



The Song Sparrow

**Newsletter of Bird Protection Quebec
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April 2008



Barbara Frei

Ecology and Management of the Bobolink When Grasslands Go Bad... the BOBO of Breeding in Hayfields with Barbara Frei

Monday 7 April 2008 at 8:00 PM

A major consequence of worldwide grassland habitat loss is the parallel loss of grassland birds. In North America, with the near disappearance of the natural grasslands, grassland bird numbers have plummeted, with 22 of 25 species facing population declines. The loss of native grassland has forced these birds to relocate to hayfields and pastures. These alternate habitats, which once provided a haven for birds, now serve as an ecological trap, as agricultural intensification has led to habitat degradation and increased bird mortality.

Bobolinks, well-known and loved spring songsters, are obligate grassland generalists, and like many grassland birds, are suffering crippling population declines. Yet recent research concerning the Quebec Bobolink population is lacking, despite the fact that the species is undergoing one of the most severe breeding population declines across its entire range. The plight of how to “keep

common birds common” motivated Barbara Frei’s research on Bobolinks. In an effort to recommend feasible local management practices, Barbara aimed to “see” the habitat through the eyes of the Bobolink and investigate nest-site selection and nesting success in local farmland habitats.

Barbara Frei is working toward the completion of her M.Sc. thesis at McGill University. She is a bander and assistant coordinator at the McGill Bird Observatory, and is under contract with the Canadian Wildlife Service to publish a technical report on the conservation and management of Bobolinks in Quebec. She has also served as an expert witness in the battle against a wind-farm planned for Wolfe Island, Ontario, recognized as a Level 4 Important Bird Area. Barbara will share her insight into Bobolink ecology and outline management practices suited for local Bobolink and other grassland bird conservation.

Jeff Harrison

Annual General Meeting Monday 5 May 2008 at 8:00 PM

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of Bird Protection Quebec will be held:

Monday 5 May 2008 at 8:00 PM
Knox Crescent Kensington &
First Presbyterian Church
6225 Godfrey Avenue, NDG.

Let’s Party!

All members are cordially invited to the end-of-year party following the AGM. Come and celebrate this year’s accomplishments. The party will begin immediately following the business of the AGM. There will be lots of good things to eat and drink, music, a quiz and very congenial company. Be sure to be there.

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Message From Our President

The excitement is mounting as the date for the Nature Canada Conference in Montreal (12 - 15 June) draws nearer. Plans for the conference are coming together and you can share them by clicking on the website (see below). We've worked hard to put together a first-class line-up of speakers on a variety of topics, field trips to all our favourite spots, good meals and promise of good fellowship.

It's not every day that we have the opportunity to meet fellow naturalists from all across the country and I hope that many members of Bird Protection Quebec will take advantage of this one. The last time the Nature Canada Conference was held in Montreal was in 1979, so it might be another two decades before we have another chance.

We also would like to think that we can count on members of BPQ to make sure that our guests have a splendid time in our vibrant, beautiful city, hosted by our lively and friendly Society. Your warm welcome and informed advice on "things to do" will ensure that they go away with happy memories of their time in Montreal.

For complete details of the program, the speakers, field trips and registration, please visit the Nature Canada Conference website at http://www.pqspb.org/NCconf_2008/nc08_home.htm.

For nine years we have held the line on membership fees, preferring to become more efficient and to cut our budgets rather than pass on increased expenses to the members. However, we will have to increase our fees come September renewal time.

Membership fees are used to support the workings of Bird Protection Quebec (insurance, audit fees, property taxes, etc.), as well as for services to members. Without them, the Society could not exist. We count on your understanding and your loyal and continued support.

Happy birding,



Overall Big Year Winners

Our hats are off to **all** Big Year participants! Everyone is a winner for participating, but some people must be singled out. Please see page 6 for further details.

Big Year

- 1st prize Mark Dennis - 266 species
- 2nd prize Olivier Barden - 265 species
- 3rd prize Sylvie Vanier - 216 species
- 17 & under Jeremy Pauzé (14 years of age) - 76 species

Big Day Olivier Barden - 176 species broke Quebec record of 166

Big Sit Claudette Cormier and Germain Savard - 62 species, - surpassed Quebec record of 46

Big Sit Olivier Barden - 51 species - surpassed Quebec record of 46

Big Sit Wayne Grubert - 49 species - surpassed Quebec record of 46

Big Sit Mark Dennis - 47 species - surpassed Quebec record of 46

Backyard List Claudette Cormier and Germain Savard - 170 species

Backyard List (traditional category) Jean Gregson - 79 species

Most Lifers Sophie Cauchon - 53 species

Photograph of the Year

- 1st prize Francis Bossé
- 2nd prize Chuck Kling
- 3rd prize Mona Wizenberg

People's Choice for Photograph of the Year Jean De Marre

Bird Protection Quebec



■ Observation ■ Education ■ Conservation

Bird Protection Quebec is the operational name of The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds.

Established 4 January 1917

Officers

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**Deadline for the next newsletter:
28 July 2008**

Education

Barbara MacDuff and David Mulholland gave a presentation on winter birds to residents of the Maxwell Residence in Baie d'Urfé. The residents have the pleasure of watching birds at feeders from their communal dining room and were pleased to learn more about these winter visitors.

Lynn Miller gave an entertaining talk entitled "Birds in the Garden" to approximately 80 members of the Dorval Garden Club. Judging by the number of questions after the talk, the presentation was a complete success.

David Mulholland gave two talks on feeder birds to the Grade Five classes at St. John Fisher School in Pointe Claire. This was a "kick-off" to bird projects that the children will be working on in the classroom over the next several months.

Remember to check out the Bird of the Month on the BPQ website (www.pqspb.org/education.html) and to keep 13 April open for a children's trip to Baie du Febvre to see the Snow Geese.

Funding is available for young people, ages 13 to 17, to attend the weeklong Doug Tarry Young Ornithologists' Workshop held in the summer at Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario. The workshop focuses on hands-on learning and training in field ornithology. Participants will learn how to identify, age and sex birds, and to study their populations and behaviour. For more information on this and other Education Committee activities, please contact Barbara MacDuff, 514-457-2222, email barb.macduff@sympatico.ca; or Lynn Miller, 450-458-2169, email mbeland@securenet.net.

Last Call for Point Pelee

At the time this issue went to press, there were still places available on the Point Pelee camping trip, 13-16 May. Cost per person is around \$52.00. If you are interested, contact Martin Bowman, 613-347-1655, email pict@riverlink.ca.

Big Sit 2008

Whether you are a "twitcher wanna-be", a weekend birder, a feeder-watcher or simply want a taste of competitive listing, then we have an event for you. The rules are simple:

- Set aside one hour over the weekend (16, 17, 18 May)
- Pick a location (no geographic restrictions)
- Bird by yourself or with a group
- Record all species heard or seen
- Submit your list, the time & coordinates of your "Sit" and any interesting anecdotes or photos by mail to: Wayne Grubert, 779 Main Road, Hudson QC, J0P 1H0, or email wgrubert@hotmail.com.

Last year, the team of Claudette Cormier and Germain Savard set a new record of 62 species in 60 minutes, a very high bar to surpass! However, records are made just to be broken, as this year's Big Year clearly proved. The challenge is out there - will this record hold or will it be beaten? Whatever the outcome, the birding and birding accounts are sure to be fun.

Wayne Grubert

Île aux Basques Weekend Trip

24 - 25 -26 May 2008

A cottage on Île aux Basques has been reserved for a weekend during the nesting season, a privileged time to be there and offered only to recognized ornithological groups. Owned by La Société Provancher, Île aux Basques is situated in the St. Lawrence estuary, opposite the south shore town of Trois Pistoles (250 kilometers east of Quebec City). Access to the island is by boat, only at high tide, departing from the wharf at Trois Pistoles. We will cross to the island on 24 May, at about noon, and return to the mainland in the early afternoon on Monday 26 May. (N.B. This is not the May long week-end).

Helen Meredith, who knows this island sanctuary well, will once again coordinate the trip. If you are interested in reserving a place, contact Helen as quickly as possible, 514-369-2778, email helen.meredith@sympatico.ca. The deadline to sign up is 20 April.

The island is enchanting and there are no permanent human residents. The cottage is comfortably rustic with dorm-style sleeping arrangements (bunk beds for 14). This is a self-catering, bring-your-own-sleeping-bag trip. The approximate cost will be \$70 per person for two nights' accommodation, about \$30 per person for the boat ride to/from the island, plus food and gas money. From Montreal expect six hours of driving time to get to the wharf at Trois Pistoles.

For further information about the island, please visit www.qc.ec.gc.ca/faune/faune/html/mbs_ile_aux_basques.html.

Helen Meredith

Informal Evening Field Trips

Good news for alumni of the birding course given for many years at John Abbott College by Peter Mitchell, first with Bob Carswell and then with Steve Charlton. That course is not being given this year, but you will be delighted to know that Peter will be leading his popular informal field trips at 6:00 PM on Tuesday evenings this spring. He looks forward to seeing you there. *New participants are also most welcome.* The schedule will be as follows:

- April 1 - Île Perrot
- April 8 - Parc des Rapides, LaSalle
- April 15 - Île Perrot
- April 22 - Île Bizard Nature Park
- April 29 - Cap St. Jacques Nature Park
- May 6 - Morgan Arboretum
- May 13 - Île Bizard Nature Park
- May 20 - Hudson

Welcome New Members

A warm welcome to new members: Lina Bardo, Anjou; Elizabeth Cuthill, Montreal; Michael Fleming and family, St. Bruno; and Anne Scott, Hudson Heights. We look forward to seeing you on our field trips and at our meetings. Be sure to come to the Annual General Meeting on 5 May; you'll learn lots about Bird Protection Quebec and meet many interesting people at the post-business party.

Envoi

As we come to the end of another “newsletter year,” I would like to thank everyone who has helped out with the newsletter since I took over as editor six years ago. I am grateful to all who contributed articles, photographs and ideas. Thank you for taking the time to share some of your knowledge and passion with the rest of us. It has been a privilege to work with you throughout these past years. There have been some challenges along the way, but for the most part it has been a positive learning experience - and fun too.

I would also like to thank my co-editor Diane Demers; the members of the proofreading team: Jean Bacon, Averill Craig, Diane Demers, Jean Harwood Gregson and Zofia Laubitz; Membership Secretary Sharon Veysey for maintaining such an up-to-date mailing list; and, hidden behind the scenes, the staff at Anlo PDC: Pat, Jia and Phyllis, who always managed to get the newsletter printed and delivered, even under the severest of time constraints. *The Song Sparrow* exemplifies teamwork.

Like all aspects of life, the secret to success is renewal. In that spirit, I am pleased to announce that Marie-Anne Hudson has accepted the editorship of *The Song Sparrow*. Marie-Anne brings solid editing skills, creative vision and a strong ornithology background to the job. She officially begins her new post with the August issue.

Marie-Anne, Bird Protection Quebec welcomes you warmly as editor - we are looking forward to reading the August newsletter! Thank you for stepping forward.

Gay Gruner

2008 Summer Series of Birding

The 5th annual Summer Series of Birding will take place this summer, between late June and late August, with a series of summer field trips. Last year's series of nine field trips yielded a total of 117 different species; an average of 49 species per trip.

As in previous years, the destination for each trip will be determined about mid-week each week, with details to be posted on the Songsparrow email group. We will, once again, attempt to incorporate a few new destinations into the trip schedule, plus revisit a few locations which proved very productive over the past summers. The trips will be scheduled for Saturday mornings; however, an occasional Sunday outing may be possible.

We will monitor various rare bird postings throughout the summer and, if possible, organize outings to locations at, or close to, the location of these rare sightings.

If there are any locations that you feel would be interesting new destinations, please feel free to send along your suggestions. If you wish to receive weekly trip notices, or if you have questions regarding specific trips, please contact Sheldon Harvey, 450-671-3773, email ve2shw@yahoo.com.

We look forward to another exciting Summer Series of Birding in 2008.

Sheldon Harvey



Marie-Anne Hudson brainstorms ideas for the August issue of the newsletter.

Interview With New Editor

Gay: What do you want to tell our members about yourself?

Marie-Anne: I guess I would like to start by saying that I am quite excited about taking on the editorship for *The Song Sparrow*. I know I will be joining a wonderful group of people who will help me throughout my time as editor. I look forward to learning about the inner workings of BPQ and spending time with the folks who make up the club and make it the conservation, education and observation force-of-nature that it is.

Gay: In what direction will you be taking *The Song Sparrow*?

Marie-Anne: I think it is fantastic the way it is - you have done a wonderful job over the past six years, as Sheila Arthur did before you. However, being the new kid on the block, I feel I need to put my own stamp on our *Song Sparrow*, from little things like tinkering with layout to dealing with larger issues such as moving towards electronic publishing, a contentious and important issue. I would like to get more students involved, perhaps through interviews with students studying ornithology in Quebec. Finally, I would like to invite members of BPQ to submit, submit, submit! Please remember that there is no newsletter without you, so I implore you to show us your art talent, your writing skills and your birdy trivia. The deadline for the next newsletter will be at the end of July. Do not be shy; please send me your submissions or your ideas via email at marie-anne.hudson@mcgill.ca.

Baillie Birdathon

The Baillie Birdathon is challenging, exhilarating, exhausting and - beware - addictive!

More than 7,000 people participate in and/or sponsor the Baillie Birdathon in May of every year. During a 24-hour period in May, birders attempt to find as many bird species as they can, sponsored at a flat rate, or on a per-species basis. Each birder designates a conservation group to receive a portion of the funds they raise, with the balance providing funding essential to Bird Studies Canada's efforts to study and conserve birds and their habitats.

For more information or to register, contact Bird Studies Canada, 1-888-448-2473, or visit www.bsc-eoc.org/support/birdathon/index.jsp?lang=EN&targetpg=overview.

A Good Old Fashioned Cat Fight

A Review in Verse of David Bird's January Lecture



When David came to talk of cats,
And their impact on the birds,
He was prepared with many stats,
To back up fervent words.

Of hunting drive innate he spoke,
And unchecked reproduction,
Of how that pet you love to stroke,
Can cause wholesale destruction.

This country has four million cats,
Reports of their predation,
Claim billions die (that's birds not rats) -
Cats can't resist temptation.

Australia's feral cats are cursed,
For they've wiped out whole species,
With us the barn cats are the worst,
Field birds show sharp decreases.

Cats should roam free your neighbours say?
But they may be converted,
If you can demonstrate a way,
Some deaths may be averted.

For house cats love to hunt a bird,
Especially round your feeder,
So to precautions please be spurred,
Become your neighbours' leader.

Grow thorny bushes to protect,
Birds at your feeding stations,
A sprinkler use that can deflect,
By sensing cats' vibrations.

Keep cats inside (or at the least
When baby birds are fledging),
And bell that puss, so he can't feast,
By hiding in the hedging.



Spring Arrival Dates

Pierre Bannon has been compiling data on spring arrival dates of migrating birds for over fifteen years. Using data collected between 1992 and 2007, he calculates the mean arrival date for each species. The table is an important scientific record and a valuable reference for all birders.

Visit Pierre's website for the latest update on this year's spring migration dates:

<http://pages.videotron.com/pbannon/tableau19922006.htm>

Pierre also maintains the records of the Winter Waterfowl Census:

<http://pages.videotron.com/pbannon/canards19822006.htm>

Nature Canada Conference

We Need You!

Our major fund-raiser at the Nature Canada Conference will be a Silent Auction. We need donations, minimum value \$20 plus. (Tax receipts may be issued for donations.) What to donate?

- Art work and crafts, bird or nature related
- Bird and nature books
- Optics - what about that old scope you've had in the attic for years since you up-graded?
- In kind donations - a gourmet dinner for four; cat or dog-sitting; dog-walking; lending your country place for a weekend; house-sitting for someone who is on vacation; let your imagination go wild.

We will also need volunteers to solicit donations from commercial enterprises, to pick up donated items, and to help at the Auction itself during the conference. You have been warned! Let's all have fun with this! Please contact Pat Steele, 514-369-3473, email patricia.steele@videotron.ca.

Pat Steele

Driscoll-Naylor Sanctuary

The Driscoll-Naylor Sanctuary is a three-acre property forming a sanctuary of marsh and woodland nestled in a residential part of Hudson to the west of Montreal. BPQ maintains Wood Duck boxes and bird feeders there. Many thanks to Ian Deakin, who has been monitoring and filling the bird feeder this fall and winter.

Spring Migration Monitoring at McGill Bird Observatory



Bird banding provides a unique opportunity to gather information regarding the timing and routing of migration, survival rates, social structures, population trends, and more. Even for the most common species, such research continues

to reveal surprises, while for species of concern it provides critical data for the planning of conservation and management efforts.

The McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) is gearing up for spring migration. Volunteers are needed to fill the many roles that are essential to the operation of the station: observers, net assistants, scribes and banders. You may also support the MBO



by participating in the Baillie Birdathon or making a pledge to the MBO Baillie team. For more details visit www.migrationresearch.org/mbo.html.

Above Left: White-throated Sparrow. **Above Right:** Red-wing Blackbird. Both these After-Second-Year birds were banded at the MBO.

Photos: Marie-Anne Hudson

Regroupement QuébecOiseaux Two New Honorary Members

Recently, the Board of Directors of Regroupement QuébecOiseaux elected two new honorary members: Jean-Luc Grondin and Mabel McIntosh. The status of Honorary Member is a significant honour awarded to people who, by their career, their commitment or their achievements, have provided meritorious service to Quebec's ornithological history.

Jean-Luc Grondin is an extremely talented painter in Quebec and his reputation extends far beyond Canada's borders. Through his art, he has greatly contributed to the popularity of birds as a subject of observation. His bird paintings have been widely distributed, from signed lithographs to calendars, as well as postage stamps. He has also contributed to the design of several "loonies" for the Royal Canadian Mint. Jean-Luc Grondin illustrated two books that have marked the history of Quebec's ornithology: *Les oiseaux du Québec* (1972) and *Nichoirs d'oiseaux* (1978).

Mabel McIntosh, Past President and long-time member of Bird Protection Quebec, has been a key figure in amateur ornithology in Montreal over the last 40 years. She established links with American birders in the 1960s and 1970s, including the then-emerging American Birding Association. She contributed to the modernization of birding and citizen science in Quebec, and to its expansion outside of the province. She is best known for her annual Hawk Watch in Montreal, which she has maintained for over 30 years, and which is now part of the network of Hawk Migration Association of North America. Mabel McIntosh has participated in several vigorous long-term surveys, such as the breeding bird censuses in Lachute and Verchères that she has followed for over 25 years.

Jean-Sébastien Guénette



Marsh Monitoring Equipment Available for Loan

2008 marks the fifth year of the Quebec Marsh Monitoring Program (QMMP), which is run by Bird Studies Canada (BSC) and supported by the Canadian Wildlife Service of Environment Canada (EC, Quebec Region). If you are a participant in the QMMP, please note that Bird Protection Quebec now holds a CD player and portable speakers purchased by BSC to help participants do their surveys. If you live in the Montreal area, and would like to borrow this equipment for your own survey, contact Averill Craig, 514-484-6575, email ak.craig@sympatico.ca, or Mary Ellen Graham, 514-484-6261, email marellgra@aol.com.

If you are interested in joining the QMMP program, visit www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/qcmmp for more information, or email Catherine Poussart, BSC's Quebec coordinator, cpoussart@bsc-eoc.org.

Averill Craig and Mary Ellen Graham



Sheldon Harvey

Barbara Szabo presents Francis Bossé with prize. Off camera, Richard Gregson mans the mic and Sheldon Harvey snaps the camera. Big Year team work!

Big Year of Birding Wrap-Up

Thanks everyone... it was great!

Eve Marshall, thanks for your big delicious idea! A Big Year of Birding to celebrate the 90th anniversary of one of North America's oldest birding organizations ... it couldn't have been more fitting!

Of course it took some quick planning, creative organizing and constant administering to pull it all off and keep it going. But keep going it did, all through 2007, with the event culminating at the monthly meeting on 3 March with the awarding of the prizes.

The success of the Big Year could certainly be defined in terms of numbers - \$5,700 in prizes awarded to 25 individuals or teams, 15 sponsors, 113 registered participants (47% coming from outside of the Montreal area). However, I think it is best defined in terms of the quality of the birders that the event attracted, the positive feedback it generated, the high participation by the francophone community and the more than respectable winner turnout at the awards ceremony.

On that last note, "*un grand merci*" to Olivier Barden who came in from Quebec City, Sylvie Vanier from St-Eustache and Francis Bossé from St-Jean-sur-Richelieu (all new faces, by the way, to BPQ ...hope we'll see more of them). It was great to finally put faces to names.

Our sponsors were an integral part of the event and we appreciate their support: Société Duvetnor, Centre de la faune ailée, Swarovski, Vortex, La Maison de l'Astronomie, Éditions Michel Quintin, Club des ornithologues de la Gaspésie, Lire La Nature, Radio HF, Bird Studies Canada, Claybank Designs, Peter Gruner, Outdoor Photography Canada, Photo Life/Photo Sélection, and Simon's Cameras.

Thanks also go to our photo contest judges, Pierre Bannon, Régis Fortin and Bogdan Karasek, who faced the formidable challenge of selecting the photos-of-the-month.

Much time was devoted to translating the Big Year e-newsletters, website information and other correspondence into French - thank you Raymonde Simard for making us read well in the eyes of the francophone community.

And finally, I couldn't have been teamed up with better people than Richard Gregson and Sheldon Harvey...I think we made a great team!

Barbara Szabo

Ed. Note. BPQ thinks you made a great team too! Thank you Barbara, Richard and Sheldon. The Big Year was a huge success and great fun, too.



Nature Canada Conference Field Trip Program

As part of the Nature Canada Conference program we have developed a series of field trips to local and regional places of interest. All the trips will be run subject to a suitable number of registrants. They will depart from, and return to, the Conference headquarters at McGill's New Residence Hall at the corner of Avenue du Parc and Prince Arthur downtown. We hope to be able to offer pre- and post-conference trips as well, but they are still in the planning stages. More details, including costs, will be posted on the Nature Canada website when available (www.pqspb.org/NCconf_2008/nc08_home.htm).

If you are planning on registering for the conference, the cost of many of the 14 June trips will be included in your registration fee. If you are not registering, but want to go on a trip on 14 June, or any of the pre- or post-conference trips, we encourage you to do so. A list of the trips and associated costs is outlined below. We will have a limited number of places available. You can put your name on the waiting list (first-come, first-served) by contacting Jean Demers, 514-694-8240, email jeandemers@sympatico.ca. You can get more details about these trips, including leaders, and start and finishing times, by consulting our website.

Pre-Conference Trip

Wednesday 11 June to Thursday 12 June:

- Mont Tremblant Park

Saturday 14 June:

- Dundee-Huntingdon, \$10.00
- Bois de l'Île-Bizard Nature Park, \$10.00
- Refuge faunique Marguerite-D'Youville, Île St. Bernard, \$10.00
- Mont St. Hilaire Biosphere Reserve (UNESCO), \$15.00
- Montreal Botanical Garden, transportation & entrance fee
- McGill Bird Observatory & the Parc des Rapides, \$20.00

Post-Conference Trips

Sunday 15 June and Monday 16 June:

- Mount Gosford or Lac Mégantic

Sunday 15 June to Friday 20 June:

- Gaspé

Barbara MacDuff and Jeff Harrison

Red-breasted Mergansers at Kouchibouguac National Park

On 4 February, Shawn Craik enlightened us on the life history of the Red-breasted Merganser. Shawn is currently working on his Ph.D. at McGill University under Rodger Titman. He is also involved at the McGill Bird Observatory and a Director of Bird Protection Quebec.

The Red-breasted Merganser is not well known scientifically, partly due to the fact that they breed in low densities and in remote locations. Shawn's research was done on Tern Island at Kouchibouguac National Park, NB, and was conducted between 2002 and 2006. This island is home to the third largest Common Tern colony in the world and is classified as an Important Bird Area. The study involved nest searching, nest site measurements, brood habitat assessment, banding female mergansers and fitting some with radio transmitters in order to track them with their brood.

Results

97% of the nests were located in dense marram grass and 60% of the nests were successful. The rate of nest abandonment was high (40%), and might have been linked to habitat suitability and time of season when the eggs were laid. Nests located closer to an edge (an open area without grass) and nests that were laid early in the season showed a higher rate of abandonment. It was observed that Common Terns provided protection against predators such as Greater Black-backed Gulls - so much so that Shawn and his field assistants needed to wear hard hats when near the tern colony.

After searching unsuccessfully through a few nearby areas for females with broods, Shawn asked local park staff for input. They suggested an area where mergansers were often seen. This proved to be a very important site where post-breeding females went with their brood due to its shallow water, abundance of fish, and good habitat to hide in. The valuable help taught Shawn about the importance of citizen science and the contribution of local birders and park employees.

Shawn is presently analysing the data collected over the years and the results of his brood study will be published in the fall in the *Wilson Journal of Ornithology* (Volume 20, issue 3 or 4, 2008).

Not only did Shawn Craik captivate us as he taught us about the breeding ecology and life history of the Red-breasted Merganser, but as a bonus, we learned how to pronounce Kouchibouguac.

Interesting facts about Red-breasted Mergansers (RBME):

- One recorded nest found in an igloo
- RBMEs can spend one minute under water and dive up to 10 metres
- The world's fastest straight flying bird at 130 km/hour!
- Females sometime lay their eggs in other Red-breasted Merganser nests
- Average of eight eggs per nest and up to 24 in parasitized nests

Alain Goulet

Parlons d'oiseaux

Un bilan des observations intéressantes à Montréal
et à travers la province

par **Pierre Bannon**

Janvier-février 2008

Oie des neiges: une à Noyan 29 janv (M. Gauthier). **Canard chipeau:** 45 à Verdun 8 fév (P. Bannon). **Fuligule à tête rouge:** un à Noyan 23-25 fév (R. Boulet *et al.*). **Fuligule à collier:** le nombre d'hivernants est à la hausse: des oiseaux à Magog tout l'hiver (B. Courtemanche), LaSalle 10 janv (P. Bannon), Chambly 17 fév (S. Rioux, P. Bannon) et Ferme-Neuve 20 fév (G. Normandin). **Eider à tête grise:** un mâle imm. à Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka du 6 janv au 23 fév+ (S. Robert, G. Laperrière, pl. ob., ph.). **Arlequin plongeur:** l'oiseau signalé lors du RON de Montréal était encore au large de Verdun le 10 janv (P. Bannon). **Petit Garrot:** un à McMasterville 23 fév (D. Ouellette). **Dindon sauvage:** des oiseaux solitaires se sont aventurés à Kiamika 15 fév (MA. Montpetit) et au mont Sainte-Marie dans le nord de l'Outaouais 17 fév (B. Cloutier).

Plongeon huard: un à Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka 6 janv (S. Robert, G. Laperrière), deux à Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 23 fév (R. & J. Gregson). **Grand Héron:** un trouvé mort à Lingwick 14 janv (*fide* R. Morin). **Urubu à tête rouge:** des indiv. à Stoke 10 janv (J. Turgeon) et à Saint-Armand 17 janv (N. Bourdon). **Buse à épauettes:** une hivernant à Laval (pl. ob.). **Aigle royal:** encore cette année, quelques oiseaux ont hiverné dans le nord des Laurentides, à Sainte-Anne-du-Lac (MA. Montpetit). **Goéland brun:** un possible 2ième hiver à Verdun 23 fév (D. Demers) et un ad. à Sherbrooke 27 fév (R. Baeta). **Tourterelle turque:** l'oiseau signalé à Saint-Anselme en nov était toujours présent au début de mars (S. Audet, R. Labadie).

Chouette épervière: trois indiv. présents dans Lanaudière tout l'hiver. **Chouette rayée:** plusieurs oiseaux signalés hors de leur habitat. **Chouette lapone:** une incursion tardive dans Lanaudière et la région de Montréal avec cinq indiv. signalés à partir du 21 fév. **Nyctale de Tengmalm:** une dans les îles de Boucherville 21-23 fév (S. Sabourin).

Martin-pêcheur d'Amérique: des indiv. à Lac-des-Écorces 13 janv (MA. Montpetit *et al.*), Notre-Dame-du-Laus 20 fév (R. Bisson, D. Dallaire, A. Cloutier) et Saint-Jérôme 24 fév (S. Chevalier). **Pic à ventre roux:** seulement deux indiv. signalés régulièrement cet hiver: Châteauguay (pl. ob.) et Saint-André d'Argenteuil (C. Lemieux, P. Dubuc). **Troglodyte de Caroline:** bien en évidence avec une vingtaine d'indiv. signalés au cours de l'hiver. **Troglodyte mignon:** des indiv. à Cap Tourmente (S. Cloutier) et à l'île des Soeurs (P. Bannon) 15 janv. **Solitaire de Townsend:** l'oiseau signalé à l'île Notre-Dame le 31 déc était encore présent le 19 fév (P. Bannon). **Grive solitaire:** une à Aylmer 19-21 fév (G. McNulty). **Moqueur roux:** un à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 11-15 fév (C. Lalumière).

Bruant familier: un à Montréal 30 janv était toujours présent au début de mars (J. Harrison). **Bruant à couronne blanche:** des indiv. à Montréal 17 janv (A. Craig) et Laval

Birdviews

A summary of interesting bird sightings in Montreal
and around the province

by **Pierre Bannon**

January-February 2008

Snow Goose: one at Noyan 29 Jan (M. Gauthier). **Gadwall:** 45 on the river off Verdun 8 Feb (P. Bannon). **Redhead:** one at Noyan 23-25 Feb (R. Boulet *et al.*). **Ring-necked Duck:** the number of wintering birds was higher than usual: singles at Magog all winter (B. Courtemanche), LaSalle 10 Jan (P. Bannon), Chambly 17 Feb (S. Rioux, P. Bannon), and Ferme-Neuve 20 Feb (G. Normandin). **King Eider:** an imm. male at Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka 6 Jan through at least 23 Feb (S. Robert, G. Laperrière, m. ob., ph.). **Harlequin Duck:** the bird reported during the Montreal CBC was still on the river off Verdun 10 Jan (P. Bannon). **Bufflehead:** one at McMasterville 23 Feb (D. Ouellette). **Wild Turkey:** single birds ventured north to Kiamika 15 Feb (MA. Montpetit) and Mont Sainte-Marie in the northern Outaouais region 17 Feb (B. Cloutier).

Common Loon: one at Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka 6 Jan (S. Robert, G. Laperrière), two at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 23 Feb (R. & J. Gregson). **Great Blue Heron:** one found dead at Lingwick 14 Jan (*fide* R. Morin). **Turkey Vulture:** singles at Stoke 10 Jan (J. Turgeon) and at Saint-Armand 17 Jan (N. Bourdon). **Red-shouldered Hawk:** one overwintered at Laval (m. ob.). **Golden Eagle:** again this year, a few birds wintered in the northern Laurentians (Sainte-Anne-du-Lac) (MA. Montpetit). **Lesser Black-backed Gull:** a possible second-winter bird at Verdun 23 Feb (D. Demers) and an ad. at Sherbrooke 27 Feb (R. Baeta). **Eurasian Collared-Dove:** the bird reported at Saint-Anselme in Nov was still present in early March (S. Audet, R. Labadie).

Northern Hawk Owl: three indiv. were present in the Lanaudière region throughout the winter. **Barred Owl:** several birds ventured out of their woodland habitat. **Great Gray Owl:** a late movement was detected in Lanaudière and Montreal regions with five birds reported starting 21 Feb. **Boreal Owl:** one in the Boucherville Is. 21-23 Feb (S. Sabourin).

Belted Kingfisher: singles at Lac-des-Écorces 13 Jan (MA. Montpetit *et al.*), Notre-Dame-du-Laus 20 Feb (R. Bisson, D. Dallaire, A. Cloutier), and Saint-Jérôme 24 Feb (S. Chevalier). **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** only two birds were reported regularly throughout the winter: Châteauguay (m. ob.) and Saint-André d'Argenteuil (C. Lemieux, P. Dubuc). **Carolina Wren:** well in evidence with approximately 20 indiv. reported throughout winter. **Winter Wren:** singles at Cap Tourmente (S. Cloutier) and Nuns' Island (P. Bannon) 15 Jan. **Townsend's Solitaire:** the bird discovered at Île Notre-Dame 31 Dec was still present 19 Feb (P. Bannon). **Hermit Thrush:** one at Aylmer 19-21 Feb (G. McNulty). **Brown Thrasher:** one at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 11-15 Feb (C. Lalumière).

Chipping Sparrow: one at Montreal 30 Jan was still present in early March (J. Harrison). **White-crowned Sparrow:** singles at Montreal 17 Jan (A. Craig) and Laval

30 janv + (J. Perreault, ph.). **Cardinal à tête noire:** un mâle imm. découvert aux Îles de la Madeleine le 25 nov était toujours présent à la fin de fév (C. Roy). **Quiscale rouilleux:** un à Bergeronnes 14 fév (S. Belleau, P. Côté) et quelques-uns à Beauport 23 fév (R. Boutet).

Veillez communiquer vos observations intéressantes à: Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montréal, QC H4E 1P1. Tél: 514-766-8767 en soirée. Courriel: pbannon@videotron.ca

30 Jan + (J. Perreault, ph.). **Black-headed Grosbeak:** an immature male discovered in the Magdalen Is. 25 Nov was still present in late Feb (C. Roy). **Rusty Blackbird:** one at Bergeronnes 14 Feb (S. Belleau, P. Côté), and several at Beauport 23 Feb (R. Boutet).

Please report your interesting bird observations to: Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montreal, QC H4E 1P1. Tel: 514-766-8767 after 7:00 PM. Email: pbannon@videotron.ca

Monitoring Nest Sites of Species at Risk (SOS-POP)

This spring and summer Bird Protection Quebec will again participate in the province-wide program to monitor the nest sites of populations of bird species at risk in Quebec (*Suivi de l'occupation des stations de nidification des populations d'oiseaux en péril du Québec - SOS-POP*). This year the species to be monitored (not all found in the Montreal area) are: Harlequin Duck; Barrow's Goldeneye; Horned Grebe; Least Bittern; Bald Eagle; Golden Eagle; Peregrine Falcon; Yellow Rail; Piping Plover; Caspian Tern; Roseate Tern; Short-eared Owl; Red-headed Woodpecker; Loggerhead Shrike; Sedge Wren; Bicknell's Thrush; Golden-winged Warbler; Cerulean Warbler; Grasshopper Sparrow; Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow. In addition, Barn Owl and Louisiana Waterthrush have been newly added to the list of species covered by the SOS-POP program. However, monitoring them, as well as five other species also added to the list of those at risk in Quebec, will be handled differently in 2008. Please refer to the article in the right-hand column entitled, "Report your Observations of these Species."

In the hope that more volunteers will participate in the program, the SOS-POP coordinator requested that a copy of the English version of the observation sheet be enclosed with this newsletter. Volunteers are provided with these observation sheets and a detailed guide (both available in English or French), as well as a topographic map indicating one or more known breeding sites. Locations must be visited at least once during the species' nesting period, or more frequently if no evidence is found during the first visit. Should a new site be found, you will be asked to record detailed information. Your reports will be entered in the SOS-POP data bank, and will help in protecting the nesting sites of species at risk.

If you have participated in the program already, or can identify by sight or ear the species concerned and would like to take part, please contact BPQ's representative for SOS-POP, Averill Craig, email ak.craig@sympatico.ca. For more information and a copy of the French version of the observation sheet, visit www.quebecoiseaux.org/sospop.

Averill Craig

Right: Common Loon on Nest by Jean De Marre. Big Year winner of the People's Choice for Photo of the Year.

Report Your Observations of these Species

Barn Owl, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird, Chimney Swift, Common Nighthawk, Louisiana Waterthrush and Red Knot have all been added this year to the list of species at risk in Quebec. Known nest sites will be monitored in due course under the SOS-POP province-wide nesting survey. This year, in preparation, SOS-POP is seeking the help of all BPQ members in reporting observations of these species using the ÉPOQ checklist, and noting details of location and type of breeding behaviour using the codes from the Quebec Breeding Bird Atlas.

ÉPOQ checklists are available free of charge at BPQ monthly meetings or can be downloaded from our website (www.pqspb.org/checklists.html), as can the codes for breeding behaviour, which are also given in the SOS-POP Submission Form enclosed with this newsletter. You can submit the completed ÉPOQ checklists to Jean Demers at our monthly meetings or mail them to Jean at the BPQ post box (see address details on page 2), or by direct data entry at www.oiseauxqc.org/feuillelet.jsp.

Since the Red Knot does not breed in Quebec, it will be sufficient to record the number of migrating birds and their precise location, paying particular attention to the presence of any leg-bands, their colours and arrangement. Any sighting of the Barn Owl or the Louisiana Waterthrush should also be reported as soon as possible to the SOS-POP coordinator, Pierre Fradette, 1-877-367-3745 (toll-free), email sos-pop@quebecoiseaux.org, who will also provide more detailed information if required.

Averill Craig



Bringing Back the Bobolink: Grassland Bird Conservation on a Local Level

For those of us who wake up to the morning chorus characterized by the sweet call of the Savannah Sparrow, the poignant notes of the Eastern Meadowlark and the bubbly song of the Bobolinks, spring mornings may seem a little quieter this year. Grassland birds, as a group, are facing the fastest and steepest decline of any other behavioural guild in North America. One of the species that is disappearing is the Bobolink (*Dolichonyx oryzivorus*), once a common breeder in grasslands and farmlands. In the past, the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence region was home to one of the largest breeding populations of Bobolinks. But habitat loss and earlier hay cutting are leaving little undisturbed habitat for nesting.

A priority for the conservation of grassland birds is management action on private land. Currently, public grasslands and protected areas are few and far between. In contrast, the agroecosystems encompass a huge percentage of land, with more than half the world's ecologically productive land being farmed. Often these are considered "ecological sacrifice areas" in conservation planning. But the unexplored possibilities are endless: you do not have to buy shade-grown coffee to help conserve birdlife thousands of kilometres away - although this is a great idea, just make sure it is fair trade *and* organic. Better still to look towards helping the species that may be breeding close to or even in your own backyard! So, make a difference this spring, or encourage someone you know to do so. By planning conservation-based grassland agriculture in Quebec, the province may ultimately provide the most grassland bird habitat in northeastern North America.

Most local breeding populations of Bobolink fledge around the 3rd or 4th week of June (see Fig. 1). Over the last 40 years the average hay-cropping date has advanced and, in Quebec, generally occurs around 24 June. This means nestlings or vulnerable fledglings are crushed or chopped to bits during hay cutting. Even more

disturbing are recent reports that not only are crows and gulls opportunistically eating the few escaping young, they are attacking and consuming the frantic and distracted adults. A single day of hay cropping can wipe out both generations.

Management should be two-fold, with ideally (1) delaying hay cropping and planting a mixture of grass and forbs (broad-leaved herbaceous plants) to attract nesting Bobolinks; and (2) limiting the attractiveness of early-cut fields by reducing spring cover and avoiding the vegetative characteristics that attract Bobolinks.

Steps for conserving Bobolinks

Delay hay cutting: Most young leave the nest around 24 June (weather and year dependent) and are still vulnerable for 5-7 days before their feathers fully develop. Delaying hay cutting by 1 or 1.5 weeks can substantially increase the number of surviving young (see Fig.1), while still providing hay with high enough crude protein for animal fodder. Hay that is cut even later guarantees high survival of fledglings, and can be used to supplement the diets of dairy cattle to increase manure consistency, and for outdoor cattle in winter to help

regulate body-temperature.

Plant or allow a mixture of forbs: Bobolinks prefer fields with a mixture of grass and forbs such as red and white clover, birdsfoot trefoil, common dandelions, the latter being an important food source in spring.

Minimize your ecological trap: Both naïve and experienced birds may choose to nest in early-cut fields since in spring they are attractive habitats. They can be dissuaded in two ways, (1) by cutting the fields late the previous year or early in spring to minimize the amount of vegetative cover during mid-spring (May) when males are selecting territories; or (2) planting fields with pure timothy or pure alfalfa. These should attract a lower number of nesting birds due to the lack of forbs. Please note that I do not advocate these monocultures, but recognize that if early hay cropping must occur, the fields it occurs on should be made to support the smallest number of nesting grassland birds, so that the minimal amount of destruction occurs. Ideally, if conventional fields are treated in the way outlined above, they will be able to provide suitable and safe nesting habitat while also fulfilling their role as managed agricultural fields.

Barbara Frei

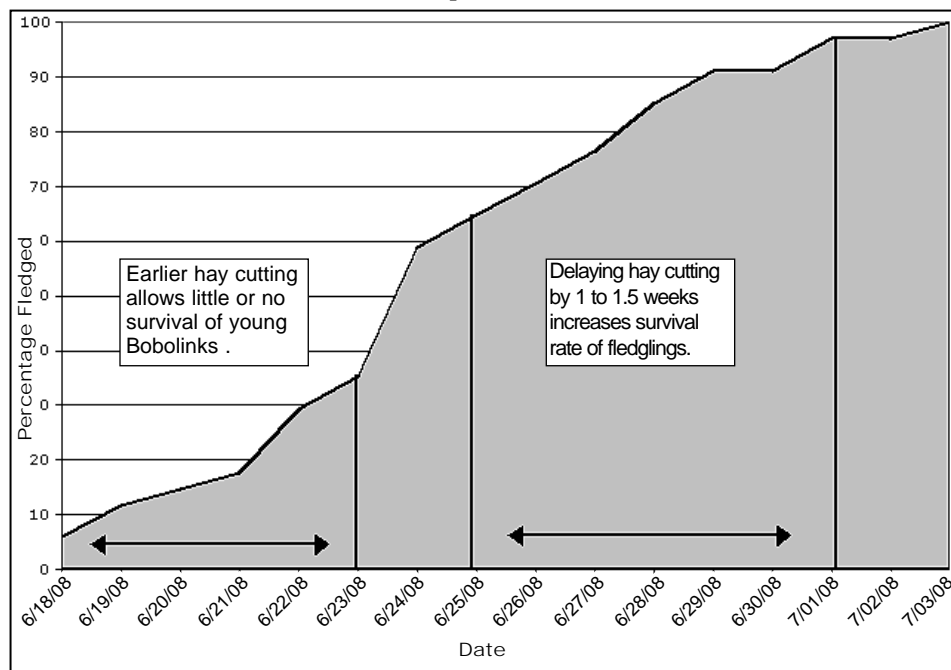


Figure 1.

Field Trip Diaries

- 26/01/08 **STE-MARTHE, ST-CLET, STE-JUSTINE** **Leader: Wayne Grubert**
Weather: Early fog, -19°C up to -9°C by midday. 19 birders 20 species
Bird of the Day: Snowy Owl spotted eating a vole!
Other Birds of Note: Rough-legged Hawk, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Shrike, C. Raven, Lapland Longspur.
- 02/02/08 **MOUNT ROYAL CEMETERY** **Leader: Chuck Kling**
 Trip cancelled due to snowstorm.
- 09/02/08 **VARENNES, VERCHÈRES & BOUCHERVILLE** **Leader: Sheldon Harvey**
Weather: Cloudy and cold. 13 birders 28 species
Birds of the Day: Pine Grosbeak, European Goldfinch.
Other Birds of Note: Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Glaucous Gull, American Robin.
- 16/02/08 **HUDSON** **Leader: Barbara MacDuff**
Weather: Sunny, -22°C. 8 birders 16 species
Birds of the Day: Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak.
Other Birds of Note: Red-breasted Nuthatch, American Robin, Common Redpoll.
- 23/02/08 **MORGAN ARBORETUM** **Leader: Betsy McFarlane**
Weather: Sunny, -8°C. 12 birders 14 species
Bird of the Day: Northern Shrike.
Other Birds of Note: Pileated Woodpecker, Common Raven, Bohemian Waxwing, Pine Grosbeak, C. Redpoll.
- 01/03/08 **GRENVILLE** **Leaders: Jacques Bouvier, Martin Bowman**
Weather: Snow, at times heavy, -6°C. 8 birders 19 species
Bird of the Day: Bald Eagle.
Other Birds of Note: Canada Goose, Common Raven, Common Redpoll, Hoary Redpoll, White-throated Sparrow.

Field Trip Diaries are compiled by Sheldon Harvey

Winter Waterfowl Count 1-23 Feb 2008 Dénombrement des canards hivernants 1-23 Fév 2008 Coordinator: Pierre Bannon	St. Lawrence River Montréal Region	St. Lawrence River Valleyfield Region*	Châteauguay River	Richelieu River	Rivière des Prairies Rivière des Mille- îles	2008 total	2007 total
Mute Swan/Cygne tuberculé						0	0
Snow Goose/Oie des neiges				0		0	2
Canada Goose/Bernache du Canada	27	0	0	2	9	38	293
Wood Duck/Canard branchu		0			0	0	4
Gadwall/Canard chipeau	45	0				45	53
American Wigeon/Canard d'Amérique	0				0	0	8
American Black Duck/Canard noir	55	41	55	195	199	545	792
Mallard/Canard colvert	730	833	392	1271	1776	5002	8107
Mallard X Black/Colvert X Noir				3	20	23	17
Northern Pintail/Canard pilet	0	0		1		1	4
Green-winged Teal/Sarcelle d'hiver				0		0	1
Canvasback/Fuligule à dos blanc						0	0
Redhead/Fuligule à tête rouge				1		1	0
Ring-necked Duck/Fuligule à collier	0			1		1	2
Greater Scaup/Fuligule milouinan		0				0	3
Lesser Scaup/Petit Fuligule						0	0
King Eider/Eider à tête grise		1				1	0
Harlequin Duck/Arlequin plongeur						0	0
Long-tailed Duck/Harelde kakawi						0	0
Bufflehead/Petit Garrot	0			1		1	1
Common Goldeneye/Garrot à œil d'or	1425	283		125	3	1836	1026
Barrow's Goldeneye/Garrot d'Islande	3					3	1
C. Goldeneye X Barrow's Goldeneye						0	0
Hooded Merganser/Harle couronné	7	0	2	26		35	20
Common Merganser/Grand Harle	690	1637	1	561	30	2919	1327
Red-breasted Merganser/Harle huppé				0		0	1
Total	2982	2795	450	2187	2037	10451	11662



Upcoming Field Trips - Prochaines Excursions

Coordinators: Martin Bowman, 613-347-1655; Wayne Grubert, 450-458-5498

Saturday 12 April - samedi 12 avril

www.oies.com/Saisons_par_saisons/saisons_2.htm#printemps

BAIE DU FEBVRE

Leader:

Jean Demers
Clémence Soulard
514-694-8240
jeandemers@sympatico.ca

8:30 AM ****New Driving Instructions from previous years**** Meet at the Route Janelle lookout at Baie du Febvre. Two possible driving routes. First route: Take Highway 30 east to Sorel and then Highway 132 east to Baie du Febvre. Look for Route Janelle on your left. Alternate route: Take Highway 20 east to Exit 185 past Drummondville and then Route 255 north to Highway 132. Turn left and look for Route Janelle almost immediately on your right. Allow 90 minutes driving time from Montreal. Looking for waterfowl, hawks, early spring migrants and thousands of migrating Snow Geese. **All day.**

8 h 30 ****Nouvelles indications**** Rassemblement au poste d'observation (cache) situé le long de la route Janelle, à Baie-du-Febvre. On propose deux trajets. Premier trajet : Prendre l'autoroute 30 en direction est jusqu'à Sorel puis prendre la route 132 en direction est jusqu'à Baie-du-Febvre. Tourner à gauche sur la route Janelle, juste après l'intersection avec la rue principale. Deuxième trajet : Prendre l'autoroute 20 en direction est jusqu'à la sortie 185 située après Drummondville. A partir de cette sortie, prendre la route 255 en direction nord jusqu'à l'intersection avec la route 132. Tourner à gauche sur celle-ci. Immédiatement après, tourner à droite sur la route Janelle. Durée du trajet : 1h30. À la recherche de milliers d'Oies des neiges, d'oiseaux aquatiques, de rapaces et d'autres migrateurs. **Toute la journée.**

Saturday 19 April - samedi 19 avril

HUDSON

Leader:

Barbara MacDuff
514-457-2222
barb.macduff@sympatico.ca

8:00 AM Meet at the CPR station in Hudson. Highway 40, exit 22 onto Côte St. Charles north, right on Main Street, left on Wharf Street. Looking for waterfowl, hawks and early spring arrivals. **Half day.**

8 h 00 Rassemblement à la gare C.P. sur la rue Wharf, Hudson. Prendre l'autoroute 40, sortie 22, et tourner à droite sur la Côte St-Charles nord jusqu'à la rue Main. Tourner à droite et se rendre à la rue Wharf puis tourner à gauche. Espèces recherchées : sauvagine, buses et migrateurs précoces. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday 26 April - samedi 26 avril

PARC REGIONAL DE LONGUEUIL

Leader:

Sheldon Harvey
450-671-3773
ve2shw@yahoo.com

8:00 AM Meet in the parking lot of Parc régional de Longueuil, entrance off Boulevard Jean-Paul Vincent, Longueuil. After the Champlain Bridge, take Highway 132 East (direction Longueuil/Varenes). Continue on Highway 132 East to Exit 11 - Boulevard Roland-Therrien. Take Exit 11, which puts you heading south on Boulevard Roland-Therrien. Follow Boulevard Roland-Therrien a short distance to Boulevard Fernand-Lafontaine. Turn left (you can only turn left!) on to Boulevard Fernand-Lafontaine. Follow Boulevard Fernand-Lafontaine to the second major intersection that will be Boulevard Jean-Paul-Vincent. Turn right on Boulevard Jean-Paul-Vincent. On your right, a short distance along, you will see the entrance to the park, clearly marked with signs. Turn right into the park and follow the road to the parking lot on the left, which will be our meeting point. Parking is free and there is no admission fee to access the park. Washroom facilities are available at a few locations in the park. **Half day.**

8h00 Rassemblement dans le stationnement, à l'entrée du parc régional de Longueuil, entrée boul. Jean-Paul-Vincent, Longueuil. Après avoir traversé le pont Champlain, prendre la route 132 en direction est, vers Longueuil et Varenes. Continuer sur la 132 jusqu'à la sortie 11 pour le boul. Roland-Therrien. Celle-ci mène au boul. Roland-Therrien, en direction sud. De là, continuer sur une courte distance jusqu'au boul. Fernand-Lafontaine. Tourner à gauche sur celui-ci (seule possibilité!) et continuer jusqu'à la deuxième intersection principale, où vous tournerez à droite sur le boul. Jean-Paul-Vincent. Après une courte distance, l'entrée du parc est clairement indiquée, sur la droite. Prendre cette entrée et continuer jusqu'au stationnement, situé à gauche. Le stationnement est gratuit et il n'y a aucun frais d'entrée pour le parc. On retrouve des toilettes publiques en quelques endroits sur le site. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday 3 May - samedi 3 mai

<http://www.rrca.on.ca/conservation-areas/cooper-marsh.html>

COOPER MARSH

Leader:

Martin Bowman
613-347-1655
pict@riverlink.ca

8:00 AM Take Highway 20 (Ontario Hwy 401) and exit at Lancaster, Ontario (exit 814). Follow Highway 2 west, and follow signs to Cooper Marsh. Park in the gravel parking area. Allow 1 to 1-1/2 hours travel time. A walking trip. Looking for waterfowl, egrets, herons, hawks and passerines. Could be muddy. **Half day.**

8 h 00 À partir de l'autoroute 20 (Ontario 401), prendre la sortie pour Lancaster, Ontario (sortie 814). Prendre l'autoroute 2 ouest et suivre les indications pour le marais Cooper. Prévoir entre 1h et 1h30 de voyage. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux aquatiques, de buses, de passereaux. Excursion à pied. Des chaussures imperméables sont recommandées. **Demi-journée.**

Sunday 4 May - dimanche 4 mai

PHILIPSBURG TRAIL CLEARING - DÉGAGEMENT DES PISTES

Leader:

Sandy Montgomery
514-482-0565
sandy_montgomery@sympatico.ca

10:00 AM Take exit 22 off Highway 10 to Hwy 35, which joins Highway 133 in St. Jean. Highway 133 to Philipsburg, turn right at the flashing light down Montgomery Ave. to the waterfront, then left into the Montgomerys' driveway. If you can help, call Sandy. It's fun, and the birding can be great. **All day.**

10h00. Tourner à la sortie 22 de l'autoroute 10 vers l'autoroute 35, qui rejoint l'autoroute 133 à St. Jean. Prendre l'autoroute 133 vers Philipsburg, tourner à droite aux feux clignotants sur l'avenue Montgomery vers le bord de l'eau, ensuite à gauche dans l'entrée de garage des Montgomery. Si vous pouvez aider, appeler Sandy. Ce sera agréable et l'observation des oiseaux peut être fantastique. **Toute la journée.**

Saturday 10 May - samedi 10 mai

COVEY HILL

Leaders:

John Hodges
450-247-2267
hodjon@gmail.com
David Smith
450-247-2185
drsmith@drsmithsoftware.com

8:00 AM Meet at Havelock Town Hall just south of the intersection of Highways 202 & 203. Two possible driving routes. First route: Cross the Mercier Bridge and follow Highways 207 & 221 to St-Rémi, 209 to St-Chrysostome and 203 to Havelock. Second route: Cross the Champlain Bridge and follow Highway 15 south to exit 6. Take Highway 202 west to Havelock. (Look for Upland Sandpiper on poles about 5 km west of Hemmingford.) Bring your lunch and be prepared for a good hike and a spectacular view of the gorge. Looking for Common Raven, Hooded Merganser, Wood Duck, warblers and other forest passerines. **Bring identification acceptable to US customs. All day trip.**

8 h 00 Rassemblement à la mairie de Havelock, située au sud de l'intersection des routes 202 et 203. On propose deux trajets. Premier trajet : Traverser le pont Mercier et suivre les routes 207 puis 221 jusqu'à St-Rémi; de là, continuer sur la route 209 jusqu'à St-Chrysostome puis prendre la route 203 jusqu'à Havelock. Deuxième trajet : traverser le pont Champlain puis prendre la sortie pour l'autoroute 15. Continuer sur la 15 jusqu'à la sortie 6, qui mène à la route 202, puis continuer sur celle-ci jusqu'à Havelock. (Rechercher la Maubèche des champs, qui a l'habitude de se poser sur des panneaux, à environ 5 km à l'ouest d'Hemmingford.) Apporter votre déjeuner. Préparez-vous pour une bonne randonnée avec vue impressionnante sur la gorge. Espèces recherchées : Grand corbeau, Harle couronné, Canard branchu, parulines et autres passereaux forestiers. **Apporter une pièce d'identité pour les douanes américaines. Toute la journée.**

Sunday 11 May - dimanche 11 mai

SUMMIT PARK LOOKOUT - AU BELVÉDÈRE DU PARC SUMMIT

Leader:

Darlene Harvey
450-671-3773
settertwins@yahoo.com

7:00 AM Meet at Summit Park Lookout on Summit Circle in Westmount. To reach Summit Circle, head north on Côte-des-Neiges. Turn left on to The Boulevard. Proceed to Chemin Belvedere and turn right. Drive up the steep hill on Chemin Belvedere to Summit Circle. Looking for spring migrants. **Half day.**

7 h 00 Rassemblement au belvédère sur Summit Circle à Westmount. Pour vous rendre au Summit Circle, dirigez vous vers le nord sur Côte-des-Neiges. Tourner à gauche sur le Boulevard. Poursuivre jusqu'au Chemin Belvédère et tourner à droite. Monter la côte abrupte sur le Chemin Belvédère jusqu'à Summit Circle. **Demi-journée.**

Please see **FIELD TRIPS** page 14, 15 and 16.

Saturday 17 May - samedi 17 mai

<http://www.pqspb.org/sanctuaries.html>

GEORGE H. MONTGOMERY SANCTUARY, PHILIPSBURG

Leader:

Sandy Montgomery
514-482-0565
sandy_montgomery@sympatico.ca

8:30 AM Meet at the Motel Frontière. From Montreal take the Champlain Bridge, Highway 10 east to exit 22, Highway 35 south to St. Jean to join Highway 133 south to Philipsburg. Continue past flashing light, cross to the east side of the highway at the motel. Note the small PQSPB sign; turn in and park in the PQSPB lot. Good choice of trails from long & strenuous to short & easy. Looking for migrating passerines, waterbirds and hawks. Bring a lunch. **All day.**
8h30 Rassemblement au Motel Frontière. De Montréal, traverser le pont Champlain et continuer sur l'autoroute 10 est. Prendre la sortie 22 et rejoindre l'autoroute 35 sud. Continuer sur celle-ci jusqu'à Saint-Jean. De là continuer sur l'autoroute 133 sud en direction de Philipsburg. Dépasser le feu clignotant puis traverser la voie inverse (133 nord) pour rejoindre le motel, situé du côté est de la route. L'entrée du motel permet d'accéder au stationnement de POQ, situé juste au sud. Bonne variété de sentiers dont les niveaux de difficulté vont de longs et ardues à courts et faciles. Apporter un lunch. Espèces recherchées : passereaux migrateurs, sauvagine et rapaces. Apporter votre déjeuner. **Toute la journée.**

Monday 19 May - lundi 19 mai

www.squirrelworks.ca/birdingmontreal/Site_Information/ile_bizard.htm

PARC-NATURE DU BOIS-DE-L'ÎLE-BIZARD

Leader:

Felix Hilton
514-631-3437
hiltonfb@sympatico.ca

7:15 AM From Highway 40 exit St. Jean Boulevard north, left (west) on Gouin Boulevard, right (north) on Jacques Bizard Boulevard, over bridge, left (west) on Chevrement, right (north) on de l'Église, right (east) on Bord-du-Lac to park entrance, approximately 1 km. Parking: \$7.00. Looking for warblers, waterfowl and hawks. **Half day.**
7h15 De l'autoroute 40, prendre la sortie pour le boulevard St-Jean nord et continuer sur celui-ci jusqu'au boulevard Gouin. Tourner à gauche (ouest) sur Gouin et continuer jusqu'au boulevard Jacques-Bizard. Tourner à droite (nord) sur Jacques-Bizard et traverser le pont. Tourner à gauche (ouest) sur le boulevard Chevrement et continuer jusqu'à la Montée de l'Église. Tourner à droite (nord) sur celle-ci et continuer jusqu'au chemin du Bord-du-Lac. Tourner à droite (est) sur celui-ci et continuer jusqu'à l'entrée du parc (environ 1 km). Stationnement : 7,00 \$. Espèces recherchées : parulines, buses et sauvagine. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday 24 May - samedi 24 mai

<http://www.heritagesbernard.qc.ca/rfmy.htm>

REFUGE FAUNIQUE MARGUERITE D'YOUVILLE on ÎLE ST-BERNARD

Leader:

Tom Long
450-692-1590
ram_air455@yahoo.com

7:30 AM Meet at the welcome centre of the Refuge Faunique Marguerite D'Youville on Île St-Bernard. From Montreal, take Highway 138 and cross the Mercier Bridge. Stay right coming off the bridge and take Highway 138 through Kahnawake into Châteauguay. As you enter Châteauguay, turn right onto Boul. St-Francis. Follow St-Francis all the way to the end where it meets the Châteauguay River at Boulevard Salaberry Nord. Turn right onto Salaberry Nord. Continue past the railway bridge. The next bridge that crosses the road and river is Pont de la Sauvagine. Turn right after the bridge. There will be a sign and an entrance ramp for the bridge for Beauharnois and Refuge Faunique Marguerite d'Youville. Cross the bridge and continue to Notre-Dame Nord. At the flashing red light turn right onto Notre-Dame and follow the signs to Refuge Faunique Marguerite D'Youville. Cross the small bridge onto Île St-Bernard. The parking area is to the right. Looking for waterbirds, summer breeding birds and late migrants. The grass paths can be wet in the morning so wear appropriate footwear. **Half day.**
7h3 0 Rassemblement à l'accueil du refuge faunique Marguerite-D'Youville, l'île Saint-Bernard. De Montréal, prendre la route 138 et traverser le pont Mercier. A la sortie du pont, garder la droite et continuer sur la 138, passé Kahnawake, jusqu'à Châteauguay. A l'entrée de Châteauguay, tourner à droite sur le boul. St-Francis. Continuer sur celui-ci jusqu'à l'intersection avec le boul. Salaberry Nord, qui longe la rivière Châteauguay. Tourner à droite sur Salaberry nord, passer en-dessous du pont de la voie ferrée et continuer jusqu'à un deuxième pont : il s'agit du pont de la Sauvagine. Tourner à droite juste après avoir passé sous ce pont et accéder à une rampe d'accès au pont. Des indications pour le refuge faunique Marguerite-D'Youville y sont visibles. Traverser le pont et continuer jusqu'à la rue Notre-Dame Nord. Au feu rouge clignotant, tourner à droite sur Notre-Dame et suivre les indications pour le refuge. Traverser le petit pont qui mène à l'île Saint-Bernard. Le stationnement est à la droite. Excursion à pied, à la recherche d'oiseaux aquatiques, d'oiseaux nicheurs et de migrateurs tardifs. Considérant que les sentiers gazonnés sont généralement humides le matin, il est conseillé de porter des chaussures adéquates. **Demi-journée.**

Wednesday 28 May - mercredi 28 mai

HUDSON - EVENING TRIP - EXCURSION DU SOIR

Leader:

Barbara MacDuff
514-457-2222

barb.macduff@sympatico.ca

7:00 PM Meet at Finnegan's Market, 775 Main Road, Hudson Heights. Take Highway 40 to Exit 22. Turn right onto Côte St-Charles. Drive to its end at T-intersection with Main Road. Turn left. Drive (about 2 km) to Finnegan's Market parking lot on left. Looking for rails, woodcock and owls.

19h00 Rassemblement au Marché Finnegan, 775 Main Road, Hudson Heights. Prendre l'autoroute 40, sortie 22. Tourner à droite sur Côte St-Charles. Suivre cette route jusqu'à sa fin à Main Road. Tourner à gauche. Poursuivre (2 km environ) jusqu'au stationnement du Marché Finnegan, à gauche. Espèces recherchées : râles, hiboux et bécasse d'Amérique.

Saturday 31 May - samedi 31 mai

PIEDMONT

Leader:

Mildred Kelly
514-288-6524

8:00 AM Take Highway 15 north from Montreal. Turn off at exit 58. Follow Highway 117 north for about 1.6 km to the first traffic lights. Turn right and cross the bridge at the bottom of the hill. Keep to the right and follow Chemin de la Rivière to the end of the paved road. Looking for breeding warblers, Eastern Bluebird, Bobolink, other nesting passerines and Common Raven. Bring a lunch. **All day.**

8 h 00 De Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 15 nord, sortie 58. Continuer sur la route 117 nord jusqu'au premier feu de circulation et tourner à droite. Traverser le pont en bas de la côte, garder la droite et suivre le chemin de la Rivière jusqu'à la fin de la route pavée. Espèces recherchées : parulines nicheuses, Merle-bleu de l'Est, Grand corbeau, Goglu des prés et autres passereaux nicheurs. Apporter votre déjeuner. **Toute la journée.**

Saturday 7 June - samedi 7 juin

ALFRED/FORÊT LAROSE

Leader:

Jacques Bouvier
613 524-1154

bouvier@magma.ca

4:00 PM Meet at Alfred's Ultramar Service Station. Take Autoroute 40 to the Ontario border (signpost Ottawa) and continue on Highway 417 west to exit 9 (Route 17). Follow Route 17 beyond Hawkesbury towards Alfred (about 32 km from Exit 9 of 417). Proceed to the edge of Alfred. The Ultramar gas station is on your right at the corner of Route 17 and Peat Moss Road. Allow about 90 minutes driving time from Montreal.

We will visit the Alfred Sewage Lagoons and adjacent open areas and eat a late supper in Alfred. To encourage the local economy we hope everyone will eat at a restaurant.

We will be looking for ducks, shorebirds, and open country birds such as Grasshopper Sparrow and Clay-colored Sparrow. After supper we will depart for Larose Forest where we will be seeking such forest-nesting birds as Evening Grosbeak, Cape May Warbler and at dusk, Whip-poor-will. **Trip ends at about 9:00 PM.**

16h00 Rassemblement au poste d'essence Ultramar d'Alfred. À partir de Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 417 ouest jusqu'à la sortie 9 (route 17). Prendre la route 17 et dépasser Hawkesbury en continuant jusqu'à Alfred (environ 32 km). Le poste d'essence Ultramar se trouve à l'est d'Alfred à votre droite, au coin des routes Peat Moss et 17. Prévoir environ 1h30 de route à partir de la région de Montréal.

On prévoit arrêter à la "lagune" d'Alfred et examiner les champs adjacents. Ensuite on soupera à Alfred. Afin d'encourager l'économie d'Alfred on souhaite que chacun mangera à un restaurant du coin. Espèces recherchées : canards, limicoles, oiseaux de terrains découverts tel Bruant sauterelle et Bruant des plaines. Après le souper on se dirige vers la Forêt Larose où les espèces recherchées sont le Gros-bec errant, la Paruline tigrée et à la brûnante, l'Engoulevent bois-pourri. **La sortie se termine vers 21h00.**

Saturday 14 June - samedi 14 juin

NATURE CANADA CONFERENCE FIELD TRIPS

Contact:

Jean Demers
514-694-8240

jeandemers@sympatico.ca

If you are attending the NC conference, the cost of many of the trips will be included in your registration fee. Non-registrants are also welcome to attend, but a minor charge will apply.

- Dundee-Huntingdon, \$10.00
- Bois de l'Île-Bizard Nature Park, \$10.00
- Refuge Faunique Marguerite D'Youville on Île St-Bernard, \$10.00
- Mont St. Hilaire: UNESCO Man and Biosphere Reserve, \$15.00
- Montreal Botanical Garden, your car or public transport, plus cost of admittance
- McGill Bird Observatory and the Parc des Rapides, \$20.00

Saturday 21 June - samedi 21 juin

SOUTHWESTERN QUEBEC - SUD-OUEST DU QUÉBEC Early Bird Solstice Trip - Excursion lève-tôt du solstice d'été

Leader:

Martin Bowman
613-347-1655
pict@riverlink.ca
Cell: 613-361-7064
(N.B. Use Cell number only on morning of trip!)

5:30 AM Meet on 3ème rang, just off Highway 201, near Ormstown. From Montreal take the Mercier Bridge and follow Highway 138 to Ormstown. Turn left on Highway 201 to 3ème Rang (called Rang de Tullochgorum on opposite side of 201). Turn right on 3ème rang and wait there for the group.

From the West Island take Highway 20 west to exit 14 (Highway 201) for Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. Take Highway 201 through Grande-Île, following signs for Ormstown. There are a number of lights and turns on this route (see a map). Stay on 201 beyond Ormstown. Turn right on 3ème Rang and wait there for the group.

This trip will explore some of the roads of southwestern Quebec in the Ormstown-Huntingdon area on the first full day of summer. We are starting early because some of the roads are busy and parking can be difficult.

Looking for birds of the forests and of open country. Possible species include Yellow-throated Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, Field Sparrow, Eastern Bluebird as well as more common passerines. This is a driving trip; carpooling is recommended. **Half day trip with possibility of extension into the early afternoon.**

5 h 30 Rassemblement le long du 3ème rang, près de la route 201 (Ormstown). De Montréal, prendre le pont Mercier. Tourner à gauche sur la route 201 et continuer jusqu'à l'intersection avec le 3ème rang (indiqué rang Tullochgorum de l'autre côté). Tourner à droite sur le 3ème rang et y attendre le reste du groupe.

De l'Ouest-de-l'Île de Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 20 direction ouest jusqu'à la sortie 14 (route 201) pour Salaberry-de-Valleyfield. Prendre la route 201 et traverser Grande-Île en suivant les indications pour Ormstown. On rencontre un bon nombre de lumières et tournants sur cette route : consulter une carte. Continuer sur la 201 après avoir traversé Ormstown. Tourner à droite sur le 3ème rang et y attendre le reste du groupe.

Cette excursion permettra d'explorer certaines routes du sud-ouest du Québec, dans la région de Ormstown et Huntingdon, en cette première journée de l'été. L'excursion débute tôt car certaines routes sont très achalandées et il peut être difficile d'y trouver un stationnement. À la recherche d'oiseaux forestiers et d'oiseaux d'espaces ouverts. Parmi les espèces susceptibles d'être rencontrées, notons le Viréo à gorge jaune, la Paruline à ailes dorées, le Bruant des champs, le Merlebleu de l'Est ainsi que d'autres passereaux plus communs. Les déplacements se feront principalement en voiture. Le covoiturage est recommandé. **Demi-journée, avec possibilité de poursuivre jusqu'en début d'après-midi.**

Jim Houghton Spring Warbler Walks

Summit Park Lookout - Au Belvédère du Summit Park

7:00 AM Tuesdays 22, 29 April; 6, 13, 20, 27 May

7 h 00 les mardis 22, 29 avril; 6, 13, 20, 27mai

Summit Park is a wooded area, transected with numerous footpaths on which vehicles are not permitted. From mid-April to late May, spring migrants find the Summit an attractive place in which to rest and feed. White-throated Sparrows and kinglets are among the earliest arrivals, waves of warblers pass through in the month of May. At least 33 warbler species have been seen there over the years, and 24 warbler species are seen each year. Come and participate in one or all of the Jim Houghton Spring Warbler Walks led by Kyra Emo; it's a perfect start to a spring day.

Trip Advice - De rigueur pour les excursions



Cancellations: Trips are rarely cancelled, but in case of extreme weather check with the leader.

Clothing: Dress warmly and wear waterproof footwear, even if the day seems mild and dry.

Transportation: Contact the leader if you need or can offer a lift.

Food: Bring plenty to eat and drink, even on half-day trips.

Annulations : En cas d'intempérie, vérifier la possibilité d'une annulation avec le responsable.

Habillement : Vêtements chauds et bottes imperméables sont toujours de rigueur.

Transport : Téléphoner au responsable si vous voulez faire du covoiturage.

Nourriture : Amener toujours une collation et quelque chose à boire.

André Pelletier