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Mallard (*Anas platyrhynchos*) female with young. Photo: Dave Szmyr.

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Editors' Message

Rob Warnock and Barbara Bleho

Welcome to the first issue of *Picoides* of 2019. We hope everyone had a great holiday season and start to the new year.

Thank you for the diversity of submissions this issue, let's keep the momentum going! In addition to the President's message from Colleen Barber, this issue also contains both research and popular articles from members and a crafty poem about owl population trends. Also in this issue are the research reports from the 2018 Taverner Award recipients and a thesis abstract.

Please consider nominations for the Doris Huestis Speirs Award if you have not already done so. Deadline for nomination is April 15, 2019. Also a reminder that the next SCO-SOC meeting will be a stand-alone one in August 2019 in lovely and historic Quebec City. Registration is now open and abstracts are being accepted until April 15, 2019. Members are encouraged to support the conference through donations, particularly to support students and families with young children.

We wish everyone a safe and wonderful end of winter and start to spring. Next *Picoides* deadline is May 15, 2019. We look forward to your next submission!

FRANÇAIS—Message des éditeurs – Rob Warnock et Barbara Bleho

Bienvenue au premier numéro de *Picoides* de 2019. Nous espérons que tout le monde ait passé un joyeux temps des fêtes et que la nouvelle année ait bien commencé.

Merci pour la diversité des soumissions dans ce numéro, continuons sur cette lancée! En plus du message de la présidente, Colleen Barber, ce numéro contient aussi des articles de recherche et des articles populaires des membres, ainsi qu'un poème astucieux sur les tendances démographiques des hiboux. Vous trouverez également dans ce numéro les rapports de recherche des lauréats du Prix Taverner 2018 et un résumé de thèse.

Si vous ne l'avez pas déjà fait, veuillez considérer les candidatures pour le Prix Doris Huestis Speirs. La date limite de mise en candidature est le 15 avril 2019. Nous vous rappelons également que la prochaine réunion de l'SCO-SOC sera une réunion autonome en août 2019 dans la charmante et historique ville de Québec. Les inscriptions sont maintenant ouvertes et les résumés sont acceptés jusqu'au 15 avril 2019. Les membres sont encouragés à soutenir la conférence par des dons, en particulier pour soutenir les étudiants et les familles avec de jeunes enfants.

Nous souhaitons à tous joie et sécurité en cette fin d'hiver et début de printemps. La prochaine date limite du *Picoides* est le 15 mai 2019. Nous attendons avec impatience votre prochaine soumission!



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Message du président

Colleen Barber

Encore une autre tempête de neige frappe les provinces de l'Atlantique. Toutes les régions du Canada ont connu un hiver rigoureux cette année. Cependant, des signes subtils du printemps commencent à apparaître; nous avons de plus en plus de luminosité chaque jour et l'angle du soleil change. Les bruants chanteur et les étourneaux sansonnet chantent plus souvent, tandis que les mésanges à tête noire commencent à défendre des territoires.

Ce numéro de *Picoides* comportent de l'excellente lecture. Nous avons les rapports de deux de nos lauréats des bourses de recherche pour étudiants de 2018 (la bourse Taverner: Andrew Beauchamp et Sonya Pastran) sur leurs travaux de maîtrise. Nous présentons également un court récit de la Dre Catherine Dale sur une autre de ses aventures pendant la saison de terrain. Dr. Bob Montgomerie nous a aimablement permis de rééditer son article sur The Nice Bird Club, publié pour la première fois dans le blog History of Ornithology de l'American Ornithological Society (29 janvier 2019). Son histoire met en vedette Margaret Nice et Doris Huestis Speirs et donne un aperçu de la façon dont elles ont contribué à ouvrir la voie aux femmes intéressées par l'ornithologie et les sciences.

En parlant de Doris Huestis Speirs, les nominations pour le Prix Doris Huestis Speirs sont toujours ouvertes jusqu'au 15 avril 2019. Si vous connaissez quelqu'un qui a apporté une contribution exceptionnelle à l'ornithologie canadienne au cours de sa vie, veuillez envisager de proposer sa candidature.

Nous avons hâte d'accueillir une conférence indépendante des SCO-SOC à la ville de Québec, au Québec, du 27 au 30 août 2019. Les inscriptions et les soumissions de résumés sont maintenant ouvertes, avec une date limite du 15 avril pour les résumés. La conférence aura lieu au magnifique Hôtel Château Laurier au centre-ville de Québec. Le SCO-SOC est très motivé à rendre cette conférence conviviale pour les familles et les étudiants. Nous recueillons actuellement des fonds pour 1) une salle réservée près des lieux de présentation orale et par affiches afin que les mères puissent allaiter leur bébé dans une relative intimité et que les familles puissent se reposer et socialiser, et 2) et pour réduire les frais d'inscription pour tous les étudiants participants. Vos dons sont très appréciés pour cette bonne cause et peuvent être faits à la page des dons de CanadaDon – <https://www.canadahelps.org/fr/organismesdebienfaisance/society-of-canadian-ornithologists-societe-des-ornithologist/campaign/support-for-students-and-families-at-quebec2019/>. Tous les dons personnels sont déductibles d'impôt.

Notre mandat est de veiller à ce que *Picoides* soit rédigé dans nos deux langues officielles. Nous remercions Marie-Ève Cyr, Junior Tremblay et Hanna Carey pour leur aide dans la traduction française. Nous nous rapprochons d'un bulletin vraiment bilingue, mais nous sommes concient qu'il reste des améliorations à apporter. Si quelqu'un peut nous aider à réviser les traductions françaises pour *Picoides*, nous accueillons votre aide à bras ouverts.

Profitez de ces derniers jours de l'hiver...et d'un printemps formidable.

ENGLISH— President's Message – Colleen Barber

I am watching yet another snowstorm pummel the Atlantic provinces. Every part of Canada has had a full-on winter this year. However, subtle signs of spring are beginning to show; it stays lighter a little longer each day, and the angle of the sun is changing. Song Sparrows and European Starlings are singing more frequently, while Black-capped Chickadees are beginning to defend territories.

There is some great reading ahead in this issue of *Picoides*. We have reports from two of our 2018 student research award winners (Taverner Award: Andrew Beauchamp and Sonya Pastran) on their M.Sc. work. We also feature a short story by Dr. Catherine Dale on another of her field-season adventures. Dr. Bob Montgomerie has kindly allowed us to re-publish his article on The Nice Bird Club, first published in the History of Ornithology blog of the American Ornithological Society (Jan 29, 2019). His story features Margaret Nice and Doris Huestis Speirs and provides insight into how they helped pave the way for women interested in ornithology and science.

Speaking of Doris Huestis Spears, nominations for the Doris Huestis Speirs Award are still open until April 15, 2019. If you know someone who has made outstanding lifetime contributions to Canadian ornithology, please consider nominating them.

We are looking forward to hosting an independent SCO-SOC conference in Quebec City, Quebec from August 27-30, 2019. Registration and Abstract submissions are now open, with a deadline of April 15 for Abstracts. The conference will be held at the beautiful Hôtel Château Laurier in downtown Quebec City. The SCO-SOC is very motivated to make this conference family-friendly, and student-friendly. We are currently raising funds for 1) a dedicated room near the oral and poster presentation venues so that mothers can nurse their babies in relative privacy, and families can connect, and 2) to lower registration costs for all student participants. Your donations are gratefully for this good cause. Donations can be made at the society's CanadaHelps donations page - <https://www.canadahelps.org/en/charities/society-of-canadian-ornithologists/societe-des-ornithologist/campaign/support-for-students-and-families-at-quebec2019/>. All personal donations are tax deductible.

Our mandate is to ensure that Picoides is written in both our official languages. We are grateful to Marie-Ève Cyr, Junior Tremblay, and Hanna Carey for their help with French translations. We are getting closer to having a truly bilingual newsletter, but we are not there yet. If anyone can help review French translations for Picoides, we welcome you with open arms.

Enjoy these last days of winter...here's to a great spring.

2018 Taverner Award Reports

Marbled Murrelet Marine Habitat Utilization in Haida, Gwaii, BC

Sonya Pastran, Simon Fraser University

Project Overview

Laskeek Bay Conservation Society holds the oldest dataset on the local marine seabird distribution in Haida Gwaii, BC. What I am aiming to do is use this dataset along with additional data from the Laskeek Bay waters to better understand the marine distribution of Marbled Murrelets (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) and other recorded seabirds. Specifically, I intend to (1) map out the yearly abundance and distribution of species in the Laskeek Bay waters, as well as analyze hotspots where the birds have been repeatedly observed throughout the years; (2) test for retrospective relationships between physical oceanographic conditions and other potential variables influencing the species abundances and distributions; and (3) examine the influence of prey abundance and availability on current distributions.

2018 Field Season

I first arrived on East Limestone Island (ELI) on May 18th 2018, together with my first boat driver Quinlan Fennel. These first couple of weeks in the field consisted of project setup, troubleshooting and protocol modifications. A large portion of the project setup was dedicated to the experimental portion of the project, the avian predation experiment. For this, we flew Eagle and Peregrine Falcon kites along the shoreline to test if the presence of seabirds close to the shore would be impacted. For the setup, we built ten stands along a 10 km segment of Louise Island (Figures 1 & 2).

After the kite stands were set up, we turned our efforts to organizing the data collection protocol for the regular sea-surveys. Stations were set up along the transects to measure



Figure 1: Kite stand along the shoreline of Louise Island (left) and extended pole with flying Eagle kite attached (right). / Figure 1 : Station de cerf-volant le long du rivage de l'île Louise (à gauche) et mât allongé avec un cerf-volant d'aigle attaché (à droite).

temperature and salinity (Figure 2) with the YSI Pro 30 probe. A Lawrence Elite Ti 7 sonar 'fish finder' was set up on the 18 ft aluminum skiff to measure general fish abundance.

After several trial days and modifications, the final procedure involved three types of surveys: Inner Normal Survey (first half of transects), Outer Normal Survey (second half of transects) and Kite Surveys (shoreline survey with kites flying). These Kite Surveys were run paired within 2 days of the Inner Normal Surveys. Between the 9th of June and 3rd of July, four sets of Inner and Outer Normal Surveys were done, and four Kite Surveys had also been conducted.

Post Field Season

Data from the 2018 field season have been digitally inputted and filed. The top 3 species recorded this season were Marbled Murrelets, Pigeon Guillemots (*Cephus columba*) and Rhinoceros Auklets (*Cerorhinca monocerata*). For the historical data, I have now digitalized entries from 1997 to 2017 in raw excel files. Currently, I am cleaning and formatting the last ten years of data for preliminary spatial analysis.

FRANÇAIS— Rapport du lauréat du prix Taverner 2018: Utilisation de l'habitat marin du guillemot marbré à Haïda, Gwaii, C.-B. par Sonya Pastran, Université Simon Fraser

Aperçu du projet

La Laskeek Bay Conservation Society détient le plus ancien ensemble de données sur la répartition locale des oiseaux marins marins à Haïda Gwaii, en Colombie-Britannique. J'ai l'intention d'utiliser cet ensemble de données, ainsi que d'autres données provenant des eaux de la baie Laskeek pour mieux comprendre la distribution marine du guillemot marbré (*Brachyramphus marmoratus*) et d'autres oiseaux marins rapportés. Plus précisément, j'ai l'intention (1) de cartographier l'abondance et la distribution annuelle des espèces dans les eaux de la baie Laskeek, ainsi qu'analyser les points chauds où les oiseaux ont été observés à plusieurs reprises au fil des ans; (2) d'étudier les relations rétrospectives entre les conditions océanographiques physiques et d'autres variables influençant potentiellement sur



Figure 2: Map of all transect lines in Laskeek Bay, fine scale temperature points (1 km apart) shown as well as locations of 10 replica raptor kites. / Figure 2 : Carte de toutes les lignes de transects dans la baie Laskeek, points de température à échelle fine (à 1 km l'un de l'autre), ainsi que l'emplacement de 10 répliques de cerfs-volants de rapaces.

l'abondance et la distribution des espèces; et (3) examiner l'influence de l'abondance et de la disponibilité des proies sur la distribution actuelle.

Saison 2018

Je suis arrivée sur East Limestone Island (ELI) pour la première fois le 18 mai 2018 avec mon premier pilote de bateau Quinlan Fennel. Ces premières semaines sur le terrain ont consisté en la mise en place du projet, le dépannage et les modifications du protocole. Une grande partie de la mise en place du projet a été consacrée à la partie expérimentale du projet, l'expérience de prédation aviaire. Pour ce faire, nous avons fait voler des cerfs-volants d'aigle et de faucon pèlerin le long du rivage pour vérifier si la présence d'oiseaux marins près du rivage serait affectée. Pour la mise en place, nous avons construit dix stations le long d'un tronçon de 10 km de l'île Louise (figures 1 et 2).

Après la mise en place des stations de cerfs-volants, nous nous sommes concentrés sur l'organisation du protocole de collecte des données pour les relevés réguliers de la mer. Des stations ont été installées le long des transects pour mesurer la température et la salinité (Figure 2) avec la sonde YSI Pro 30. Un sonar Elite Ti 7 de Lawrence Elite a été installé sur la yole en aluminium de 18 pieds pour mesurer l'abondance générale des poissons.

Après plusieurs jours d'essai et de modifications, la procédure finale comportait trois types d'enquêtes : relevé de la normale intérieure (première moitié des transects), de la normale extérieure (deuxième moitié des transects) et relevés de cerf-volant (relevé du rivage avec des cerfs-volants en volent). Ces relevés de

cerfs-volants ont été effectuées par paires dans les 2 jours suivant les relevés normaux intérieurs. Entre le 9 juin et le 3 juillet, quatre séries de relevés de la normale intérieure et extérieure ont été effectuées, et quatre relevés de cerfs-volants ont également été effectués.

Période après terrain

Les données de la saison 2018 sur le terrain ont été entrées et classées numériquement. Les trois espèces les plus fréquemment observées cette saison furent le guillemot marbré, le guillemot pigeon (*Cephus columba*) et le starique rhinoceros (*Cerorhinca monocerata*). Pour les données historiques, j'ai maintenant numérisé les entrées de 1997 à 2017 dans des fichiers Excel bruts. Actuellement, je suis en train de nettoyer et de formater les données des dix dernières années pour l'analyse spatiale préliminaire.

Differential Spring Migration in the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*)

Andrew Beauchamp, Western University

Differential migration timing between age or sex classes is observed in many songbirds species (Morbey et al. 2012), however, the behavioural mechanisms underlying this phenomenon are still uncertain. Differences in migration speed, distance, or initiation date may all act to promote differential migration timing (Coppack and Pulido 2009), yet the relative importance and contribution of each behaviour is still poorly understood. Overall migration speed is influenced by flight speed, however, the amount of time spent at inter-flight stopover locations may have a greater impact on migration speed (Hedenström 2008). Stopover duration is influenced by fuel load, and birds that refuel quickly likely conduct shorter stopover bouts and have a faster overall migration (Alerstam and Lindström 1990). Difference in refuelling rate between sex and age classes may then promote differential stopover duration and migration speed. Differential migration distance is another behavioural mechanism that could produce differential migration timing, with more northern overwintering latitudes facilitating earlier arrival to breeding areas in the spring. Latitudinal differences in wintering area may arise from competitive exclusion of subordinate individuals from more northern habitats, differential susceptibility to adverse winter conditions, or in response to selection for sex or age based differential migration (Cristol et al. 1999). Finally, initiation of spring migration at an earlier date could promote earlier arrival on breeding areas (Coppack and Pulido 2009).



Figure 1. Plumage morphs of the White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). / Morphes de plumage du Bruant à gorge blanche (*Zonotrichia albicollis*).

For my MSc research, I examined multiple behavioural mechanisms of differential migration timing concurrently in spring migrating White-throated Sparrows (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). The White-throated Sparrow is an excellent species with which to examine the mechanisms underlying differential migration, and previous studies have observed both sex-specific migration timing (Knapton et al. 1984) and a latitudinal cline in sex-ratios on the wintering grounds (Jenkins and Cristol 2002). White-throated Sparrows also exhibit an interesting genetic dimorphism (Figure 1), which is associated with both plumage colouration and behavioural differences (Kopachena and Falls 1993). Morph can influence migration timing (Caldwell and Mills 2006) and stopover refuelling rate during fall migration (Brown et al. 2014) providing an additional axis with which to study differential migration in addition to sex and age.

Sparrows were studied during stopover at the Long Point Bird Observatory in the spring of 2017. Stopover refuelling rate was measured using plasma metabolite profiling (Guglielmo et al. 2005), and stopover duration was measured using the Motus Wildlife Tracking System (Taylor et al. 2017). Feather samples were taken to estimate both wintering and breeding latitude using isotopic analysis (Hobson and Wassenaar 2008) (Figure 2).

My study is one of the first to apply radio telemetry, plasma metabolite analysis, and stable isotope analysis to simultaneously examine multiple behavioural mechanisms underlying differential migration timing in a songbird species. This knowledge will contribute to a better understanding of how differential migration is regulated via behaviour and physiology. My research also furthers our understanding of how plumage morph influences the migration ecology of the White-throated Sparrow.

FRANÇAIS— Rapport du lauréat du prix Taverner 2018 Migration printanière différentielle chez le bruant à gorge blanche (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) par Andrew Beauchamp, Université Western

On observe chez de nombreuses espèces d'oiseaux chanteurs des différences de temps de migration entre les classes d'âge ou de sexe (Morbey et al. 2012), mais les mécanismes comportementaux qui sous-tendent ce phénomène sont encore incertains. Les différences dans la vitesse de migration, la distance ou la date de début de migration peuvent toutes avoir pour effet de favoriser une migration différentielle dans le temps (Coppack et Pulido 2009), mais l'importance et la contribution relatives de chaque comportement sont encore mal comprises. La vitesse de migration globale est influencée par la vitesse de vol, mais le temps passé aux escales entre les vols peut



Figure 2. Feather sample collection from a White-throated Sparrow (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). Photo credit to Chloe Carter. / Prélèvement d'échantillons de plumes sur un bruant à gorge blanche (*Zonotrichia albicollis*). Crédit photo à Chloé Carter.

avoir un impact plus important sur la vitesse de migration (Hedenström 2008). La durée des escales est influencée par la charge de carburant et les oiseaux qui se ravitaillent rapidement font probablement des escales plus courtes et ont une migration globale plus rapide (Alerstam et Lindström 1990). La différence de taux de ravitaillement en carburant entre le sexe et les classes d'âge peut alors favoriser une durée d'escale et une vitesse de migration différentes. La distance de migration différentielle est un autre mécanisme comportemental qui pourrait produire une différence dans la période de migration, les latitudes d'hivernage plus septentrionales facilitant l'arrivée plus précoce dans les aires de reproduction au printemps. Les différences de latitude dans les aires d'hivernage peuvent découler de l'exclusion concurrentielle d'individus subordonnés venant d'habitats plus nordiques, d'une susceptibilité différentielle aux conditions hivernales défavorables, ou d'une sélection en fonction du sexe ou de l'âge (Cristol et al., 1999). Enfin, le début de la migration printanière à une date plus précoce pourrait favoriser une arrivée plus hâtive dans les aires de reproduction (Coppack et Pulido 2009).

Dans le cadre de ma recherche de maîtrise en sciences, j'ai examiné de multiples mécanismes comportementaux du moment de la migration différentielle simultanément chez le Bruant à gorge blanche (*Zonotrichia albicollis*) migrant au printemps. Le Bruant à gorge blanche est une excellente espèce pour étudier les mécanismes qui sous-tendent la migration différentielle. Des études antérieures ont observé à la fois le moment de la migration selon le sexe (Knapton et al. 1984) et un cline latitudinal dans les ratios des sexes sur les aires d'hivernage (Jenkins et Cristol 2002). Le Bruant à gorge blanche présente également un dimorphisme génétique intéressant (figure 1), qui est associé à la fois à la coloration du plumage et aux différences de comportement (Kopachena et Falls 1993). La morphologie peut influencer le moment de la migration (Caldwell et Mills

2006) et le taux de ravitaillement en carburant pendant la migration automnale (Brown et al., 2014), ce qui fournit un angle supplémentaire pour étudier la migration différentielle en plus du sexe et de l'âge.

Les passereaux ont été étudiés lors d'une escale à l'Observatoire d'oiseaux de Long Point au printemps 2017. Le taux de ravitaillement en carburant des escales a été mesuré à l'aide du profilage des métabolites plasmatiques (Guglielmo et al. 2005) et la durée des escales a été mesurée à l'aide du système Motus Wildlife Tracking (Taylor et al. 2017). Des échantillons de plumes ont été prélevés pour estimer la latitude d'hivernage et de reproduction à l'aide d'analyses isotopiques (Hobson et Wassenaar 2008) (figure 2).

Mon étude est l'une des premières à appliquer la radiotélémétrie, l'analyse des métabolites plasmatiques et l'analyse des isotopes stables pour examiner simultanément les multiples mécanismes comportementaux qui sous-tendent le moment de la migration différentielle chez une espèce d'oiseaux chanteurs. Ces connaissances contribueront à une meilleure compréhension de la façon dont la migration différentielle est régulée par le comportement et la physiologie. Mes recherches permettent également de mieux comprendre l'influence de la morphologie du plumage sur l'écologie migratoire du Bruant à gorge blanche.

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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 page 23 for submission details.

Feature Articles

Rencontres rapprochées du genre sans caffeine

Catherine Dale

*Cet article est adapté d'un article initialement publié sur « **Dispatches from the Field** », un blog dédié à la diffusion d'histoires de travail sur le terrain avec la communauté scientifique et le public. Pour en savoir plus, consultez le blog à l'adresse suivante, www.dispatchesfromthefield1.wordpress.com, ou suivez-nous sur Twitter (@fieldworkblog). Nous sommes toujours à la recherche de nouvelles histoires à partager. Si vous souhaitez en publier une en tant qu'invité, contactez-nous à fieldworkblog@gmail.com!*

Je ne suis pas matinale.

J'ai toujours voulu l'être et j'ai souvent essayé de l'être - mais je ne suis pas à mon meilleur avant 8 heures du matin. Ce qui fait que ma décision d'étudier les oiseaux n'est peut-être pas l'un de mes choix de vie les plus intelligents. Bien que j'aime beaucoup le travail sur le terrain, je ne peux nier qu'il y a des choses que j'aime moins : le son redouté de mon alarme qui sonne dans le noir, la prise de conscience déchirante que je dois sortir du lit même si la plupart du monde dort encore et la difficulté à m'habiller et à sortir avec les yeux encore fermés.

Une fois que je suis debout, cependant, je profite habituellement de la tranquillité du monde d'avant l'aube - c'est-à-dire, tant que je prends mon café et que j'ai un peu de paix pour le siroter. Je ne suis pas une fanatique du café; en fait, pendant de nombreuses années, j'ai méprisé ce produit. Mais j'ai commencé à étudier les oiseaux et je me lève régulièrement à 4 h du matin. J'ai vite découvert que le café rend ces matins presque supportables.

Tôt un matin de juillet, il y a plusieurs années, je me suis retrouvée dans la cuisine d'une maison de campagne à la recherche de ma dose matinale de caféine. Je passais l'été en Californie, à étudier les pics glandivore et il faisait si chaud qu'il fallait commencer tôt. Naviguant plus par l'odorat que par la vue (toujours une proposition dangereuse dans une maison habitée par six assistants de terrain dans la vingtaine), j'ai contourné la pile de vaisselle dans l'évier et suis allé directement au poêle pour prendre la bouilloire.

Alors que je m'appuyais contre le comptoir, en attendant que l'eau bout et essayant de ne pas me rendormir, une de mes colocataires est entrée dans la cuisine. Elle portait une petite boîte en métal : le piège que nous avons posé la veille dans l'espoir d'attraper au moins une des souris qui s'installaient dans notre salon.

Quand on vit sur le terrain, les souris font partie du décor. Mais je les aime autant que le son de mon réveil à 4 h du matin. Bien sûr, les souris peuvent être mignonnes - dehors. Mais dès qu'elles commencent à courir sur mes pieds nus pendant que je dîne, tout est perdu. Malheureusement, comme le savent tous ceux qui ont déjà eu affaire à des souris, il est extrêmement difficile de s'en débarrasser, surtout si vous n'êtes pas prêt à les tuer. Les souris piégées vivantes sont singulièrement inefficaces. Elles sont remarquablement douées pour trouver leur chemin de retour à leur repaire et reviendront infailliblement dans votre maison à moins que vous ne montiez dans une voiture et les conduisiez à au moins un kilomètre de là avant de les relâcher. (Si vous conduisez moins d'un kilomètre, il y a de fortes chances que la souris revienne à votre maison avant vous.)

Cependant, les biologistes de terrain ont tendance à aimer les animaux et c'est pourquoi nous faisons la " guerre " à nos colocataires à fourrure en utilisant des pièges à capture vivante. Au début, nous avons eu un certain succès. Mais au cours de l'été, les pièges devenaient de moins en moins efficaces - probablement parce que nous n'étions pas très attentifs à ne pas relâcher les souris à plus d'un kilomètre de distance, de sorte que la plupart d'entre elles avaient déjà survécu au piège et savaient comment s'en éloigner.

Ce matin-là, cependant, mon amie était excitée par une victoire inhabituelle. Tenant la boîte métallique verticalement, elle a poussé la trappe vers le haut pour regarder à l'intérieur.

"On en a un !" dit-elle en triomphant. "Hé, c'est plutôt mignon en fait ! Viens y jeter un coup d'oeil."

Comme je n'avais toujours pas pris mon café, j'étais moins qu'enthousiaste. Mais j'ai quand même pris le piège dans mes mains et j'ai poussé la porte pour jeter un coup d'œil à la souris qui se blottissait au fond.

Du moins, je suppose qu'il était blotti au fond. Je ne l'ai jamais vu se blottir nulle part. Alors que j'enfonçais la trappe, un flou de fourrure brun-grisâtre s'en échappa - et atterrit au milieu de ma poitrine, s'accrochant à mon chandail et me fixant de ses yeux perçants.

Je ne vais pas mentir : j'ai peut-être crié. Pour ma défense, bien que je n'aime pas les souris dans ma cuisine, je n'ai normalement pas peur d'elles. Mais les souris par terre, c'est une chose; les souris qui s'accrochent à mes vêtements, c'est une toute autre chose. Et - pour ne pas insister sur ce point - c'était avant 5 heures du matin. Plus important encore, c'était avant mon café.

J'ai regardé la souris. Elle m'a regardé fixement. J'aurais du mal à dire lequel d'entre nous avait l'air le plus horrifié. Il était clair qu'aucun de nous n'avait la moindre idée de la façon de nous sortir de cette situation.

Heureusement, la souris a été beaucoup plus décisive que moi. Une fraction de seconde plus tard, elle a lâché son emprise mortelle sur mon chandail, a battu en retraite le long de la jambe et a disparu dans le salon - où elle est sans doute retournée directement à son repaire.

Je suis restée immobile, la regardant fixement. A côté de moi, mon amie s'est mise à rire. Quand la bouilloire sur le poêle a commencé à siffler, elle était pliée en deux, morte de rires. "Oh mon Dieu, ton visage !" dit-elle. Et toujours en riant, elle sortit par la porte.

Moi, par contre, j'ai décidé de sauter le café et de retourner me coucher.

ENGLISH— *Close Encounters of the Uncaffeinated Kind by Catherine Dale*

*This article is adapted from a post originally published on **Dispatches from the Field**, a blog dedicated to sharing the behind-the-scenes stories of fieldwork with the scientific community and the public. For more fieldwork stories, check out the blog at www.dispatchesfromthefield1.wordpress.com or follow us on Twitter (@fieldworkblog). We're always looking for new stories to share, so if you're interested in contributing a guest post, please contact us at fieldworkblog@gmail.com!*

I am not a morning person.

I've always wanted to be, and often tried to be – but I am just not at my best before 8 am. Which makes my decision to study birds perhaps not one of my smartest life choices. Although I love most things about fieldwork, I can't deny that there are parts I'm less fond of: the dreaded sound of my alarm going off in the dark, the wrenching realization that I have to get out of bed even though most of the world is still asleep, and the difficulty of getting dressed and out the door with my eyes still mostly shut.

Once I'm up, though, I usually find myself enjoying the quiet stillness of pre-dawn world – that is, as long as I get my coffee and some peace in which to sip it. I'm not a coffee fanatic; in fact, for many years, I despised the stuff. But then I started studying birds, and regularly getting up at 4:00 am. I quickly discovered that coffee makes those early mornings almost bearable.

Early one July morning several years ago, I stumbled into the kitchen of a field house on the hunt for my morning dose of caffeine. I was spending the summer in California, studying acorn woodpeckers, and it was so fiendishly hot that getting an early start was a necessity. Navigating more by smell than sight (always a dangerous proposition in a house inhabited by six twenty-something field assistants), I bypassed the stack of dishes in the sink and went straight to the stove to grab the kettle.

As I leaned against the counter, waiting for the water to boil and trying not to fall back asleep, one of my housemates entered the kitchen. She was carrying a small metal box: the trap we'd set out the night before in hopes of catching at least one of the mice making themselves at home in our living room.

When you're living in the field, mice just come with the territory. But I am about as fond of them as the sound of my alarm at 4:00 am. Sure, mice can be cute – outside. But the second they start running across my bare feet while I'm eating dinner, all bets are off. Unfortunately, as anyone who has ever had to deal with mice knows, they are extremely hard to get rid of, especially if you aren't willing to kill them. Live trapping mice is singularly ineffective. They are remarkably good at finding their way home, and will unerringly make their way back into your house unless you get in a car and drive them at least a mile away before releasing them. (If you drive less than a mile, there's a good chance the mouse will be back in your house before you are.)

However, field biologists tend to be animal-loving types, and so we were waging our 'war' on our furry housemates using live traps. At first, we had some success. But over the summer, the traps were becoming less and less effective – most likely because we weren't all

that careful about releasing the mice more than a mile away, so most of them had already experienced the trap and knew to steer clear of it.

That morning, though, my friend was excited by an unusual victory. Holding the metal box vertically, she pushed open the trap door at the top to peer inside.

“We got one!” she said in triumph. “Hey – it’s actually pretty cute! Come and have a look at it.”

Since I still hadn’t had my coffee, I was less than enthused about that. But I took the trap from her anyway, and pushed down the door to peek at the mouse huddled at the bottom.

At least, I assume it was huddled at the bottom. I never actually saw it huddled anywhere. As I depressed the trap door, a blur of greyish-brown fur came flying out of it – and landed in the middle of my chest, clinging to my sweatshirt and staring up at me with beady eyes.

I’m not going to lie: I may have screamed. In my defense, while I dislike mice in my kitchen, I am not normally scared of them. But mice on the floor are one thing; mice clinging to my clothing are an entirely different thing. And – not to belabour the point – this was before 5 am. More importantly, it was *before my coffee*.

I stared at the mouse. It stared at me. I’d be hard pressed to say which one of us looked more horrified. It was clear that neither of us had the slightest idea how to extricate ourselves from the situation.

Luckily, the mouse was much more decisive than me. A split second later, it released its death grip on my sweatshirt, beat a hasty retreat down my leg, and disappeared into the living room – where it no doubt went right back to making itself at home.

I stood stock still, staring after it. Beside me, my friend started to giggle. By the time the kettle on the stove began whistling, she was bent double with laughter. “Oh my God – your face!” she said. And still laughing, she headed out the door.

I, on the other hand, decided to skip the coffee and just go back to bed.

The Nice Bird Club



BY: Bob Montgomerie, Queen’s University | Reprinted from the History of Ornithology blog of the American Ornithological Society, originally published online on 29 January 2019 at <https://amornithhistory.org/2019/01/29/the-nice-bird-club/>

When I took first-year Zoology at the University of Toronto, in the 1960s, our lab instructor/coordinator was Dr J. Murray Speirs. Speirs was a kindly gentleman with a bit of old-world charm, accentuated by his ever-present black beret. I warmed to him immediately because he was also a birder and had a reputation for encouraging young naturalists [1].

That warmth cooled somewhat when Dr Speirs gave me a ‘B’ grade for my bird list from a weekend class lab project where we had to record all of the birds seen in a day’s outing. My non-birder friends all got ‘A’s so I was particularly puzzled. When I asked him about my grade, he said that he gave me a ‘B’ because *“every bird has a name, and you failed to name them all”*. I had listed 3 unidentified buteos and a half-dozen unidentified peeps, whereas my more-savvy confrères had—I found out later—fudged their reports based on what the bird books told them to expect in late September in Toronto [2].

Dr Speirs was married to Doris Heustis Speirs, who I met only once, at their home in Pickering, just east of Toronto. This was on a weekend birding/photography outing with my friends George Peck and Jim Richards. As we left the Speirs’s home, I commented that Doris really knew her birds. To which they replied *“Yes, and she also founded the nice bird club”*. “Interesting,” I said, *“but what’s so nice about it”*. They laughed: *“No, no. It’s the Margaret Nice Bird Club, named after that famous woman ornithologist, and it’s open only to women.”*

At a dinner with the Speirs, on 10 Jan 1952, the biogeographer Miklos Udvardy was appalled to learn that his wife Maud would not be allowed to attend that evening's meeting of the Toronto Ornithological Club (TOC). Murray and Miklos were going, but the club was 'men only' [3]. Udvardy's response was priceless: "*Is this the fourteenth century?*" He then suggested to Doris that she start an ornithological club of her own, for women only [4].

A week later, Doris had lunch with two friends—Irma Metcalfe and Marjorie Lawrence Meredith—interested in birds, and they decided to start just such a club. They chose to call it the Margaret Morse Nice Ornithological Club (MMNOC), in honour of one of the pioneers of behavioural and evolutionary ecology of birds, a renowned ornithologist, and, in those days, one of the few well-known women who studied birds. They limited membership to 12 women, and their little club flourished for the next 35 years.

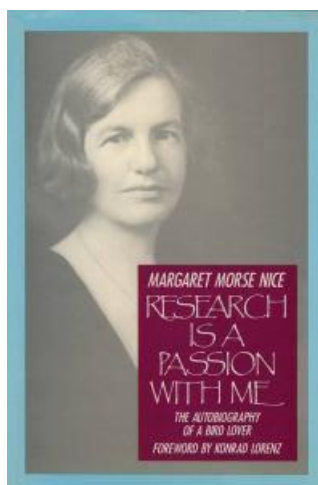
Doris met Margaret Nice at the American Ornithologists Union meeting in October 1938 in Washington, DC. At that meeting, Margaret was one of four speakers in a symposium—'*The Individual vs. the Species in Behavior Studies*' [5]. Her paper '*The Social Kumpan in the Song Sparrow*' was published in *The Auk* in 1939 and pays homage to her friend Konrad Lorenz and his foundational ideas about social interactions. Based on her own studies of the Song Sparrow, Nice's paper and her participation in the symposium illustrate her stature as one of the leading American ornithologists of the day. Doris was enthralled with meeting Nice and wrote to her brother about their conversation about Doris's own research: "*...she questioned me on my research with evidently a sincere and even keen interest, as though I could really contribute to her knowledge of bird behaviour by my observations. Her simplicity, her deep humility and sense of awe and wonder were evidences of her greatness.*" [6]



Doris and Murray Speirs. Source: Iron and Pittaway (2010)

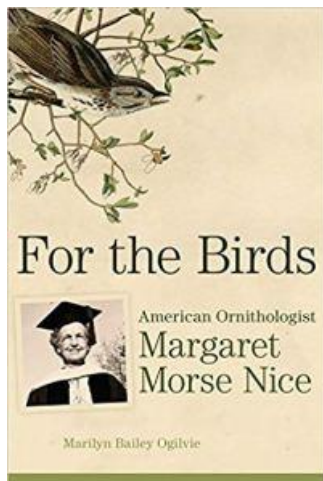
Thus began a lifelong friendship and an obvious reason for the name that Doris gave to her bird club. Here is Nice on that friendship in a letter to Speirs: *I feel that the study of ornithology is a wonderful game in which strong sympathy and fellowship reign between the serious participants: we are friends and glad to help one another. We have high standards for our science and we want beginners*

to realize this [7]. Nice visited the Speirs home several times, and there got the inspiration for her seminal review on avian incubation periods, published in *The Condor* in 1954. The Speirs maintained a fabulous ornithological library in their home and Nice began exploring their books to see what some writers, as far back as Aristotle, had to say about incubation. She noticed, for example, that new bird books often reported different incubation periods for the same species [8].



In 1979, a few years after Nice died, the MMNOC published her autobiography *Research is a Passion with Me* as a tribute to their patron saint. It's not often—not often enough—that scientists, and particularly ornithologists, write their own stories and those by Charles Darwin, Margaret Nice and others are a treasure trove for historians of science about how the authors viewed themselves. One must, of course, read an autobiography with that in mind as the authors do have a certain bias, may leave out the unflattering bits, and have no real appreciation for the historical (in retrospect) context of

their lives and research contributions. All that said, Nice's autobiography is—as is Darwin's—a wonderful read and was, for me, an inspiration. It was published, and I read it, in the year that I completed my PhD and it reminded me once again that it was OK to be passionate about research, and that persevering in the face of great odds was (or at least could be) very rewarding [9].



Soon I will be reviewing a new full-length biography of Margaret Morse Nice in *Birding* magazine. This book—*For the Birds: American Ornithologist Margaret Morse Nice* by Marilyn Bailey Ogilvie (University of Oklahoma Press)—was published in September 2018 and is the first biography of this remarkable woman. While Nice's autobiography gave us lots of insights into her life and research, Ogilvie's book is richer with detail and context. Ogilvie was Curator of the History of Science Collections at the University of Oklahoma where much of Nice's archives are housed, and she appears to have read everything that Nice ever wrote including letters, manuscripts, and publications, as well as talking to many of Nice's relatives, friends and colleagues. Ogilvie chronicles an important period in biology, when women often struggled to do research and to obtain some recognition for their many accomplishments. In part, because of women like Margaret Morse Nice and Doris Huestis Speirs, they witnessed a sea change in the roles and prominence of women to ornithology during their lifetimes.

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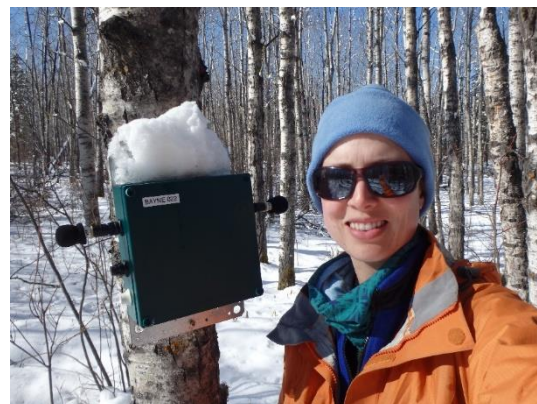
Footnotes

1. **Murray Speirs's reputation:** Dr Speirs and his wife Doris took several local young naturalists under their wings and often took them out birding. I am grateful to Jim Richards for several insights about the Speirs and their generosity, in an email to me on 27 January 2019.
2. **first-year lab reports:** I almost failed first-year Botany for always drawing accurately what I saw under the microscope, instead of what I was supposed to see. These experiences were transformative for me as I vowed to never penalize my own students—if I should ever become a professor, which seemed unlikely in those days as I was doing poorly in my courses—for describing exactly what they saw even if it seemed incorrect or unorthodox
3. **men only:** I had been to a few meetings of the TOC as a guest of my older friends, and often wondered why no women ever attended.
4. **ornithological club for women:** for more details see Miles Hearn's blog [here](#)
5. **symposium speakers:** the other speakers were Francis H. Herrick, Frederick Lincoln, and G. K. Noble
6. **Doris Speirs quotation:** from Ogilvie 2018 page 220
7. **Margaret Nice quotation:** from Nice 1979 page 268
8. **Nice on incubation periods:** see Ogilvie 2019 pages 214-217 for more details
9. **on persevering:** although I had been very privileged to do my PhD with a great scientist at an outstanding institution, the prospects for an academic appointment in Canada in those days, at least in my field, were zero. Over a period of more than 5 years around 1980 there was not a single academic job that I could apply for in Canada, and my interests were quite broad.

Recent Canadian Ornithology Theses

Shonfield, Julia. 2018. Using bioacoustics to examine the effects of industrial disturbance on owls and their prey. Ph.D. Thesis. University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB.

Anthropogenic disturbance is known to have negative population consequences and alter animal behaviour. Noise can mask important acoustic signals used for animal communication. Owls use vocal communication to attract mates and defend territories, and rely on acoustic cues to locate their prey. Industrial noise has been shown to negatively affect owl hunting success and reduce foraging efficiency by affecting their ability to detect prey, but whether this results in reduced habitat suitability for owls in areas near industrial noise sources is largely unknown. I sought to determine if owls avoid the areas surrounding chronic industrial noise sources, if prey availability is affected by chronic industrial noise, and assess the relative importance of noise compared to other types of disturbance resulting from industrial development on owl habitat use. I used autonomous recording units to survey for owls and automated recognizers to scan recordings for owl vocalizations. I found that Barred Owls (*Strix varia*), Great Horned Owls (*Bubo virginianus*), and Boreal Owls (*Aegolius funereus*) in northeastern Alberta were equally likely to occupy noisy sites compared to sites with no noise, indicating that site-level occupancy (representing a home range scale) was unaffected by the presence of noise sources on the landscape. I found no difference in abundance or activity of red-backed voles (*Myodes gapperi*) and deer mice (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), indicating that these important prey species are not strongly affected by noise. Finally, I found each owl species responded differently to different disturbance types. Barred Owls were less likely to be present in areas with more total human footprint and roads, whereas Great Horned Owls were more tolerant to disturbance and were more likely to be present in areas with more soft linear features (e.g. seismic lines, pipelines), though they did avoid areas with large industrial facilities. Boreal Owl presence was more strongly affected by forest composition than disturbance, showing a preference for more coniferous forest. For these owl species, the effect of noise was minimal and forest composition and other types of disturbance on the landscape were more likely to influence their habitat use. Assessing the relative effects of multiple types of disturbance and how the accumulation of disturbances can influence multiple species is important in understanding responses to our increasing human footprint.



Julia Shonfield deploying an autonomous recording unit to survey for owls. Photo: Julia Shonfield.

Announcements

Drone Technology & Field Techniques: a Workshop for Biologists

April 9-12, 2019 - Hastings Natural History Reservation, Carmel Valley, Monterey Co.

This workshop is designed to provide an overview of unmanned aerial systems (UAS) technology, regulations and image analysis in support of drone applications. It is targeted towards participants with little to no experience in UAS technology who are interested exploring practical applications of UAS for biology. Participants will gain practice conducting flight operations and using geospatial technologies for monitoring and mapping natural resources.

An optional Mentored Research Project takes place at the end of the workshop and will allow participants to practice what they've learned through a project designed by David Bird, Ornithologist and Editor of The Journal of UAS. [Registration](#): \$520 (member rate), \$565 (non-member rate). All meals are included.

Instructors: Sean Hogan, Andy Lyons, David Bird, Steve Goldman, Stephen Earsom, Kelly Easterday, Jacob Flannagan

Announcements



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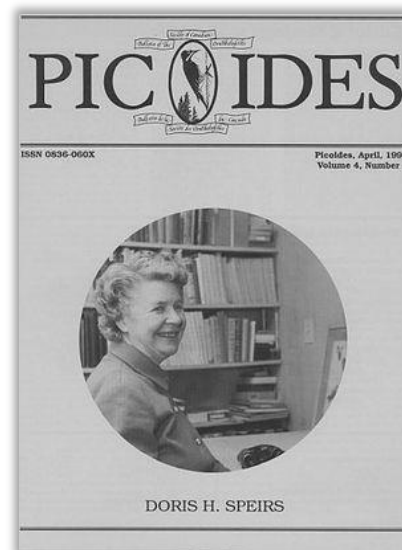
Doris Huestis Speirs Award

Prix Doris Huestis Speirs

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS / APPEL DE NOMINATIONS - 2019

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 née les 27 octobre 1894 à Toronto, en Ontario, et est décédée 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:*

Ken Otter
Ecosystem Science and Management Program
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way, Prince George, BC V2N 4Z9
Tel: 250-960-5019
Email: Ken.Otter@unbc.ca



Society of Canadian Ornithologists
Société des ornithologistes du Canada

Deadline for receipt of nominations is 15 April 2019. // La date limite de réception des candidatures est le 15 avril 2019.

The Speirs award selection committee is composed of Ken Otter (Chair), Mark Brigham (Univ. Regina), and Nicky Koper (Univ. Manitoba). // *Le comité de sélection du prix Speirs est composé de Ken Otter (président), Mark Brigham (Univ. Regina) et Nicky Koper (Univ. Manitoba).*

Bird Poetry

Analysis of yearly Northern Saw-whet owl (*Aegolius acadicus*) abundance, and variability of local climate data

By Madison Hillman

The Northern Saw-whet owl is a nocturnal bird of prey
But don't fear my raptor nature, I'm no bigger than an ostrich egg
I may be hard to see, but my shrill is proud
I am a cavity nester so keep the forests around!
I prefer old woodpecker holes to nest, but wooden boxes have also passed the test
Of course, if the female thinks it's best!
Mixed wood forest stands are optimal for nesting,
Even after she leaves I will work to fledge our offspring.

Most of us migrate southward in the fall
avoiding the bitter winter and following our prey in thrall
Our numbers are in decline, but we are deemed not at risk today.
Known threats to our lives include decreased number of prey,
But impacts from urbanization strip our habitat away.

With less and less forest cover, we are seen to neglect our owlets
We will reduce our home range too, which can't be good for our fitness.
Since climate change is known to impact forest range,
Perhaps increased temperature could make tree connectivity strange.
Interactions between predator and prey may change,
which could be detrimental to our range.

Previous studies of climate impacts on our breeding phenology show
being too early or too late to the game is bad you know.
I hypothesize that increasing temperatures may cause a decline in our abundance
Surely our breeding time would be earlier,
but synchronicity with prey may become a nuisance.

Using eBird to extract data on my community near Algonquin Provincial Park
abundance was averaged for the months April to September before we embark.
Temperature data from Environment and Climate Change Canada were compared
to the number of owls in APP from 2012-2018,
the relationship we found helps us set the scene
of the impacts keeping our population from being pristine.

Average temperatures in 2013 were 1 degree higher than the year before
And our abundance during this year were declined even more.
Increased average temperatures are seen to correlate with our decline,
Except for in recent years, there may be another factor combined.

The dataset of sightings was limited in APP,
so more research is needed among the northern trees.
Perhaps a synergy of impacts including climate variables influence species interactions
Therefore, we need your help to give birds of prey populations back their traction!

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Dr. Andy Horn	Member of Council	902-494-2158	aghorn@dal.ca

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Ross Lein	1983-1986	David Nettleship	1996-1998	David Bird	2008-2010
Spencer Sealy	1986-1988	Tony Diamond	1998-2000	Erica Nol	2010-2012
Erica Dunn	1988-1990	Kathy Martin	2000-2002	Joe Nocera	2013-2014
Jon Barlow	1990-1992	Jean-Pierre Savard	2002-2004	Greg Robertson	2014-2016
Bruce Falls	1992-1994	Charles Francis	2004-2006	Ken Otter	2016-2018
Henri Ouellet	1994-1996	Susan Hannon	2006-2008		

Membership Information

www.sco-soc.ca/membership.html

SCO-SOC membership forms can be found at the link above.
Current membership rates are as follows:

Student	\$10.00/year
Regular	\$25.00/year (\$35.00/year international)
Sustaining	\$50.00/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.

To suggest any additions or edits for the website, contact 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.

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