

SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP – AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2013

by Lance Laviolette
Membership Secretary, SCO-SOC

This report gives the picture of SCO membership as of December 31, 2013. Following the recommendation by the Auditor, the Membership Report now follows SCO's fiscal year, January 1 - December 31. In this report, we will compare the situation between 31 December 2011 and 31 December 2013.

The membership levels at the end of 2013 dropped significantly from the previous year. The number of members was 255 with the biggest drop in the University category (Table 1). Table 6 further shows that this drop was among students.

The 255 paid up members includes 48 new members and members who rejoined the society after being previously archived.

Table 1. Affiliation of SCO paid members (Those working for Environment Canada/CWS and also in a University are listed as Environment Canada/CWS in Category 2)

Affiliation (Category)	Members Dec 2011	%	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%
None (0)	9	2.6%	6	1.7%	10	3.9%
University (1)	214	61.8%	216	63.0%	142	55.6%
Environment Canada/CWS (2)	38	11.0%	40	11.7%	29	11.4%
Other Fed. Gov. Agencies (3)	5	1.4%	3	0.9%	3	1.2%
Museum (4)	5	1.4%	6	1.7%	6	2.4%
Non Gov. Agencies (e.g. DU) (5)	21	6.1%	21	6.1%	14	5.5%
Prov. Gov. and Agencies (6)	14	4.0%	14	4.1%	11	4.3%
Clubs, Societies (7)	7	2.0%	8	2.3%	7	2.7%
Private Consultants (8)	25	7.2%	26	7.6%	27	10.6%
Libraries (9)	8	2.3%	3	0.9%	6	2.4%
TOTAL	346	100.0%	343	100.0%	255	100.0%

At the end of December 2013 there were 137 members who had not yet paid for 2014 (Table 2). The number of non-renewals always goes down in the first weeks of the year, after final notices are sent.

Table 2. Renewal Status of members

Paid through	Members Dec 2011	%	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%
2010	54	13.5%				
2011	108	27.0%	70	16.9%		
2012	160	40.0%	166	40.2%	137	35.2%
2013	36	9.0%	102	24.7%	133	34.1%
2014	11	2.8%	36	8.7%	66	17.0%
2015	5	1.3%	8	1.9%	16	4.1%
2016	1	0.3%	5	1.2%	9	2.3%
2017	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2018	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
2019	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	0.3%
LIFE	22	5.5%	24	5.8%	25	6.4%
Complimentary	3	0.8%	3	0.7%	1	0.3%
TOTAL	400	100.0%	414	100.0%	389	0.0%

In April 2013, the names of members who did not pay for 2012 were archived. The decrease in 2013 represents 25% of the paid 2012 membership. While there is an increasing trend that regular members have not renewed, 2013 marked a large jump in the number of students that didn't renew (Table 3).

Table 3. Number of names archived.

	Regular members	Sustaining members	Student members	Total archived
April 2007	24	1	13	38
March 2008	47	2	35	84
April 2009	13	2	12	27
April 2010	29	0	42	71
April 2011	20	0	19	39
April 2012	37	1	30	68
April 2013	45	1	83	129

Table 4 shows that 38.8% of the current members joined before 2005. Until 2013, the overall retention rate of the SCO-SOC was around 80%. In 2013 the retention rate dropped to 60.3% mainly due to the non-renewal of the majority of members who joined in the previous two years.

Table 4. Year when members joined

Year joined	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%	Retention %
founders	10	2.9%	10	3.9%	100%
1983-1994	50	14.6%	43	19.9%	86%
1995-1999	14	4.1%	12	4.7%	85.7%
2000-2004	40	11.7%	34	13.3%	85%
2005-2010	81	23.6%	52	20.4%	64.2%
2011-2012	143	41.7%	51	20.0%	35.7%
2013			48	18.8	N/A
Unknown/complimentary	5	1.4%	5	2.0%	100%
TOTAL	343	100.0%	255	100.0%	

The renewal pattern of members has remained fairly consistent with half of them preferring to renew every year (Table 5).

Table 5. Renewal pattern of members

Number of years paid	Members Dec 2011	%	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%
1	176	50.9%	175	51.0%	110	43.1%
2	95	27.5%	95	27.7%	71	27.8%
3	30	8.7%	28	8.2%	25	9.8%
4	14	4.0%	15	4.4%	17	6.7%
5	5	1.4%	5	1.5%	4	1.6%
8	1	0.3%	1	0.3%	1	0.4%
LIFE	22	6.4%	24	7.0%	24	9.4%
Complimentary	3	0.9%	0	0.0%	3	1.2%
TOTAL	346	100.0%	343	100.0%	255	100.0%

A breakdown of the membership by category is shown in Table 6. The number of Sustaining memberships is now 11 from a high of 18 in 2007. The SCO gives a charity receipt of \$25 for Sustaining memberships and of \$250 for Life membership. One person became Life members in 2013, bringing the number of Life members to 25. this table clearly shows that most of the drop in membership can be attributed to a drop in students joining the SCO-SOC in 2013.

Table 6. Breakdown of SCO membership by categories

Membership Category	Members Dec 2011	%	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%
Regular (\$25/year)	179	51.7%	164	47.8%	140	54.9%
Sustaining (\$50/year)	7	2.0%	9	2.6%	11	4.3%
Student (\$10/year)	132	38.2%	145	42.3%	76	29.8%
Free - Student Award	3	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	0%
Life (\$500)	22	6.4%	24	7.0%	25	9.8%
Complimentary	3	0.9%	0	0.0%	3	1.2%
TOTAL	346	100.0%	343	100.0%	255	100.0%

The geographical breakdown of SCO-SOC membership is shown in Table 7. With the addition of our first member from Nunavut, the SCO-SOC now has a member in every province and territory. Overall, the membership distribution across Canada has remained the same as last year. Membership abroad (most of these members are expat Canadians) has dropped substantially from that of recent years.

Table 7. Geographical breakdown of SCO membership

Geographical area	Members Dec 2011	%	Members Dec 2012	%	Members Dec 2013	%
Newfoundland	7	2.0%	6	1.7%	6	2.4%
Nova Scotia	19	5.5%	16	4.7%	6	2.4%
New Brunswick	24	6.9%	25	7.3%	8	3.1%
Prince Edward Island	3	0.9%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Québec	45	13.0%	42	12.2%	21	8.2%
Ontario	97	28.0%	99	28.9%	81	31.8%

Manitoba	13	3.8%	10	2.9%	7	2.7%
Saskatchewan	27	7.8%	27	7.9%	21	8.2%
Alberta	25	7.2%	34	9.9%	29	11.4%
British Columbia	53	15.3%	56	16.3%	53	20.8%
Yukon	2	0.6%	2	0.6%	3	1.2%
North West Territories	3	0.9%	3	0.9%	3	1.2%
Nunavut	0	0.0%	1	0.3%	0	0.0%
Unites States	19	5.5%	14	4.1%	10	3.9%
Mexico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Australia and New Zealand	3	0.9%	2	0.6%	2	0.8%
Europe	6	1.7%	5	1.5%	5	1.9%
TOTAL	346	100.0%	343	100.0%	255	100.0%

Most members and prospective members are now taking advantage of the online membership application that is available on the SCO-SOC webpage.

I want to emphasize that it is important to send any change of email address or other contact information to the Membership Secretary so that he can ensure that there is no interruption in the receipt of the various information, competition and meeting notices that are regularly provided to members.

I'd like to thank Dorothy Diamond, who is sending paper copies of *Picoides* to about a dozen members and libraries, *Picoides* Editors Rob Warnock, Marcel Gahbauer and Barbara Bleho, and Ryan Norris, Greg Robertson and Karen Wiebe for awards.

Lance Laviolette
SCO Membership Secretary/Secrétaire aux membres de la SOC
15 August 2014