Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Bulletin of The
Bulletin de la Société des Ornithologistes du Canada

PICOIDES

ISSN 0836-060X

Picoides, April, 1995
Volume 8, Number 1

Photo by Editor

Bank Swallow colony, near Avonport, Nova Scotia, 1957.
Does "the budget" give you the feeling your house is crumbling around you? Join the clan!

EDITOR'S MUSINGS

Canadian Landbird Conservation Strategy (C.L.C.S.) -> -> ->

Many S.C.O. members heard about the meeting in Delta, B.C., in October 1994 to discuss the C.L.C.S. (see report in this issue). Like me, most of you didn't attend. The people present established a working group to recommend a structure for co-ordinating activities implicit in such a strategy. The report of the working group (dated 30 November 1994) referred to regional working groups vs. ecologically defined groupings, representative membership, status reports on species and habitats, and links to existing conservation efforts. The suggestion was made to add "Partners in Flight Canada" to any name chosen, so as "to capitalize on the established profile of the US group".

Such initiatives probably are necessary, as well as democratic. But devoting much space in *Picoides* to reporting the glacially slow progress of what soon become bureaucratic processes may put readers of our bulletin to sleep. What I've written above is, I believe, about as much as many of you want to read on C.L.C.S. until it can report concrete results. To make such a account interesting, it must be based on lots of hard data, as was the *Ibis* (136: 362-367, 1994) report on the 1994 bird conservation conference of the British Ornithologists Union and collaborating societies (proceedings already available as a special issue of that journal), of which the summary is very pertinent for C.L.C.S.. I'm uneasy that use of a "Partners in Flight" label, even with "Canada" attached, would imply much closer parallels between bird conservation initiatives in Canada and the U.S.A. than are likely to emerge, given the divergent ecological and political frameworks within which they must operate in those countries. Unlike the situation in the U.K., much information needed for bird conservation in Canada is still unknown or barely guessed at. Major efforts are needed in collecting new data and in assembling and studying data already in files across the country, before we can convince politicians and bureaucrats that we know what the problems are and how they should be addressed. The recommendation "More data are needed and should be collected." looks like a "cop-out" here, as in many other situations. But convincing people requires that we can say confidently, "This is how things are." rather than waffling: "Existing data suggest to us that things may be this way, but...". How much do we really know of what drives bird survival systems in Canada?

Editor

Published by:

The Society of Canadian Ornithologists.
c/o Canadian Wildlife Service, Atlantic Region,
P.O. Box 1590, Sackville, New Brunswick E0A 3C0

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:

Dr. Tom Dickinson, Dept. of Biological Sciences,
University College of the Cariboo, 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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The activities of the Society are progressing steadily even while most people involved in the Society's affairs have numerous other responsibilities. This is reassuring, because the continued existence of an organization like the S.C.O. depends on the determination and commitment of volunteers who contribute their time, efforts and expertise. Thanks to all those who participate in the activities of the S.C.O. and contribute to its administrative functions. I take this opportunity to emphasize the efforts of Tony Erskine in producing high-quality issues of *Picoides* on a regular schedule.

As announced in the previous issue, Ricky Dunn has prepared a short report on the "Canadian Landbird Conservation Strategy" [see below]. The participation of S.C.O. in this plan has yet to be defined. Any comments and suggestions, for initiating discussion on S.C.O.'s involvement in C.L.C.S. when it becomes operative, would be useful. Please forward them to me before the end of June. The S.C.O.'s participation will reflect what the membership says it wants, so make Council aware of your wishes as to level and type of involvement. This applies as well to the other matters mentioned in this "message".

The committee on awards, chaired by Bill Montevecchi, received 19 high-quality applications for the 1995 Taverner and Baillie awards. Official announcement of the awards will be made at the annual meeting, after their approval by Council. Likewise Spencer Sealy and his committee will recommend to Council a recipient for the Doris Speirs Award, also to be presented at the annual meeting.

On behalf of the S.C.O., I have indicated our interest in the proposal, by the Long Point Bird Observatory, for a "Canadian Centre for the Study and Preservation of Birds". Information on this proposal will appear in *Picoides* when available.

Concerning the possibility of a future Canadian journal of ornithology, consultation with several members of the Society and other ornithologists in Canada and abroad suggests a definite need for such a publication. However, there are major problems before such a periodical can be launched. The most serious difficulty appears to be the financing of such an undertaking, which seems unlikely to be obtained in the near future. This may appear to be a setback for the initiative, but it gives S.C.O. the time neecessary for preparation of a substantive funding proposal. Many issues will have to be given consideration before decisions are taken and before funding is solicited. For example,

librarians have advised me to consider electronic publication instead of the traditional (paper) journals which have been parts of our daily life! The kind of journal we want has still to be determined. How different should it be from the current ornithological, biological, or natural history journals published in Canada and the United States, and what place should it occupy among avian biology journals? To what audience should it be directed? What topics should it consider? What should be its format and title? These questions and others will have to be addressed shortly, and your input is needed to assist the publication committee (Tony Diamond, Raymond McNeil, David Nettleship, Henri Ouellet).

The document describing the S.C.O,'s activities is still in preparation, but it should be available shortly, to promote membership in the Society.

Election of a Vice-President (President-Elect) and five Councillors will take place during the next few weeks, and the results will be approved at the meeting of Council during the annual meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: The annual meeting of S.C.O. will take place during the A.O.U. meeting in Cincinatti, Ohio, in the week of 13-20 August. Our Council meeting will probably be on Wednesday, 16 August, and the general S.C.O. meeting on 18 or 19 August. The A.O.U. programme (circulated in late March) gave no dates, times, and locations for our meetings, which will take place somehow, somewhere. If you have topics for discussion, please send me a brief description before the end of June so that your suggestions may be placed on the agenda. I invite you to attend the annual meeting, and I look forward to seeing you there.

Henri Ouellet

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REPORTS FROM 1994 WINNER OF S.C.O. STUDENT AWARDS

(all somewhat shortened from submitted versions. Ed.)

BAILLIE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD:

"Evolutionary divergence of North American Rock Ptarmigan". Karen Holder, Queen's University.

Elliot in 1896 was perplexed by the distribution of the many different Rock Ptarmigan subspecies. Until recently, no one had the tools with which to tackle this evolutionary puzzle. In my doctoral studies, I hope to shed light on this problem through use of new techniques evolved during the recent revolutions in evolutionary genetics and systematics.

During the most recent major glaciation, most of arctic and temperate North America was under ice except for a few refugia. "Beringia", the largest refugium for flora and fauna, extended from Yukon into Siberia. From there, many species recolonized the Nearctic after the ice receded <10,000 years ago. I am exploring the hypothesis that arctic bird species also survived and diverged in other, smaller northern refugia, by combining studies of molecular evolution, geographic variation in morphology,

and current distribution of North American Rock Ptarmigan. DNA amplification and sequencing allow me to determine the sequence of genetic markers. Comparing the number of changes in sequence within and among members of different populations or subspecies provides a measure of the degree to which they have diverged, and an estimate of the time since they shared a common ancestor. This evolutionary history will show whether the common ancestor of North American Rock Ptarmigan subspecies is older than the glaciation (>100,000 years), and whether subsequent subspeciation events are consistent with patterns expected from isolation and divergence in different refugia. Alternatively, the subspecies we see today must have diverged in the <10,000 years since the ice receded.

I will also determine if morphological variation is concordant with the genetic patterns. Blood and feather samples from individuals of most subspecies in North America (including Greenland) allowed me to begin work on the "control region", a rapidly evolving part of the mitochondrial DNA. Preliminary results show 14 variable sites in the first half of the sequence, most of which are population-specific. Thus, the variation is geographically structured and phylogenetically informative.

On a more restricted geographic range, the Aleutian archipelago comprises only a small part of the ptarmigan range but supports 8 of the 14 North American subspecies, many occurring on only one or a few islands. Morphological divergence since the glaciers receded from the islands has been rapid and considerable, and is related to their geographic isolation. By plumage, the westernmost population, on Attu, is closer to Siberian and Japanese birds than to other Aleutian populations, and preliminary genetic results also suggest that it is distinct from the latter, some of which are indistinguishable from mainland Alaskan birds. Further study of these populations may help to show whether the Aleutian islands functioned as a bridge between Asia and North America.

I am grateful for funding for my research from the James L. Baillie Student Research Award of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, the Jennifer Robinson Memorial Scholarship, a Frank M. Chapman Memorial Award, a Northern Scientific Training Grant, and a Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Postgraduate Fellowship.

TAVERNER AWARDS

"Determinants of extra-pair paternity in Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolor*)". Colleen A. Barbour, Queen's University.

The discovery of high rates of extra-pair paternity (EPP) in apparently monogamous species raises many questions about interpretations of mate-choice, parental care, and evolution of mating systems. The central goal of my research is to identify the determinants of EPP in the Tree Swallow, a socially monogamous species. Past work has shown EPP levels in this species of 50-87%, with extra-pair males fathering 38-53% of all young.

One objective is to determine why the level of EPP varies so greatly among broods and among years, by identifying the net benefits of extra-pair copulations (EPCs) in this species. Female Tree Swallows control the extent of EPCs through solicitation and rejection of extra-pair partners. There appears to be no cost to females for engaging in EPCs, as males usually provide half the nestling feedings, and cuckolded males do not feed less than non-cuckolded males. The most likely benefit is that a female's fitness is in-

creased, through her offspring, by mating with males of which "superior" genes give the offspring increased viability and/or make them more attractive to the opposite sex. If correct, this hypothesis predicts that females mated to superior males will be monogamous, whereas those mated to inferior males will engage in EPCs with superior males. Broods should either have no extra-pair young or consist mainly or entirely of EPY.

Other objectives include determining (a) the effects of removing early-settling males on the extent of EPP in broods; (b) the identity of males gaining EPP; (c) EPP frequencies in natural cavities relative to those in nest boxes; (d) the distribution of EPP with respect to laying order to determine when EPCs occur in the breeding cycle. Predictions that I am testing include: males and females with one or a combination of the following morphological features should be of superior quality: greater mass, symmetry, age, iridescence, and lower parasite loads. Males with these features, or with greater song rates or feather-collecting abilities, should have little or no EPP in their nests, and also should father more young in other nests. A replacement male should have a higher proportion of EPP in his nest than an original early-arriving male. So far, I have established that EPP does not differ significantly between natural cavity and nest-box populations of Tree Swallows: high EPP frequency is not an artifact of the nest-boxes.

I am very grateful for the funding I received through the Taverner Award of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists. This was used towards the costs of DNA fingerprinting in the Queen's University Molecular Ecology Lab, under supervision of Dr. Peter Boag. The field study was conducted at the Queen's University Biological Station at Chaffeys Locks, under supervision of Dr. Raleigh Robertson. Other support was received from the North American Bluebird Society, the Animal Behavior Society, the American Museum of Natural History (Chapman Memorial Fund), and Sigma Xi, as well as through an NSERC grant to Dr. Robertson.

"Mixed mating strategies in female Black-capped Chickadees, *Parus atricapillus*". Ken Otter, Queen's University.

In monogamous songbird species, sexual selection was traditionally thought to function through initial mate-attraction: higher-quality males occupied the best territories and were better able to attract a breeding partner. Trivers suggested that breeding males may gain by also attempting to father young in nests of females mated to other males, a mixed mating strategy. Trivers assumed that females did not seek extra-pair copulations (EPCs) lest their mates subsequently desert, leaving them unable to rear the (mixed-paternity) brood. Smith recently showed that in Black-capped Chickadees females actively seek out EPCs in the territories of other males of higher social rank than the female's own mate, thus suggesting effort in search for "better genes". My colleagues and I, using DNA "fingerprinting" and social ranking from winter flocks, have confirmed EPP by higher-ranking males in our study population.

My research addresses what attributes of males females are using to make selections. Dominance hierarchies of flocks at winter feeders may be a good measure of the quality of one male relative to others, but once winter flocks have disbanded females cannot use this approach and may use phenotypic cues such as plumage variation or singing behaviour. One such signal possibly indicating male quality is song production, if the length of time a male can sing and the rates at which it sings reflect its energy reserves. I recorded dawn choruses of 18 males in spring 1994, and found that higher-ranking males sang longer at dawn, began their chorus earlier in the morning, and sang

at higher maximum song-rates than did subordinate flockmates. By monitoring the singing of neighbouring males during the breeding season, females could discern the quality and availability of males for EPCs.

Showing that males involved in EPCs are of higher rank is only the first step. I am also attempting to establish whether females actively choose between males based on their relative dominance ranks, competing for high-ranking males during initial mate choice. By temporarily removing the mates of selected males this spring, I will see whether remaining females preferentially seek out higher- rather than lower-ranked neighbouring "widowers". Such patterns would suggest that females continuously monitor the mating status of nearby males, assessing the potential to acquire copulations from high-ranking individuals. In addition, I will allow aviary-housed females to select between dominant and subordinate males to aid in understanding mate-choice selection.

I greatly appreciate the research funding I received through a Taverner Award from the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, which helped fund the DNA fingerprinting used to establish paternity of nestlings. My work is also funded through an NSERC operating grant to Dr. Laurene Ratcliffe, and field research is conducted at the Queen's University Biological Station.

CANADIAN LANDBIRD CONSERVATION STRATEGY (CLCS)

The C.L.C.S. is a working document written and revised over the past several years by the Canadian Wildlife Service (C.W.S) and the Canadian Nature Federation. Its aim is to develop a framework for landbird conservation that gets all interested parties focused on the key problems, communicates, and coordinates activities to produce the best results.

There was a meeting in Delta, B.C., on 21 October 1994, to try to move things beyond proposal stage. A wide variety of groups was represented, including C.W.S. and provincial government agencies, resource industries and NGOs. An interim working group was appointed to make recommendations on how a national body should be structured and what its role should be. There was consensus that the same mix of groups as at the meeting should continue to take part; the national body should serve a communication/policy/coordination role rather than advocacy; there should be regional and technical working groups (e.g. research, monitoring); the focus could eventually evolve beyond landbirds; and implementation of conservation should mostly take place at regional and local levels.

The interim working group report (to be finalized in March 1995) recommended: 5 regional working groups; national support for same (e.g. common data banks for habitat and population information); links with the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, Canadian Biodiversity Convention, and Partners in Flight; a communication function (e.g. produce a national report); development of national conservation priorities; and a role in ensuring complete coverage of the country by conservation programs. Regional groups will define their own structure, designating a lead agency (C.W.S. will often be the choice). A name has not been chosen, but one suggestion is 'Canadian Bird Conservation Program (Partners in Flight Canada)'.

What is S.C.O.'s role in this? The interim working group suggested S.C.O. as a possible representative of academics on the national body. However, S.C.O. might have very little to contribute at that level, and might prefer to be involved in regional or technical committees (e.g. a research working group), where all the real action will take place. S.C.O. Council should begin considering whether and how S.C.O. might be involved as an organization.

Ricky Dunn

CONSERVATION MISTAKES REPEATED

Joy and Cam Finlay called to my attention an article in the *Canadian Field-Naturalist* (39: 165-166, 1925; excerpted below) written by William Welsh, a Bruce County pioneer then aged over 80 years and living in Kincardine, Ontario.

"In the month of May, in the year 1854, we were landed... on the shore of Lake Huron... near Pine River... north of Point Clark. ...As the day wore on, the [Passenger] pigeons surprised us, they came in such large numbers. ...A person who has not seen these flocks of pigeons cannot comprehend the enormous numbers flying overhead and continuing for days. They were often so low that guns, stones and sticks were used to knock them down; pigeon soup or pigeon pie was often part of the frugal fare of the settlers. These birds always flew in flocks of hundreds or thousands and to even count the flocks visible at one time was impossible. Standing on the lakeshore, I have seen the flocks at times following one another so closely that at least one-third of the space (sky?) seemed filled with pigeons, and this would continue for days. In later years, as the clearings were enlarged, I have seen a flock of hundreds light in a wheat field, with the result that the crop was soon a dead loss. They were, however, easily frightened away. Often the birds would perch in trees in such numbers as to break strong limbs with their weight. There was no care taken in preserving this quiet, harmless innocent bird; the white man was even worse than the Indian in destroying it. While the Indian looked to its food value, the white man thought often only of the sport of killing. What calamity caused the disappearance of such myriads of birds is not known, but the Passenger Pigeon is now extinct. Whether they were destroyed by disease or whether extensive snowfalls or cold weather overwhelmed them is not certain. Hawks... and owls must have had good hunting... Other animals... also aided in the destruction of the birds. ...The chicks grew very quickly and in a few weeks were nearly as heavy as the parents. The young were then looked upon as dainties by epicures, and to supply this demand many were taken from the nests. The pigeons built in communities and the extent of a pigeonry might be over a hundred square miles. There was one convenient to our farms, only about six miles away, and this was said to extend eleven miles in one direction and thirteen in another. I did not see any trees with more than twenty-four nests and there were others with perhaps twelve and some with not more than three or four... We are not ever likely to see again such sights as the Passenger Pigeon has afforded us."

Accounts of the primaeval profusion of natural things in North America seem unbelievable nowadays. One might assume exaggeration in any one account, but so many accounts, of so many forms of life, in so many areas (see for example The Eyes of Discovery, (Bakeless, J. 1950, J.B. Lippincott, New York. [Dover reprint 1961]) a book summarizing such reports), leave the unavoidable impression that the early explorers and settlers described accurately what they saw. This author's failure to make the connection between massive killings and the disappearance of the pigeons seems unfortunately typical of people who exploit natural resources, whether for food, sport, or profit. Cam Finlay noted that the western fur traders of the late 1700s "clear-cut" the fur-bearers and big game from an area within 3-5 years before moving on to a new region, and they too couldn't understand why the animals disappeared so fast. 200 years later we are seeing the same pattern, and hearing the same comments, with reference to fish stocks on both of Canada's coasts, and to forest resources across our boreal regions. Even without direct exploitation, one may wonder if birds have a future?

Editor

MANITOBA'S NOCTURNAL OWL SURVEY: THE FIRST FOUR YEARS

In early April 1991, with support of the Manitoba Department of Natural Resources, we organized the province's first extensive owl survey. The objectives were to determine relative owl species abundance and distribution, habitat associations, numerical changes between years, and, most importantly, to provide an organized opportunity for volunteers to contribute to understanding of owl ecology. Participation and coverage have expanded from the southeast to include a large part of south and central Manitoba (Table 1). A total of 117 volunteers have been involved, and 1995 participation is expected to exceed that in previous years.

Table 1.
Manitoba Owl Survey
Participation and Coverage.

Year	No. Routes	No. Km covered	No. Volunteers
1991	23	623	45
1992	27	757	56
1993	37	770	78
1994	41	832	104

Some trends are apparent from the first three years (1994 data not yet analysed). Great Gray Owls and Long-eared Owls declined (No. detected/km surveyed), corresponding to a decline in availability of their main prey species in two areas where prey populations are monitored annually. Boreal, Saw-whet, Great Horned, and Barred owls all increased, by the same index, from 1992 to 1993. The data and the duration of surveys are limited, but we see this as a good beginning towards monitoring this little-studied group. By comparisons with nest monitoring, we hope to evaluate how well these methods reflect breeding population changes for Great Gray Owls. Our efforts have stimulated similar owl surveys in northwestern Ontario and Saskatchewan. Funding for this project was received from the James L. Baillie Memorial Fund, Nature Saskatchewan Membership Initiatives Fund, University of Manitoba Alumni Fund and Manitoba Department of Natural Resources. For more information, contact

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S.C.O. COLUMN: ANNUAL MEETINGS, PAST AND FUTURE

Since the Society of Canadian Ornithologists was formally proposed, at the Edmonton A.O.U. meeting in 1981, it has met annually, but only three of the 13 subsequent meetings were in Canada. This is anomalous for a society of which one main purpose was to provide a Canadian focus for ornithologists. Most S.C.O. meetings took place during A.O.U. conferences, the largest annual bird meetings in the Americas. The A.O.U. has a good record of arranging to hold meetings in Canada, at least once each decade since the first in 1926, though these meetings are now so large that few Canadian centres can host them. Canadian attendance at A.O.U. meetings since S.C.O. began may be summarized thus:

- Total Canadian attendance (including spouses) was under 60 except at the two meetings held in Canada (1981 & 1991);
- At least 29 persons from Ontario registered at each meeting except in 1986 (Mississippi, August), 1988 (Arkansas, August), and 1992 (Iowa, June), each with 15 or fewer;
- Other provinces had <10 persons registered except at meetings in the same or adjoining provinces (1981 - Alta., B.C., Sask.; 1991 - Que.).
- Some Canadians who attended these conferences were not S.C.O. members, and probably not all members present attended the S.C.O. meetings there.

A.O.U. meetings in the southern half of the U.S.A. attracted only the 15+ Canadians, mostly from Ontario, who go to nearly all A.O.U. meetings; it seems inappropriate to schedule S.C.O. meetings at such sites. The same applies to many A.O.U. meetings in the next "tier" of states; some location/season combinations have considerable appeal, others (perhaps including Cincinatti in August?) offer little to attract Canadians. I suggest that few U.S. locations south of New York City, St. Louis, and Portland, Ore., would draw as many Canadians as would attend meetings of S.C.O. held with another group within Canada.

Other bird groups meet less often in Canada, e.g. the Cooper society only once (Vancouver 1964), the Wilson society three times (1961, 1981, 1993). The 1981 W.O.S. meeting in Sackville, N.B. (pre-S.C.O.) included 44 Canadians from 7 provinces, and the 1993 W.O.S./S.C.O. conference in Guelph had 73 Canadians from 7 provinces, of whom 65 were from Ontario. The 1986 I.O.C. registrations at Ottawa included 263 with Canadian addresses, these numbering less than half of the 559 Canadian Ornithologists in the 1994 Directory.

Conflict with field seasons likely deterred some from attending the I.O.C. in June, and the costs of registration plus travel, lodging and meals deterred most amateurs and others from distant areas. Attendance at the other Canadian conferences also may give a distorted idea of how many might attend S.C.O. meetings held in Canada with other groups. The Edmonton number was perhaps inflated because that was the first A.O.U. meeting in Alberta (3rd in western Canada), and the Montreal conference was in a very large urban centre - but Ontario delegates there outnumbered those from Quebec. The number in Guelph may be our best estimate of how many to expect in central Canada, as few Canadians regularly attend W.O.S. meetings. A S.C.O. meeting in the Atlantic Provinces, unless pushed as a special birding experience, might attract fewer than 30 Canadians. The major centres in the western provinces should do better if well-organized, but successful conferences don't happen of themselves.

The program and associated discussions are what attract most professional ornithologists to a conference, with birding

trips usually seen as "add-ons" rather than primary attractions. The S.C.O. annual general meetings bring in few besides members of the Council. If we want to hold some of our meetings at scientific conferences in Canada, we must

(i) set dates and places, which calls for a local organizer; and

(ii) appoint, and publicize the appointment of, a program chair;

far enough ahead that a worthwhile program can be developed and, in outline, advertised in the final meeting announcement. We need both invited presentations, not necessarily all linked as a symposium, and contributed papers, and we should include one session of papers selected to be understandable by amateurs and on subjects amateurs can relate to. None of this will happen spontaneously, any more than reports arrive at an A.G.M. without prompting. People have to accept the tasks of organizing a conference and arranging a program, starting at least 6-8 months ahead. Unless S.C.O. undertakes seriously to attract Canadian ornithologists to its meetings, rather than relying on our members coming to events organized by another society, we can expect our annual meetings to be poorly attended, and less than memorable.

However, discussions around the time S.C.O. was established reached general agreement that our society should not be trying to perform functions already handled adequately by other groups. There is no obvious shortage of scientific bird conferences in North America, though few are held in Canada, and efforts to organize our own may be re-inventing the wheel. Business meetings during outside conferences, as in the past, are not an appealing alternative, but have we a better one? One possibility is the challenge issued to S.C.O. by the past-president of the Vancouver Natural History Society (*Picoides* 6(2): 5, 1993): "academia... all seem [to be] beavering away at increasing knowledge... but they don't come and share it with other naturalists, alert us to trends, show how we can help...". Instead of talking mainly to each other at our annual meetings, should we instead focus on informing the public on selected issues? Preparing suitable summaries and organizing - and advertising - a venue for them would be as much work as for a conventional conference, but we would be less likely thus to duplicate the efforts of other groups. Any such gathering could include our business meeting, as well as opportunities for mutual chit-chat, back-scratching or whatever.

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IN PRESS

Current and "In Press" Articles in Canadian Ornithology

BROCK UNIVERSITY

Brown, K.M., Morris, R.D. From tragedy to triumph: renesting in Ring-billed Gulls. Auk, in press.

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CANADIAN WILDLIFE SERVICE, ONTARIO REGION – BURLINGTON

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Johnson, S.R., Schieck, J.O., Searing, G.F. Neck band loss rates for Lesser Snow Geese. J. Wildl. Manage., in press.

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UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO/ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

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NEWS ITEMS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Ornithological Society of Pakistan (OSP)

I received a brochure and enquiry from OSP, a recently formed (1993) group in a country with several times Canada's human population, with needs for almost any kind of assistance anyone could afford to send. I told them that postal charges would be limiting, but I sent them a fat bundle of publications. Their current address is OSP, 109/D, P.O. Box 73, Dera Ghazi Khan 32200, PAKISTAN. Editor

Another International Contact

Michael Spencer forwarded a circular letter from the President of the Bombay Natural History Society (founded 1883). They are seeking contacts in other countries, for mutual benefit, a sort of informal external BNHS chapter. For example, the BNHS can arrange study trips for groups of naturalists from other countries; they are interested in communication on research; and of course they are seeking donations for any field of nature conservation. Address: Hornbill House, Dr. Salim Ali Chowk, Shaheed Bhagat Singh Rd, Bombay 400 023, INDIA.

Presqu'ile Provincial Park (Ontario) declared "lead-free" zone

Agreement between Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment Canada led to designation of Presqu'ile Park as a non-toxic shot zone starting in the 1995 waterfowl hunting season. The area is one of Ontario's oldest provincial parks, designated as of special conservation interest under several programs. The build-up of lead (shot and sinkers) in the environment had resulted in deaths among loons, eagles, and other birds directly or indirectly ingesting lead while feeding in the park area. Lead poisoning as a threat to birds in Ontario was recently dramatized by deaths of two Trumpeter Swans at Wye Marsh, another area where use of lead shot has now been banned.

condensed from a release
sent by Donald A. Davis

British Columbia Birds has a new editor

After three years at the helm (1991-93), the first Editor of *British Columbia Birds*, Wayne C. Weber, stepped down, his new position cutting into the time he'd earlier devoted to the journal. Ornithologists with research findings or other observations of regional significance are invited to submit MSS to the new Editor, Martin K. McNicholl, at 4735 Canada Way, Burnaby, B.C. V5G 1L3. Review copies of books on birds in B.C. and surrounding areas are also welcome. Although currently behind schedule, the journal is expected to appear on time by the end of 1995.

from release by new Editor BCB

Two recent publications from the north

Attention was recently called to the following

- The Birds of Great Slave Lake (1994), by Jacques Sirois. $3.00 from Ecology North, 4807 49th St., Yellowknife, N.W.T. X1A 3T5; (subtitled "A miniguide to a megalake").

- The Birds of the Northwest Territories (1994), by Jacques Sirois & Doug McRae. Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service. (updating & expanding on a 1978 check-list).

Editor

Canadian Wildlife Service songbirds activities

An annual, several-page summary is prepared in fall on the songbird-related activities of CWS personnel across the country. If anyone wishes to receive this summary regularly, please contact

Erica H. Dunn, CWS,
100 Gamelin Blvd.,
Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3.

Broad-scale bird population monitoring: news update

In the past year or two there have been some important developments in the field of population monitoring. Several studies have shown that population trends based on Breeding Bird Survey data agree quite well with trends from migration counts, checklist programs and Christmas Bird Counts. Although there is often disagreement among program results on individual species, the evidence is good that even quite unstandardized broad-scale counts have the ability to detect important trends. Scientific evaluation of other monitoring programs is planned or underway (e.g. MAPS, the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survival program; and the Forest Bird Monitoring Program, which is based on point counts).

As awareness of the monitoring value of geographically-broad projects has increased, some project organizers have tightened standards in order to make their data better still. For example, a Migration Monitoring Council is currently producing guidelines for migration counts.

Manuals are available for many monitoring protocols (see below) and training sessions for field workers are available each year in various parts of North America. Field workers who census birds should take advantage of these training opportunities, and consider using field protocols that can contribute as well to regional and national programs. Anyone desiring further information is welcome to contact Erica H. Dunn, CWS, 100 Gamelin Blvd., Hull, Quebec K1A 0H3.

N.B.: Guidelines or manuals are available for the following (and others): Monitoring in general, point counts (in general, as well as specialized programs for forest, grassland and marsh birds), migration monitoring (songbirds or raptors), MAPS, BBIRD (a nest-monitoring program), owl censusing, mist-netting and banding, and Breeding Bird Census (area census).

Ricky Dunn

Bird Trends: Survey results for everyone

Volunteers who take part in a bird survey usually receive some kind of report on the activity itself or on the data resulting from it. Sometimes the reports include a summary covering the accumulation of data since the survey began. A review of what has been learned from those data, combined with those from other surveys covering the same group of birds, should be both more interesting and more useful. This is the objective of a new series of reports to the public by the Canadian Wildlife Service. The first issue of *Bird Trends* appeared in 1991, and the series now includes the following:

No. 1, 1991; stating the purpose of the series, and reviewing surveys that monitor numbers of songbirds; surveys of a few other groups were mentioned briefly;

No.2, 1992; reviewing seabird survey results;

No.3, 1993-94; reviewing shorebird survey results, with mention of Canada's expanding network of bird observatories;

No.4, 1994-95; reviewing raptor status and survey results, with a note on wildlife health centres.

Coverage in the different issues varies in amount of detail, as the series is still evolving. If you haven't seen or heard of the series, this may be one of the sources you've been seeking for years. All of these are available, free of charge, from the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment Canada, Ottawa K1A 0H3.

1998 INTERNATIONAL ORNITHOLOGICAL CONGRESS XXII (I.O.C.)

The XXII I.O.C. will be held in Durban, South Africa, 16-22 August 1998. The following officers were elected:

Honorary President, Tso-Hsin Cheng;
President, Professor Peter Berthold;
Vice-President, Dr. Janet Kear;
Secretary, Professor Walter Bock.

Dr. Aldo Berutti, Dept. of Ornithology, Durban Natural Science Museum, was appointed Secretary-General for this Congress.

The Scientific Program Committee (SPC) is chaired by Dr. Lukas Jenni, Swiss Ornithological Institute, CH-6204 Sempach, Switzerland (fax +41-41-99 40 07; after 4 Nov./95 this becomes +41-41-460 40 07), and includes C.J. Bibby, U.K.; C.J. Brown, Namibia; A. Chandola-Saklani, India; T.M. Crowe, So.Africa; D.G. Homberger, U.S.A.; A.P. Moller, Denmark; A.J. van Noordwijk, Netherlands; Y. Ntiamoa-Baidu, Ghana; V.A. Payevsky, Russia; F. Spina, Italy; L.G. Underhill, So.Africa; J.C. Wingfield, U.S.A., plus the President, Secretary-General, and the Secretary. This committee will meet in Durban in early October 1995 to plan the scientific program including plenary speakers, symposia and their convenors. Please send suggestions for the program to Lukas Jenni ASAP. If you wish to propose a symposium, send the following to Lukas Jenni ASAP (deadline 31 Aug./95): title, two convenors (you can propose yourself), a statement (<1 page) outlining the subject area to be covered, possible speakers (max. 5) with titles or topics for their talks. Symposia are intended for the general ornithologist, not solely for specialists; speakers should review recent developments and integrate ideas and findings rather than focussing on a narrowly specialized study. Convenors should seek an international range of speakers and broad coverage of the subject. Symposium proposals for

recent congresses greatly exceeded the time available, so a clear proposal will assist the committee in selecting those to be included. Persons agreeing to organize or speak in a symposium are committed to attend the Congress. A person may contribute as first author only one talk in a symposium. [Note: It isn't clear if this excludes being first author for single talks in two different symposia?] Round-table discussions (RTDs) are for discussion between specialists and are not to be used for a formal series of presented talks. Applications for RTDs will be requested later, in the general Congress brochure. Questions about the scientific program may be directed to the officers or members of the SPC.

condensed from circular,
at request of SCO President

COLONIAL WATERBIRD SOCIETY & PACIFIC SEABIRD GROUP JOINT MEETING

The two societies named above will hold a joint meeting in Victoria, B.C., 8-12 November 1995. The scientific meetings will be held in the new Conference Centre downtown, on the theme "Behavioural mechanisms of population regulation". Invited plenary speakers, workshops, paper and poster sessions are planned for three days. Special symposia can be arranged. Victoria is one of the best locations for birds in Canada, and November is one of the best months to see them. Field trips for wildlife and scenery are planned. For information on the scientific program, contact JAMES KUSHLAN, Dept. Biology, U. Mississippi, MS 38677, U.S.A. (601-232-7203, fax 601-232-5144) or WILLIAM EVERETT, Dept. Birds & Mammals, San Diego Natural History Museum, San Diego, CA 92112, U.S.A. (619-589-0480). For information on other matters, contact local Committee Chairs Rob Butler, Pacific Wildlife Research Centre, Canadian Wildlife Service, POBox 340, Delta, B.C. V4K 3Y3 (604-946-8546, fax 604-946-7022) or Ron Ydenberg, Dept. of Biosciences, Simon Fraser U, Burnaby, B.C. V5A 1S6 (604-291-4282).

from release by local chairs

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I thank everyone who supported our Bulletin with material or ideas or advice. It continues to appear because you and others like you want it for communication as well as evidence that our Society has a continuing existence between annual meetings. All your help is much appreciated.

AND FOR THE NEXT ISSUE

Now that the novelty of having a new Editor for *Picoides* has worn off - for you and also for me, it may not surprise you that I am again requesting for the next issue articles with substance, whether this be data, re-interpretation, or opinion. Don't wait for fall; do it now!

Suitable photographs (black-and-white, or high-contrast colour) for the cover or for inclusion in articles would be much appreciated.

Our "In Press" section in the next issue will focus on work by ornithologists in Quebec and the Atlantic provinces.

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