

THE PRESIDENT'S PAGE

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As it is a year since I was elected President of the Neotropical Ornithological Society (NOS), I believe that it is worthwhile to review what has been accomplished in that time, as well as to inventory what still needs to be done in the three years left until the VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress is convened in Chile in 2003. Changes and progress for the consolidation of the NOS and the development of its journal *Ornitología Neotropical* (ON) have taken place at a fast pace during the year 2000.

The new Executive Board of the NOS, acting upon a formal proposal by Editor Raymond McNeil, unanimously voted to nominate Mario Ramos as Honorary Member of the NOS in recognition of his outstanding contributions to NOS affairs as President of the Society from its foundation in December 1987 until October 1999 and as the President of the Second Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Xalapa, México, in 1983. I congratulate Mario Ramos for this well deserved distinction, and I take this opportunity once again to thank him personally, and on behalf of the Executive Board and of all NOS members, for his splendid job. The NOS would not be what it is today without his untiring work.

Two key aspects of the development and growth of the NOS and of ON are a much broader membership base and an ever stronger and scientifically more rigorous journal. These and many other items were discussed by the members of the Executive Board of the NOS at a meeting held in Washington, D.C., 23–24 February 2001.

In order to increase the visibility of the NOS, Jack Clinton Eitnear, Chairman of the Membership Committee, started to design a web-page (<http://www.cstbinc.org/NOS.html>), largely based on a brochure advertising the NOS and ON in English, Spanish, and Portuguese. Much remains to be done to make our web-page more complete and more attractive, but this is an excellent beginning. All comments are welcome [please send them to Jack Eitnear (cstbinc1@aol.com), to NOS Treasurer Joe Meyers (jmeyers@smokey.forestry.uga.edu), and to Executive Board member Vickie McDonald (vickiem@mail.uca.edu)]. In order to make NOS and ON better known to European ornithologists, as many of them work in the Neotropics, progress is being made to place announcements in European journals. A notice concerning NOS and ON was published in *Ornithologischer Anzeiger* (Volume 39, 2000, p. 90, signed by T. Mischler) and another will soon be published in *Nos Oiseaux*. In addition, an announcement appeared in *Southern Connection Bulletin* (Number 17, 2000, pp. 21–22), reaching scientists working in the southern hemisphere in general. To make the distribution of the journal to NOS members and to subscribing libraries faster and more efficient, NOS Treasurer Joe Meyers has made many improvements in the handling of membership lists and of mailing labels, so that, once printed, each issue of ON is sent out without delay.

Ornitología Neotropical has for the first time in ten years been published in four issues in the year 2000 (Volume 11, which contains a total of 380 pages). This important development, which reflects a decision made by the Executive Board at the VIth Neotropical Congress in Monterrey, México, in October 1999, was made possible by an increase in the number of submitted manuscripts, as well as an increase in membership, cheaper printing costs, and sound fis-

cal policies. What this means is that readers of ON now get twice as much product for the same amount of money. Thanks to the extremely efficient editorship of Editor Raymond McNeil, the journal is now published on a quarterly basis. Editorial policies have been streamlined and sharpened, resulting in a turnover time of less than a year, from submission to review and to publication, for those manuscripts that are accepted. In view of the ever increasing number of manuscripts submitted by authors from all countries in the Neotropics and beyond, ON is clearly an attractive journal in which to publish one's research results. In addition to the sections Articles and Short Communications, ON includes new rubrics, Points of View, Commentaries, and Book Reviews, making the journal more diverse. It will soon also include a new section, Obituaries, edited by James W. Wiley (wileyjw@alpha0.gram.edu) in which the memory of ornithologists who did important work in the Neotropics will be honored. Given the ever more solid and broader base of the subject material published in ON, the journal is clearly on the right track.

Readers of ON will notice some changes in the design of the cover page. Because of potential confusion with other societies also using a hummingbird as their emblematic bird, and although the previous cover artwork was lovely, a new design, accepted by the Executive Board, appears on the cover of this issue. The new artwork represents the Thorn-tailed Rayadito (*Aphrastura spinicauda*), a common species of southern South American forests belonging to the exclusively Neotropical family Furnariidae. This design will be used on all NOS documents, such as brochures, announcements, and stationery. In addition, the cover page now states that ON is published by the Neotropical Ornithological Society, thus aligning our journal on most other scientific societies. Beginning with the first issue of volume 12, all articles will have two titles. The first will be in the language in which the article is written; the second will be a translation of the first title, in a language that will be either English, Spanish, or Portuguese, depending on the language of the country of origin of the article. From now on, all key words will be in English only, for international indexation purposes. Starting immediately, all authors will be required to pay page charges for accepted manuscripts exceeding 15 printed pages. This decision of the Executive Board was made to permit the NOS to maintain subscription costs at the current low rates for all classes of membership, yet to increase its cash flow in order to keep publishing a large number of outstanding manuscripts without decreasing the number of pages per volume.

The NOS has exchange agreements with the Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali in Torino, Italy (for which we receive the Bollettino del Museo Regionale di Scienze Naturali), the Sociedad Antioqueña de Ornitología (SAO) in Medellín, Colombia (Boletín of the SAO), the Unión de Ornitólogos de Chile (UNORCH) (Boletín Chileno de Ornitología), the American Museum of Natural History in New York (ornithological papers in Bulletin of the AMNH and American Museum Novitates), the Museu de Biologia Mello Leitão in Brazil (Boletim), the Swedish Ornithological Society (Ornis Svecica), and the Danish Ornithological Society (Vår Fågelvärld). These journals are currently housed in the library of the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology (WFVZ) in Camarillo, California, where they are available to NOS members. Until 2000, Jon C. Fisher of the WFVZ was in charge of the exchange program. I thank him and the WFVZ wholeheartedly for their efforts on behalf of the NOS in the past ten years. New exchange agreements are being formalized with the Brazilian Society of Ornithologists (for Ararajuba), the Asociación Ornitológica del Plata in Argentina (El Hornero), Melopsittacus Publicações Científicas in Brazil (Tangara), the Museu de Zoologia da Universidade de São

Paulo, Brazil (Arquivos de Zoologia and Papeis Avulsos de Zoologia), the Instituto de la Patagonia, Punta Arenas, Chile (Anales del Instituto de la Patagonia, Serie Ciencias Naturales), and the Sociedad Chilena de Biología (Revista Chilena de Historia natural). These exchanges increase the visibility of the NOS, help diffuse ON to a wide audience, and allow closer links between the NOS and sister societies in the Neotropics and beyond. Suggestions concerning our exchange program should be sent to me (vuill@amnh.org).

Although the NOS is presently financially sound insofar as the costs of publication of ON go, the need for special funds is acute. It is especially important to substantially increase the Research Fund, designed to help finance research projects, and the Goelet Student Fund, designed to help students from the Neotropical Region attend (and present papers at) the VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Chile in 2003. The Travel Grants Committee [chaired by André Weller (uzsshx@mailin.uni-bonn.de)] is coordinating fund-raising efforts to support the attendance of students to the Congress in 2003. Although I am happy to announce that the initial grant made by Mr. and Mrs. Robert G. Goelet for the Goelet Student Fund has increased from \$5000 to \$6000 since November 1999, this sum is still inadequate to achieve the stated goals of the fund. Thus, I urge members of the NOS to allocate a few extra dollars to one or another of these funds, in addition to their regular annual subscription dues, when they renew their membership to the NOS for 2001. The convenient renewal forms (in English, Spanish, and Portuguese) include space to do just that. And remember that it is easy to renew your subscription by credit card. For additional information, please contact Treasurer Joe Meyers (jmeyers@smokey.forestry.uga.edu).

I suggested in my earlier President's Page (ON 11: i–iii, 2000) that the 25th International Ornithological Congress in 2010 should be held in the Neotropics, thus capping “The Decade of Neotropical Ornithology” launched in 2000 with a momentous international event that will put Neotropical ornithology firmly on the map. Brazilian ornithologists, at their VIIIth Ornithological Congress in August 2000, convened a round-table discussion on this topic, and concluded that Brazil could be the host for such a Congress. Further discussions are now underway.

Substantial progress has been made since the VIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress in Monterrey in October 1999 on the organization of the VIIth Neotropical Ornithological Congress. During three trips to Chile, in November 1999, October 2000, and February 2001, by Editor Raymond McNeil, Scientific Program Co-Chair Karl-L. Schuchmann, Council Member Victoria McDonald, Liaison Assistant Katja Kunz, and myself, a wide range of issues were discussed with our Chilean ornithological colleagues. On-site visits were made with key local organizers, and plans for the Congress were discussed with top-level officials of several government and conservation organizations in Chile. The Congress is planned for October in the attractive town of Puerto Varas, Xth Region, Chile, in the beautiful Lake District. The official congress host is the Unión de Ornitólogos de Chile, who appointed an ad hoc Congress committee. Luis Espinosa (Chile) is the Chairman of the local organizing committee, and Karl-L. Schuchmann (Germany) and Jaime Jiménez (Chile) are co-Chairmen of the Scientific Program Committee. More details will be published in ON: watch for them and put these dates in your agenda.

I close this message, as I did my first President's Page, with a call to become involved in the affairs of the NOS, to recruit new members, to suggest ON to potential authors, and to contribute financially to our special funds. Recall that you now receive four issues per year at the same price as two in the past. And, of course, submit the results of your own research for publication in ON!

