

AQUATIC BIRDS IN THE TROPHIC WEB OF LAKES

Preliminary Announcement Symposium, Mount Allison University Sackville, New Brunswick, Canada, August 20 -22, 1991

Rationale of the Symposium

Birds are an integral part of most freshwater ecosystems (lakes, rivers, wetlands) but their role in the trophic dynamics of these water bodies is usually ignored. Aquatic birds are part of the biota of water bodies and are indicators of their trophic state both in terms of species composition (quality) and occupancy and breeding (quantity). Birds may also influence the trophic state of a water body by importing nutrients (e.g. resident or migrating birds feeding on adjacent watershed or the sea).

Because of anthropogenic activities and animal predation or their mobility,

birds may not utilize otherwise suitable aquatic habitats. This often creates difficulties in relating aquatic bird production to trophic state of habitats. Therefore, their role in the trophic web in inland water bodies is often overlooked. This situation is now changing rapidly and ornithologists and limnologists are increasingly conscious of the response and contribution of aquatic birds to the trophic state of the water body as indicated by nutrient levels. Recently, attempts are being made to define the role of aquatic birds in the flow of energy in lakes.

Objective of the Symposium

This Symposium will facilitate the communication of aquatic scientist's interest in the role of aquatic birds in inland water bodies. The proceedings of the Symposium will be published in a Special Volume of the journal *Hydrobiologia*. Field trips before and after the Symposium will be organized.

Partial list of topics to be considered:

1. Quantitative and qualitative response of aquatic birds to nutrient levels and acidification in water bodies.
2. Food requirement in relation to food availability, for the maintenance of adult birds and to raise young to fledging.
3. Nutrient import and export from lakes by birds.
4. Interactions with fish as both predators and competitors.
5. How to express bird abundance in meaningful ways. By unit water surface area, unit shore length?, etc.
6. Occurrence or absence of birds for reasons other than availability of food.
7. Juxtaposition, the importance of the relationship of a water body to its surroundings (water and land).

Please ask for a copy of the inscription form at: Maarten Platteeuw (ed. Sula), Paletstraat 26, NL-1825 KS Alkmaar. To receive further information and to receive subsequent circulars contact:

Aquatic Birds Symposium 1991, Canadian Wildlife Service, Bedford Institute of Oceanography, P.O.Box 1006, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia B2Y 4A2, Canada.