar Convention on habitats for wetland birds (1971); others are more recent, including North American Waterfowl Management Plan (N.A.W.M.P., 1986) and Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (W.H.S.R.N., 1987). Many more local or regional initiatives are taking place under those "umbrella" agreements.

Some recently completed or now-operational activities listed by the C.W.S. landbird working group (E. Dunn, chair) included a computerized database for breeding bird census plots; tape-recordings of bird songs in each of 8 regions for use in B.B.S. and other songbird counting exercises; wider use, of Canadian bird-banding training manuals developed by L.P.B.O., under North American Banding Council (N.A.B.C.); completion of breeding bird atlases for Quebec (in French; English expected fall 1996) and Saskatchewan; draft Bird Conservation Strategy for Ontario; exploration of stable isotope analyses of bird feathers to track origins of bird populations. Many other research and monitoring projects are ongoing.

The C.W.S. waterfowl working group (K. Dickson reporting; see also *Bird Trends* no.5, fall 1996) highlighted the workshop on "Degradation of Habitat by Geese in Arctic and Subarctic Staging and Breeding Areas" in October 1995 (see *Picoides*, 8(2), pp.4-6), with findings of the working group to appear this fall; completion of a 5-year banding program to study White-fronted Goose distribution and survival (22,000 birds marked across arctic America), data now under analysis; start (in 1996) of a cooperative study of Atlantic Flyway Canada Geese, among which the Ungava-nesting geese have declined substantially; assembly (by the working group) of a multi-authored status report on Canada Geese across Canada, first drafts of many chapters now in hand; evolution (since 1985) of a comprehensive monitoring survey of breeding waterfowl, especially Black Ducks, across the eastern boreal shield and Atlantic highland ecozones; creation of an ad hoc working group to assess distribution and populations of arctic-nesting

iders, field work proposed to begin in 1997.

1996 activities of seabird researchers in Canada (summarized by A.J. Gaston) included renewed studies (under ACWERN and C.W.S.) of reproduction and demography at Gannet Islands, Labrador, for future comparisons with intensive work there 1981-84 (by Birkhead, Nettleship, and co-workers) and, for Razorbill and Atlantic Puffins, with work at Machias Seal Island (by C.W.S. and recently ACWERN). A study of disturbance to breeding seabirds at Witless Bay, Newfoundland, focussed on activities of tour-boats - to which Razorbill were more sensitive than murre or kittiwakes; other local disturbance arose from recreational boating (including "jet-skis"), a helicopter chartered by a TV company, and oil leakage

from a grounded fishing vessel. A re-survey of Atlantic Gannet breeding populations was completed. In the Arctic, the Coats Island Thick-billed Murre colony continued to expand, new colonists being mostly 4- to 6-year-olds. A reconnaissance of Prince Charles Island (Foxe Basin) confirmed its importance to breeding Sabine's Gulls, jaegers, and Red Phalaropes. West coast work focussed on Marbled Murrelets, with studies in several widely separated areas. Information is slowly building on this probably threatened species, of which the first known nest was found less than 20 years ago. Productivity and demography studies of several other species continued, with various universities, federal and provincial governments, and private groups involved.

## RECENT LITERATURE

### Book Reviews

(Opinions expressed are those of the reviewers, not the official viewpoints of the Society)

**Atlas of Saskatchewan birds.** Alan R. Smith. Saskatchewan Natural History Society, Spec. Publ. no.22 (no.4 in Manley Callin Series), 456 pp. 1996. (\$45.00 + p&p, from rm 206, 1860 Lorne St., Regina, Sask. S4P 2L7)

At first glance, this attractively produced volume seems to be another of the breeding bird atlases whose coverage has spread widely across Canada since 1987. Closer examination reveals that it is more than that, and also less. In addition to mapping breeding birds, it presents some data on distribution of species known only as migrants and winterers (and wanderers). It was based on published and unpublished records, mainly from 1966-89, with earlier records shown only where they expanded on recent coverage. Little field-work was undertaken explicitly for this publication, so the mapped distributions were appreciably influenced by where observers lived and spent their field time as much as by where each species is to be expected. This is a major compilation, and the author - who was also artist and computer-designer - deserves much credit for its completion.

The "front material" (24 pp) provides a concise summary of the biogeographic and historic-cultural environment within which Saskatchewan birds live, and explains how the bird data were presented in the species accounts which take up most (357 pp) of the volume. Appendices list details for rarities (spp. known from 25 or fewer records), Christmas Bird

Counts, Breeding Bird Surveys, scientific names of other biota mentioned, a gazetteer, 13 pp of references, and an index. Readers should have little difficulty in finding most expectable information, but the gazetteer may give some trouble. My one foray therein, to find "Big Muddy", left me puzzled, as one key citation, "73H", seemed to be a typo for "72H"; how many other typos are there?. I noted few typos in the text, where they are more easily detected (by proof-reader or reviewer).

The bird data are the core of this publication. Only one other Canadian bird atlas has attempted to map records for all seasons (Cyr & Larivée 1995), and some of the maps in this volume need study to sort out the seasonal patterns. Breeding records were mapped first, wherever available, so the picture for that season was as complete as the data allowed. The volunteered (unsystematic) coverage, even over 20+ years, left gaps, especially in the roadless northern hinterlands, but the resulting picture of breeding status seems as useful as those achieved in Alberta and Quebec, where "traditional" atlas coverage for breeding birds was attempted. The "peripheral screens" (to suggest status in adjoining provinces/territories/ states) are an innovation providing useful geographic perspective. Species texts described habitat use and summarized distribution by major habitat zones.

The winter records often were combined with breeding evidence, but migrating birds were mapped only in blocks having neither breeding nor winter records. Thus, patterns presented for the non-breeding seasons were often very incomplete. Modifying the wintering and migrant symbols to show both in one square might have allowed inclusion of a separate



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(perhaps smaller) map displaying all records for those seasons? Under the system used, mental gymnastics may be needed in visualizing any single-season picture for species with various symbols intermingled, and mapping the extra information separately might also have improved clarity in the breeding maps?

Migration data may not have been complete enough for many species to be usefully presented separately. Maps for species mainly breeding north of Saskatchewan and wintering south of the province, e.g. American Pipit, Harris's Sparrow, provided rather little obvious insight. The lack of migration records of forest species in prairie regions need not indicate migration around the treeless plains, as hypothesized in the text; most such species are night migrants, which may overfly such areas, descending only where

suitable habitat is found. To me, mapping the vagrants (30± pp) seemed poor use of space, as those records reflected mainly where most birding effort was spent, without improving predictive capacity.

I won't use space here to list the few slips in wording, typos, and other infelicities, including some in the usually pleasing drawings. Those were mostly minor details. On the broader stage, this will be a very useful book, in and beyond the province for which it was prepared. One hopes to see soon the British Columbia, Manitoba, and Newfoundland books (all in advanced stages of preparation) that will complete up-to-date distributional coverage across southern Canada.

A.J. Erskine

\* \* \* \* \*

**Birds of the Besnard Lake area, north-central Saskatchewan.** Jon M. Gerrard, Gary R. Bortolotti and Karen L. Weibe. Saskatchewan Natural History Society, Spec. Publ. no.20 (no.2 in Manley Callin Series), 97 pp. 1996. (\$14.00 + p&p, as above)

S.N.H.S. regional bird publications have been admired by other Canadians since 1959, when Houston and Street's *The birds of the Saskatchewan River, Carlton to Cumberland* was distributed at the A.O.U. meeting in Regina. This year's releases expanded the coverage to 11 areas. The Besnard Lake publication is the first one focussed in the boreal forest region that occupies half the area of that province, although two others touched its southern border. With my long interest in the boreal zone (e.g. *Birds in boreal Canada*, CWS Rep.Ser. 41, 1977), I was delighted to see this first step towards remedying the imbalance in published coverage of Saskatchewan's birds (other S.N.H.S. bird publications included 2 on the subarctic, 4 parkland/prairie transition, and 4 prairies).

This publication arose from long-term studies of

raptors, especially Bald Eagles and American Kestrels, with other birds noted opportunistically. The species list, after more than 25 years, seemed reasonably complete, but seasonal coverage was understandably limited (little outside late April to early September), with surprisingly few records of some species I expected to be more common. No attempt was made to compare the local avifauna with accounts from nearby boreal areas (e.g. Johnson, J.W. 1970. A bird list for Thompson, Manitoba. *Blue Jay* 28: 14-19; Erskine, A.J. 1968. Birds observed in north-central Alberta, summer 1964. *Blue Jay* 26: 24-31.) For such comparisons, we eagerly await the long-planned book on Saskatchewan birds towards which this series has been building for decades.

A.J. Erskine

Note Lists received of titles for our "In Press" section were judged too few to include in this issue. We hope to introduce an alternative listing focussing on publications judged (somehow!) as important to Canadian ornithology.

\* \* \* \* \*

Books that should be reviewed for future issues of *Picoides* (not yet assigned) include:

- A life with birds: Percy A. Taverner, Canadian ornithologist, 1875-1947. by John L. Cranmer-Byng. Special issue of *The Canadian Field-Naturalist*, 110(1): 1-254, 1996.

[A high priority, given Taverner's key role in development of ornithology in Canada.]

- Les oiseaux nicheurs du Québec. sous la direction de Jean Gauthier et Yves Aubry. 1295 pp. Montreal. 1995. (English translation expected November 1996.) [A major regional publication, as yet available only in French.]

- Atlas saisonnier des oiseaux du Québec, par André Cyr et Jacques Larivée. 711 pp. Sherbrooke. 1995. (Available only in French.)

[The first Canadian atlas presenting extensive year-

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round coverage, based on check-lists mainly from 1970-89.]

- Birds of the Elbow. by J. Frank Roy. Saskatchewan Natural History Society Spec. Publ. no.21. 325 pp. [The largest among S.N.H.S. regional bird publications, this summarizes over 50 years study of prairie birds in southwestern Saskatchewan.]

The Editor of *Picoides* (address inside front cover) has copies of all the above (except the second title) that can be made available to persons who do not have them already but are willing and able to review those books. If you know of other titles that would appropriately be reviewed in our bulletin, please notify the Editor (or, even better, indicate your intent to review them yourself).

\* \* \* \* \*

Dividing the workload of our bulletin Editor has been suggested:

- Having people in each region canvas for and send in material for *Picoides* sounds great, in principle. In practice, with many contact people one spends as much time hounding them for feedback as would be spent in direct solicitation; few individuals perform well (i.e. without prompting) in such roles. Admittedly, the return *to them* is little more than an intangible "good feeling" of responsibility accepted.
- Having an Assistant Editor organize book reviews and selection of recent literature for mention (replacing our erratic "In Press" coverage) is realistic as to effort needed, the added workload for those tasks exceeding what most volunteer editors-in-chief would accept. Only one such individual is needed, but that person should expect to serve for several years.

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## NEWS ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Nominations sought for Important Bird Areas (IBA) Program

The IBA program originated with BirdLife International (formerly ICBP), and is supported in Canada by Bird Studies Canada and Canadian Nature Federation. An IBA includes habitat essential to one or more species of birds, and is usually discrete and distinguishable in nature from surrounding areas. No minimum or maximum area is specified, but they should be large enough to supply most or all requirements of the species during the season(s) for

which they are important. Separate categories are recognized for sites with large numbers of birds, sites with scarce or endemic species, and sites with unique natural communities. The first Canadian newsletter appeared in summer 1996. Forms for site nomination, and other information, may be obtained from IBA Coordinator, c/o Canadian Nature Federation, 1 Nicholas St., Ottawa, Ont. K1N 7B7.

### Baillie Fund grants available for bird projects in 1997

Since 1976, the James L. Baillie Memorial Fund (JLBMF) for Bird Research and Preservation has awarded over \$280,000 to some 250 projects across Canada. All projects must be about Canadian birds, and must take place in Canada or in wintering or migration areas of Canadian birds. Priority is given to work by volunteers. Most supported projects involve research or education or contribute to preservation of Canadian birds. 1997 is the final year of "start-up" support for migration monitoring stations (bird observatories that monitor landbird numbers during migration). Grants average about \$1,000, usually for one year only. Support for graduate students is not a

priority for the Fund.

Application forms (required) and information are available from Secretary JLBMF, Bird Studies Canada/Long Point Bird Observatory, P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, Ont. N0E 1M0 (PH 519-586-3531; FX 519-586-3532; EM bsc@nornet.on.ca). **Completed applications must be received by 26 January 1996.**

Money to fund grants from the JLBMF is raised mostly by individuals participating in the annual Baillie BIRDATHON. For information on participation, contact the Birdathon coordinator (address, phone, fax, as above; e-mail brdathon@nornet.on.ca).

### Canadian Wildlife Service to celebrate 50 Years

Federal government involvement in wildlife work officially began soon after the Migratory Birds Convention was signed in 1916. Wildlife activities in the Northwest Territories and in the National Parks were added in 1935-45. In November 1947 these activities were assembled under the name Dominion Wildlife Service (amended to Canadian Wildlife Service in 1950). Various initiatives now underway,

including a history of the C.W.S., will come together in fall 1997 to mark the 50th anniversary of the "Wildlife Service" name in Canada. Birds were the first work of the unit that became C.W.S., and they still are important among the varied responsibilities of the present organization (which goes under several other names in different parts of this country.)



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## EDITOR'S MUSINGS

Preparing *Picoides* for publication twice a year, not always at six-month intervals, reminds me of ornithology in Canada. We, and "our" birds, live in a seasonal environment, but phenology differs from year to year. The greater contrast between summer and winter here is a major difference between bird study here and in the United States or the United Kingdom. We hear less speculation about birds having problems on Canadian wintering areas, because most birds don't stay here in winter. The ones that stay often have problems surviving. Margaret Atwood would understand. I do too. Canadian winters are an ordeal, unless you go out only by choice, and can insulate yourself from the outdoors the rest of the time.

Editors too sometimes want to insulate themselves from the publishing game, if (as with our bulletin) it isn't a full-time job. I try to restrict *Picoides* work to

two six-week periods each year, at other times plunging in mostly when I get an idea on which I might write a piece. The rest of the year I pile things into folders for use in the next work session. That approach is intended to enhance survival - of time in which I can work on other things.

You can't organize an annual meeting that way, as Tony Diamond knows and others will learn. That task is more like the breeding season for Canadian birds, something that has to be dealt with right away if it's to be done at all, usually calling for full-time effort. The Fredericton conference was a very good one, and not so elaborate that others need feel discouraged at the prospect of trying to emulate it.

A.J. Erskine

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We thank everyone who, by contributing in any way to the success of the Fredericton meeting and conference, provided material for this issue - which might otherwise have been very slim. Your material is

important! You'd rapidly get tired of our Bulletin if it contained only what your Editor generates himself.. Keep up the good work.

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

**(deadline for copy is 1 March 1997)**

"Call for Papers" for the Peterborough conference will be prominent therein, but we also need "meat" -

mostly in the form of feature articles or major new initiatives. A "Recent Canadian Literature" section will be included, if the effort to assemble material is forthcoming

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**Standing Committees and Work Groups**

	<u>voice:</u>	<u>fax:</u>	<u>e-mail:</u>
<b>Doris Huestis Speirs Award</b> (for contributions to Canadian Ornithology)			
David N. Nettleship (chair)	902-426-3274	902-426-4457	nettleshipd@ns.doe.ca
Tony Diamond	506-453-5006	506-453-3583	diamond@unb.ca
Spencer G. Sealy	204-474-9459	204-275-6352	sgsealy@ccm.umanitoba.ca

**Research Awards Committee**

(James L. Baillie & Taverner Research Awards)

Dr. M. Ross Lein (chair)	403-220-6549	403-289-9311	mrlein@acs.ucalgary.ca
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Mandate: annual selection of candidates for Baillie Award (1K\$) and Taverner Awards (two 0.5K\$).

Actions: (a) summer-fall call for applications, review, & announcement of awards 1 April each year; (b) membership appointment and maintenance of rotational committee structure.

**Publications Committee** (*Picoides* and journal)

Tony Diamond	506-453-5006	506-453-3583	diamond@unb.ca
Raymond McNeil	514-343-6878	514-343-2293	mcneilr@ere.umontreal.ca
David N. Nettleship (a/chair)		(contact as above)	
Henri Ouellet	819-595-4956	819-595-8725	henri.ouellet@sympatico.ca
Spencer G. Sealy	204-474-9459	204-275-6352	sgsealy@ccm.umanitoba.ca

Mandate: (a) editorial advisory board to Editor, *Picoides*; (b) assessment of SCO journal re conservation and biology of Canadian birds.

Actions: (a) on-going; (b) review results to executive council by 31 December 1996.

**Finance Committee**

David Hussell (Chair)	613-941-8376	613-952-9027	husselld@aesott.am.doe.ca
Tom E. Dickinson	604-828-5447	604-828-5450	tdickinson@cariboo.bc.ca

**By-Laws Committee**

David Hussell (Chair)	613-941-8376	613-952-9027	husselld@aesott.am.doe.ca
Henri Ouellet		(contact as above)	
David N. Nettleship		(contact as above)	

**Bird Studies Canada**

Andr� Cyr	819-821-7074	819-821-8049	acyr@courrier.usherb.ca
David N. Nettleship		(contact as above)	

**Canadian Landbird Conservation Program**

Henri Ouellet		(contact as above)	
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**North American Banding Council**

Jon McCracken	519-586-3531	519-586-3532	jmc@alpha.nornet.on.ca
Lucie M�tras	819-997-4213	819-953-6612	metrasl@nwrc.cws.doe.ca
(CWS coordinator)			

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## MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

If you would like to be a member of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, please send your name, address, phone number, and a cheque or money order (payable to S.C.O.) for \$10.00 to the Membership Secretary:

Dr. Nancy Flood, Dept. of Biological Sciences,  
University College of the Cariboo,  
900 McGill Rd. (Box 3010), Kamloops, B.C. V2C 5N3

Si vous désirez devenir membre de la Société des ornithologistes du Canada, faites parvenir vos coordonnées ainsi qu'un chèque ou mandat-poste (à S.O.C.) au montant de 10,00\$ à l'adresse ci-haut.

