



Society of Canadian Ornithologists

Société des ornithologistes du Canada

REPORT ON MEMBERSHIP – 2018 with interim data up to August 27, 2019

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This report summarises SCO membership from January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018. Following an earlier recommendation by the Auditor, Membership is summarised on December 31 each year to reflect the SCO's fiscal year (January 1 - December 31). I have also included the most recent updated numbers (August 27, 2019) as an indicator of where we are right now.

Memberships expire on December 31, so note that there is a big drop on January 1 of each year. To mitigate this, we have been distributing renewal reminders to members whose membership is about to lapse. These are sent on November 15 and December 15 each year, and then, for those who still let their membership lapse, again on January 15. I also distribute the first of these reminders to individuals who let their membership lapse the year before.

Table 1. Summary of SCO membership in 2017 and 2018, and through March 17, 2019 by affiliation.

Affiliation (Category)	Members Dec 31 2017	%	Members Dec 31 2018	%	Members August 27, 2019	%
None (0)	9	3.4%	7	2.7%	7	2.8%
University (1)	158	59.4%	159	60.9%	142	57.0%
Environment Canada/CWS (2)	31	11.7%	33	12.6%	35	14.1%
Other Fed. Gov. Agencies (3)	5	1.9%	5	1.9%	5	2.0%
Museum (4)	4	1.5%	4	1.5%	4	1.6%
Non Gov. Agencies (e.g. DU) (5)	21	7.9%	15	5.7%	19	7.6%
Prov. Gov. and Agencies (6)	7	2.6%	6	2.3%	7	2.8%
Clubs, Societies (7)	4	1.5%	6	2.3%	6	2.4%
Private Consultants (8)	26	9.8%	24	9.2%	23	9.2%
Libraries (9)	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%
TOTAL	266	100%	261	100%	249	100%

Membership levels at the end of 2018 included 257 individuals, 3 organisations, and one library, which was similar to the previous year (262 individuals, 3 organisations and 1 library). It is encouraging that we were already almost back to this level of membership in March of 2018 (Table 1). However, comparing these numbers to historical membership reports reveals a large decline in membership since ~2010 (Table 2).

Table 2. Total SCO membership, 2006-2017. Reports were not prepared in 2014 and 2015 so year-end membership is not known.

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Members	393	410	357	381	336	346	343	255	?	?	261	266	261

*Reports were not prepared in 2014 and 2015 so year-end membership is not known.

The SOC attracted 63 new members in 2016, 67 new members in 2017, and 51 in 2018. Since membership is relatively stable this suggests that ~60 members are not returning each year (Table 3). Of the 120 individuals who let their membership lapse at the end of either 2017 or 2018, 77 (64%) were student members, which is approximately twice the proportion that would be expected based on the representation of students in overall membership. Also, of the individuals who let their membership lapse, 46 (38%) had only been members for one year, while 31 (26%) had been members for two years, indicating relatively low retention of new members. Of these “transient” members, 66% were students, again reflecting low retention of students. While this may reflect failure of some students to continue in the field of ornithology, it may also indicate that many students are joining for “reasons of convenience”, such as reduced conference fees or eligibility for student awards or travel grants, and are not subsequently returning.

Table 3. Renewal Status of members

Paid through	Members		Members	
	Dec 31 2017	%	Dec 31 2018	%
2016	<i>55</i>	<i>expired</i>		
2017	112	42.1%	<i>61</i>	<i>expired</i>
2018	73	27.4%	101	38.7%
2019	27	10.2%	76	29.1%
2020	10	3.8%	29	11.1%
2021	5	1.9%	12	4.6%
2022	2	0.8%	2	0.8%
2023	1	0.4%	1	0.4%
2024	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2025	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2026	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2027	1	0.4%	1	0.4%
2028	0	0.0%	1	0.4%
LIFE	35	13.2%	38	14.6%
TOTAL	266	100%	261	100%

A breakdown of membership by category is shown in Table 4. Seven individuals signed on as new life members during 2016, two in 2017, and three in 2018.

Table 4. Breakdown of SCO membership by categories

Membership Category	Members Dec 31 2016	%	Members Dec 31 2017	%	Members Dec 31 2018	%	Members August 27 2019	%
Regular (\$25/year)	104	39.8	126	47.4%	128	49.4%	132	53.0%
Sustaining (\$50/year)	12	4.6	8	3.0%	8	3.1%	8	3.2%
Student (\$10/year)	112	42.9%	93	35.0%	86	33.0%	70	28.1%
Life (\$500)	33	12.6	35	13.2%	36	13.8%	36	14.5%
Complimentary	0	0%	4	1.5%	3	1.1%	3	1.2%
TOTAL	261	100%	266	100.0%	261	100.0%	249	100%

The geographical breakdown of SCO-SOC membership is shown in Table 5; note that some international students at Canadian universities are registered with Canadian addresses, so international membership is somewhat under-represented.

Table 5. Geographic distribution of SCO membership

Geographical area*	Members Dec 31 2016	%	Members Dec 31 2017	%	Members Dec 31 2018	%
Newfoundland	6	2.3	11	4.1%	9	3.4%
Nova Scotia	8	3.1	6	2.3%	7	2.7%
New Brunswick	8	3.1	9	3.4%	8	3.1%
Prince Edward Island	0	0.0	0	0.0%	1	0.4%
Québec	25	9.6	27	10.2%	29	11.1%
Ontario	82	31.4	85	32.0%	74	28.4%
Manitoba	10	3.8	13	4.9%	13	5.0%
Saskatchewan	16	6.1	17	6.4%	17	6.5%
Alberta	34	13.0	31	11.7%	37	14.2%
British Columbia	52	19.9	47	17.7%	47	18.0%
Yukon	4	1.5	5	1.9%	4	1.5%
Northwest Territories	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Nunavut	0	0.0	0	0.0%	1	0.4%
United States	13	5.0	13	4.9%	13	5.0%
Mexico	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Australia / New Zealand	0	0.0	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Europe	3	1.1	2	0.8%	1	0.4%
TOTAL	261	100%	266	100%	261	100%