PICOIDES

Bulletin of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists **Picoides, November 2008**
Bulletin de la Société des Ornithologistes du Canada **Volume 21, Number 3**

Common Murres. Photo by Alan Burger.

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Randy Lauff has opened a migration monitoring station for Northern Saw-whet Owls near Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Here, his student Amanda Lowe is learning to extract a recent capture. Photo by Nicky Lowe.

Editor's Message

Happy autumn and welcome to the third and final issue of *Picoides* of 2008! I hope everyone had a good summer is looking forward to Christmas holidays!

Please find inside the reports from the new President of SCO-SOC, David Bird and past president, Sue Hannon. I congratulate members Kathy Martin, Tom Nudds, Andre Cyr and Jon Barlow on their well-deserved awards. I wish to thank Nature Saskatchewan for honouring me with a Fellows Award. The citations of award winners are included in this issue. Please consider nominating a deserving member with a Jamie Smith or a Doris Huestis Speirs Award. We have interesting articles on Mute Swans, Common Murres and Bicknell's Thrush. Also inside this issue is a major report from the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University, two thesis abstracts, two book reviews and many other ornithological articles and notices in this issue. Please note the last call to get paper copies of past issues of *Picoides*! Also please help identify those woodpecker remains described on page 47. Don't forget to mark your calendar for the 2009 SCO-SOC AGM in Edmonton on August 20-23, 2009.

With the re-election of the Conservatives to a second minority mandate in Ottawa, our society and its members should be reminding the federal government the benefits of effective environmental protection. A healthy economy depends on a healthy environment notwithstanding the current turmoil in the financial and stock markets.

Please take note of photo submission guidelines on page 11. I thank Dorothy Diamond, Tony Diamond, Thérèse Beaudet, Laura Tranquilla, Joe Nocera, and Ken Otter for their help with *Picoides* during the past year. On a final note, I need all members to continue to submit material and I welcome your feedback to improve *Picoides*. After all, it is your publication. I look forward to hearing from you. Have a safe, wonderful and holiday season!

Cheers,

Rob Warnock
Picoides
Editor

PLEASE NOTE THE PICOIDES DEADLINES! Deadlines are now February 15, May 15 and October 15.

American Avocet. Photo by Sarah Jamieson.

SCO President's Message
David M. Bird, Ph.D.

Dear members,

I trust that all of you have come to terms with the trauma of summer's end and that your fall ornithology plans are in full swing. If you are not yet aware, the SCO meeting held in conjunction with the American Ornithologists' Union and the Cooper Ornithological Society in Portland, Oregon was a grand success! Our two major awards, the Doris Huestis Speirs Award and the Jamie Smith Mentoring Award, were given out to two deserving members, i.e. Kathy Martin and Tom Nudds, respectively, in front of a full meeting hall at two plenary sessions. President Sue Hannon presided over our Council meeting and the annual general meeting and the meetings were very productive. As your new President, I offer my deepest thanks to her for handing over the reins of a very healthy organization in terms of membership, finances, awards, and publications. I look forward to doing the same for Erica Nol, our new President-Elect.

We also held a useful discussion on the SCO's role in conservation. Our Conservation Committee has created a mandate for itself and you can expect to hear more on this later.

If you have not yet had the chance, take a peek at our totally renovated web site www.sco-soc.ca; Joe Nocera has done an exemplary job on this!

I encourage all of you to get involved in your society and not just leave it up to a handful of members. If you know of a member who has let their good standing in our organization slip, work on them to get them back in the fold. If you know someone who should be a member, convince them to join us. I look forward to any suggestions as to how the SCO can make itself even better and to serving the organization with professionalism and enthusiasm!

Just so everyone is aware, the following summary details the SCO positions held as of the end of the 2008 meeting in Portland, Oregon:

Councillors' Status
1) Debbie Badzinski - first term (off after 2010 meeting unless agrees to a second term)
2) Russ Dawson - first term (off after 2010 meeting unless agrees to a second term)
3) Paul Martin - first term (off after 2010 meeting unless agrees to a second term)
4) John Chardine - second term (off after 2010 meeting)
5) Nicola Koper- second term (off after 2010 meeting)
6) Joe Nocera- second term (off after 2010 meeting)
7) Ryan Norris- second term (off after 2010 meeting)
8) Andrea Pomeroy- second term (off after 2010 meeting)
9) Leslie Evans-Ogden- second term (off after 2009 meeting)
10) Jean-Michel DeVink- second term (off after 2009 meeting)

Officers' Status
President: David M. Bird
Vice-President and President-Elect: Erica Nol
Past-President: Susan Hannon
Membership Secretary: Thérèse Beaudet
Treasurer: Pierre Lamothe
Recording Secretary: Andrea Pomeroy
Picoides Editor: Robert Warnock
Avian Conservation and Ecology Editors-in-Chief: Thomas Nudds and Marc-André Villard

Message du Président de la SOC
David M. Bird

Bonjour aux membres de la SOC,
J'espère que la fin de l'été n'a pas été trop difficile et que vos projets ornithologiques pour l'automne sont en plein essor. Vous savez sans doute que la réunion de la SOC qui s'est tenue à Portland, en Oregon, a été un grand succès; il s'agissait d'une rencontre conjointe avec l'American Ornithologists' Union et la Cooper Ornithological Society. Nous y avons remis au cours de la séance plénière le Prix Doris Huestis Speirs et le prix commémoratif Jamie Smith de tutorat en ornithologie devant une salle comble, à deux membres méritants, Kathy Martin and Tom Nudds respectivement. La présidente Sue Hannon a présidé la réunion du Conseil et l'assemblée générale des membres, et ce furent deux rencontres très productives. À titre de nouveau président, je la remercie du fond du cœur de m'avoir remis les rênes d'une organisation en très bonne santé tant au plan financier qu'en ce qui concerne les membres, les prix et les publications. Je compte bien faire de même au profit d'Erica Nol, notre nouvelle vice-présidente-présidente élue.

Nous avons profité de la rencontre pour avoir une bonne discussion sur le rôle de la SOC face à la conservation. Notre comité ad hoc a élaboré un mandat à cet effet et nous aurons sous peu le résultat de la réflexion en cours.

Si vous n'avez pas encore eu la chance de le faire, je vous invite à jeter un coup d'œil à notre site web www.sco-soc.ca qui a subi une cure de rajeunissement; Joe Nocera s'est surpassé!

Je vous encourage à vous impliquer dans votre société et à ne pas laisser une poignée de membres faire tout le travail. Si vous connaissez un membre qui a négligé de renouveler son adhésion, talonnez-le! Si vous connaissez quelqu'un qui devrait être membre, convainquez cette personne d'adhérer à la SOC. Finalement, j'apprécie toute suggestion qui permettrait à la SOC de s'améliorer encore, et qui me permettrait de travailler pour la SOC avec encore d'avantage de professionnalisme et d'enthousiasme.

Pour votre information, voici le résumé des différents postes qu'occupent maintenant des membres de la SOC suite à la rencontre de Portland, en août 2008 :

Conseillers:
1) Debbie Badzinski - 1er mandat (fin en 2010, possibilité de 2e mandat)
2) Russ Dawson - 1er mandat (fin en 2010, possibilité de 2e mandat)
3) Paul Martin - 1er mandat (fin en 2010, possibilité de 2e mandat)
4) John Chardine - 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
5) Nicola Koper- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
6) Joe Nocera- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
7) Ryan Norris- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
8) Andrea Pomeroy- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
9) Leslie Evans-Ogden- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)
10) Jean-Michel DeVink- 2e mandat (fin après la rencontre de 2010)

Exécutif:
Président: David M. Bird
Vice-Présidente et Présidente-élue: Erica Nol
Présidente sortante: Susan Hannon
Secrétaire aux membres: Thérèse Beaudet
Trésorier: Pierre Lamothe
Secrétaire d'assemblée: Andrea Pomeroy
Éditeur de *Picoides*: Robert Warnock
Éditeurs en chef *d'Écologie et conservation des oiseaux*: Thomas Nudds et Marc-André Villard

The State of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Report from Past President, Susan Hannon

As outgoing president, this is my last report to members on my final year of office. In August, the 27th annual meeting of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists was held in conjunction with the American Ornithologists Union and the Cooper Ornithological Society in Portland Oregon. At the meeting I gave a report at our Annual General Meeting of SCO activities over the second year of my presidency and I want to share that with members who could not attend the meeting.

The SCO is in a very good state. Our membership is stable (410 members; thanks to Membership Secretary Thérèse Beaudet), our finances are excellent (total assets of $47 992; thanks to Treasurer Pierre Lamothe), we have an interesting and informative newsletter (thanks to editor Rob Warnock). At our AGM we voted to remove the password from Picoides to make it more accessible. Our website was recently taken over and updated by Joe Nocera (check it out). Our journal, Avian Conservation and Ecology - Écologie et Conservation des Oiseaux (ACE-ÉCO), has published 46 papers in 5 issues, including some special issues series. There is a 54% rejection rate and a 72-day average turnaround time. Discussions with the journal committee and editors have resulted in an improved statement of journal scope and niche. A new publication agreement was signed with Resilience Alliance, our publisher. They have agreed to accept financial liability if there are cost overruns and have agreed to limit increases in page charges for the next 5 years. Many thanks are given to editors Marc-André Villard and Tom Nudds, and all the associate editors and to the SCO journal committee Charles Francis, Nicki Koper, and Erica Nol.

The working documents of the society have been revised and will be posted on our website soon. The council and I have been working on revisions to the official bylaws and constitution to update them to current practice. This should be completed over the next couple of months. Our conservation committee (Erica Nol, Joe Nocera and Tony Gaston) provided comments to Environment Canada on proposed incidental take regulations through the Ornithological Council. We discussed the role of the Conservation Committee and decided it should not take an advocacy role, rather it should provide scientific information pertinent to bird conservation issues to relevant organizations. The committee is now developing its full mandate.

There were several people to congratulate at the meeting. Kathy Martin won the Doris Huestis Speirs Award and Tom Nudds won the Jamie Smith Mentoring Award. Their citations are included in this issue of Picoides. Congratulations also to Alaine Camfield who won a best student presentation award at the meeting. Finally congratulations to all the student research award winners (Cooke Award: Rosalin Dakin; Junco Technologies: Andrea Norris; Baillie Foundation: Robert DeClaire; Taverner: Celia Chui and Lori Parker). Thanks to the chairs and members of the awards committees (Speirs: Marty Leonard, Bob Clark, Mark Brigham and Greg Robertson; Smith: Ken Otter, Kathy Martin, and Dick Cannings; Student Awards: Russ Dawson, Joël Bêty, Ian Warkentin and Colleen Barber).

The results of elections were presented at the meeting. Welcome to new Vice President Erica Nol and new councillors Debbie Badzinski, Russ Dawson, and Paul Martin. Many thanks to those who let their names stand for election. I thank continuing councillors (John Chardine, Nicola Koper, Joe Nocera, Ryan Norris, and Andrea Pomeroy, Leslie Evans-Ogden and Jean-Michel DeVink) and outgoing councillors Ian Warkentin, Jean-Francois Giroux and Ken Otter.

It was a pleasure serving as your President and now I pass the reins to our new President, David Bird.

Susan Hannon, Past-President

État de la situation à la Société des ornithologistes du Canada
Rapport de la présidente sortante, Susan Hannon

En tant que présidente sortante, voici mon dernier rapport annuel aux membres. Au mois d'août dernier, la 27e réunion annuelle de la Societé des ornithologistes du Canada a été tenue à Portland, Oregon, avec les organismes American Ornithologists Union et Cooper Ornithologists Union. À cette réunion, j'ai présenté le rapport des activités de la SOC au cours de ma deuxième année en tant que présidente et je désirele partager avec les membres qui ne pouvaient pas être présents.

La SOC est dans un très bon état. Notre adhésion individuelle est stable (410 membres, grâce à Thérèse Beaudet, secrétaire aux membres), nos finances sont en excellent état ($47 992 en actifs, grâce à Pierre Lamothe, trésorier) et nous avons un bulletin intéressant et instructif (grâce à Rob Warnock, rédacteur). Lors de notre assemblée générale annuelle, nous avons voté en faveur d'éliminer le mot de passe du Picoides afin de le rendre plus accessible à tous. Récemment, notre site web fut mis à jour par Joe Nocera et notre revue, Écologie et conservation des oiseaux (ACE-ÉCO), a publié 46 articles au sein de cinq volumes, incluant quelques éditions spéciales. Elle a un taux de rejet de 54% et une rotation moyenne de 72 jours. Les discussions avec le comité et les rédacteurs ont amélioré les objectifs et la portée de la revue. Une nouvelle entente a été signée avec Resilience Alliance, notre maison d'édition. Elle acceptera dorénavant la responsabilité financière si les dépenses dépassent le budget alloué et n'augmentera pas le prix par page pour les cinq prochaines années. Merci beaucoup aux rédacteurs Marc-André Villard et Tom Nudds ainsi que tous les rédacteurs adjoints, sans aussi oublier le comité de la SOC Charles Francis, Nicki Koper et Erica Nol.

Les documents constitutifs de la SOC ont été mis-à-jour et seront bientôt disponibles sur notre site web. Le conseil et moi-même avons révisé les statuts et règlements ainsi que la constitution officielle afin de les mettre à jour. Ceci devrait se finaliser dans les mois à venir. Via le Ornithological Council, notre comité de conservation (Erica Nol, Joe Nocera et Tony Gaston) a fourni à Environnement Canada des commentaires en ce qui a trait au projet de règlement sur les prises accessoires. Nous avons aussi discuté du rôle de ce comité de conservation et avons conclu qu'il ne devrait pas jouer un rôle de revendication active (advocacy), mais devrait plutôt fournir aux organismes appropriés de l'information scientifique portant sur la conservation des oiseaux,. Le comité élabore présentement son nouveau mandat.

Il y avait plusieurs personnes à féliciter lors de la réunion. Kathy Martin s'est vu attribuer le prix Doris Heustis Speirs et Tom Nudds le prix Jamie Smith. Les textes de présentation de ces prix sont inclus dans cette édition de Picoides. Félicitations également à Alaine Camfield qui a remporté le prix de la meilleure présentation étudiante. Enfin, félicitations à tous les gagnantes et gagnants des bourses de recherches étudiantes (Cooke: Rosalin Dakin; Junco technologies: Andrea Norris; Baillie Foundation: Robert DeClaire; Taverner: Celia Chui et Lori Parker). Merci aux membres des différents comités (Speirs: Marty Leonard, Bob Clark, Mark Brigham et Greg Robertson; Smith: Ken Otter, Kathy Martin et Dick Cannings; Bourses pour étudiant(e)s: Russ Dawson, Joël Bêty, Ian Warkentin et Colleen Barber).

Le résultat des élections a aussi été dévoilé lors de la réunion. Bienvenue à notre nouvelle vice-présidente Erica Nol et aux nouveaux conseillers Debbie Badzinski, Russ Dawson et Paul Martin. Merci beaucoup à tous ceux et celles qui se sont présentés comme candidate et candidat à l'élection. Je tiens aussi à remercier les conseillers actuels: John Chardine, Nicola Koper, Joe Nocera, Ryan Norris, Andrea Pomeroy, Leslie Evans-Ogden et Jean-Michel DeVink; ainsi que les conseillers sortants: Ian Warkentin, Jean-Francois Giroux et Ken Otter.

Ce fut un plaisir de vous servir comme présidente et bienvenue à notre nouveau président, David Bird.

Susan Hannon, Présidente sortante

2008 Doris Huestis Speirs Award for Outstanding Contributions to Canadian Ornithology Awarded to Dr. Kathy Martin

The Doris Huestis Speirs Award is the most prestigious award of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists and is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding lifetime contributions to Canadian ornithology. It is with great pleasure that the Society of Canadian Ornithologist's presents the 2008 Doris Huestis Speirs Award to Dr. Kathy Martin.

Kathy Martin. Photo courtesy of UBC.

Kathy holds a joint position as a research scientist with Environment Canada and as a Professor in the Centre for Applied Conservation Research at the University of British Columbia. She is a highly productive scientist, having produced over 120 research papers on birds ranging from grouse to woodpeckers. Although the full breadth and depth of Kathy's work is too extensive to briefly summarize, it can be broadly divided into two major research areas. The first includes studies on the ecology, life history, behaviour and conservation of birds in arctic and high elevation habitats. These studies have resulted in many influential papers, including a large body of literature on life-history tradeoffs in White-tailed and Willow Ptarmigan. Kathy's second main research area focuses on the community dynamics of cavity nesting birds and how they are affected by forestry and natural disturbances. Her work in this area has been critical in helping us to understand habitat selection, impacts of harvesting and the links between primary cavity producers and secondary cavity nesters in these poorly understood communities.

Kathy's contributions to ornithology extend well beyond her research endeavours. To date, she has trained 30 graduate students and post-docs, many of whom have gone on to their own careers in ornithology. Kathy has also worked tirelessly on behalf of the ornithological community, both in Canada and abroad. She has served in several capacities on the SCO council, including a term as President of the Society. She has also been an AOU council member and will organize the 5th North American Ornithological Conference in 2012. Kathy has served on the Board of Directors and National Science Advisory Committee for Bird Studies Canada, as the Canadian representative to the IUCN/ICBP Specialist Group for the Conservation of Galliformes, and on the International Ornithological Committee. She has also been Associate Editor for a variety of journals, including Avian Conservation and Ecology and the Auk.

Kathy's commitment, dedication and hard work are truly inspiring.

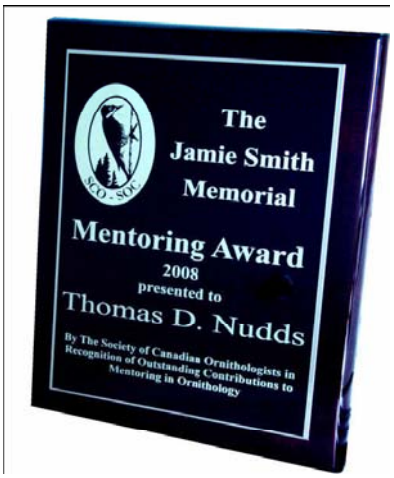
The D.H. Speirs Award Selection Committee for 2008 consisted of Mark Brigham, Bob Clark, Greg Robertson and Marty Leonard (chair).

The Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring in Ornithology

It is with great pleasure that the Society of Canadian Ornithologists presented the 2008 Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award to:

Dr. Thomas D. Nudds, Professor, University of Guelph

Photo credit: M. Pieron, LSU



Once again, the awards committee had an exceptional cohort of nominees for the Jamie Smith Mentoring Award. All nominators highlighted the qualities in the candidates which we have come to expect: demonstration of obvious respect for the development of students/mentees; the ability to intellectually challenge people to meet their full potential without simply providing answers for them; interest in the mentoring process; and making themselves unconditionally-available to their students/mentees etc.

Tom Nudds' nomination stood out for several reasons. He had the greatest breadth of mentees as well as broadest outcomes of mentees. He had nominations from postdocs, PhD students, MSc students who either currently work or had formerly worked in his lab. He even received one letter from someone who had worked as a TA for him! A fair number of nominations came from students that only had Tom as a committee member, rather than a primary supervisor. Many others were mentored as undergrads and stayed on with him. His mentees are now working in a wide range of employment positions, including academic (all across Canada and the US, as well as international), as well as both provincial and federal governments (Parks, Renewable Resource Departments, etc), non-government organizations (Bird Studies Canada, CPAWS), consultants, and home makers. All felt highly valued by Tom given their diverse career choices, as well as those who are still job hunting. A theme that ran through almost all the 19 support letters for this nomination was the value Tom placed on critical thinking, scientific integrity and rigour which he instilled in his mentees.

Another common theme in Tom's nomination was the unlimited time that he devotes to spending with his students (a 'door-always-open' policy). Tom's nominators also highlighted his emphasis on a balance between research and life, and putting family and friends first. The fact that Tom has remained successful in his career while supporting and even encouraging students to take time off for having families, or supporting students who needed to withdraw from programs for personal reasons (and them taking them back on later and helping them complete again), was striking. This is pretty difficult when we consider that external measures of 'success' for academics are often linked to success of their students; it is easy to be supportive of students who are highly productive and motivated, harder when they aren't. There was clear evidence that he faced significant challenges with his mentees that he was able to successfully resolve them to their very strong satisfaction.

On behalf of the award committee, I would like to congratulate Tom on his achievements and encourage others to consider making nominations of supervisors and peers for next year's awards.
Ken Otter, Chair, Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award Committee

Attention Photographers- Submission Guidelines!

To assist the Picoides editor with managing photo submissions, please do following:

- Use .tiff or .jpeg file format
- Minimize file size while maintaining photo quality. This helps keep overall file size down and speed up downloads
- Use descriptive file names. Generic file names from photo software are not very helpful.
- Supply captions for all photos. Good captions include common names of species, names of people, locations, activities, behaviours and dates and very importantly photo credit.

Your submissions are greatly appreciated and always welcome.

Rob Warnock, Editor of Picoides

Great Horned Owl. Photo by Sarah Jamieson.

Call for Nominations for D.H. Speirs Award

The Doris Huestis Speirs Award is the most prestigious award given by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists and is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding lifetime contributions to Canadian ornithology. Past awardees include professionals who work at museums, government agencies, private companies and universities, as well as amateur ornithologists.

To nominate a candidate for the Speirs award please provide the Chair of the award committee with the name of the nominee and supporting information that describes the nature and scope of the nominee's contributions and impact in Canadian ornithology. This could include their efforts to advance conservation, science, public education, or some combination of these or other contribution(s).

Nominations for the 2009 award may be sent to:

Dr. Marty Leonard, Department of Biology, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia B3H 4J1
Phone: (902) 494-3540; Fax: (902) 494-1123; e-mail: mleonard@dal.ca

Nominations will be accepted until 1 June 2009.

For more information on the award and previous award winners go to: http://www.sco-soc.ca/speirs_award.htm

2009 SCO-SOC Student Research Awards Competition

The SCO-SOC administers four different student research awards - the Taverner Awards, James L. Baillie Award, Fred Cooke Award, and the Junco Technologies Award.

Applicants must be members of the SCO-SOC to be eligible.

A single application can be made to apply for all three types of Student Research Awards. The deadline for application is 15 February 2008. Applications are available online at: http://www.sco-soc.ca/studentawards.html

Successful applicants are strongly urged to submit brief project reports (3-4 pages) within 1 year of receipt of award to *Picoides* so the membership can learn about your award winning research.

Applications should be emailed to:
Russ Dawson
Chair, SCO-SOC Student Awards Committee
University of Northern British Columbia, Prince George BC V2N 4Z9
e-mail: dawsonr@unbc.ca; Phone: 250-960-6068

Taverner Awards
Taverner Awards are offered by The Society of Canadian Ornithologists to honour Percy A. Taverner and to further his accomplishments in increasing the 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. Two awards of up to $1000 each are made annually.

James L. Baillie Student Research Award
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 shall be for research that is consistent with the objectives of the James L. Baillie Memorial Fund. These are to support studies of Canadian birds in their natural environment, projects that contribute to preservation of birds, and projects that disseminate knowledge of birds. Long Point Bird Observatory funds the James L. Baillie Student Research Award / Bird Studies Canada from proceeds of the Baillie Birdathon, and is administered by The Society of Canadian Ornithologists. A single award of up to $1000 is made annually.

Fred Cooke Student Research Award
The Fred Cooke Student Award is offered jointly by the SCO and Bird Studies Canada to honour the contributions of Professor Fred Cooke to Canadian ornithology by supporting ornithological conference travel or research activities by a student at a Canadian university. The Award shall be open to any student conducting ornithological research at a Canadian university, except that previous recipients of the Award shall not be eligible. The Award shall be for travel to ornithological conferences at which the student will make a verbal or poster presentation, or research in any aspect of ornithology anywhere in the world. A single award of up to $1000 is made annually.

Junco Technologies Award
The Junco Technologies Award is open to any student who is enrolled in a Canadian university and is conducting a field research project in Canada on at least one species of cavity-nesting bird. The Award must be used to purchase field equipment necessary for the research project (e.g., audio recording, optics, video camera or radio transmitters). The Award cannot be used for to pay a stipend for the

recipient. One Award of up to $1,000 is available each year. The Junco Technologies Award is sponsored by Junco Technologies Inc., in cooperation with Bird Studies Canada / Études d'Oiseaux Canada (BSC/ÉOC). Junco Technologies Inc., a company specializing in the production of birdhouses, is interested in advancing field research on cavity-nesting birds in Canada. Bird Studies Canada / Études d'Oiseaux Canada (BSC/ÉOC), a national non-governmental conservation organization, is dedicated to advancing the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds in Canada.

Snowy Owl. Photo by David Raitt.

The Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award in Ornithology: Call for Nominations

Nominarion Eligibility and Qualities of the Candidates:
To be eligible, the candidate must have contributed to the training and fostering of Canadian ornithologists. There are no requirements that the candidate work in a specific field; individuals in academia, public sector, industry, conservation agencies and government are eligible for consideration, providing they exhibit the desired qualities of Jamie Smith himself.

The candidate must be recognized by those trained as being a consistent motivator, as well as being diligent in pushing students/colleagues to excel. The candidate should demonstrate a passion for his/her discipline that is transferred to those that he/she has trained. The candidate should also instil a sense of integrity in those that he/she mentors.

Nomination Process:
Candidates are nominated by former/current students, colleagues and/or peers.
There is no formal nomination form, but the nominator should provide a nomination letter addressed to the chair of the committee that includes a short statement (max. 1000 words) indicating how the nominee has influenced the development of other ornithologists through mentoring.

Nomination letters should be in either Word or .pdf format, and emailed to the Chair of the committee to allow for distribution to other committee members. In the nomination letter or the accompanying email, the full contact information for the candidate should be provided.

The nomination must be accompanied by at least two additional letters of support from others (these can be in the form of separately submitted emails). Support letters should not exceed 500 words, and should indicate they have seen and support the nomination letter. They may then add their own comments on the nominee.

If a candidate is not chosen to receive the award in the first year nominated, the nominee will be automatically considered for next successive years' competition. The nominator may update the file in the second year if they so chose, otherwise the existing file will be reconsidered.

Nomination Submission Deadline: 15 April 2009. Nominations should be sent to:

Ken Otter. Chair - Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award Committee
Ecosystem Science & Management Program
University of Northern British Columbia, 3333 University Way, Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9
tel: 250-960-5019, fax: 250-960-5539, email: otterk@unbc.ca

Review Process:
Nominees will be reviewed by an SCO subcommittee of 3-4 individuals. The committee members will be chosen to represent as broad as possible a spectrum of academic, government and non-government agencies. The current committee consists of:

Dick Cannings, Bird Studies Canada
Kathy Martin, University of British Columbia & Canadian Wildlife Service
Ken Otter (Chair), University of Northern BC

Last call for Paper copies of Picoides

To SCO members,
Aux members de la SOC,

For those who wish to obtain paper copies of past Picoides (1987 - 2006), please contact me by e-mail beaudet.lamothe@sympatico.ca or at the address below. The remaining copies will be recycled by December 2008. Please note that these past issues have been scanned and are available on the SCO-SOC website at http://www.sco-soc.ca/picoides/archives.htm.

Ceux et celles qui souhaiteraient obtenir une copie papier des éditions de Picoides entre 1987 et 2006 peuvent m'en faire la demande par courriel à beaudet.lamothe@sympatico.ca ou par la poste à l'adresse ci-dessous. Les copies restantes seront recyclées en décembre 2008. Veuillez noter que ces anciens numéros de Picoides ont été numérisés et sont disponibles sur le site de la SOC-SCO http://www.sco-soc.ca/picoides/archives.htm.

Thérèse Beaudet
SCO Membership Secretary
Secrétaire aux membres de la SOC
128 Chemin des Lièges, St-Jean de l'Île d'Orléans (QC) Canada G0A 3W0
Tel.: + 418 829-0379 Fax: +418 829-0584

	Volume	Available copies disponibles		Volume	Available copies Disponibles
1987	1 (1)	2	1998	11 (1)	5
1988	2 (1)	1		11 (2)	7
	2 (2)	6	1999	12 (1)	3
1989	3 (1)	6		12 (2)	3
	3 (2)	1	2000	13 (1)	5
1990	4 (1)	5		13 (2)	4
	4 (2)	0	2001	14 (1)	5
1991	5 (1)	5		14 (2)	9
	5 (2)	6	2002	15 (1)	3
1993	6 (1)	6		15 (2)	6
	6 (2)	8		15 (3)	7
1994	7 (1)	8	2003	16 (1)	7
	7 (2)	9		16 (2)	3
1995	8 (1)	8	2004	17 (1)	6
	8 (2)	7		17 (2)	6
1996	9 (1)	7	2005	18 (1)	18
	9 (2)	1		18 (2)	15
1997	10 (1)	10	e2006	19 (1)	2
	10 (2)	8		19 (2)	2
				19 (3/4)	2

SCO-SOC
Annual Meeting/Réunion annuelle

EDMONTON 2009

August 20-23 Août
University of Alberta/Université d'Alberta

Meeting announcement:

The 28th Annual meeting of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists will be held in Edmonton, Alberta, August 20-23 2009. Erin Bayne and Susan Hannon will organize the meeting. Further details will be forthcoming.

Réunion annuelle:

La 28ème réunion annuelle de la Société des ornithologistes du Canada se tiendra à Edmonton, Alberta, du 20 au 23 août 2009. La réunion sera organisée par Erin Bayne et Susan Hannon. D'autres détails suivront.

Canadian Thesis Abstracts in Ornithology

Camfield, Alaine F. 2008. Life History Tradeoffs, Incubation Bhavior and Conservation of Horned Larks (*Eremophila alpestris*). PhD Dissertation, Centre for Applied Conservation Research, Forest Science, University of British Columbia, Vancouver BC.

Male Horned Lark. Photo by Matthew Tomlinson

Nearly 30 percent of the earth's terrestrial surface is mountainous and a large proportion of the planet's protected areas are found at high elevations. Despite presenting potentially valuable conservation opportunities, the ecology of vertebrates in high elevation areas has received little attention from researchers and managers. I studied two subspecies of horned larks *Eremophila alpestris articola* that breed at high elevation and latitude in British Columbia, Canada and *E. a. strigata* at low elevation and latitude in Washington, USA. I addressed the question of how the life history of alpine breeding songbirds differs from their low elevation conspecifics and I showed that significant life history variation can be found among closely related groups. My results were consistent with other comparative demography studies which suggest that alpine vertebrate populations tend to show survivor life history strategies when compared to their low elevation counterparts. In addition, population growth rates were stable for *E. a. articola* suggesting that this subspecies is well adapted to the challenges of breeding in alpine environments. *E. a. strigata*, however, is declining rapidly and the remaining breeding habitats in Washington do not support stable populations. I used demographic models to show that within reasonable ranges for each vital rate (fecundity, adult and juvenile survival), management actions that target a single rate independently are unlikely to result in stable or recovering populations, and thus management actions that target multiple vital rates should be prioritized.

Finally, to further investigate adaptations of *E. a. articola* to alpine environments I examined how they modify their incubation behavior in response to changes in ambient temperatures which were generally well below the optimal temperature range for normal embryonic development. Females adjusted the amount of time spent incubating by varying the frequency rather than the duration of recesses. At low ambient temperatures they appeared to shift their investment toward the survival of their eggs by increasing the total time spent on the nest instead of taking longer or more frequent foraging bouts. Overall, the results of my study indicate that alpine populations of horned larks have life history traits and breeding behaviors that allow them to persist in these areas despite the challenging breeding conditions.

Poulin, Jean-François. 2008. Mechanisms Underlying Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*) Sensitivity to Forest Structure in a Managed Landscape. M.Sc Thesis. Université de Moncton, Moncton, New Brunswick.

Many songbird and woodpecker species are sensitive to forest harvesting, even at moderate intensities. The Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*) and the Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) are considered to be the two bird species most sensitive to partial harvesting in North America, making them good focal species.

Brown Creeper. .Photo by Frode Jacobsen

For example, according to a study conducted in northwestern New Brunswick, the probability of presence of the Brown Creeper decreased significantly under a threshold of 66 stems/ha (≥ 30 cm dbh). However, the life history of the Brown Creeper is still poorly known, as well as the mechanisms underlying its sensitivity to forest harvesting. At the stand level, the limiting factors could be the availability of nesting (mainly snags) or foraging (large-diameter trees with textured bark) substrates. Partial harvesting provides the opportunity to manipulate post-harvest value in terms of habitat quality for creepers and ecologically similar species. In our study area, deciduous stands are mainly managed under uneven-aged systems through the single tree selection harvesting. *A priori*, stand structure after a first entry seems to allow the presence of creepers.

The broader objectives of this study were to compare occurrence thresholds to eventual thresholds associated with nesting habitat requirements, to identify key variables in nesting site selection, and to determine the immediate demographic response of the creeper to experimental selection harvesting. During the summers of 2005 and 2006, we searched for nests in Black Brook and West Tobique Districts and compared vegetation characteristics between nests and sites unused by the creeper. A discriminant function analysis was used to pinpoint the key variables in selection of habitat for nesting and thresholds in habitat structure were found with the use of logistic regression and receiver-operating characteristic analysis (hereafter ROC). For example, the probability of presence of a nest decreased significantly below 127 stems/ha (≥ 30 cm dbh). This value represents nearly twice the occurrence threshold found for the same region. In the summer of 2007, I studied the short-term demographic response of individuals to experimental single-tree selection harvesting in 10 plots of 25 ha each (5 controls, 5 treated). Nest density and number of territories were lower in treated sites. Furthermore, fledging success of the first nesting attempt was lower in harvested sites. However, when considering the total reproductive success at the end of the breeding season, no statistical difference was detected. Our results suggest that stand structure (large trees and snags) and the presence of mature or old forest patches in a 250-m radius have a significant influence on the probability of presence of a Brown Creeper nest. The thresholds found suggest that occurrence thresholds may underestimate the requirements of sensitive species. The current definition of old hardwood habitat by the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources calls for the maintenance of a minimum of 60 stems/ha (≥ 30 cm dbh). Thresholds in the probability of presence of a nest suggest that these strategies should include the retention of undisturbed mature forest patches. Creepers respond negatively to selection harvesting one year after harvest and this may be due to a decrease in food abundance (fewer large trees).

REMISE DU PRIX CHARLES-EUSÈBE-DIONNE AU PROFESSEUR ANDRÉ CYR

Gilles Goulet, Frédéric and André Cyr (right). Photo by Alain Hogue - www.oiseaux.ca

Le Regroupement QuébecOiseaux a profité de sa 27e assemblée générale annuelle pour remettre à monsieur André Cyr le prestigieux prix Charles-Eusèbe-Dionne, soulignant ainsi sa contribution importante à titre de scientifique et communicateur chevronné.

Professeur titulaire à l'Université de Sherbrooke depuis 1978, André Cyr est bien connu de la communauté ornithologique. Il s'est fait connaître par sa participation à la traduction en français du célèbre guide Peterson des oiseaux de l'Est de l'Amérique du Nord, par la publication de l'Atlas saisonnier des oiseaux du Québec avec Jacques Larivée. Il a participé à la fondation de la première association de groupes d'ornithologues au Québec et est aussi un des membres fondateurs de la SOC. Le professeur Cyr est également connu du grand public par ses nombreuses participations à des émissions de radio et de télévision, en particulier l'émission hebdomadaire printanière 1-888-OISEAUX, produite pour la télévision de Radio-Canada durant plus de sept ans, émission à partir de laquelle Radio-Canada a produit six DVD. Le professeur Cyr est aussi un conférencier chevronné et un imitateur d'oiseaux hors pairs, en plus d'être un excellent photographe, dont les photographies ont été primées ou publiées dans de nombreux livres, articles et revues scientifiques. Une de ses photographies a même fait la page couverture du premier numéro de la revue Behavioural Ecology.

Le professeur Cyr est diplômé de l'Université de Montréal en biologie-zoologie (B.Sc. 1972, M.Sc. 1974). Il a poursuivi ses études doctorales en Allemagne (Ph.D. 1977, Universität des Saarlandes) dans le domaine de l'ornithologie et de la biogéographie. Il est professeur titulaire en écologie, zoologie et ornithologie depuis 30 ans à l'Université de Sherbrooke. Ses recherches scientifiques ont porté sur divers aspects de l'écologie, du comportement et de la chronobiologie de plusieurs passereaux, en particulier le Carouge à épaulettes. Il a particulièrement fait avancer les connaissances dans les domaines de la répartition spatiale et de l'évaluation des tendances des populations d'oiseaux à long terme, entre autres en collaboration avec Jacques Larivée. Il a innové en s'aventurant sur certains chemins peu fréquentés comme montrer les oiseaux en nature à des non-voyants, étudier la communication mentale entre l'humain et les oiseaux tout en provoquant leur comportement à distance. Il poursuit ses recherches sur les liens entre la neuro-éthologie et la mécanique quantique.

Le prix Charles-Eusèbe-Dionne, créé en 2005 par le Regroupement QuébecOiseaux, vise à souligner la contribution exceptionnelle d'une personne à l'avancement de l'observation et de l'étude des oiseaux du Québec. En choisissant ce nom, l'organisme a voulu rendre hommage au premier véritable ornithologue québécois : Charles-Eusèbe Dionne. Son œuvre maîtresse, Les oiseaux de la province de Québec, a été publiée en 1906 et a marqué le début du développement de l'ornithologie québécoise contemporaine.

La remise du prix a eu lieu pendant l'assemblée générale annuelle du Regroupement QuébecOiseaux, le samedi 27 septembre 2008.

Un hommage supplémentaire a été rendu au professeur Cyr, qui a été reconnu parmi les leaders de la communauté universitaire de l'Université de Sherbrooke pour son engagement et ses réalisations qui sont source d'inspiration pour ses collègues et l'ensemble des membres de la communauté universitaire qui tire avantage de ses contributions. Un article à ce sujet a été publié dans le journal de l'Université de Sherbrooke de la mi-octobre 2008.

Le Regroupement QuébecOiseaux (www.quebecoiseaux.org) est un organisme national à but non lucratif qui regroupe et représente les personnes et les organismes intéressés à l'étude, à l'observation et à la protection des oiseaux du Québec. Il comprend les clubs et les sociétés d'observateurs d'oiseaux du Québec, des membres individuels ainsi que des organismes affiliés. Ses objectifs sont les suivants : favoriser le développement du loisir ornithologique, promouvoir l'étude des oiseaux et veiller à leur protection et à celle de leurs habitats.

ANDRÉ CYR RECEIVES CHARLES-EUSÈBE-DIONNE 2008 AWARD

The Charles-Eusèbe-Dionne 2008 award was given to André Cyr last September. The award is offered by the Regroupement QuébecOiseaux honouring Charles-Eusèbe Dionne, the first ornithologist to produce an important work on the birds of Quebec, in French, in 1906. The award emphasizes the exceptional contribution of André Cyr to Quebec ornithology during his career.

Professor Cyr graduated from the University of Montréal and Universität des Saarlandes in Germany. He has been a full professor in ecology, zoology and ornithology for the last 30 years at the University of Sherbrooke. He is one of the founding members of the SCO, has been a council member and secretary for eight years.

Professor Cyr has been known for his translation in French of the eastern Peterson Field guide, and his monumental work *Atlas saisonnier des oiseaux du Québec* with Jacques Larivée. He founded a bird club in the Eastern Townships, was very active in many aspects of Quebec ornithology including his longstanding participation in a television series 1-888-OISEAUX for Radio-Canada. He is a well-recognized speaker, bird photographer, and bird imitator. One of his pictures is on the front cover of the first issue of Behavioral Ecology.

His research interests included ecology, behaviour and chronobiology of passerines, especially Red-winged Blackbird, long-term trend studies and seasonal mapping of the birds of Quebec with Jacques Larivée. He ventured into showing birds to blind people, studying mental communication between humans and birds. His ongoing research includes links between neuro-ethology and quantum mechanics.

The University of Sherbrooke has also recognized Professor Cyr as a leader of the University community for his commitment and his achievements.

Authors : André Cyr et Jean-Sébastien Guénette, Directeur général du Regroupement QuébecOiseaux

Picoides Editor Receives Fellows Award from Nature Saskatchewan

Rob Warnock (right) receives the 2008 Fellows Award from Nature Saskatchewan President Bill Mackenzie (left). Photo by Jacquie Bolton.

Picoides Editor, Rob Warnock, received the 2008 Nature Saskatchewan Fellows Award on September 27, 2008 in Swift Current, Saskatchewan.

This award recognizes an extensive and continuing contribution of time over many years to the Nature Saskatchewan and its objectives.

He has served on the board of Nature Saskatchewan in a variety of portfolios since 1999 including Member Services Director, Education Director and Vice-President. He has worked on several Burrowing Owl projects including evaluation of the Operation Burrowing Owl stewardship program. This evaluation was published in the international peer-reviewed journal *Environmental Management* in March 2004. He has also served as associate editor and has contributed a number of articles to Nature Saskatchewan's quarterly journal of natural history, *Blue Jay*. In addition, Rob was the Nature Saskatchewan representative for the organizing committee for the regional 8th Prairie Conservation and Endangered Species Conference and Workshop that was held March 1 to 3, 2007 in Regina and was lead editor for the 400-page conference proceedings.

Rob is currently Research Director of Nature Saskatchewan and co-editor of *Nature Views*, Nature Saskatchewan's quarterly newspaper. As Research Director, Rob oversees Nature Saskatchewan's research and habitat stewardship programs including Operation Burrowing Owl and the Last Mountain Bird Observatory on behalf of the Society's membership. He currently serves on the Nature Saskatchewan policy review and graduate scholarship committees. He is contributing a number of species accounts to the upcoming two-volume *Birds of Saskatchewan*. Rob is currently employed as a culture and heritage policy analyst in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Culture and Sport.

Rob is grateful for this prestigious award, the many wonderful friendships and great opportunities that came from his long time association with Nature Saskatchewan.

Alliance of **Natural History Museums** of Canada

Alliance des **musées d'histoire naturelle** du Canada

Jon C. Barlow receives national award from Canadian museum network

Dr. Jon C. Barlow, a respected scientist who devoted his career to the study of bird evolution is the distinguished recipient this year of the Bruce Naylor Award on September 22, 2008 in Ottawa. This national award, presented by the Alliance of Natural History Museums of Canada (ANHMC), recognizes exceptional contributions to the study of museum-based natural history in Canada.

Dr. Barlow is most known in museum circles as the Curator of Ornithology at Toronto's Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) – a position he held for 35 years until 2001. He also led the University of Toronto's Museum Studies Program, inspiring numerous students to pursue careers in natural sciences and museum administration.

It has been said that through his unique combination of talents -- researcher, collector, curator, educator, mentor, editor, administrator and larger-than-life personality – he transformed the ornithology program into a flagship department at the ROM.

His research focused on avian vocalization, specializing in the study of vireos (small to medium-sized songbirds). In fact, Dr. James Rising, an ornithologist at the University of Toronto, states: "Jon is the world's foremost authority on vireos."

Over the course of his career, Barlow personally contributed over 6,000 specimens to the provincial bird collection, building it into one of the largest in the world. "The ROM I think has one the best bird skeleton collections in the world largely because of his job," says Rising.

Drs. Rising and Barlow first met as students at the University of Kansas. Both ended up coming to Canada for research positions. Explains Rising: Until the 1960s, most ornithologists pursuing graduate studies went to universities outside of the country such as Oxford or Cornell. Barlow trained students at the graduate level in Ornithology at the University of Toronto making them competitive with any in the world.

"He was the right man at the right time," says Rising.

"Jon's contributions as an ornithologist alone qualify him for recognition, but it is his leadership of the Museum Studies Program at the University of Toronto, his roles with the Ontario Museum Association and Metro Toronto Zoo, and his training of a future generation of museum workers that single him out as an exceptional award recipient," says Dr. Bruce McGillivray, current Director of the Royal Alberta Museum, former undergraduate student of Barlow's and long-time research collaborator.

Further, Barlow's collaborations with 25 museums around the world led to international partnerships and an enviable list of academic contributions, notes McGillivray. "Jon's own research and extensive involvement with American and International Ornithological Societies elevated the status of Canadian, museum-based research in the minds of North American and European academics," he adds.

His list of honours also includes an award of merit from the Ontario Museum Association in 1993 for "Outstanding Contributions to the Museum Community" as well as one from the Metro Toronto Zoo in 1996.

“He was a dedicated scientist and dedicated museum person. Not only was he a mentor to dozens of students and colleagues, but he inspired each of his five children,” says Margaret May, Dr. Barlow’s wife. “He was a curator who really understood and cared about the public dimension of museums. We are very proud of him. This is the icing on the cake of a fabulous career.”

The award was accepted by Dr. Barlow’s family at a special reception of the ANHMC on September 23 in The Speaker’s Reception Room in the Centre Block of Parliament Hill, Ottawa.

Created in 2003, the ANHMC now has 13 members from coast to coast. Its goal is to increase visibility of Canada’s natural history museums, which are responsible for preserving precious collections of millions of specimens that are the record of our natural heritage. The network strives to build capacity in the areas of scientific research, collections development and education about the natural environment, for the greater benefit of all Canadians.

Philadelphia Vireo. Photo by Frode Jacobsen.

Alliance of **Natural History Museums** of Canada

Alliance des **musées d'histoire naturelle** du Canada

Jon C. Barlow reçoit un prix national d'un réseau muséal canadien

OTTAWA, le 22 septembre 2008 - M. Jon C. Barlow, un scientifique respecté qui a consacré sa carrière à l'étude de l'évolution des oiseaux, est le distingué lauréat du prix Bruce-Naylor. Ce prix national, décerné par l'Alliance des musées d'histoire naturelle du Canada (AMHNC), récompense les contributions exceptionnelles à l'étude de l'histoire naturelle du Canada dans un cadre muséal.

M. Barlow est plus connu dans le milieu muséal comme le conservateur du département d'ornithologie au Musée royal de l'Ontario à Toronto (ROM), une position qu'il a occupée pendant 35 ans jusqu'en 2001. Il a également dirigé le programme d'études muséales de l'Université de Toronto, inspirant de nombreux étudiants à faire carrière dans les sciences naturelles et l'administration de musées.

On a déjà dit de lui qu'avec sa combinaison unique de talents -- chercheur, collectionneur, conservateur, pédagogue, mentor, rédacteur en chef, administrateur et personnalité hors pair --, il a transformé le programme d'ornithologie en un porte-bannière du ROM.

Ses recherches portaient sur la vocalisation aviaire, en particulier sur l'étude des viréos (des oiseaux chanteurs de taille petite à moyenne). De fait, comme l'affirme James Rising, ornithologue de l'Université de Toronto : « Jon est le plus éminent spécialiste du monde en matière de viréos ».

Au fil de sa carrière, Barlow a personnellement contribué plus de 6 000 spécimens à la collection ornithologique provinciale, amenant celle-ci au rang des plus grandes collections du monde. « Le ROM a, je crois, une des meilleures collections de squelettes d'oiseaux du monde, en grande partie grâce à son travail », affirme Rising.

Rising et Barlow se sont d'abord rencontrés en tant qu'étudiants à l'Université du Kansas. Les deux ont abouti au Canada pour occuper des postes de chercheur. Rising explique : Jusque dans les années 60, la plupart des ornithologues qui poursuivaient des études supérieures étudiaient dans des universités à l'extérieur du pays comme Oxford et Cornell. Barlow a formé des étudiants de cycle supérieur en ornithologie à l'Université de Toronto, les rendant concurrentiels à l'échelle mondiale.

« C'était la bonne personne au bon moment », affirme Rising.

« La contribution de Jon uniquement à titre d'ornithologue mérite une reconnaissance, mais c'est son leadership à la tête du Programme d'études muséales de l'Université de Toronto, son rôle au sein de l'Association des musées de l'Ontario et du zoo de Toronto et son travail de pédagogue auprès d'une nouvelle génération de gestionnaires de musée qui le distingue comme lauréat exceptionnel », a déclaré Bruce McGillivray, directeur du Royal Alberta Museum, ancien étudiant de Barlow au premier cycle et collaborateur scientifique de longue date.

En outre, la collaboration de Barlow avec 25 musées à travers le monde a permis d'établir des partenariats et de dresser une liste enviable de contributions académiques, remarque McGillivray. « Les propres recherches de Jon et une implication soutenue auprès de sociétés ornithologiques américaines et

internationales ont redoré le blason de la recherche muséale canadienne dans l'esprit des chercheurs nord-américains et européens », ajoute-t-il.

Parmi ses distinctions, on trouve un prix d'excellence de l'Association des musées de l'Ontario en 1993 pour ses « contributions exceptionnelles à la communauté des musées », ainsi qu'un prix du zoo de Toronto en 1996.

« C'était un scientifique dévoué et un homme de musée passionné. Non seulement a-t-il servi de mentor auprès de dizaines d'étudiants et de collègues, mais il a inspiré chacun de ses cinq enfants », a déclaré Margaret May, la femme de Barlow. « C'était un conservateur qui comprenait vraiment la dimension publique des musées et y tenait. Nous sommes très fiers de lui. C'est la cerise sur le gâteau d'une fabuleuse carrière. »

Le prix sera reçu par la famille de M. Barlow à une réception spéciale de l'AMHNC le 23 septembre, dans la salle de réception du président de la Chambre des communes, à l'édifice du Centre de la Colline du Parlement à Ottawa.

Créée en 2003, l'AMHNC compte maintenant 13 membres de toutes les régions du pays. Elle poursuit l'objectif d'accroître la visibilité des musées d'histoire naturelle du Canada, lesquels préservent d'inestimables collections comptant des millions de spécimens, témoins de notre patrimoine naturel. Ce réseau s'efforce de renforcer les capacités dans les domaines de la recherche scientifique, de l'élaboration des collections et de la vulgarisation des connaissances sur l'environnement naturel, tout cela au profit de la population du Canada.

Blue-headed Vireo. Photo by Jean-Sébastien Guénette.

Specialization in Murres: Four Examples

Kyle Elliott

Ornithologists are increasingly aware that to truly understand fundamental processes, it is important to comprehend variation among individuals, rather than trends followed by the population mean. This is especially true in studies of foraging behaviour and diet. A recent study found that most populations of predators are made up of individual specialists; few animals forage across the entire dietary breadth, but rather specialize on one or a few prey items.

In a recent study funded as part of the 2006 SCO Taverner Award, others and myself examined the degree of dietary specialization by Thick-billed Murres (*Uria lomvia*) at Coats Island, NU, by watching what type of prey item adult murres brought back to their chicks over a 15 year period (1993-2007). We used a computer program (IndSpec.Exe) to run Monte Carlo simulations that computed three different indices of specialization.

The first index calculated the niche width of individuals relative to the niche width of the population. Thus, a bird that brought back four capelin (which make up 60% of murre diet) would be considered more specialized than a bird that brought back three Arctic shanny (which make up 1% of murre diet) and one capelin. The second two indices compared the prey distribution for each individual and compared it to the population distribution. For the latter two indices, the bird bringing back three shannies would be considered more specialized than the bird bringing back four capelins. Nonetheless, all three indices were highly correlated.

For all three indices, birds were more specialized over short time scales (days) than long time scales (years), specialization was largely independent of age and gender, and was linked to specialization in foraging behaviour. Stable isotopes from adult blood suggested that adults tended to specialize when self-feeding on the same prey items they fed their offspring. Specialists and generalists were largely equivalent in terms of reproductive success and survival; we speculated that specialists did better in some years, and generalists in other years. Although most birds were generalists, about a third could be considered specialists, among the highest proportion of any animal studied so far.

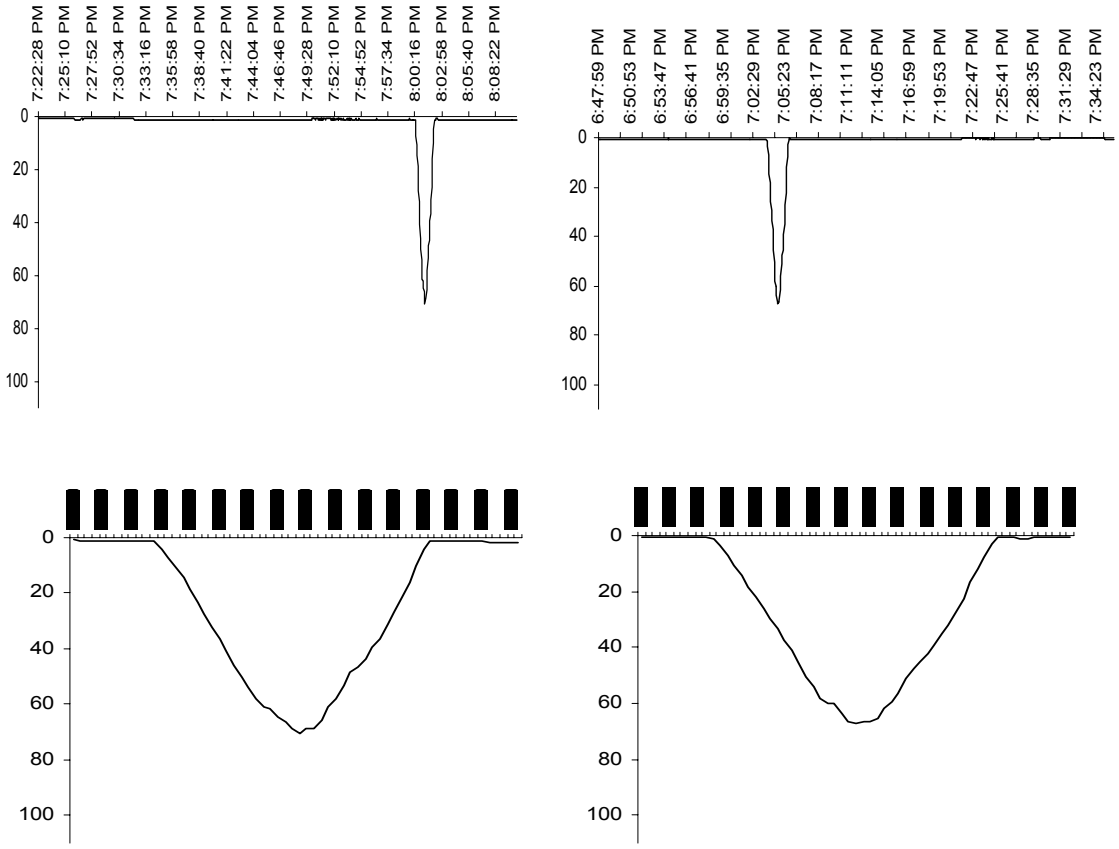
Although the rather complicated statistics (e.g Monte Carlo simulations) were essential to demonstrate specialization in unambiguous, rigorous terms and be published in a high-end journal, they also obscured some of the trends by talking in generalized terms. Here, I propose to take another approach: I offer to illustrate the degree of specialization in Coats Island murres by examining four murres, chosen because they have a particularly large amount of available data, and because they show the range of specializations present at Coats.

This study included benthic fish such as snakeblenny, *Eumesogrammus* (abbreviated as EUM); fishdoctor, *Gymnelus* (GYM); daubed shanny, *Leptoclinus* (LEP); sculpin (SCU); Arctic shanny, *Stichaeus* (STI); and pelagic prey such as sandlance, *Ammodytes* (AMM) and amphipods (AMP). We report individual totals (TOT) and population totals (POP). All graphs show typical dive patterns, with depth on the y-axis and 3 (lower) or 48 mins (upper) on the x-axis for 2005 (left graphs) and 2006 (right).

Follow-up work is planned to determine whether specializations group together (are shanny specialists more likely to take sculpin as alternative prey, creating a “benthic specialist” group.) and to measure the energetics of different specializations.

85520 This male brings back almost exclusively amphipods, with only a single other prey item recorded (a capelin). He often returns visibly wet from his short forays that often involve a single, V-shaped dive. This male provides a clear example of specialization representing a poor strategy, as this bird only reared offspring for two years before disappearing. In many ways, 85520 is similar to 06799 (unknown sex) which also brings back large numbers of amphipods, and has successfully reared young in only four out of the 15 years of this study.

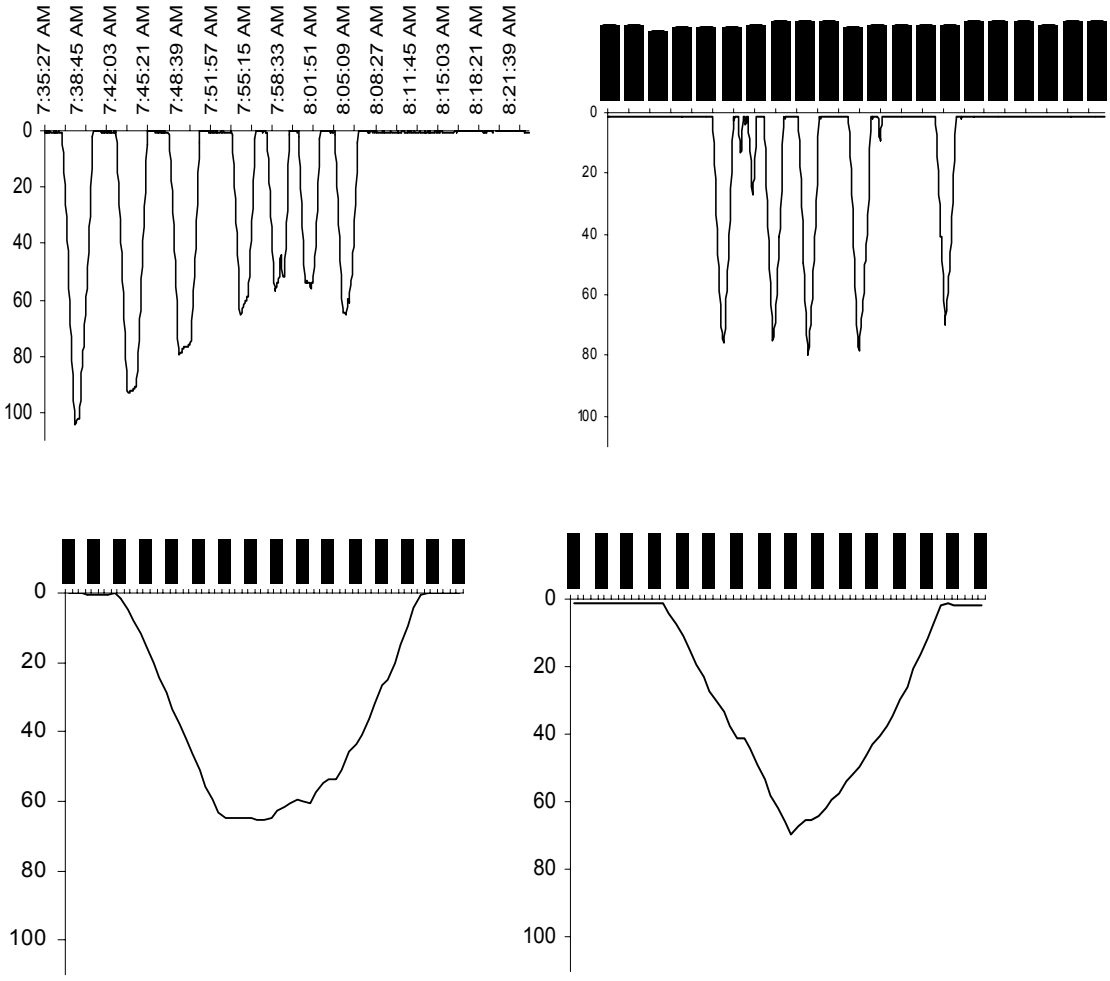
2005 **2006**



	CAPELIN	COD	EUM	GYM	LEP	AMM	SCU	SQUID	STI	AMP	SHRIMP
2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27	0
2006	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	0
TOT	1.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	98.4%	0.0%
POP	41.2%	19.3%	2.0%	2.1%	6.4%	8.1%	11.2%	1.5%	1.4%	6.0%	0.8%

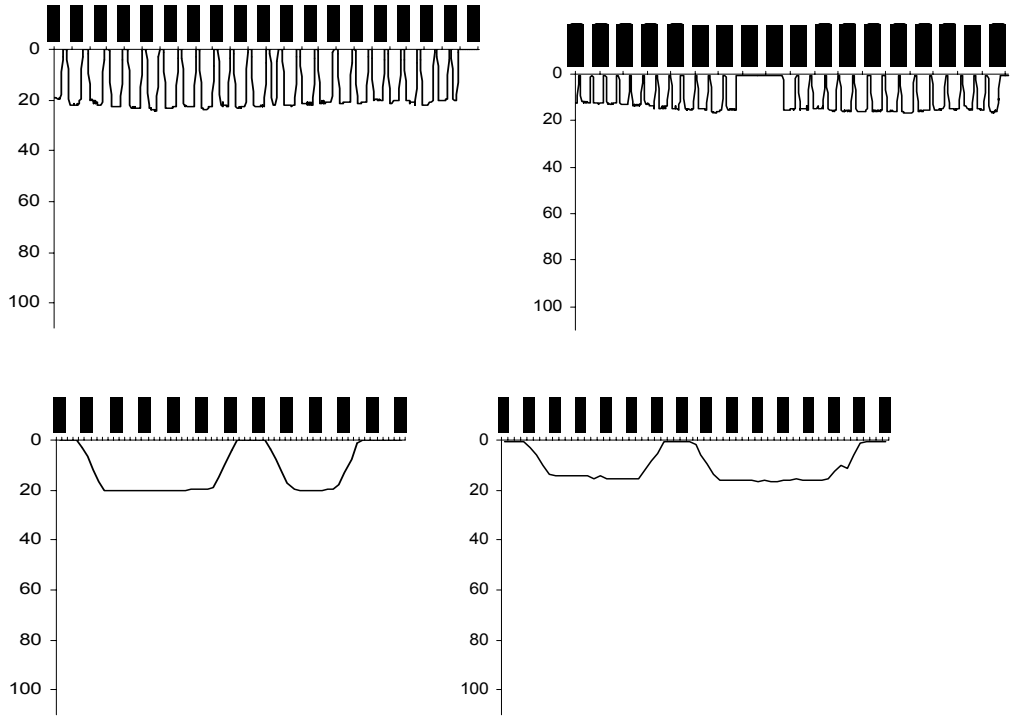
69944 This female, banded as a chick in 1997, produced her first young in 2005, at age 8. A capelinivore, she had among the rarest strategies at the colony, bringing back two capelins at a time, held crosswise in her bill. In this way, she specialized on the commonest prey item of all, showing that specialization is not only restricted to the rare prey items. She primarily uses several V- or W-shaped dives to variable depths. She is still a relatively young bird, and it will be interesting to see if she maintains her specialization over time. Her partner since she first arrived at the plot is also a capelinivore.

2005 **2006**



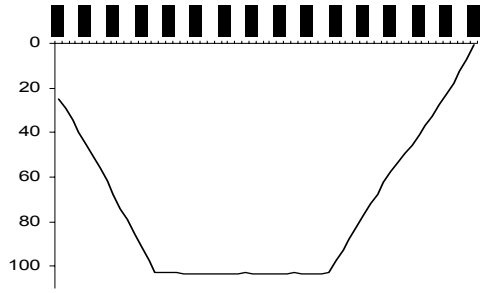
	CAPELIN	CAP x 2	COD	EUM	GYM	LEP	AMM	SCU	SQU	STI	AMP	SHR
2005	20	3	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
2006	28	7	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
2007	10	9	3	0	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	0
TOT	61.3%	25.2%	5.6%	0.0%	1.1%	1.1%	2.2%	2.2%	0.0%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%
POP	40.6%	0.6%	19.3%	2.0%	2.1%	6.4%	8.1%	11.2%	1.5%	1.4%	6.0%	0.8%

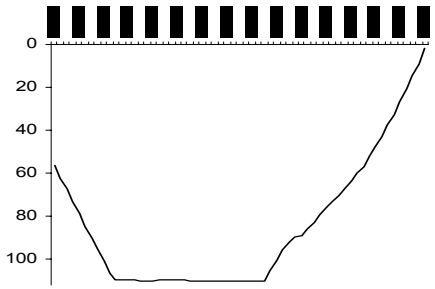
02029 This male was banded as an adult in 1987 and is therefore of indeterminate age. He successfully reared a chick in every year except 2003. He is a benthic specialist, with STI/GYM accounting for nearly half of his diet (and in all but three years), and cod for nearly one-third of his diet. Capelin, the dominant prey item, was never recorded in the first five years and only makes up 9% of the total diet. He uses many short, shallow, flat-bottomed dives with little surface time. This male has cornered the market for benthic fish, and this strategy has paid off by producing many chicks.

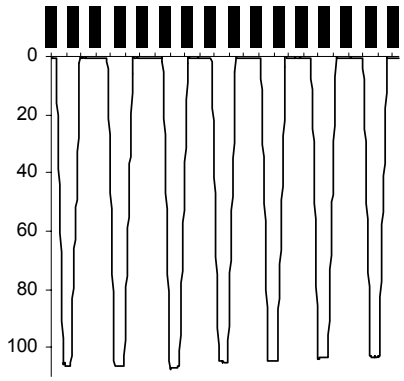


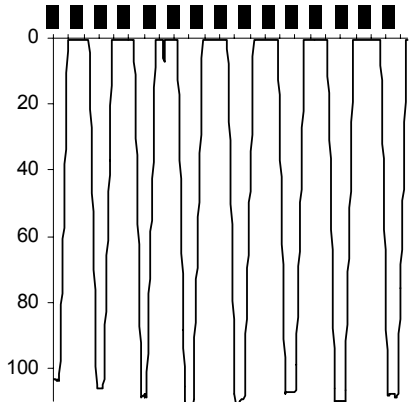
	CAPELIN	COD	EUM	GYM	LEP	AMM	SCU	SQUID	STI	AMP	SHRIMP
1993	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1994	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1995	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1996	0	5	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
1997	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	0	9	0	0
1998	2	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	0
1999	0	8	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2001	2	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	0
2002	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	3	5	0
2004	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
2005	3	1	1	13	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
2006	0	2	1	2	0	0	1	0	12	0	0
2007	2	4	0	3	0	2	0	0	7	1	0
TOT	8.5%	28.4%	7.8%	15.6%	1.4%	2.8%	1.4%	0.0%	29.8%	4.3%	0.0%
POP	41.2%	19.3%	2.0%	2.1%	6.4%	8.1%	11.2%	1.5%	1.4%	6.0%	0.8%

09445 This female, banded as a chick in 1988, first raised an offspring at seven years of age, and has successfully raised an offspring every year since 1995. She is another benthic specialist, with sculpins making up over half of her diet, and sculpins appearing in her diet every year but two. She largely brings back deepwater sculpins in the genus *Triglops*, using very deep, long dives with several dives per bout. Clearly, the sculpin strategy has paid off well for her, with offspring produced in every year.









	CAPELIN	COD	EUM	GYM	LEP	AMM	SCU	SQUID	STI	AMP	SHRIMP
1995	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
1996	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1997	5	1	1	0	0	1	7	0	0	0	0
1998	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0
1999	4	0	0	0	2	1	4	0	0	0	0
2000	0	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2001	5	1	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0
2002	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
2003	5	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
2004	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	1	0	0	0
2005	3	1	0	0	0	0	9	0	0	0	0
2006	1	0	0	0	1	0	17	0	0	0	0
2007	3	1	0	0	0	1	6	0	0	0	0
TOT	25.7%	11.0%	0.9%	0.0%	3.7%	5.5%	52.3%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
POP	41.2%	19.3%	2.0%	2.1%	6.4%	8.1%	11.2%	1.5%	1.4%	6.0%	0.8%

International Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Group annual meeting hosted by University of New Brunswick, Fredericton

Emily A. McKinnon

Bicknell's Thrush. Photo by Kevin Fraser

The International Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Group (IBTCG) had their second annual meeting on 29-30 October 2008. In order to reduce carbon emissions, the meeting was held by phone and webcam conference with participants gathering in two main venues: the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service office in Hadley, Massachusetts.

Canadian and US researchers founded the IBTCG in 2007. The IBTCG is a flexible, inclusive group with no rules for membership beyond a shared interest in furthering Bicknell's Thrush conservation. Its mission is "to develop a broad-based, scientifically-sound approach to conserve Bicknell's Thrush, incorporating research, monitoring, and on-the-ground management actions" (www.bicknellsthrush.org). This group fosters cross-border collaborations to improve our understanding of the population status of Bicknell's Thrush and to determine what conservation actions should be taken to ensure the long-term viability of the species. The IBTCG is continuing to develop collaborations with stakeholders on both the breeding and wintering grounds of Bicknell's Thrush, with the goal of implementing range-wide conservation strategies.

The main objective of the meeting was to refine the Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Action Plan, a document that outlines major threats, research priorities and short- and long-term outcomes for the group's work. About 20 people participated in the meeting. Representatives from the major NGOs involved, Bird Studies Canada and the Vermont Centre for Ecostudies, led the discussions with input from university researchers, government scientists from both sides of the border, representatives from parks and the forest industry. Canadian representatives included Kevin Fraser, Hubert Askanas, Emily McKinnon and Dr. Tony Diamond from the University of New Brunswick, Becky Whittam, Greg Campbell and Andrew Coughlan from Bird Studies Canada, Julie Paquet and Yves Aubry from Canadian Wildlife Service, Cape Breton Highlands National Park Ecologist James Bridgeland, Scott Makepeace and Mark McGarrigle from the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resouces, and forestry company representatives Tony Vanbuskirk (UPM-Kymmene) and Andrea Doucette (NewPage Port Hawksbury).

Day one of the meeting focused on major research goals, with a breakout session in the afternoon for subgroups discussing the impacts of forestry and wintering ground factors. Day two of the meeting allowed the major monitoring bodies for Bicknell's Thrush, Mountain Birdwatch in the US and Bird Studies Canada's High Elevation Landbird Program, to discuss standardization of a new monitoring protocol that would improve the statistical power of the data to allow for estimation of population size across the breeding range.

For more information, please visit the group's website at www.bicknellsthrush.org.

News from the Avian Science and Conservation at McGill University

David M. Bird, Director of Avian Science and Conservation Centre

Completed Theses

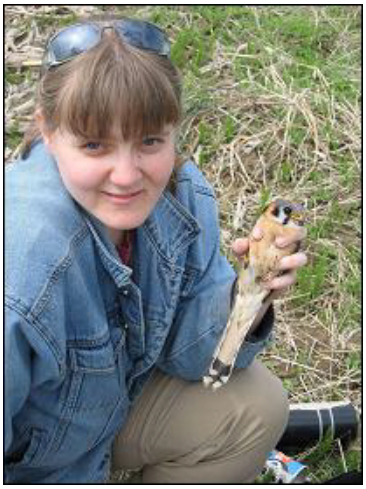
Mark O'Connor recently made the final submission of his Masters thesis, *Surf Scoter (Melanitta perspicillata) ecology on spring staging grounds and during the flightless period*. During his fieldwork along the north shore of the St-Lawrence River and in northern Labrador, he found that these sea ducks modify their behaviour to deal with the higher energetic requirements and vulnerability related to wing-moult. In addition, he successfully used satellite telemetry to track the movements of flightless scoters and determine the area required by them while moulting. It is particularly interesting that despite their inability to fly, Surf Scoters are capable of swimming distances of up to 50 km!

Claude Drolet studied the pattern of variation in group structure and feeding behaviour of wintering Common Goldeneyes on the Saint-Lawrence River by comparing two major habitats for this species, one in freshwater and one in saltwater. Groups of goldeneyes were smaller in freshwater near Montreal than in the estuary and consisted of twice as many males. Individuals spent a lesser proportion of time feeding in the saltwater estuary. Temporal variables had a major influence on group structure and on diving time. Tide affected timing of activity in the estuary.

Current Members of the ASCC Flock

Captive-bred kestrels: equivalent to their wild counterparts.

The ASCC has been breeding kestrels in captivity for over 35 years! In the spring and summer of 2007 **Lina Bardo** completed the second field season of her project looking at the possible effects of such long-term captive breeding on their behaviour and morphology using cross-fostering of clutches between wild and captive breeding pairs. She has also completed over 150 hours of behavioural observations on kestrels during the fall of 2006 and will complete the behavioural portion of her research by the end of 2008. With the addition of corticosterone sampling to document stress responses in the birds, she has successfully transferred into a doctoral program. A fourth field season has been added to her project for the spring and summer of 2009.



Lina Bardo holds a wild adult male American Kestrel in preparation for blood sampling.

Are golf courses bird-friendly?

After spending four summers out on Montreal-area golf courses and green spaces, **Marie-Anne Hudson** is now officially out of the field, at least for her graduate studies. Progress on her thesis is going well despite the many distractions that her directorship of the McGill Bird Observatory provide, not to mention her new appointment as editor of Bird Protection Quebec's newsletter, the *Song Sparrow*, and her participation in the steering committee of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. Marie-Anne has analyzed data from her 2006 field season in order to address the question of whether golf courses and green spaces support the same breeding bird communities. While there is no difference in the mean number of species on each type of site, the number accumulated over two surveys of each site differed, with golf courses supporting 55 species, and green spaces supporting 66. Species composition differed between the sites, and was likely driven by differences in land cover characteristics such as the percentage of grass versus deciduous tree cover on each site. Site size was also correlated to the communities, suggesting that no matter how much management occurs within a site, the overall condition of site may ultimately dictate what species occur within it.

Can Green-Energy Turbines Share the Wind with Birds of Prey.

For his M.Sc. project, **Michael Ross** traveled to the Gaspé region to study whether the Baie-des-Sables wind farm affects the behaviour and abundance of migrating birds of prey. For two months during the spring migration of 2007 and 2008, daily scans were conducted to verify if altitude, direction and flight type varies between a control (an area without wind turbines) and the main wind farm area. Abundance between the two areas is also currently being verified to see if raptors avoid the wind farm, leading to an increase in energy expenditure. Preliminary analyses suggest that most raptorial species do not seem to be affected by the presence of the wind farm, although a few species seem to increase their altitude when flying near them. The results of this study are very important to the province of Quebec since the Baie-des-Sables wind farm is the first of many large-scale wind farms planned for in the next ten years. It also has worldwide importance since wind energy is an increasingly attractive source of clean renewable energy.

Michael Ross observes the behaviour of migrating raptors as they fly over the Baie-des-Sables wind farm.

Are Flame-Retardant Chemicals Used in Household Items Bad News for Our Birds?

As part of a five-year study by Dr. Bird and two former Ph.D. students, Drs. **Kim Fernie** and **Laird Shutt**, now toxicologists with Environment Canada, ASCC graduate students **Sarah Marteinson** and **Katrina Sullivan** are using the American Kestrel colony to examine the impact of brominated flame retardants (BFRs) on the health and reproduction of birds of prey. BFRs are added to many commercial products for the purpose of fire prevention, including high impact polystyrenes used in textiles, foams, upholstery, electronics, insulation and building materials. BFRs are similar in nature to PCBs, a more well known class of pollutants, but are currently less well understood. The chemical properties of BFRs allow them to disperse through air and water as well as accumulate in wildlife. They are also capable of biomagnification and so are particularly dangerous for wildlife species at the top of the food chain such as raptorial birds. For her Ph.D. project, Sarah is studying the effects of exposure of captive male kestrels to two kinds of flame-retardant chemicals, primarily how BFRs affect reproduction, including effects on courtship and brood rearing behaviour as well as testes activity, sperm integrity and hormone levels. Preliminary results suggest serious effects including a decreased copulation frequency during courtship, an increase in testes weight and an overall decrease in fertility. Meanwhile, for her M.Sc. project, Katrina is using tiny data loggers known as iButtons, which take periodic nest temperature readings, to investigate whether these two kinds of chemicals can change the birds' incubation behaviours. She is also analyzing blood levels of the hormone, prolactin, which is responsible for the onset and maintenance of incubation. **Demetrios Kobiliris**, a M.Sc. student, is investigating possible effects of these chemicals on the stress response of kestrels as well as on their foraging behaviour. In 2007 and 2008, he completed several hours of behavioural observations and also took blood samples to assess their corticosterone response to stress. If flame retardant chemicals in the food chain do affect this corticosterone response, it could mean a slower reaction to potential dangers in the wild and/or a reduced capacity to obtain food, both of which could compromise the survival of birds of prey.

Barbara Frei carefully holds a young Bobolink nestling.

Can Quebec Farmers Help Save the Bobolink?

Over the last two years, M.Sc. student **Barbara Frei** has dedicated herself to champion the cause of the swiftly declining grassland bird, the Bobolink. This once common species has suffered steep declines due to habitat loss and mortality associated with agricultural intensification. Throughout the summers of 2006-2007, Barbara and her field assistants gathered data on the breeding ecology of this species in order to answer the question; can Bobolinks and agriculture co-exist in local hayfields. The answer is indeed yes! By delaying hay cutting until early July, preferably July 15th, Bobolink fledglings can successfully leave their nests without facing the lethal gauntlet of mowers and balers. Loss of hay quality due to this delay is minimal, hay quantity is increased, and survival of Bobolink young jumps from an estimated crippling 10-20% to over 80%! By planning conservation-based grassland agriculture in Quebec, the province may ultimately provide the most grassland bird habitat in northeastern North America. For additional information visit www.migrationresearch.org/research/grassland.html or contact Barbara at barbara.frei@mail.mcgill.ca.

How Do Red-breasted Mergansers Make the Best Use of Habitat During and After Breeding in the Gulf of St. Lawrence?

The Red-breasted Merganser remains one of the least understood waterfowl species in North America. Doctoral studies by **Shawn Craik**, now in the analysis and writing stages, focus on habitat use by these ducks during their breeding and post-breeding stages. Breeding mergansers were studied at Kouchibouguac National Park, New Brunswick and post-breeding birds were observed at Anticosti Island, Québec. At Kouchibouguac, mergansers nested colonially on coastal islands with Common Terns and placed their nests in dense grasses that provided concealment of eggs. Following egg hatching, radio-marked broods often traveled large distances (>3 km) from nesting islands to shallow habitats along the mainland. These estuarine sites provide an abundance of small fish (sticklebacks) for merganser broods. Preliminary results of data collected at Anticosti Island suggest that flocks of post-breeding male mergansers use shallow (<6 m depth) coastal bays throughout the four-week wing moult period. Grubby, a small bottom-dwelling fish, appears to make up a substantial portion of the diet of these mergansers.

Shawn Craik chases after moulting red-breasted mergansers in the waters off Anticosti Island Kouchibouguac National Park, N.B.

Dominique Chabot prepares to hand-launch the 1.2m-long, 2.4m-wingspan UAV on another wildlife survey

Can Eaves revolutionize wildlife aerial surveys?

Now in the 2nd year of his M.Sc., **Dominique Chabot** is looking to change the way wildlife aerial surveys are conducted. Ever more sophisticated and affordable drone planes, known as UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) promise to soon rival costly and obtrusive full-size airplanes and helicopters when it comes to counting animal herds and colonies, censusing remote wildlife, mapping out natural habitats and countless other related tasks. Dominique is presently conducting trials using the CropCam, a Canadian-built UAV originally designed for agricultural assessment, weighing only 2.5kg and powered by a small electric motor. The small and silent aircraft is capable of carrying out custom flights

autonomously using built-in GPS and capturing bird's-eye view imagery with an onboard digital camera. To date the CropCam has been tested for peering into Bald Eagle nests, locating beaver food caches, counting colonies of Canada Geese and Snow Geese, and mapping out threatened Least Bittern habitat.

Sex and the City: How are Bald Eagles Making Use of Urban Habitat?
In the past few decades, despite their previously known avoidance of humans, Bald Eagles have begun moving into urbanized habitats in large numbers. In April of 2008 M.Sc. student **Raphael Goulet** travelled to the Greater Vancouver area to examine nesting success, nest-site preferences and feeding habits of urban and suburban Bald Eagles. From Vancouver Island to Stanley Park and from northern Washington State to the upper Fraser Valley, Raph counted the number of fledged young in each active nest, collected food remains below nest trees, and recorded data on selected nest site features from hundreds of nests! He and Dr. Bird are working in collaboration with David Hancock, a renowned west coast Bald Eagle biologist, founder of the Hancock Wildlife Foundation, and originator of the live-streaming eagle webcam.

Just How Important are Seeds to Boreal Seed-eating Birds.
As part of his M.Sc. project, **Samuel Denault** collected data on migrating birds from the boreal forest in Tadoussac (QC) for a sixth consecutive season. He is paying special attention to boreal seedeaters, a group of birds that are not easy to study because of their unpredictability and their movements over large geographical areas. To determine the abundance of boreal seed-eating birds, Samuel performed standardized censuses performed daily during three and a half months, from mid-August to the end of November in 2008. White-winged Crossbills, Pine Siskins, Common Redpoll and Pine Grosbeak have all shown strong irruptive patterns in Tadoussac since 1996, when standardized censuses started. He will also investigate how seed-crop production affects boreal finch abundance. This study will fill a gap in what is known about boreal finch irruptive migration by providing a better understanding of their nomadic movements

2007 Best Season Ever for the ASCC Loggerhead Shrike Breeding and Release Program!
The summer of 2007 was an excellent year in terms of the reproductive success at the ASCC. A total of 34 shrikes were produced, three were kept for future reproduction and 31 were released into the wild, a number almost equal to the sum of released birds from the previous three years! Trying out new attachments for radio transmitters, François Marzialis, an undergraduate student holding a prestigious scholarship from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, was able to track seven birds for a few weeks after release. One bird's movements were tracked from a distance of 15 kilometres!

A word from the McGill Bird Observatory

MBO

The McGill Bird Observatory, affiliated with the ASCC, is still going strong, especially now that it has been officially accepted into the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN). Since its inception in 2004 by ASCC graduate students, over 13,000 birds have been leg-banded! Highlights from this past year include the acceptance of the MBO's first peer-reviewed article ('Unusually extensive preformative molt in hatching-year Song Sparrows') for publication in the journal, North American Bird Bander, its involvement in the CMMN's nationwide isotope analysis project, and coming in fifth across Canada in Bird Studies Canada's Baillie Birdathon. In 2007, no less than 704 birds comprising 61 species were banded in the spring and 2876 birds of 77 species in the fall. In the spring of 2008, 828 birds comprising 64 species were caught and banded. During this season, some very special birds hit the MBO nets for the first time ever, including Merlin, Eastern Towhee, Golden-winged Warbler, Wood Thrush, Marsh Wren, Eastern Bluebird, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Cooper's Hawk, Northern Shrike, Solitary Sandpiper, and Bobolink.

New Evidence of Early Presence of *Cygnus olor*

Robert Alison, PhD, Victoria, BC and Kathryn Stillwell Burton, Old Lyme, CT

Abstract: For many years, despite solid evidence to the contrary, the Mute swan (*Cygnus olor*) has been called a non-native bird, imported from Europe. It is, in fact, an ancient circumboreal bird, with a history across Europe and Asia and into the Russian Maritimes and Kamchatka, (Dement'ev 1967, Weiloch 1992) a major staging area for millions of birds on migration across the American continent, a short distance away. It has been recorded in Alaska (Sladen and King 1976, Heilprin 2006), Saskatchewan (Greenwood, 2000) and found in 17th century, precolonized James Bay area at Ft. Albany (Baldwin and Churcher 1967). Douglas Sadler and Howard G. Savage (2003) notes several digs in the James Bay area, confirming a very early presence of Mute Swans in Canada. Federal agency testimony in Federal Court, District of Columbia, USA, states that Mute Swans migrate from the Hudson Bay into the United States (Cirianca 2003). This is an ancient route, in which prevailing winds and open waters, but not "the hand of man" assists migration

Introduction

A criteria used in the US Federal Register, 01/2005, relating to the "nativeness" of the Mute Swan asks: "Why, if it has been here since before colonization, John White did not paint a Mute swan, while he DID paint the Trumpeter Swan in 1585 Roanoke?" That was a trick question. In fact, the Mute Swan (left) is from the British Museum's John White Collection. This watercolour, done during the 1585 scientific exploration to America for Sir Walter Raleigh, is on watermarked paper, (1580s) revealing much earlier occurrence of *Cygnus olor* (Mute Swan) on the Atlantic coast, than previously thought. It was mislabelled in the 1960s as a "Trumpeter Swan", at the University of North Carolina, but of course, it is not. Among northern hemisphere swans, only the Mute Swan has a knob, on a black bill in this painting, because the leaded paint used, four hundred years ago, degraded with time, according to Kim Sloan, (2007) curator of the John White collection, at the British Museum. In her book, *A New World*, the process is described in depth. The knob, s-curved neck, lifted rear feathers, in fact the entire countenance defines the Mute Swan in the field. There are several swans clearly identifiable as Mute swans in the De Bry engravings in Thomas Harriot's journal, kept during the exploration in 1585 Virginia.

Historian and scholar, David Beers Quinn (1964) and Paul Hulton (1964) former Director of the British Museum, compiled the artworks and records of the Roanoke Voyages and produced "The Complete Drawings of John White" in two volumes. Hulton wrote " It is clear that White's main aim was to impart information and that his drawings can be considered purely as historical and scientific documents of remarkable validity." Quinn wrote that "there would be nothing in the paintings that the artist did not see, these men were scientists" (pers. comm.).

Clearly, White felt it his mission to show what he saw, and over the period in which he was in Virginia, he saw Mute Swans. If he had seen and drawn Trumpeter swans, that would have been of more interest to the people back in England, but obviously, he did not. The mislabelling of the drawing, at University of North Carolina, is very curious, and deserves additional research.

Robert Bateman, the internationally known wildlife artist, agrees that the White painting is of a Mute Swan and Roland Clement, also a noted artist in the field, who was head biologist for National Audubon for many years, agrees. David Beers Quinn, said "Nothing would be in the paintings unless it was seen by the artist, these were noted scientists of the day. Do not rely on the De Bry engravings alone, look at the swan painting and that will solve your Mute Swan problems" (hand written letter, 2005, sent from Ireland, just prior to his death).

Audubon on Swans

Among the other early major artists, swans did not appear until Audubon's work, although many early journals of people like Wood (1634), Henlopen (1683) and the Jesuit Marquette (1673) mention many swans in seasons in which the Trumpeters and Tundras would be in the far north.

In Audubon's Birds of America, 1840-1844, he stated, "The history of the American swans has been but very slightly traced. Few records of the habits of these majestic, elegant and useful birds exist, upon which reliance can be placed; their geographical range still remains an unsolved problem; one species has been mistaken for another, and this by ornithologists who are said to be of the first order. It is possible we have more than two species of swan within the limits of North America but I am at present acquainted with only that which forms the subject of this article (the Trumpeter) and the *Cygnus Americanus* of Sharpless."

This insight was shared by Karl W. Kenyon (1986) on finding Whooper Swans in the Aleutians: "Since the Whooper Swan was not expected, even trained ornithologists may have assumed that swans reported by natives or seen at a distance were Whistling Swans. They still do, as "probably Tundra swans, etc." is seen again and again in serious ornithological publications.

Archaeological Finds

In 1961-5, excavations at the Fort Albany Post site on James Bay, Canada (Kenyon 1986) yielded Mute Swan material in several sites, including a Mute swan sternum, the defining element, according to Storrs L. Olson, Curator of Birds, AMNH, Smithsonian Institution (pers. comm.). The area of interest was first occupied from 1674 to about 1690, pre European colonization. The sternum was identified at the site, not only by Walter Kenyon, archaeologist-in-charge of the excavation, but by Howard G. Savage, MD PhD, zoologist/ornithologist, for whom the faunal lab at University of Toronto was named. Rufus Churcher, professor of ornithology and archaeology at University of Toronto and ornithologist Donald Baldwin, who later published an account of the finding, (Baldwin and Churcher 1967) all naming it a Mute Swan sternum. The sternum was carefully examined before its conclusive identification, according to Dr. Churcher (now Department of Zoology Professor Emeritus Paleontology, University of Toronto), who was present at the site at the time the sternum was found and examined.

It should be noted that Kortright, nor Bellrose, nor Jarnsgard would have known of these specimens, only recently announced, in *Birds from the Ground* (Sadler and Savage 2003)

The sternum was eventually housed in the collection at the Howard Savage Faunal Laboratory, University of Toronto. It was noted in a subsequent book on Ontario archaeology, *Birds from the Ground* (Sadler and Savage 2003), and according to Doug Sadler, who co-wrote the text, Dr. Savage personally confirmed the identity of the bone before including it in the book's contents.

It is very doubtful that the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) employees would have brought a Mute Swan to North America from England, due to the easy availability of swans and other bird species in much of Canada. It is well documented that HBC company policy, from the beginning was to have North American posts rely on local provisions as far as possible (Lindsay 2003).

Since the killing of Mute Swans was illegal under English law and that law extended to Canada, according to Dr. Churcher, (2008 pers. comm.), it would be reasonable to understand why these takings would not be immortalized in writing, much as the species' "removal" was handled, traditionally, by agency people in the United States, prior to the 2001 re-inclusion of the Mute Swan under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), by Federal US law.

Wild Mute Swans currently occur in the area of Fort Albany in habitats similar to those that were present there in the 17th Century. On July 16, 2004, a Mute Swan was seen on mudflats only a few miles from the site where the swan sternum was found by the Kenyon group (op. cit). This was amplified by a paper by Abraham and Ross (2005) in which movement of Mute Swans into that very area was noted, suggesting an historic migration route.

D.M. Dawson, Canadian Geological Survey, March 7, 1890 stated, 954,000 square miles of the Dominion, Is for all practical purposes entirely unknown."

The Fossil Record

We have assembled historic and scientific documents and specimens that create a time line ranging from Miocene to present, showing a Mute Swan (*Cygnus olor*) homotaxic presence in at least four States on the North American continent: Oregon, Idaho, California and Arizona.

In current theory, all swans are thought to have originated in the southern hemisphere, several species moving, through the ages, northward, through the Americas. Dr. K.H. Voous, (2000) a proponent of that theory, noted the Mute Swan, *Cygnus olor* as a possible relation of *Cygnus paloregonus*. Hildegarde Howard (1946, 1956) went further, in her studies of the Fossil Lake Oregon anatidae, she used the name *Cygnus olor* in comparative studies and "probably Mute Swan," in the description of a fossil found in Arizona. Fossils, at sites in the United States, represent *Sthenelides paloregonu*s, a Mute Swan genotype (ancestor) found at Fossil Lake, in large numbers. Wetmore (1968) singled this species out, saying " At Fossil Lake, Oregon, the most interesting species is a swan, *Cygnus paloregonus*, as large in bulk as the great trumpeter swan, but with shorter legs and longer toes." *Cygnus olor* also has these identifying features.

The fossils were studied by Cope (1878), Schufeldt (1892, 1913) and Howard (1946), as well as others working on the Fossil Lake, Oregon, Froman's Ferry, Idaho, and Arizona material. Arizona fossils described: "specimens are thought to represent mute type of swan." (Howard 1964). Howard compared *Sthenelides paloregonus* to *Sthenelides olor* in many areas. Prior to the 1930s, *Sthenelides olor* was the correct name for the Mute Swan (Scott 1972).

These fossil swans were "very similar to, but somehow distinct" from *Cygnus olor*, the Mute Swan (Cope 1878, Coues 1887). The distinction was primarily size. Work hypothesized by Bergmann (1847) and proven in Baird's extensive collection at the Smithsonian, provides a reason for the size difference within a living species and their fossils, dependent on a number of things, but primarily on altitude, latitude, temperature, inland and coastal humidity (Lindsay, 1993) and, of course, food availability and climate extremes. Storer (1959) studied Western Grebes that had been frozen in Lake Newell, Alberta, against those housed in museums in California and at the American Museum. He concluded that significant skeletal differences between the two groups could be attributed to geographic variations, post mortem wear, or preparation techniques, and not to genetic variations.

This would account for a size difference in the same species of bird from modern United States and the Russia/Siberia coast, in avian fossils. The Caspian Sea has the largest Mute Swans in the World, for example, and they migrate from that area to far eastern Russia/Kamchatka and the Maritimes (Dement'ev

1989). These are the birds we believe came across, just as the other three swan species in that area do and stayed in the huge, undeveloped areas, of this continent, at some point in history.

The data suggests an ancestral proto-Mute Swan or swans, whose structure and measurements are the same species found in the Caspian Sea area, in Russia and Siberia, as far east as the Russian Maritimes (Dement'ev 1989) generated lineages over an extensive period of time, evolving perhaps simultaneously in North America and Eurasia, shaped divergently by different local environmental pressures but nonetheless homotaxic. Ancestral Mute Swan type fossils have been found in four states (Anza Borego Desert in California; Fossil Lake, Oregon; Froman's Ferry, Idaho and Arizona.) as well as Europe and Asia. They circle the globe in northern latitudes and have no subspecies.

While American imports of Mute Swans have been documented, and expected, the probability of a "natural migration" at some historic date becomes obvious, as all three species of swan with which the Mute Swan flies in parts of Europe and Asia have also been known to arrive here "without the hand of man." Many early colonists noted a great number of "swannes," in America, making their use as an imported food unnecessary, and as noted, the Hudson Bay Company lived off the land.

Documents produced in Hill v Norton, 2001 for the federal government's argument, admit the movement of Mute Swans from Canada into the United States, through the Great Lakes (Cirianca 2001). Is this not a migration "without the hand of man?"

"The question is not, would Mute Swans have come onto this continent? but rather, why would they not?" (Paul S. Martin, University of Arizona, 2001)

Results of Mislabelling

This species, *Cygnus olor* is put at a disadvantage in protection and evaluation of environmental impact, by being labelled "non-native." While many agency people admit studies do not show extensive negative effects to habitat or surroundings, caused by them, the unproven " non-native" status is presented as representing "potential" problems, such as "eating food that belongs to other birds"…." Normal bird behaviour is seen as extreme, and given as a reason for "removal" of the species. The extensive Berglund studies (1963), compiled over a six-year period in Sweden, where fishermen complained about Mute Swan activities among the waterfowl and some loss of eelgrass, showed no cause for removal. Winston E. Banko, who wrote The Trumpeter Swan (1960), reviewed the Berglund study for The Auk, Vol.82, and agreed with that conclusion.

Similar results have been found in Maryland's Chesapeake Bay, according to government agency "experts". In fact, the Mute Swan is rarely mentioned in studies of the very polluted and degraded state of the Bay. Instead the damage is blamed on hog and chicken farms, dredging and trawlers, hurricanes and tornadoes, increased development and massive growth among high speed boats. However, the public is deluged by stories anti-Mute Swan and flagrant lies, to justify the killings. The "potential," presented by the Mute Swan, may never occur, has been used to justify killings.

It has been promoted in parts of Canada, by agencies and NGOs there, that are rewarded by grants from the USF&WS. " This agency action is based on no science," according to a Federal District Court in Washington, D.C. yet, it continues, as the Ornithological Newsletter suggests.

Historic Status as a Circumboreal Species

In northern latitudes all of the four swan species fly together on migration throughout Europe and Asia (Weiloch 1989) to the Russian Maritimes (Dement'ev 1967). Bewick's, Whooper and Whistling (now Tundra) swans have long been known to come into Alaska, with fatal results on US federal properties,

according to Trumpeter Swan Society reports (Sladen 1978, King 1978). It is not unlikely Mute Swans continued the same ancient route, joining them in migration from Russia.

Today the Mute Swan is circumboreal across much of Europe and Asia. The proximity of Alaska to Kamchatka Peninsula, the site of Mute Swan population even today, suggests such relocation is feasible. An Icelandic population, once established by pioneering Mute Swans, has since disappeared (Sutton 1961), and that stock doubtless originated in Europe as they are also known in the Scandinavian countries of Sweden and Finland, in northern Scotland and in the Isle of Man, UK vagrant occurrences of Mutes in Iceland persist (op. cit.).

The North American genotype possibly never went extinct, but became exceedingly rare and may have persisted in small pockets of unexplored parts of the continent of America" (E.C. Pielou 2001 pers. comm.) This pattern also describes the history of another swan in America, a swan that was found with Mute swans in Fossil Lake, Oregon, the Trumpeter.

Annual Reports from The Trumpeter Swan Society include mentions of Eurasian Mute, Bewick's, and Whooper Swans coming into Alaska, all without the hand of man" (Sladen 1978, King 1978). The Whooper Swans also are known to arrive in the Aleutians (Kenyon 1963, Eichholz and James 1997), Yosemite National Park, Massachusetts, and Iceland, another area in which the Mute Swans have a history (Sutton 1962).

Both Whooper Swans and Mute Swans were known in Yosemite early on, as were Trumpeters and Tundras, before their near extinction due to over hunting. It is very difficult for hunters to identify swan species, "in the midst," as shown in data collected on Trumpeter losses during Tundra Swan hunting season in the Pacific Flyway. A Mute Swan removal program on all US federal lands was initiated by the Trumpeter Swan Society and the US federal government and an "open season on swans" was proposed by the agencies and endorsed by Harvey Nelson, then president of the Trumpeter Swan Society, an ex-agency man.

Recently, the Trumpeter Swan was removed from Endangered Species Act protection. It's future, after 75 years of a restoration program, is very much at risk.

MBC, MBTA, MBTRA History re: *Cygnus olor*

The Migratory Birds Convention (MBC) (1916) is the primary authority for US and Canadian federal protection of migratory birds—the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) is its enabling legislation. It specifically names families rather than species in many cases, but the Anatidae family, of which the Mute Swan is a member, is listed as a protected group of waterfowl. In fact, swans and eiders are listed as exempt from hunting and research "takings. Mute Swans were present and well known in North America when the MBTA and MBC were fashioned, and had they not been intended for protection, the MBC would doubtless have so indicated.

Nonetheless, virtually ever since, federal authorities have operated as if swans are unprotected by the MBTA and state as much in federal court cases. But, in 2001, a DC Federal Circuit Court of Appeals ruled (Hill v Norton) all swans are protected by the MBTA, including the Mute Swan. This prompted the US federal agencies to regroup and promote legislative steps to remove US federal Mute Swan protection. This was lobbied and formalized, as the Migratory Bird Treaty Reform Act of 2005, based on the contention that the bird is not native to North America. While more than 100 other species of birds were put on the unprotected list, the Federal Register entry made by their attorney, Helen Paul, made it clear that the Mute Swan was the target of interest, but the reasoning is flawed and evidence goes against it.

Since ancestral Mute Swans were prehistoric inhabitants of North America, were here during early colonization in Canada as well as the United States (S.D. Ripley 1965) and information from the Trumpeter Swan Society papers indicates a movement of Eurasian Mute swans into Alaska (King 1968). Federal agency testimony in Federal Court, DC Circuit admits movement of Mute Swans from the Hudson Bay area into the United States (Cirianca in Hill v Norton 2001) this should constitute a homecoming into a former niche, through surviving kin of a once-present genotype that became extinct or rare. This is rather like the restoration of Trumpeter Swans by federal and state agencies, from stock bought from Dr. Blauuw, in Holland, (Derscheid 1939), which the agencies view as "a homecoming" in the US Federal Register.

The Maryland Removal Programs-No Science Used

The Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries cover 41,000,000 acres. It is nearly 200 miles long and 35 miles wide at its widest point and has a shoreline approximately 11,700 miles long. The Bay has never met the basic standards of the Clean Water Act and is becoming the responsibility of the NOAA agency in a restoration effort, similar to the clean up of several Canadian bodies of water.

Of the more than 1,500,000 waterfowl that overwinter or pass through the Chesapeake Bay annually, no more than 3800 mute swans have ever been counted there, according to Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) 2004 estimates. Many of these are birds from inland states that move to open water from areas where lakes freeze in winters. In 2006-2007 the Maryland DNR killed 2,700 Mute Swans with no scientific backup. Most of these swans came from other states, to overwinter. While US federal agency people readily admit that although they cannot say the Mute Swan is a major problem in the Bay, they continue that appraisal with "there is a potential that it could be."

North American Mute Swan Records Timeline

Timeline, difficult because of the long held mistaken opinion of the status of this bird:

- 1585 - John White drawing in Virginia
- 1600s - Many mentions of "swans such as we have at home," in early journals (1600/1700) during seasons in which the other swan species would be nesting in the north. Mute Swans were recorded at Lake Erie (Hennepin, 1698), Upper Mississippi (Jacques Marquette, 1673) and Cabot Strait, St. Lawrence (Father Joseph Jouvency 1610) (Bellrose 1976, Thwaites 1959).
- 1650-70s - specimen from James Bay, found in the 1960s (no publicity)
- 1700s - Gmelin lists *Cygnus olor* in Kamchatka, see also Pennant, Arctic Zoology,
- John Latham, "General Synopsis of Birds,1781-1801."
- 1785-1851s - J.J. Audubon (Birds of North America, 1820s) states "It is possible we may have more than two species of swan within the limits of North America" This quote from section on Trumpeters and Tundras.
- 1804 - Lewis and Clark saw "many young swans in a lake" in Atchison, Kansas area July 4-7, captured them but did not mention species. They do, however, excitedly note first sightings of Trumpeters and Whistling swans at the base of the Columbia River, in March, 1806, on the trip homeward.
- 1872 - Courier & Ives show "Mute and Tundra Swans, Carroll Island, Maryland. "caption from photo showing Haunts of the Wild Swans" print in the book (USF&W book, The Atlantic Flyway, by R. Elman, 1977)
- 1880s - Fossil Lake gives up numerous Trumpeter and *Sthenelides Paloregonus* specimens. (Cope, 1878) "Sthenelides" the old fashioned name for Mute Swan," (Scott1972)
- 1946 - Hildegarde Howard releases studies on Fossil Lake fossil anseriformes, including *Cygnus paloregonus*, with comparisons to *Sthenelides olor* (short tarsi and long toes) in several instances

stating “similar to *Cygnus olor*”, and “thought to represent the Mute-type swan.” (see Wetmore 1957 p.268)

- 1967- Royal Ontario Museum, Archaeology Newsletter, item: THE FORT ALBANY BIRD BONES pg.3. "the breast bone of a mute swan, (ca.1650-1700)." This area was not colonized at that period. The species identification was done additionally by Rufus Churcher, Howard Savage, and Walter Kenyon, ROM. It is published in *Birds from the Ground*, by Dr. Savage and Douglas C.Sadler and published as Occasional Papers in Archaeology No.15, 2003.
- 1967 - In Birds of the Soviet Union, Dement'ev (1967) states: 4. Hissing Swan (Mute Swan) pg.302, under Distribution: Range: extensive area, ending with, "and further east near Sidemi in Maritime Territory."
- 1970s - There are also many notes in Trumpeter Swan Society papers, showing presence of
- Mute Swans, and three colours of bands to accommodate the three species being studied, Trumpeter, Tundra and Mute Swans.

Fossil swans have been found and named *Cygnus paloregonus*, in at least four states. However, most studies have been on behaviour, in the recent past rather than history.

Discussion and conclusions:
Convincing paleontological evidence confirms Miocene, Pliocene and Pleistocene presence in North America of now-extinct swans homotaxic with the Mute Swan. The fossil Mute Swans are probably a lineage of an ancestral proto-Mute Swan, conceivably arisen in the New World and subsequently pioneered across the Northern Hemisphere, eventually branching into Eurasian and North American genotypes that diverged over time. Mute Swans did not spring up spontaneously in pre-European colonization in Canada.

It is indisputable that Mute Swans were present in the early 20th Century in North America, when the MBC and MBTA were being drafted and ratified. It would be extremely unlikely that the formulators of those documents were unaware that Mute Swans were present in North America at that time. Failure of the MBC to specifically exclude Mute Swans from its protective provisions suggests the authors did not intend for them to be excluded, because they were here. In fact, in the MBTA, swans and eiders were separated out and taking them through hunting or for medical research was deemed illegal.

Although, in the United States, the de-listing of Mute Swans has resulted in the destruction of birds, as state-initiated programs, the Canadian Wildlife Service considers the birds to be fully protected in Canada. Only in British Columbia has a local removal been conducted, and that was in conjunction with a Trumpeter Swan introduction project.

The Ornithological Newsletter recently stated: Most federal agencies have little or no scientific expertise. Therefore the “NLAA”decision would be devoid of science. We believe the activities created by the agencies to make the Mute Swan extinct on this continent are also devoid of science.

Acknowledgements:
Howard Savage (now deceased) was a former staff paleontologist at the University of Toronto, Department of Ornithology, and his many comments of swan bones are appreciated. The Howard Savage Faunal Laboratory is named in his honour. Roland Clement was head biologist for National Audubon for many years, working as liaison with the Federal and state agencies and wrote extensively for them. CS (Rufus) Churcher is Professor Emeritus (Paleontology), Department of Zoology, University of Toronto (retired), who has been extremely helpful in some of the paleontological aspects of this investigation. Ken Ross is a senior biologist with the Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Region. Dr. Peter Storck, Curator. Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, ROM was very helpful and informative and

patient. George Jefferson, of Berkeley, NMLA and a State of California paleontologist in residence, was helpful and gets the last word: “Good morning Kathryn, I have no problem providing you with a statement or professional opinion concerning the paleontological evidence, or the lack there of, for *Cygnus olor* and its possible fossil ancestors. This is simply an issue of evidence, which, as you have pointed out, is largely ignored by some. Communications from this office are considered a matter of public record. The relationships of North American Plio-Pleistocene fossil species of the genus *Cygnus* (in part assigned to *Sthenelides* or *Olor* by previous workers), including *C. hibbardi* and *C. paloregonus* to the modern species *C. olor* have not been well studied. Although it has not been shown through any rigorous anatomical research that these taxa form a clade, there are no compelling reasons to reject such a hypothesis. It has been recognized that *C. paloregonus* is a likely candidate ancestor for *C. olor* but this remains to be fully demonstrated. Until then, *C. olor* must be considered a taxon with potential North American ancestry. Best, George”

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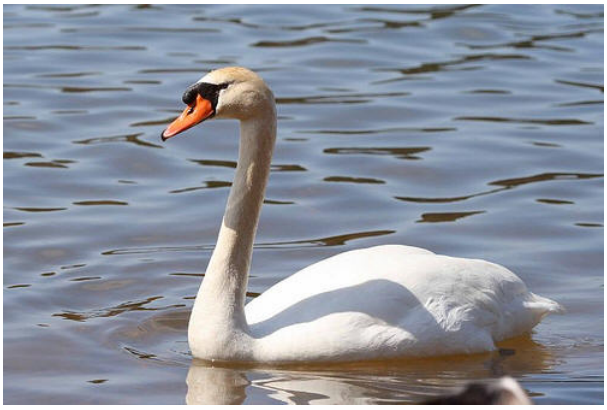

Male Mute Swan at Loch Raven Reservoir, Baltimore County. Maryland (3/23/08). Photo by Frode Jacobsen.

An Explanation of the Working Wetlands Conservation Initiative

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Background:

Working agricultural lands in the southern United States and California, primarily rice and/or crawfish farming, contribute significantly to the habitat requirements of migrating waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife. For example, of the estimated six million birds wintering in Southern Louisiana, 75 percent of the habitat is provided on the crop producing land along the Gulf Coast. The remaining 25 percent is supplied by the marsh habitats along the Gulf. Similarly, agricultural production in the Central Valley of California is critical to wintering bird populations.

Millions of other waterbirds including waders, shorebirds, gulls, terns, rails, moorhens, gallinules, coots, gulls and terns benefit from working wetland habitat. The working wetlands in southern Louisiana and southeastern Texas are invaluable habitat as the result of the integration of crawfish within the rice landscape. This ensures that moist soil and shallow water habitat is available throughout the year to support resident, breeding, wintering and migrant birds.

Rice acreage in the region exceeds 800,000 acres and crawfish acreage approaches 200,000 acres. Rice is cultivated in the warm months from spring into fall. Crawfish is cultivated from fall into spring. The two crops compliment each other. Although little crawfish is cultivated in California, feral populations of the same species cultivated in Louisiana and Texas, the red swamp crawfish, are present throughout the state's rice production areas and provide significant macro-invertebrate food resources for predaceous waterbirds. There is a direct correlation between geometric increases in wading bird populations – egrets, herons, night herons, ibises, and spoonbills – in Louisiana and the development of the state's crawfish industry over the past half-century.

Current trends in agriculture are positive for the production of crops along the Gulf and in California. However, these very factors place habitat quantity and quality for waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife at risk by replacing beneficial crop systems with crop systems that leave no residual habitat, or maintain the moist-soil conditions necessary for production of beneficial plant materials, invertebrates, small fish, crawfish and related habitats. The decline in available habitat on agricultural producing land will concentrate the birds on fewer acres resulting in degraded habitat quality, increased risk of avian disease outbreaks and population decline.

Of special concern is the loss of coastal and interior wetlands in southern Louisiana. Since 1950, over 1.5 million acres of coastal wetlands have been loss along the Louisiana coast. Waterbirds have responded favorably to the working wetlands immediately adjacent to this coast as has been documented by a number of studies.

Similar to the Grassland Reserve Program's annual payment for a "broader" natural resource benefiting management on working grasslands, a payment for working wetland management on cropland will enhance the habitat essential to sustaining waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife. The historic contribution of agricultural production areas for meeting waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife habitat needs, as wetland conversion reduced the native habitat, is well documented. Public participation in a "working lands concept" will extend the beneficial use of these lands to the greater benefit of society in providing habitat requirements without restricting much needed agricultural production.

Recommendation:
The Natural Resources Conservation Service will establish under the authorities of the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) a "working wetlands" pilot program for working agricultural lands providing waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife habitat through water management practices. Key components of the pilot program effort will be:

1. The program will be offered in rice and/or crawfish production areas of Southern Louisiana, Texas and California;
2. Annual per acre cost-share and/or incentive payments will be available for up to 5 years for program participants completing working wetland-management practices;
3. The payment will be for wetland-management practices that provide benefits to waterfowl and other wetland-dependent wildlife;
4. Payments will be offered for three different payment levels as related to the length/period of habitat availability and quality of management (forage/diet and water);
5. Payment ranges will be established in the range of $25 to $50/acre/year as established by the state conservationist in consultation with the State Technical Committee. The rates will be based on actual costs of the practices in the respective states.

Note:
The Working Wetlands Habitat Initiative was submitted to the U. S. Department of Agriculture in August 2008. No final action has been taken as of this writing (October 2008). Organizations, no matter how large or small, are encouraged to support the initiative. To do so, they should direct inquiries as follows:

Mr. Jeffery Durand, Co-Coordinator
Working Wetland Habitat Initiative
6934 Cemetery Highway
St. Martinville, Louisiana 70582 USA jdurandfarm@yahoo.com

Current/Potential Supporters:

American Farm Bureau
Baton Rouge Audubon Society
California Association of Conservation Districts
California Farm Bureau
California Outdoor Heritage Alliance
California Rice Commission
California Waterfowl Association
Delta Waterfowl
Ducks Unlimited
Fermata, Inc.
Louisiana Association of Conservation Districts
Louisiana Crawfish Farmers Association
Louisiana Farm Bureau
Louisiana Rice Growers Association
Louisiana Rice Producers Group
Mississippi River Trust
National Association of Conservation Districts
Texas Association of Conservation Districts
Texas Farm Bureau
Texas Rice Industry for Conservation and the Environment
Texas Rice Producers Association
USA Rice Producers Group
USA Rice Federation
US Rice Producers Association

Woodpecker Remains

Below are 4 pics of what was left of a woodpecker who had her/himself trapped in a house twice. The first time I found her/him and its mate in time and could rescue them. Both had seemed lifeless but then flew away. This one came back and didn't make it the second time.

The orange/red is more intense than in the pictures.

What was left, we put up on a tree stump to be taken care of the way Nature intended.

Anyway, please help us identify that critter.

Thank you very much for your help. Please contact me at: VajraMa@GreatGoddess.org and the *Picoides* editor at: warnockr@accesscomm.ca

Wolfgang Nebmaier

Book Review

Dennis, Roy. 2008. **A Life of Ospreys.** Whittles Publishing, Caithness, Scotland, UK. ix + 211 pages. ISBN 978-1-904445-26-5. Soft cover — £18.99.

For almost 50 years, Roy Dennis has been intimately involved in the recovery of Ospreys in the United Kingdom and this book details the recovery between 1954 and 2007. During this time, the population in Scotland has increased from a single breeding pair to the current population of over 200 hundred breeding pairs. This book is a personal account of the sorrow and joy, the failures and successes, of species recovery.

The author begins by describing the domain of Ospreys in Scotland, most notably Loch Garten where he worked as a warden to protect the birds starting in 1960. The recolonization of Scotland between 1954 and the present is summarized in Chapter 2 with figures showing population recovery. Next, the history of the Osprey in the British Isles details both the relentless persecution of this species beginning in the mid-1800's and the first (unsuccessful) reintroduction attempt of North American Ospreys into Scotland. Chapters 5 to 8 explain the ecology of Ospreys drawing on data from over half a century. Migration timing, the nesting cycle and food habitats are provided in Chapter 5 while the movement and fate of several individuals through both band recovery and more recent satellite telemetry in presented in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 shows dispersal, age at first reproduction and habitat choice. Natural and unnatural causes of mortality are provided in Chapter 8, which nicely summarizes how threats to Ospreys have changed over the past 50 years. The continuing conservation efforts and initiatives to protect this recovering, but still small, population in Scotland are outlined in Chapter 9. The recolonization through both natural dispersal and through hacking efforts of Wales and England are found in Chapter 10. Chapter 11 provides the status and population estimates of Ospreys throughout Europe, Africa, Australia and Canada and the United States. The last chapter offers advice on observing Ospreys in the UK and the appendix provides a list of web pages and publications where readers can find further information.

The subject material in this book comes primarily from Scotland and England and readers unfamiliar with these areas are encouraged to have a map handy that details the cities and localities to orientate themselves during descriptions of the recolonization, dispersal and migration of Ospreys. Indeed, a map with Osprey distribution and local landmarks at the beginning of the book would have gone a long way, even for readers native to this part of Europe. At times information was repeated both within and between chapters including one table that had duplicated population estimates for the Ukraine. Several of the figures would benefit from addition of axis titles, figure titles explaining the relationships displayed and the removal of irrelevant legends to improve comprehension. The section on Osprey recovery, nest selection, human-built nest structures and species recovery was well written but requires a figure of the nest structures described so that managers considering or currently undertaking reintroduction of Ospreys and other bird species can make best use of this information.

The data presented in this book is easily understood (there is not a single statistical test) and the author successfully presents the data to emphasize that the conservation of Osprey populations requires cooperation among the many jurisdictions where these birds spend part of each year. The prime example, and for me the highlight of the book, was the interesting migration data obtained from

satellite transmitters that have been fixed to Ospreys. These data are vital to rebounding populations because they indicate where the bottlenecks in the recovery process may occur once Ospreys have left their breeding areas. The author is dedicated enough to go to some of the locations where transmitter signals have been obtained and in one case is lucky enough to sight the same bird he had attached a transmitter to in the months previous. Not all birds stayed near land during their movements. The few individuals with transmitters that flew out towards open-ocean provide important data on how often birds deviate from normal migration out over open water and subsequently how many of those individuals do manage to survive. The author details the journey of Osprey "SSK" that makes landfall in southern Portugal after a 60 hour, 3000 km non-stop flight over the Atlantic (p.102). In populations so small where researchers and the public know the Ospreys by name (or number), information like this provides motivation to continue the commitment to protect and conserve these amazing animals.

The simple approach of this book is entertaining enough to be enjoyed by naturalists while still containing the findings from a long-term research program to satisfy most ornithologists. The numerous personal diary entries included in the book are candid and reflect the emotional ups and downs involved in a species recovery project; I expect these passages likely mirror the feelings of many ornithologists working in the field of conservation biology. Similarly, many ornithologists will find the success story found in this book uplifting and useful towards their own efforts towards species recovery.

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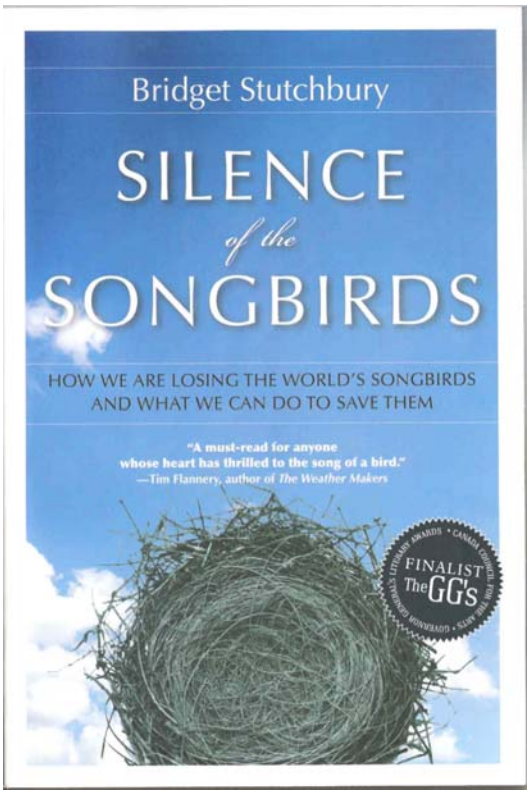
Osprey. Photo by Frode Jacobsen.

Book Review

Stuchbury, Bridget 2007. **Silence of the Songbirds.** Harper Perennial, Toronto, ON. Paperback. 260 pages. 8 colour photographs, 29 illustrations. $19.95 CAD. ISBN: 978-0-00-639577-5.



A great strength of the book is the easy conversational storytelling approach taken by the author. I particularly like the anecdotes to explain observations and concepts placed anywhere from personal to global perspectives. She has successfully taken complex concepts and issues in bird conservation and made them clear to lay people with little or no scientific training. There is sufficient detail in each chapter to make them useful to both lay people and professional biologists. These chapters make handy reviews of the threats to birds and bird conservation in general. Yet the chapters are not data laden with numbers and statistics. The author has carefully selected a limited number of tables and illustrations to strengthen her point made in the text.

The first chapter is titled Paradise not Yet Lost. The author discusses how she got into ornithology, threats faced by migratory birds and her first experiences in the tropical rainforests of Panama and how important these tropical habitats are to biodiversity and as bird habitat. The next chapter discusses the miracle of bird migration, how the superabundant Passenger Pigeon went extinct due to hunting, the importance of ecological services to human survival and a large number of North American songbirds are in population declines due to a wide variety of factors such as pesticides, climate change and habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation. The third chapter discusses the importance, strength and limitations of the Breeding Bird Survey and migration counts and encourages everyone to participate in bird population monitoring.

The fourth chapter reviews the key roles of birds in the tropical rainforests and how habitat fragmentation, degradation and loss disrupt birds at the individual and population levels and ecological goods and services. In the next chapter, the author urges all readers to drink shade coffee as it helps the small coffee growers and less damaging to tropical rainforests. Shade coffee is grown under the forest canopy, which needs little or no fertilizer or pesticides as compared to sun coffee grown in forest-cleared plantations. She encourages 'consumer power' to affect positive change to help people and birds. The chapter 'Falling from the Sky' discusses the negative impacts of pesticides on birds, their prey and on people. She notes that pesticide regulations are lax or not enforced in Latin America and we need to educate the landowners and farmers there about safer pesticides, pesticide alternatives and safe pesticide handling. Consumers should demand organic produce to go along with fair trade shade coffee. In "Bright Lights, Big Danger" the author discusses the hazards of buildings, communication towers and other similar structures to birds during migration and the importance of stopover habitat. Countless millions of birds are killed by these hazards each year. We must have office buildings' lights turned off at night to reduce the carnage.

The next two chapters, 'Stalking the Songbirds' and 'Living on the Edge' deal with effects of habitat fragmentation and loss on birds. These effects include increased predation, increased brood parasitism, difficulty in finding mates and reduced food supply. The author correctly states that edge effects are not universal and are species and landscape context dependent. Birds need some large areas so they can be sources to help populate sink areas.

The book concludes with an uplifting epilogue where the author optimistically says it is not too late to help birds and their habitats as they are worth saving. There are a number of simple actions we can undertake to help. These include buying fairly traded sun coffee and organic produce, keep cat indoors and keep buildings dark during bird migration and use recycled paper products and certified Forrest Stewardship Council lumber and paper products.

As a special bonus, each chapter including the epilogue begins with a beautiful line drawing of songbird by Julie Zickefoose. There are drawings of Wood Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, Purple Martin, Kentucky Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Baltimore Oriole, Dickcissels, Black-billed Cuckoo, Ovenbird, Hooded Warbler and Blackburnian Warbler. In the middle of the book there are sharp colour plates of Chestnut-sided Warbler, Hooded Warblers, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting, Bobolink, Yellow Warbler, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Painted Bunting.

To assist the ease of reading, references are not placed in the text like a scientific paper. References are in the back of the book listed by chapter and make an excellent gateway to the bird conservation literature. There are over 250 references in this book. In addition, there is detailed, easy to use index to find specific information.

I think this book is good and important enough to be the early 21st century's equivalent to Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*. It is a must read and I highly recommend this great book to anyone interested in bird conservation.

Reviewed by Rob Warnock, 3603 White Bay, Regina, SK S4S 7C9, warnockr@accesscomm.ca

Northern Cardinal. Photo by Jean-Sébastien Guénette

CCAC Three Rs Microsite

The first phase of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) Three Rs Microsite has now been published on the CCAC website, http://www.ccac.ca.

The CCAC Three Rs Microsite aims to provide those involved with the use of animals in science with easily accessible, useful, and relevant information and resources on the Three Rs - Replacement, Reduction and Refinement alternatives. This microsite will be continually evolving and the CCAC encourages visitors to check back regularly to view new additions to the site. In addition, the CCAC welcomes comments or suggestions about any part of this microsite.

The CCAC thanks the many reviewers who provided useful feedback during the development of this microsite.

Le microsite du CCPA sur les Trois R

La première phase du microsite du Conseil canadien de protection des animaux (CCPA) sur les Trois R est maintenant disponible sur le site internet du CCPA au: http://www.ccac.ca.

Le but de ce microsite est de fournir aux personnes qui utilisent des animaux à des fins scientifiques de l'information et des ressources utiles, pertinentes et facilement accessibles sur les Trois R, soit sur les alternatives de remplacement, de réduction et de raffinement. Ce microsite sera continuellement révisé et amélioré et le CCPA encourage les visiteurs à le consulter régulièrement afin d'être informés des plus récents ajouts. De plus, le CCPA aimerait recevoir tout commentaire ou suggestion que les visiteurs souhaiteraient formuler à propos des différentes sections de ce microsite.

Le CCPA remercie les nombreux visiteurs ayant fourni des commentaires et des suggestions durant le développement du microsite.

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

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