

THE SONG SPARROW

Newsletter of Bird Protection Quebec
Bulletin de la Protection des oiseaux du Québec

Volume 48 Number 6

May 2006

Celebrate Spring



& Birds & Birding

At our annual members' party
following the AGM

We'll have:

Music

Birdy talk

A quiz

Door prizes

Great eats

Great drinks for all

Come join us for
Fun & Fellowship



Annual General Meeting

Monday 8 May 2006

8:00 PM

Fraser Hickson Library

4855 Kensington Avenue, NDG

Breeding Bird Surveys at Philipsburg

The Philipsburg Committee and the Conservation Committee want to gather data on the birds of the George H. Montgomery Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Philipsburg. In June and July 2006, breeding evidence will be collected on the birds at the sanctuary, based on standard breeding bird atlas methodology. Point count surveys will be conducted in 2007.

Birders are needed to help survey the sanctuary this year. You do not have to be an "expert": intermediate birding skills, a basic familiarity with most of southern Quebec's breeding birds and a keen interest are all that is required. We will provide information and training at an initial surveying session in June and then you will be able to survey on your own, at your own pace. This will be a great opportunity to develop skills for Quebec's next breeding bird atlas!

For more information, contact Betsy McFarlane, 514-457-9315; email: betsy.mcfarlane@sympatico.ca.

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Message From Our President

I have heard it said that many of our members would like to know more of what we do. We are likely negligent in informing you about our activities and what we have accomplished. The activities that most people identify us with are those described regularly in this newsletter: the "monthly" lectures and our field trips. I will identify some activities that may be less familiar to you and would urge you to consult our website: www.birdprotectionquebec.org.

One aspect that distinguishes us from most other bird clubs is that we own sanctuaries and are actively involved in the acquisition of land to preserve habitat for birds. We have a Property Acquisition Committee whose main function is to evaluate prospective properties for conservation value and to recommend action to our Board of Directors concerning these properties. They are particularly concerned with enhancing the sanctuaries we already possess. Included among our sanctuaries are the George H. Montgomery Migratory Bird Sanctuary in Philipsburg, Île aux Perroquets near Blanc Sablon, the Driscoll-Naylor Sanctuary in Hudson, Ghost Hill Farm at Breckenridge and Alderbrooke Marsh near Sutton. Our society has contributed to the purchase of properties with other conservation organizations, notably the Nature Conservancy of Canada - Quebec, to protect bird habitat. There is also an effort to provide stewardship at each site.

One of our priorities is to promote education about birds and their habitats. To further this aim we have an Education Committee that provides information and activities for pre-school and elementary school groups as well as diverse community organizations. The Nature Adventure Centre, currently based at Bishop Whelan Elementary School in Lachine, also provides outreach to children. The Education Committee is trying to establish a junior bird club or "youth wing". For many years our Bird Fair was a means of informing the public about birds. You will learn in this edition of *The Song Sparrow* that the Board has decided that the Bird Fair will take a break for a year to restructure the current format of the Bird Fair.

Our Conservation Committee stays informed about factors affecting local birds and their habitats in order to promote conservation. Recently this group issued a statement about a crow hunt in St. Lazare, participated in city-wide discussions about bird kills at lighted buildings at night and monitored the potential development of the city's harbourfront. They have initiated correspondence, receiving Board approval, with provincial ministers responsible for road development toward l'Anse à l'Orme and a possible park in the Lake of Two Mountains. The Conservation Committee has also been involved in surveys monitoring bird populations at several specific local sites and proposes to monitor the birds at our sanctuary in Philipsburg.

We have committees which monitor hawk migration, monitor and maintain bluebird nest boxes, decide on research grants to be awarded and provide support grants. Others are concerned with membership services, marketing of Bird Protection Quebec and communications. Recently we have updated our checklist of the birds of Montreal. Altogether there are 26 standing committees that deal with these issues and more. If you have a strong interest in any of these areas and would like to contribute by volunteering your time, energy and expertise, we would welcome your participation.

Rodger Titman

Monthly Meetings 2006 - 2007

Heads-up! Enter next year's meeting dates in your agenda now. All meetings take place at Fraser-Hickson Library, 4855 Kensington Avenue, NDG.

25 September, 6 November, 4 December 2006
8 January, 5 February, 5 March, 2 April, 7 May 2007

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

President	Rodger Titman
Vice-Presidents	Eve Marshall Lance Laviolette
Hon. Vice-Presidents	Mabel McIntosh Robert Carswell Peter Mitchell
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Assoc. Treasurers	Christine Murphy Jean Gregson
Secretary	Jean Bacon
Assoc. Secretary	Kyra Emo
Membership Secretary	Sharon Veysey
Website Manager	Richard Gregson
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**Deadline for the August newsletter
23 July 2006**

Earl Litchfield

Sadly, the Society has learned of the passing of former Board member and enthusiastic birdwatcher, Earl Litchfield, in London, Ontario, on 5 March 2006.

Earl was not just a birder; he was also a proficient naturalist with an extensive knowledge of bird lore and habits, all acquired in the field. To find a Bobolink's nest, he once said, two people should walk along either edge of a field, each holding the end of a string. The bird will flush as the string grazes over it. To see Winter Wrens, he told me, one should never walk around looking for them, but just sit motionless on a mossy log in deep woods. Soon the birds will come flitting around, allowing one to observe this shy species at leisure. I often try this whenever I hear a Winter Wren and have found that Earl's recipe works. And, of course, I never see a Winter Wren without thinking of him.

While he was a member of the PQSPB, Earl took up ventriloquism, and he used to try out his acts on us, at our annual wine and cheese parties. At first he used the traditional ventriloquist's dummy with whom he engaged in a repartee of corny jokes. A star was born: Earl the Pearl! Soon he added a crow to his collection of "dummies". The crow knew how to slip the names of Society members into his conversations with Earl. Thus, to our great merriment, we would become the butt of Earl's "groaners". It was a sad day for the Society when Earl moved to London, Ontario.

Earl worked hard as a Board member, particularly in the areas of nest boxes and education. It was he who drew up the manual establishing the requirements for the Scout birding badge.

Our condolences to his family on the loss of Earl, whom we remember as a loyal friend dedicated to promoting the aims of the Society.

Margaret Arnaudin

Nature Adventure Centre

The NAC installed and regularly filled feeders outside the windows of the Kindergarten classes at Bishop Whelan Elementary School this winter. The young feeder-watchers were excited to see the birds and often theorized about what happened to the seed when they weren't there. They are looking forward to spring migration.

The grade five classes are gearing up to do a project on local birds. The Education Committee will provide the teachers with information and materials and will lead a field trip to Île Bizard Nature Park. The Ecomuseum will present a session on raptors.

National Wildlife Week was 27 March to 12 April. At the time of this notice, fifteen sessions had been booked.

David Mulholland

Well-deserved Break

Look for the next issue of *The Song Sparrow* in your mailbox on or about 28 August. The dedicated people who contribute articles and proofread the copy are taking a well-deserved break to do some birding. Many thanks to these talented individuals. You are thinkers and doers, and the newsletter is very grateful for your input.

Counting for the Boreal

A Contest to Celebrate International Migratory Bird Day

Saturday 13 May has been designated International Migratory Bird Day for 2006, around the theme The Boreal Forest: Bird Nursery of the Americas. Events will be held across North America and South America to celebrate and promote an understanding of boreal birds, many of which breed in Quebec. In this spirit, Bird Protection Quebec is holding a birding contest focusing on boreal birds. The contest will encourage birders to gather valuable data on these birds and to write about, photograph and draw them.

Under *Counting for the Boreal*, the objective is to observe on 13 May as many species of boreal birds as you can at a single site anywhere in Quebec, or the highest number of individuals of these species. Data must be submitted on ÉPOQ checklists, which will then be entered in the database. Prizes will also be awarded for the best original photo or drawing of a boreal bird, and for a short original essay or poem on a boreal bird, boreal birding experience or the theme of boreal conservation.

The deadline for entries is 31 May 2006. The winners, to be judged by the Conservation Committee, will be announced in June.

For complete contest details, contact Betsy McFarlane, 514-457-9315; email: betsy.mcfarlane@sympatico.ca or visit: www.birdprotectionquebec.org.

Tenth Annual Big Sit - May 2006

Whether you are a "twitcher wanna-be", a week-end 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 (20, 21, 22 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 and coordinates of your "Sit" and any interesting anecdotes or photos by mail: Wayne Grubert, 779 Main Road, Hudson QC, J0P 1H0, or email: wgrubert@hotmail.com.

We are still hoping to surpass Bob Barnhurst's record of 46 species seen in 1997 at Hungry Bay.

Wayne Grubert

Winter Bird-List Competition

Congratulations to Emma and Rachel Champagne-Wees and Krystina Maltais, winners of the Winter Bird List contest. Emma and Rachel saw 13 species while Krystina observed ten. List highlights included Snowy Owl and Common Redpoll.

Nest Boxes

Bird Protection Quebec maintains Eastern Bluebird nest boxes in the Hudson and Ste. Marthe areas. These boxes need to be monitored on a regular basis during May and June. If you would like to help with this activity, please call Barbara MacDuff, 514-457-2222; email: barb.macduff@sympatico.ca.

Thanks to Mary Hughes for making and donating a beautifully constructed Wood Duck box.

Bird Protection Quebec Officers and Directors 2006 - 2007

Bird Protection Quebec Nominating Committee 2005 - 2006

R. Titman (Chair), A. Craig, L. Laviolette, E. Marshall, B. MacDuff and B. McFarlane present the following slate:

Members nominated to serve as Directors of Bird Protection Quebec May 2006 - May 2009

Jean Bacon*	Alison Bentley	Martin Bowman	Jean Demers	Wayne Grubert
Marie-Anne Hudson	Eve Marshall*	Lynn Miller	Rodger Titman*	

*Member of the Executive

The following Directors were elected in May 2005 to serve as officers of Bird Protection Quebec until May 2007:

Rodger Titman	-	President
Eve Marshall	-	First Vice-President
Lance Laviolette	-	Second Vice-President
Kenneth Thorpe	-	Treasurer
Jean Bacon	-	Secretary

The following members were previously elected as Directors for three years:

Years remaining to be served in brackets.

Sheila Arthur (1)	Albert McArdle (1)	Averill Craig (1)	Kyra Emo (1)	Jean Gregson (2)
Jeff Harrison (2)	Sheldon Harvey (2)	Lance Laviolette (2)	Barbara MacDuff (1)	Gay McDougall (2)
Betsy McFarlane (2)	Helen Meredith (1)	Sandy Montgomery (1)	David Mulholland (1)	Christine Murphy (2)
Ken Thorpe (1)				

Bird Behaviour Course Brightens Winter Evenings

Each of the four lectures on bird behaviour which constituted our winter birding course offered participants a different way of looking at birds. Rodger Titman started us off with an investigation of breeding behaviour, not so much how birds do it, but more how they prepare for it. Rodger showed us many different examples of courtship behaviour and linked them with feeding and other behaviours, giving us an idea of how these behaviours may have evolved. Marcel Gahbauer's talk on migration amazed us with the tales of the heroic efforts many birds make twice every year. He also gave us insights into the scientific work that is being done to discover more about migration - how they find their way, for example. Marie-Anne Hudson's talk on nests was almost a workshop, as she brought in a variety of nests of different shapes and sizes to illustrate the different types and to explain their advantages for particular birds. The last lecture, by Louis-Joseph Asselin, was on bird flight, how different birds use different techniques to aid their particular lifestyle and how much humans have learned from birds in conquering the airways.

The series was a wonderful eye-opener for all participants and we thank our four lecturers most enthusiastically for their expertise and the generosity they showed in sharing it with us.

Eve Marshall
Chair, Membership Services Committee

Enthusiastic Response to COAQ Conference

Michel Bertrand's call for speakers at the *Congrès des ornithologues amateurs du Québec* (COAQ) Conference has met with such an enthusiastic response that all 44 slots are already filled - and this for an event that won't happen until the end of October. Eager birders should take note and mark the date on their calendars: Saturday 28 October, in St. Hyacinth. The first such conference, held in St. Jean in 2004, was an exciting event, with more than 300 birders gathering to hear twenty-minute quick-takes on all sorts of bird-related topics. An "extra" was the chance to meet and swap "war" stories with birders from all over the province - it was a grand event.

The fall *Song Sparrow* will publish information about the programme and how to register.

Eve Marshall

Nature Day

On Saturday 3 June 2006, Bird Protection Quebec will be participating in "Nature Day", an outdoor event organized by *Heritage Laurentien*, in conjunction with the borough of Ville LaSalle. The goal is to promote nature, conservation and ecology. Displays by groups from the fields of entomology, botany, paleontology, etc. will also be represented.

The event will take place from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM at Parc des Rapides in Ville LaSalle. If you would like to assist Bird Protection Quebec in the set-up, staffing, and/or the tear-down of our display for the day, contact Sheldon Harvey, 450-671-3773; email: ve2shw@yahoo.com.

Sheldon Harvey

Great Bird and Nature Fair Will Not Fly in 2006

For the past 21 years the month of November has been marked in the Bird Protection Quebec calendar by the advent of the Great Bird and Nature Fair. Many of you have volunteered to work on the Planning Committee or at the event itself over the years, and I'm sure most of you have attended the Fair at one time or another. It has been an incredibly successful event from very small beginnings in a church basement to one of the regular highlights of the fall fair season. Unfortunately, attendance has been slipping in the past few years. The event seems to be getting stale, people are not returning as they used to and there have been many grumblings about the sorry state of the venue.

After long discussions and the setting up of a special working group to review the issue in detail, the Board of Directors has decided to renew the Bird Fair by changing its format. We hope to move from a typical "Fall Fair" event, albeit with live birds, to an activity-centred event where members of the public and their children will be able to get some hands-on experience of birding, in the open air. No location has yet been decided upon, and it will have to be held no later than September to permit outdoor events. For

this year, unfortunately, we shall have to cancel the event altogether since there is not time to plan and implement the new look by late summer.

As always, the success of these initiatives depends on YOU, our members. Please get involved – give us a call, email or even snail mail, with your comments and suggestions. And please volunteer your time and expertise to help in the planning and implementation of this exciting new venture. We are looking for organizers to plan the event; fund-raisers to approach exhibitors, other nature groups and sponsors; public relations and advertising mavens; people to lead groups into the fields and woods; and anyone who is willing to pitch in. We must start planning now in order to hold such an event in late summer 2007. To put your name on the list of volunteers, contact Eve Marshall, 514-363-5313; email: eve.george@sympatico.ca. We may not contact you immediately since it will take some time to find a co-ordinator, but we will be in touch.

Bird Protection Quebec can be proud of the success of the Great Bird and Nature Fair. Now let's all get together and make the new event a highlight of the Montreal calendar!

Pat Steele

Hail to the Leaders

Our Field-trip Co-ordinators did a great job organizing our weekly outings in 2005-2006 and in '04, '03, '02... Bird Protection Quebec is very fortunate to have an exciting roster of field trips and dedicated trip leaders arranged year after year.

It's not a simple task. It demands constant evaluation of birding sites, matching seasons with sites and the birds, scouting new locations and exhorting more trip leaders to

volunteer their time and expertise.

Thank you to Co-ordinators Martin Bowman and Wayne Grubert and all field trip leaders for working on our behalf.

And, oh by the way, if anyone can suggest a new birding location or is willing to lead a trip, please contact Martin Bowman, 613-347-1655; email: pict@glen-net.ca, or Wayne Grubert, 450-458-5498; email: wgrubert@hotmail.com.

Field Trip Diaries

04/03/06	Montreal Botanical Gardens, QC Weather: Cold wind with sunny breaks. Bird of the Day: Pine Siskin Other Birds of Note: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing, American Robin, Dark-eyed Junco.	Leader: Wayne Grubert 11 birders 15 species
11/03/06	Amherst Island, ON Weather: Glorious spring-like day; sunny, 9° C. Bird of the Day: Ten Snowy Owls seen throughout the day. Other Birds of Note: Green-winged Teal, Northern Pintail, Redhead, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Common Goldeneye, Bufflehead, Common Merganser, Northern Harrier, Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, American Kestrel, Ring-necked Pheasant, Killdeer, Long-eared Owl (probable), Short-eared Owl, Horned Lark, Song Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Eastern Meadowlark (heard), Common Grackle.	Leader: Martin Bowman 28 birders 45 species
18/03/06	Parc des Rapides, LaSalle, Verdun Waterfront, Île-des-Soeurs, QC Weather: Cloudy, cold wind; -17° C windchill. Bird of the Day: Great Blue Heron (five) Other Birds of Note: Gadwall, American Wigeon, Bufflehead, Hooded Merganser, Red-winged Blackbird, Common Grackle.	Leader: Diane Demers 17 birders 20 species
23/03/06	Île Perrot, QC Weather: 8° C, calm. Bird of the Day: None indicated Other Birds of Note: Snow Goose, 13 duck species, Killdeer, Pileated Woodpecker, Song Sparrow.	Leader: Wayne Grubert 23 birders 36 species

Sheldon Harvey

Parlons d'oiseaux

Un bilan des observations intéressantes à Montréal
et à travers la province
par Pierre Bannon

Février-mars 2006

Durant cette période, le temps doux enregistré du 3 au 5 fév et du 10 au 14 mars fut responsable de l'arrivée très hâtive de quelques migrateurs.

Oie à bec court: une trouvée à Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu le 25 mars, une 9^{ème} mention provinciale et une date d'arrivée record (G. Zenaitis, P. Bannon, A. Messier). L'oiseau fut retrouvé à Saint-Basile plus tard le même jour (O. Barden, M. Raymond, S. Denault). **Oie rieuse:** des oiseaux à Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague le 19 mars (S. Rioux, J-S. Guénette), Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu (G. Zenaitis, P. Bannon, A. Messier, R. Chartier) et Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (M. Gagnon, S. Mathieu, N. Frappier, P. Laporte *et al.*) le 25 mars, et à Laval le 27 mars (G. Lachaine). **Oie des neiges:** un groupe de 40 oiseaux très hâtifs à Elgin le 5 fév (C. Lemoyne). **Bernache du Canada:** arrivée très hâtive dans le Haut-Richelieu: 100 le 4 fév (E. Samson, A. Lacasse), et 250 le 5 fév (M. Gauthier). **Cygne siffleur:** présences remarquables cette année: deux à Sainte-Barbe le 11 mars, revu le 27 mars (P. Éthier, S. Rochon), cinq cygnes sp. près de Saint-Jean le 12 mars appartenait probablement à cette espèce (M. & C. Arnaudin), sept à Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 16-17 mars, dont deux demeurant jusqu'au 24 mars (M. Gauthier *et al.*), deux à Saint-Blaise 16-24 mars (Y. Paquette, L. Simard, L. Gagné), trois à Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka le 18 mars (B. Barnhurst). **Canard branchu:** présences plus nombreuses cet hiver: deux femelles encore présentes en fév à Saint-Eustache (S. Vanier), une femelle encore à Beauport en fév (pl. ob.), un mâle à Noyan le 1^{er} fév (M. Gauthier, P. Bannon), une femelle à North Hatley le 19 fév, et une femelle à Victoriaville en janv (J. Ducharme). **Canard siffleur:** deux mâles à Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix le 18 mars ont établi un record d'arrivée hâtive (D. Paquette, D. Ouellette). **Canard chipeau:** un groupe de 23 indiv. a hiverné dans les rapides de Lachine (P. Bannon), un était à Sherbrooke le 19 fév (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon). **Canard souchet:** un mâle était toujours à Beauport en fév (m. ob.), tandis que deux mâles à Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix le 12 mars établissaient un record d'arrivée hâtive (E. Samson, A. Lacasse). **Hybride Colvert X Pilet:** un photographié à Sherbrooke le 19 fév (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon). **Sarcelle d'hiver:** un oiseau a hiverné à Bécancour (*fide* R. Barbeau). Un indiv de la race d'Eurasie, *crecca*, photographié à Noyan le 25 mars (P. Bannon, G. Zenaitis). **Fuligule à collier:** un hivernant à Sherbrooke 3-19 fév (B. Turgeon). **Fuligule milouinan:** jusqu'à 95 oiseaux à Tadoussac le 13 fév (R. Pintiaux).

Plongeon huard: un oiseau encore sur le lac Memphremagog le 3 fév (B. Turgeon). **Grèbe à bec bigarré:** des oiseaux à LaSalle le 7 fév, Sherbrooke le 19 fév (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon) et Boucherville le 15 fév (P. Joly) étaient probablement des hivernants. **Urubu à tête rouge:** un à Saint-Armand le 4 fév (P. Bannon, G. Zenaitis), un à Orford le 9 fév (S. Bergeron), et quelques-uns se nourrissant sur une carcasse à Bécancour au début de fév (*fide* R. Barbeau) étaient des

Birdviews

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

February-March 2006

During this period, two mild spells, 3-5 Feb and 10-14 March, were directly linked with the very early arrival of some migrants in our area.

Pink-footed Goose: one discovered at Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu 25 Mar, providing a 9th record for the province and a new record early date (G. Zenaitis, P. Bannon, A. Messier). The bird was spotted again at nearby Saint-Basile later the same day (O. Barden, M. Raymond, S. Denault). **Greater White-fronted Goose:** singles at Saint-Louis-de-Gonzague 19 Mar (S. Rioux, J-S. Guénette), Saint-Mathias-sur-Richelieu (G. Zenaitis, P. Bannon, A. Messier, R. Chartier) and Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (M. Gagnon, S. Mathieu, N. Frappier, P. Laporte *et al.*) 25 Mar, and at Laval 27 Mar (G. Lachaine). **Snow Goose:** a group of 40 very early birds at Elgin 5 Feb (C. Lemoyne). **Canada Goose:** birds appeared early in the Upper Richelieu valley: 100 on 4 Feb (E. Samson, A. Lacasse), and 250 on 5 Feb (M. Gauthier). **Tundra Swan:** a very good showing this year: two at Sainte-Barbe 11 Mar, seen again 27 Mar (P. Éthier, S. Rochon), five unidentified swans near Saint-Jean 12 Mar were probably this species (M. & C. Arnaudin), seven at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 16-17 Mar with two remaining until 24 Mar (M. Gauthier *et al.*), two at Saint-Blaise 16-24 Mar (Y. Paquette, L. Simard, L. Gagné), three at Saint-Stanislas-de-Kostka 18 Mar (B. Barnhurst). **Wood Duck:** the number of wintering birds was on the rise for this species: two females continued throughout Feb at Saint-Eustache (S. Vanier), a female also continued at Beauport in Feb (m. ob.), one male at Noyan 1 Feb (M. Gauthier, P. Bannon), a female at North Hatley 19 Feb, and a female at Victoriaville in Jan (J. Ducharme). **Eurasian Wigeon:** two males at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 18 March were record early (D. Paquette, D. Ouellette). **Gadwall:** a group of 23 indiv. overwintered at the bottom of the Lachine rapids (P. Bannon), one was at Sherbrooke 19 Feb (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon). **Northern Shoveler:** a wintering male was still at Beauport for most of Feb (m. ob.), while two males at Saint-Paul-de-l'Île-aux-Noix 12 March were record early migrants (E. Samson, A. Lacasse). **Mallard X Pintail hybrid:** one was photographed at Sherbrooke 19 Feb (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon). **Green-winged Teal:** a bird overwintered at Bécancour (*fide* R. Barbeau). A bird of the Eurasian race, *crecca*, was photographed at Noyan 25 Mar (P. Bannon, G. Zenaitis). **Ring-necked Duck:** a wintering bird at Sherbrooke 3-19 Feb (B. Turgeon). **Greater Scaup:** up to 95 birds at Tadoussac 13 Feb (R. Pintiaux).

Common Loon: at least one bird was still on Lake Memphremagog 3 Feb (B. Turgeon). **Pied-billed Grebe:** singles at LaSalle 7 Feb, Sherbrooke 19 Feb (S. Rioux, F. Gagnon) and Boucherville 15 Feb (P. Joly) were probably wintering birds. **Turkey Vulture:** one at Saint-Armand 4 Feb (P. Bannon, G. Zenaitis), one at Orford 9 Feb (S. Bergeron), and a few feeding on a carcass at Bécancour in early Feb (*fide* R. Barbeau) were very early migrants. **Red-shouldered Hawk:**

migrateurs hâtifs. **Buse à épaulettes:** une à Boisbriand le 4 fév semblait être un migrateur hâtif (L. & P. Simard), tandis qu'une autre à Québec le 25 fév était un hivernant (C. Boily, Y. Cossette). **Faucon gerfaut:** deux oiseaux continuaient de fréquenter le mont Saint-Hilaire (pl. ob.). **Pluvier argenté:** un à Cap-Rouge 23-24 mars contribuait une date d'arrivée record pour la province (P. Nadeau, J. Lachance). **Mouette blanche:** des ad. trouvés à Cap-aux-Meules (Îles de la Madeleine) le 21 fév (A. Richard) et à Lévis le 25 mars (J. Lachance).

Harfang des neiges: des nombres assez impressionnants, eg. 15 à Saint-Clet le 8 mars (M. Dennis), cinq à Mirabel le 4 mars (S. Robert *et al.*), et dix à Hébertville le 19 mars (*vide* G. Savard). **Chouette lapone:** leur nombre a augmenté dans la région de Montréal en fév et au début de mars, avec un total de 11 indiv. signalés. Un a même été trouvé au cimetière du Mont-Royal, au coeur de Montréal, le 20 fév (E. Samson). De bons nombres à Québec aussi. **Martin-pêcheur d'Amérique:** des oiseaux à Chambly le 1^{er} fév (P. Bannon), Lacolle le 4 fév (D. Ouellette), et Notre-Dame-du-Laus le 11 fév (D. Tremblay) étaient probablement des hivernants. **Pic à ventre roux:** un à Saint-Godefroid le 18 fév (M. & E. Arsenault), un couple est apparu à Châteauguay à partir du 4 fév (D. Demers, m.ob.). **Pic flamboyant:** plusieurs hivernages cet hiver, eg. quatre indiv. à Châteauguay le 6 fév (M-F. Breton, D-J. Léandri-Breton). **Sittelle à poitrine blanche:** un oiseau a hiverné à Tadoussac, à l'est de son aire (R. Pintiaux). **Troglodyte de Caroline:** jusqu'à cinq indiv. signalés à Cowansville à la fin de l'hiver (*vide* J-P. Santerre), deux à Répigny (G. Santiago), un à Charny (A. Charest), un à Châteauguay (D. Paquette), un à Philipsburg (J-C. Charbonneau), un à Léry (M. Groulx *et al.*), puis un à Dundee (P. Bannon, S. Denault). **Troglodyte mignon:** des oiseaux à Cap Tourmente le 15 fév (A. Rasmussen, J. Laporte) et à l'île Sainte-Hélène le 12 mars (L. Ladouceur-Côté) étaient des hivernants.

Solitaire de Townsend: des oiseaux à Beauport jusqu'à la mi-mars (J-M. Giroux), et Chicoutimi le 22 fév (*vide* G. Savard). **Grive à collier:** l'oiseau déjà signalé à Grande-Rivière était toujours présent à la mi-mars (A. Couture *et al.*). **Moqueur chat:** une mention rapportée à Havre Saint-Pierre le 18 déc (S. Cloutier), puis un à Hudson le 12 fév (A. Bentley). **Moqueur roux:** un à Maria à partir du début de fév (C. Lamarre, Y. Cyr, A. Couture). **Paruline à croupion jaune:** une à Matapédia jusqu'au 25 fév (C. Pitre) et une à Gaspé le 6 fév (D. Jalbert).

Tohi à flancs roux: un oiseau a hiverné à Sept-Îles (B. Duchesne). **Bruant des champs:** l'indiv vu à Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon était encore présent le 12 fév. **Bruant des marais:** un à Saint-Étienne-de-Beauharnois le 5 fév (A. Quenneville). **Bruant à couronne blanche:** un a hiverné à Dundee (A. Quenneville, D. Ouellette). **Quiscale rouilleux:** des nombres sans précédent cet hiver, eg. deux à Saint-Georges-de-Windsor le 11 fév (S. Deshaies), un à Baie-du-Febvre le 18 fév (R. Huxley *et al.*), un à Saint-Blaise le 25 fév (S. Mathieu *et al.*), et 12 à Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré 26-28 fév (J. Lachance, pl.ob.). **Bec-croisé des sapins:** un groupe de cinq-huit indiv. présents à Saint-Lazare 25-28 fév (D. Demers, pl.ob.).

Erratum: SVP, annuler la mention d'un Bruant des champs à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu le 15 janv.

one at Boisbriand 4 Feb was probably an early migrant (L. & P. Simard), while one at Quebec City 25 Feb was probably a wintering bird (C. Boily, Y. Cossette). **Gyrfalcon:** two birds continued at Mount-Saint-Hilaire (m. ob.). **Black-bellied Plover:** one at Cap-Rouge 23-24 Mar provided a record early date for the province (P. Nadeau, J. Lachance). **Ivory Gull:** single ad. were discovered at Cap-aux-Meules (Magdalen Is.) 21 Feb (A. Richard) and at Lévis 25 Mar (J. Lachance).

Snowy Owl: some excellent numbers included 15 at Saint-Clet 8 Mar (M. Dennis), five at Mirabel 4 Mar (S. Robert *et al.*), and ten at Hébertville 19 Mar (*vide* G. Savard). **Great Gray Owl:** there was a definite increase in the number of birds in the Montreal area in Feb and early Mar, with a total of 11 indiv. reported. One even reached Mount-Royal cemetery, in the heart of Montreal 20 Feb (E. Samson). Birds were also on the rise in the Quebec City area. **Belted Kingfisher:** singles at Chambly 1 Feb (P. Bannon), Lacolle 4 Feb (D. Ouellette), and Notre-Dame-du-Laus 11 Feb (D. Tremblay) were probably wintering birds. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** one at Saint-Godefroid 18 Feb (M. & E. Arsenault), a pair appeared at Châteauguay from 4 Feb onwards (D. Demers, m.ob.). **Northern Flicker:** more birds than usual apparently overwintered, eg four indiv. at Châteauguay 6 Feb (M-F. Breton, D-J. Léandri-Breton). **White-breasted Nuthatch:** one overwintered at Tadoussac, east of its range (R. Pintiaux). **Carolina Wren:** up to five indiv. were reported at Cowansville in late winter (*vide* J-P. Santerre), two at Répigny (G. Santiago), one at Charny (A. Charest), one at Châteauguay (D. Paquette), one at Philipsburg (J-C. Charbonneau), one at Léry (M. Groulx *et al.*), and one at Dundee (P. Bannon, S. Denault). **Winter Wren:** singles at Cap Tourmente 15 Feb (A. Rasmussen, J. Laporte) and St. Helen's Island 12 Mar (L. Ladouceur-Côté) were wintering birds

Townsend's Solitaire: singles at Beauport until at least mid-Mar (J-M. Giroux), and Chicoutimi 22 Feb (*vide* G. Savard). **Varied Thrush:** the bird previously reported at Grande-Rivière was still there in mid-Mar (A. Couture *et al.*). **Gray Catbird:** a belated report of a bird at Havre Saint-Pierre 18 Dec (S. Cloutier), also one at Hudson 12 Feb (A. Bentley). **Brown Thrasher:** one at Maria from early Feb onwards (C. Lamarre, Y. Cyr, A. Couture). **Yellow-rumped Warbler:** one continued at Matapédia until 25 Feb (C. Pitre) and one stopped at Gaspé 6 Feb (D. Jalbert).

Eastern Towhee: a bird overwintered at Sept-Îles (B. Duchesne). **Field Sparrow:** the bird at Saint-Lambert-de-Lauzon was seen until at least 12 Feb. **Swamp Sparrow:** one at Saint-Étienne-de-Beauharnois 5 Feb (A. Quenneville). **White-crowned Sparrow:** one overwintered at Dundee (A. Quenneville, D. Ouellette). **Rusty Blackbird:** there was an abnormally high number of wintering birds for this species: two at Saint-Georges-de-Windsor 11 Feb (S. Deshaies), one at Baie-du-Febvre 18 Feb (R. Huxley *et al.*), one at Saint-Blaise 25 Feb (S. Mathieu *et al.*), and an incredible 12 at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré 26-28 Feb (J. Lachance, m.ob.). **Red Crossbill:** a small group of five-eight indiv. was at Saint-Lazare 25-28 Feb (D. Demers, m.ob.).

Erratum: please delete the report of a Field Sparrow at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 15 Jan.

Merlins

Over the years I have not only worked with Peregrine Falcons and kestrels, I have also observed them in the wild on many occasions. My level of knowledge of these species is far greater than that of their cousin, the Merlin, although I have ministered to the odd Merlin in my role as a wild bird rehabber. Before last night I could say: they eat birds, fly fast and scream at you when handled! Yves Fredette, our February speaker, took that base and expanded on it, piquing our interest in getting to know these birds better.

Of course it starts with the fact that this member of the falcon family was reserved for the "lady", with eagles reserved for the emperor, peregrines for the prince and so on. Skylarks were the goal of hunting with these birds, kills being made after a spectacular aerial display of prowess. I can do without this facet, but rather enjoyed hearing that sparrows and starlings make up a significant portion of the diet of 800-odd birds eaten annually by the Merlin, especially in urban areas. This also accounts for a rather healthy population growth of this species with a 43% increase in numbers noted over the years from 1969 to 1983 in southern Canada. They also seem to be adapting to urban life rather well with a population density reaching one pair per square kilometre in urban settings versus one pair per 100 square kilometres in the rural scene. Of course they will also eat other birds, much to the chagrin and consternation of backyard bird feeders, and I have to confess I would rather they leave the Cedar Waxwings and Mourning Doves alone.

Nest sites can be found in excavations jackhammered by the Pileated Woodpecker, but are more likely to be made in old nests of crow, raven or other raptorial species, with a preference for those in older pine trees. The breeding season begins in April, with two to seven eggs laid in May. It is not uncommon to see four youngsters fledging.

Yves, I will keep a look out for these rather lovely falcons. Thank you for sharing your passion for these birds with us.

Lynn Miller

Mapping Philipsburg



Eve Marshall

Members of the Philipsburg Committee (Felix Hilton, Gordon Renny and Sandy Montgomery) show map-maker Lina Bardo the salient features of the Sanctuary on her aerial photograph. Later the group tramped the trails for hours, recording GPS co-ordinates. A visitor-friendly map of the Sanctuary should be available this summer.

A Bird of Summer

The chittering of Chimney Swifts chasing insects is such an integral part of our summer soundscape that the decline of this unique species is unthinkable. Yet with only 4000 breeding pairs left in Canada, mostly in southern Quebec and Ontario, the status of *Chaetura pelagica* is in jeopardy, particularly because of a scarcity of suitable nest sites.

Jean Gauthier, well known to birders as co-editor of the 1300-page Breeding Bird Atlas of Quebec, took the March meeting of Bird Protection Quebec on a fascinating tour of the habits and status of the Chimney Swift. His considerable work as a biologist for the Canadian Wildlife Service has involved him in a broad range of scientific studies of avian distribution and related issues, and he is enthusiastic about explaining his most recent research to the public.

Restricted by their special nest requirements, Chimney Swifts arrive here in early May and search for a suitable cavity tree or chimney protected from the elements. Since the birds fly into the cavity without stopping at the rim, the interior space needs to have a diameter of 30 to 45 cm so they can bank and land safely. They adjust to the darkness using a third fovea in their specialized eyes. Even when a good site is found, they will nest only after the air temperature reaches 13° C. Then, Jean explained, the birds use their gluey saliva, the main ingredient in birds' nest soup, to paste twigs onto the vertical sides of the cavity. A change in forestry practices and the capping of chimneys has led to a serious lack of sites suitable for this unusual nest building.

During cold snaps, swifts can lower their body temperature from 40°C to 10°C, but can only remain in this state of semi-hibernation a short time. The artificial swift towers being constructed south of the border would need supplementary heating in our climate.

Spending up to 17 hours a day in the air, at night Chimney Swifts spiral down into huge communal roosts. At one site, approximately 1000 birds were counted entering a six-foot diameter chimney in St-Georges-de-Beauce. By monitoring these conspicuous roosts, researchers have been able to determine population size and distribution, making the Chimney Swift the only widely-distributed small North American land bird for which there is a good population estimate. And this population appears to be shrinking.

After arousing our interest in the precarious status of this lively summer visitor, Jean encouraged Society members to press for foresters to leave cavity trees standing and to aid in data gathering for a report to the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC). If you know about, or would like to find, a site to observe and record the dramatic descent of Chimney Swifts into a roost at nightfall this summer, contact Jean Gauthier, CWS-Quebec Region, 1141 Route de l'Église, P.O. Box 10100, Ste. Foy, QC G1V 4H5; email: jean.gauthier@ec.gc.ca.

Sylvia Wees

Internet Resources provided by Sheldon Harvey:

<http://www.gwf.org/chimneytower.htm>

<http://www.chimneyswifts.org>



R. Hays Cummins



Jean-Pierre Matton

Above: A Virginia Rail struts the boardwalk at Philipsburg.

Left: A Tufted Titmouse keeps a curious eye on the comings and goings of visitors.

The George H. Montgomery Migratory Bird Sanctuary

IN PHILIPSBURG

The George H. Montgomery Bird Sanctuary in Philipsburg, comprising 525 hectares of land, 62 of which belong to Bird Protection Quebec, is an area set aside for the protection of migratory birds. Created in 1955, the sanctuary is located in southeastern Quebec on the shore of Mississquoi Bay, where the foothills of the Green Mountains meet the plain of the St. Lawrence Valley. It is Bird Protection Quebec's pride and joy.

It is our privilege to own a house within its boundaries and to enjoy observing its flora and fauna as well as its ornithological inhabitants. In the wooded area behind our house we have seen deer feeding on the cedars during a very cold winter, a baby porcupine clinging to a tree trunk waiting for its mother to return, a Wild Turkey gobbling by, a raccoon foraging with her young, a Wood Duck couple bringing up their babies in a hole in a tree, and a Pileated Woodpecker couple doing likewise!

On the other side of the house is our bird feeding station, where we host a diverse selection of birds, including Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, both nuthatches, Carolina Wren, Pine Siskin, Mourning Dove, Brown Creeper, sparrows, chickadees, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, and last year, a Red-bellied Woodpecker, which was an exciting treat for us!

A colony of ravens is present every year on the cliffs and, over the past few years there has also been a pair of Great Horned Owls nesting on the cliffs. We have observed the young owls, looking like overstuffed teddy bears, as they mature and fledge. Flocks of Cedar Waxwings can be seen taking advantage of an insect hatch. A pair of Carolina Wrens built a nest in our shed, inside a fruit basket! And a Barred Owl has been seen enjoying a perch on a broken tree trunk.

The sanctuary is home to many different, and some rare, species of mushrooms, fungi, mosses, ferns, wild flowers, butterflies and moths. Even the rock formations are of great geological interest, the oldest ones having slid on top of the newer ones many millions of years ago, exposing all the ancient data. So there is plenty of nature, in all forms, to

enjoy if the feathered varieties are proving shy for a while.

Each spring we look forward to welcoming the warblers as they return from wintering in South and Central America. We make sure to visit all the traditional nesting sites for bluebirds, Indigo Buntings, Scarlet Tanagers, Baltimore Orioles; even the elusive Cerulean Warbler has its preferred space where it can be seen, if you are lucky.

Bird Protection Quebec organizes a field trip to the Philipsburg area every spring and fall. The trips are well attended and rightly so - the list usually tops 80 species. Trails are categorised according to duration and degree of difficulty, and a leader accompanies each group. There are usually four or five groups covering fields, cliffs and forest, marshes and even garden feeders. Every year we make the same pilgrimage, and see the same sights, yet it is this very sameness that thrills and delights.

This spring, the trip will take place on Saturday 13 May, meeting at the Bird Protection Quebec parking lot located on Highway 133 at *Motel de la Frontière* at 8.30 AM. There will be a trail-clearing group going out the previous weekend on Sunday 7 May starting at 10:00 AM. Be sure to be there for one or both of these outings.

Gaelies Renny



Pierre Bannon

Wild Turkeys enjoy a sunny outing in Philipsburg.



Upcoming Field Trips - Prochaines Excursions

Co-ordinators: Martin Bowman, 613-347-1655, Wayne Grubert, 450-458-5498

Field Trip Advice - De rigueur pour les excursions

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

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

Security. Be sure to lock your car securely; bring as little of value as possible; leave nothing visible in your car; keep important papers and credit cards with you.

Transportation. Telephone the leader if you need or can offer a lift. Always travel with good maps.

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

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

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

Sécurité. Assurez-vous de bien verrouiller les portes de votre voiture; gardez toujours avec vous tout document important et cartes de crédit.

Transport. Téléphonnez au responsable si vous voulez faire du covoiturage. Apportez des cartes récentes.

Nourriture. Amenez toujours un bon goûter et beaucoup à boire même pour les excursions d'une demi-journée.

Saturday 6 May - samedi 6 mai

HUDSON

Leader: Barbara MacDuff 514-457-2222

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

8h00 Rassemblement à la gare C.P. sur la rue Wharf, Hudson. Prenez l'autoroute 40, sortie 22, et tournez à droite sur la Côte St-Charles nord jusqu'à la rue Main. Tournez à droite et se rendre à la rue Wharf puis tournez à gauche. Espèces recherchées : sauvagines, rapaces, parulines et autres passereaux. **Demi-journée.**

Sunday 7 May - dimanche 7 mai

PHILIPSBURG TRAIL CLEARING - ENTRETIEN DES SENTIERS Leader: Sandy Montgomery 514-482-0565

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

10h00. Tournez à la sortie 22 de l'autoroute 10 vers l'autoroute 35, qui rejoint l'autoroute 133 à St. Jean. Prenez l'autoroute 133 vers Philipsburg, tournez 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, appelez Sandy. Ce sera agréable et l'observation des oiseaux peut être fantastique. **Toute la journée.**

Saturday 13 May - samedi 13 mai

PHILIPSBURG

Leaders: Sandy Montgomery 514-482-0565

Gordon Renny 450-248-2937

8:30 AM Meet at *Motel de la Frontière*. From Montreal take the Champlain Bridge, Hwy 10 east to exit 22, Hwy 35 south to St. Jean to join Hwy 133 south to Philipsburg. Continue past flashing light, cross to the east side of the highway at the motel. Note the small PQSPB sign; enter the motel drive, park in the PQSPB lot just south of the motel. Good choice of trails from long and strenuous to short and easy. Looking for migrating passerines, waterbirds and hawks. Bring a lunch. **All day.**

8h30 Rassemblement au Motel de la Frontière. Tournez à la sortie 22 de l'autoroute 10 vers l'autoroute 35, qui rejoint l'autoroute 133 à St. Jean. Prenez l'autoroute 133 vers Philipsburg. Passez la lumière clignotante, puis trouvez le motel côté est de la route, stationnez dans le parking de la SQPO. Il y a un bon choix de sentiers, allant des longs et difficiles aux courts et faciles. Espèces recherchées : passereaux migrants, sauvagines et rapaces. Amenez votre déjeuner. **Toute la journée.**

Saturday 20 May - samedi 20 mai

ÎLE ST-BERNARD SURVEY - RECENSEMENT À L'ÎLE ST-BERNARD Leader: Monique Groulx 450-692-8259

7:00 AM Meet in the parking lot of the Châteauguay CLSC, 101 Lauzon, to form survey teams, which will then proceed to the island. From Montreal, take the Mercier Bridge and bear right to Châteauguay (Route 138-132 West). At the Petro-Canada station in Châteauguay, go another 1 km (four traffic lights) and turn left. The CLSC parking lot is behind Dépanneur Lauzon. For more information, visit: www.heritagestbernard.qc.ca. **Half day.**

7h00 Rassemblement au stationnement du CLSC de Châteauguay, 101 rue Lauzon, pour la formation des équipes. De Montréal, traversez le Pont Mercier et prenez la direction Châteauguay par la route 132/138. À Châteauguay, à partir du Petro-Canada, circulez sur 1 km ou compter 4 feux de circulation et tournez à gauche. Le stationnement du CLSC est situé derrière le dépanneur Lauzon. Pour plus d'informations visitez le site Internet : www.heritagestbernard.qc.ca. **Demi-journée.**

Monday 22 May - lundi 22 mai

SUMMERSTOWN/KENTUCKY WOODS/GLENGARRY CO.

Leader: Martin Bowman

613-347-1655

8:00 AM Meet at parking area on Public Forest Road. Take Hwy 401 west to Exit 804 (Summerstown). Turn right at the stop sign off the exit and go north 1.5 km to Public Forest Road. Turn left and continue 100 metres to the parking area. Looking for warblers, thrushes, other migrating passerines, raptors and marsh birds. This area can be wet; appropriate footwear essential. **Half day.**

8h00 Rassemblement dans le stationnement sur Public Forest Road. Prenez l'autoroute 401 Ouest jusqu'à la sortie 804 (Summerstown). Tournez à droite au panneau Stop juste après la sortie et continuez vers le nord jusqu'à Public Forest Road. Tournez à gauche. Le terrain de stationnement est à 100 mètres. Espèces recherchées : parulines, grives, autres passereaux migrateurs, rapaces et oiseaux des marais. Cet endroit peut être humide : assurez-vous d'avoir des bonnes chaussures. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday 27 May - samedi 27 mai

PIEDMONT

Leader: Mildred Kelly

514-288-6524

8:00 AM Take Hwy 15 north from Montreal. Take exit 58. Follow Hwy 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, Common Raven and other nesting passerines. **All day.**

8h00 De Montréal, prenez l'autoroute 15 Nord, sortie 58. Continuez sur la route 117 Nord jusqu'au premier feu de circulation et tournez à droite. Traversez le pont en bas de la côte, gardez 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 et autres passereaux nicheurs. **Toute la journée.**

Tuesday evening, 30 May - mardi soir 30 mai

HUDSON

Leader: Barbara MacDuff

514-457-2222

7:00 PM Meet at Finnegan's Market, 775 Main Road, Hudson Heights. Take Hwy 40 to Exit 22. Turn right onto Côte St-Charles. Continue to Main Road. Turn left. Drive (about 2 km) to Finnegan's Market parking lot on left. Looking for rails, woodcock and owls. **Evening trip.**

19h00 Rassemblement au marché Finnegan, 775 Main Road, Hudson Heights. Prenez l'autoroute 40, sortie 22. Tournez à droite sur Côte St-Charles. Suivez cette route jusqu'à sa fin à Main Road. Tournez à gauche. Poursuivez (2 km environ) jusqu'au stationnement du Marché Finnegan, à gauche. Espèces recherchées : râles, hiboux et Bécasse d'Amérique. **Excursion en soirée.**

Saturday 3 June - samedi 3 juin

PARC DES RAPIDES

Nature Day - Journée de la Nature

10:00 - 3:00 Bird Protection Quebec is participating in "Nature Day, an outdoor event organized by *Heritage Laurentien*, in conjunction with the borough of LaSalle. The goal is to promote nature, conservation and ecology. Everyone is welcome.

10h00 - 15h00 Protection des oiseaux du Québec participera à la Journée de la Nature, un événement organisé par *Héritage Laurentien* conjointement avec l'arrondissement LaSalle. Cet événement se tiendra à l'extérieur. Le but de cette journée est de faire la promotion de la nature, la conservation et l'écologie. Vous êtes tous invités à y assister.

Sunday 4 June - dimanche 4 juin

UPPER CANADA MIGRATORY BIRD SANCTUARY

Leader: Wayne Grubert

450-458-5498

8:00 AM Take Hwy 401 west to exit 770 (Ingleside). Proceed south to Hwy 2. Take Hwy 2 west for several kilometres. Watch for signs on left for "Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary". Turn left and follow road for 2 km to main parking lot. Allow 1½ hours driving time from Montreal. **Half day.**

8h00 Prenez l'autoroute 401 Ouest. Prenez la sortie 770 (Ingleside). Roulez direction sud jusqu'à l'autoroute 2 pendant plusieurs kilomètres. À gauche, cherchez la pancarte du "Upper Canada Migratory Bird Sanctuary". Tournez à gauche et prenez ce chemin pendant 2 km jusqu'au stationnement. Comptez approximativement 90 minutes de route à partir de Montréal. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday 10 June - samedi 10 juin

MER BLEUE

Leader: Martin Bowman

613-347-1655

8:00 AM Take Highway 40 to the Quebec-Ontario border where it becomes Highway 417. Continue on Highway 417 approximately 90 km to Anderson Road. Exit at Anderson Road (exit 104) and go north to Ridge Road. Turn right onto Ridge Road and go 2.6 km to the parking lot. Allow 90 to 120 minutes traveling time.

Mer bleue is an area of open bog habitat with a remarkably boreal aspect to it. There is a one kilometre boardwalk that may allow views of nesting Nashville Warbler, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Hermit Thrush. There is a network of trails to be explored in this special place. **Half day.** If time and weather permit, we may go to another area on the return trip to Montreal. For more information, visit: <http://ca.geocities.com/larry.neily@rogers.com/merblu3.htm>.

Please see **FIELD TRIPS** page 12

Saturday 10 June - samedi 10 juin

MER BLEUE

Leader: Martin Bowman

613-347-1655

8 h 00 : Prenez l'autoroute 40 Ouest, direction Ontario, ou la route devient la 417. Continuez sur la route 417 environ 90 km, jusqu'à Anderson Road. Prenez la sortie Anderson Road, sortie 104, dirigez-vous vers le nord jusqu'à Ridge Road. Tournez à droite sur Ridge Road et continuez environ 2.6 km jusqu'au stationnement. Comptez approximativement 90 à 120 minutes de route à partir de Montréal.

Mer bleue est un territoire avec un habitat de tourbière qui ressemble remarquablement à une région boréale. Il y a une passerelle d'un kilomètre. Espèces recherchées : Paruline à joues grises, Bruant de Lincoln et Grive solitaire. Il y a un réseau de sentiers à explorer dans cet endroit très spécial. **Demi-journée**. Si le temps et la température le permettent, nous pourrions arrêter à un autre endroit sur le chemin de retour à Montréal. Pour plus d'informations visitez le site Internet : <http://ca.geocities.com/larry.neily@rogers.com/merblu3.htm>.

Early Morning Trips 2006 Excursions Matinales

Warbler Walks led by Kyra Emo. Une promenade à la recherche de parulines guidée par Kyra Emo.

Westmount Summit Park Lookout - Au Belvédère du Summit Park à Westmount

6:30 AM Tuesday 25 April; 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 May

6h30 les mardis 25 avril; 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 mai

2006 Summer Series of Birding

The third annual Summer Series of Birding will take place this summer, between mid-June and late August, with a series of summer field trips being organized. Last year's series of seven field trips yielded a total of 106 different species with an average of 44 species per trip.

The destination for each trip will be determined around mid-week each week, with details to be posted on the Songsparrow email group. We will incorporate a few new destinations into the trip schedule, plus re-visit some locations that proved very productive over the past two summers. Most of these trips will be scheduled for Saturday mornings; however, one or two Sunday outings

may be possible.

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

If there are any particular locations that you feel would make for interesting new destinations, please feel free to send along your suggestions. If you wish to receive weekly trip notices, please contact Sheldon Harvey, 450-671-3773; email: ve2shw@yahoo.com.

We look forward to another exciting Summer Series of Birding in 2006.

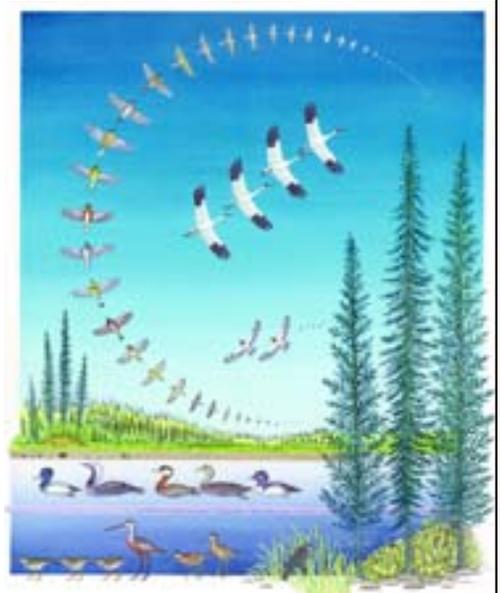
Sheldon Harvey

Birds and the Boreal Forest of North America

Extending from Newfoundland to the Yukon, the Canadian Boreal is one of the world's biggest intact forest ecosystems. Over 300 bird species breed in the Boreal, yet less than 10% of the forest is protected. In Quebec, only 3.4% of the Boreal is protected. Timber, mining, oil and gas, and hydroelectric industries are all vying for rights to "develop" the Boreal.

We need to refocus conservation efforts to include both ends of the migratory flyways. Many of North America's most rapidly declining birds are among those most reliant on the Boreal for their survival. Waterfowl such as Greater and Lesser Scaup have declined by about 150,000 birds per year since the late 1970s. The Horned Grebe has declined by 60% since the late 1960s. Other species such as Olive-sided Flycatcher (60% decline) and Canada Warbler (45% decline) have had less severe but still steep declines since 1966. (Source: BorealSongbird Initiative)

Birders can take an active role in conserving the Boreal. Log onto <http://www.borealbirds.org/action.html> and take part in specific action plans. More immediately, birders can participate in Bird Protection Quebec's International Migratory Bird Day contest to raise awareness of Boreal birds.



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