THE BRODIE CLUB

ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM OF ZOOLOGY

THE 976th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB

The 976th meeting of The Brodie Club was held on May 20, 2003 in Room 432 of the Ramsay Wright Zoological Laboratories at the University of Toronto.

Chairman: Michael Boyer
Secretary: Oliver Bertin
Attendance: 11 members and three guests
David Tomlinson, guest of Harry Lumsden
Kevin Seymour, guest of Jock McAndrews
Peggy Haist, guest of Bertin

The minutes of the 975th meeting were approved as written.

Helen and Aarne Juhola were welcomed as new members of The Brodie Club.

Lumsden nominated David Tomlinson as a new member. He has attended the required number of meetings. His biography is attached.

John Speakman invited members to his cottage on June 15, 2003 for the summer field day, an invitation that was approved by members after considerable discussion. Speakman suggested avid birders meet at Carden Plain at 8 am for a tour of the plain and local sewage lagoons before returning to his cottage for BYO picnic lunch or tea. Other members can use his cottage as a base for shorter trips. The cottage is off Hwy 48 between Sutton and Beaverton, and a 30-minute drive from the Cameron Ranch on the Carden Plain. Shore birds can be seen at a nearby sewage lagoons and a peat-filled valley is nearby. A map and directions are attached.

SPEECH:

The speaker was long-time member Harry Lumsden, who visited Russia for the third time last summer.

TRAVELS IN EASTERN RUSSIA

The only way to Magadan is through Anchorage. The flight takes one over the spectacular Alaska coast range with its folded sedimentary rocks and glaciers. On reaching Kamchatka, one flies over very different kinds of mountains formed by volcanism. One comes across the Sea of Okhotsk to reach Magadan. On arrival at

Magadan, we saw activity along the shore. The Caplin were still spawning but most of the run was over. We were given enough for a meal but I found them rather dull.

We made one trip from Magadan to a mountain with an unusually rich flora. It is the type locality for a number of species probably because it was one of the first places to be intensively collected.

Pedicularis capitata has a circumpolar distribution and was quite common wherever we went in Russia. *Pulsatilla magadanense* was photographed in the type locality. It is almost as attractive in seed as in flower. It is one of the earliest plants to come into flower, like our prairie crocus. *Geum pucillum* is locally distributed north of Magadan. *Phyllodoce coerulea*: This mountain heather has a circumpolar distribution, occurring as far south as Gaspe and Scotland, where it is a relic of the glacial epochs. *Primula cunifolia* is found in the North Pacific region including the Aleutians. *Cassiope lycopodioides* is another North Pacific species including Japan and Sakhalin. *Rhododendron kamtschaticum* is widely distributed in eastern Asia and Alaska. *Rhododendron aureum* is common in the Magadan area where it grows no more than 30 to 50 cm high. I grow it in Aurora where it flowers over one meter high.

From Magadan, we went by road about three hours west to the Magadanski reserve and the Chomika River to look for Stellar's Sea Eagles.

Within the reserve, there was an interesting flora. *Clematis ochotensis* is normally blue. Some years ago, I got seed of this species. When one of the seedling's flowered, it was pink. I was told it could not be *ochotensis*. Later, Grey-Wilson's monograph was published and he records that there is a red form, *var. rubicunda*. It must be rare because the botanists at Magadan had not seen this form.

Fritillaria camschatcensis was abundant near the HQ of the Reserve and on the river banks. It is a most unusual blackish-purple colour. It occurs from Vladivostok through the Japanese Islands, the Kuriles, Kamchatka and through southern Alaska, BC, as far south as Oregon.

The Stellar's Sea Eagle is one of the largest eagles in the world with a wingspan of 2.5 m (8 ft). In Kamchatka, they estimate about 4,000 birds with about 1,000 nesting pairs. They range on both coasts of Kamchatka and around the coast of the Sea of Okhotsk. A few pairs nest as far south as northern Sakhalin. In the Magadanski Reserve, about four hours driving west of Magadan on the Chomika River, there is a nesting population of Stellar's Sea Eagles. On a four-hour trip on the river on a fast boat, we saw seven eagles and four nests.

Stellar's Sea Eagles return to their nesting grounds in Kamchatka very early in the spring when almost everything is still frozen. They feed on seal afterbirth and dead pups on the ice. Where there is a winter fishery through the ice, the fishermen discard the species they do not want on the ice. When they move to a new hole, the eagles descend and eat the discarded fish. The salmon run had not yet started and we did not see eagles fishing. There were around 15 Harbour Seals resting on a shoal also waiting for the salmon run. The eagles also parasitize salmon netting operations, fishing like an osprey.

Losses of eaglets are caused by bears which climb to the cliff nests. When they cannot reach the nest they scavenge round the base of the tree or cliff beneath the nest. There are nearly always bear signs around nest sites.

Stellar's Sea Eagles which winter in Hokkaido are not doing well. The Japanese have overfished the salmon runs and there is not enough fish for the eagles. They have

moved inland to scavenge on the remains of Sika Deer shot by Japanese hunters. The hunters take only the haunches and the best parts. The eagles eat what is left and are becoming poisoned with lead.

We wanted to collect plants around Irkutsk and Lake Baikal in Central Siberia. It is the deepest lake in the world at 1,637 m (5,370 ft). It is about 300 km long and is estimated to be about 20 million years old. This puts its formation into the Miocene epoch of the Tertiary period. It is reputed to have 2,630 species of fish, 2/3 of which are endemic. There are seals related to the oceanic Harbour Seal *(Poca baikalensis)* present in the lake. It is a cold lake shrouded in fog most of the time we were there. The locals catch commercially a fish they prize highly which they call Omul. We were served this fish many times and could buy smoked Omul on the roadside. It turned out to be a whitefish (*Coregonus autumnalis*), a species endemic to Lake Baikal.

We stayed in the city of Irkutsk and then caught the Trans-Siberian Railway to a village south of Lake Baikal called Tankhoy. We had been told that we could reach the alpine zone in the mountains near that place. We hired a local trapper as a guide and climbed the mountain through, first, birch forest then mixed with conifers and finally into spruce. We found that there was no alpine zone at the summit but only alpine meadows. The area was nevertheless interesting botanically.

Aconitum escelsum. Most of this genus are blue or yellow. In bright sunlight, photos of blue often turn out pink. That is not the case here. This Monkshood really is pink. *Trollius asiaticus*, more orange than the yellow European one, was common. *Aquilegia chichinii* is apparently not in cultivation. The flowers are of exceptional size for the genus. I was told it was an *Aquilegia*. The flower does not look like an *Aquilegia* but the foliage does. One plant survived the journey and is growing in my garden now. At low elevation, near the hotel, *Orchid maculata* grew in disturbed sites. Near Irkutsk, the shrub *Spyrea media* was common. *Anemone sylvestris* ranges from Europe across Asia. *Anemone dicotoma* looks particularly attractive in bud. *Mulgedium sibiricum* was one of the most colourful *(Lactuca tatarica syn).* A common butterfly was concentrating on *Centaurea uniflora.*

Kamchatka with a population of about 435,000 is probably the most active volcanic area in the world with over 300 volcanoes. However, only 29 are active now. They lie about 30 km apart along the length of the peninsula. Much of the volcanism is relatively recent. In the late Tertiary in Pliocene times, submarine explosions formed an archipelago of islands similar to the Kurile Island chain. Subsequent uplift formed the peninsula joining it to the mainland in Chukotka. During the glacial epoch, the summits of the higher volcanoes formed ice caps and their glaciers even reached the sea. The extremely rugged nature of the terrain was partially caused by sinking of blocks of basalt into chasms formed by soft new larva. This created mountain ridges separated by vast rift valleys.

The sea off south-eastern Kamchatka is extremely deep and is an extension of the Kurile Trench 6,000 to 9,000 m deep (20,000-29,500 feet). The Eurasian Plate is being thrust over the floor of the Pacific Plate forming a steep scarp which aligns with the western boundary of the Kurile Trench. At the same time, the Pacific oceanic plate is sinking and pushing under Kamchatka and the Kurile Island arc at a rate of several centimeters a year.

Julia, Director of Forestry for southern Kamchatka, took us on one of her inspection trips to the Valley of the Geysers. This extraordinary volcanic area was known to the native Itelmans, who did not reveal their secret until 1941. An Itelman guide took Tatiana Ustinova up the Shumanaya River to the valley. The Kamchatka provincial government set up a tourist facility there with a Swiss-type chalet and a helicopter pad. For $500, one can fly from Petropavlovsk, wander along the boardwalks to view the geysers, have an excellent meal at the chalet and return.

It seems to be a very well run "national park," comparable to the best we have. One may not leave the boardwalks which provide access to all the best views. Along the walls of the steep valley, there are fumeroles and geysers and at the bottom of the valley, an ice-cold stream fed by melting snow. Some geysers spurt continuously, while others at intervals of 10 minutes to several hours. The water is boiling and at some geysers at their peak are almost 15 m (45 ft) high. There are pools of boiling grey or red mud and many mineral deposits of brilliant colour.

I saw bear tracks in the valley and one White Wagtail on the creek. This however is so contaminated with toxic minerals that it contained no fish and I suspect no insects. In some of the hot pools, there were growths of algae of varying colours.

Few of the gases emitted by these geysers are toxic but another volcanic area produces such concentrations of hydrogen sulphide and carbonic acid that much wildlife is killed. If the wind changes, bears, foxes and many species of birds may be overcome and die. In the large marsh adjacent to the toxic area, I saw Whooper Swans and large numbers of mallard and teal. We visited the erupting Karymsky volcano and landed at its base. I timed the emissions of ash gas and steam at once every two to three minutes. It is growing in height and was 1,486 m (4,530 ft) in 2001. It is relatively young and is estimated to be about 6,100 years old. It had 23 major eruptions in the 1900s, the latest in 1996. It is one of the most active volcanoes in Kamchatka. It is relatively quiescent now. The present emissions are not coming from the old crater but from a new one forming on the side.

Near Karymsky, there is a crater of an extinct volcano filled with sulphuric and hydrochloric acid. The temperature of the liquid in this caldera is up to 42C and it would dissolve an iron bar in a few hours.

The Forestry Department maintains volcanic hot baths at a number of locations, all well built and maintained. We twice finished a day's travelling with a dip.

We visited another volcano near Petropavlovsk. In 2000, there were no emissions, but we were told that the basaltic plug in the crater was pushing upwards. In 2002, fumeroles were active in the crater and some steam and dust were being expelled. The last big eruption was in 1991. The Avacha volcano erupted five times in the 1900s.

A road, passable only in mid- to late summer, is the main access to the mountain. It is the main drainage course for the snow pack. Avacha receives about three meters per year of snow. When it melts under the normal break-up influences in addition to the volcanic heat from the mountain, it roars down, sweeping everything in its path.

We drove up this dried out drainage bed and encountered two snow drifts. We got stuck in one. After collecting some stones and digging, we got out. The vehicle was a Russian-made four-wheel drive something like a Land Rover. They say in Russia that they build rotten roads but good vehicles.

In the birch forest at the foot of the mountain, we found some interesting plants. *Cypripedium guttatum* is a species with a very wide distribution from Europe to Japan, Kamchatka through Alaska as far as British Columbia. The closely related *Cypripedium yatabeanum* has a narrow range from the Japanese island of Honshu and Hokkaido to the Kuriles and Kamchatka. *Astrocodon kruhsceanus,* a survivor in the Japanese Kamchatka glacial refugium, is related to the bellflowers, a particularly beautiful plant. *Castallega pallida*, found mostly in the alpine regions of Kamchatka but ranging across Asia to Europe, replaced in Alaska by a *var septentionalis*, probably semi-parasitic. *Papaver nudicaule* is very variable across its wide range. *Penstemon fruitescens:* The only *Penstemon* found in Asia. There are about 250 species in North America. Growing at Avacha in crumbling black lava soil. ph 6.4. *Gentiana algida* is a high alpine species ranging from the Altai Mountains and Kashmir, east to Japan and Alaska through the Rockies to Montana. *Trillium camtschaticum* is found in birch and mixed forests through Kamchatka, the Kuriles, Hokkaido and the adjacent mainland. The flower in the slide is from my garden.

The Brown Bear of Asia is the same species as the Grizzly of North America. It is widely distributed in the Russian far east but unlike the North American form has not developed a barrenland population. As in North America, it varies greatly in size depending on the availability of salmon. The pelts I saw at Siemchan on the Kolyma River were no bigger than a small to medium Black Bear in Ontario. The Kolyma flows into the Arctic Ocean and does not have a salmon run like the Kamchatka rivers.

The mass given by Earnest P. Walker in his *Mammals of the World* for old-world Grizzlies is 150 to 250 kg (330-550 lbs). In North America, Grizzlies may weigh up to 360 kg (800 lbs) and Alaska Brown Bears up to 780 kg (1,719 lbs). The track photographed in Kamchatka measured about 27 by 31.5 cm (10.6 by 12.4 in).

I thought that Brown Bears were about the commonest large mammal in eastern Russia. I saw tracks or droppings at virtually all rural localities visited. The droppings consisted of sedges and grasses which were not chewed up much and did not have the consistency of that of a ruminant. Bears must consume very large quantities of this kind of forage to satisfy their nutritional needs. When and where berries are available *(Lonicera edule),* the bears probably fill themselves up with this more nutritious food.

In Kamchatka, where the largest of the Russian bears are found, they feed on salmon, a few of which start running in June and continue until freeze-up. The salmon-feeding bears are reported to be less aggressive than those living inland from Magadan. The watershed of the Sea of Okhotsk where salmon abound, is short and close to the coast. In Kamchatka and the Okhotsk Sea watersheds, there are Chum, Pink, Sockeye and Chinook Salmon. *Oncorhynchus masu* is confined to Kamchatka.

Most Russians have a fear of bears and avoid them whenever possible.

Although called Brown Bears, the two I saw in Kamchatka and the pelts at Siemchan were almost black. Before shedding their coats, some may bleach a lighter colour.

We visited the coast near Petropavlovsk for a day and found a black sand beach (pH 6.0), composed of volcanic material. There was a fishing trawler driven ashore in a storm beached on the sands.

Mertensia maritima was growing on a gravel beach. It ranges around the northern coasts of the Atlantic and Pacific. Some botanists recognize the eastern Pacific form as a

separate species "*asiatica,*" (Ohwi in Japan), but others (Hulten), treat it as a variety. *Oxytropis strobilanthea*: One among many species recorded from Kamchatka. It formed colourful drifts on the dunes or as isolated clumps at Avacha. *Veratrum oxysepalum* is widely distributed in Asia and North America. It has unusual green flowers. *Orchis aristata* a north Pacific species ranging from Japan to the south coast of Alaska.

Our last trip in Kamchatka was about a four-hour drive south to the Viliichinsky volcano. Julia went to inspect the construction site to ensure that environmental regulations were being observed. At this thermo-generating station, they are drilling ½ kilometer vertically, then at right angles for two km to reach the reservoir of boiling water beneath the Viliichinsky volcano. They expect to generate enough power to supply all of Kamchatka. Faith in megaprojects is not confined to Canada. One wonders what will happen to this project if there is an earthquake.

We crossed a beautiful alpine area on the way but found that much of the flora was not yet in bloom. *Claytonia acutifolia* is confined to the mountain tops. It occurs on both sides of the Bering Sea. *Lagotis glauca* has circumpolar distribution up to the limit of alpine distribution. *Veronica grandiflora:* Another high altitude species is from both sides of the Bering Sea from Kamchatka to the Aleutians. Crossing this high-altitude area, we saw Snow Buntings and, in a sheltered wooded valley near the thermal plant, we heard and then saw two species of cuckoo -- *Cuculus canorus* and *Cuculus saturatus*. They were flying together, *C. saturatus* being much the larger.

There was a bear crossing a snow drift about one km away.

For the first time on my visits to Russia, I encountered a young man, Gearman Ginady, who would talk politics. We discussed "Lenin's Legacy." When a state is centralized to the extent that the USSR was, there are bound to be conditions that will be very difficult and expensive to change. The ugly apartment blocks are centrally heated, watered and lit from a single town power plant. At Magadan, the Soviets and later governments could not afford enough coal to supply the needs of a city of 152,000 people. They were able to supply hot water and heat for three days a week in 1998. I do not know how they stopped the pipes from freezing.

Collective farms meant that all workers lived in a village where they could be supervised. To cultivate, some had to travel many kilometers to where they could start work. The collective farms were notably unproductive but the peasant holdings and dachas which constituted a very small part of the available acreage produced almost as much. Around Magadan, the cleared land once cultivated by the collective farm lay fallow and weed-infested. This year, President Putin submitted a bill to the Duma to de-nationalize the land. The Communist Party, the largest in the Duma, killed the bill.

When Canadian governments balanced their budgets, staff was reduced drastically. We all know what Harris did to MNR and MOE. Through early retirements and lay-offs, staff was reduced by up to 30 per cent, thus saving millions in salaries. In Russia, they did not fire anyone, they just stopped paying them. Then the ruble collapsed in 1998 and the exchange rate with the U.S. dollar went from 7R:$1 to 23R:$1. In spite of inflation and the drop in purchasing power, no changes were made to pensions.

When travelling, it takes four people to handle customs where a single employee can do it in North America. Officials can sometimes be unbelievably rude. On airlines, foreigners are segregated from Russians! Failure to pay the police resulted in fines being levied on the spot and the policeman keeps the proceeds. Failure to pay civil servants

resulted in widespread and intensive poaching. I saw one pile of Moose droppings in all my three visits. There should have been Snow Sheep on most of the mountain ranges we visited. We saw three sheep in the most remote area we visited in 1998, north of Siamchan and none on the helicopter trip over a first-class range in Kamchatka.

The pollution problem is acute. We visited a mining prison camp in 1998 where over 100 acres of find sandy tailings had been dumped beside a river. The edge of the dump was slowly eroding into the river. This dump had been abandonned for 40 years and not a single plant had established on it. In the Primore District Office, I asked the director what was their most serious conservation problem. I expected he might say tigers or leopards. Without hesitation, he said "pollution." This is part of Lenin's Legacy. Those in charge of industry were under pressure to maximize production and profit. No thought was given to cleaning up afterwards. There seemed to be junk abandonned everywhere. While most may not have been toxic, it was still an eyesore.

QUESTIONS:

- Lumsden travelled to Siberia from mid-June to mid-July last year. On previous trips, he went in July and August.
- He does not speak Russian. He travelled with the aid of a local botanist who helped him with the necessary translations.
- Flora moved both east and west across the Bering Strait from their glacial refugia. One botanist was able to track plants from Russia across the strait and down as far as Alaska, British Columbia or Oregon. Other plants travelled from the Yukon refugia throughout the polar regions. Many are alpine species. The climate was very different in glacial times. The Bering Strait was blocked, cutting off the flow of Arctic currents into the Pacific.
- Many Stalin-era collective farms have been abandonned. A collective dairy farm in Magadan is now operating in private hands, producing milk and cheese for the local inhabitants. A considerable amount of food is produced privately on the local dachas.
- Lumsden saw considerable evidence of waste under the communist regime. Enormous apartment blocks in Magadan were heated by a central heating plant that was dependent on coal brought in by sea from a distant and sometimes unreliable source.
- Magadan was the headquarters of the Gulag prison system. There is no local industry and no reason for the town to exist.
- President Vladimir Putin pressed for the de-nationalization of farms across Russia but his proposal was voted down.
- A lot of fruit is grown locally, both wild and domestic. They include wild berries, honeysuckles and strawberries.
- Vladivostok is a major city with considerable manufacturing and a large naval base nearby. It has a monsoon climate and can be very cold.
- The warm Japanese current bypasses Kamchatka. The peninsula is exposed to the cold Arctic currents.

Boyer thanked the speaker.

NOTES & OBSERVATIONS:

- McAndrews found large numbers of rotifers in Crawford Lake during the native Indian occupation from the 13th century to about 1650 when the Indians were wiped out by the Iroquois. There was an Indian village near the lake, a sink hole in the Niagara Escarpment north of Burlington. The rotifers disappeared after 1650 and reappeared in lower numbers when white farmers colonized the area. Rotifers are an indicator of nutrient contamination. There were apparently blooms of single-cell algae during the Indian days, as well as traces of sunflower seeds, maize and corn.
- Fred Bodsworth said spring birds are slowly and hesitantly moving north across Lake Erie. He saw 1,000 to 2,000 exhausted swallows sheltering from the wind on a beach at Long Point, all clustered together in groups about one meter across, apparently seeking warmth.
- One member saw an orange Ruff, lots of southern birds including warblers and tanagers.
- Hugh Currie said his recent trip to Point Pelee was the worst in 50 years. He saw only 10 warblers, a Common Eider, and a female Blue Grosbeak that had been at Rondeau Provincial Park for a week.
- Glenn Coady had just returned from Point Pelee before the meeting. He said birds were scarce at Point Pelee Park because of the inclement weather. The winds changed to the south, bringing more birds with it. He saw about 20 species of warblers and a few shore birds, an adult Laughing Gull and a Henslow's Sparrow. Other birders reported a Fish Crow, a species that is seen every year at Rondeau Park and Point Pelee, but not at the east end of Lake Ontario.
- McAndrews saw a cock pheasant on three successive Sundays. They appear to be more numerous this year because of a fall in the number of foxes and coyotes.
- Trudy Rising saw a Lark Sparrow at Point Pelee the week before. She also reported breeding behaviour in American Toads and saw horsehair worms in a large Gordian knot in the mud.
- Speakman saw a Pine Warbler feeding on peanuts at his cottage on April 14.
- Jean Iron reported a "spectacular view" of Scarlet Tanagers the previous week. She also saw a White-eyed Vireo, a Great Blue Heron and a Mississippi Kite. Two weeks ago, she spied an American Bittern taking refuge in a squirrel's nest on a cold and stormy day.
- Sandra Eadie telephoned from Point Pelee to say she had seen a Henslow's Sparrow and a Laughing Gull.
- Bodsworth reported that a cousin had seen a bittern on the roof of a nearby house taking refuge from a late snowfall.
- Iron offered members a Birding Guide to Carden Plain written by Ron Pittaway and published by the Ontario Field Ornithologists.

The meeting adjourned at 9:30 pm. It was the last meeting of the season.

FIELD DAY:

The spring field day will be held on June 15 at Speakman's cottage.

Speakman recommended that avid birders meet at Wylie Rd. on Carden Plain at 8 am before proceeding to his cottage for a BYO picnic lunch or tea. Carden Plain is about 1.5 hours or 125 km northeast of Toronto. Other members can come straight to his cottage.

To get to Carden Plain from Toronto:

- go north on Hwy 404 (DVP) to Davis Drive (Newmarket);
- go east on Davis Drive to Hwy 48;
- go north on Hwy 48 to Hwy 12;
- go left on Hwy 12/48 about 12.5 km to County Rd 48
- go east on County Rd 48, 19.0 km to Kirkfield;
- at main intersection, go north on County Rd 6, 3.0 km to Lift Lock;
- go 2.5 km north on County Rd. 6;
- turn right (east) on McNamee Rd where County Rd. 6 turns sharply to the left;
- turn left (north) almost immediately on Wylie Rd and park on the shoulder.

To get to the Speakman cottage from Toronto:

- go north on Hwy 404 (DVP) to Davis Drive (Newmarket);
- go east on Davis Drive to Hwy 48;
- go north on Hwy 48, past Sutton, past the CNR railway track to Port Bolster, at Durham Rd. 23. Do not go as far as Hwy. 12;
- turn left on Durham Rd 23 and go north, past the red barn, to the golf course at Conc. 4;
- turn left on Conc. 4, past the railway track and right on Cedarhurst Beach Rd;
- turn left just before the dead end and proceed to the cottage, the last one on Cedarhurst Beach Rd;

The Speakman telephone number is 705-426-5002.

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David W. Tomlinson

Application to become a member to the Brody Club

I became interested in birds at the age of 12, like many boys in England. I was an avid bird's nester, but not an egg collector, I kept records of the nests I found. On leaving school I decided to become a gardener so that I could work outdoors, watch birds all day and get paid for it. Unfortunately my plan didn't succeed, as I was encouraged to study horticulture and became a student at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, England. This was my undoing as I ended up working at an office desk with no birds in sight and eventually became a landscape architect. Regardless of this mishap, my interest in birds continued to develop. Eventually I worked for Milton Keynes New City that is close to Tring, the then headquarters of the British Trust of Ornithology. During this period I assisted in several Common Bird Censuses and early one morning met Henry Meyer Gross who administered their Nest Record Scheme, he was also their professional bird nester. We became bird nesting companions and in 1972 between us we found over 3000 birds nests (mainly to band nestlings) and also to confirm breeding for the first U.K. Breeding Bird Atlas.

On arrival in Canada in 1973, I continued my bird nesting and Common Bird Census activities and submitted cards to both the Ontario and Alberta nest record schemes. While working in Alberta I confirmed breeding of Piping plover on the Chain Lakes and

with Tim Fitzharris, the well-known wildlife photographer, recorded the second breeding in Canada of White Faced Ibis on Pakowki Lake.

I am not particularly interested in searching for vagrant birds (birds that have lost their way), my main interest in common bird population dynamics, particularly the changes that occur over a long period of time.

As a landscape architect I have a special interest in the design and management of wildlife habitat. I have carried out many projects including the design of the Fletcher Wildlife Park in Ottawa for the Ottawa Field Naturalists, and habitat naturalization and creation for Metro Toronto at several oftheir major parks. On retirement in 1990 I was honoured with an Emeritus membership of the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects.

I have been a close friend of Harry Lumsden and have assisted him over the last 20 years on his Trumpeter Swan reintroduction program (I am younger than Harry and when it comes to catching swans I can run faster). Over these years I have enjoyed many hours exchanging views with Harry on bird ecology. My reason for wanting to join the Brody Club is so that I can also exchange ideas with other members and benefit from their experience.