

## A STATEMENT FROM THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL SCIENCES

[In 1981, the Board of Trustees of the National Museums Corporation approved the establishment of a Natural History Survey of Canada within the National Museums of Canada. In October 1981, the National Museum of Natural Sciences issued the following statement outlining the concept of this Survey (which encompasses the mineralogy section as well as purely biological divisions within the Museum).]

### Introduction:

1. A Natural History Survey of Canada has been established in the National Museum of Natural Sciences by the Board of Trustees of the National Museums of Canada. It is intended to promote knowledge of the natural history of Canada through species inventories, studies of systematics and distribution, biological properties, ecological significance and how these are affected by man.
2. The continued involvement of the Entomological Society of Canada at the policy level in a Natural History Survey of Canada responds to the often repeated view (e.g. Science Council of Canada) that scientific societies should assume a larger responsibility for the planning and fulfilment of nationally important objectives within their discipline.
3. The Biological Survey (Terrestrial Arthropods) is to be regarded as a model for biological surveys for other groups of organisms, the national centre for which would be at the National Museum of Natural Sciences in Ottawa. Hence, all components of the fauna and flora should eventually be included in a biological survey of Canada, and initiatives to this end should be taken by the relevant individuals, agencies and societies.

### Roles:

1. The general role of the Natural History Survey organization should be the encouragement of biological survey effort from a national perspective, through discussion and examination of programs, facilities and policy in systematic and faunistic work, and acting as a centre for information on resources and current operations.
2. The Natural History Survey of Canada should encourage the publication of systematic and faunistic work through established channels, and should itself develop or publish bibliographies, reviews and comprehensive or individual studies, whenever appropriate. Since previously published information relevant to a Natural History Survey is widely scattered, guides to this literature are needed to support the future development of the survey. The survey organization would be able to identify priorities, and to guide the development of syntheses with great authority. These roles, and the field cooperation engendered, would also foster the preparation of works on the fauna, including handbooks, keys, etc.
3. The Natural History Survey should periodically publish resource inventories, such as lists of workers, and lists of collections.

4. The survey organization should facilitate the contribution of existing national and regional efforts and collections to the objectives of the survey, but should not itself acquire systematic collections. The survey would therefore further the discovery, organization and publication of basic knowledge on the flora and fauna of Canada primarily through the encouragement and stimulation of existing resources in order to support, not compete with, other agencies.
5. The Natural History Survey should propose desirable projects to appropriate agencies. The fulfilment of specific entomological needs could also be assisted by the Natural History Survey acting in an advisory capacity, with respect to the scientific design of projects and contracts or the location of qualified personnel.
6. Government agencies should be encouraged to discuss their needs with the survey, through the development of appropriate mechanisms.