

# Bird Studies Canada

Annual Report/Rapport Annuel 2010 - 2011



BIRD STUDIES  
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX CANADA

## Chair's Report

In my final term as Chair of Bird Studies Canada's (BSC) Board of Directors, I am pleased to report that once again, our organization continued to thrive in the 2010-11 fiscal year. We ended the year with revenues of about \$4 million, with an increase in our carry-forward (accrued position), which now stands at \$250,000. The carry forward minimizes the need to use our line of credit and provides some cushion in the event of unexpected costs or shortfalls in revenue – our goal is to maintain a similar balance in the future.



I would also like to report that BSC membership has been increasingly steadily since 2005 and had surpassed 6900 members and donors by year end. Members, donors, and volunteers are essential to BSC and, as our programs become better known, particularly outside of Ontario, we hope that membership growth and volunteer participation continues. We are tremendously grateful for everyone's support and dedication.

BSC continues to expand its communications programs. Subscriptions to *Latest News*, our bi-weekly online newsletter have increased dramatically this past year; over 40,000 subscribers now receive it and the number is growing, with many going to international addresses. This means, of course, that many people are hearing about BSC's bird news and programs.

BSC has many programs and projects extending from the west coast to the east, some of which are highlighted in this report. In addition to these highlights, in May 2010, Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO), the progenitor of BSC, celebrated its 50th Anniversary and in early 2011, BSC assumed coordination responsibilities for the Newfoundland Murre Conservation Fund through an arrangement with Environment Canada and Wildlife Habitat Canada.

Bird conservation is a global concern and a global mission. BSC, along with Nature Canada, is a member of BirdLife International (BLI), an organization that now includes member organizations from 120 countries. As partners in Canada, BSC and Nature Canada are continually striving to find ways to enhance collaboration and to increase the profile of BirdLife in Canada. To these ends, we were pleased to accept the invitation by BLI to host the next Global Conference of the parties in Ottawa in June 2013. Organizing a week-long conference of 500-plus delegates is a daunting task, but it is an event we look forward to.

This year, there is substantial turnover of our Board, as several of us have come to the end of our second terms. We leave with mixed feelings; we regret that we will no longer be working directly with BSC but we also leave with a tremendous sense of satisfaction and knowledge that BSC is a healthy and growing organization and that we are leaving it in good hands.

## Rapport du Président

En cette dernière année de mon mandat à titre de président du Conseil d'administration d'Études d'Oiseaux Canada (ÉOC), je suis ravi de vous signaler que nous avons de nouveau obtenu d'excellents résultats en 2010-2011. À la fin de l'exercice, nos recettes atteignaient environ 4 M\$, si bien que le report prospectif a aussi augmenté et se chiffre actuellement à 250 000 \$. Ce report nous permet de minimiser l'utilisation de notre marge de crédit et nous offre un certain coussin financier en cas de coûts imprévus ou de manque à gagner. Nous visons à maintenir un solde similaire dans le futur.

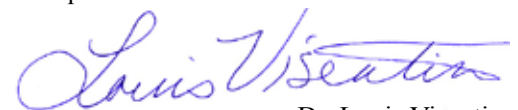
En outre, à la fin de l'exercice, les adhésions à ÉOC, qui se sont accrues de façon constante depuis 2005, dépassaient 6900 membres et donateurs. Nos membres, donateurs et bénévoles nous sont indispensables et, à mesure que nos programmes deviennent mieux connus, particulièrement hors de l'Ontario, nous espérons que leurs nombres ne cesseront de grossir. Nous sommes extrêmement reconnaissants à chacun d'eux de l'appui et du dévouement dont ils nous font preuve.

ÉOC continue également d'étendre son programme de communications. Le nombre d'abonnés à « Latest News », notre bulletin électronique bimensuel, a nettement progressé durant la dernière année : les envois sans cesse croissants totalisent plus de 40 000, dont bon nombre sont destinés à l'étranger. Cela veut bien sûr dire que les nouvelles et les renseignements sur les programmes d'ÉOC sont vastement diffusés.

D'un océan à l'autre, ÉOC met en œuvre de nombreux programmes et projets, dont certains sont examinés dans le présent rapport. J'aimerais souligner également qu'en mai 2010, l'Observatoire d'oiseaux de Long Point (OOLP), le créateur d'ÉOC, a fêté son 50e anniversaire et que depuis le début de 2011, ÉOC se charge de la coordination du Fonds de conservation des guillemots de Terre Neuve et Labrador par suite d'une entente conclue avec Environnement Canada et Habitat faunique Canada.

La conservation de l'avifaune constitue tant une préoccupation qu'une mission à l'échelle planétaire. ÉOC et Nature Canada sont membres de BirdLife International (BLI) qui compte actuellement des organismes membres dans 120 pays. En tant que partenaires canadiens, ÉOC et Nature Canada s'efforcent sans cesse de trouver des moyens d'accroître à la fois sa collaboration avec BLI et la visibilité de l'organisme au pays. Nous avons donc accepté avec joie l'invitation de BLI à animer la prochaine conférence mondiale des pays membres qui se tiendra à Ottawa, en juin 2013. Bien que l'organisation d'une conférence d'une semaine réunissant plus de 500 délégués constitue un défi de taille, nous attendons l'événement avec impatience.

Cette année est marquée par un important roulement au sein du conseil d'administration puisque le second mandat de plusieurs membres se termine. Notre départ éveille en nous des sentiments mitigés : nous regretterons de ne plus travailler directement avec ÉOC, mais nous quittons en sachant que l'organisme est sain et en pleine croissance et que nous le laissons entre bonnes mains.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Louis Visentin".

Dr. Louis Visentin,  
Chair / Président

BSC Board of Directors / Conseil d'administration d'ÉOC

## Highlights from 2010-11

Bird Studies Canada (BSC) is a national charitable organization, dedicated to advancing the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds and their habitats through research, monitoring, “Citizen Science,” and education.

BSC maintains one of Canada’s largest databases on bird populations, and is a primary source of information for researchers and decision-makers. Using data collected through surveys and research studies that typically involve strong collaborative partnerships, our investigative science is essential to the identification of conservation issues and priorities.

This report highlights selected regional and national programs from 2010-11. In addition, BSC is involved in many other initiatives including contributing to the production of the report *Saving our Shared Birds: Partners in Flight Tri-national Vision for Landbird Conservation* – a collaborative effort of more than 15 government and nongovernmental organizations presenting for the first time a comprehensive conservation assessment of landbirds in Canada, Mexico, and the continental United States.

We thank our many members, volunteers, and partners for making 2010-11 another successful and rewarding year. All of our projects and programs depend on the generous support of our donors and sponsors who are acknowledged in this Annual Report.

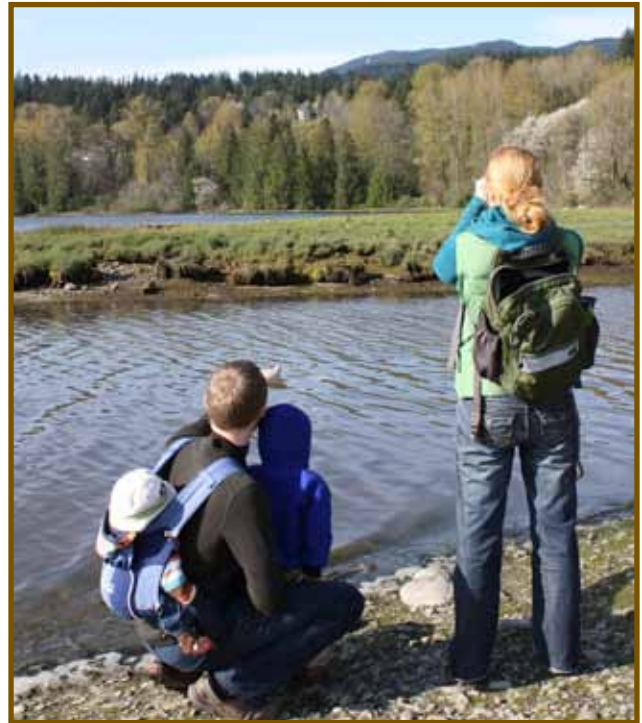
## National Programs

No other animal captures the spirit of the Canadian wilderness better than the Common Loon. The Canadian Lakes Loon Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/ells](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/ells)) began in 1981. Each summer for the past 30 years, volunteers across the country have been documenting the breeding success of loons on their lakes. This information is used to monitor the health of lakes in relation to acid rain, and to assess how boat traffic and lakeshore development affect loons and other wildlife.

For many Canadians, the long winters are brightened by the birds that flock to their feeders. Project FeederWatch ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/pfw](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/pfw)) originated in Ontario in 1976, before being rolled out as a continental program in 1987 in partnership with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. The program not only provides a wealth of important data on winter bird numbers and their distributions, but also serves as a valuable educational tool to the thousands of people who take part across Canada and the United States.



Common Loon Photo: Peter Ferguson



Atlassing with the family Photo: Krista Englund



Carolina Wren Photo: Tom Kingsbury

## British Columbia Programs

Our five in-province program staff, supported by the team at BSC headquarters in Port Rowan, Ontario, coordinated about 2500 volunteers working on 12 projects within British Columbia. Our partnership with BC Nature and Nature Canada on the Important Bird Area Program completed a two-year outreach and awareness-raising program to 45 federal, government, non-governmental, and First Nations groups.

Beached Bird Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bcbeachbird/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bcbeachbird/)) data were used to assess fisheries by-catch and plastics ingestion issues. The Coastal Waterbird Survey (<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bccws/>) became an important component of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and part of a multi-partner collaboration with groups in Washington State. We completed a comprehensive Marine Bird and Mammal Survey report with recommendations for Parks Canada in the Southern Gulf Islands. As the search for a project sponsor continued, the BC-Yukon Nocturnal Owl Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bcowls/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/bcowls/)) completed its 11th season, covering 87 routes.

The BC office received Natural Science and Engineering Research Council of Canada accreditation and secured our first post-doctoral fellowship, investigating hybrid zones related to the BC Breeding Bird Atlas ([www.birdatlas.bc.ca/english/](http://www.birdatlas.bc.ca/english/)). The Atlas entered year four, building important new partnerships with the Sustainable Forestry Initiative and the University of British Columbia's Geography Department, using Atlas data to model bird distribution changes related to climate scenarios.



Atlassing in British Columbia Photo: Eric Demers



Black Oystercatchers Photo: Ralph Hocken

## Prairie Programs

The Prairie and Parkland Marsh Monitoring Program ([www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ppmmp/](http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/ppmmp/)) delivered its second year of data collection in summer 2010. The program operated at 27 sites in Alberta and Saskatchewan and 2360 bird surveys were completed. To date, 901 survey stations have been sampled, with over 4000 point counts having been conducted within 48 wetland sites. 'Remote sampling' using automated recording devices was also tested and showed very promising results.

The Manitoba Breeding Bird Atlas ([www.birdatlas.mb.ca](http://www.birdatlas.mb.ca)) completed its inaugural year of data collection in 2010-11, attracting over 500 volunteers, who logged more than 5000 hours and conducted over 3700 point counts. Two species were confirmed breeding in Manitoba for the first time. Preparations for remote area coverage in 2011-12 began in earnest.

Golden-winged Warbler research in Manitoba continued through the industrial Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada program. Ph.D. student Laurel Moulton designed a nest monitoring and landscape ecology project to complement previous survey work, with support from the Walter Siemens Memorial Fund.



Manitoba Atlassing Photo: Jill Larkin



Yellow-headed Blackbird Photo: Nick Saunders

## Ontario Programs

In the 16th season of the Ontario Nocturnal Owl Survey ([www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/onowls/](http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/onowls/)) 166 routes were surveyed across Central and Northern Ontario. In total, 837 owls of 9 species were recorded; most species either increased or remained stable.

In 2010, 430 Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program ([www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/glmmmp/](http://www.birdscanada.org/volunteer/glmmmp/)) routes were surveyed by 309 participants. This program has been monitoring amphibian and marshbird populations throughout the Great Lakes basin since 1995.

Volunteers were recruited from across the province to assist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's American Woodcock Singing Ground Survey. Ninety Ontario routes were surveyed.

More than 90 volunteers in 13 communities participated in the Ontario SwiftWatch Program ([www.birdscanada.org/research/speciesatrisk/chsw/](http://www.birdscanada.org/research/speciesatrisk/chsw/)). Over 3000 chimneys were surveyed, of which 95 were identified as nesting or roosting sites. In addition, a Chimney Swift "Best Stewardship Practices" document was produced.

A collaborative Bank Swallow research and monitoring program was introduced to begin to understand possible reasons for strong population declines. Surveys along the north shore of Lake Erie documented more than 100,000 nesting burrows – one of the largest densities of Bank Swallows in the world!

The Bird Science and Environmental Education Program was launched. This included field trips, classroom outreach, and enrichment programs in southwestern Ontario. Sixteen schools, 34 classes, and 804 students were engaged.

## Long Point Bird Observatory

As should befit a golden anniversary celebration, 2010 was a banner year for Long Point Bird Observatory. A record fall season saw 17,595 birds banded which, when combined with the spring's tally, brought the year's total to 30,399 individuals of 158 species. Two new species, Green-tailed Towhee and Western Wood-Pewee, were added to the Long Point list, and 72 volunteers from 7 countries logged over 8000 hours collecting migration data.

Extensive renovations to the Old Cut Field Station were completed with the generous assistance of a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation; Old Cut was ready for visitors at the beginning of the spring field season.

The 50th anniversary celebrations on the May 15-16 weekend brought together over 400 members, supporters, and friends to celebrate the occasion. Two special publications – the *Long Point Bird Observatory and Bird Studies Canada 50th Anniversary Report* by Jon McCracken and *A Birding Guide to the Long Point Area* by Ron Ridout – were both launched at the gala event. Also in 2010, two graduate students (Stu Mackenzie and Beth Thurber) completed their Master's theses on bird migration at Long Point.



Marsh monitoring Photo: Claire Sanders



Checking Bank Swallow nests Photo: Myles Falconer



LPBO Interpretive Program Photo: David Szmyr

## Québec Programs

In total, 80 routes were surveyed for the Québec Marsh Monitoring Program ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qcmmp/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qcmmp/)) in 2010, with focal species being recorded on 74% of these, and species at risk on 20%.

During the third season of the Québec Nocturnal Owl Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qchiboux/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qchiboux/)), 104 routes were surveyed, representing 1009 stations. Participants recorded 453 owls of 6 species.

Staff and volunteers surveyed 50 beaches for the Québec Beached Bird Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qcbeachbird/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qcbeachbird/)), reporting 49 dead birds and 1 live oiled Herring Gull. Northern Gannets accounted for 20% of the carcasses recorded in 2010, and 20% of these were by-catch victims.

The second Québec Breeding Bird Atlas ([www.atlas-oiseaux.qc.ca/](http://www.atlas-oiseaux.qc.ca/)) was launched in 2010. BSC played a key role in developing mapping tools, data sheets, data entry and management capacity, and a fully bilingual website. During the first field season, 1191 people registered to participate. Atlassers contributed over 15,600 hours, submitted 77,800 individual bird records for 255 species, and completed 4576 point counts. Highlights included the first confirmed nesting of Trumpeter Swan and Bohemian Waxwing, and the province's first recorded nesting of the nationally endangered Loggerhead Shrike in 15 years.

## Atlantic Canada Programs

2010 marked the 10th year of the Atlantic Canada Nocturnal Owl Survey ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/atowls/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/atowls/)) in New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. Long-time owl surveyors can be spotted in their “giving a hoot for 10 years” t-shirts. In total, 724 owls were detected in the region – the highest number to date.

It was the last year of data collection for the Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas. Volunteers surpassed all pre-established targets, dedicating 49,000 hours to the project and returning 263,000 records.

International partnerships for species at risk conservation were strengthened. In the Dominican Republic, Bird Studies Canada joined delegates from seven other countries to plan the implementation of *A Conservation Action Plan for Bicknell's Thrush*, released in July 2010. In addition, BSC staff and volunteers surveyed 66 High Elevation Landbird Program ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/achelp/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/achelp/)) survey routes for Bicknell's Thrush in New Brunswick and Cape Breton Island. Surveys were also conducted in industrial forests.

In The Bahamas, staff participated in the 2011 International Piping, Snowy and Wilson's Plover Winter Census in collaboration with Bahamas National Trust, U.S. Geological Survey, and other partners. Piping Plover beaches in Nova Scotia were busy as well – 75 volunteers dedicated over 1000 hours to monitoring nest success and habitat protection as part of the Nova Scotia Piping Plover Conservation Program ([www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/nspllover/](http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/nspllover/)).



Beached Bird Surveys Photo: Janet Kenefick



Loggerhead Shrike Photo: Nick Saunders



Maritime Atlassing Photo: Kyle Wellband



Piping Plovers Photo: Ron Ridout

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## Legacy Donations

In 2010-11, Bird Studies Canada received legacy donations from the estates of the following individuals: Dr. Bruce Charles (Toronto, ON); Mr. Curtis H. Chipman (Wolfville, NS).

BSC is extremely grateful to everyone who has made, or who has committed to making, a gift to safeguard our birds and environment for future generations. Gifts to BSC's endowed funds will support our research and conservation work in perpetuity.

## Memorial Donations

In 2010-11, Bird Studies Canada received memorial donations honouring the following individuals: Mr. David T.C. Ambridge (Cambridge, ON); Dr. Richard Brown (Dartmouth, NS); Mr. Alex Chanyi (Port Rowan, ON); Dr. Kenneth Eade (Ottawa, ON); Prof. Terrell Gardner (Toronto, ON); Mr. Warren Hughes (Toronto, ON); Mr. Bud Massel (Port Rowan, ON); Mrs. Gladys Oliver (Simcoe, ON); Mrs. Sheila J. Peck (Oakville, ON); Mrs. Shirley Post (Long Point, ON); Dr. Robert C. Ritchie (Thorold, ON); Mr. Grant Snyder (St. Jacobs, ON); Mrs. Betty Szilagyi (Walsingham, ON); Mr. Charlie Thomas (BC); Mr. William Wasserfall (Holland Centre, ON).

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\* Deceased

We also thank the 10,548  
donors who gave less than  
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## Condensed Statement of Financial Position

Year ending 31 March

	2011	2010
<b>Revenue</b>		
Fees	222,209	213,509
Donations	190,927	162,204
Grants and projects	3,339,196	2,982,237
Fundraising	289,571	309,550
Investment income	213,188	135,843
Other	88,917	90,817
	<u>4,334,008</u>	<u>3,894,160</u>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Administration	320,289	194,933
Amortization of capital assets	192,367	182,130
Conservation and Research		
LPBO	132,865	309,942
LPWWRP programs	619,827	752,053
Regional programs	1,805,778	1,632,537
National and international programs	608,420	658,608
Fundraising and membership development	236,205	247,382
Membership services	208,042	211,585
Grants	21,170	21,000
Other	3,029	2,005
	<u>4,147,992</u>	<u>4,212,175</u>

### Excess (deficiency) of revenue over expenses

Operating Fund	119,504	(225,974)
Endowment Fund	225,684	132,941
Capital Fund	(183,764)	(179,629)
Baillie Fund	(21,027)	(21,113)
Tarry Fund	(27,382)	(24,240)
Murre Fund	83,001	0
Total	196,016	(318,015)
Unrealized Gain (Loss)-Investments (Endowment)	142,899	568,450
Member's equity, beginning	5,981,240	5,730,805
Member's equity, ending	<u>6,320,155*</u>	<u>5,981,240*</u>

### \* Member's Equity consists of:

Operating Fund	250,472	183,624
Endowment Fund - General	730,053	730,103
- LPBO	571,725	574,621
- Tarry Fund	1,405,284	1,333,788
- LPWWRP	507,472	505,424
- Comp. Income	741,990	599,091
Capital Fund	3,956,524	3,743,027
Baillie Fund	1,994,192	2,014,611
Tarry Fund (operating)	32,001	35,061
Murre Fund	3,965	4,917
	83,001	0
	<u>6,320,155</u>	<u>5,981,240</u>

## Staff

Sue Abbott (Nova Scotia Piping Plover Conservation Program Coordinator); Jody Allair (Biologist and Science Educator); Ryan Archer (Aquatic Survey Program Coordinator – until Mar 2011); Christian Artuso (Manitoba Projects Manager); Debbie Badzinski (Ontario Program Manager); Shannon Badzinski, Ph.D. (Scientist, LPW – until Sep 2010); Tracy Barber (Data Entry Technician); Liza Barney (Science Educator); Ted Barney (Biologist, LPW); Karen Barry (BC Projects Officer); Mike Burrell (Migration Monitoring Assistant Field Coordinator, until Jan 2011); Kate Bredin (Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator); Katherine Brewster (Prairie Region Outreach and Volunteer Coordinator, until Mar 2011); Robert

Butler, Ph.D. (BC Program Scientist); Greg Campbell (Atlantic Region Project Biologist); Richard Cannings (Senior Projects Officer); Bonnie Chartier (Manitoba Breeding Bird Atlas Assistant Coordinator); John Conkin (Prairie and Parkland MMP Assistant Manager); Jim Cook (Research Technician, LPW, until Nov 2010); Andrew Coughlan (Quebec Program Manager); Andrew Couturier (Senior Analyst-Landscape Ecology and Conservation); Tara Crewe (Bird Conservation Biologist); Peter Davidson (BC Program Manager); Christopher Di Corrado (BC Breeding Bird Atlas Coordinator); Kristine Dobney (Membership Services and Accounting Facilitator); Kiel Drake, Ph.D. (Prairie Region Marsh Monitoring Program

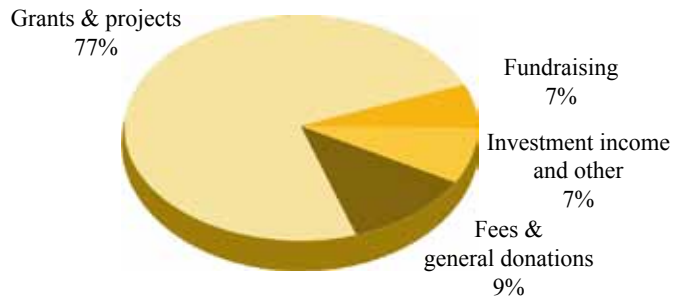
Manager); Myles Falconer (Ontario Region Project Biologist); George Finney, Ph.D. (President); Audrey Heagy (Bird Conservation Planning Biologist); Cesar Hernandez (Data Manager/Programmer); Kathy Jones (Ontario Programs Volunteer Coordinator); Rosie Kirton (Membership Database Manager); Denis Lepage, Ph.D. (Senior Scientist – National Data Center); Stu Mackenzie, (Landbird Program Coordinator, from Mar 2011); (Sandra Marquez (Conservation GIS Analyst); Jon McCracken (Director of National Programs); Janet Moore (IBA Technical Coordinator); Scott Petrie, Ph.D. (Executive Director, LPW); Cindy Pilkington (Member Services Assistant); Kristyn Richardson (Ontario Programs Stewardship Intern – from Sep

## Condensed Balance Sheet

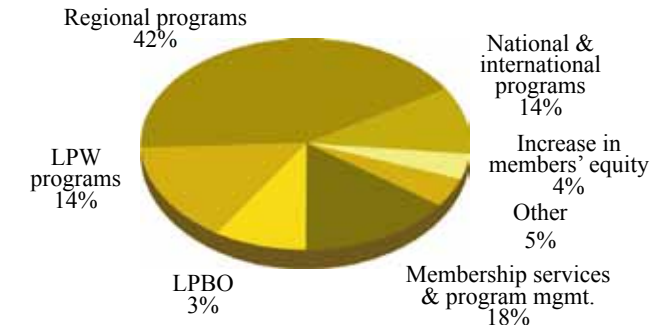
Year ending 31 March

	2011	2010
<b>Assets</b>		
Current assets	1,385,090	1,046,065
Investments	3,955,641	3,742,752
Capital assets	1,951,765	2,000,622
	<u>7,292,496</u>	<u>6,789,439</u>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>		
Current liabilities	972,341	806,934
Long term debt	0	1,265
Fund balances:		
Invested capital assets	1,851,765	1,900,622
Externally restricted	887,048	835,904
Internally restricted	3,326,905	3,286,653
Unrestricted	254,437	(41,939)
	<u>7,292,496</u>	<u>6,789,439</u>

### Revenue Source



### Use of Funds



Copies of BSC's audited financial statements can be downloaded from our website at: <http://www.birdscanada.org/download/2010-11audit.pdf> or are available on request.

2010); Anne Marie Ridout (Accounting and Facilities Administrator); Ron Ridout (Technical Support & Design Specialist); Barbara Robinson (Acting Communications and Public Affairs Manager – from Jan 2010); Mike Schummer, Ph.D. (Long Point Waterfowl Scientist – from Jan 2011);

Elaine Secord (Communications and Public Affairs Manager); Becky Stewart (Atlantic Canada Program Manager – from Sep 2010); Doug Tozer, Ph.D. (Aquatic Surveys Biologist – from Mar 2011); Elisabeth van Stam (Ontario Region Project Biologist); Liane Varga (Chief Financial

Officer); Becky Whittam (Atlantic Canada Program Manager – until Sep 2010); Kerrie Wilcox (Project FeederWatch Coordinator/ Exec Assistant); Ross Wood (Assistant Landbird Programs Coordinator); John Woodcock (Thunder Cape Bird Observatory Coordinator).

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bcprograms@birdscanada.org

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cartuso@birdscanada.org

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dbadzinski@birdscanada.org

Atlantic Canada Program Office  
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