

# Vermont Center for Ecostudies



Annual Report 2012



Uniting People and Science for Conservation

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### Sara Zahendra

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## Mission Statement

The Vermont Center for Ecostudies advances the conservation of wildlife across the Americas through research, monitoring and citizen engagement.



## Director's Message

Dear Friends:

A colleague once told me that five years is a tried and true benchmark for non-profits like VCE. Pass that watershed, and prospects for longevity magnify. I'm pleased to report that five years after becoming independent, VCE is most definitely going strong. In fact, our trajectory continues to climb, and 2012 was our most productive year yet. We're advancing conservation with good science, we're financially robust, we have a terrific community of stakeholders, and we're continually making new discoveries about the natural world.

The pages that follow highlight some of VCE's key successes over our first five years. We've expanded our far-reaching conservation science – from alpine butterflies to migrant dragonflies, loons to vernal pools, *Bombus* to Bicknell's Thrush. Our work spans the hemisphere, from Vermont's Green Mountains to Hispaniola's Sierra de Bahoruco. We communicate widely through a diversity of media, from peer-reviewed publications to social networks, invited talks to public birding walks. Our five-year strategic plan, crafted in 2012, firmly anchors VCE's research, monitoring and citizen science. Our fiscal health is excellent, no mean feat in recent economic times. Our engaged Board of Directors and growing Advisory Council provide invaluable direction and support.

As always, VCE comes down to people, and this 2012 annual report underscores that vital tenet. VCE's success over the past five years reflects collaboration in every sense – among our citizen scientists, scientific colleagues, conservation partners, field trainees, donors, and friends. You are by far VCE's greatest asset and most powerful conservation tool. We look forward to connecting with each and every one of you in the months and years ahead.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Anthony C.', written in a cursive style.





# 5 Years of

On October 1st, 2007, The Vermont Center for Ecostudies became established as an independent, innovative research group dedicated to the understanding and conservation of wildlife. Our findings inform scientists, policy makers, and members of the public about sound conservation goals and practices. VCE firmly believes conservation is as much about people as it is about ecology.

## 2008

- **Forest Bird Monitoring Project** collects its 20th year of field data.
- VCE collaborates with the Union of Concerned Scientists to model **Climate Change in the Northeast**.
- As part of VCE's long-term commitment to biodiversity conservation on Hispaniola, VCE hosts a **3-week exchange** of Dominican and Haitian colleagues.
- VCE's long-term research on Stratton Mountain finds pervasive bio-accumulation of **methylmercury** throughout the high-elevation food web.
- VCE biologists, in collaboration with our numerous partners, publish **9 peer-reviewed publications**.

## 2009

- **Vernal Pool Mapping Project** begins documenting the distribution of Vermont's vernal pools, a "keystone" ecosystem of the Northeast.
- **Bobolink** research in Bolivia leads to the ban of pesticide Monocrotophos.
- Creation of the **Julie Nicholson Citizen Science Award** to honor Julie's extraordinary passion and commitment to wildlife conservation through her many years as a citizen scientist. The first awardee is Roy Pilcher.
- VCE coordinates an invited symposium entitled "Ecology and Conservation of a Rare, Declining Species: Bicknell's Thrush" at the annual meeting of the **American Ornithologists' Union** in Philadelphia, PA.
- VCE joins other **Vermont Monitoring Cooperative** members reporting on 20 years of research and monitoring in the document, "Vermont's Changing Forests".
- VCE biologists and our many collaborators publish **5 peer-reviewed papers**.

## 2010

- The **Julie Nicholson Citizen Science Award** is presented to Ruth Stewart.
- VCE's five year **Vermont Butterfly Survey** documents the statewide status and distribution of butterflies, identifying 16 species of high conservation concern.
- **Mountain Birdwatch** celebrates 10 years of high-elevation bird monitoring in NY, VT, NH, and ME.
- VCE bids farewell to MBW Coordinator Julie Hart, and welcomes Biological Technician, Sara Zahendra, and Mountain Birdwatch Director, Judith Scarl.
- VCE biologists, in collaboration with our scientific colleagues, publish **6 peer-reviewed papers**.
- **The International Bicknell's Thrush Conservation Group** releases a trilingual range-wide action plan for this globally vulnerable species.
- The **VCE Advisory Council** is formed to bring a fresh dimension of engagement and guidance for our work.





## 2011

- VCE, in partnership with the Vermont Department of Fish and Wildlife, launches the **Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas website**, a valuable long-term resource for planners, conservationists, researchers, and land managers.
- Juan Carlos Martinez-Sanchez joins VCE as the new **Caribbean Bird Conservation Coordinator**, based full-time on Hispaniola.
- VCE biologists and our collaborators publish **4 peer-reviewed papers**.
- Ed Hack receives the **Julie Nicholson Citizen Science Award**.
- In response to declines of grassland bird populations, VCE launches the **Grassland Bird Program**, to address the year-round conservation needs of migratory grassland birds.
- In collaboration with the **National Park Service**, VCE completes the 5th year of long-term bird monitoring at 11 National Parks and Historic Sites in the Northeast.
- VCE celebrates 35 years of **Common Loon** research, monitoring, and management efforts.
- VCE and our international partners launch **Mountain Birdwatch 2.0** in the U.S. and Canada.
- **Vermont County Quest** encourages birders to enter 18,000 checklists and more than 500,000 individual records into Vermont eBird.

## 2012

- **Julie Nicholson Citizen Science Award** is presented to Kevin Hemeon.
- VCE completes a 5-year **Strategic Plan**.
- VCE launches the **Vermont Bumblebee Survey** to document the little-known conservation status of bumblebees in our state.
- VCE teams up with the **Migratory Dragonfly Partnership** to investigate the mysteries of dragonfly migration in North America.
- VCE and several partner organizations award the first grant from the **Bicknell's Thrush Habitat Protection Fund** to a Dominican NGO, Grupo Jaragua.
- Chris Rimmer is elected a **Fellow of the American Ornithologists' Union**, one of the oldest member organizations devoted to the scientific study of birds.
- VCE welcomes Jane Ackerman as **Director of Development**.
- VCE's science informs purchase of 500-hectare **Finca Ortega** as the Dominican Republic's first private reserve.
- VCE documents presence of **toxic mercury** in migrant and resident birds on Hispaniola.
- VCE completes 20 years studying the demography and ecology of high-elevation songbirds on **Mt. Mansfield**.
- VCE launches a **Rusty Blackbird** project, conducting surveys for this rapidly-declining species throughout the boreal forest wetlands of northern VT and ME.
- VCE biologists, in collaboration with partners across the hemisphere, publish **5 peer-reviewed papers**.

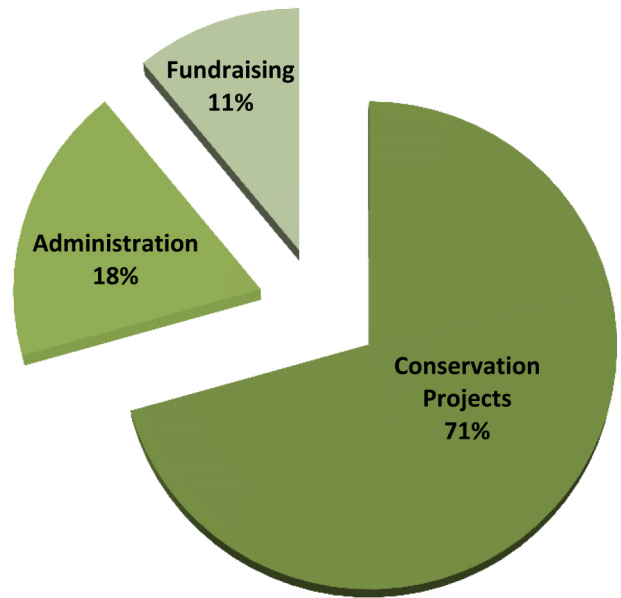
**5 Years of "Uniting People & Science for Conservation"**



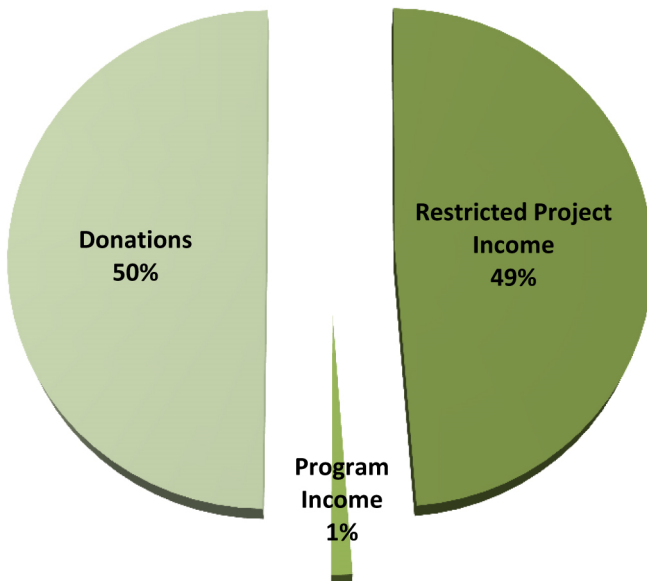
# Accountability



## Revenue Uses



## Revenue Sources



## Expense

Personnel	\$511,651
Business	\$3,752
Contract Services	\$46,052
General Office	\$31,100
Mailing	\$6,949
Travel	\$37,232
Meeting & Entertainment	\$1,013
Equipment	\$3,925
Facilities	\$22,974
Insurance	\$8,875
Bank Fees	\$944
Sub Grants	\$5,000
Miscellaneous	\$270

## Total Expense

**\$679,737**

## Net Income

**\$38,354**

## Income

Restricted Project Income	\$348,734
Program Income	\$9,279
Donations	\$356,518
Investments	\$718
Other	\$2,841

## Total Income

**\$718,090**





# VCE thanks its contributors

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<b>Green Mountain Goatsuckers (VCE) Birdathon Team</b> Ann B. Day Val Stori	<b>Chris Rimmer on the Occasion of VCE's 5th Anniversary</b> David Blockstein
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<b>Kyle Jones' Birthday</b> Jennifer Megyesi	<b>Andy and Deb Williams</b> Bob and Tari Holterman
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<b>Sally Laughlin's Birthday</b> Evergreen Erb	
<b>Carol Licht's 80th Birthday</b> Linda Romans	
<b>Brian and Sandi Lincoln</b> Crawford and Ann Lincoln	



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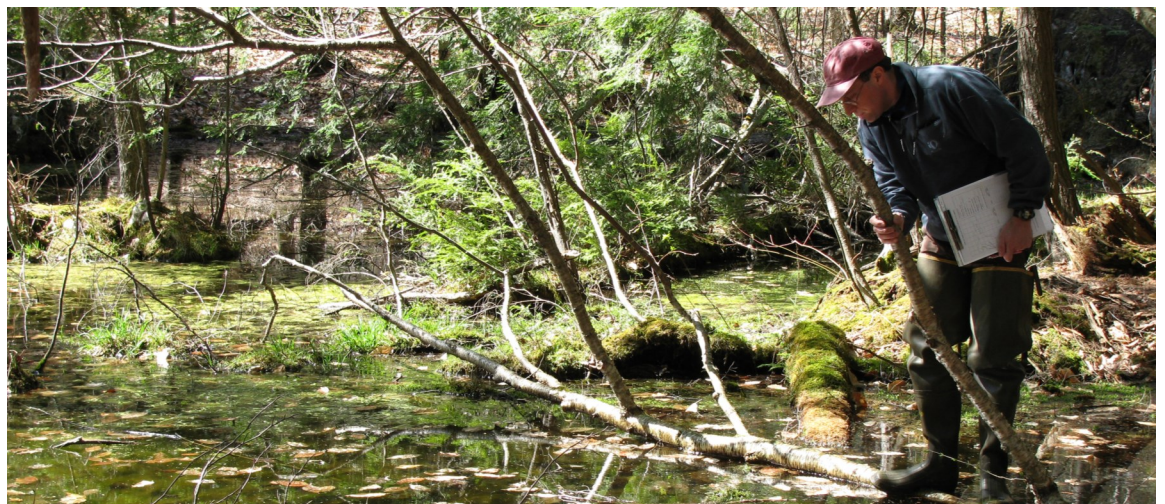
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