

REPORTS OF THE 15TH REGIONAL MEETING OF THE
SOCIETY FOR THE CONSERVATION AND STUDY OF CARIBBEAN BIRDS

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BELOW ARE REPORTS from the workshops, roundtable discussions, and Working Group meetings convened during the 15th Regional Meeting of the Society for the Conservation and Study of Caribbean Birds, held in Guadeloupe, French West Indies, 1-5 August 2005. The scientific program and all abstracts from the meeting can be downloaded from www.scscb.org.

LONG-TERM CAPACITY BUILDING IN THE CARIBBEAN—STRENGTHENING
LOCAL CAPACITY FOR CONSERVATION THROUGH TRAINING
OF WILDLIFE PROFESSIONALS

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THIS WORKSHOP ADDRESSED CAPACITY BUILDING as it relates to the Society rather than the needs of the Caribbean as a whole (contrary to the title of the workshop). Specifically the question discussed during this session was, “What actions should the SCSCB take to enhance the involvement of local islanders in its core activities, particularly the bi-annual meetings and ultimately leadership positions in the Society?”

Participants were divided into five sub-groups. These were organized by language to facilitate conversation. Groups included two Spanish, two English and one French. A facilitator directed each sub-group discussion and a second individual recorded on flip charts the ideas put forward. Each group met for approximately an hour and one half. Near the close of the sub-group segment each sub-group prioritized its recommendations via a vote by the sub-group participants. These priority recommendations

were then presented by each of the five facilitators to the entire plenary assemblage. No attempt was made to further prioritize the recommendations of the five sub-groups. Rather, all of the priority recommendations were put forward to the Executive Committee for their consideration. These have been categorized by theme by Andrew Dobson and are included in Table 1 below. The primary categories include: communication, information, networking/partnership, management, membership, and funding.

A number of innovative ideas came out of this discussion. It is anticipated that many of these could be adopted by the Executive Committee so that the Society might establish a more proactive strategy to better involve local islanders in its future development.

Special thanks are owed to the facilitators who included: Maurice Anselme, Yvonne Arias, Patricia

Table 1. Priority recommendations for actions SCSCB can take to enhance the involvement of local islanders in its core activities.

CONCERNS	POSSIBLE ACTIONS
Communication	
Better web site	Find funding to employ web designer to create dedicated SCSCB web site
Electronic newsletter	Working Group chairs and society members contribute news items, C. Wardle will produce 2 times per year

Table 1. (Continued)

CONCERNS	POSSIBLE ACTIONS
Communication (Cont.)	
Why join SCSCB?	Need to get the message out!
Language barrier for French speaking islands	Translate web and newsletter text to French
Individual island involvement	Expand ways to engage local islanders in the society (e.g., through projects and/or research)
Meeting attendance and involvement	Tie financial support for meeting attendance to playing a more active role, require local co-leaders and co-presenters for all papers, workshops and initiatives
Information	
Provide greater information on the activities of the various SCSCB Working Groups and current projects	Through newsletter, website and reports
Need information on skills required	Through a workshop or questionnaire
Offer workshops, especially in the 'off years' between conferences	Design and run workshops
Skills training (e.g., monitoring, outreach, habitat restoration)	Hold training workshops for local islanders
More publications (posters, books, outreach and educational materials, etc)	Produce in three languages
Journal required to encourage exchange of information and scientific research	Continue publication of Journal of Caribbean Ornithology (JCO)
Strategic plan to be implemented	Distribute plan to members
Methodological help in defining priorities (especially French Antilles)	SCSCB assist by offering a priority setting workshop
A joint education/awareness program for all the French Caribbean areas	SCSCB to assist in developing with local French leadership
Concern over writing standards, especially Journal of Caribbean Ornithology	Sponsor writing workshops
Networking/Partnerships	
Increase inter-island cooperation	Channel and coordinate efforts through SCSCB, especially on regional topics and issues of shared concern (e.g., monitoring and conservation of migratory species, protected areas management, nature tourism)
Develop increased partnerships	Expand our partnerships with other groups in the Caribbean to involve them further in the society, establish formal links with BirdLife, SPAW, Waterbird Council, etc
Internships could take place	SCSCB partner with local NGOs, colleges and universities to develop internships offering training/experience in applied research, management, and conservation
Management	
Appoint a development officer – prior to a paid secretariat	Employ someone from one island
Employ a paid secretariat	Apply for funding
Hire an intern	Island intern to help with one or more key activities of the society
Have a mentoring program to allow seamless transition during Board changes	Document job descriptions and include mentoring
Leadership training required	Sponsor leadership training workshops
French representative needed on Board	Co-opt to Board?
Membership	
Lack of locals joining SCSCB	Better promotional material, offer opportunities to become involved

Table 1. (Continued)

CONCERNS	POSSIBLE ACTIONS
Membership	
Membership too narrow	Attract members and groups with diverse interests; increase continental membership e.g., Puerto Rican Ornithological Society
Encourage local organisations and groups to join and become involved	
Target teachers, students and artists	Better advertising, offer materials to teachers, and activities for students; promote wildlife artists
Concerns over lack of younger members	Identify younger members and form local youth groups and birding clubs, (e.g., Angela Ramsey willing to try in Tobago), offer summer internships
Funding	
Develop more SCSCB-funded projects to support local people and projects	Identify potential projects (based on local needs and priorities) and raise funds
More individuals writing grant proposals	Provide training in proposal writing (e.g., SCSCB workshop), list grant opportunities and funding agencies on website and in newsletter
Attract funding to support society	Identify major donors (funding agencies, foundations, corporate and business sponsors) and pursue support

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BIRD MONITORING SYMPOSIA AND WORKSHOP: STRATEGIES
FOR MONITORING BIRDS IN THE CARIBBEAN—HOW TO
DESIGN AND CARRY OUT A MONITORING PROGRAM

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MANY INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL organizations have agreed to the need to establish long-term bird monitoring programs. Habitat-specific data on birds is required because conservation and management activities are related to the population size of a species. The challenge of developing monitoring programs is difficult, however, often because of the lack of qualified biologists or other resources in key regions, and more fundamentally because of confusion over how to compare monitoring data across large areas, especially when local organizations often have their own goals and locally defined monitoring objectives. In this workshop we explored different types of monitoring programs, including inventories; defining population size and habitat relationships based on a broad-scale set of point counts; censuses based on repeated counts; constant effort mist-netting; the determination of reproductive success and reproductive rate through nest monitoring; and the estimation of

population composition, survivorship, and site fidelity through a comprehensive program of mist netting and/or color-band resighting.

Following oral presentations, we explored through discussion a variety of monitoring topics. Discussion groups were formed based on an individual's interest in monitoring various types of habitats or species. Thus we had groups discussing the monitoring of West Indian Whistling-Ducks, wetlands and waterbirds, seabird colonies, and forested habitats. Each group informally reviewed monitoring efforts for these species or habitats in the Caribbean, and then explored how a monitoring program could be designed that allowed more inter-island cooperation. Little concrete headway was made on this latter point, but groups also discussed resources needed in order to expand monitoring in the region. All groups expressed an enthusiastic desire for more training in monitoring methods, and some identified existing (albeit limited) opportuni-