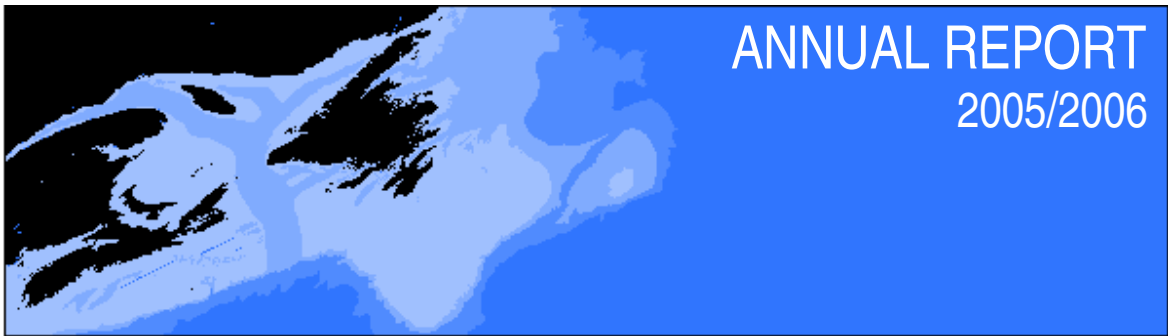

Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre



Centre de données sur la conservation du Canada Atlantique

Executive Director's Report (Lautenschlager)

The 05/06 fiscal year started with two major changes for the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre (CDC). Kate MacQuarrie became Chair, Stephen Flemming continued as Vice-Chair, Barry Sabeau continued as Secretary, and Mike Sullivan became Treasurer. These changes resulted in Board meetings and related transactions being efficiently conducted.

The 05/06 fiscal year was the best yet for the CDC. We worked on a variety of contracts (outlined under Program Overviews – below) focusing on species and communities of conservation concern, including species at risk; and finished the year with a healthy surplus (Treasurer's Report – below). That surplus is in line with what the Board now believes the CDC should maintain in reserve to ensure secure business operations into the future. The surplus also made it possible for the CDC's staff to attend training sessions, such as Advanced Biotics training, Heritage Training, and the NatureServe regional meeting, held September 25-28 just outside of Quebec City. It also allowed us to upgrade some of our older computer equipment.

During the 05/06 fiscal year the conservation science software package known as Biotics 4 became operational, and it is now available, via an internet connection, to staff in both Sackville New Brunswick, and Corner Brook Newfoundland. Biotics, however, continues to present operational and financial challenges and, if for nothing other than security, we are far from abandoning our previous data management system. However, the instillation of Biotics has allowed us to communicate more easily with NatureServe Canada, NatureServe, and key partners like the Parks Canada Agency. In addition, other federal and provincial agencies have expressed interest in Biotics and we are now positioned to introduce them to that package in the months and years ahead.

Since 1999, the Atlantic CDC has increasingly become **the** recognized source for species at risk information for Atlantic Canada. Maintaining that position, however, will require leadership, continued support from key partners, and adequate funding for staff and infrastructure. Thankfully, all of those now seem to be in place and functioning well.

The growing interest in Canadian CDCs, as appropriate units for federal SAR and general *biodiversity*-related information (including invasive species), is encouraging and funds from related work are expected to continue to help maintain and potentially increase the size and scope of the CDC's operation in the future. Therefore, I see challenges but great potential ahead for the CDC.

Chair's Report (MacQuarrie) – When the CDC concept for the Atlantic Region was proposed in the 1990s, some sectors responded, “great idea, good luck with that!”

Since that time, the Atlantic Canada Conservation Data Centre has grown to become THE resource for data and expertise for species of conservation concern, and more recently ecological communities in the region. It owes its success to its highly dedicated staff, who are recognized as regional and national experts in their respective fields. The original field work completed by CDC staff have made significant contributions to our understanding of species presence, distribution, and abundance in the Atlantic region.

The quality and utility of the data held by the CDC is evidenced by the growing number and types of data requests. From a handful of queries in the initial years, the CDC now handles hundreds of requests annually, from Federal, Provincial, and Municipal agencies, consultants, educational and academic organizations, conservation groups, corporations, and others.

Staff outline highlights of their efforts later in this report, here I identify a few that strike me as particularly important:

- The CDC has just come through its best financial year ever. This is a significant accomplishment for any non-profit organization in the current climate of increased competitiveness among groups and dwindling dollars;
- Thanks to the Data Managers and staff, the installation – at last – of the Biotics 4 biodiversity data management software is now complete. It is important to recognize that this story does not end with the completed installation: there will be a learning curve for the data managers and staff, kinks in the system will need to be ironed out, and the usual maintenance and updating of the new system while keeping the old system functioning until the transition is complete.
- The CDC undertook a major data mining project to capture and enter previously unentered data from all federal parks in the Atlantic region, and it is also helping federal land managers – better determine which of their lands are likely to support species-at-risk.
- Staff helped identify potential protected areas in New Brunswick and spent many field days completing botanical surveys in the three Maritime provinces.
- On the ecological communities front, work describing the Maritimes forest communities is wrapping up, and funding to support developing descriptions for non-forested communities (including wetlands) is being sought. I believe that improved community classification and ranking will improve habitat management and contribute to long-term conservation.

Staff, supporters, and board members are to be thanked for making the past year the most successful ever for the CDC. In the coming year, we'll need to maintain the high quality the organization has become known for, and continue to work toward the long-term financial sustainability of the organization.

Treasurer's Report (Sullivan) -

- The 2004/2005 fiscal year ended with revenue exceeding expenditures by ~\$50K
- During the 2005/2006 fiscal year a total of ~\$653K (a 13% increase over the previous year) in revenue was received, 41% as unrestricted contributions and 59% restricted to specific projects
- Approximately 61% of the revenue received was from federal and 28% from provincial government sources, while 11% was from private sources (foundations, corporations, NGO's, service fees, etc.).
- Total expenses were ~\$506K; approximately 73% for salaries and employee benefits, 5% for travel, 12% for contract personnel, 5% for office occupancy and related costs, and 5% for other costs (capital assets, banking, insurance, etc.).
- The 2005/2006 fiscal year ended with revenue exceeding expenditures by ~\$147K). That plus the ~\$126K balance at the beginning of the year (\$50K *unrestricted* and \$76K *for dedicated efforts*) resulted in a balance of ~\$273K. However, ~\$70K of that was for work to be conducted during the 2006/2007 fiscal year, leaving approximately ~\$203K to address cash flow issues and initiate new conservation projects during the 2006/2007 fiscal year.

Founding Partners, Members, and Supporters

The Atlantic CDC gratefully acknowledges support received from the following organizations during the 2005/2006 fiscal year. That support, for staff, projects, and infrastructure, was critical as we worked to accomplish **our mission: to assemble and provide objective and understandable data and expertise about species and ecological communities of conservation concern, including those at risk, and undertake field biological inventories to support decision-making, research, and education.**

Founding Partners Supporting the CDC

- Environment Canada, Canadian Wildlife Service
- Natural Resources Canada, Canadian Forest Service
- New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy
- Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation¹
- Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

¹ The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation, Wildlife Division, also provides office space and related materials for our Data Manager and Assistant Data Manager stationed in Corner Brook. The value of these facilities and related materials as well as the proximity to this major partner, can not be overestimated.

- Parks Canada Agency
- Prince Edward Island Department of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Environment

Additional Members

- Bowater Mersey, Ltd.
- J.D. Irving, Ltd.
- Public Works and Government Services
- Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Labour
- Transport Canada

Other Supporters

- Endangered Species Recovery Fund
- NatureServe, and NatureServe Canada
- New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund
- New Brunswick Wildlife Council
- Shell Canada, Ltd. (Environmental Fund)
- World Wildlife Fund

Program Overviews

Administration

Dr. R.A. Lautenschlager - Executive Director, worked with the Board of Directors, Staff, Partners, and Clients to address needs, identify business opportunities, participate in projects, and ensure project development and delivery. He led an exercise, using three separate predictive approaches, designed to inform federal property custodians about which Species at Risk might be on their properties. Because inventories for Species at Risk in the Maritimes and across Canada are far from complete, one of those approaches involved developing GIS based species specific predictive range maps. Those maps, as well as previous location information, stored in the CDCs database, provided the foundation for reports prepared for: The Canadian Forest Service; Agriculture and Agri-foods Canada; Defense (14-Wing Greenwood and MARLANT), and The Canadian Wildlife Service. Those reports have already led to surveys for species identified as potentials and new records for the same, as well as plans for additional surveys during 2006. In addition, *Dr. Lautenschlager* oversaw the delivery of the Parks Canada Agencies Data Mining exercise, and with help from contractors and CDC staff, prepared the Final Report for Parks. He also contributed to a number of forestry focused information sessions. *Dr. Lautenschlager* was ably assisted by *Cindy Spicer* who attended all Board Meetings presenting financial overviews, and handled all financial related activities.

Cindy Spicer – Administrative Assistant,

- Worked closely with the Executive Director on major administrative issues
- Prepared - payroll, invoices, cheques, T4's, monthly remittance, revenue and expense reports, bank reconciliations, WHSCC reports, receipts for income tax, health plan deductions, release slips, various other forms;
- Worked with the Auditor and entered financial transactions into Simply Accounting;

- Received, reviewed and organized: monthly time sheets, project proposals, project budgets, and employee expenses;
- Attended staff and board meetings and presented revenue and expenses; and
- Responded to calls and e-mails relating to invoices and projects.

Botany

Sean Blaney - Botanist/Assistant Director, helped contract zoologists as they worked on a number of individual projects. In addition, among other things, he also: processed data and specimens (e.g., Ram's Head Lady's-Slipper); completed botany, field focused work and prepared reports for New Brunswick Environmental Trust Fund, and Wildlife Trust Fund, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources, and Kouchibouguac National Park; completed National General Status Assessments for vascular plants for New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island and reviewed and revised S-ranks for flora in those provinces; gathered approximately 1400 rare species site records representing hundreds of element occurrences throughout the Maritimes; was the major contributor to the Maritimes Species at Risk Predictive Range Mapping exercise (providing plant predictions and reviewing animal predictions); and was the major organizer/reviewer of the Parks Canada Data Mining exercise.

Cindy Spicer – Botanist, led botany field training exercises for J.D. Irving in Weymouth, Nova Scotia, and Sussex, New Brunswick; led searches for Southern Twayblade on the Acadia Research Forest; contributed to forest surveys in Prince Edward Island and Pipewort and Pinweed surveys in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island; contributed to protected areas surveys in New Brunswick; pressed and identified plants, prepared field notes and entered data; added missing information to plant collection labels; sent sorted specimens to appropriate herbaria; and organized plant and habitat photographs and printed thumbnails of the same on two CDs.

Community Ecology

Sean Basquill – Ecologist, reformatted Maritime forest community data to follow National standards; began working with VProXP and with a contractor uploading the Maritime data into the National database; used VUnits to produce new Maritime forest community fact-sheets; helped organize a Nova Forest Alliance meeting designed to introduce forest industry to provincial, regional, national, and international forests classifications and applications; worked with a contractor to develop a publication proposal for university presses; began the development of a guide to Acadian Forest Ecosystems; compiled spatial data for community EOs; improved rare species data for all forest community unit descriptions; helped the Nova Scotia DNR (Truro and Kentville) with forest community related requests; regularly contributed to the development of the Canadian National Vegetation Classification; attended the Ecological Society of America's conference; presented during the Canadian National Vegetation Classification workshop and meeting; and prepared for and attended an internal Quebec provincial forest classification meeting. In addition, Sean prepared reports for many of the contributions identified above.

Data Management:

Sackville, NB

Stefen Gerriets – Senior Data Manager,

- Continued with our data improvement project (with help from other staff specialists): plant, bird, and odonate records were improved:
- Participated in the Parks Data Mining Project
- Responded to over 500 data requests; and
- Spent significant amounts of time on Biotics installation and working with Biotics. (The Atlantic CDC is using the first 'multistate' version of Biotics).

Corner Brook, NL

Meherzad Romer - Data Manager, made changes and adjustments to the Piping Plover database for CWS, including modified forms for data entry and created reports summarizing the seasons results by beaches and nests; supervised the Newfoundland and Labrador Parks Data Mining project, and Kirsten Miller who coordinated that exercise in Newfoundland; acquired topographic data for Newfoundland and Labrador, and converted that data into working zones for Biotics 4; acquired new plant data from projects in the Labrador Straits, Doctors Brook, and Squid Cove; worked with NatureServe staff on the annual data exchange; responded to 30 external (outside the NL Wildlife Division) data requests; contracted and supervised *Claudia Hanel*, who was hired to compile a list of plant species for Newfoundland and Labrador, and worked on S-ranks for troublesome records; uploaded and updated bird s-ranks into Biotics 4; contributed to a two day search for *Erioderma pedicellatum* in the Burgeo area of insular Newfoundland; created a stand alone database (taxonomy, general status and heritage ranks, and observation coordinates); created an exotics database for entering species introduced to Newfoundland and Labrador; and worked closely with the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation's Wildlife Division.

Kirsten Miller – Assistant Data Manager, joined CDC staff in October 2005 to help with the Parks Canada Agency Data Mining Project. Kirsten started by compiling lists of species with S-ranks of S1 to S3S4 in and within 5km of Gros Morne and Terra Nova National Parks, and comparing these with information in the CDC's database and rare species lists for these parks. Terra Nova Park was visited in December 2005 and slightly more than 1,000 records were obtained from the parks electronic databsses, hard copy reports, and publicly accessible data (i.e., Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Surveys). Gros Mome National Park was visited in January 2006 and over 2,000 records were obtained from the park's electronic databases, transcribed plant field notes, and publicly accessible data. Data from the parks was organized into Element Occurrence Templates for input into Biotics 4, and prepared overviews of accomplishments for the Final Report presented to the Parks Canada Agency at the end of March 2006.

Zoology

Kate Bredin, our previous Zoologist - completed a contract early during the fiscal year that enabled her to finish several previously unfinished projects and prepare related reports. *Kate* also contributed to the preparation of a limited number of Expert Opinion maps for animal species in the Maritimes. Contract Conservation Scientist, *Denis Doucet*, consulted with Maritime animal experts and developed the majority of species specific predicted range maps

for animal species at risk in the Maritimes. In addition *Denis* also led the CDCs Parks Canada Agency Data Mining exercise in the Maritimes.

Acknowledgements

In addition to our sustaining members and supporters, we thank the following individuals and groups for providing help and data sets during our 2005/2006 fiscal year.

Individuals

Dr. Mark Anderson, The Nature Conservancy
Bruce Bagnell, B & B Botanical
Ken Baldwin, Canadian Forest Service
Gart Bishop, B & B Botanical
Lawrence Benjamin, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Paul Brunelle
Joe Brazil, N&L Dept. of Env. & Conservation, Wildlife Division
Rob Cameron, Nova Scotia Department of the Environment & Labour
Stephen Clayden, New Brunswick Museum
Rosemary Curley, PEI Dept. of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Environment
Andy Cutko, Maine Natural Areas Program/NatureServe Forestry Program
Dr. Don Faber-Langendoen, NatureServe
Dr. Sue Gawler, Gawler Conservation Services
Bill Glen, PEI Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Dr. Jim Goltz
Louise Gratton, Nature Conservancy Canada
Dr. Heinrich Harries, Mount Allison University
John Hutchison, PEI Department of Agriculture & Forestry
Dr. Judy Loo Canadian Forest Service
Art Lynds, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Peter Neily, Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources
Ruth Newell, Acadia University
Dwayne Sabine, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources
Dr. Doug Sobey, University of Ulster
Bruce Matson, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy
Dr. Serguei Ponomarenko, NatureServe Canada
Dr. Jean-Pierre Saucier, Forêt-Quebec
Vince Zelazny, New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources and Energy

Staff working with the following Groups and those groups

Agriculture and Agrifoods Canada
Canadian Wildlife Service
Canadian Forest Service
Connell Herbarium, University of New Brunswick
E.C. Smith Herbarium, Acadia University
Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation (Surveys and Mapping Division)
Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources

Nova Scotia Herpetofaunal Atlas
Parks Canada
Surveys and Mapping Division, N&L Department of Environment and Conservation

Our People

Board of Directors

Doug Bliss (Canadian Wildlife Service) – *Ex officio*
Stephen Flemming (Parks Canada) – *Vice Chair*
Jim Hancock (Newfoundland & Labrador Department of Environment and Conservation)
Kate MacQuarrie (Prince Edward Island) – *Chair*
Kim Mawhinney (Canadian Wildlife Service) – *Ex officio, alternate*
Dave McKinnon (Nova Scotia Dept. of Environment and Labour)
Bruce Pendrel (Canadian Forest Service)
Barry Sabeau (Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources) – *Secretary*
Mike Sullivan (New Brunswick Dept. of Natural Resources & Energy) - *Treasurer*
Margie Whyte (Transport Canada)

CDC Staff

Sean Blaney, Botanist/Assistant Director
Denis Doucet, Contract Conservation Assistant
Stefen Gerriets, Sr. Data Manager
Dr. R.A. Lautenschlager, Executive Director
Kirsten Miller, Contract Conservation Assistant
Meherzad Romer, Data Manager
Cindy Spicer, Botanist/Financial Manager

Contact Information

PO Box 6416, Sackville, NB E4L 1G6
Telephone: (506) 364-2661 (Executive Director)
FAX: (506)364-2656
Email: rlautenschlager@mta.ca (Executive Director)
Courier 146 Main Street, Sackville, NB E4L 1A8
Home page: <http://www.accdc.com>