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ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX CANADA

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23 January 2009

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## INTERNATIONAL

### Penguins Walk a Rocky Road



Photo: Richard Cuthbert, RSPB

**16 January 2009** – A new study published in BirdLife International’s journal, *Bird Conservation International*, has revealed that the Northern Rockhopper Penguin – which is principally found on UK territories such as Tristan da Cunha and Gough Island in the South Atlantic – has declined by 90% over the last 50 years. Possible factors include climate change, shifts in marine ecosystems, and overfishing.

“We have lost upwards of a million birds from Gough and Tristan. The declines at Gough since the 1950s are equivalent to losing 100 birds every day for the last 50 years,” said Richard Cuthbert of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, lead author of the paper. “With more than half the world’s penguins facing varying degrees of extinction, it is imperative that we establish the exact reason why the Northern Rockhopper Penguin is sliding towards oblivion.”

To learn more, visit the [BirdLife International website](#).

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## NATIONAL

### Student Awards for Ornithological Research – Call for Applications

**23 January 2009** – Applications for the various Student Research Awards offered annually by Bird Studies Canada and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists (SCO) are due by February 15, 2009. Awards sponsored in whole or in part by BSC include: the James L. Baillie Student Research Award, funded by proceeds of the Baillie Birdathon; the Fred Cooke Student Research Award, offered jointly by BSC and SCO; and the Junco Technologies Award, sponsored by Junco Technologies Inc. in cooperation with BSC. These awards are open to students conducting ornithological research at a Canadian university. Application forms and additional information are available on the [Society of Canadian Ornithologists website](#).

**Appel de candidatures – Bourses étudiantes pour la recherche ornithologique**

**23 janvier 2009** – La mise en candidature pour les bourses étudiantes de recherche offertes annuellement par Études d'Oiseaux Canada (ÉOC) et la Société des ornithologistes du Canada (SOC) est ouverte jusqu'au 15 février 2009. Les bourses commanditées, en partie ou en entier, par Études d'Oiseaux Canada sont : la bourse de recherche étudiante James L. Baillie financée par les revenus du Baillie Birdathon ; la bourse de recherche étudiante Fred Cooke, offerte conjointement par ÉOC et SOC ; et la bourse Junco Technologies commanditée par Junco Technologies Inc. en coopération avec ÉOC. Ces bourses sont offertes aux étudiant(e)s qui effectuent des études ornithologiques dans une université canadienne. Les formulaires d'application et de l'information additionnelle (en anglais seulement) sont disponibles sur le [site Internet de la Société des ornithologistes du Canada](#).

### **eBird Canada Receives \$20,000 Grant**

**20 January 2009** – Bird Studies Canada has received a grant of \$20,000 from a family foundation to fund eBird Canada, the popular online birding database. eBird Canada use has been growing exponentially since the website was launched in the fall of 2006. Birders can enter their sightings into the database, then explore the database with maps, seasonal graphs, or tables. eBird also acts as listing software, so can keep track of birders' lifelists for different regions. You can enter or explore data from anywhere in the Americas, and New Zealand was recently added to the eBird 'family.' There are now over 167,000 Canadian checklists in eBird, representing well over a million bird species records. All the eBird data becomes part of a larger database at the Avian Knowledge Network. The data can be downloaded through our [NatureCounts portal](#), where we also provide ways to explore and visualize the bird data. You can check out eBird at [www.ebird.ca](http://www.ebird.ca); it's free, it's informative, and it's fun!

### **Call for Nominations: D.H. Speirs Award**

**20 January 2009** – The Doris Huestis Speirs Award is the most prestigious award given by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists (SCO), and is presented annually to an individual who has made outstanding lifetime contributions to Canadian ornithology. Past awardees include professionals who work at museums, government agencies, private companies, and universities, as well as amateur ornithologists. For more information on the award and previous award winners, visit the [SCO website](#).

To nominate a candidate for the Speirs award, please provide the Chair of the award committee with the name of the nominee and supporting information that describes the nature and scope of the nominee's contributions and impact in Canadian ornithology. This could include their efforts to advance conservation, science, public education, or some combination of these or other contribution(s).

Nominations for the 2009 award may be sent to Dr. Marty Leonard, Department of Biology, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, B3H 4J1; Phone: (902) 494-3540; Fax: (902) 494-1123; email [mleonard@dal.ca](mailto:mleonard@dal.ca). Nominations will be accepted until June 1, 2009.

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## **REGIONAL**

### **BSC Welcomes John Conkin**



Photo: Dana Kellett

**22 January 2009** – Bird Studies Canada is pleased to announce the hiring of John Conkin as the assistant manager for the [Prairie & Parkland Marsh Monitoring Program](#). John holds a B.Sc. Honours Degree in Biology from the University of Saskatchewan, is certified in Geographic Information Systems for Resource Management, and is due to complete his M.Sc. this spring.

Growing up in Saskatchewan's southern boreal, John's curiosity about the outdoors began at an early age. John's interest

in landscape ecology and understanding factors that affect species distribution developed during several years of field-based experience while working as an assistant on a variety of avian research projects (e.g. Sage Grouse, and Ross's and Lesser Snow Geese). His Master's research focused on understanding species distributions at the landscape level in Canada's central Arctic by linking land cover and bird survey data to model waterfowl distributions, with the overall objective of applying such models as predictive tools to estimate species distributions within areas not covered by survey efforts. John's experience and expertise will serve an important role as he assists with the delivery of the Prairie & Parkland MMP.

### **Jody Allair to Present at "Nature in the City"**

**22 January 2009** – "Nature in the City" is a free six-part series of illustrated talks on the wild creatures and habitats that are an integral part of the urban landscape in London, Ontario. The talks run from 7:30-8:30 on Tuesday evenings from January 20 to February 24, and are sponsored by the London Public Library and McIlwraith Field Naturalists. BSC Project Biologist and Outreach Coordinator Jody Allair will present the talk "Urban Owls: Who Gives a Hoot?" on February 10. From the tiny Eastern Screech Owl to the imposing Great Horned Owl, Jody will introduce owls at the local, regional, and national scales, and highlight BSC's efforts to monitor these mysterious creatures.

All talks will take place at London's Central Library, 251 Dundas Street, in the Wolf Performance Hall. Families (with children aged 10 and up) are welcome. As a follow-up to his February 10 talk, Jody Allair will lead an "Owl Prowl" in the London area on Friday, February 13, 2009. For more information, visit the [McIlwraith Field Naturalists website](#).

### **BSC Citizen Science Workshop, February 28, 2009**

**21 January 2009** – The Niagara Peninsula Conservation Authority (NPCA) and Bird Studies Canada will host a Citizen Science Workshop on February 28, 2009 at the Balls Falls Conservation Area near Vineland, Ontario. Interested citizens can come and learn about the importance of volunteer-based research, and the BSC/NPCA opportunities available in their area. Workshop highlights will include an in-depth introduction to the [Marsh Monitoring Program \(MMP\)](#) and its survey protocols, and a presentation about the [Southern Ontario Bald Eagle Monitoring Project](#). This day-long event will be "bring your own lunch" and will include MMP registration, route assignment, and field training in the afternoon. The workshop is free but pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, contact Cindy Pilkington toll-free at 1-888-443-2473 ext. 122 or by email at [cpilkington@birdscanada.org](mailto:cpilkington@birdscanada.org).

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For questions about the news items or for media inquiries, please email [esecord@birdscanada.org](mailto:esecord@birdscanada.org).

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