

BIRD STUDIES
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX **CANADA**

Bird Studies Canada

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



UNDERSTAND

APPRECIATE

CONSERVE



BIRD STUDIES
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX **CANADA**

Bird Studies Canada is Canada's leading national charitable organization dedicated to bird science and conservation.

Our Mission

To conserve wild birds of Canada through sound science, on-the-ground actions, innovative partnerships, public engagement, and science-based advocacy.

Bird Studies Canada is a partner in BirdLife International, the world's largest nature conservation Partnership.



Partnership for
nature and **people**



A Message from Our President

Advancing Understanding, Appreciation, and Conservation

“What would you like most from Bird Studies Canada?” I eagerly asked a volunteer I recently met in Nova Scotia. She was monitoring endangered Piping Plovers nesting on a beautiful sand and cobblestone beach. “I just want you to save birds – that’s why I give my time and money,” she replied.

And so we do. Help save birds. Our three-part mandate is to promote the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of Canada’s birds. This report details our progress.

Toward **understanding**, Bird Studies Canada is the hub of the world’s most ambitious wildlife tracking network, “Motus” – Latin for “motion.” An increasing number of Motus receivers across North America (and soon throughout the hemisphere) track migrating birds wearing radio-tag ‘backpacks.’ Co-publishing breeding bird atlases and scientific papers on bird conservation are other examples of our research accomplishments.

About 40,000 Citizen Scientists help us advance bird **appreciation**. These volunteers are involved in dozens of our field projects, such as bird atlases; loon, owl, and swift surveys; urban bird programs in Toronto and Vancouver; Project FeederWatch; and the Christmas Bird Count.

And under **conservation**, we work directly on many at-risk species, like the Golden-winged Warbler, Piping Plover, and Bank Swallow. We also help keep common birds common through the Important Bird Areas program, delivered globally through the BirdLife network. There are some 600 IBAs in Canada, where “Caretakers” offer volunteers with bird interests a local focus for their stewardship efforts.

I have seen firsthand our efforts in every region of the country. Bird Studies Canada partners effectively with governments of all levels, as well as other conservation organizations. We have a particularly close working relationship with Environment Canada, the federal authority for migratory species.

I’ve been BSC’s president for just one year, and I’m more motivated than ever to be leading this fine organization. But I need your help.

What can you do for birds? You can volunteer your time to count birds near you, and magnify that work with financial support to help birds now and for years to come. If you’re already doing these things, please accept my sincere thanks. Together, we’re building a bird-friendly nation, conserving the species and habitats our lives and livelihoods depend on.

Steven Price
President
Bird Studies Canada



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* Until September 2014
** From September 2014



Northern Pintails Photo: Hui Sim

BIRD STUDIES CANADA At a Glance

Founded in: 1960

Budget: \$5 million

Full-time staff: 50

Additional staff
(seasonal & contracts): 30

Photo: Kristen Grittani



Citizen Science

Watching birds is more popular than ever! Tens of thousands of Canadians share their energy, skill, and observations through Bird Studies Canada's bird surveys. These "Citizen Scientists" provide a tremendous service by volunteering their time to track the health of bird populations.

Project FeederWatch is one of Bird Studies Canada's most popular and enduring programs. Flashes of chickadees, jays, and woodpeckers can certainly brighten a dull winter day. Perhaps that's why so many people throughout Canada and the United States enjoy watching winter birds at their feeders, and sharing those important observations through Project FeederWatch. The results help scientists track long-term changes in winter bird populations and distributions.

Long Point Bird Observatory launched Project FeederWatch in 1976. The program has grown to include over 20,000 volunteers, and is now jointly administered by Bird Studies Canada and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. More than 3200 Canadians participated in the 2014-15 season, its 28th year as a continent-wide program.

Participants in the 2015 **Great Backyard Bird Count** broke the previous record for the number of species identified. Volunteers in over 100 countries submitted a record 147,265 checklists and reported 5090 species – nearly half of the world's bird species! The four-day event, held annually in February, is a joint project of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and the National Audubon Society with Bird Studies Canada.

Bird Studies Canada, in collaboration with countless partners and volunteers across the country, is documenting the distribution and abundance of Canada's birds through **Breeding Bird Atlases**. Productive five-year survey periods have wrapped up in some key regions, with results coming soon. Online publishing of the *Atlas of the Breeding Birds of British Columbia* launched in spring 2015 to rave reviews.



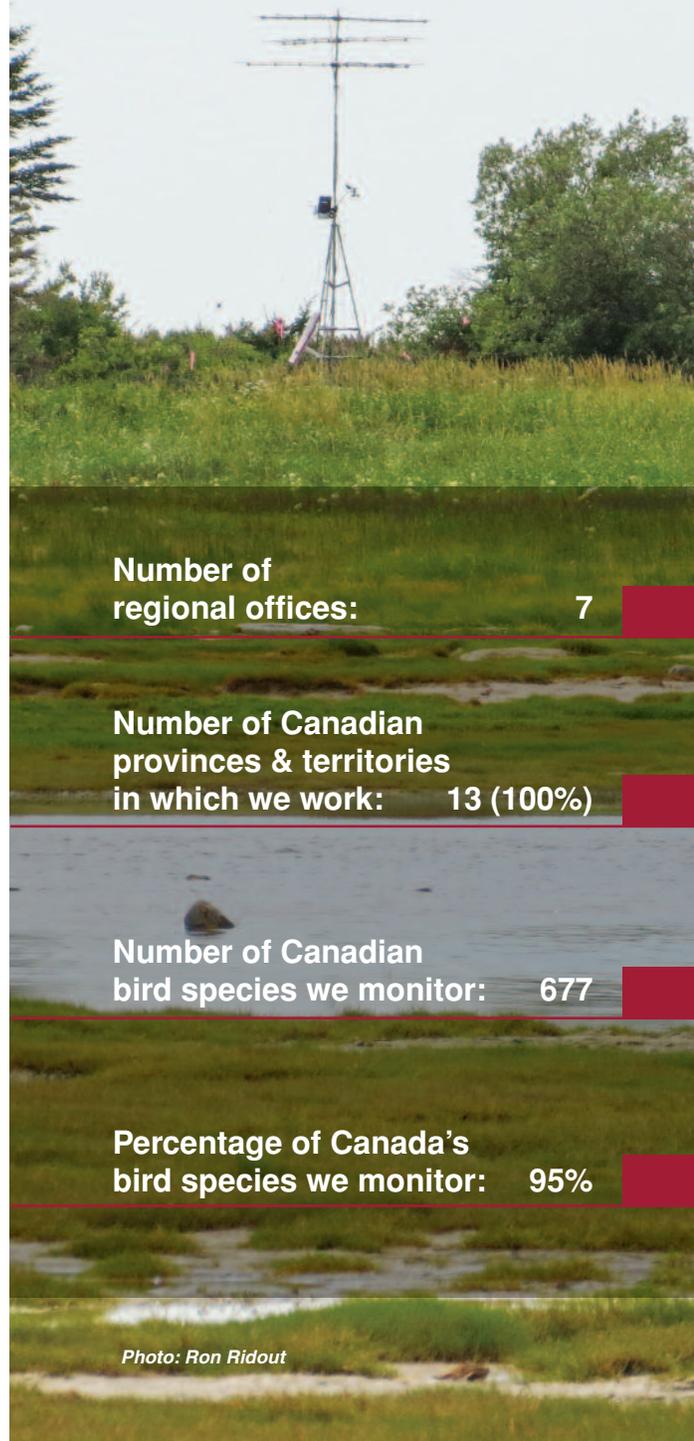
Research and Conservation

Using data from targeted research and Citizen Science programs, and in collaboration with conservation partners, Bird Studies Canada's scientists monitor bird population trends, investigate declines, and recommend actions to protect the health of ecosystems we all depend on.

Groundbreaking research using the **Motus Wildlife Tracking System** is revealing amazing new details of birds' habitat use at wintering and stopover areas, and their movements throughout the continent. In one remarkable example, 19 of 67 Gray-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes tagged in early 2015 in Colombia by SELVA were tracked on their northbound spring migration to far-flung locations in Texas, Saskatchewan, and Ontario. Motus harnesses the extraordinary power of collaboration, and continues to yield amazing results!



Le Conte's Sparrow Photo: Ron Ridout



Number of regional offices: 7

Number of Canadian provinces & territories in which we work: 13 (100%)

Number of Canadian bird species we monitor: 677

Percentage of Canada's bird species we monitor: 95%

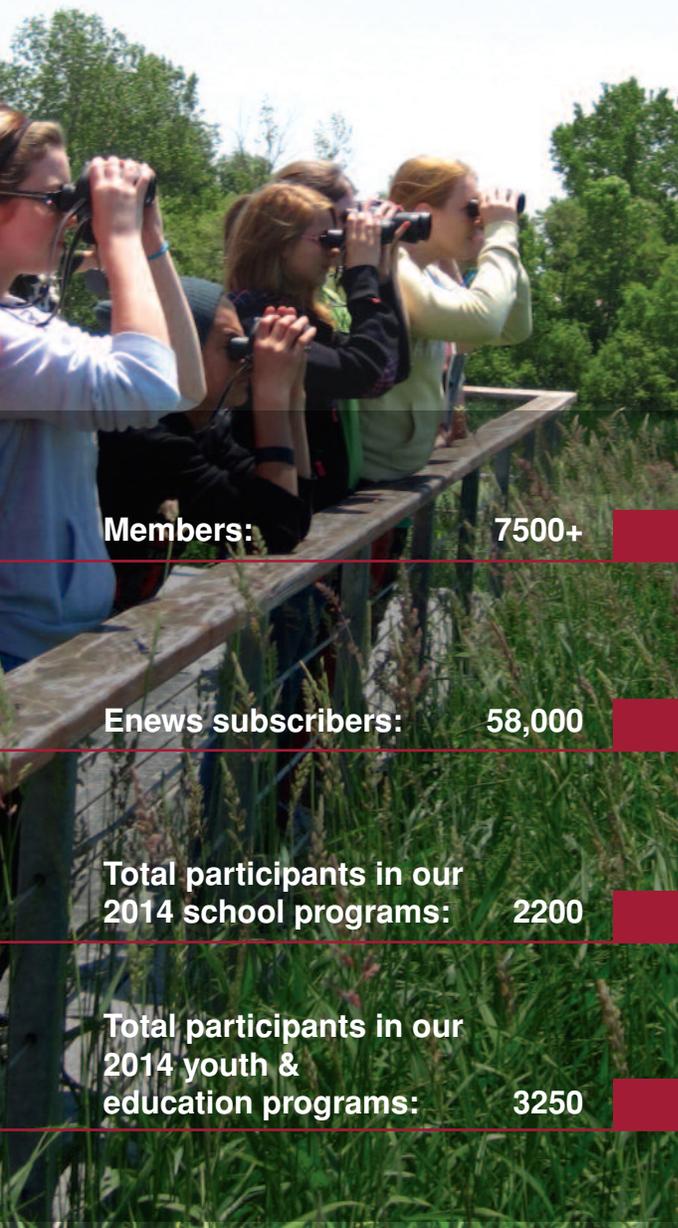
Photo: Ron Ridout



Piping Plover Photo: Ron Williams

Bird Studies Canada's **Piping Plover Conservation Program** works to reduce threats to this endangered shorebird, and tracks population recovery through a network of partners and volunteers. During the breeding season, Piping Plovers face pressures from recreational activities on Atlantic Canada's beaches. Beach surveys help measure biological and stewardship indicators to evaluate progress, and help enforcement agencies target areas with high threat levels. Coastal community volunteers contribute over 1000 stewardship hours each year. An increased proportion of Nova Scotia beachgoers avoiding sensitive plover nesting areas is one sign of success. Over the last decade, these efforts have helped maintain Atlantic Piping Plover numbers and boost productivity above target in Nova Scotia.

Bird Studies Canada's educational programs combine research, Citizen Science, mentoring, school programs, public events, and workshops to provide engaging experiences that foster awareness, appreciation, and stewardship of birds and nature.



Members: 7500+

Enews subscribers: 58,000

Total participants in our 2014 school programs: 2200

Total participants in our 2014 youth & education programs: 3250



Photo: Dayna LeClair

Photo: Liza Barney



Education and Outreach

The **Bird Science and Environmental Education Program** provides high-quality curriculum-based field trip programs to more than 2000 students annually. Bird Studies Canada’s education team recently developed and piloted “Virtual Ornithology,” a new distance-learning program. Now, our educators will be able to share innovative programs and exciting field experiences with more schools and youth groups than ever before, anywhere in Canada.

Each May, **Vancouver Bird Week** activities engage hundreds of people in the fantastic bird diversity of one of Canada’s largest cities. Bird Studies Canada’s British Columbia team enjoys being part of this week-long annual event. From giving talks and leading walks, to sharing information and materials – such as a new multilingual map guide to Vancouver’s 30 most common birds – at educational gatherings, Bird Week successfully connects new audiences to birds and their conservation.



Photo: Jon Hayes



Photos: David Bradley

People reached through all 2014 outreach events & education programs: 25,000

Citizen Science volunteers: 40,000

Volunteer hours contributed in 2014: 300,000+

Annual monetary value of volunteer Citizen Science contributions: \$6,000,000



Barn Swallows Photo: Peter Ferguson



Legacy Gifts & Memorial Donations

Legacy Donations

Many of our cherished friends have decided to leave gifts in their wills to Bird Studies Canada. We are extremely grateful to everyone who has made, or arranged to make, a gift to safeguard our birds and environment for future generations. Gifts to BSC's endowed funds will support our research, conservation, and education programs in perpetuity.

In 2014-15, Bird Studies Canada received legacy gifts from the estates of A.G. Loughrey (Ottawa, ON) and Brenda Zimmerman (Kitchener, ON).

Memorial Donations

In 2014-15, Bird Studies Canada received memorial donations honouring the following individuals.

David Ambridge (Cambridge, ON)
 James Babcock (North Vancouver, BC)
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 Ludwig Zibauer (Sudbury, ON)



Photo: Liza Barney



Photo: Jody Allair

Donations

Our bird science and conservation work is made possible by the generous ongoing support of countless members and donors. Thank you!

Individual Donors

\$1000 or more

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*Deceased

We also thank the 8451 donors who gave less than \$500.



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Habitat Conservation Fund
The Schad Foundation
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation
Vancouver Foundation

Between \$1000 and \$9999

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Wild Birds Unlimited
The Winthrop Foundation of Athens, GA

Financial Statements

Condensed Statement of Operations and Fund Balances

Year ending 31 March

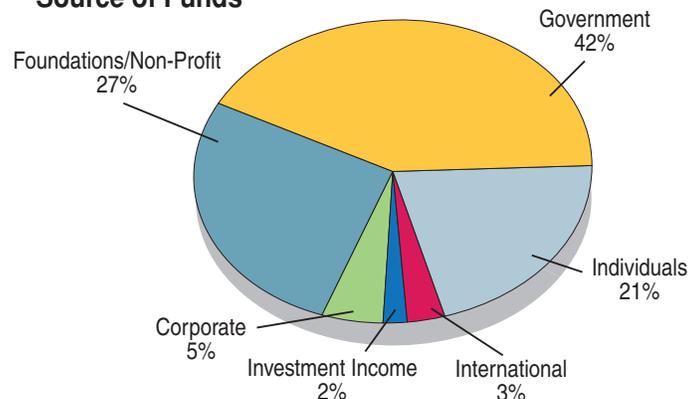
| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Revenue | | |
| Fees | 234,356 | 233,291 |
| Donations | 419,869 | 408,985 |
| Research and Conservation grants | 4,186,101 | 3,827,450 |
| Fundraising Events | 318,740 | 300,364 |
| Investment income | 164,394 | 171,233 |
| Gain (loss) on sale of investments | (58,849) | 41,905 |
| Other | 85,285 | 93,302 |
| | <u>5,349,896</u> | <u>5,076,530</u> |
| Expenses | | |
| Management and Administration | | |
| Administration | 386,069 | 359,263 |
| Fundraising and membership development | 192,522 | 179,411 |
| Membership services | 239,521 | 230,509 |
| Amortization of capital assets | 154,537 | 161,179 |
| Research and Conservation | | |
| International Collaborations | 316,360 | 330,310 |
| National Programs | 785,254 | 494,844 |
| Regional programs | 3,258,599 | 3,211,834 |
| Grants | 21,300 | 19,900 |
| Other | 1,002 | 1,002 |
| | <u>5,355,164</u> | <u>4,988,252</u> |
| Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses | (5,268) | 88,278 |
| Change in unrealized gain on investments | 272,761 | 165,924 |
| Fund Balances, beginning | 6,640,038 | 6,385,836 |
| Fund Balances, ending | <u>6,907,531</u> | <u>6,640,038</u> |

Condensed Balance Sheet

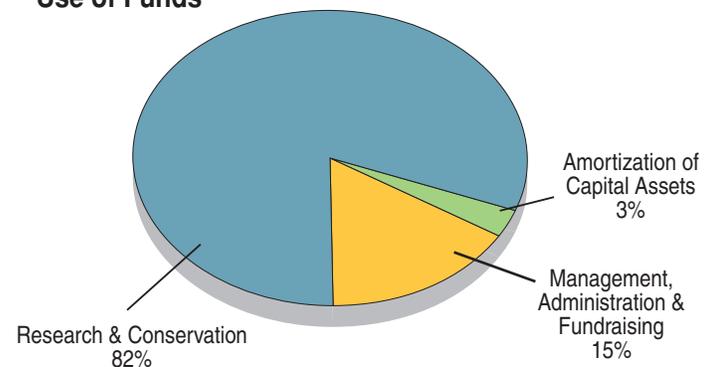
Year ending 31 March

| | 2015 | 2014 |
|--|------------------|------------------|
| Assets | | |
| Current assets | 1,691,914 | 1,512,174 |
| Investments | 4,745,174 | 4,536,269 |
| Capital assets | 1,562,906 | 1,635,673 |
| Total Assets | <u>7,999,994</u> | <u>7,684,116</u> |
| Liabilities and Fund Balances | | |
| Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities | 434,448 | 331,711 |
| Deferred Revenue | 658,015 | 712,367 |
| Fund balances: | | |
| Operating | 384,999 | 335,554 |
| Endowment | 4,746,179 | 4,537,278 |
| Capital | 1,667,674 | 1,665,416 |
| Other | 108,679 | 101,790 |
| Total Liabilities and Fund Balances | <u>7,999,994</u> | <u>7,684,116</u> |

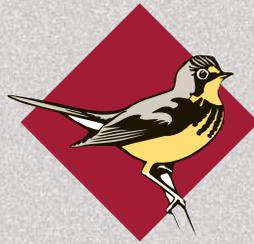
Source of Funds



Use of Funds



Common Loon Photo: Dave Gignac



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Rose-breasted Grosbeak and Forest - *Ron Ridout*