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Common Goldeneye (*Bucephala clangula*). // Garrot à oeil d'or. Photo: Katelyn Luff.

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Editors' Message

Rob Warnock and Barbara Bleho

Welcome to the third and final issue of *Picoides* in 2023. We hope everyone had a great summer and start to fall. In Matt Reudink's President's Message, he discusses the success of the 800-person + joint AOS-SCO-SOC conference in August in London Ontario. Matt thanks Greg Mitchell, the conference organizing committee and the many volunteers for their outstanding work. He gives a shout out to the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Committee for the ongoing progress making SCO-SOC more inclusive for everyone. Matt concludes his report with the news of SCO-SOC's partnership with Indigenous Haida artist, Erik Prytula. Erik will create shirts and other SCO-SOC gear with a Haida rendition of our society's woodpecker logo. Sales of this special gear will go to support the Society's EDI initiatives.

We welcome both Lionel Leston as our new Recording Secretary and Lisha Berzins as our new Treasurer. We also thank again Junior Tremblay and Greg Mitchell for their years of exemplary service to SCO-SOC.

On November 1, 2023, the American Ornithologists Society (AOS) announced the abandonment of the use of eponymous English bird names. It is a welcome and overdue change needed to begin to rectify harm. The SCO-SOC stands in solidarity with the AOS in this decision. SCO-SOC luminaries Kathy Martin and Erica Nol were very involved in this process with the AOS. Check out the official SCO-SOC statement on changing eponymous bird names in this issue.

In this issue, there is a keynote article about Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in SCO-SOC. The article authors discuss essential EDI definitions, its importance to SCO-SOC, key Society initiatives to boost EDI and several membership indicators to measure progress towards achieving EDI goals. The authors also provide some key references about EDI as well. It is an important read.

There are several other interesting articles in this issue. We have articles from Emily Choy and Leanne Grieves, our newest recipients of the Early Career Research Award. They both discuss their past and present research projects. Other articles include birding in Cuba and sister publication *The Cuban Birder*; updates from Field Research in Ecology and Evolution Diversified (FREED) program and Bird Sounds Global: automated species recognition with machine learning. Check them all out.

Congratulations to Kathy Martin and her colleagues on the publication of *Ecology and Conservation of Mountain Birds*. Publication details are in this issue and an upcoming review of this book will appear in the next issue of *Picoides*.

There is a book review of *Connecticut Yankee Goes to Washington.* This is a well-written biography of US politician George P. McLean who was a key driving force behind the creation of the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.* It is a good read.

Notices in this issue include deadlines for Student Research Awards and the Early Career Research Award. Please visit these notices for award details and submission deadlines. Also see the notice for the SCO-SOC Membership Survey. We encourage everyone to complete the survey. And of course, the latest *Avian Conservation and Ecology* Table of Contents is included in the issue. Check them all out!

The next *Picoides* deadline is February 15, 2024. We look forward to your next submission. Without submissions, there is no *Picoides.* We also welcome your feedback as it your publication and we wish everyone a safe, healthy fall, winter, and holiday season.

FRANÇAIS—Message des éditeurs – Rob Warnock et Barbara Bleho

Bienvenue dans ce troisième et dernier numéro des *Picoides* de l'année 2023. Nous espérons que tout le monde a passé un bon été et un bon début d'automne. Dans le message du président, Matt Reudink, évoque le succès de la conférence conjointe AOS-SCO-SOC de plus de 800 personnes qui s'est tenue en août à London (Ontario). Matt remercie Greg Mitchell, le comité organisateur de la conférence et les nombreux bénévoles pour leur travail remarquable. Il salue le Comité pour l'équité, la diversité et l'inclusion (EDI) pour les progrès continus réalisés afin de rendre le SCO-SOC plus inclusif pour tous. Matt conclut son rapport en annonçant le partenariat du SCO-SOC avec l'artiste

indigène haïda, Erik Prytula. Erik créera des chemises et d'autres articles pour le SCO-SOC avec une interprétation haïda du logo du pic de notre société. Les ventes de cet équipement spécial serviront à soutenir les initiatives EDI de la Société.

Nous souhaitons la bienvenue à Lionel Leston en tant que nouveau secrétaire-archiviste et à Lisha Berzins en tant que nouvelle trésorière. Nous remercions également Junior Tremblay et Greg Mitchell pour leurs années de service exemplaire au SCO-SOC.

Le 1er novembre 2023, l'American Ornithologists Society (AOS) a annoncé l'abandon de l'utilisation des noms d'oiseaux éponymes anglais. Il s'agit d'un changement bienvenu et attendu, nécessaire pour commencer à réparer les dommages. Le SCO-SOC est solidaire de l'AOS dans cette décision. Kathy Martin et Erica Nol, deux sommités du SCO-SOC, ont été très impliquées dans ce processus avec l'AOS. Consultez la déclaration officielle du SCO-SOC sur le changement des noms d'oiseaux éponymes dans ce numéro.

Ce numéro contient un article principal sur l'équité, la diversité et l'inclusion (EDI) au sein du SCO-SOC. Les auteurs de l'article discutent des définitions essentielles de l'EDI, de son importance pour le SCO-SOC, des initiatives clés de la Société pour stimuler l'EDI et de plusieurs indicateurs d'adhésion pour mesurer les progrès vers la réalisation des objectifs de l'EDI. Les auteurs fournissent également quelques références clés sur l'EDI. Il s'agit d'une lecture importante.

Ce numéro contient plusieurs autres articles intéressants. Nous avons des articles d'Emily Choy et de Leanne Grieves, nos nouveaux récipiendaires de la bourse de recherche en début de carrière. Elles parlent toutes deux de leurs projets de recherche passés et présents. D'autres articles traitent de l'observation des oiseaux à Cuba et de la publication sœur *The Cuban Birder* ; des mises à jour du programme FREED (Field Research in Ecology and Evolution Diversified) et de Bird Sounds Global : reconnaissance automatisée des espèces grâce à l'apprentissage automatique. Consultez-les tous.

Félicitations à Kathy Martin et à ses collègues pour la publication de *Ecology and Conservation of Mountain Birds*. Les détails de la publication figurent dans ce numéro et une critique de ce livre paraîtra dans le prochain numéro de *Picoides*.

Une critique de livre a été publiée sur *Connecticut Yankee Goes to Washington*. Il s'agit d'une biographie bien écrite de l'homme politique américain George P. McLean, qui a été l'un des principaux moteurs de la création du *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* (loi sur le traité des oiseaux migrateurs) de 1918. C'est une bonne lecture.

Les avis publiés dans ce numéro comprennent les dates limites pour les bourses de recherche pour étudiants et la bourse de recherche en début de carrière. Veuillez consulter ces avis pour obtenir des détails sur les bourses et les dates limites de soumission. Consultez également l'avis relatif à l'enquête sur l'adhésion au SCO-SOC. Nous encourageons tout le monde à répondre à l'enquête. Et bien sûr, la dernière table des matières d'*Avian Conservation and Ecology* (Écologie et conservation et des oiseaux) est incluse dans le numéro. Jetez-y un coup d'œil !

La prochaine date limite pour *Picoides* est le 15 février 2024. Nous attendons avec impatience votre prochain article. Sans soumissions, il n'y a pas de *Picoides*. Nous vous invitons également à nous faire part de vos commentaires concernant votre publication et nous souhaitons à tous un automne, un hiver et des fêtes de fin d'année sains et sûrs.

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Message du président

Matt Reudink

Pour beaucoup d'entre nous, cela fait beaucoup trop d'années que nous n'avons pas vu nos amis et collègues en personne. La conférence conjointe de cet été avec l'AOS a été un changement bienvenu et une merveilleuse occasion de retrouver de vieux amis et de s'en faire de nouveaux. Un grand merci à Greg Mitchell pour avoir représenté la SOC-SCO au sein du comité de direction et aux innombrables personnes qui ont donné de leur temps pour siéger dans les comités, juger les exposés et les affiches, et faire tout le travail en coulisses qui rend ces conférences possibles.

Notre conférence conjointe a attiré plus de 800 participants du monde entier, ce qui en fait une conférence véritablement mondiale. Comme toujours, la qualité des études présentées par les étudiants et par les chercheurs en début de carrière semble être de plus en plus impressionnante chaque année - et je ne sais jamais vraiment comment c'est même possible! Les sociétés et les organisateurs continuent de s'efforcer de rendre nos réunions et nos sociétés plus inclusives. Un grand merci à notre comité EDI pour son engagement continu à faire de la SOC-SCO une société accueillante pour tous avec des conférences qui fournissent un environnement sûr et inclusif pour que nous puissions tous y partager notre passion pour les oiseaux. Il reste encore beaucoup à faire mais nous sommes sur la bonne voie.

Cette année, nous organisons pour la deuxième fois notre programme de mentorat structuré de 8 mois; cette fois-ci, nous jumèlerons 11 mentorés avec des ornithologues professionnels issus de l'industrie, du gouvernement et du monde universitaire. Si vous souhaitez vous impliquer à l'avenir, n'hésitez pas à nous contacter!

Cet hiver, nous organisons à nouveau une collecte de fonds pour soutenir nos diverses initiatives en matière d'EDI. Cependant, nous changeons les choses cette année. Notre collègue ornithologue canadienne et artiste haïda indigène, Erik Prytula, a créé une interprétation haïda personnalisée de notre logo de pic à dos noir et nous produirons des chemises et d'autres articles pour la SOC-SCO. Pour plus d'informations et de liens, veuillez consulter l'avis de collecte de fonds à la page 22.

ENGLISH— President's Message – Matt Reudink

For many of us, it has been far too many years since we last saw our friends and colleagues in person. This summer's joint meeting with the AOS was a welcome change and a wonderful opportunity to reunite with old friends and make plenty of new ones. Many, many thanks go out to Greg Mitchell for representing SCO-SOC on the leadership committee and to the countless folks who volunteered their time to sit on committees, judge talks and posters, and do all the behind-the-scenes work that makes these meetings possible.

Our joint meeting attracted over 800 participants from across the world, making it a truly global conference. As always, the quality of the work presented by students and early career researchers seems to get more impressive each year—and I'm never quite sure how! The societies and organizers continue to push towards making our meetings, and our societies, more inclusive. Many thanks go out to our EDI committee for their continued commitment to making the SCO-SOC a society that is welcoming to everyone with meetings that provide a safe and inclusive environment for us all to share our passion for birds. There is much work still to be done, but we are on the right track.

This year we are running our 8-month structured mentorship program for the second time; this go-round we will be pairing 11 mentees with professional ornithologists from industry, government, and academia. If you are interested in getting involved in the future, please be sure to get in touch!

This winter, we are once again running a fundraiser to support our various EDI initiatives. However, we are switching things up year. Fellow Canadian ornithologist and Indigenous Haida artist, Erik Prytula, has created a custom Haida rendition of our black-backed woodpecker logo and we will be producing shirts and other SCO-SOC gear. For more information and links, please visit the fundraiser notice on page 22.

2023 Early Career Researcher Award Research Synopses

Research Synopsis – Emily Choy

I would like to sincerely thank the Society of Canadian Ornithologists for the Early Career Researcher Award and the opportunity to share my research at the AOS & SCO-SOC 2023 Joint Conference. I was incredibly honoured to share the award with Dr. Leanne Grieves. One week after starting my new position as an Assistant Professor at McMaster University, I carpooled with Dr. Grieves and Dr. Jim Quinn, the winner of the 2023 Doris Heustis Speirs Award, to AOS & SCO-SOC 2023 in London! The conference was a wonderful opportunity to showcase my research program and graduate student opportunities in my new lab! I was happy to finally meet Dr. Danielle Ethier who was an incredible resource and helped coordinate our plenaries as award winners. I was honoured to attend the AOS Fellows Dinner and many of the networking opportunities, such as the ECR meet-up organized by Dr. Steffi LaZerte.

Young Emily feeding a Black-Capped Chickadee at her grandparents' cottage in Bolsover, Ontario. Photo Credit: Vicky Choy

As far back as I can remember I have been fascinated by nature and birds. As a child, I grew up in Markham, Ontario, but spent my summers at my grandparents' cottage on Canal Lake in Bolsover, Ontario where I would spend countless hours feeding the Black-Capped Chickadees (*Poecile atricapillus*) and White-Breasted Nuthatches (*Sitta carolinensis*).

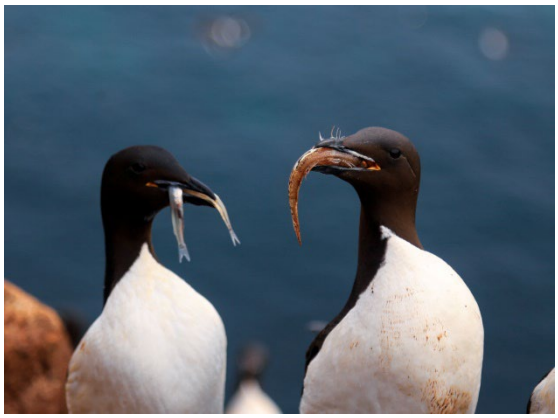
Fast forward to my Biology undergraduate at Queen's University, my first introduction to ornithology started when I attended Dr. Raleigh Robertson's "Field Biology and Conservation of Birds" course. Dr. Robertson led us on numerous expeditions to witness fascinating bird behaviours! I remember being enchanted by the display of the American Woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) and going on an evening "owl hoot" to call the Barred Owls (*Strix varia*) with special guest Mike Runtz!

I started seabird research as an MSc candidate at the University of Ottawa, where I worked on a project with Drs. Jules Blais, Mark Mallory, and John Smol to study the ability of Northern Fulmars (*Fulmarus glacialis*) to transport marine nutrients and contaminants through their guano to coastal ecosystems. I spent one summer on Cape Vera, Devon Island, in Nunavut and was captivated by the landscape and wildlife! The fulmar colony was massive and was having an influence on the neighbouring ecosystems. Cape Vera is a polar desert, but next to the seabird cliffs lay an oasis of lichens, saxifrage, and Snow Buntings (*Plectrophenax nivalis*). My research demonstrated that stable isotope values and concentrations of total mercury and biomagnifying PCBs and DDT were higher in aquatic and terrestrial food webs closer to the seabird colony relative to those collected from distant reference sites (Choy et al., 2010a; Choy et al., 2010b). The degree of isotopic enrichment was astounding- $\delta^{15}N$ values of several organisms including buntings at Cape Vera were similar to polar bears (Dehn et al., 2006)!

The cliffs that host the Northern Fulmar colony at Cape Vera on Devon Island, Nunavut. Jewel lichen is an orange ornithogenic lichen commonly found near seabird roosts. Photo credit: Emily Choy

I returned to seabird research as a postdoc at McGill University with Drs. Kyle Elliott and Grant Gilchrist. I was honoured to participate in the Coats Island Murre project, a long-term monitoring program in Hudson Bay, Nunavut established by Dr. Tony Gaston. The objective of my research was to examine the direct and indirect effects of climate change on Thick-Billed Murres (*Uria lomvia*). Climate change

may have direct effects on murres through increasing air temperatures, leading to hyperthermia. During the breeding season, murres face the risk of mortality due to water loss from overheating and mosquito parasitism (Gaston and Elliott, 2013). In addition, murres have switched their diet from >50% Arctic Cod (*Boreogadus saida*) to >50% Capelin (*Mallotus villosus*) with the warming of Hudson Bay (Gaston et al., 2009). The lower body mass of capelin may have resulted in lower net energy gain to murre chicks and therefore, decreases in chick growth rates(Gaston et al., 2005). As a cold-adapted Arctic bird with one of the highest energetic costs of flight of all vertebrates (Elliott et al., 2013), the synergistic effects of prey changes and increasing air temperatures may impact murre fitness.



Thick-Billed Murres with forage fish in their beaks from the West colony at Coats Island in northern Hudson Bay, Nunavut. Photo Credit: Douglas Noblet

To examine the effects of Arctic warming on murres, I was part of the "Arctic Scope" project with Drs. Elliott, Francois Vezina, Oliver Love, and Anna Hargreaves. Using respirometry, I measured several physiological traits associated with heat stress in birds, including increases in metabolic rate, evaporative water loss, body temperature, and evaporative cooling efficiency. Our study demonstrated that Thick-billed Murres experience heat stress at low temperatures and had the lowest evaporative cooling efficiency (the ability to dissipate heat) ever reported in birds (Choy et al., 2021). In addition, body mass was a significant predictor of heat tolerance, and larger murres were more sensitive to heat stress than smaller birds. Our study on murres was the first to examine heat stress in seabirds. As most studies on avian heat tolerance have focused on desert birds, the Arctic Scope project was also the first to examine heat stress in Arctic birds (Choy et al., 2021; O'Connor et al., 2021; O'Connor et al., 2022).

To examine the indirect effects of prey shifts on murres, I studied heart rate as a proxy for metabolic rate and fine scale energetics. I had the opportunity to be trained in surgeries to implant heart rate loggers on Black-Legged Kittiwakes (*Rissa tridactyla*) by Dr. Jonathan Green at the Institute for Seabird Research and Conservation, a long-term monitoring station established by Dr. Scott Hatch. The Middleton Island biological station in Alaska, USA, is an amazing facility and produced many studies on differences in energy costs of behaviours and different stages of the breeding season in kittiwakes (Tremblay et al., *in review*.; Tremblay et al., 2022).

During the pandemic, I was prevented from continuing my field research on murres and kittiwakes. However, I was able to work with Drs. Louise Blight, John Elliott, and Keith Hobson to examine a 109-year trend in total and methylmercury concentrations in Glaucous-Winged Gulls (*Larus glaucescens*). We found that stable trends in methylmercury and total mercury in Salish Sea gulls coincided with a 150 year-old shift away from marine prey to more terrestrial and freshwater food sources (Choy et al., 2022). In contrast, total mercury concentrations have actually increased in the Pacific Ocean ecosystem over time(Laurier et al., 2004; Sunderland et al., 2009). As such, the long-term prey shifts in gulls may have obscured trends in mercury.

This summer marked my first return to seabird field work, and I was able to mentor my first Honours student at McMaster on the kittiwake heart rate project. We had a successful field season and were able to deploy 30 heart rate loggers and GPS-accelerometers on kittiwakes, to identify which behaviours required the most energy during the breeding season. As a new PI, I will continue my research on seabirds and will also study Tree Swallows (*Tachycineta bicolour*). After my MSc, I had conducted field research to monitor contaminants in swallow colonies breeding at wastewater treatment plants with Dr. Kim Fernie.

I would like to sincerely thank the Society of Canadian Ornithologists again for the award and the opportunity to share my research. I would also like to thank the wonderful mentors I have had in ornithology, including Drs. Kyle Elliott, Grant Gilchrist, Kim Fernie, Raleigh Robertson, Francois Vezina, Oliver Love, Jonathan Green, Scott Hatch, Louise Blight, and others. I am grateful for the tremendous support I have received from the Weston Family Foundation NSERC, Fonds de Recherche du Quebec, L'Oreal-UNESCO Women in Science, MEOPAR, ArcticNet and Earth Rangers programs. In my new position, I look forward to being an active member of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists and a mentor to the next generation of diverse ornithologists!

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Research Synopsis – Leanne Grieves

It was an honour to be co-awarded the 2023 Society of Canadian Ornithologists Early Career Researcher Award (SCO ECRA) along with Dr. Emily Choy this summer. We carpooled to the joint SCO-SOC/AOS Ornithology Meeting together from Hamilton to London ON, and it was wonderful to have the opportunity to showcase our research as part of the meeting's plenary talks. We also had the chance to have lunch with past SCO ECRA winners. Making connections through this award, the annual meeting, and the lunch put together by Dr. Steffi LaZerte has been a deeply meaningful and positive experience for me, and I want to express my gratitude to the SCO-SOC for this award.

I have always loved nature and spent much of my childhood outdoors climbing poplars, exploring flooded ditches, wetlands, wheat fields, and the network of carragana bushes behind my childhood home, and rescuing lady beetles trapped in the spring ice in my yard near Winnipeg, MB. I first became interested in birds after adopting a special needs budgerigar when I was about 20. He had leg and foot deformities such that he couldn't perch properly, so I designed special perches for him to use. It wasn't long before I had adopted several other birds, amassing quite the crew of feathered friends! Pete the budgie lived a rich 7 years, and I am grateful to still share my life with the sole remaining member of the original flock, Sav the cockatiel, who is an impressive 22 years old and still going strong!

Around the time I was adopting exotic birds in need of forever homes, I started my undergraduate degree at the University of Winnipeg. My first-year biology instructor was Dr. Scott Forbes and, after hearing about his work on Red-winged Blackbirds (*Agelaius phoeniceus*), I approached him to ask if there were any research opportunities in his lab. I spent three summers monitoring Red-winged Blackbird

breeding colonies near Rosser MB, culminating in my Honour's thesis project on the effect of neighbours on nest predation (Grieves and Forbes 2012). In the final year of my BSc, I gained experience learning genetic techniques in Dr. Alberto Civetta's lab as an NSERC Undergraduate Student Research Award recipient (which was also how I was able to complete my thesis research during the summer). Leveraging my field and lab skills, I then applied to join Dr. Jim Quinn's behavioural ecology group at McMaster University.

Four Smooth-billed Anis huddled together on the outer surface of a tree at dawn in southwestern Puerto Rico.

Dr. Quinn hired me as a field technician and I spent my first fall in Puerto Rico studying Smooth-billed Anis in 2011, officially starting my MSc in winter 2012. I quickly fell in love with La Isla Encanta, and with these complex and beautiful birds. I thought I would study the evolution and maintenance of the Smooth-billed Anis' (*Crotophaga ani*) rare joint-laying communal breeding system – a breeding system limited to just 15 of the world's described bird species – but instead I ended up studying the complexity of their vocal communication. Together with our collaborator and my mentor Dr. David Logue (now at the University of Lethbridge), we published the vocal repertoire of Smooth-billed Anis (Grieves et al. 2015a) and conducted experiments demonstrating their use of referential signals indicative of aerial and terrestrial predators (Grieves et al. 2014) and reliable signals of aggressive intent (Grieves et al. 2015b). This set the stage for my interest in studying animal communication, and it was also the first time I thought about olfaction in birds. Smooth-billed Anis are particularly smelly (Weldon and Rappole 1997), and I wondered whether their unique musky odour could be important for communication.

I wasn't able to pursue this line of inquiry at the time, but to my surprise and delight, when I interviewed with Dr. Beth MacDougall-Shackleton at Western University in London, ON in 2015, I discovered that then-PhD candidate, Dr. Joel Slade (now a professor at Fresno State University), had recently identified a link between the chemical composition of preen oil – a proxy for body odour in birds – and immune genotype, providing a potential mechanism of olfactory mate assessment in birds. I was fortunate to follow up on Dr. Slade's work by conducting behavioural experiments demonstrating that Song Sparrows (*Melospiza melodia*) use preen oil odour cues to discriminate the major histocompatibility complex (MHC) immune genotype of potential mates—providing the first evidence that odour cues are the mechanism by which songbirds assess the MHC genotype of potential mates, and challenging the view that songbirds possess little or no sense of smell (Grieves et al. 2019c). I also demonstrated that preen oil composition differs among species (Grieves et al. 2019a), sexes, populations, age classes, seasons (Grieves et al. 2019b), and with food stress (Grieves et al. 2020), and exposure to avian malaria parasites (Grieves et al. 2018). I conducted additional behavioural experiments showing that Song Sparrows use preen oil odour to discriminate species and sexes (Grieves et al. 2019a), and showed that symbiotic microbes of the preen gland vary among populations (Grieves et al. 2021b) and correlate with MHC genotype and preen oil composition (Grieves et al. 2021a)—providing the first evidence that salient odour cues may be influenced both directly by host genotype and indirectly by host microbiota. As part of an international collaboration, colleagues and I recently published the first review and analysis of seasonal and sex differences in preen oil composition wherein we introduced a framework for understanding the function of inter-individual differences in preen oil, formalizing the hypothesis that sex differences in preen oil enable conspecific olfactory communication during breeding (Grieves et al. 2022). This huge research effort was made possible in large part due to my receipt of a Vanier Scholarship and the Gilles Brassard Doctoral Prize for Interdisciplinary Research, both of which allowed me to focus intensively on research throughout my PhD.

Song Sparrows at Western University's Advanced Facility for Avian Research held in captivity for use in behavioural experiments testing their ability to discriminate odour cues in preen oil.

I defended my dissertation in April 2020 during peak Covid and, despite the disappointment of defending my PhD from my bedroom, my doctoral seminar being cancelled, and ensuring celebrations being deferred for about two years, I was very lucky to have been able to defend on time, and to secure a postdoc position at McMaster University in July 2020. I developed a research project that I completed data collection for at the Long Point Bird Observatory (Birds Canada) in Port Rowan, ON, surveying the preen gland microbial and preen oil chemical diversity of over 30 migratory passerine species. These analyses are ongoing, but I look forward to sharing the results of this project at a future SCO-SOC meeting, and/or in a future *Picoides* article!

For my second postdoc (as an NSERC Postdoctoral Fellow), I stayed at McMaster University and finally returned to pursue my interest in the olfactory communication of Smooth-billed Anis. In fall 2021, I was granted permission to travel to Puerto Rico once again, where I collected preen gland swabs and preen oil samples to demonstrate, for the first time in social birds, that group members have shared preen gland and feather microbial communities (Grieves et al. 2023) as well as shared preen oil and feather chemical composition (Grieves et al. Am Nat *In Revision*). These findings raise the exciting possibility that symbiotic microbes may influence host odour and provide information about group membership, and the chemical similarity among group members raises the possibility that social birds may use odour cues to distinguish group members from non-group members, much like social insects and mammals do. This is particularly exciting because Smooth-billed Anis live in non-kin groups, so their chemical similarity is not likely to be driven by relatedness. I hope to pursue these and related questions exploring chemical communication in Smooth-billed Anis in the future.

Recently, I was offered a Rose Postdoctoral Fellowship and made the leap to take up a position at Cornell University in Ithaca NY. I plan to use my expertise in animal communication to explore the importance of multimodal signalling in avian mate choice. I will work with Song Sparrows again, using behavioural experiments to determine the relative importance of different modalities (visual, acoustic, and chemical) for mate preferences, combining this information with field data on reproductive success, mate choice, and physical traits that reflect individual quality. Together, this should allow me to determine the relative importance of different signal modalities in mate choice and evaluate how females integrate multiple type of information to arrive at a mate choice decision. I am excited to take on this project and, in my first month, it's been a thrill to settle into my new community at the Lab of Ornithology.

An adult Song Sparrow perched on the ground foraging in London, Ontario.

They say it takes a village to raise a child, and I agree with this proverb. It also takes a village to raise a scientist, and I am endlessly grateful to the incredible scientific community that has helped shape me into the scientist I am today. This is not an exhaustive list, but I want to especially express my gratitude to my mentors Scott Forbes, Nancy Loadman (rest in peace), Susan Lingle, Jim Quinn, David Logue, Beth MacDougall-Shackleton, Mark Bernards, Greg Gloor, Greg Slater, Allyson Brady, Ben Bolker, Jonathan Dushoff, Oscar Diaz, and Diane Fields (rest in peace), as well as colleagues Rick Simpson, Leticía Soares, Joel Slade, Tosha Kelly, Jim Barnett, Cayleih Roberston, Rodrigo Narro Péres, James McKendry, Cody Dey, Laura King, Isabel Rojas-Ferrer, and Luis Rodriguez Sanoguet. I also thank the Society of Canadian Ornithologists and its many wonderful members who I have been fortunate to work and connect with over the years. I am privileged to be part of this ornithology community and I am excited to continue working with the SCO-SOC to make our society more equitable, welcoming, and just. Thank you for the opportunity to share my 'academic origin story' and research snapshot with you – please come say 'hi' at the next meeting!

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Feature Articles

Increasing Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the SCO-SOC

Triana, C. [1]; Sutcliffe, L.[1]; Grieves, L. A. [2]; Estevo, C. A. [3]; Ng., J. [4]; Howes, L. [5]; Chicalo, R. [6]; Westwood, A. R. [7]; Gow, E. A.[8 9 10]; McKellar A. [8 11]; Reynolds, J. [12]; Tench, H. M. [13]; Nanji, Z. [1]; Koper, N.[13]

[1]Natural Resources Institute - University of Manitoba, [2]Department of Biology; School of Earth, Environment & Society, McMaster University, [3]University of Alberta, [4]Saskatchewan Water Security Agency, [5]Canadian Wildlife Service Division, Environment and Climate Change Canada, [6]Madrone Environmental Services, [7]School for Resource and Environmental Studies, Dalhousie University, [8]Wildlife Research Division, Environment and Climate Change Canada, [9]Department Biological Science, Simon Fraser University, [10]Department of Biology, University of Guelph, [11]University of Saskatchewan, [12]University of Waterloo, [13]University of Northern British Columbia.

Understood to be a field of science, ornithology is rooted in historical context and paradigms that are Eurocentric and colonial (Inzunza et al., 2023). This historical legacy not only makes it harder for individuals whose identities do not conform with the ones traditionally seen in the field to achieve their professional goals, but it also does a disservice to the field, as science will remain biased if it only reflects the views and interests of a homogenous group of people (Soares at al., 2023). As one example of this, when ornithological knowledge was based on male-dominated research from the Global North[1], the singing behaviour of birds was considered a male-only trait. Women researchers ultimately discovered that both sexes sing and demonstrated how widespread this is in songbirds in the tropics (Haine et al., 2020; Stutchbury & Morton, 2021). Therefore, creating a professional environment that reflects and respects the complex identities of a more diverse set of people is in the best interest of the field (Carol et al., 2022).

[1] As in Soares et al., 2023 and following Khan et al., 2022, to avoid the negative connotations associated with terms like under-developed and the like, we use this imperfect categorization to describe the differences between countries that are more prominent geopolitically, wealthier and more stable ("the Global North", e.g., Canada, the U.S., New Zealand, Australia), than the rest of the countries on Earth (the "Global South," e.g., Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean, most of Asia).

The Society of Canadian Ornithologists (SCO-SOC) serves a broad ornithological community that takes pride in the diversity of its population at all levels. Therefore, following the current discussions around these topics, the Society created its first EDI committee (**E**quity, **D**iversity, and **I**nclusion)[2] in 2021 to plan and take the actions necessary to ensure the Society responds to and addresses the historical and contemporary societal issues highlighted above.

One concrete starting point of the EDI efforts of SCO-SOC so far has been to increase the diversity of members so that current members could engage with the Society, feel represented, and benefit from being part of the Society. To achieve this, the members of the EDI Committee and Executive Council within SCO-SOC who came up with the EDI initiative spent nine months focusing on reflection, planning, and researching, and then launched the following series of new policies and programs:

- Demographic surveys to understand baseline membership and identify where the Society can improve.
- Free Society memberships for individuals from underrepresented groups.
- Fundraising event for EDI initiatives.
- Webinar and workshop series and a structured mentorship program for career development.
- A new student award (the Student Discovery Award) to support the research of students from underrepresented groups.
- Free registration for the 2022 SCO-SOC virtual annual meeting.
- Virtual monthly social groups for members of underrepresented groups (i.e., affinity groups).

During the virtual meetups, some members reported the value of having a safe space to share with peers and mentors about experiences unique to each person, to hear their tips about thriving, and other stories of success and sometimes of struggles and failures. Individuals in the meetups found value in cheering each other on and seeing more people like themselves in the field. These social groups can benefit the Society by reassuring people that who they are is not a hindrance to being in ornithology but quite the opposite. We all have something we can contribute to the field.

The Society of Canadian Ornithologists saw an increase in members in the months after implementing these initiatives and, importantly, an upsurge in the number of individuals, particularly international members, and members from underrepresented groups, after the virtual conference in September 2022 (Figures 1 and 2).

Inclusion efforts at the 2022 conference included:

- Free registration.
- Invitations to international professionals and students.
- A special session on research in Latin American and Caribbean ornithology to highlight voices and research from these countries.
- Range of free EDI and skills development workshops including Culturally responsive teaching in ornithology (Emily McKinnon), Decolonizing and Indigenizing universities and other institutions (Wylee Fitz-Gerald), R Markdown (Steffi LaZerte), Drones for ecological studies (Chris Adams), Field maps app (Zack Moore), Alternatives to academic careers (Janet Ng and Ryan Fisher).

Thanks to the generous time and knowledge shared by the workshop presenters and the conference organizers, SCO-SOC was able to offer these free training opportunities in both EDI and career development skills. These free training opportunities are key to enhancing the capacity, confidence, and collegiality of all members, especially those of underrepresented communities. These efforts contribute to bridging skills gaps that might have been created due to less accessibility to this type of training in the past.

[2] Definitions of Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and more recently Belonging (B) and Justice (J). **Equity**: giving fair treatment to all individuals acknowledging that we did not all start in an equal playing field, and therefore considering these outside barriers when striving for fairness. **Diversity**: the variety that exists between people in multiple aspects such as age, gender, sexual orientation, race (and intersection with other aspects), ethnicity, physical and mental ability, income, level of education, income, etc. Looking to increase diversity means having a proportionate representation of people across these dimensions of human difference. **Inclusion**: means fostering an environment where diverse people feel welcomed, respected, and fully participate. **Belonging**: when equity and inclusion effectively translate into feeling welcomed, respected, and valued for who you are in a society. Making people aware of who they are and their contributions are highly valuable. **Justice**: is like equity in which a fair outcome is sought for all people but might be more challenging to achieve at the level of a professional society as it relates to aspects operating a bigger societal scale. However, engaging and caring about EDIB work is a good starting point.

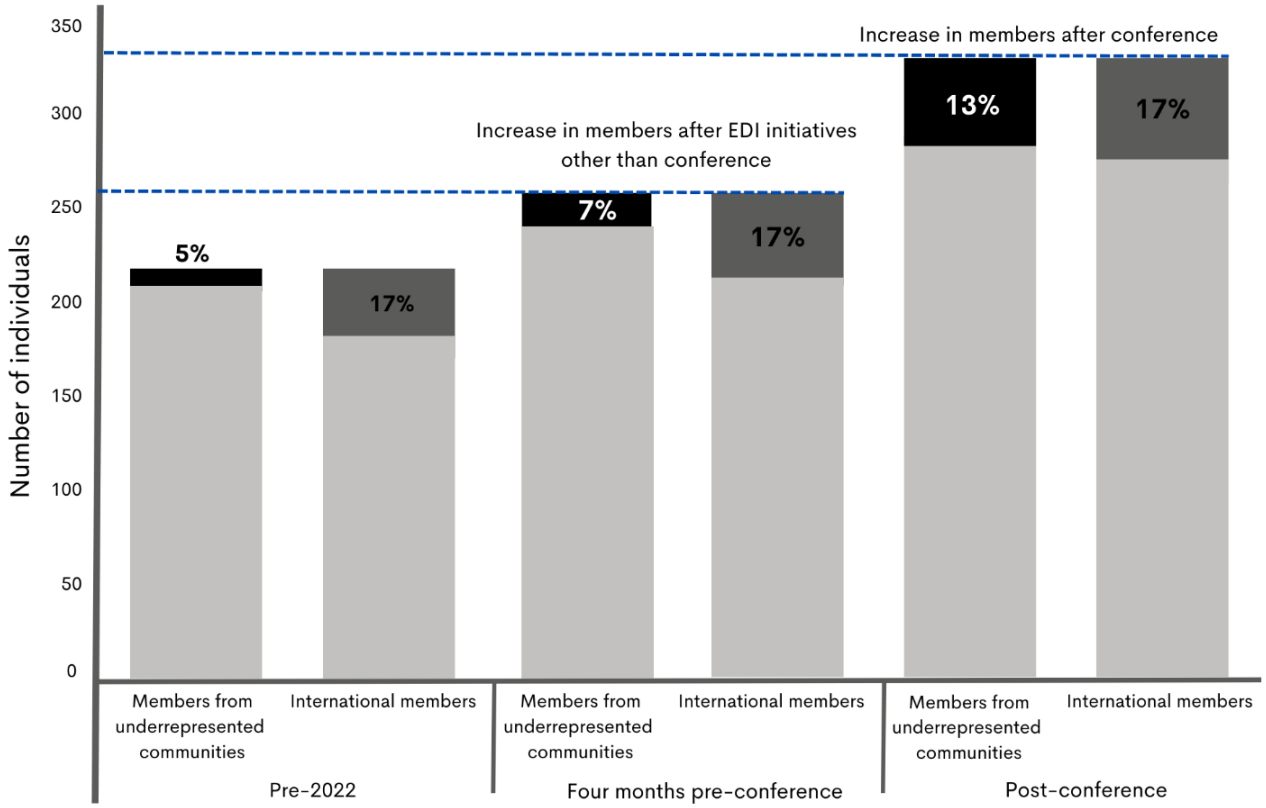

Figure 1. SCO-SOC membership numbers and demographics. Light grey bars indicate the total number of members in the Society who do not identify as belonging to an underrepresented community (1st, 3rd, and 5th bars) or as an international member (2nd, 4th, and 6th bars), whereas the proportion of members from underrepresented communities (intersectionality of race, ethnicity, mental, and physical differences, gender and sexual identity, expression, and orientation) are indicated in black, and the proportion of international members in dark grey. The bars show the numbers pre-2022 before any EDI initiatives were implemented, four months pre-conference after some of the initiatives were implemented, and post-conference.

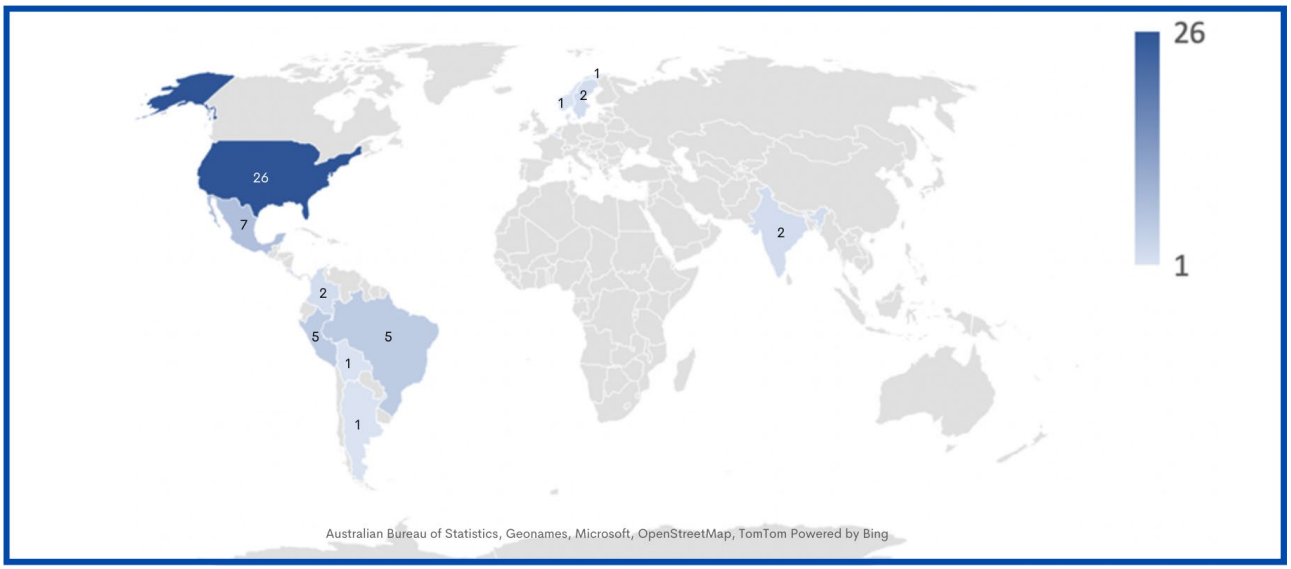

Figure 2. Global map showing the SCO-SOC membership geographic distribution of the fifty-six international members registered with SCO post-conference. Light blue represents countries with fewer international members and dark blue represented countries with more international members (up to 26 members). Gray represents countries with no international members.

An additional aspect of the Society's EDI efforts worth noting is that offering free Society memberships to underrepresented people has not affected the number of paid memberships (Figure 3). Thus, the free membership program is an effective way to reduce barriers, increase and diversify the membership, without negatively impacting membership revenues, which are important to maintaining various SCO-SOC initiatives (e.g., student awards).

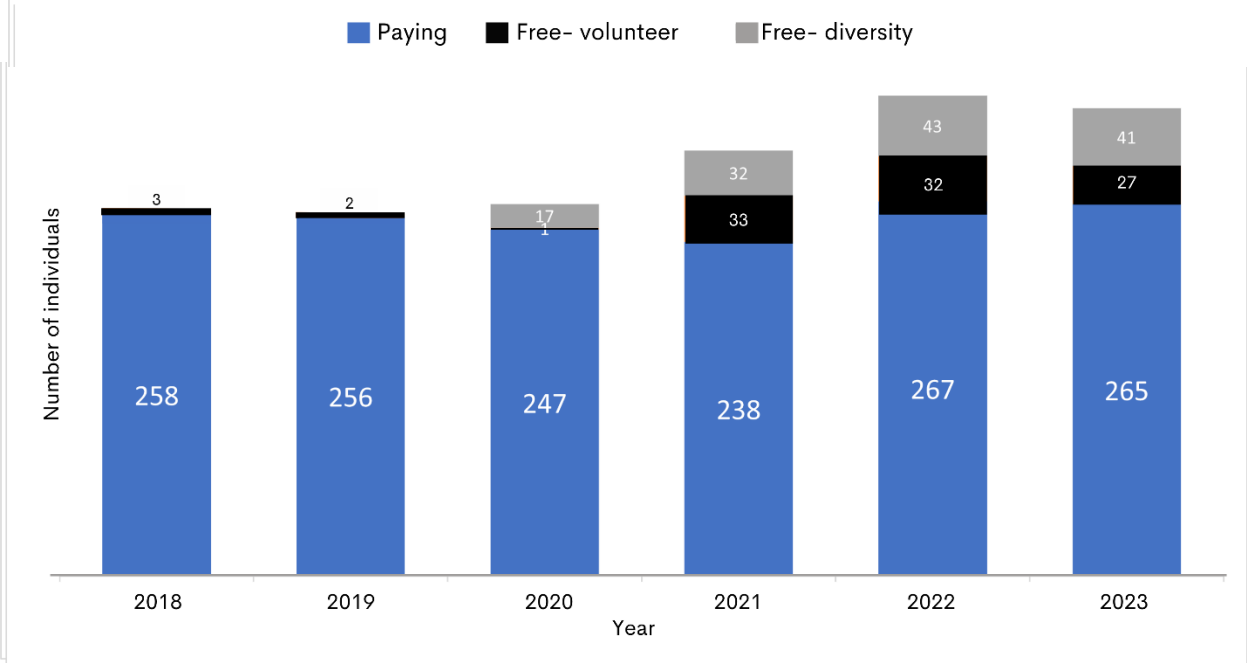

Figure 3. SCO-SOC members from 2018 to 2023. The bars show the number of different types of memberships across the years. Paid memberships are shown in blue, with the two types of free memberships in orange (volunteer memberships offered to people who volunteered their time at the AOS & SCO-SOC 2021 joint meeting) and grey (members from underrepresented communities). Figure credit: Beth MacDougall-Shackleton.

Overall, there have been many benefits to The Society of Canadian Ornithologists' focus on equity, diversity, and inclusion initiatives over the past three years. The Society leadership attributes these positive outcomes to the following:

- The EDI committee is primarily composed of members from underrepresented groups, and therefore, these were the people directing change.
- Individuals outside the EDI committee (primarily SCO-SOC Council members) listened to and implemented recommendations from the EDI committee. This eased the workload that EDI efforts entail, which often leads to high burnout rates in EDI committees (Woods, 2022), and allowed the Society to undertake many initiatives by spreading the workload among more people. Further, allies participating in EDI initiatives led by members of underrepresented groups can have transformative learning experiences and feelings of being part of the solution, encouraging their ongoing support of these initiatives.
- The EDI committee is made up of individuals who are passionate about EDI.
- The EDI has a mix of experience levels that facilitates group learning and innovation and fosters trust and productive, respectful dialogue to push for the issues that matter most to SCO-SOC as a committee and as a professional society.
- The EDI committee planned, learned, and reflected before implementing most measures, thereby avoiding action bias (the impulse of favoring action over inaction where there is no evidence that it will lead to a positive outcome (Patt & Zeckhauser, 2000)).

Although EDI efforts might start by promoting diversity, the outcome should be to make all members feel like they belong. The Society of Canadian Ornithologists recognizes it will take constant prioritization and commitment to EDI in the long term to increase and maintain feelings of belonging, competence, confidence, collegiality, and identity as a professional or member of a discipline.

Some of the discussions in the virtual meetups highlighted issues underrepresented members identified as key to their belonging and tenure in the field, as below. It is important to have:

- A supportive community in places where students live for school or research and fieldwork and providing students with enough prior information for them to decide whether it is safe or desirable to go there.
- Specific supports for primary caregivers who are also researchers.
- Increasing representation and diversity across council & award winners.
- Regular surveys for members to see if SCO-SOC is meeting their needs and what more they would value.
- Up-to-date demographic data to track membership.
- More grants and financial aid specifically targeting members of underrepresented groups. E.g., there is currently a lack of funding aimed at international students from the Global South doing research in the Global North[2].
- Looking for ways to decolonize and indigenize ornithological spaces. E.g., places where ornithological knowledge and practice is being constructed such as universities, government agencies, and other research agencies.

Concerning the implementation of these suggestions, the Society has specifically encouraged members from underrepresented groups to apply for Council positions and will continue to seek ways to increase representation in leadership. The Society is planning to run the membership survey every 2-3 years (next survey, December 2023), to continue tracking demographics and soliciting member feedback, to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and add value to the membership. The Society currently has a set of student awards to which everybody can apply regardless of their identity. By doing this, the Society is helping bridge the gap that some international students who are also racialized[3] face, as some of the most significant funding and grants for science in Canada exclude them from applying based on their citizenship. In addition, this year, the Society introduced a new Student Discovery Award, that supports the research of students from underrepresented communities in the Society.

Overall, the results above show that the Society progressed in several aspects of EDI since the idea's inception three years ago, increasing its membership and engagement in the process. The Society recognizes that this is only possible by the collective effort and the support of many individuals we would like to thank. It also recognizes that achieving equity, inclusion, and belonging is a long-term process of committed effort, and what has been achieved so far is only the beginning of such a process.

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[3] We initially used BIPOC (an acronym for Black, Indigenous and People of Color), a term that originated in the US context to center the experiences of Black and Indigenous peoples, and the solidarity between different communities defined as people of color (The BIPOC Project, n.d.). The explicit mention of Black and Indigenous in the term seeks "to acknowledge that not all people of color face equal levels of injustice." (The BIPOC Project, n.d.), so it is appropriate when discussing racial issues in the many societies where these two populations and identities intersecting with them have suffered racism and its negative consequences the most. However, using the term in every opportunity makes it imperfect as it lumps together very different communities and experiences, rendering these experiences invisible even when they might be at the center of the issue at hand (Deo, 2021). Additionally, the well-intentioned mention and emphasis on Black and Indigenous Peoples when they and their interests/priorities may be totally excluded from the issue or data being discussed, only signals a disinterest in their real inclusion, and might end up doing a disservice to their real inclusion in the long-term (Deo, 2021). An alternative to BIPOC can be "racialized" as race is a dynamic social construct, not a characteristic inherent to a person, and has no real biological meaning. However, the term itself and when it is appropriate is not without debate (Nicole & Osazuwa, 2022). In conclusion, whenever possible and necessary, it is always best to address any person or group with their specific name and only when they are included and centred in the issue being addressed (Deo, 2021).

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Flying through the bird workshops at FREED 2023!

By Aranya Iyer, FREED co-founder and co-director

For all three events that we hosted for Field Research in Ecology and Evolution Diversified (FREED) this year, a bird workshop centering research and long-term monitoring methodologies were a mainstay regardless of location and length of our event. As an organization, FREED is committed to increasing access to all types of fieldwork and research for Indigenous, Black and/or Racialized undergraduate students studying in southwestern Ontario. However, we have yet to host an event that doesn't feature our feathered friends.

McMaster student looking at birds on an early morning hike at the Toronto Zoo. Photo Credit: Mariel Terebiznik

Our first weekend event in May was held at the Toronto Zoo, in partnership with the Species Recovery Branch. 18 students from McMaster University and University of Guelph got a chance to stay overnight at the Bush Camp and wake up early on Saturday for a beginner's birding hike co-led by avid birders Reta Meng and Jonathan Chu, PhD candidates from McMaster and Guelph University respectively. Here, students learned how to use binoculars and field guides. They picked up on general birding tips and even heard a Wood thrush during the hike! Later that evening, Linda Zou from Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, led a workshop on Bats and Owls. Students huddled together in our makeshift presentation tent for a comprehensive session on key identifiable characteristics of these nocturnal species. Afterwards, students went on a walk and learned the basics of ethical playback for owl surveys.

Students using binoculars while Samreen Munim explains how to conduct a census. Photo Credit: Alexander Abel

Many of these themes were carried over in our second event in June held at Bronte Creek Provincial Park, in partnership with Ontario Parks. Here, 11 students from University of Western Ontario and University of Toronto went on a birding hike at the Trillium Trail with Samreen Munim, a Forest Birds at Risk Field Biologist at Birds Canada. Students got to practice using binoculars, field guides and popular naturalist apps like Merlin and Seek to identify the curious creatures they encountered. Samreen introduced skills like birding by sight and sound, and how to conduct a census. She touched on how current projects, such as Anishinaabe Bird Names, were actively working to decolonize the field of avian research. On the hike, the students also had a chance to get a rare glimpse of a Bald eagle nest with an adult and juvenile in it!

Finally, at Algonquin Provincial Park, 13 students from University of Toronto had a packed morning workshop co-led by Alexandra Israel, Research lead for the Native Bat Conservation Program at the Toronto Zoo and Dr. Brendan Boyd, postdoctoral researcher at York

University. Alex first walked our students through the basics of beginner birding including the anatomy of a bird, and tricks for identifying bird silhouettes. She also discussed relationships that Anishinaabe communities had with birds, especially through her own journey of learning bird names. In the meantime, Brendan had set up mist-nests near the bog and excitedly came in to inform everybody of the birds caught in the latest net round. Students got to hold species like the Red-eyed vireo, Bay-breasted warbler, and Black-capped chickadees. Brendan carefully taught the students how to take the basic measurements of the bird and how to safely handle these animals to prioritize the birds' safety and wellbeing. Students were thrilled at the opportunity to see migratory birds up close and nearly everyone got a photo with the stars of the show!

Students holding a red-eyed vireo caught in the mist-net at the Algonquin Wildlife Research Stations, Photo Credit: Samantha

With the support of societies like SOC-SCO, we are able to host events like this that cover most, if not all, costs associated with getting a safe and welcoming first fieldwork experience. Our first birding workshop was led by me in 2022 and it has been amazing to see how each new workshop has become better with every iteration. Every time, the workshops have completely surpassed my expectations and renewed my own love of these amazing creatures. With every new expert instructor, I also learned more about how to center students' learning, integrate Indigenous knowledge and names, and create workshops that highlight the best part of studying and living alongside birds. The most rewarding part for me is seeing students, post-workshop, continue applying those skills whenever they are outside during their free time or in down time in their other workshops.

Over the last two years, we were able to host 4 events and a total of 39 workshops for 56 students from 4 universities. We worked with over 40 generous organizations and have fundraised more than $150,000 through both financial and in-kind donations. We are excited for the next year as we built FREED to ensure that we can continue leading undergraduate students through bird workshops and so much more. If you are interested in working with us, please reach out to us at directorsfreed@gmail.com. We are always looking for ways for others to get involved. Until next time, see you in the field!

Bird Sounds Global: Automated species recognition with machine learning

Sebastian Andrejeff & Petteri Lehikoinen

The LIFEPLAN project, Department of Biosciences, University of Helsinki, Finland.
sebastian.andrejeff@helsinki.fi; petteri.lehikoinen@helsinki.fi

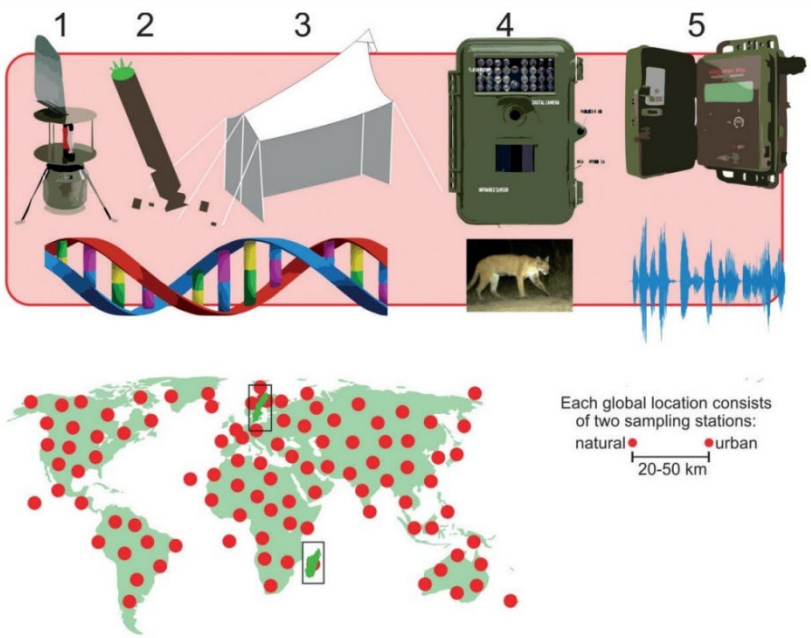
A fascinating insight into how to harness your expertise to advance automated bird-sound identification, understanding of global biodiversity and enhance your own sound-recognition skills.

Bird Sounds Global (BSG) is part of the LIFEPLAN research programme (www2.helsinki.fi/en/projects/lifeplan), which aims to improve understanding of the global biodiversity and its driving factors. LIFEPLAN is a network of data collection through remote sensing, and it monitors a wide range of taxa with different sampling methods. It produces thousands of years of audio data from across the planet. Understandably, these data cannot be listened through by human experts. Therefore, automated species identification is required, and this represents the main goal of BSG.

Another important element of BSG involves enabling public participation in the research. BSG is about developing automated bird-sound identification by combining machine learning and citizen science (Lehikoinen et al. 2023). In BSG you can produce sound features alongside labelled training and testing material of the birds of the world. These are important steps for developing methods that will eventually be used to recognise sounds produced by all the world's birds, mammals, and amphibians. With such methods, machine learning and automated data collection can be used not only to understand current biodiversity and its drivers but also to predict future biodiversity.

The end products of BSG are an expert-validated sound-feature library for birds of the world and locally refined species-identification models for bird vocalisations. The end products will be openly available to everyone for further use. Open-access recognition models provide opportunities for other applications and their further development, such as the current state-of-the-art software applications, Merlin & BirdNET, developed by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology (birdnet.cornell.edu/).

Both Merlin and BirdNET are working well for targeted recordings, but since the LIFEPLAN project is producing data audio data on *soundscapes* (i.e., passive recordings of all noises in the environment at a locality, rather than recording a single species), further method development is needed. Fine-tuning the models with data annotated by ornithological experts is a crucial and important part of this development. Essentially this means birders identifying bird vocalisations within an ambient recording... which is where *Picoides* readers come in!



The overall sampling scheme of the LIFEPLAN project, targeting a wide range of taxa. Fungi and bacteria are monitored with cyclone samplers (1) and soil samples (2), insects with Malaise traps (3), mammals and other vertebrates with camera traps (4) and birds, amphibians and bats with sound recorders (5).

Passive acoustic monitoring

Passive acoustic monitoring (PAM) is an increasingly important survey technique (Metcalf 2022). Among other advantages, PAM offers a powerful tool to survey species that are hard to observe otherwise. It provides important information on nocturnal groups such as owls and nightjars; and can, particularly over the long term, offer information about species' population sizes and trajectories. Critically, all this can happen without ornithologists needing to be in the field. LIFEPLAN sampling sites in North America include ten localities in Canada and the USA. Canada's sites are located in Yellowknife, Guelph and Moncton.

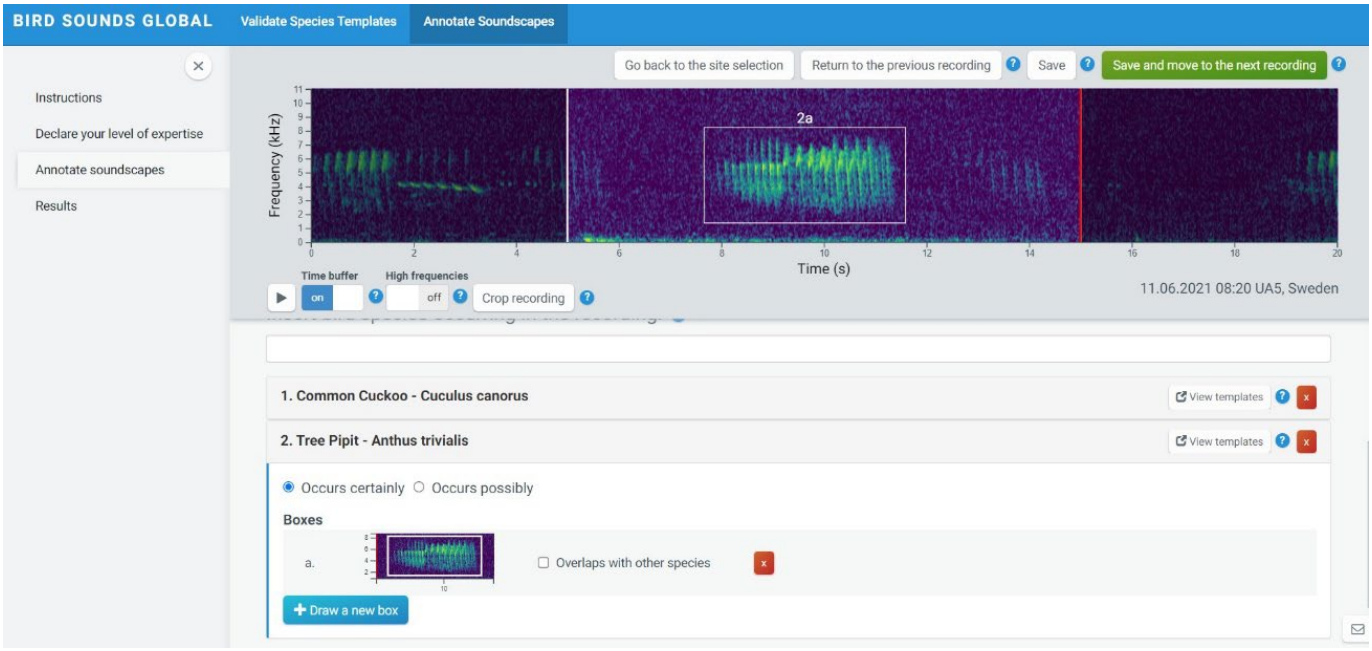
AudioMoth device at a LIFEPLAN recording site.

How you can annotate soundscapes from Canada

Regions with LIFEPLAN sampling sites in Canada will be well known to many *Picoides* readers. So how can you help?

You can contribute your expertise in five easy steps. First, visit bsg.laji.fi/identification/instructions to sign up or log in. Second, declare your level of expertise by answering a couple of questions. Then you can 'annotate' the soundscapes via the 'Annotate Soundscapes' portal (Fig). You are invited to identify and label the species that vocalise on a 10-second audio recording. You are not necessarily expected to identify all the vocalisations. In case of unrecognised vocalisations, simply check the box marked *'recording contains bird vocalisations I cannot identify'.*

Labelling is done by drawing boxes on the spectrogram. Labels are used for training and testing the identification models. It is recommended to label all the sounds when it is easy, but the first priority is to insert all bird species that you can identify in the recording. If there are many species vocalising in the recording, it is better to label only those sounds which are clear and not get stuck with labelling all distant or overlapping sounds. As a rule of thumb, for method-developing purposes it is best to produce annotations time-efficiently, i.e., focus on what you can easily do.



Example of an annotated soundscape.

Validating species templates

In addition to annotating soundscapes, BSG hosts a section for creating and validating sound templates for the world's bird species (see bsg.laji.fi/validation/instructions). This project was launched in November 2021 and sound templates have already been completed for over 1,300 species. The results vary regionally; over 60% of European species templates have two or more validations, but in North America fully validated templates comprise only 28% of the species.

You can contribute through two types of tasks. The first expert to work with a particular species can build up 10 sound templates which represent the vocalisations of the focal species. The second expert is expected to check and validate that the 10 templates prepared by the first expert all include the focal species and have been correctly framed. Ideally, all the templates should include the most typical vocalisation for the species, so that they include different vocalisation types and/or different variations of these types. The audio used to create these templates are from Xeno-Canto and the Macaulay Library.

The global data collected in this first phase of BSG is now being put to good use, namely training a global base model for bird-sound recognition. Training data produced from annotating soundscapes will be used for adapting this base model for a specific location. Our pilot work has showed these annotated local soundscapes to be important for fine-tuning location-specific models, and thereby identifying the local bird species with higher accuracy (Lauha et al. 2022).

End products

LIFEPLAN is a non-profit research project that aims to produce end products which could be freely used in other research. BSG will produce an open-access database of fully annotated sound features for the global avifauna. Application possibilities are ample, such as further development of automatic bird-sound recognition, environmental education or recognising which features in vocalisations are pleasant for human ears (a characteristic that might render these bird species more vulnerable to capture and trafficking).

Another end product of the BSG will be an open-access global bird-sound recognition model and multiple locally fine-tuned models for the LIFEPLAN sites. Since autumn 2022, we have invited non-LIFEPLAN locations to contribute their PAM data into BSG. In the portal, teams can easily annotate their own recordings and, in return, receive a recognition model fine-tuned for their data. This will also mean that there is more annotated data for the global model, which will improve its performance and reliability.

How can you contribute and strengthen understanding of global biodiversity?

With BSG you can harness your expertise to advance automated bird-sound identification and understanding of global biodiversity! The number of annotated soundscapes in Canada is currently very low as is the number of completed species' sound templates. This means that even with a small contribution you will significantly advance automated sound recognition in the region. In turn, this will increase not only possible applications for research, monitoring and protection of North American birds but also applications for birdwatchers and other naturalists. These include the next generation of smartphone apps, which can identify the vocalising birds in the field.

Another good reason to contribute to the BSG is to enhance your own sound-recognition skills. Focusing completely on the sounds with the help of the audiovisual spectrograms is highly educational even for the most hard-core birders. Exploring the soundscapes is also purely fun – and you never know what you might encounter in the next recording!

To contribute to automated bird sound recognition with Bird Sounds Global, visit bsg.laji.fi.

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Bird Watching in Cuba. A Need for Change.

Vladimir Mirabal, Birding Havana
E-mail: birdinghavana@gmail.com

From an ornithological point of view, Cuba is the Caribbean island with the highest representation of avifauna in terms of total number of species, and a high percentage of these are endemics.

Birds represent the highest percentage of diversity among Cuban vertebrates with 56.18% (González et al., 2012). The number of known species is 398 (Navarro, 2022). The living species are grouped in 27 orders and 72 families (Navarro, 2022), of the total number of species, 155 (38.9%) breed in Cuba (Navarro, 2022); 47 (12%) species are under some category of threat (Navarro, 2022).

Approximately 67% of Cuban birds are migratory (Navarro, 2022). Of the six migratory corridors of North American birds, the Atlantic coast and the Mississippi River have the greatest impact on the country. This is due to its geographical location, the distance from North America, the size and shape of the Cuban archipelago and the diversity of the ecosystems present, which provide food and shelter during the winter for many migratory species.

Despite the Cuban government's efforts to protect and preserve nature in general, there is a climate of impunity in the country in particular towards birds and their habitats, especially regarding the use of bird traps, the plundering of nests, the trade in species and their display as trophies.

Many bird species that breed in the United States and Canada, such as Indigo Buntings (*Passerina cyanea*), Blue Grosbeaks (*Passerina caerulea*), Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (*Pheucticus ludovicianus*) and Painted Buntings (*Passerina ciris*) are among the most targeted species by Cuban bird trappers. Several endemics such as the Cuban Parakeet (*Psittacara euops*), Cuban Grassquit (*Phonipara canora*), Cuban Bullfinch (*Melopyrrha nigra*), and the regional endemic Cuban Parrot *(Amazona leucocephala leucocephala*) are also highly persecuted.

In a single year, thousands of birds are captured in Cuba during the fall and spring migrations, predominantly males. The decline in their numbers is alarming.

The regular practice of birdwatching in Cuba has historically been almost exclusively for foreign tourists. The main source markets have been the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada and, to a lesser extent, other European countries and, sporadically, Asian countries. This type of tourism is concentrated in some enclaves with rich avifauna, both in endemic species and in other categories of residence. Paradoxically, at the same time there has been little or no national movement of birdwatchers due to socio-economic and cultural factors. But this reality is changing.

By organizing and developing the practice of birdwatching in Cuba, in a massive and systematic way, as a means to increase the conservationist awareness of birds and their habitats, Birding Havana intends to help stop the decline in the number of migratory species, endemic and resident songbirds. This harmful practice undermines the natural reproduction of a large number of birds that do not reach their usual breeding grounds.

Birding Havana, an independent and non-profit birdwatching project, was founded in June 2019 out of the need to promote a national birdwatching movement in Cuba, since this noble activity has not had the necessary dissemination outside the academic or international tourism fields.

Since its inception, we have been committed to promoting an environmental culture of respect and knowledge about birds and their habitats. Our aim is to involve as many people as possible in the activity of birdwatching by means of field trips, educational talks, information campaigns, etc.

In this regard, the quarterly, digital, and free magazine *The Cuban Birder* was created in March 2021. It is a communication and environmental education tool that aims to reach the public in Cuba and other countries. Its main objective is to promote birdwatching as a way to arouse the best sentiments of protection and care for birds, taking advantage of the progressive increase in knowledge about their characteristics, habits, and natural history.

We are convinced that you cannot love or care for what you don´t know. With this magazine, we are trying to draw attention to this fact by educating people in the hope of turning things around.

The magazine also aims to be a tool to raise awareness and fight against the poaching of birds and their habitats, the illegal trade in wild birds and apathy in the face of these terrible scourges.

Increasing the use of the citizen science platform eBird is also a priority.

This publication, along with the numerous actions of many people and institutions inside and outside of Cuba, contributes to making our country and its people better citizens, with a more educated environmental awareness and even more sensitive to the importance of protecting and conserving birds and their natural environment.

Another example of actions taken to promote birding in Cuba was the successful CUBA BIG YEAR held for the first-time last year (2022). A total of 79 birdwatchers from 13 provinces registered for the competition, 13 of whom were women. Five birders broke the 200 species barrier, and more than half of the participants reported 100 or more species, which is a significant achievement. Birding Havana was part of the organizing committee of this event.

Some data that illustrate the gradual but positive change that birding has had in Cuba in recent years are as follows:

- ✓ In 2021 there were 2907 eBirders and at the end of July 2023 there were 3860.
- ✓ In 2021 we had 54,500 published lists in eBird and today we have 77 800.
- ✓ Records of new species were added to the country to reach 379 (we had 361 in 2021).
- ✓ Of 237 sites of interest for observation in 2021, we went to 379.
- ✓ We already have several birding clubs throughout the island. Those in Baracoa, Holguín, Gibara, Granma, Santiago de Cuba and Havana are the most active.
- ✓ At the end of December 2022, of the 100 best eBirders in Cuba historically (Top 100), only 29 were Cubans (29%), but if we look only at the year 2022, this number is 50 birders, or 50%.
- ✓ In June 2021, 87% of the eBirders in Cuba's historical Top 100 were foreigners, and by the end of December 2022, this figure had dropped to 71%.
- ✓ According to eBird statistics, during 2022 Cuba showed a sustained growth in the number of uploaded lists, which placed it among the most dynamic countries in the world for several months compared to 2021. For example, in November there was a 144.97% increase over November of the previous year; in August, 126.44%; in April, 338.13%; and in March, 185.36%.

It cannot be said that Birding Havana alone is responsible for these modest but constant qualitative and quantitative changes. Although still insufficient, over time, more and more people and institutions have become involved in environmental education activities and in promoting the love and protection of Cuba's wild birds. The National Forest Ranger Corps, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment and its dependencies, Cuban universities, national and provincial press media, among others, have made a special push in this regard from their respective areas of influence.

All that remains is to continue working to maintain and multiply these results over time. The work of environmental education, of raising awareness, of embracing citizen science as an indispensable tool for change, is a daily task.

Reference

Navarro Pacheco, Nils, 2022. Annotated Checklist of the Birds of Cuba. Ediciones Nuevos Mundos.

Note: Since The Cuban Birder is a free magazine and made by volunteers, donations are welcome to keep it running. If you are willing to donate, please contact Birding Havana at birdinghavana@gmail.com

Check out previous issues of Birding Havana at www.thecubanbirder.wordpress.com

Student contributions wanted for *Picoides*!

SCO-SOC encourages students to submit material for *Picoides*. In particular, we would like each issue to feature abstracts of at least one or two recently published theses. They must be from students at a Canadian university, but need not necessarily focus on Canadian birds. Abstracts should be 250-400 words long, preferably accompanied by one or two relevant photos.

We also welcome articles describing aspects of student research in greater detail; these should focus on a subject relevant to Canadian ornithology, require references, and may be up to 1,000 words long, again preferably accompanied by one or two photos. See the SCO-SOC Information page for submission details.

Ornithological News and Announcements

Statement from SCO-SOC on changing eponymous bird names

The SCO-SOC firmly supports actions to increase inclusivity within the ornithological community. For centuries, eponymous names have been pervasive in English bird taxonomy; this legacy of our colonial past and the rippling harm it has ultimately caused and continues to cause for people from groups historically excluded from western science, particularly by those of us in the Global North, is finally being addressed. The recent announcement by the AOS to abandon the use of eponymous English bird names is a welcome and overdue change needed to begin to rectify harm. The SCO-SOC stands in solidarity with the AOS in this decision and looks forward to working with the AOS on taking actions to further understand and dismantle colonial oppression in all forms. Canadians have been intimately involved in this process through the work of two SCO-SOC past presidents, Dr. Erica Nol and Dr. Kathy Martin. This change in naming conventions aligns with the values of the SCO-SOC and the thoughtful, impactful work of our own EDI committee to ensure that ornithology—and the love of birds— is inclusive and welcoming to absolutely everyone. We recognize that this is a contentious issue for some and with this in mind, we strongly encourage all of our members and the broader ornithological community to read the AOS' final report, available here. The SCO-SOC hopes that this decision is the first step in leading to transformative change across ornithology towards an approach that reduces colonial harm and supports better conservation of birds within Canada, and globally.

Sincerely,

Matt Reudink, President, on behalf of the SCO-SOC executive and council

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Déclaration de la SOC-SCO sur le changement de noms d'oiseaux éponymes

La SOC-SCO soutient fermement les actions visant à accroître l'inclusivité au sein de la communauté ornithologique. Pendant des siècles, les noms éponymes ont été omniprésents dans la taxonomie anglaise des oiseaux; cet héritage de notre passé colonial et le préjudice que ça a causé et continue de causer aux personnes appartenant à des groupes historiquement exclus de la science occidentale, en particulier par ceux d'entre nous qui se trouvent dans l'hémisphère nord, est enfin pris en compte. L'annonce de l'AOS portant sur l'abandon de l'utilisation de noms d'oiseaux éponymes en anglais est un changement bienvenu et nécessaire pour commencer à réparer le mal qui a été fait. La SOC-SCO est solidaire avec l'AOS dans cette décision et se réjouit de travailler avec l'AOS pour prendre des mesures visant à mieux comprendre et à démanteler l'oppression coloniale sous toutes ses formes. Les Canadiens ont été étroitement associés à ce processus de par l'implication de deux anciennes présidentes de la SOC-SCO, Erica Nol et Kathy Martin. Ce changement dans les conventions de dénomination s'aligne sur les valeurs de la SOC-SCO et sur le travail réfléchi et efficace de notre propre comité EDI pour s'assurer que l'ornithologie - et l'amour des oiseaux - soit inclusif et accueillant pour absolument tout le monde. Nous reconnaissons qu'il s'agit d'une question controversée pour certains et, dans cette optique, nous encourageons vivement tous nos membres et l'ensemble de la communauté ornithologique à lire le rapport final de l'AOS, disponible ici. La SOC-SCO espère que cette décision est la première étape d'un changement transformateur dans l'ensemble de l'ornithologie vers une approche qui réduit les dommages coloniaux et soutient une meilleure conservation des oiseaux au Canada et dans le monde entier.

Sincèrement,

Matt Reudink, président, au nom de l'exécutif et du conseil de la SOC-SCO

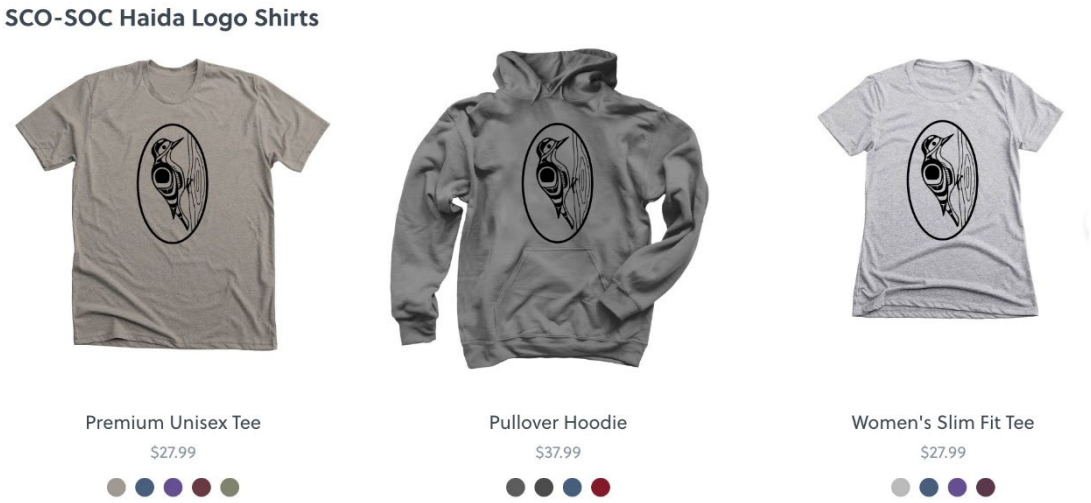
SCO-SOC Annual Fundraiser for EDI Initiatives

It's that time of year again—the SCO-SOC is holding our annual fundraiser, the proceeds of which will fund our various EDI initiatives, including our Student Discovery Award, meeting programming, workshops, and supporting wonderful programs like FREED. This year, we commissioned Indigenous Haida artist and ornithologist, Erik Prytula, to create a Haida version of our black-backed woodpecker logo. We have set up two shops, one in Canada and one in the US, to sell shirts, hoodies, tote bags, and mugs with this beautiful design. Note that these are different companies, so the offerings differ slightly. Please distribute far and wide to anyone looking for a gift for the holidays!

To purchase from Canada: https://urstore.ca/group/society-of-canadian-ornithologists-apparel

To purchase from the US: https://www.bonfire.com/store/society-of-canadian-ornithologists/

About the artist:
Erik Prytula is an Haida artist and Indigenous entrepreneur who operates out of Kamloops BC. He is from the Eagle clan Tsiits Gitanee clan of Haida Gwaii. Erik specializes in traditional Haida formline where he paints acrylic paint on canvas and cedar, carves red and yellow cedar, and sculpts a rare rock called argillite. In 2016 he was mentored by master artist Reg Davidson who taught him how to carve cedar. Major public art features that Erik has created are the "Taking Flight" mural for Thompson Rivers University, a portrait mask for the Vancouver Airport, a "Raven Steals the Light" painting for the BC Nurses Union, and hand painted masquerade masks for Fashion Speaks International. However, the majority of his works have been sold to private buyers. Erik considers art as a means of keeping in touch with his culture as well as a way of inspiring the next generation of First Nations youth.
Find more of Erik's artwork on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/prytulae/



Collecte de fonds annuelle du SCO-SOC pour les initiatives de l'IDE

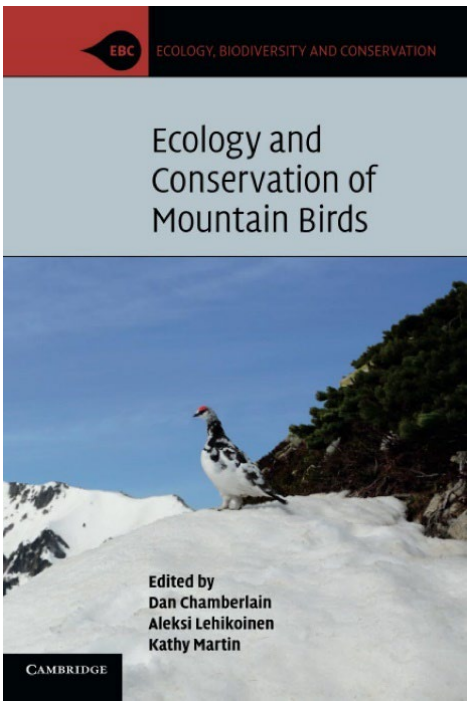
C'est à nouveau le moment de l'année : le SCO-SOC organise sa collecte de fonds annuelle, dont les recettes serviront à financer diverses initiatives de l'IDE, notamment le prix de la découverte pour les étudiants, la programmation des réunions, les ateliers et le soutien à de merveilleux programmes tels que FREED. Cette année, nous avons demandé à Erik Prytula, artiste et ornithologue haïda, de créer une version haïda de notre logo de pic à dos noir. Nous avons ouvert deux boutiques, l'une au Canada et l'autre aux États-Unis, pour vendre des t-shirts, des sweats à capuche, des sacs fourre-tout et des tasses avec ce magnifique dessin. Notez qu'il s'agit de deux sociétés différentes, et que les offres diffèrent donc légèrement. N'hésitez pas à diffuser largement l'information à tous ceux qui cherchent un cadeau pour les fêtes de fin d'année !

Pour acheter au Canada : https://urstore.ca/group/society-of-canadian-ornithologists-apparel

Pour acheter aux États-Unis : https://www.bonfire.com/store/society-of-canadian-ornithologists/

À propos de l'artiste :
Erik Prytula est un artiste haïda et un entrepreneur autochtone qui travaille à Kamloops, en Colombie-Britannique. Il appartient au clan de l'aigle Tsiits Gitanee de Haida Gwaii. Erik se spécialise dans le formage traditionnel haïda où il peint à l'acrylique sur toile et sur cèdre, sculpte le cèdre rouge et le cèdre jaune, ainsi qu'une roche rare appelée argilite. En 2016, il a bénéficié du mentorat du maître artiste Reg Davidson qui lui a appris à sculpter le cèdre. Les principales œuvres d'art public créées par Erik sont la peinture murale "Taking Flight" pour l'université Thompson Rivers, un masque portrait pour l'aéroport de Vancouver, une peinture "Raven Steals the Light" pour le syndicat des infirmières de la Colombie-Britannique, et des masques de mascarade peints à la main pour Fashion Speaks International. Cependant, la majorité de ses œuvres ont été vendues à des acheteurs privés. Erik considère l'art comme un moyen de rester en contact avec sa culture et d'inspirer la prochaine génération de jeunes des Premières nations.
Retrouvez d'autres œuvres d'art d'Erik sur Instagram : https://www.instagram.com/prytulae/

Ecology and Conservation of Mountain Birds



Dan Chamberlain, Aleksi Lehikoinen and Kathy Martin, editors 2023

$44.99 US (ebook), ISBN: 9781108945684
$51.37 CDN (paperback), ISBN: 9781108940429
$137.95 CDN (hardcover), ISBN: 9781108837194

Ecology, Biodiversity and Conservation Series, Cambridge University Press

We announce the publication of a global reference volume on high mountain bird ecology and conservation. The ten chapters in our multi-author book focus on avian ecology and research at and above the treeline ecotone with an emphasis on the alpine zone. The book begins with our working definition of 'mountains', global estimates of mountain habitats, an introduction to mountain bird communities and their habitats including the many adaptations that birds employ to live in high mountains. Several chapters summarize what we know about avian ecology in the alpine and nival zones (the highest elevation habitats) and the treeline ecotone in temperate and topical habitats. Two chapters review mountain bird population trends across Europe and North America, and approaches to large large-scale modelling for mountain bird ecology and conservation. There is extensive treatment of potential threats to mountain bird populations, particularly climate change and human disturbance, assessing the evidence of likely impacts and conservation actions required to minimize those impacts and improve prospects for the future. The book concludes with a 'roadmap' to guide mountain bird research over the next decades that involves improving population monitoring programs, increasing our ecological knowledge of mountain species, identifying the key drivers of their distributions and population trends, and providing an assessment of their resilience to environmental change.

Mountains are globally important for biodiversity and endemism as mountain regions cover one quarter of the earth's terrestrial surface but contain nearly half of its biodiversity hotspots. The high mountains host many charismatic and highly sought-after species such as Giant Hummingbird (*Patagona gigas*) and Glacier Finch (*Diuca speculifera*) in the Andes, White-tailed Ptarmigan (*Lagopus leucura*) in North America, White-winged Snowfinch (*Montifringilla nivalis*) in the European Alps, Grandala (*Grandala coelicolor*) in Asia, Scarlet-tufted Sunbird (*Nectarinia johnstoni*) in Africa, or rosy-finches in the Holarctic. Many of you will be familiar with the research on mountain grouse, but you might be surprised to learn that at least 1,310 species of birds breed above the treeline, with additional species expected to be discovered in future, especially in the global south. This tally represents 12% of the 10,933 species currently recognized by the International Ornithological Committee (Gill et al. 2022). In some areas, high mountains support up to 40% of the local species pools with often extensive avian use year-round. About 25% of birds breeding above the treeline are alpine specialists, and 75% of birds breeding there live across a range of elevations.

Mountain biodiversity is threatened by growing pressure caused by human activities, especially climate change, that imperil many key ecosystem services provided by mountain habitats. Increasingly, mountains are providing climate and habitat refugia for open-country species that were formerly widespread but are now declining in the lowlands due to increasingly intensive anthropogenic activities at low elevations. Despite escalating threats, mountain biodiversity is poorly studied compared to many lowland habitats. Thus, conducting further ecological and biodiversity conservation research for mountain ecosystems is a high priority. Overall, mountains support disproportionately high biodiversity, birds in high mountain are sensitive to habitat degradation, and alpine birds can be useful sentinels of environmental change. Our hope is that despite the climate change threats, mountain ecosystems may, with appropriate management, become more important centres for bird conservation in a changing climate than they are at present.

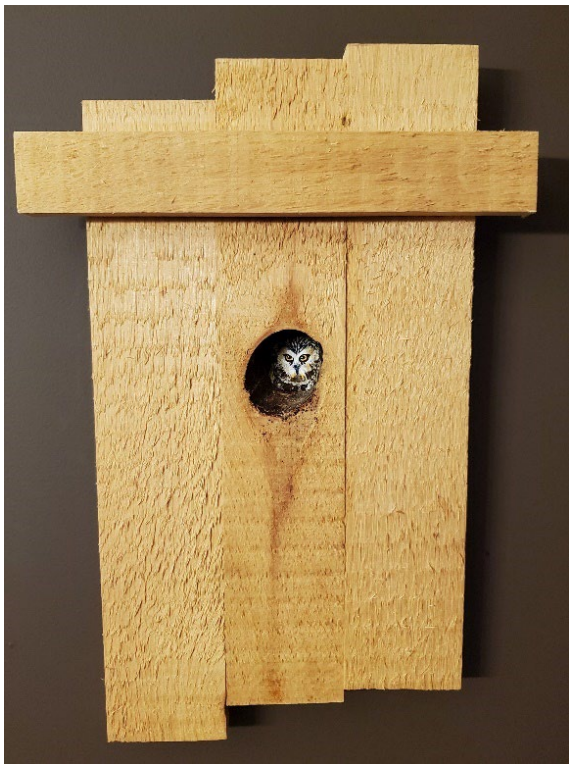
2023/24 Membership Survey

Dear members, in 2021 we conducted the first SCO-SOC membership survey. Results of the survey allowed us to collect important baseline data on our membership demographics, demonstrating areas for improvement and growth, and gave you the opportunity to provide important feedback on how we can better serve you as members. We are now running a second survey to evaluate our progress in making the SCO-SOC more diverse, equitable and inclusive, and to gather additional feedback on how we can better serve our members and add value to your membership with us. We plan to release the 2023 Membership Survey in December, to coincide with membership renewal season. We anticipate running the survey until January 2024, to give ample time for members to respond. You will receive an email notification about the survey and we will post about it on our social media channels as well. Stay tuned and thank you for your continued membership with us!

Sondage 2023/24 auprès des membres

Chers membres, en 2021, nous avons mené le premier sondage sur l'adhésion à la SOC-SCO. Les résultats de ce sondage nous ont permis d'obtenir des données de base importantes sur la démographie de nos membres, démontrant où nous améliorer et croître, en plus de vous donner l'opportunité de commenter sur la façon dont nous pouvons mieux vous servir en tant que membres. Nous menons présentement un deuxième sondage afin d'évaluer les progrès accomplis pour rendre la SOC-SCO plus diversifiée, équitable et inclusive, et pour recueillir vos commentaires sur la manière dont nous pouvons mieux servir nos membres et ajouter de la valeur à votre adhésion à notre organisation. Nous prévoyons envoyer le sondage à nos membres en décembre 2023, ce qui coïncidera avec le temps de renouvellement des adhésions. Nous garderons le sondage ouvert jusqu'en janvier 2024 afin de vous laisser suffisamment de temps pour y répondre. Vous recevrez une notification par courriel au sujet du sondage et nous le publierons également sur nos différents médias sociaux. Restez à l'affût et merci de continuer à adhérer à notre association!

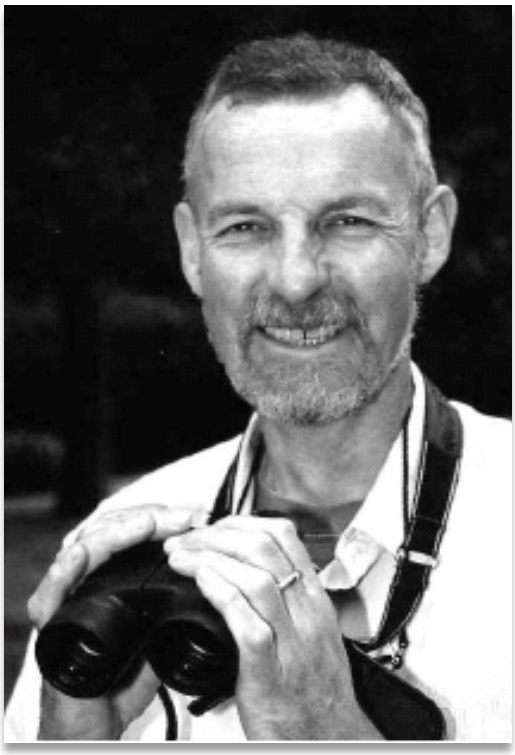
Bird Artwork



Top: Painting of a MOTUS tower ("Georgian Bay Alexander") by Amalie Justine Hutchinson. Right: Mixed media work: Painting of a northern saw-whet owl inside a wooden nest box-style frame ("Owl Box") by Amalie Justine Hutchinson (painting) and her husband Jeffrey Hutchinson (woodwork).

Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring
Prix Memorial de Jamie Smith pour le mentorat

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS / APPEL DE NOMINATIONS - 2024



In recognition of Jamie Smith's contribution to fostering ornithological research, the Society of Canadian Ornithologists has created The Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring in Ornithology.

This award honours established ornithologists - either in academia, industry, non-government or government agencies - nominated by students, colleagues and/or peers to have displayed excellence in mentoring a new generation of professional or amateur biologists. The award will be presented to the recipient at the Society's annual meeting.

Nomination: Details concerning nominations can be found online at www.sco-soc.ca/smith-award. A cover letter (max 1,000 words) outlining why the nominee should receive the distinction should accompany the nomination. The nomination must be accompanied by at least two additional letters of support (max 500 words) that indicate they have seen and support the nomination letter. They may then add their own comments on the nominee.

Deadline for submission of nominations is **31 December 2023**.

Nominations should be sent, by email, to:

Kyle Elliott
Chair - Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award Committee
Email: kyle.elliott@mcgill.ca

En reconnaissance pour la contribution de Jamie Smith à la recherche en ornithologie au Canada, la Société des ornithologistes du Canada a créé le Prix Mémorial de Jamie Smith pour le mentorat en ornithologie.

Le prix est remis à un(e) ornithologiste établi(e), soit dans le domaine académique, industriel, gouvernemental ou ONG, nominé par des étudiants ou collègues pour avoir excellé dans le mentorat d'une nouvelle génération de biologistes amateurs ou professionnels. Le prix sera présenté au récipiendaire à la réunion annuelle de la Société.

Nomination : Les détails concernant les nominations peuvent être trouvés au site de la SCO-SOC (www.sco-soc.ca/smith-award). Une lettre (max 1 000 mots) expliquant pourquoi la personne nominée devrait recevoir ce prix doit accompagner la nomination. La nomination devrait aussi inclure au moins deux autres lettres de support (max 500 mots) dans lesquelles il est indiqué que ces personnes ont lu la lettre de nomination et qu'ils la supportent. Ils peuvent également ajouter leurs propres commentaires sur le nominé.

Date limite pour la remise des nominations est le **31 décembre 2023.**

Les nominations devraient être envoyé, par courriel, à :

Kyle Elliott
Comité pour le Prix Mémorial de Jamie Smith pour le mentorat
Courriel : kyle.elliott@mcgill.ca

Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

Early Career Researcher Award
Prix de recherche en début de carrière

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS / APPEL DE NOMINATIONS - 2024

The Early Career Researcher Award honours fledgling ornithologists – in academia, industry, non-government or government agencies – that show strong potential for future leadership in Canadian ornithology. The award will be presented to the recipient at the Society's annual meeting where they will be invited to give a 30 minute keynote address, and travel to the meeting will be subsidized. The recipient will also be asked to provide a synopsis of their work to appear as a multi-page colour feature in the Society's *Picoides* newsletter. // *Le prix de recherche en début de carrière honore les jeunes ornithologistes – en université, en industrie et en agences non-gouvernementales et gouvernementales – qui démontrent un fort potentiel pour le futur leadership en ornithologie canadienne. Le prix sera présenté au récipiendaire à la réunion annuelle de la société où il sera invité à donner un discours d'ouverture de 30 minutes, et le voyage à la réunion sera subventionné. Le récipiendaire devra également fournir un résumé de son travail qui sera publié comme un article à plusieurs pages dans le bulletin de la société,* Picoides*.*

Nomination: Candidates can be nominated by themselves, former/current supervisors, colleagues and/or peers. A nomination letter should include a short statement (max 1,000 words) describing the nominee's accomplishments to date. To be eligible, the candidate must have received their PhD from or currently working at a Canadian institution. The researcher should have obtained her or his PhD no more than five years prior to the SCO meeting where the award is to be given. Periods where the researcher has not been active due to parental or personal leave would be excluded from the five years. Nominations are accepted in French or English. // *Les candidats peuvent se nommer ou peuvent être nommés par leurs anciens superviseurs, par leur superviseurs actuels, par leurs collègues, ou par leurs pairs. Une lettre de nomination devrait inclure une courte déclaration (max 1 000 mots) décrivant les accomplissements du nominé à ce jour. Pour être éligible, le candidat doit avoir reçu son doctorat d'une institution canadienne ou doit présentement travailler à une institution canadienne. Le candidat doit avoir obtenu son doctorat au plus tard 5 ans avant la réunion de la SOC où le prix sera remis. Les périodes durant lesquelles le candidat n'était pas actif à cause d'un congé parental ou personnel seront exclues de cette période. Les candidatures sont acceptées en français ou en anglais.*

Deadline for submission of nominations is 31 January 2024. // Date limite pour les nominations est le 31 janvier 2024.

Nominations should be sent, by email, to // *Les nominations devraient être envoyées, par courriel, à*:

Danielle Ethier, Chair/Chaire
Early Career Researcher Award Committee/ Comité de prix de recherche en début de carrière
email/courriel: dethier@birdscanada.org

Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

STUDENT RESEARCH AWARDS

TAVERNER AWARDS

Taverner Awards are offered by the SCO-SOC to honour Percy A. Taverner and to further his accomplishments in increasing the knowledge of Canadian birds through research, conservation, and public education. The awards are aimed at people with limited or no access to major funding, regardless of professional status, who are undertaking ornithological work in Canada.

Two awards of up to $2,000 each are made annually.

STUDENT DISCOVERY

The SCO-SOC is committed to removing barriers and promoting diversity and inclusion within the ornithology community in Canada. The Student Discovery Award is offered to students who self-identify as being from equity-denied groups, including but not limited to visible minorities (e.g., Black, Indigenous, and/or members of other racialized groups), minority sexual orientations or gender identities (e.g., 2SLGBTQIA+), and individuals with disabilities.

One award of up to $500 is made annually.

FRED COOKE AWARD

The Fred Cooke Student Award is offered jointly by the SCO-SOC and Birds Canada to honour the contributions of Professor Fred Cooke to Canadian ornithology. It supports ornithological conference travel or research activities by a student. The award shall be open to any student conducting ornithological research at a Canadian university, except that previous recipients of the award shall not be eligible. The award shall be for travel to ornithological conferences at which the student will make an oral or poster presentation, or research in any aspect of ornithology anywhere in the world.

One award of up to $1,000 is made annually.

FOR FULL DESCRIPTIONS/APPLICATION FORMS, VISIT:

https://www.sco-soc.ca/student-awards

- **Applicants must be members of the SCO-SOC to be eligible**
- **Application Deadline: 1 Mar 2024**

For further information or to submit an application (e-mail only), contact:
Dr. Danielle Ethier, Chair, SCO-SOC Student Awards Committee
Birds Canada, Port Rowan, Ontario
e-mail: dethier@birdscanada.org

Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

BIRDS CANADA OISEAUX CANADA

BOURSES ÉTUDIANTES DE RECHERCHE

PRIX TAVERNER

Lex prix Taverner sont offerts par la SCO-SOC pour honorer Percy A. Taverner et pour contribuer à l'acroissement des connaissances sur les oiseaux canadiens grâce à la recherche, à la conservation et à l'éducation du public. Les prix s'adressent aux personnes qui ont peu ou pas d'accès à un important financement, peu importe leur statut professionnel, et qui entreprennent des travaux ornithologiques au Canada.

Deux prix allant jusqu'à 2 000 $ chacun seront décernés chaque année.

PRIX DÉCOUVERTE

La SOC-SCO s'est engagée à éliminer les obstacles et à promouvoir la diversité et l'inclusion au sein de la communauté ornithologique au Canada. Le prix Découverte Étudiante est offert aux étudiants s'identifiant comme appartenant à des groupes privés d'équité, comprenant sans s'y limiter: les minorités visibles (ex. Noirs, Autochtones et / ou membres d'autres groupes racialisés), les orientations sexuelles ou les identités de genre minoritaires (ex. 2SLGBTQIA+) et les personnes handicapées.

Un prix allant jusqu'à 500 $ sera versé chaque année.

PRIX FRED COOKE

Le prix étudiant Fred Cooke est offert conjointement par la SOC-SCO et Oiseaux Canada pour honorer les contributions du professeur Fred Cooke à l'ornithologie canadienne. Ce prix a pour but de soutenir les voyages pour aller à une conférence ornithologique ou les activités de recherche d'un étudiant. Le prix est ouvert à tout étudiant qui effectue des recherches ornithologiques dans une université canadienne, à l'exception des anciens récipiendaires de la bourse. Le prix doit être utilisé pour payer un voyage permettant d'assister à une conférence ornithologique au cours de laquelle l'étudiant fera une présentation orale ou présentera un poster, ou peut être utilisé pour contribuer à la recherche de l'étudiant dans n'importe quel aspect de l'ornithologie n'importe où dans le monde.

Un prix pouvant atteindre 1 000 $ est accordé chaque année.

POUR LES DESCRIPTIONS COMPLÈTES/FORMULAIRE DE DEMANDE, VISITEZ:

https://www.sco-soc.ca/prix-etudiants

- **Les candidats doivent être membres de la SCO-SOC pour être éligible**
- **Date limite d'inscription: 1 mars 2024**

Pour de plus amples renseignements ou pour présenter une demande (courriel seulement), veuillez communiquer avec:

Dr. Danielle Ethier, Chaire du Comité de SCO-SOC bourses de recherche pour étudiant(e)s
Oiseaux Canada, Port Rowan, Ontario
Courriel: dethier@birdscanada.org

Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

BIRDS CANADA OISEAUX CANADA

Doris Huestis Speirs Award
Prix Doris Huestis Speirs

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS / APPEL DE NOMINATIONS - 2024

The Doris Huestis Speirs Award is the most prestigious award given by the SCO-SOC. The award is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding lifetime contributions in Canadian ornithology. Past awardees include professionals who work at museums, government agencies, private companies and universities, as well as amateur ornithologists and people who have contributed to ornithological infrastructure of Canada. // *Le prix Doris Huestis Speirs est le plus prestigieux prix décerné par la SCO-SOC. Le prix est remis annuellement à une personne qui a apporté une contribution significative à long terme en ornithologie au Canada. Les précédents récipiendaires sont des professionnels qui travaillent dans les musées, les organismes gouvernementaux, les entreprises privées, les universités, ainsi que des ornithologues amateurs et des personnes qui ont contribué à la cause ornithologique au Canada.*

Doris Huestis Speirs was born on 27 October 1894 in Toronto, Ontario, and passed away in Ajax, Ontario, on 24 October 1989. Doris was highly prominent in art, literary, and ornithological circles. She founded the Margaret Morse Nice Ornithological Club, which was the only such group specifically for women, and she was also a founding member of the Pickering Naturalists' Club. In her lifetime, Doris made several prominent contributions to the ornithological literature on Evening Grosbeaks and Lincoln's Sparrows (the latter with her husband, J. Murray Speirs). *// Doris Huestis Speirs est né le 27 octobre 1894 à Toronto, en Ontario, et est décédé à Ajax, Ontario, le 24 octobre 1989. Doris a été très importante dans les milieux artistiques, littéraires et ornithologiques. Elle a fondé le club ornithologique de Margaret Morse Nice, qui était le seul groupe ornithologique pour les femmes et elle a également été membre fondateur du Club des naturalistes de Pickering. De son vivant, Doris a fait plusieurs contributions importantes à la littérature ornithologique du Gros bec errant et le Bruant de Lincoln (ce dernier avec son mari, J. Murray Speirs).*

Process//Processus: Nominations should clearly articulate the nominee's cumulative, significant contributions to ornithology in Canada. Nomination packages containing attestations from more than one individual about the scope and impact of the nominee's contributions are particularly welcomed. To nominate a candidate for the Speirs award, preferably with supporting detailed information, contact the Chair of the award committee: // *Les candidatures doivent exprimer clairement le cumul et l'importance des contributions du candidat à l'ornithologie au Canada. Les dossiers de candidature comprenant le soutien de plus d'une personne au sujet de la portée et l'impact des contributions du candidat sont particulièrement les bienvenues. Afin de désigner un candidat au prix Speirs, de préférence avec à l'appui des informations détaillées, contactez le président du comité d'attribution:*

Nicola Koper
Dean of Environment
University of Northern British Columbia
Email/courriel: nicola.koper@unbc.ca

Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

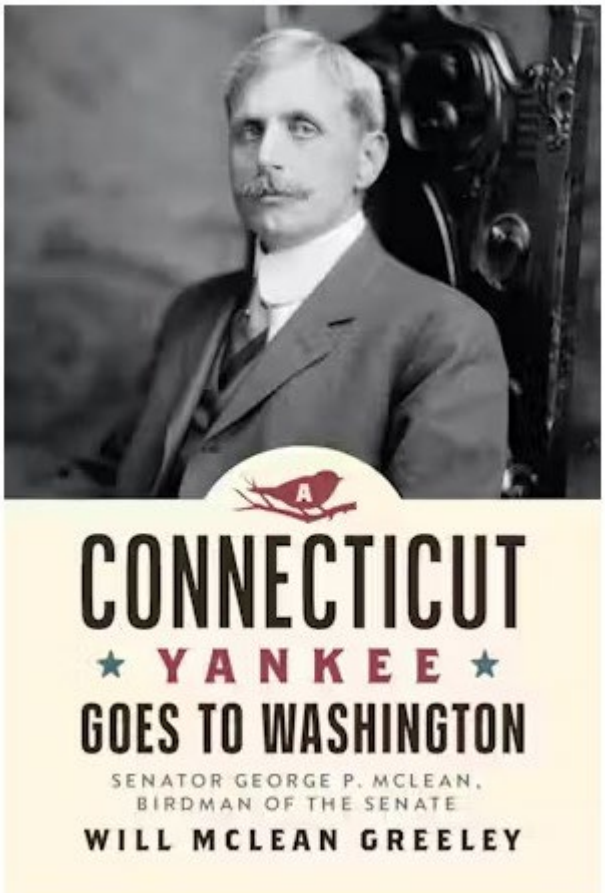
Deadline for receipt of nominations is 9 April 2024. // La date limite de réception des candidatures est le 9 avril 2024.

Book Review

Connecticut Yankee Goes to Washington

By Will McLean Greeley

Published in 2023 by RIT Press, Rochester NY, ISBN: 9791939125996



You may be wondering why a biography of a dead US politician is appearing in *Picoides*. The subject of the book is George P. McLean, the Birdman of the US Senate. His crowning achievement is the *Migratory Bird Treaty Act* of 1918 (MBTA). The MBTA is still in effect in the US as is its Canadian counterpart, the *Migratory Birds Convention Act* (passed in 1917), in Canada.

The book is well-written and easy to read with the story narrative approach used by the author. Mr. Greeley did a meticulous job with the research for this book including a detailed bibliography and numerous footnotes so readers can dive more deeply into the topics discussed in the book. The author is a descendant of George P. McLean who gives a positive view of his ancestor's life. However, he does not shy away from discussing the various health issues that George McLean faced during his lifetime including during his difficult governorship of Connecticut.

The eighth chapter is probably the one of most interest to *Picoides* readers as the MBTA is the focus of the chapter. However, I strongly recommend reading the whole book to learn what made George McLean tick and why he was so passionate about bird conservation. He grew up on a farm and loved the outdoors, and later became a lawyer, businessman, politician and sportsman. According to the author, Mr. McLean was very honest compared to many of his contemporaries. However, he did financially benefit from significant legal political patronage at the time and he was worth $1.8 million US ($31 million in 2020 dollars) when he died in 1932. The significant estate was shared among his widow, extended family (he and his wife had no children), household and estate staff and several charities. Three key ongoing legacies from his estate were a nursing home that still operates today, a 4,400 acre wildlife refuge and the McLean Fund that provides $800,000 annually to local charities including wildlife and bird conservation organizations.

The US Senate did suit his skills and interests much better than the governorship. He shepherded many pieces of major US federal legislation in various areas like banking in addition to the MBTA. He was a moderate Progressive Republican who recognized the need for reforms to curb the excesses of capitalism and improve lives of ordinary folks and democracy itself. He was usually in tune with the wishes of his constituents but he was slow to embrace women's suffrage. Mr. McLean was often at odds with both ardent status quo conservatives and 'radical' progressives like Teddy Roosevelt. Mr. McLean was not afraid to buck the party line when necessary. He reminded me of the late US senator John McCain.

Although George McLean was an avid hunter and fisherman, he clearly recognized the impacts of overhunting and habitat loss and the need for effective means to protect wildlife populations. Local and state level wildlife laws and regulations at the

time were not effective. He wanted to create a national law to protect birds as they do not respect political boundaries. Mr. McLean's key concern for any national bird protection legislation was the constitutionality within the US system. Making the legislation part of an international treaty might help protect it from court challenges and being struct down as unconstitutional. Likely, his approach was right. It took several attempts over several years to pass the MBTA in Congress.

Canada was not the first choice for the international partner for the MBTA because Canada was already a participant in World War One. However, the extreme political instability in Mexico in the 1910s made it impossible for it to sign and enforce the MBTA. Thankfully, Canada and Britain saw the opportunity that the MBTA brought to them. At the time, Canada did not have an independent foreign policy and needed British permission to enter treaties with countries outside the British Empire. Pleasing a key ally during wartime was probably a key consideration. I did wonder what direct role Mr. McLean had in treaty negotiations and how were his relationships with the US State Department and the Canadian and British treaty negotiators. Unfortunately, the author did not explore that in any detail. He does go into detail about Mr. McLean's relationships with other key members of Congress, US Cabinet and Presidents Taft and Wilson.

Throughout the book, I had the feeling of "they don't make politicians like that anymore" given the current state of hyper-partisanship and heightened hostility between political parties. The author notes the same thing at end of the book.

To conclude, I did enjoy reading the book and learning how the MBTA came into being. I recommend this book to anyone who likes political biographies and anyone who wants to learn about a key 20th century cornerstone of bird conservation in North America.

Reviewed by Rob Warnock, warnockr@myaccess.ca

Avian Conservation and Ecology Articles

Volume 18, Issue 1 June 2023 New Additions

Long-distance dispersal patterns in the Cerulean Warbler: a case study from Indiana
Lara E. Jones, Kamal Islam

Evaluating captive-release strategies for the Western Burrowing Owl (Athene cunicularia hypugaea)
Breanna E. Pyott, Lauren M. M. Meads, Alexandra L. M. Froese, Stephen D. Petersen, Aimee M. Mitchell, Albrecht I. Schulte-Hostedde

Evaluating the effects of Natural Resources Conservation Service project implementation on the disturbance-dependent avian community with implications for Blue-winged Warblers
Lincoln R. Oliver, Richard S. Bailey, Kyle R. Aldinger, Petra B. Wood, Christopher M. Lituma

Heightened heart rate but similar flight responses to evolved versus recent predators in an Arctic seabird
Erica A. Geldart, Oliver P. Love, H. Grant Gilchrist, Andrew F. Barnas, Christopher M. Harris, Christina A.D Semeniuk

International importance of tidal flats in the Republic of Korea as shorebird stopover sites in the East Asian–Australasian flyway
Ju-Hyun Lee, In-Cheol Kim, Si-Wan Lee, Jong-Ju Son, Jae-Ung Jang, Ha-Cheol Sung

Three grassland bird species' responses to fire and habitat structure in southern Illinois, USA suggest broad benefits of grassland size and plant diversity
Alex Glass, Michael Eichholz

Volume 18, Issue 2 October 2023

SCO – SOC Information

Name	Title	Phone	E-mail
Officers for 2023/2024:			
Dr. Matt Reudink	President	204-474-8768	mreudink@tru.ca
Dr. Danielle Ethier	Vice-President/President-elect	519-586-3531 ext. 115	dethier@birdscanada.org
Dr. Nicola Koper	Past President	-	nicola.koper@unbc.ca
Dr. Lisha Berzins	Treasurer	-	lisha.berzins@usask.ca
Dr. Elizabeth MacDougall-Shackleton	Membership Secretary	519-852-5179	emacdoug@uwo.ca
Dr. Lionel Leston	Recording Secretary	-	leston@ualberta.ca
Rob Warnock	Co-editor, *Picoides*	306-586-2492	warnockr@myaccess.ca
Barbara Bleho	Co-editor, *Picoides*	416-705-0092	bleho.barbara@gmail.com
Voting Members of Council:			
Dr. Kara Lefevre	Member of Council	239-321-0425	klefevre@tru.ca
Dr. Brendan Casey	Member of Council	780-920-1787	bgcasey@ualberta.ca
Amélie Roberto-Charron	Member of Council	867-669-4734	amelie.roberto-charron@canada.ca
Dr. Maggie MacPherson	Member of Council	705-622-4575	maggie.macpherson@gmail.com
Dr. Leanne Grieves	Member of Council	-	lag296@cornell.edu
Dr. Sam Hache	Member of Council	867-669-4771	samuel.hache@canada.ca
Dr. Sarah Gutowsky	Member of Council	-	sarahegutowsky@gmail.com
Dr. Ann McKellar	Member of Council	306-241-1495	ann.mckellar@canada.ca
Steven van Wilgenburg	Member of Council	306-975-5506	steven.vanwilgenburg@canada.ca
Francis van Oordt	Member of Council	-	francis.vanoordtlahoz@mail.mcgill.ca
Dr. Andrea Norris	Member of Council	-	andrea.norris@canada.ca

(Non-voting) Past Presidents:

Ross Lein	1983-1986	Tony Diamond	1998-2000	Joe Nocera	2012-2014
Spencer Sealy	1986-1988	Kathy Martin	2000-2002	Greg Robertson	2014-2016
Erica Dunn	1988-1990	Jean-Pierre Savard	2002-2004	Ken Otter	2016-2018
Jon Barlow	1990-1992	Charles Francis	2004-2006	Colleen Barber	2018-2020
Bruce Falls	1992-1994	Susan Hannon	2006-2008	Nicola Koper	2020-2022
Henri Ouellet	1994-1996	David Bird	2008-2010		
David Nettleship	1996-1998	Erica Nol	2010-2012		

Membership Information

www.sco-soc.ca/membership.html

SCO-SOC membership forms can be found at the link above. Current membership rates are provided below. SCO-SOC provides free membership to members of equity-denied communities. See our website for more information.

Student	$15.00/year
Early Career (<5 y post-grad)	$25.00/year
Retired	$25.00/year
Regular	$35.00/year ($45.00/year international)
Sustained	$75.00/year
Life	$500.00

SCO-SOC Website

www.sco-soc.ca/index.html

The SCO-SOC website includes sections on membership, meetings, news, publications, awards, information for students, an overview of SCO-SOC, and links of interest to members and other visitors.

Please direct any suggested additions or edits to the website to the Society's webmaster, Jennifer Foote, at jennifer.foote@algomau.ca.

Submissions to *Picoides*:

Articles and photos relevant to Canadian ornithology are welcomed by the editors. If submitting photos, please save them in tiff or jpeg format with descriptive file names, and supply captions including common names of species, location, date, photographer, and any other notes of interest. Deadlines for submission are February 15, May 15, and October 15; issues are typically published 4-6 weeks later. Please send all submissions to Rob Warnock at warnockr@myaccess.ca. **Disclaimer:** *Picoides* is not a peer-reviewed journal; the publication of an article in *Picoides* does not imply endorsement by SCO-SOC.