

Doris Huestis Speirs Award 2018 – Robert W. Elnor

The Doris Huestis Speirs Award is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding lifetime contributions in Canadian ornithology. On behalf of the society, I am happy to announce this year's award recipient is Dr. Robert W. Elnor.

Dr. Elnor's career in ornithology began in an unusual manner – as a researcher in ocean invertebrates. That trajectory shifted, however, in 1991 when Dr. Elnor accepted a position as Scientist and Research Manager at the Pacific Wildlife Research Centre of the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada. In his capacity at the Wildlife Service, he has fostered world-class research for nearly three decades through his own personal research activity, through interaction with and support for the work of others within CWS, and through his extensive interactions with academics, both locally and across the country. His enthusiasm and critical thinking, willingness to take chances and pursue truly novel lines of research has inspired a generation of students, many of whom are now well established researchers in government/ academia/industry and NGO's across the country. Perhaps his unusual background is what led him to recognize and draw the world's attention to the importance of biofilm as an integral food source for migrating shorebirds. Biofilm is now recognized globally as a critical resource during migratory stopovers and is being integrated into international habitat conservation planning. With nearly 200 career papers and reports, Dr. Elnor is firmly established as a researcher in his own right, but through his leadership role and collaborations, Dr. Elnor has been the 'behind the scenes' hand helping foster exponentially more of Canada's ornithological research.



Most recently, in formal retirement, he has devoted the better part of two years to bring international ornithology to Canada, as The Convener of the 27th International Ornithological Congress that took place in Vancouver, BC this past August. Dr. Elnor added his unique perspective to avian research and awareness by bringing the Congress together with the Vancouver International Bird Festival. In doing so, he further bridged the gap between science, conservation and art, to communicate the gift of birds and their habitats to scientists and the general public alike.

On behalf of the selection committee of Dr. Mark Brigham, Dr. Nicola Koper and myself, as well as the society, I would like to congratulate Dr. Robert W. Elnor on his legacy of work.

Ken A. Otter, Chair, Doris Huestis Speirs Award Selection Committee