

WETLANDS OF NEW PROVIDENCE

- WHEREAS the wetland area on the island of New Providence, Bahamas, known as Wilson and Harrold Pond is important for wading and other birds, particularly in the migratory season; and
- WHEREAS New Providence has the highest population and tourist density of all The Bahama Islands and this island has few remaining wetland areas of such importance; and
- WHEREAS this area if left undisturbed would be important for ecotourism and environmental education; and
- WHEREAS Wilson Pond is under increasing pressure from agricultural activity and the clearing of the buffer zone on the south side of the pond; and
- WHEREAS the ridge and buffer zone to the north of Harrold Pond has been increasingly disturbed recently by the excavation of the hill and the spreading of fill towards the pond
- THE SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY
- AGREES that the area of Wilson and Harrold Ponds on the island of New Providence represents an important habitat for migratory and resident avian species and has potential as a significant ecotourism site and for environmental education,
- RECOMMENDS that the Government of the Bahamas set aside the area with a buffer zone under the protection of the Bahamas National Trust as a reserve area to be left in its natural state.

THANK YOU RESOLUTION FOR ARUBA

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology wishes to express its deepest appreciation to the Aruban Foundation for Nature and Parks (FANAPA) and the members of the local organizing committee for their assistance with this our tenth annual meeting. SCO gratefully acknowledges the dedication of these workers in planning and hosting this meeting. A special note of thanks to the local committee chair, Mr. Roeland de Kort, who worked to make our visit to Aruba a memorable occasion.

SCO was heartened by the gracious hospitality extended to us by the Holiday Inn, Aruba. We wish to thank the entire staff of the Holiday Inn, especially the Food and Beverage Manager and his staff for the sumptuous meals which were provided.

We are also grateful to the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Tourism, Government of Aruba, the Coastal Aruba Refining Com-

pany; De Palm Tours, Aruba; Amsterdam Manor Beach Resort, Aruba; Tropical Bottling Company of Aruba, other local organizations and the Aruban people for their support and interest in the SCO.

We also thank our international supporters, the International Institute of Tropical Forestry, USDA Forest Service, and the Office of International Affairs, USDI Fish and Wildlife Service for their generous contributions.

SCO hopes to assist Aruba in their future conservation efforts especially in the development of the Parke Nacional Arikok and Bubali sanctuary.

We hope our association with Aruba will be long and fruitful.

RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF WEST INDIAN WHISTLING DUCKS IN JAMAICA

- WHEREAS The Society of Caribbean Ornithology notes that West Indian Whistling Ducks *Dendrocygna arborea* have been internationally recognized as in need of conservation throughout their range, including Jamaica
- and WHEREAS there are no scientific data on the status and distribution of West Indian Whistling Ducks or other resident or migratory ducks in Jamaica
- and WHEREAS there is no habitat protection for any species of ducks in Jamaica
- and WHEREAS no management plans have been developed or implemented for ducks in Jamaica
- and WHEREAS the Society has been informed that there is interest in Jamaica in declaring an open season to hunt migratory ducks
- and WHEREAS there is no information about the likely impacts of hunting of migratory ducks on resident ducks (including West Indian Whistling Ducks, Masked Ducks *Oxyura dominica* and Ruddy Ducks *Oxyura jamaicensis*)

RESOLUTIONS (CONTINUED)

- and WHEREAS West Indian Whistling Ducks in Jamaica are often found in the same places as game species (especially Blue-winged Teal *Anas discors*)
- and WHEREAS ducks and their habitats have considerable potential value for ecotourism, but duck hunting and ecotourism cannot coexist in the same places at the same times
- Be it resolved that the Society for Caribbean Ornithology
- CONGRATULATES the Government of Jamaica on its decision not to declare an open season for migratory ducks in 1997
- and URGES the Government of Jamaica to maintain its present position and not to support proposals for migratory duck hunting until measures to ensure the future of Jamaican populations of ducks, specially West Indian Whistling Ducks, (including a scientific assessment of the status and distribution of ducks, effective habitat protection, zoning of areas for hunting and ecotourism, and a management plan for ducks and their habitats) have been put in place.

RESOLUTION ON THE CONSERVATION OF THE COCKPIT COUNTRY, JAMAICA

ADOPTED BY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY OF CARIBBEAN ORNITHOLOGY ON 4 AUGUST 1997

- WHEREAS the biodiversity of the Cockpit Country of Jamaica is of national and international importance
- and WHEREAS the Cockpit Country provides habitat for all Jamaica's endemic bird species (including the Yellow-billed Parrot *Amazona collaria*, Black-billed Parrot *Amazona agilis*, Jamaican Blackbird *Nesopsar nigerrimus*, and Ring-tailed Pigeon *Columba caribea*) and many endemic sub-species of birds (including the nationally endangered Golden Swallow *Tachycineta euchrysea euchrysea* and Plain Pigeon *Columba inornata exigua*) as well as more than 100 endemic species of plants, reptiles and amphibians, many of which are restricted to the area,
- and WHEREAS the Cockpit Country is of hydrological importance for western Jamaica,
- and WHEREAS the Cockpit Country has great potential for ecotourism and heritage tourism,
- and WHEREAS the forests of the Cockpit Country are being destroyed at an increasingly rapid rate by timber extraction, and clearance of land for farming, and the wildlife is being negatively affected by hunting,
- and WHEREAS mining of bauxite and limestone has been proposed in the Cockpit Country,
- Be it RESOLVED that the Society for Caribbean Ornithology
- ENCOURAGES the Government of Jamaica to include the Cockpit Country in the national system of protected areas and to develop and implement a plan for sustainable management as soon as possible.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ON THE ENDANGERED BERMUDA PETREL BY PROPOSED OIL EXPLORATION ON THE ATLANTIC CONTINENTAL SHELF OF THE UNITED STATES

Whereas the Bermuda Petrel, *Pterodroma cahow*, which breeds only on the Castle Harbour islands of Bermuda and ranges out into the Atlantic Ocean is listed as an endangered species by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service and in *Endangered Birds of the World, The ICBP Bird Red Data Book*. When rediscovered in 1951, after having been presumed extinct for three hundred years, the population was estimated to number only eighteen nesting pairs and less than fifty birds, but as a result of an intensive management and restoration plan administered by the Bermuda Government, the population has gradually increased to fifty-two breeding pairs and an estimated one hundred eighty individuals in 1997.

Whereas the feeding range and migratory movements of this oceanic bird were previously unknown, recent collaborative efforts with ornithological colleagues in the United States have yielded documented sight records and one irrefutable photograph in the immediate vicinity of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina.

Whereas this is the only location other than near the Bermuda nesting grounds where these petrels have been recorded, and given the small population numbers and the great distance (540 nautical miles) from Bermuda this implies a non-random concentration of the species in that area, primarily where offshore oil/gas exploration is proposed.

Whereas the Cape Hatteras area is acknowledged to be an area of exceptionally rich feeding grounds vital to numerous other species of seabirds, we are concerned that the proposed oil exploration on the Outer Continental Shelf of North Carolina would endanger the Bermuda Petrel as well as a number of other critically endangered species that frequent the area.

Whereas oil spillages or accidents may occur as a consequence of drilling and seabirds are exceptionally vulnerable to oil contaminants.

RESOLUTIONS (CONTINUED)

Whereas petrels and related night-flying species are known to be attracted to lights or gas flares in periods of fog or rain, we are concerned about the high probability of mortality due to collision with drilling equipment.

We are therefore convinced that any oil exploration in the Cape Hatteras area would pose a significant threat to the survival of the

Bermuda Petrel.

The Society of Caribbean Ornithology urges the Government of North Carolina to consider this resolution when determining policy regarding off shore drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf of North Carolina.

1998 ANNUAL SCO MEETING IN GUADELOUPE

The eleventh annual meeting of the Society of Caribbean Ornithology will be held in the Touring Hotel, Ft. Royal, in Guadeloupe during 24–29 July 1998. The meeting, sponsored in part by the National Park of Guadeloupe, will have a full program of activities. The meeting will have two major workshops: 1. Setting avian conservation priorities for the Caribbean and the SCO, and 2. Hunting issues and problems hindering effective sustainable harvest of gamebirds in the Caribbean. In addition, there will be smaller workshops on Caribbean wetlands conservation (RAMSAR) and the status of threatened and endangered Caribbean birds (BirdLife International). In addition, the event will include meetings of the SCO's two active working groups: West Indian Whistling-Ducks and Caribbean Seabirds. A keynote address and a diversity of technical presentations will add to the meeting, as well as a one-day field trip. The tentative meeting schedule is provided below:

THURSDAY, 23 July 1998 — SCO Executive Meeting; meeting participants arrive; meeting registration (continued on Friday morning)

FRIDAY, 24 July

- Morning — Opening ceremony, welcome by local dignitaries, keynote address by Dr. Jean Luis Martin
- Afternoon — Technical session, with French Antilles presentation
- Evening — Reception/cocktail (arranged by Local Committee and hotel)

SATURDAY, 25 July

- Morning — Hunting Workshop (Facilitator, Dr. Herbert Raffaele)
- Afternoon — Hunting Workshop, continued
- Evening — Meeting of SCO Island Representatives and SCO Executive Board

SUNDAY, 26 July

- All day — Field trips: two trips — (1) a montane trip to the endemic Guadeloupe Woodpecker and forest birds; and (2) wetlands trip to see birds in mangrove and *Pterocarpus* habitats
- Evening — Meeting of West Indian Whistling-Duck Working Group

MONDAY, 27 July

- Morning — Caribbean and SCO Conservation Priorities Workshop, Part I (Facilitator, Ms. Marlene Walker)
- Afternoon — Caribbean and SCO Conservation Priorities Workshop, Part I, continued
- Late afternoon (4:00 PM) — SCO General Meeting
- Evening — Meeting of Caribbean Seabird Working Group

TUESDAY, 28 July

- Morning — Priorities Workshop, Part II
- Afternoon — Workshop on Caribbean wetlands conducted by RAMSAR
- Evening — Workshop to evaluate status of threatened and endangered birds in the Caribbean, by BirdLife International (Cambridge, UK, David Wege)

WEDNESDAY, 29 July

- Morning — Technical session
- Afternoon — Technical session and time to complete unfinished workshop or working group business
- Late afternoon and early evening — Silent auction
- Evening — SCO banquet at Touring Hotel

THURSDAY, 30 July — Island Representatives depart