

Bien que nous n'ayons pas pu remettre les prix lors de la réunion de l'OCNA 2020 en raison de la pandémie internationale COVID-19, nous avons été heureux de pouvoir remettre le prix Speirs à David lors d'une cérémonie privée et de distanciation sociale avant l'OCNA. Nous remercions la Dre Beth McDougall-Shackleton d'avoir organisé cette cérémonie et d'avoir présenté le prix au nom de la société, ainsi que la Dre Mélanie Guigueno d'avoir organisé une réunion Virtual Zoom à laquelle certains des nombreux nominateurs ont pu assister.

Au nom du comité de sélection du Dr Mark Brigham, du Dr Nicola Koper et moi-même, ainsi que de la Société, je tiens à féliciter le Dr David Sherry pour sa contribution exceptionnelle à l'ornithologie au Canada.

-Ken A. Otter, Présidente, Comité du Prix Doris Huestis Speirs

2020 Jamie Smith Memorial Award Recipient – Bill Montevocchi

The Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring is one of the top honours of the Society and recognizes individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the fledging of new generations of Canadian ornithologists. Nominees are ranked based on their commitment to fostering achievement among their students and peers and demonstrating the importance of mentoring in their professional life. On



behalf of the Jamie Smith Committee, who also consisted of Andrea MacLeod and Oliver Love, I am pleased to announce that this year's award is being presented to Bill Montevocchi, who received the award virtually at NAOC.

Dr. Montevocchi exemplifies the spirit of the Jamie Smith Mentoring Award, having mentored countless amateur naturalists and birders, as well as undergraduate and graduate students. We received letters from all across Canada, as Bill's academic children and grandchildren chimed in with their own "Bill stories". Indeed, virtually every seabird biologist across Canada is "related" to Bill in some manner via their academic pedigree. With almost 400 publications, mentorship of 33 MSc, 9 PhD, 3 PDF and 15 BSc Honours students, and having overseen a

plethora of projects, including the long-term study at Funk Island, Bill is clearly a super-star in marine ornithology. His work in seabird energetics, ecotoxicology, seabird tracking, and the development of seabirds as indicators have all revolutionized different aspects of ornithology. Like a gannet, he plunged deep in unknown waters and discovered fruitful schools of thought. As one letter-writer put it "Bill has more big ideas before breakfast than I've had in my career", and he is willing to share these ideas with anyone.

Bill's signature contribution as a supervisor was to help graduate students see the big picture when they were caught up in the details. However, it is Bill's generous and genuine nature that really stands out. His willingness to discuss mundane bird observations with a neophyte turned a computer programmer into a full-time ornithologist, his generosity in helping a young undergrad pursue research launched the career of a current ornithology professor, and his willingness to stick his neck out for a graduate student and go against the entire committee allowed a current professor to graduate with her PhD. There were countless stories.

Bill is particularly known for his dedication towards conservation in Newfoundland, including opposing the Ring Road, highlighting chronic effects from oil pollution, and assessing the effects of low-level military flights in Labrador. As a radio personality, he has brought these and other important conservation issues to a wide audience. The universal statement of the many letter-writers was that Bill would go above and beyond, even with people he barely knew, to guide them as they developed into conservationists, ornithologists, and researchers.

No matter how busy he is, his former students agree that Dr. Montevecchi is always there for his students. His open-door policy means no one is ever turned away. As one letter-writer put it “In some ways, Bill is like the classic absent-minded professor, consistently late for faculty meetings and appointments because he was happily engaged in a broad and rambling discussion with a graduate student struggling with the minutiae of their research topic. In those moments, he showed us that we were truly seen and valued, and I always walked away with boosted confidence and greater clarity and understanding.” It is for the value that he places on mentorship that Dr. Montevecchi is awarded the 2020 Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring.

From Bill’s acceptance speech: “I first met Jamie Smith in 1972, after he had just completed his PhD at Oxford and came to the Institute of Animal Behavior [Rutgers University], where I was just beginning my PhD research. I was astonishingly impressed with the elegant simplicity of Jamie’s field studies on the food searching behavior of European thrushes and the complexity of the behavioral questions that he addressed. These impressions no doubt played a role in some egg predation studies by crows that became a part of my PhD research.”

-Kyle Elliott, Chair of Jamie Smith Committee



Jamie Smith and Bill Montevecchi – in it for the long run!

2020 Early Career Researcher Award – Dr. Barbara Frei

Dr. Barbara Frei is SCO-SOC’s 2020 Early Career Researcher Award recipient. Dr. Frei’s research focuses on the conservation and ecology of avian species-at-risk and finding ways to preserve biodiversity in agricultural landscapes. She is a Quantitative Biologist at Canadian Wildlife Service and has served as the Director of the McGill Bird Observatory, on the Board of Directors for Bird Protection Quebec, and as a Recovery Team Species Expert for Red-headed Woodpecker, Bobolink, and Eastern Meadowlark. Dr. Frei has been described as a leader among her peers making significant contributions to ornithology, teaching, mentorship, and science literacy. She is known for her public outreach and even made a guest appearance on a children’s television show *Finding Stuff Out*. Dr. Frei’s current contributions integrate socio-environmental data and show that that multifunctional ecosystem services in agricultural landscapes are beneficial to both biodiversity and agricultural resilience. The committee (myself, Andy Horn of Dalhousie University, Tony Gaston, Research Scientist Emeritus at Environment and Climate Change Canada, and Jon McCracken of Bird Studies Canada) is confident that Dr. Frei will continue to advance avian conservation biology well into the future. Congratulations Dr. Barbara Frei!



Please Note: Dr. Frei will present a plenary talk at the virtual joint meeting of AOS and SCO-SOC in August 2021.

-Dorothy Hill, Chair SCO-SOC Early Career Researcher Award