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EDITORIAL

How ornithological societies can get to work for bird conservation

Philip C Stouffer

Editor-in-Chief, *The Condor: Ornithological Applications*, Cooper Ornithological Society

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Readers of *The Condor: Ornithological Applications* care about birds. For most of us, our relationship with birds goes deeper than just finding an appropriate study organism. We want bird populations and communities to be healthy. We want decisions about land use, energy policy, industrial regulation, and other human enterprise to consider the welfare of birds and other biodiversity. Many of us have considerable expertise that could be applied to these decisions for the benefit of birds. At the same time, our careers are built on establishing objective credibility, and our professional societies have developed around the scientific discipline of ornithology, not around mitigating threats to birds. Is it time we find a better way to apply the collective knowledge and skills within our professional societies to advance conservation without compromising scientific credibility or crossing into pure advocacy?

In this issue of *The Condor: Ornithological Applications*, Jeffrey Walters and colleagues outline how ornithological professional societies can provide information to decision-makers without taking advocacy positions (Walters 2014). The paper defines the roles we might take, providing a solid taxonomy and defining limits for these roles. They also describe the process that might lead from a conservation question through convening appropriate experts to collecting data to a published product. This potential product matches our goal for this journal; I hope we have the opportunity to publish work like Walters et al. describe. Even more importantly, I hope our scholarly activity will be applied in ways that can make a real-world difference for birds. I'm sure most ornithologists feel the same way and will welcome a mechanism to contribute and disseminate their expertise.

Philip C Stouffer, Editor-in-Chief
The Condor: Ornithological Applications

LITERATURE CITED

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