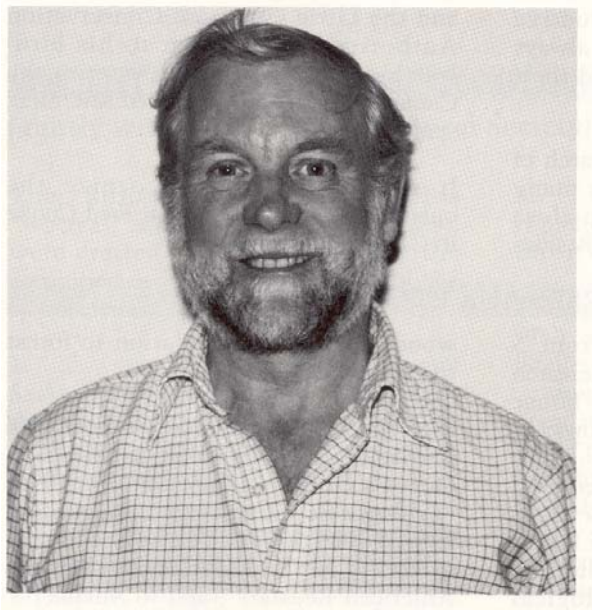


1993 DORIS HUESTIS SPEIRS AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CONTRIBUTIONS IN CANADIAN ORNITHOLOGY

Fred Cooke



Each year the Society of Canadian Ornithologists presents the Doris Huestis Speirs Award to a person who has made important contributions to Canadian ornithology. This year we honour Fred Cooke, who has carried out a monumental long-term study of the Lesser Snow Goose and in the process has influenced the careers of many colleagues and students.

Fred was born in England in 1936 and educated at Cambridge through to his doctorate in botany. He joined the biology department at Queen's University in 1965 as a specialist in fungal genetics. His passion for birds got the better of him and in 1975 he started the Tundra Biological Station near Churchill, Manitoba, where he had begun in 1969 his studies of Snow Geese that have continued to the present. At first, conditions were rather rough, and we hear stories of Fred trying to pitch a tent knee-deep in water, although it is not clear who would want to sleep in such a tent. I understand the station is rather palatial now, with a goose colony where the front lawn should be. Here Fred and a small army of students and colleagues, with a distinctly international flavour, have carried out research into the selective forces shaping the population of mixed Snow and Blue Geese. [As an aside, it's appropriate to note that Graham Cooch, who first established that Snows and Blues were colour-morphs of one species, was an earlier recipient of the Speirs award.] Fred's studies have also dealt with life history, reproductive strategies and genetic variability, always tied to the birds in the wild and their ecology.

Fred Cooke has directed the research of 27 graduate students, and their many joint publications attest to the close collaboration within his group. Besides authoring many journal papers and invited presentations, Fred co-edited a widely acclaimed book on avian genetics, and is in the process of drawing together the work on Snow Geese in another volume. Fred was vice-chair of the program committee for the XIXth International Ornithological Congress in Ottawa in 1986. He is a Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union and a Corresponding Fellow of the Deutsche Ornithologen-Gesellschaft. From 1985 through 1987 he was a Killam Fellow. He received the William Brewster Award of the AOU in 1990. He has certainly added lustre to Queen's University biology, and will shortly take up a newly established chair in wildlife ecology at Simon Fraser University.

Throughout his distinguished academic career, Fred has continued an interest in natural history and conservation, for example helping with the Rideau Trail and the Little Cataraqui Conservation Authority. I can attest to his bird- watching skills: when we went to the Camargue [south France], Fred saw more species than I & d.

It is a pleasure to recognize the outstanding contributions of Fred Cooke to Canadian ornithology.