

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. The D.H. Speirs Award Selection Committee has selected **Peter Arcese**, the Forest Renewal BC Chair in Applied Conservation Biology and Co-Director, Centre for Applied Conservation Research, for the 2012 award.

Peter obtained his BA in Zoology from the University of Washington in 1981. Both of his graduate degrees came in Zoology from UBC, his MSc in 1985 and his PhD in 1988. He then obtained post-doctoral awards from NATO-NSF and NSERC to study at Simon Fraser University. In 1992 Peter took a tenure-track position at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. In 1999 he returned to UBC to take his current position, including continuing the research program on the Mandarte Island Song Sparrows started by Frank Tompa and Jamie Smith.

Peter's research has examined fundamental questions ranging from genetics, evolution, ecology, demographics and conservation, and the interface among these fields. He has authored over 100 papers, which is impressive, but more impressive is the high quality of these papers, many of which are in the leading journals. Equally impressive is the breadth of topics on which Peter has made contributions.

His early papers on the Mandarte Island Song Sparrows are benchmark empirical examples of the role of individual behaviour and territoriality on population processes. Following his graduate work Peter changed gears to work on African mammals and the many conservation challenges they face. After his post-doctoral work, he expanded his interests to host-parasite interactions, and the implications of these interactions on population processes.

More recently, Peter has expanded his work to include species and habitats of conservation interest in western Canada. He is not shy about tackling the most pressing issues, tackling key conservation questions related to Marbled Murrelets, Vancouver Island Marmots and Northern Spotted Owls. His work on wildlife conservation in Africa has led to important conservation gains, and he continues to examine the role of reserve design for effective conservation.

Peter has already received a number of significant awards. Early in his career he was awarded an NSF Young Investigator Award. He is an elected member and fellow of the AOU. Not limited to excellence in research, Peter received the Outstanding Undergraduate Advisor award while at the University of Wisconsin, showing his dedication to mentoring and teaching young scientists. Peter takes great pride in his teaching and supervision; his students have received numerous awards and are themselves making important contributions to Canadian ornithology.

Peter's efforts are not limited to research and scientific study, he is an active member of a number of local naturalist clubs, and regular participant in provincial, national and international working groups attempting to resolve a myriad of conservation issues.

This award will acknowledge the outstanding contributions Peter has made to Canadian ornithology, from fundamental research on the processes that drive bird evolution and population dynamics, to studies with immediate applied conservation value.