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# PICOIDES

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Atlantic Puffins - Gull Island, Witless Bay, Nfld.  
(photo by John Chardine)

[Provincial bird of Newfoundland;

this group seems perplexed because no presentation at the Birds 2000 conference  
(see pp. 2-24) specially featured their species?!]

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# Society of Canadian Ornithologists Société des Ornithologistes du Canada

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**2001 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING/RÉUNION ANNUELLE GÉNÉRALE 2001  
UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, SEATTLE, WASH., U.S.A.**

The 2001 AGM of S.C.O./S.O.C. will be held in Seattle in association with the annual A.O.U. conference 15-18 August. S.C.O. expects to sponsor or co-sponsor at least one session in addition to our (independent) AGM. Meetings will be held on the University of Washington campus. Further details will be in the spring *Picoides* - & sent by A.O.U. to members of that body.

Sievert Rohwer chairs the Local Executive Committee;

website <http://depts.washington.edu/bird2001/>.

Peter Lowther coordinates Papers & Poster submissions;

website <http://www.fmnh.org/aou/aoupage.htm>

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#### THE "BIRDS 2000" EXPERIENCE

The recent bird conference in Newfoundland provided both novelty and sameness, and must have opened the eyes of many who were visiting the tenth province for the first time. For me, it was my first summer visit longer than overnight to St. John's, 50 years after my first experience of Newfoundland - when I didn't come within 150 km of the city in four months on "the Rock". It also was my 15th A.O.U. conference, but the first shared with other ornithological societies; that particular combination (with B.O.U., S.C.O.) seems unlikely to recur.

The conference setting, on a university campus, in August heat and humidity, with commuter traffic audible at most hours, might have been almost anywhere in eastern North America. St. John's laid on what for them were record temperatures - brought by humid southwest winds - that probably surprised people from away as much as they did locals. But as soon as you left the campus you knew you weren't in Alabama or Connecticut or even Ontario. The forested ridge across Long Pond

was boreal by any standard, despite exotic alien plants along the trails, and the birds were those we'd find around Quebec City or Sudbury. It was probably the first-ever A.O.U. meeting in the "Canadian Zone" (of Merriam 1894); Alaska meetings were in his "Hudsonian Zone" and other Canadian meetings in the "Transition Zone". Some suburban housing in the city might have been matched elsewhere, but older streets, especially towards the harbour, featured "vintage Newfoundland" buildings. The harbour itself, cherished as "Newfiejohn" by World War II convoys and entered only by a fjord-like gash in the rock, featured a Viking ship, visiting as part of the celebration of Norse visits to Newfoundland 1000 years ago.

Oh yes, we did go to St. John's to attend the conference! We weren't disappointed. The program committee did its work well; plenary lectures and accompanying symposia focused on aspects of northern and marine ecology to a degree unusual in A.O.U. meetings, even those held elsewhere in































































