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Photo by Editor

Bank Swallow colony, near Avonport, Nova Scotia, 1957.

Does "the budget" give you the feeling your house is crumbling around you? Join the clan!

EDITOR'S MUSINGS

Canadian Landbird Conservation Strategy (C.L.C.S.) -> -> ->

Many S.C.O. members heard about the meeting in Delta, B.C., in October 1994 to discuss the C.L.C.S. (see report in this issue). Like me, most of you didn't attend. The people present established a working group to recommend a structure for co-ordinating activities implicit in such a strategy. The report of the working group (dated 30 November 1994) referred to regional working groups vs. ecologically defined groupings, representative membership, status reports on species and habitats, and links to existing conservation efforts. The suggestion was made to add "Partners in Flight Canada" to any name chosen, so as "to capitalize on the established profile of the US group".

Such initiatives probably are necessary, as well as democratic. But devoting much space in *Picoides* to reporting the glacially slow progress of what soon be-

come bureaucratic processes may put readers of our bulletin to sleep. What I've written above is, I believe, about as much as many of you want to read on C.L.C.S. until it can report concrete results. To make such an account interesting, it must be based on lots of hard data, as was the *Ibis* (136: 362-367, 1994) report on the 1994 bird conservation conference of the British Ornithologists Union and collaborating societies (proceedings already available as a special issue of that journal), of which the summary is very pertinent for C.L.C.S.. I'm uneasy that use of a "Partners in Flight" label, even with "Canada" attached, would imply much closer parallels between bird conservation initiatives in Canada and the U.S.A. than are likely to emerge, given the divergent ecological and political frameworks within which they must operate in those countries. Unlike the

situation in the U.K., much information needed for bird conservation in Canada is still unknown or barely guessed at. Major efforts are needed in collecting new data and in assembling and studying data already in files across the country, before we can convince politicians and bureaucrats that we know what the problems are and how they should be addressed. The recommendation "More data are needed and should be collected." looks like a "cop-out" here, as in many other situations. But convincing people requires that we can say confidently, "This is how things are." rather than waffling: "Existing data suggest to us that things may be this way, but...". How much do we really know of what drives bird survival systems in Canada?

Editor

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If you would like to be a member of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, please send your name, address, phone number, and a cheque or money order (payable to S.C.O.) for \$10.00 to:

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The activities of the Society are progressing steadily even while most people involved in the Society's affairs have numerous other responsibilities. This is reassuring, because the continued existence of an organization like the S.C.O. depends on the determination and commitment of volunteers who contribute their time, efforts and expertise. Thanks to all those who participate in the activities of the S.C.O. and contribute to its administrative functions. I take this opportunity to emphasize the efforts of Tony Erskine in producing high-quality issues of *Picoides* on a regular schedule.

As announced in the previous issue, Ricky Dunn has prepared a short report on the "Canadian Landbird Conservation Strategy" [see below]. The participation of S.C.O. in this plan has yet to be defined. Any comments and suggestions, for initiating discussion on S.C.O.'s involvement in C.L.C.S. when it becomes operative, would be useful. Please forward them to me before the end of June. The S.C.O.'s participation will reflect what the membership says it wants, so make Council aware of your wishes as to level and type of involvement. This applies as well to the other matters mentioned in this "message".

The committee on awards, chaired by Bill Montevecchi, received 19 high-quality

applications for the 1995 Taverner and Baillie awards. Official announcement of the awards will be made at the annual meeting, after their approval by Council. Likewise Spencer Sealy and his committee will recommend to Council a recipient for the Doris Speirs Award, also to be presented at the annual meeting.

On behalf of the S.C.O., I have indicated our interest in the proposal, by the Long Point Bird Observatory, for a "Canadian Centre for the Study and Preservation of Birds". Information on this proposal will appear in *Picoides* when available.

Concerning the possibility of a future Canadian journal of ornithology, consultation with several members of the Society and other ornithologists in Canada and abroad suggests a definite need for such a publication. However, there are major problems before such a periodical can be launched. The most serious difficulty appears to be the financing of such an undertaking, which seems unlikely to be obtained in the near future. This may appear to be a setback for the initiative, but it gives S.C.O. the time necessary for preparation of a substantive funding proposal. Many issues will have to be given consideration before decisions are taken and before funding is solicited. For example,

