

SOCIETY OF CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGISTS REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP – AS OF 31 DECEMBER 2008

**by Thérèse Beaudet
Membership Secretary, SCO**

This report gives the picture of SCO membership as of December 31st, 2008. Following recommendation by the Auditor, the Membership Report now follows the fiscal year, which is January 1st to December 31st. In this report, we will compare the situation between 1st January 2008 and 31 December 2008.

At the end of 2007, SCO members had reached 410 (Table 1), but at the end of 2008, the membership was down to 357, following a decrease in the number of members from universities (decreasing from 222 to 195), and a decrease, for the second year in a row, of the number of members working for the CWS, which went from 80 in 2006, to 71 in 2007 and 50 in 2008. The 357 members include 27 new members and 15 members who rejoined the society after being archived in the previous years.

**Table 1. Affiliation of SCO members
(Those working for the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS)
and in a University are listed as CWS, in Category #2)**

Affiliation (Category)	Members in Dec 2007	%	Members in Dec 2008	%
None (0)	22	5,4	20	5,6
University (1)	222	54,1	195	54,6
Canadian Wildlife Service (2)	71	17,3	50	14,0
Other Fed. Gov. Agencies (3)	10	2,4	7	2,0
Museum (4)	6	1,5	5	1,4
Non Gov. Agencies (e.g. DU) (5)	18	4,4	17	4,8
Prov. Gov., Hydro-Québec (6)	16	3,9	17	4,8
Clubs, Societies (7)	8	2,0	7	2,0
Private Consultants (8)	29	7,1	32	9,0
Libraries (9)	8	2,0	7	2,0
TOTAL	410	100	357	100

As is true for every year, the 2008 list includes those who have paid dues for 2009 and beyond, as well as those who have not yet renewed for 2008 (but have paid for 2007) (Table 2). At the end of December 2008 there were 39 members who had not paid for 2008, and the number was down to 29 in the following weeks, after final notices were sent to non-renewers. I thus had to archive 29 members who did not pay for 2007 (2 of them rejoined later); out of the 29 archived names, 13 were regular members, 2 were sustaining members and the remaining 14 were student members. The total number of names archived reaches now 277, including deceased. One member deceased during the year.

Table 2. Renewal Status of members

Paid through	Members in Dec 2007	%	Members in Dec 2008	%
2006	103	25,1		
2007	86	21,0	39	10,9
2008	162	39,5	168	47,1
2009	38	9,3	88	24,6
2010	11	2,7	36	10,1
2011	2	0,5	13	3,6
2012	0	0,0	2	0,6
2013	1	0,2	1	0,3
LIFE	4	1,0	7	2,0
Complimentary	3	0,7	3	0,8
TOTAL	410	100	357	100

In the years following the meetings in Saskatoon and in Halifax, we observed that it is hard to retain new members who joined specifically for such meetings. For instance, a total of 40 regular members and 18 students joined for the Halifax meeting in 2005; of those, 24 regular members and 14 students did not renew their memberships, and only 20 out of the 58 new members are still members. For students in general, the trend seems similar to past years; they remain members when students, but usually do not renew after graduation if they do not work in ornithology.

Table 3 shows that only 32,9% of the current members joined before 2000; 23,8% joined from 2000 to 2004, and 43,5% joined after that.

Table 3. Year when members joined

Year joined	Members in Dec 2007	%	Members in Dec 2008	%
founders	16	3,9	16	4,5
1983-1989	56	13,7	52	14,6
1990-1994	22	5,4	22	6,2
1995-1999	27	6,6	27	7,6
2000-2004	106	25,9	85	23,8
2005-2007	177	43,2	122	34,2
2008			27	7,6
Unknown or complimentary	6	1,5	6	1,7
TOTAL	410	100	357	100,0

Allowing people to renew for more than one year could increase retention; it reduces bank and postage costs and makes it easier for the Treasurer and the Membership Secretary. As Table 4 shows, at the end of 2008, 47,6% of the members had renewed for more than one year, slightly more than for 2007, when 41% of the members had done so. Half of the regular members renewed for more than one year, whereas about only one third of the students did so.

Table 4. Renewal pattern of members

Number of years paid when renewing/joining	Members in Dec 07	%	Members in Dec 08	%	RM/SM/STM
1	242	59	187	52,4	109/7/71
2	102	24,9	95	26,6	059/6/30
3	25	6,1	28	7,8	016/1/11
4	18	4,4	21	5,9	17/4/0
5	14	3,4	14	3,9	13/1/0
6	1	0,2	1	0,3	1/0/0
7	0	0	0	0,0	
8	1	0,2	1	0,3	1/0/0
LIFE	4	1	7	2,0	
Complimentary	3	0,7	3	0,8	
TOTAL	410	100	357	100,0	

A breakdown of the membership by category is shown in Table 5. The number of sustaining members decreased to 15 (was 18 the year before), and seems to go between 15 and 20 from year to year. The new LIFE category may contribute to decrease the number of sustaining members. The SCO gives a charity receipt of \$25 for sustaining memberships. Three members became LIFE Members in 2008, taking the number of LIFE members to 7. A charity receipt of \$250 is given to LIFE members. A total of 21 free memberships were given to students who received awards or were runner-ups.

Table 5. Breakdown of SCO membership by categories

Membership Category	Members in Dec 2007	%	Members in Dec 2008	%
Regular (\$25/year)	251	61,2	216	60,5
Sustaining (\$50/year)	18	4,4	15	4,2
Student (\$10/year)	118	28,8	95	26,6
Free to Student Award	16	3,9	21	5,9
Life (\$500)	4	1	7	2,0
Complimentary	3	0,7	3	0,8
TOTAL	410	100	357	100,0

As usual, SCO membership has been broken down geographically (Table 6). The SCO is truly a national entity, represented in every province and territory, except in the Nunavut. The provincial and territorial representation is slightly different from previous years, since there has been an increase in membership in Ontario following the 2007 meeting in Lake Opinicon. Typically, membership increases in a province following a meeting in that province or region; a sharp decrease in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick is observed three years after the Halifax meeting. Membership from abroad (many of these are, of course, actually Canadians living elsewhere, mainly in the U.S.) seems more or less stable from year to year (36 in 2005, 2006 and 2007) but decreased to 32 in 2008.

Table 6. Geographical breakdown of SCO membership

Geographical area	Members in Dec 2007	%	Members in Dec 2008	%
Newfoundland	8	2	10	2,8
Nova Scotia	29	7,1	12	3,4
New Brunswick	23	5,6	17	4,8
Prince Edward Island	2	0,5	1	0,3
Québec	57	13,9	48	13,4
Ontario	122	29,8	116	32,5
Manitoba	18	4,4	14	3,9
Saskatchewan	29	7,1	25	7,0
Alberta	26	6,3	26	7,3
British Columbia	57	13,9	53	14,8
Yukon	3	0,7	1	0,3
North West Territories	4	1	3	0,8
Nunavut	0	0	0	0,0
Unites States	25	6,1	26	7,3
Mexico	1	0,2	0	0,0
Australia and New Zealand	1	0,2	0	0,0
Europe	5	1,2	5	1,4
TOTAL	410	100	357	100,0

The existence of the SCO webpage, and the fact that a membership application form can be downloaded from the webpage or from *Picoïdes*, has proven useful. This year again a few individuals undoubtedly discovered the existence of the SCO from the web.

Finally, I have to mention that I sent several collective electronic messages, most of them bilingual, to SCO members in 2008, many of them in relation to *Picoïdes* (announcing new issues, sending calls for papers) as well as notices to members who had to renew their memberships, announcements of new issues of ACE-ECO, varied announcements for awards and meetings, fundraising for Jamie Smith Award, etc. Out of the 357 members, I had e-mail addresses for all except 8 of them who do not have e-mail access and there are always a few students who changed universities without letting us know their new e-mail addresses. Only 6 members with e-mail addresses requested paper copies of *Picoïdes*. Paper copies of *Picoïdes* are sent to 10 libraries.

It has been my pleasure to serve as Membership Secretary for the sixth year. I have to thank the Treasurer, Pierre Lamothe, with whom I worked closely on the membership file, Dorothy McFarlane Diamond, who is sending paper issues of *Picoïdes* to about 20 members and libraries, Russ Dawson for eligibility of students to awards, Rob Warnock and David Bird, and all the others who provided me with the electronic material I sent to the members.

Thanks to all.

Thérèse Beaudet
 SCO Membership Secretary/Secrétaire aux membres de la SOC
 7 August 2009