
Society of Canadian
Bulletin of The Ornithologists

PICOIDES

Bulletin de la
Société des Ornithologistes

ISSN 0836-060X

Picoides, December, 1991
Volume 5, Number 2



Dr. John Richardson

Editor's Message

The highlight of the Ornithological year (apart from field work) was the joint meeting of the SCO and the AOU in Montreal in August. There was an interesting symposium on the history of Canadian Ornithology. The small but appreciative group of attendees confirmed for me the value of examining where we've been, not always where we're going. I'm trusting that all contributors to the Symposium will think of *Picoides* as a venue for a written presentation.

In this issue, Stuart Houston details some of the contributions to natural history in Canada made by Dr. John Richardson.

Ironically, although we know more today about Richardson's contributions than we did in the past, now his name is not commonly associated with a single species of bird. At one time, we spoke of Richardson's Owl, Wood Peewee and Merlin. Mammal watchers, note, however, that it's hard to pass a spring or summer day in Alberta without encountering a Richardson's Ground Squirrel.

The SCO recognizes Louise de Kiriline Lawrence, as the winner of the 1991 Speirs Award for contributions to Canadian Ornithology.

I would like to thank all contributors, those who provided information on their research and papers, and Steve Fisher and Michelle Campbell for their production assistance.

W. Bruce McGillivray

Membership Information

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 for \$10.00 to:

Dr. Philip H.R. Stepney
Provincial Museum
of Alberta
12845-102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 0M6

Si vous désirez devenir membre de la Société des Ornithologistes du Canada, faites parvenir vos coordonnées ainsi qu'un chèque ou mandat-poste au montant de 10,00\$ à l'adresse ci-haut.

Published by:
**The Society of Canadian
Ornithologists
Provincial Museum
of Alberta
12845 - 102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 0M6**

**If you are interested
in advertising
in *Picoides*,
please write to:**

**The Society of Canadian
Ornithologists,
Provincial Museum
of Alberta,
12845 - 102 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 0M6**

**Attn.: Dr. W. Bruce
McGillivray**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editor's Message	2	John Richardson	7
Baillie and Taverner Awards	3	In Press	11
Doris Huestis Speirs Award	5	Canadian Ornithologists' Research	13

BAILLIE AND TAVERNER AWARDS FOR 1991

At the 1991 annual meeting of the Society of Canadian Ornithologists, the winners of this year's Baillie and Taverner awards were announced. The winner of the James L. Baillie award, a \$1000.00 research grant provided by the Long Point Bird Observatory and administered by the SCO, was Karen Wiebe, University of Saskatchewan. Her proposal was titled "**Hatching asynchrony in the American Kestrel: proximate mechanisms and adaptive value.**"

Karen writes:

"My goal is to provide a comprehensive analysis of hatching asynchrony by investigating not only its consequences for chick growth and parental provisioning, but also its control and the influence of proximate factors at the time of laying. My specific objectives are:

To use observational and experimental approaches to investigate food abundance, population density, and weather as proximate influences on hatching asynchrony and to test the brood reduction, sibling rivalry, and peak energy hypotheses for American Kestrels.

I hypothesize that females can control the degree of asynchrony and use food supply at the time of laying as an indication of the level of asynchrony that will be optimal during the period of chick rearing. I predict that: 1) synchronous broods will fledge more and heavier young when food is abundant but that asynchronous broods will do better when food is limited. 2) females supplemented with food prior to laying will reduce the asynchrony of their clutches.

If asynchrony is beneficial during times of food shortage because it reduces energetic costs (sibling rivalry/peak energy) or increases chick growth and survival (brood reduction), I predict that: 1) chicks in synchronous nests where food is limited will grow faster and have lower mortality than those in nests I make synchronous. 2) parents of asynchronous broods will provision less."

Karen's study area is:

"...in the boreal forest of northern Saskatchewan...Nest boxes, located at the

side of the highway or logging roads are easy to access so large numbers (>10/hr) can be inspected. About 170-200 pairs breed in boxes each year. Beginning in April when the birds arrive on territories, they will be captured using bal-chatri traps and color-banded...The breeding adults will be recaptured several times (usually in the nest box) to assess physical condition...

I will supplement 30 breeding pairs with 65g of mice/day from the time of their arrival on territories until the first egg is laid and compare the hatching asynchrony to 30 control pairs."

The winner of one Taverner award of \$500.00 was Dan Kozlovic, University of Toronto, for his proposal titled "**Host Selection in a Generalist Brood Parasite: Interactions Between the Brown-headed Cowbird and House Finch.**" Kozlovic points out that:

"The House Finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*) is parasitized rarely in its native western range, but following its introduction and subsequent colonization of the east (Mundinger and Hope 1982) has become a very popular host of the cowbird there (Kozlovic unpubl. data, 1983-85, St. Catharines, Ontario). This result is of particular interest as the House Finch is an unsuitable host (Kozlovic *loc. cit.*). My proposed research will address the nature of cowbird-House Finch interactions in North America."

Through his work, Dan hoped:

"(1) To document the consequences of parasitism of both species, and answer a number of questions; 2) To determine the abundance of cowbirds, House Finches and other species of the avian community; (3) Are eastern cowbirds better adapted to parasitize House Finches than their western counterparts? (4) What behavioral or ecological characteristics of the House Finch make it unsuitable as a host for the cowbird? (5) How widespread is this phenomenon in the east, and to what extent do rates of parasitism differ geographically? (6) Given that the House Finch is an unsuitable host and if cowbirds select hosts in order to maximize their fitness, I predict that the rate

