

North American Ornithological Atlas Committee (NORAC)

2008 Workshop - DRAFT Agenda

Monday, August 4 2008, 09:00-16:30

Portland Hilton, Oregon

Ballroom Level, Parlors A/B/C

Please arrive at 8:30 for informal meet and greet and so that we can begin promptly at 9:00

Organizers:

Charles M. Francis, NORAC Chair, charles.francis@ec.gc.ca

Andrew Couturier, acouturier@bsc-eoc.org

The proposed agenda will consist of a mix of short presentations and discussion sessions as follows:

- **Introduction** (Charles Francis)
 - o Update on NORAC website
- **Short updates on current atlases**
 - o Short updates from atlas coordinators or delegates on currently active or recent atlases (5-10 minutes each) – should emphasize features that are new or distinctive in each atlas and that might be of particular interest to others developing atlases
- **What is the purpose of an atlas** (Discussion Lead - Charles Francis)
 - o How have atlas data been used for conservation/management of birds?
 - o How could/should they be used for this purpose?
 - o What data from atlases are most useful?
 - Breeding evidence?
 - Distribution maps?
 - (relative) abundance maps?
 - Rare species data?
 - Habitat information?
 - Trend information?
 - o Can we combine data from multiple atlases (especially neighbouring jurisdictions)?
 - o Can we gather appropriate data for habitat associations/modelling?
- **What data need to be recorded to ensure that changes in bird populations can be reliably monitored?** (Discussion lead - ...)
 - o Standardizing effort
 - o Recording and adjusting for effort
 - o Ensuring representative coverage
 - o Quantitative sampling
- **Developing appropriate standards for quantitative sampling to estimate abundance or relative abundance** (Discussion lead – Charles Francis)
 - o Ontario experience – point counts vs. area searches
 - o Pennsylvania – distance and time-banded detections
 - o Can we/should we try to estimate actual population sizes?
- **Logistics of running and organizing atlases** (Discussion lead - ??)
 - o Tools/approaches for managing volunteers (Becky Stewart)
 - o Fund-raising
 - o Management procedures
- **Developing atlases in Latin America and the Caribbean** (Discussion lead - Rick West)
 - o When/where might atlases be appropriate tools for monitoring and conservation in Latin America?
 - o What are the barriers to their implementation?
 - o How can we overcome these and promote their development?

LUNCH (on your own - tentative timing)

- **Recent advances in data management and analysis tools** (Discussion lead – Andrew Couturier)
 - o Overview of existing infrastructures (e.g., Bird Studies Canada, Cornell, Patuxent)
 - o Data/metadata standards
 - o What features would enhance functionality?
- **Publishing your atlas – is it worth making a printed book?** (Discussion lead – Andrew Couturier)
 - o Experiences/approaches from recent/current atlases (e.g., Ontario, Massachusetts, New York, others?)
 - o Cost/benefit analysis and open discussion of different options, e.g., printed book, web, CD, etc.
- **Non-breeding bird atlases** (Discussion leads – Rob Butler & Pete Davidson)
 - o e.g., wintering, year-round, urban, marine
 - o what changes in methodology are required?
 - o When are these useful?
- **NORAC Handbook (lead Charles Francis)**
 - o Is it worth preparing an update to the NORAC handbook (for posting on the web)?
 - o If so, what chapters do we need?
 - o How should we organize this and who is prepared to contribute?
- **NORAC business session**
 - o Chair, officers, procedures

This workshop is open to anyone interested in learning more about ornithological atlases, how they can be used, and how to implement them.