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14 March 2008

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## INTERNATIONAL

### Negotiations Continue Over Grenada Dove Habitat

**7 March 2008** – In late 2006 the government of Grenada agreed to sell Mount Hartman National Park, the main refuge of the Critically Endangered Grenada Dove, to Four Seasons to make way for a hotel and resort development. Detailed dove surveys in the summer of 2007 confirmed that Mount Hartman holds the largest and only viable population of Grenada Doves – numbering fewer than 100 individuals – and found that failure to conserve the Mount Hartman population could be disastrous for the species. The resort plan has been revised several times since last summer. Under the current proposal, eight dove territories will be lost, but there could be greater protection for the remaining block of habitat, and the government of Grenada has committed to protecting habitat at another locality called Beauséjour. Negotiations are ongoing. [Visit the American Bird Conservancy website](#) to learn more.

### Beck's Petrel Rediscovered



Photo: BirdLife International/Hadoram Shirihai

**6 March 2008** – The Critically Endangered Beck's Petrel (*Pseudobulweia becki*), previously known only from two specimens collected by Rollo Beck in 1928 and 1929, has been discovered in the Pacific nearly 80 years later. Hopes were raised two years ago with a possible Beck's Petrel sighting off Australia, but that record was not accepted by the Birds Australia Rarities Committee. A paper by Hadoram Shirihai published last week in the Bulletin of the British Ornithologists' Club marks the indisputable rediscovery of this elusive bird. After a 2003 voyage into the Bismarck Archipelago, northeast of Papua New Guinea, during which Shirihai observed 'possible Beck's Petrels,' he returned to the area in 2007 and was able to photograph more than 30 of these seabirds. He also salvaged a freshly dead young bird from the sea, which is now only the third specimen in existence. Read the full story on [the BirdLife International website](#).

### eBird Now Accepting South American Checklists

**6 March 2008** – With the help of Avibase, it is now possible to submit bird checklists to eBird from anywhere in South America. [Select this link](#) to read the full announcement on the eBird website.

[Avibase](#) is hosted by Bird Studies Canada, and maintained by BSC's Senior Scientist Denis Lepage. The website offers checklists from all around the world and taxonomic information on all 10,000 species and 22,000 subspecies of birds, including photographic checklists, links to sounds, maps, and more. Avibase provided the baseline checklist information used to generate the country checklists used in the new eBird tools, using the standard South American Committee Checklist of the American Ornithologist's Union.

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Avibase is one of the world's most popular birding websites. Launched in 2003, the site recently received its 25 millionth visitor.

### Dr. C. Stuart Houston Named 2008 Champion of Owls

**1 March 2008** – The Center for Biological Diversity has inducted Saskatoon's Dr. C. Stuart Houston into the World Owl Hall of Fame, granting him the prestigious Champion of Owls Award for 2008. Dr. Houston, an Officer of the Order of Canada, is a medical doctor who has banded more than 10,000 owls of 11 species since 1943, published 51 papers on owls, written reviews for six owl books, and inspired multiple generations of ornithologists. The award was presented in Houston, Minnesota on February 29 as part of the International Festival of Owls. [Select this link](#) to read more about the World Owl Hall of Fame and other award recipients.

### BSC Among Recipients of SFI Conservation Research Award



Photo: Karen Brandt

**25 February 2008** – Participants in a unique study of bird populations that is expected to improve forestry practices in Canada's Acadian forests have received the first-ever Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) Leadership in Conservation Research Award. At a February 25 ceremony, the award was presented to Bird Studies Canada, The Nature Conservancy of Canada, the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources, Time Inc., the Université de Moncton, and UPM-Kymmene Inc.

The Birds as Bioindicators of Biodiversity Study was launched in April 2007, with the first results expected in two to three years. The study is evaluating the reproductive performance of several songbird and woodpecker species in treated and controlled areas of public lands managed by UPM-Kymmene in New Brunswick, with a goal to use results in the development of future best management practices.

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## NATIONAL

### Steve Timmermans Leaves BSC



Photo: Cathy Timmermans

**14 March 2008** – This month we bid a fond farewell to Steve Timmermans, who has resigned from BSC to accept a position with Golder Associates. Steve specializes in many aspects of aquatic ecology, monitoring, and bioassessment, with an emphasis on aquatic birds and anurans. As BSC's Aquatic Surveys Scientist for the past seven years, Steve has been a valuable asset to our organization, managing the Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program and the Canadian Lakes Loon Survey. He worked closely with BSC colleagues and partners to expand the MMP into Québec's St. Lawrence River region in 2004, and most recently into the Prairie and Aspen Parklands region. We wish Steve continued success as Senior Project Manager in Golder's Environmental Sciences Division.

## Attention Parents and Keen Teen Birders!

**14 March 2008** – The 2008 Doug Tarry Natural History Fund's Young Ornithologists' Workshop will be held at Long Point Bird Observatory near Port Rowan, ON, from August 1-10. Workshop activities focus on hands-on training in field ornithology, including bird banding, censusing, field identification, birding trips, bird skinning, avian energetics, guest lectures, and much more. Come make new friends who share similar interests in the world of birds and the natural sciences. Six lucky applicants (ages 13-17) from across the country will be selected to attend, and will receive the Doug Tarry Bird Study Award to cover all expenses. For those traveling long distances, special grants may also be available to help offset air travel costs. Applications are due by April 30, 2008. For additional information and an application form, [visit our website](#) or contact Stu Mackenzie at [lpbo@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:lpbo@bsc-eoc.org).

## It's Not Too Late to Join Great Bear Rainforest Expedition

**12 March 2008** – Last month we announced a unique opportunity to be part of a cruise to the Great Bear Rainforest of BC's central coast. Following an age-old maritime tradition of natural history expedition to unknown regions of the world, the BC Breeding Bird Atlas team will be sailing to the remote coastal rainforest this June. The cost departing Port Hardy is \$4333 per person per week. Most berths are already taken, but there are still openings for a few guests. Our team has decades of biological and ecotour experience along the BC coast, and you can spend one or two weeks birding with us in the land of whales, bears, eagles, and ancient forest. To learn more about this trip of a lifetime, [visit the BC Breeding Bird Atlas website](#) or contact Atlas Coordinator Rob Butler at [rbutler@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:rbutler@bsc-eoc.org) or 604-940-4672.

## Call for Nominations: Jamie Smith Award

**11 March 2008** – The Society of Canadian Ornithologists is seeking nominations for The Jamie Smith Memorial Award for Mentoring in Ornithology. This award honours established ornithologists who have displayed excellence in mentoring a new generation of professional or amateur biologists. [Select this link](#) for details concerning nominations. The deadline for submission of nominations is April 15, 2008. Nominations should be sent to: Ken Otter, Chair, Jamie Smith Memorial Mentoring Award Committee, Ecosystem Science & Management Program, University of Northern British Columbia, 3333 University Way, Prince George, BC, V2N 4Z9, or via email to [otterk@unbc.ca](mailto:otterk@unbc.ca).

## BSC Joins the Campaign to Save Boreal Birds

**8 March 2008** – Canada's Boreal Forest provides vital breeding grounds for billions of birds each year, but essential bird habitats are threatened by industrial development. A variety of conservation organizations concerned about the future of the Boreal Forest and its birds have banded together to seek increased protection for the Boreal Forest. The birds can't speak for themselves, so it's up to us to save their home. [Visit the Save Our Boreal Birds website](#) to learn more and to sign the online petition.

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## REGIONAL

### BSC Welcomes Yousif Attia



Photo: Yousif Attia

**14 March 2008** – BSC would like to welcome back Yousif Attia. Yousif has joined us as the Assistant Landbird Programs Coordinator of the Long Point Bird Observatory. Yousif was a part of BSC's Boreal Project in 2003,

returned as a species at risk biologist in 2006, and is a seasoned LPBO veteran from 2006-07. A native of Calgary, Alberta, he grew up with the birds of the prairies, foothills, and mountains. His dedication to bird conservation, and his birding and banding expertise from around the world, make Yousif an excellent addition to our team.

## Scaup and Crane Migration has Begun

**10 March 2008** – Several Lesser Scaup and Sandhill Cranes fitted with satellite transmitters by researchers with the Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Fund (LPWWRF) have recently initiated their spring migrations. Three cranes that wintered in southern Georgia and Florida are currently dispersed throughout Indiana. A scaup that wintered in Cuba and three others that over-wintered in southeastern Florida have moved up the east coast of the U. S. and are now in South Carolina and North Carolina, where they are preparing for the next leg of their spring migration. Satellite locations are updated daily. To keep up to date on each bird's spring journey, be sure to make frequent visits to LPWWRF's "[Scaup Tracker](#)."

## Hot off the Press – Great Lakes MMP Newsletter!

**6 March 2008** – Are you interested in learning about the Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program (MMP)? [Visit the BSC website](#) to view the 2008 MMP Newsletter. Learn about recent marsh bird survey protocol changes, online amphibian ID training opportunities, the MMP regional coordinator network, online data submission, the MMP's westward expansion, and other interesting program news items. Interested in participating in the MMP? Contact Kathy Jones (Great Lakes region – Ontario and U.S. Great Lakes states) at [aqsurvey@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:aqsurvey@bsc-eoc.org), 1-888-448-2473 ext. 212 (toll-free), or 519-586-3531, or Catherine Poussart (Québec) at [cpoussart@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:cpoussart@bsc-eoc.org), 1-866-518-0212 (sans frais/toll-free), or (418) 649-6062.

## Support for Maritimes Atlassers

**5 March 2008** – Bird Studies Canada's Baillie Fund will once again provide support to volunteers willing to organize trips and travel to remote or difficult-to-access areas to survey in squares that might not otherwise be covered (e.g., islands that require boat rental, can only be accessed by canoe or on foot, squares that require a 4-wheel drive vehicle, and/or are more than 150 km from the nearest town). In 2006 and 2007, the Baillie Fund supported trips to St. Paul's Island, Moose Island, Isle Haute, and atlassing ventures in Cape Breton and Northern New Brunswick. So if you have a trip in mind and would like some additional support, check out the "Support for Volunteers" link on the [Atlas homepage](#) for details on how to apply for funding. Trips must be long enough (or repeated) to obtain full atlas coverage (i.e., 20 survey hours and 95% of species detected). Requests should be sent in to the Atlas office by May 9, 2008.

## Support financier pour les atlasseurs des Maritimes

**Le 5 mars 2008** – Les Fonds Baillie d'Études Oiseaux Canada fourniront, cette année encore, un support aux volontaires qui aimeraient planifier des sorties afin de visiter des endroits éloignés ou difficiles d'accès dans des carrés qui normalement ne seraient pas couverts (ex.: des îles nécessitant la location d'un bateau, les endroits seulement accessible par canoë ou à pied, les carrés nécessitant un véhicule tout-terrain (VTT) et/ou sont situés à plus de 150 km de la ville la plus près). En 2006 et 2007, les Fonds Baillie ont supportés des sorties à l'île St. Paul, à Moose Island, à Ile Haute ainsi que des sorties d'atlassage dans des régions éloignées du Cap Breton et du nord du Nouveau-Brunswick. Donc si vous avez une sortie en tête et que vous nécessitez un support additionnel, visiter le lien 'Support pour volontaires' présent sur la page d'accueil du [site internet de l'Atlas](#) pour des détails sur comment appliquer pour des fonds. Les sorties doivent être d'une durée assez longue (ou répétées) afin de bien couvrir la région visité (i.e.: au moins 20 heures et 95% des espèces détectées). Les demandes doivent être envoyées au bureau de l'Atlas avant le 9 mai 2008.

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