

Harry G. Lumsden – Pioneer Award

Harry G. Lumsden was an internationally known, self-taught ornithologist and “a life-long student of birds.” Harry was born in Scotland and came to Canada during World War II on a three-year tour of duty in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia with the Royal Air Force. During his time in Ontario, he became acquainted with the staff of the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) and became immersed in bird studies and skin preparation that formed the core of his interest in birds for the rest of his career. Following the war, he immigrated to Canada and joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests to continue his work with birds. In the 1950s, Harry found the first Ontario nesting colony of Snow Geese near Cape Henrietta Maria. For the next 35 years he conducted waterfowl surveys over the Hudson Bay and James Bay region with colleagues from the Canadian Wildlife Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He also established the first nesting studies of the sub-arctic Canada Geese in eastern Canada. Harry’s work on Trumpeter Swans began later in his career, and a recovery program for this endangered species became his main focus following retirement. By 2007, a self-sustaining population had been re-established in Ontario. Harry never had any formal training in wildlife work. However, he is the sole author of over 100 publications and a co-author on some 50 others. He was a major contributor to the first *Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas*. Harry G. Lumsden was a Pioneer in bird studies and wetland ecology in Canada, most remarkable that he was self-taught and his work covered a very broad range of bird species.