

ties for training in monitoring techniques.

Because so many participants expressed interest in monitoring training and an on-going monitoring working group, a dinner meeting was held to explore the needs and goals of such a working group. More than a dozen participants evaluated the need for a monitoring working group, and presented their vision of the role of such a group. We then agreed by consensus that a Monitoring Working Group would be formed. Steven Latta of Point Reyes Bird Observatory (slatta@prbo.org) and Jon McCracken of Bird Studies Canada (jmccracken@bsc-eoc.org)

agreed to coordinate the working group. We agreed to proceed with the drafting of a vision statement defining the role of the Monitoring Working Group, with an emphasis on training SCSCB members in monitoring techniques, and encouraging inter-island cooperation in monitoring shared species and habitats. We also agreed to prepare a regional report on bird monitoring that will include existing monitoring programs, existing training opportunities, and recommendations for standardized monitoring protocols. Finally, we are exploring options for funding training programs in the region.

J. Carib. Ornithol. 18:84-86, 2005

EDUCATION, AWARENESS, AND COMMUNITY TRAINING INITIATIVES—EXPANDING ON WHAT WORKS AND IDEAS FOR NEW INITIATIVES

LISA SORENSON¹, KATE WALLACE², AND LOURDES MUGICA³

¹*Department of Biology, 5 Cummington St., Boston University, Boston, MA 02215, USA; e-mail: LSoren@bu.edu;* ²*Apdo. 3284, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, cua809@yahoo.com;* ³*Facultad de Biología, Universidad de la Habana, Calle 25 entre J e I, Vedado, Ciudad Habana, Cuba; e-mail: lmugica@fbio.uh.cu*

CONSERVATION OF NATURE begins with education—an understanding and awareness of our dependence on intact ecosystems and an appreciation for the many values of biodiversity. There has been much progress in recent years in environmental outreach and education in the Caribbean. SCSCB has developed several innovative and successful programs including the Caribbean Endemic Bird Festival and WIWD and Wetlands Conservation Project. Local NGOs and government agencies partner with us to develop and deliver these programs as well as engage in their own outreach and advocacy projects. The Important Bird Areas Program and recent advent of Site Support Groups has presented new opportunities to engage the public in the conservation of local sites. In this symposium and workshop, we heard excellent presentations about the programs and activities taking place in different countries. Symposium contributors included Lynn Gape (Sorenson presented for Gape), Florence Sergile, Eliezer Nieves, Adrienne Tossas, Susan Bonfield, Yvonne Arias, and Lisa Sorenson. Presenters discussed the results and outcomes of their activities, difficulties and challenges faced and how they were/were not overcome, and ideas for how workshops and other activities could be improved and sustained in the future.

Discussion questions.—Following the oral presentations, we explored, in breakout discussion groups (organized by language spoken), means of improving and expanding project activities and outcomes. Each of the discussion groups addressed 5 questions regarding outreach, education and awareness initiatives. The questions and results from the discussion groups are compiled below.

1. What are the key ingredients for success?

- a. Strong leadership—highly motivated, organized and enthusiastic leaders.
- b. Funding—adequate funds to support the development of materials and good quality workshops.
- c. Well-defined objectives (identify the main problems and determine priorities for the project).
- d. Great materials and fun, hands-on activities.
- e. Field component to the workshop.
- f. Good organization and communication.
- g. Involving local people in the organization and implementation of the project.
- h. Follow-up monitoring and reinforcement of efforts (ensure repetition of the messages).
- i. Creativity.
- j. Consistency—which includes a commitment to nature and people, good follow-through.

- k. Network of collaborators.
- 1. Publicize the results (use the media).
- 2. *How do we convince people of the importance of the resource (e.g., wetlands, forests, birds)?*
 - a. Educate about the many benefits of environmental services; e.g., coastal mangrove wetlands lessen the impacts and damage from hurricanes.
 - b. Assess the economic value of the resource (especially important for decision makers), in other words, determine the \$\$ value of forests and wetlands for tourism, biodiversity, fresh water, carbon sequestration, hunting, recreational activities, etc.; the value of wetlands for fisheries, flood damage control, etc. Involve NGOs and government in the assessment.
 - c. Have a clear idea of the values and be able to explain them in terms that people understand; e.g., hunting, fishing, leisure activities, the intrinsic value of nature, etc. The message will vary depending on the audience you are trying to reach, so tailor your message to your audience; e.g., policymakers, the general public, local stakeholders, and school children will understand and appreciate the value of the

- resource in different ways.
- d. Give people first-hand experiences outdoors with nature, confirm their knowledge and encourage further explorations.
- e. Convey information with hands-on activities.
- f. Describe case studies showing the unintended and negative consequences of habitat loss (but be positive about what can still be done).
- g. Gain trust by establishing relationships with local people.
- h. Link theory and practice; use local examples wherever possible.
- i. Organize debates (contradictory if possible) on this question.
- j. Be professional in your advocacy. Make sure that you (or scientists) can back up your claims with data from scientific research and/or peer-reviewed papers in scientific journals.
- 3. *What were the major problems and challenges faced in education and awareness programs and how were they solved?*

PROBLEMS OR CHALLENGES	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
Unforeseen circumstances such as time constraints during a workshop	Be flexible; be prepared to make scheduling changes and adjustments as needed.
Lack of funding	Be on the lookout for funding opportunities; network. Become skilled at proposal writing. Ask for support from local businesses.
Set curriculum in schools	Tailor your program to existing requirements, learn to “speak the language.” Go through the proper channels to incorporate your materials into the schools’ curriculum.
Imminent threat (e.g., to a bird, wetland, forest or other habitat)	Arm yourself with the facts about your case (e.g., species is threatened, wetland serves xx functions). Take a direct approach to community leaders, policy makers, and general public. Alert the media; write letters to the editor of your local paper.
Gaining trust	Always accomplish what you promised in order to gain trust and credibility.
Lack of capacity/personnel	Recruit local volunteers/college students and train them. Look for funding for paid education staff.

- 4. *How do we follow up with people that have participated in the program?*
 - a. Establish initial commitments (e.g., people that were trained will, in turn, go out and train or teach a certain number of people).
 - b. Require progress reports (including local projects and results).
 - c. Promote the interchange between local people

- receiving the program.
- d. Support the work of the local people in schools.
- e. Recognize the work of local people.
- f. Use the media to communicate results.
- g. Revisit and offer new or supplemental training workshops to people that have already participated (e.g., offer a bird identification workshop to teach-

ers that have already taken a wetlands education workshop).

h. Assign follow-up activities to a local representative or organization; e.g., check in with people to see if they have questions or need more materials, talk with them about how they can use the information and materials they received if they are having difficulties.

i. Offer continuing education through a newsletter, quizzes, new materials, your website.

j. Administer evaluations (at the beginning and end of the workshop and/or program).

k. Establish Site Support Groups with local leadership.

5. *How can we best measure conservation outcomes or success from education and awareness initiatives?*

a. Conduct interviews or administer quizzes before and after your workshop or program to assess what has been learned and if attitudes have changed.

b. Determine if those that have been trained are continuing to teach others.

c. Look for and document anecdotal examples of positive conservation outcomes in the community or individuals; e.g., someone that has taken your wetlands workshop has successfully advocated for the conservation of a local mangrove; e.g., a student that has taken your program decides to pursue a

career in an environmental field. (These are real examples from Cuba!).

d. Your program and materials are incorporated in schools' curriculums.

e. Local people and/or Site Support Groups are advocating for the protection of the resource; someone takes on grassroots organizing.

f. Creation of a protected area, such as a Ramsar site, National Park, Watchable Wildlife Pond.

Conclusion.—We learned a great deal from one another in both the presentations and discussions. Many new insights and ideas were put forth for increasing the effectiveness of education and awareness initiatives in the Caribbean. It is recommended that anyone embarking on (or already engaged in) an education and awareness project follow, as much as possible, the recommendations outlined above. In addition, the French group noted that in the French Antilles, many structures and agencies exist which should be involved in education and awareness projects, but in fact, there is no “culture” for such projects and no real coordination between the actors. The French group therefore recommended that an outreach and education project (e.g., wetlands education) be initiated in the French Antilles. The project should be collaborative in order to develop synergism among the various groups.

J. Carib. Ornithol. 18:86-87, 2005

BIRD CONSERVATION IN HAITI: IT'S NOW OR NEVER TO SAVE HAITI'S BIRDS

CHRISTOPHER RIMMER

*Vermont Institute of Natural Science, 2723 Church Hill Road, Woodstock VT 05091, USA;
e-mail: crimmer@vinsweb.org*

THIS ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION was focused on how the international community might help advance ongoing efforts to conserve Haiti's bird populations. The problem is obvious: Haiti is teetering on the brink of ecological collapse and consequent loss of biodiversity. Resources to achieve conservation are scarce or nonexistent, the resolve and capacity of government agencies are weak at best, and the number of committed in-country players is extremely few. The Société Audubon Haiti stands virtually alone, with Florence Sergile and Philippe Bayard engineering current efforts. They have the commitment and vision, but they need the backing, at all levels (conceptual, technical, human resource, and financial), of the international conservation

community. The goal of the roundtable was to draw on the extensive experience of the participants to collectively think through some of the issues and possible solutions.

Many people, including Florence Sergile, offered their perspectives, and several ideas were proposed. These included:

1. Drafting a resolution from SCSCB to the Haitian Ministries of Agriculture and Environment, urging strong and community-based measures to protect the country's remaining forest habitats, to restore damaged habitats within currently protected areas, and to work closely with local communities to develop sustainable land use practices. This resolution was subsequently drafted and approved by