

BIRD STUDIES CANADA

2017 ANNUAL REPORT





CANADA'S VOICE FOR BIRDS

BIRD STUDIES CANADA IS CANADA'S LEADING NATIONAL CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO BIRD SCIENCE AND CONSERVATION.

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Steven Price
President, Bird Studies Canada

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

On any journey, we look for landmarks that confirm our progress to a worthy destination. So too in bird conservation.

The road to success is often challenging. Usually, multiple threats push a bird to species-at-risk status. Even as we tackle one cause of decline, another looms. Ranchers in Manitoba may be adjusting cattle-grazing times and intensity to the benefit of threatened grassland birds, only to have climate change shift the prairie environment in unpredictable ways. Protected status awarded to vital seabird colonies can be undermined by introduced predators raiding helpless young at nest sites.

Bird Studies Canada targets five major goals, encompassing over 40 projects in field research, Citizen Science, and on-the-ground conservation. And we are reaching important milestones:

- To follow 50 migratory bird species of conservation concern, we need to place Motus wildlife tracking receivers throughout the Western Hemisphere – to date, 17 countries are participating. And we banded our one millionth bird this year at the Long Point Bird Observatory.
- To help conserve 300 Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas in Canada, we have helped grow the IBA Caretaker network to 240 locally-engaged groups monitoring threats and conservation.
- To promote innovative conservation practices, we are piloting invasive predator control to save threatened seabirds, encouraging bird-friendly ranching to help grassland birds, and recommending best management practices to benefit at-risk forest birds.
- To grow Canada's bird conservation community, we have reached 48,000 Citizen Scientists, volunteering in Project FeederWatch, Christmas Bird Counts, and many other surveys.
- To engage new urban audiences in bird appreciation, we now support bird festivals in Vancouver and Toronto. In numerous communities, hundreds of skygazers follow Chimney Swifts to their nightly roosts.

We are reaching and surpassing milestones on the road. Our donors and volunteers are with us on the journey. Your contributions to our progress inspire us to reach even greater destinations ahead. Together, we can arrive at the place we all imagine, look ahead to, and work toward daily. To all of you, as fellow travellers, thank you.

“TOGETHER, WE CAN ARRIVE AT THE PLACE WE ALL IMAGINE, LOOK AHEAD TO, AND WORK TOWARD DAILY.”

– Bird Studies Canada President
Steven Price

BY THE NUMBERS



Founded

1960



Budget for research & conservation

\$5 million



Staff

75



7 Regional offices.
Programs active in all 13
Canadian provinces &
territories

7



Members

8000+



48,000 Citizen Science
volunteers contributed
750,000+ hours in 2016.
Estimated monetary value
of 2016 Citizen Science
contributions: \$15 million

48,000

BY THE NUMBERS



Motus receiving station locations throughout the Western Hemisphere

519

Tracking 40+ priority bird species of conservation concern

40+

International, collaborative Motus tracking projects

150+

IBA Caretaker Groups

240

IBAs with >20% conserved

198

Collaborating on 29 key conservation teams and working groups

29

Eastern Whip-poor-will
Photo: Christian Artuso



British Columbia Program Manager
Dr. David Bradley participating in
Long-billed Curlew research.
Photo: Jay Carlisle

Migration Program Manager
Stu Mackenzie with Long Point Bird
Observatory's millionth bird.
Photo: Elaine Secord



TRACKING PRIORITY SPECIES

Tracking threatened migratory birds enables Bird Studies Canada and our colleagues to identify and address conservation priorities. We have made significant progress toward our 2020 goal of following 50 species of conservation concern through portions of their life cycles, to inform targeted improvements to hemisphere-wide conservation.

Our bird-tracking efforts began at Long Point Bird Observatory in 1960, with the migration monitoring program pioneered by Dr. David Hussell. On May 29, 2017, a second-year female Tennessee Warbler was the one millionth bird banded at LPBO – an impressive milestone that no other bird observatory in the Western Hemisphere has reached.

This year our researchers achieved full life cycle tracking of birds such as the Blackpoll Warbler (tagged with geolocators on its boreal breeding grounds) and the Long-billed Curlew (through a satellite tracking project in British Columbia).

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System provides amazing insights into bird movements, and priority areas and habitats. Motus is a program of Bird Studies Canada, in partnership with Acadia University and collaborating researchers and organizations, undertaken with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

The Motus system continues to detect incredible journeys to support research and conservation. A critical grant from CANARIE funded further infrastructure development in 2016-17, and the hiring of a senior scientist. The Motus array expanded, with three dozen new receivers deployed in 13 countries and territories in the Caribbean, Central America, and South America.

In 2017, 519 Motus radio-tracking locations in 17 countries tracked nearly 90 species, including some bats and insects.



Nature walk at the Dundas Valley
Important Bird and Biodiversity
Area, Ontario.

Photo: IBA Canada

“YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS TO OUR
PROGRESS INSPIRE US TO REACH EVEN
GREATER DESTINATIONS AHEAD.”

– *Bird Studies Canada President*
Steven Price



Photo: IBA Canada

CONSERVING KEY SITES

The Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (“IBA”) Program is an international conservation initiative of BirdLife International. Bird Studies Canada co-leads the Canadian IBA Program, which is supported by regional partners across the country, and hundreds of volunteers nationwide.

Canada’s IBA Program is a science-based initiative to identify, monitor, and conserve a network of sites that provide essential habitat for Canada’s bird populations. IBA designations are often based on long-term Bird Studies Canada Citizen Science monitoring of globally significant bird populations.

One-third (198) of Canada’s nearly 600 IBAs have 20% or more of their area designated as conservation lands – a promising indicator of progress and influence on site protection in recent years.

We’re committed to seeing more IBAs conserved, and to increasing the level of bird monitoring within IBAs.

We’re pleased to report that there was a substantial jump in stewardship coverage by IBA Caretakers in 2016-17. This strong and active network helps us safeguard the health of Canada’s cherished birds and the special places they call home. Hands-on volunteers monitor birds and ecosystems, perform stewardship activities, and lead outreach efforts in their communities.

Bird Studies Canada, Nature Canada, and the Gosling Foundation launched a new partnership in 2017 to support conservation action for threatened ecosystems. This year, the IBA Local Action Fund provided grants totalling \$250,000 for 14 projects in 30 IBAs.



CANADA'S VOICE FOR BIRDS

INNOVATING CONSERVATION SOLUTIONS

Reducing major threats to Canada's birds is an essential goal of Bird Studies Canada's work. In collaboration with conservation partners, and using data from our targeted research and Citizen Science projects, our scientists monitor bird population trends, investigate declines, identify solutions, and take action to conserve birds.

Two important examples of innovation in bird conservation are development of bird-friendly ranching in the Prairies, and invasive predator control in seabird colonies.

Grassland bird populations have declined in Canada by 40% on average since the 1970s. Grassland specialists will not survive without effective protection of native grasslands. Developing and improving research and conservation efforts for Canada's many threatened grassland bird species is one of our priorities.

Bird Studies Canada is proud to be involved in grassroots monitoring and conservation in western Canada, as well as international conservation partnerships to promote best management practices and bird-friendly ranching.

A collaborative project between Bird Studies Canada and BirdLife International partners aims to reduce predation of native birds by introduced species in Canada, as well as in the South Pacific. To protect colonies of seabirds breeding on islands, our team is monitoring and responding to threats from invasive animals such as rats and raccoons. In 2016-17, our British Columbia program staff and partners were active on Haida Gwaii, monitoring invasive mammals at five islands within one Important Bird Area, and controlling them in another IBA.

GRASSLAND BIRD
POPULATIONS WILL
NOT SURVIVE WITHOUT
EFFECTIVE PROTECTION
OF NATIVE GRASSLANDS.

Upland Sandpiper
Photo: Christian Artuso





Photo: Joan Boxall



Photo: Jacob Apkarian

ENGAGING CHAMPIONS

Bird Studies Canada strives to inspire appreciation and stewardship of birds and nature. We're excited to meet and recruit champions for Canada's birds through our volunteer Citizen Science projects, educational programs, and public outreach activities. Please join us!

Our monitoring programs harnessed the energy, skill, and bird observations of 48,000 volunteers in 2016-17. We offer a wide range of opportunities – from entry-level programs that are beginner- and family-friendly, to activities for advanced birders. We thank all of our generous volunteers for making your

bird observations count for science, and volunteering your time to help track the health of bird populations. This year, our growing team of "Citizen Scientists" shared more than 750,000 hours of volunteer effort with us. The monetary value of their in-kind contributions is estimated at \$15 million.

Each year, our Bird Science and Environmental Education Program provides high-quality curriculum-based school programs to over 2000 students. We reach thousands more across Canada through youth-focused programs like the Schoolyard Bird Blitz and the Christmas

Bird Count for Kids. Interactive distance learning programs connect our biologists with young people throughout the country and beyond.

Introducing urban Canadians to birds through our Citizen Science and education offerings helps us engage new communities and further strengthen and diversify our supporter base. We're connecting city dwellers with the abundant birdlife in their neighbourhoods through inner-city bird programs such as Vancouver Bird Week and the new Toronto Bird Celebration, launched in 2017 with 14 partners and 31 events in our first year.



Christmas Bird Count for Kids,
Vancouver, British Columbia.
Photo: Catherine Jardine

4,800 VOLUNTEERS

LEGACY AND MEMORIAL GIFTS

Semipalmated Sandpipers
Photo: Jaya Fahey



LEGACY DONATIONS

Many of our cherished friends leave gifts in their wills to Bird Studies Canada to support our research, conservation, and education programs in perpetuity. We thank everyone who has made, or arranged to make, a gift to safeguard our birds and environment for future generations.

Bird Studies Canada gratefully acknowledges legacy gifts in 2016-17 from the following estates.

Evelyn Ashford (Atikokan, ON)
 Joan Beckley (Toronto, ON)
 Eva M. Moran (Calgary, AB)
 Brenda Zimmerman (Kitchener, ON)

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

In 2016-17, Bird Studies Canada received memorial donations honouring the following individuals.

David Ambridge (Cambridge, ON)
 Maris Apse (Grand Bend, ON)
 Harry Barrett (Port Dover, ON)
 Charles Beck (Edmonton, AB)
 Sonja Belous (Nanaimo, BC)
 Allan Boughner (Vittoria, ON)
 Dr. Jane M. Bowles (Thorndale, ON)
 Dr. Jean Briggs (Thornhill, ON)
 Art Briggs-Jude (Westport, ON)
 Fred Brugman (Niagara Falls, ON)
 Marie-Marthe Budowski (Orleans, ON)
 Audrey Bunger (Uxbridge, ON)
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 Stephen and Lois Wingfield (Simcoe, ON)
 Terrie Woodrow (Scotland, ON)
 Alex Zawierucha (Geraldton, ON)

INDIVIDUAL DONORS 1 APRIL 2016 - 31 MARCH 2017

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

\$1000+

Dr. Jacob Apkarian	Allan Foley	Dr. Suzi Peters	The Honourable Chief Justice
Karen and Eric Auzins	Christian Friis and Ana Yuristy	Steven D. Price	Warren K. Winkler
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**We also thank the 8100+
 donors who gave less than
 \$500.**

GOVERNMENT, FOUNDATION & CORPORATE SPONSORS AND PARTNERS

1 APRIL 2016 - 31 MARCH 2017

\$1,000,000+

Government of Canada

- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Environment and Climate Change Canada
- Natural Resources Canada
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada
- Parks Canada

BETWEEN \$100,000 AND \$999,999

Canadian T-GEAR Charitable Trust

CANARIE Inc.

The Gosling Foundation

Province of Ontario

- Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

S.C. Johnson & Son, Limited

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Wildlife Habitat Canada

BETWEEN \$50,000 AND \$99,999

Armstrong Bird Food

Province of New Brunswick

- Energy and Resource Development
- Environmental Trust Fund
- Wildlife Trust Fund

TD Friends of the Environment Foundation

Tides Canada Foundation - A & R Metal Fund

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

- Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The W. Garfield Weston Foundation

BETWEEN \$10,000 AND \$49,999

Acadia University

BC Hydro

Canadian Wildlife Federation

Dalhousie University

Florida Gulf Coast University

Home Hardware Stores Ltd.

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- Sustainable Development

Province of Nova Scotia

- Department of Natural Resources
- Habitat Conservation Fund
- Labour and Advanced Education

Province of Saskatchewan

- Ministry of Environment

The Schad Foundation

Southwest Ontario Tourism Corporation

Western University

Weston Family Parks Challenge

(an initiative of The W. Garfield

Weston Foundation and the Ontario
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The Winnipeg Foundation

BETWEEN \$1000 AND \$9999

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The Bradstreet Family Foundation

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Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation

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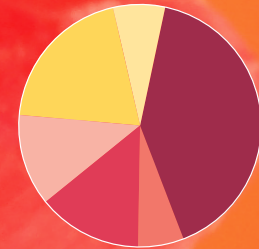
2016-17 FINANCIAL REPORT

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

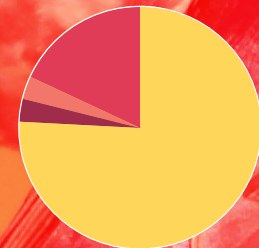
Year ending March 31

	2017	2016
ASSETS		
Current Assets	1,579,501	1,523,820
Investments	5,068,910	4,804,383
Capital Assets	1,240,488	1,510,790
Total Assets	7,888,899	7,838,993
LIABILITIES AND FUND BALANCES		
Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities	336,005	386,675
Deferred Revenue	646,884	555,677
Fund Balances:		
Operating	438,038	430,650
Endowment	5,064,987	4,800,371
Capital	1,277,271	1,548,363
Other	125,714	117,257
Total Liabilities and Fund Balances	7,888,899	7,838,993

SOURCE OF FUNDS



USE OF FUNDS



CONDENSED STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS AND FUND BALANCES

Year ending March 31

	2017	2016
REVENUE		
Fees	251,765	238,246
Donations	353,929	511,493
Research and Conservation Grants	3,571,874	4,070,307
Fundraising	361,217	361,837
Investment Income	170,906	181,542
Gain (Loss) on Sale of Investments	162,379	221,469
Other	8,351	50,954
	<u>4,880,421</u>	<u>5,635,848</u>
EXPENSES		
Management and Administration		
Administration	388,187	325,750
Fundraising and Membership Development	226,461	211,752
Membership Services	282,517	260,387
Amortization of Capital Assets	145,002	167,254
Research and Conservation		
International Collaborations	316,117	324,819
National Programs	1,024,724	851,696
Regional programs	2,492,505	3,010,524
Grants	14,146	18,925
Other	160,204	1,002
	<u>5,049,863</u>	<u>5,172,109</u>
Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses	(169,442)	463,739
Change in unrealized gain on investments	178,811	(474,629)
Fund Balances, beginning	6,896,641	6,907,531
Fund Balances, ending	<u>6,906,010</u>	<u>6,896,641</u>

Our audited financial statements are available online at: www.birdscanada.org/download/2016-17audit.pdf

Barn Swallows
Photo: Mark Peck

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*Until September 2016

**From September 2016



Belted Kingfisher
Photo: Tim Arthur





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

P.O. Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0
Tel. 1-888-448-2473

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