



At Risk Birds in Muskoka

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Today's presentation:

- Endangered Species Act 2007 (aka ESA)
- Status designations
- Species At Risk in Ontario (SARO) list
- Some SAR birds that are (or were) found in Muskoka
- Reporting information

The ESA continued

Status:

- Extirpated
- Endangered
- Threatened
- Special concern



Wood turtle (END)

Endangered Species Act

New legislation (2007)

Now: science based
assessment
(COSSARO)

SARO list



Engelmann's Quillwort (END)

The ESA continued

Endangered, threatened and extirpated species on the SARO list automatically receive legal protection under the ESA 2007.



Eastern Hognose Snake (THR)

The ESA continued

Habitat protection: general habitat and regulated (species-specific) habitat regulations

General habitat: applies until species-specific regs have been passed

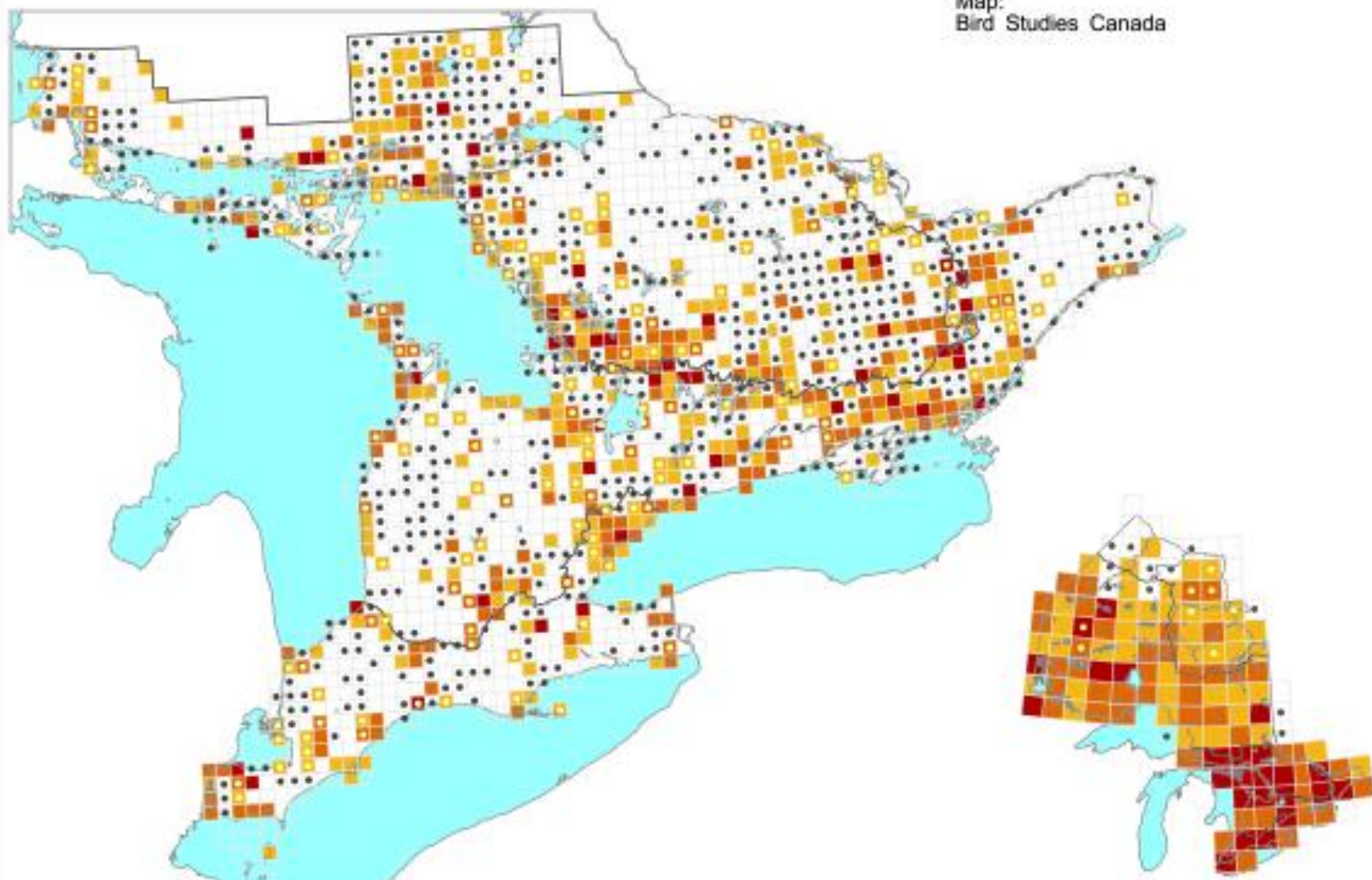
After listing, have 2 years to pass regs for endangered and 3 years for threatened

Some At Risk Birds from Muskoka

- Henslow's sparrow (END)
- Peregrine falcon (THR)
- Whip-poor-will (THR)
- Chimney swift (THR)
- Meadowlark (THR)
- Bobolink (THR)
- Least bittern (THR)
- Cerulean warbler (THR)
- Barn swallow (THR)
- Golden winged warbler (SC)
- Red-headed woodpecker (SC)
- Olive-sided flycatcher (SC)
- Bald eagle (SC)
- Black tern (SC)
- Common nighthawk (SC)

Source:
Atlas of the Breeding Birds
of Ontario (2001-2005)

Map:
Bird Studies Canada



Henslow's Sparrow (END)

- Breeds in old fields, pastures and meadows that have not been invaded by shrubs
- Ground nester
- Historical records for Muskoka (one near Port Sandfield)

Peregrine falcon (THR)

- About 1 dozen known nesting locations in Muskoka
- Most recent nesting occurred in late 1950s
- DDT
- Excellent recovery is underway



Peregrine continued...



- Nest on cliffs
- Aerial hunters
- Prey is pigeon-sized birds

Historic cliff nesting site on Skeleton Lake

Whip-poor-will (Thr)

- Habitat is rock or sand barrens with scattered trees, savannahs, old burns or other disturbed sites in a state of early to mid-forest succession, or open conifer plantations
- Areas with little ground cover are preferred
- pine (barrens and plantations), oak (barrens and savannahs), and aspen and birch (early to mid succession) are common tree species associations.

Whip Poor Will





Whip-Poor-will continued

- Conservation issues include loss of habitat and loss of food (global changes to insect populations)

Chimney swift (Thr)

- They used to nest and roost in hollow trees, but they have almost completely adapted to man-made structures, in particular chimneys



Chimney Swift

- Will roost communally but nest in pairs
- Spend the entire day flying around, catching insects







Bobolink and Meadowlark THR)



Bobolink and Meadowlark

- Both insectivorous species of old field/grasslands
- Still fairly common in Muskoka....abandoned farmland
- Ground nesters
- Both have distinctive songs
- Observations of these species needed!

Least bittern (THR)

- Smallest heron
- Habitat is cattail marshes
- Conservation issues around loss of wetland habitat
- Several records in Muskoka



Golden-winged Warbler (SC)

- Early successional scrub habitats, edges of forests, recently logged areas
- Fairly common in Muskoka along southern edge of Shield



Red-headed Woodpecker (SC)

- Habitat is open woods
- Found in S Ont, only few records in Muskoka
- Habitat loss (due to urbanization and intensification of farming), change in insect prey



Olive-sided Flycatcher (SC)

- Known for its call “quick three beers”
- Currently in decline, possibly due to loss of winter habitat, changes in prey availability and fire suppression
- Uses natural forest edges and openings



Bald Eagle (SC)



- Expanding range in Ontario
- DDT
- Large nests, strong fidelity
- Common winter visitors in Muskoka, limited breeding so far

A few others....

- Cerulean warbler (SC)
- Black tern (SC)
- Barn swallow (THR)
- Common nighthawk (SC)



Common nighthawk

Reporting information

OMNR's Natural Heritage Information

Centre: <http://nhic.mnr.gov.on.ca/>

Click on “Report....Rare Species”

The NHIC tracks other species in addition to those on the SARO list....generally they are interested in S ranks of S1 to S3.

More information?

- MNR website
- ROM website
- Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario
2001-2005



The end!