

Africanized Honeybees in the Greater Antilles (continued)

for nesting. Cavities are being constantly monitored and beehives destroyed as rapidly as possible, given the limitation of manpower. As the 1995 parrot nesting season approaches, managers can not help experiencing a feeling of distress. Following the passage of Hurricane Hugo, the wild parrot population had been exhibiting signs of increased productivity as well as a limited expansion in range and use of historical cavity-producing tree species (*Dacryodes excelsa*). We will have to wait to determine if the additional threat to parrot nesting pairs imposed by AHB will be cause for major concern.

Given the high degree of commercial shipping between Puerto Rico and the rest of the Caribbean, members of the Society of Caribbean Ornithology should communicate this matter to their respective government agriculture agencies. A brochure with information on AHB for apiculturists and the general public can be obtained from the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture (P. O. Box 21120, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00928-1120). Society members with E-mail capabilities can access a bulletin board maintained exclusively for AHB information by the U. S. Department of Agriculture (E-mail address: twillis@es USDA.gov).

FORUM

SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY MEETINGS AND AGENDA: SOME PROBLEMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO REFLECT ON

FRANK F. RIVERA-MILÁN, ROSEMARIE GNAM, AND HERBERT A. RAFFAELE
*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of International Affairs,
4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Suite 860-ARLSQ, Arlington, Virginia 22203*

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology (SCO) is facing new challenges and problems to conduct its annual meetings and promote its goals and objectives successfully. Here we identify some of the problems and provide a series of recommendations for the consideration of the Executive Board. It is hoped that our points of view are used constructively by the Board to improve the ways in which the Society serves to promote the conservation of birds and their habitats in the region. The problems and recommendations are the following:

(1) The annual meeting is too long and is not interactive enough.

Recommendation.—To arrange oral presentations by theme (say, population ecology, wildlife and habitat management, avian genetics and taxonomy, etc.) and conduct sessions simultaneously in different rooms to finish in one day; and, then, dedicate two days to conduct round-table discussions about local and regional conservation issues, resolutions, policy statements, and action plans.

(2) The participation of local individuals (researchers, managers, administrators, educators, policymakers, etc.) should always be a priority for the SCO. How many persons from Martinique attended the meeting and/or the monitoring and conservation education workshops this year? Which are the major conservation problems affecting the avifauna of Martinique and can we assist in addressing them? Is there a Minister of the Environment in Martinique and can we help train its personnel? Are there school teachers interested in environmental education and conservation issues? To whom we can offer additional skills? The coordination of activities

was not an easy task this year, but we could have done a better job in assuring enough local participation and discussing local and regional conservation issues affecting birds and their habitats. Once more, we have not been interactive enough.

Recommendation.—Each year the SCO's Local Committee should write an article for *El Pitirre* providing information about the most important environmental and conservation problems affecting the avifauna of the country/island in turn. Since experts from around the Hemisphere will spend almost a week in their island, special attention should be given to enabling individuals from the host island/country to get training, share experiences, and receive orientation to solve applied problems. This level of interaction is badly needed to meet the goals of the SCO.

(3) The SCO is not merely a "scientific" organization. Nevertheless we continue conducting our meetings as if our major concern was the science of birds ("ornithology"). We need to explore new alternatives to make the annual meetings less science-oriented and more country/island- and people-oriented.

Recommendation.—To change the structure of the meeting and spend more time promoting fruitful interactions among members (see above).

(4) To this day, the SCO has not developed financial sustainability.

Recommendation.—To develop fund raising strategies and generate some savings each year. For example, we can

Forum (continued)

sell T-shirts with the SCO's logo at the meetings. We can provide information about birds and their habitats to local airlines and ecotourism companies in exchange for "cash" and/or "in-kind" contributions to cover a portion of our annual travel and lodging expenses. We can contact local artists to spread our conservation message through more popular mechanisms such as songs, poems, paintings, wood carvings, and other local craftsmanship that can also be sold at special prices during the meeting. The SCO can solicit contributions from private organizations and individuals in exchange of space in *El Pitirre* to announce products such as bookshelves, computer hardware and software, tourist field guides, etc.

(5) Given the complexity of having two workshops this year, the SCO meeting had too many organizers involved at different levels of the process.

Recommendation.—Define the role of each of the organizers. For example, establish in writing the responsibilities of the Local Committee. If a member of the Local Committee finds some additional money for the annual meeting, alternatives should be offered to use the money according to the best interests of the SCO. Again, we cannot spend up to our last cent every year. There is an urgent need of generating some savings for lean years.

(6) The preparation of the annual meeting becomes an administrative burden that falls basically on the shoulders of two persons, the President and Treasurer.

Recommendation.—Re-define the roles of the members of the Executive Committee and Island Representatives. Only individuals willing and able to focus on the priorities of the SCO and dedicate adequate attention to the tasks should fill such positions. Follow-up is needed for our action plans and resolutions.

(7) The SCO lacks policy statements. What is our position with respect to the most important conservation issues affecting birds and their habitats in the region (e.g., the Grenada Dove)?

Recommendation.—Less time should be spent giving papers, whereas more time should be dedicated to defining our position as a Society promoting the study and conservation of birds and their habitats in the Caribbean.

(8) *El Pitirre* should be used as a communication channel between the countries/islands and the SCO. Each issue of *El Pitirre* should contain information about research, management, monitoring, training, environmental education, policymaking, conservation problems and initiatives in the region.

Recommendation.—The Island Representatives should play a more active role by writing or contacting potential contributors in their respective islands. Perhaps a quota is needed for the Island Representatives (say, two articles per year).

(9) Most of the members of the SCO still could benefit from guidance in the preparation of proposals.

Recommendation.—Conduct a workshop on how to prepare proposals for research, management, monitoring, training, and education actions. The workshop would include the objectives of major funding entities such as Partners in Flight (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation/U.S. Agency for International Development), Bird Conservation Alliance (ICBP-PACS), The Lincoln Park Zoo Scott Neotropic Fund of the Lincoln Park Zoological Society and Lincoln Park Zoological Gardens, etc.

(10) The SCO should not cover the travel and lodging expenses of any person, unless that person provides evidence of a significant contribution to the success of the annual meeting or other important SCO initiatives.

Recommendation.—Develop a set of criteria to select those persons who deserve economic assistance to participate in the annual meetings of the SCO. The criteria for receiving funding might include the following:

(A) Applicants must be Caribbean nationals or residing in the region. They must demonstrate a need for financial assistance to attend the meeting.

(B) Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to the conservation of the avifauna and their habitats in the Caribbean. If employed by a government ministry or a non-government organization (NGO), the government or NGO must also be able to demonstrate such commitment.

(C) Applicants must demonstrate past or present participation in activities of the SCO. Such activities may include, but not be limited to: holding elected office in the Society, presentations at annual meetings of the Society, publications in *El Pitirre* (if applicant is awarded funding he or she will be required to submit at least one article for publication in the Society's newsletter on conservation problems/efforts on her or his island), fund raising, developing resolutions or policy for the Society, and participation in the conservation efforts of the Society.

(D) Applicants must work with other interested individuals/groups on their island to develop mutual interest and partnerships with the Society to achieve conserva

tion goals and objectives.

(E) Priority should be given to applicants who raise matching travel funds to attend the annual meeting or raise in-kind contributions on their island.

(F) Applicants must provide a one-page statement on how their participation in the Society's annual

meeting will contribute to their professional development and to the conservation programs on their island.

(G) Repetitive financing of the same individuals, despite meeting most of the above requirements, will be discouraged through a gradual decline in the level of assistance.

INTEGRATING MONITORING OF RESIDENT AND MIGRATORY BIRDS IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: A WORKSHOP HELD BY THE SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY (SCO) IN TROIS ISLETS, MARTINIQUE, AUGUST 1994

FRANK F. RIVERA-MILÁN

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of International Affairs,
4401 N. Fairfax Dr., Suite 860-ARLSQ, Arlington, Virginia 22203*

A morning session was dedicated to the presentation of results of long-term avian population studies in the Caribbean region; an afternoon session was dedicated to discussion of the results of these studies. The results of a workshop in Costa Rica entitled "Assessment and Integration of Monitoring of Resident and Migratory Birds and Their Habitats with the Conservation Priorities of Latin America and the Caribbean Region: An Interamerican Perspective" were also discussed. The participants agreed that there is an urgent need to integrate management, monitoring, research, multilevel training and education efforts to promote multidisciplinary initiatives to open a wide front of action for the conservation of resident and migratory birds and their habitats in Latin America and the Caribbean. A resolution was passed and approved by the Society of Caribbean Ornithology supporting the results and resolutions of the Costa Rica workshop. The results of the workshop will also be discussed during the V Congress of Neotropical Ornithology to be held in Asunción, Paraguay, August 5-11, 1995. The results of the workshop can be summarized as follows:

[Monitoring actions are important only if they correspond to specific management needs. Monitoring efforts should be used as a tool to evaluate and refine management actions in the critical habitats of the species of interest; these should be continuous, replicated in space (e.g., habitats, life zones) and time (e.g., months, years), standardized, hierarchical, long-term (>10 years), and should be used in the integration of management and applied research. Multi-level training and education and the development of inter-institutional cooperative agreements ("partnerships") are essential elements to secure the success of our actions at national and international levels. There is an urgent need for a significant increase in the

amount of funds invested by programs such as *Partners in Flight* in the training and education of locals at all levels (e.g., field training for technicians, undergraduate and graduate level training in the universities in cooperation with ongoing management programs and community-based conservation projects, etc.). Only this bottom-up approach will stimulate the development of the full-fledged partners needed to promote the conservation of resident and migratory birds and their habitats in the neotropics. International partnerships must nurture a relationship of equality among partners; we cannot continue pretending that the conservation problems of birds in the neotropics will be solved simply by importing projects from the United States, specifically research-oriented projects that only promote a basic level of training ("para-ornithology") and fall short from addressing the most important conservation issues of the countries. Greater coordination and planning are needed to improve north-south collaboration and to channel donor contributions more effectively to projects in Latin America and the Caribbean region.]

Twenty-nine persons from 16 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean participated in the Costa Rica workshop (held in San José, from January 31 to February 5, 1994). Among the participants were ornithologists, managers, educators, and administrators of natural protected areas throughout the region. The proceedings of the workshop will be published in English and Spanish by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Office of International Affairs in late 1994 or early 1995. It is hoped that the document serves to promote a better integration of management and monitoring actions in Latin America and the Caribbean region.