

# The Song Sparrow

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



Volume 51 Number 4

February 2009

## Harrowing Birding - Who Says Birding Is for the Faint of Heart?

A recent exchange on the Song Sparrow list-serve proved quite interesting and lively, so we decided to reproduce it here for your reading pleasure. Unfortunately we weren't able to fit them all in, so we encourage you to go to the group site to read the exchange in its entirety. Let's hope this boots those winter doldrums out the door and gets you raring for spring birding!

— The Editorial Team

Martin Bowman wrote: My most harrowing birding experience happened before I was a birder when I was hiking alone on headlands in the Shetland Islands in 1974. Suddenly, a huge bird – and I mean HUGE – dive-bombed me and then another did the same. Though no contact was made, I felt the wind of their passage in my hair. I didn't linger, needless to say, running at full speed down the heathery slopes (running in heather for those who haven't done it is not easy as it requires a kind of leaping gait!). As I ran, the birds continued their aerial assault. The moral here is: never go hiking on the nesting grounds of Great Skua. *The Birds of Europe* says the Great Skua is the size of a Herring Gull, but it felt BIGGER. The Shetlanders at the pub where I recovered enjoyed regaling me with stories of skuas attacking sheep, and being responsible for the extinction of the mammoths.

To which Richard Gregson replied: I feel for you Martin... Jean and I have "enjoyed" the same close encounter of an avian kind in Shetland and it is scary indeed -- those guys mean business. The local Shetland dialect name for the Skua



Ahmad and Sue's vantage point as they waited in line for their turn to cross this flooded Peruvian river.

is a Bonxie -- whether or not that's because it tries to bonk you on the head I could not say!

Apparently several of you have had the misfortune of angering skuas, for Bob Barnhurst added: I too have experienced an attack by a Great Skua (on the moorlands of northern Sutherland in my case) and it is certainly intimidating. A long time ago I once spoke at some length with an interesting old crofter in his 80s, who was born in the Shetland Isles and knew quite a lot about birds. I was interested in Gaelic words then,

which were used exclusively by some of the locals and on the local maps. He mentioned the Bonxie. He told me that it wasn't Gaelic but rather old Norwegian, and meant a mean old woman. To this day, I still don't know if he was having me on but he did have a twinkle in his eye. Actually, I prefer Richard's explanation, but I suppose a mean old woman might take a notion to "bonxie" you on the head if you got too close to her.

There were several authors who wrote of tropical birding vacations gone awry. Sue Bishop wrote: Two years ago Ahmad and I were in Peru on the way to Machu Picchu and decided to hire a local guide to go to Abra Malaga in the highlands. The roads were very bad and filled with large trucks carrying lumber. On the way up, we crossed over two rivers without

bridges. Large trucks were waiting, their drivers throwing rocks out in the middle to "measure" the depth of the river. The driver would then cross himself and pass with water almost covering his wheel. A misjudgment could be fatal as you could be swept over the steep ridge. There was nothing else to do but to carry on birding while we waited to cross. We added a number of tanagers, antpittas, and fruiteaters to our list. A big fright but... you've got to love the Andes!

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## Message From Our President

A couple of articles in recent issues of *The Economist* have caused me to reflect on one of the three goals of our Society. Our mission states that we support Education, Protection and Observation. The first two are obvious, laudable and clear and a lot of our energy and resources are directed toward them.

But what about "observation"? Is birdwatching simply a frivolous pastime for oldies who don't have any more serious occupation? Is it just an excuse to get out into nature in our increasingly urbanized lives? Or can it have a serious purpose – can it contribute to scientific knowledge and help in our other goals of education and protection?

Let's take, for example, the Christmas Bird Count, in which more than 100 of our members participated in 2008. The weather was predictably awful, prompting one member to ask, "Why December? Why don't we do the count in June, when we could see more birds and we wouldn't risk broken limbs and frozen toes?"

The *Economist* writer answers the question: "In the 19th century it was common for hunters to bag a Christmas bird for dinner and enjoy a competitive 'side hunt' for sport at the same time. In 1900 Frank Chapman, an ornithologist, suggested a count instead of a kill at Christmas time. Only 27 observers in 25 places in the United States and Canada took part in that first hunt. In the 2007-08 three-week count, 59,918 people took part and 57,704,250 birds were tallied. This band of citizen scientists has contributed invaluable data to researchers." So history has become tradition and birdwatchers have become conservation scientists.

The other article concerns China and its sorry conservation record. The writer tells us that "the Asian-Australasian flyway, along which several million birds barrel each spring and autumn" is being severely compromised by the "reclamation" of rich mudflats for development and by extreme pollution along the coast, which threatens marine organisms on which the migrating birds feed. Only ten percent of Chinese sewage is treated. He goes on to say: "But the rise of an entirely new species in China brings hope to conservationists: the mainland birdwatcher." Until a decade ago, birdwatching was almost unknown on the Chinese mainland, but there are now two dozen birdwatching societies "trying hard to halt the destruction that development has brought, teaching youngsters about the joy of birds and holding governments and businesses to account when they trash wild places." "Let's hear it for the birdwatchers," says Brian Morton, expert on China's seashore ecology and recently retired from the University of Hong Kong. And so say all of us.

Happy New Year and good birding to all,



It was with great sadness that we learned recently that our dear friend and fellow birder, Bob Weeds, died on January 5, 2009. Bob was a wonderful person, a great birder and a mentor to many novice and not-so-novice birders. A quiet, modest man, Bob was an enthusiastic member of the Society, rarely missing a monthly meeting or a field trip, until his last illness made it difficult for him to get out. He will be sorely missed. A fuller obituary will be published in the next *Song Sparrow*.

### Field Trip to Presqu'île Provincial Park, May 8-10, 2009

Back by popular demand is the now annual field trip to Presqu'île Provincial Park, Ontario. This park rivals Point Pelee in terms of spring migrants and has the advantage of being close and uncrowded. Those preferring to be indoors may choose to stay in a nicely appointed cottage overlooking Salt Point or upstairs in another cottage nearby. Both cottages are within easy walking distance of the lighthouse and Calf Pasture. We will also reserve space in the campground for those of us who like to be in the great outdoors. Please contact trip leader Alison Bentley at 450-458-8076 or at [alison.bentley@sympatico.ca](mailto:alison.bentley@sympatico.ca) for details and to reserve accommodation.

## 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 January 4, 1917

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The Song Sparrow ISSN 1710-3371  
Legal Deposit: National Library and Archives of Canada

Publication Mail No. 40044323

Deadline for the next newsletter:  
March 2, 2009

## Birdwatching Workshops

Great news for new birders and for BPQ's many graduates of the John Abbott College birdwatching course: BIRD WATCHING will be given again this year! It is a wonderful opportunity for beginners to learn about birds and to get out into the field to observe them. The first two sessions will be held in the classroom; however, the next eight will be held in the field. Under the guidance of master birder Peter Mitchell, students will learn how to look at birds, spot their field marks and identify species. There will be a good ratio of experienced to novice birders on each field trip.

**Date:** March 24-May 26, 2009

**Time:** March 24-31: 7:00-9:00 pm; April 7-May 26: 6:00-8:00 pm

**Location:** John Abbott College, **Tel:** 514-457-6610 ext. 584

**Registration:** January 12-23 at JAC or online at

<http://johnabbott-conted.omnivox.ca>, **Cost:** \$160

The DOUG TARRY YOUNG ORNITHOLOGISTS' WORKSHOP will be held at Long Point Bird Observatory, near Port Rowan, Ontario, July 31-August 9. The Education Committee has money available to help with transportation costs. Please contact Barbara MacDuff at [barb.macduff@sympatico.ca](mailto:barb.macduff@sympatico.ca), or go to [lpbo@birdscanada.org](mailto:lpbo@birdscanada.org).

## Membership News

A very warm welcome to new and returning members Nathalie Blanchard, St. Lambert; Robert Bonneau, St. Laurent; Catherine Bruno, Pierrefonds; Virginia Elliot, Westmount; Jack Poluszynski, Verdun; Brian & Bev Smalridge, Greenfield Park. We hope you will join us on our field trips and at our monthly meetings; be sure to introduce yourself!

Bulletins from Quebec and Ontario birding organizations and other bird- and nature-related publications received in the BPQ mailbox are now being made available to the general membership by placing them on the Membership Services table at monthly meetings. Members are invited to read the material and take any item(s) that they wish.

## BPQ Monthly Meetings 2009

Meetings are held at **7:30 pm** at Knox Crescent Kensington and First Presbyterian Church, 6225 Godfrey Avenue, NDG (between Grand Boulevard & Kensington Ave, 1.5 blocks north of Sherbrooke, bus #105). Dates are: **February 2, March 2, April 6, May 11, 2009 (AGM)**.

## Winter Lecture Series

### WATERFOWL OF NORTH AMERICA

FEBRUARY 11, 2009

This lecture will provide a survey of geese, dabbling ducks, diving ducks, sea ducks, their natural history and the places where you can find them. It will also provide identity tips.

Rodger Titman has been identifying ducks from the air and on the water as well as studying them for over 40 years. He is currently Associate Professor of Wildlife Biology, Department of Natural Resource Sciences, at McGill University. His main academic interest is behavioural ecology (the study of the ecological and evolutionary basis for animal behaviour).

### LBJS

FEBRUARY 25, 2009

Good things come in brown packages: Sparrows may look all brown but there are specific traits that you can learn to look for or listen to, to help identify the bird. Watch for differing wingbars, eye stripes, cap colour and even leg colour. This lecture will focus on the many little brown birds found in our area so bring your bird guide to take reference notes for the field.

Lance Laviolette has been involved with conservation and birding organizations nationally and provincially for most of his life. He is a past Director of Nature Canada and has recently stepped down from being a Director and Vice-President of BPQ after serving for 20 years. Lance currently represents Nature Canada on the National Science Advisory Council of Bird Studies Canada, is co-chair of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network Steering Committee and is the Records Editor for the Nova Scotia Bird Society's quarterly publication, *Nova Scotia Birds*.

### REMEMBER THAT TUNE!

MARCH 11, 2009

Borrowing from music appreciation, this lecture will help us to learn how to listen to and distinguish bird songs through such

characteristics as pitch, frequency and rhythm and will also discuss some of the problems of birding by ear in the field. This hands-on workshop consists mainly of a series of practical exercises and is tailored to birders of all levels who find it difficult to learn bird songs. Bring a field guide, pen and note pad, and lend us your ears!

Betsy McFarlane is a past President of BPQ (2003-2005) and served on its board for over a decade. She is a current director of Bird Studies Canada, leads BPQ field trips and participates in citizen science projects such as the Breeding Bird Survey. In her non-birding life, she works as a freelance translator and dotes on her two horses, Andrea's Friend and Big Bird.

### SHOREBIRDS

MARCH 25, 2009

These birds are a challenge for amateur birders as they include many species that look similar, especially when seen at a distance. A few species nest in southern Quebec, but many more nest in the North and are only seen during their spring and fall migration. The key, or the devil if you prefer, is in observation of details: the appearance of specific feathers, the form of the beak, the shape of the body, the colour of the legs or feet, etc. Bring your field guide to make notes and acquire the tricks to help you identify these birds with confidence.

Michel Bertrand, having discovered ornithology as a teenager, has been observing birds for over 50 years. He has filled a number of roles at the Club d'ornithologie de Longueuil, the Société de biologie de Montréal, Regroupement QuébecOiseaux and many other natural science organizations. He has given several courses on bird observation, has delivered over 100 lectures, and has led countless field trips. He also edited the French edition of the Stokes field guide.

### **Harrowing Birding cont'd from page 1...**

Jeff Harrison wrote: In 1976 my wife and I were finishing up our month-long, birding-archaeological honeymoon on the beach on the west coast of Guatemala. It was a lovely spot with Willets on the black sand beach and Red-necked Phalaropes and a host of waterbirds in the nearby salt pans. Near the end of our stay, my wife was woken up one night when the birds started singing. Since it was 2:30 am, she knew there was something amiss. It came soon after in the form of a huge earthquake which we discovered later was centred at nearby Antigua in the highlands. The ground trembled so much that it threw my wife out of bed and I awoke as she crawled across the floor calling my name (I am a heavy sleeper!). Fortunately, our cabanas were well built and survived but half the water was shaken out of our swimming pool. I can well remember standing on the beach with 20 other people at 3:00 am looking at the ocean. We knew that if it was a sea quake the water would soon

recede from shore in preparation for the inevitable tidal wave. As we had no place to go, we knew if it was a seaquake we would soon be dead. I will never forget watching and waiting.

Zofia Laubitz wrote: My harrowing bird story shows that "harrowingness" is in the eye of the beholder: It probably wouldn't have been at all harrowing for someone who doesn't have a fear of heights. In the early 1990s when I was visiting friends in Munich, I took the rack railway up to the top of the Zugspitze, Germany's highest mountain. The visitor centre the train takes you to is not actually at the summit of the mountain; to get there, you have to climb down a ladder into a cleft, climb up another ladder out of it and then take a narrow trail to the summit per se. Seeing all the other tourists clambering up and down the ladders, I decided to give it a go, ignoring for the moment the fact that ladders are one of the worst things triggering my acrophobia. By the time I got up the second ladder, I was trembling and

sweating with fear and I collapsed on a rock to try and get my breathing under control. Once I got a good look at the trail to the summit, it was clear I was never going to be able to do it, so I concentrated on becoming composed enough to get back to the visitor centre -- not easy, especially when a young girl just in front of me had a screaming fit of hysterics at the top of the ladder on the way back! I collapsed at one of the tables outside the visitor centre and it took half an hour for my heart rate to get back to normal.

But what about the birds, you ask? The Zugspitze centre, like many Alpine resorts, is frequented by Alpine Choughs, which hang around trying to beg or steal food from the tourists (sort of like Clark's Nutcrackers or Gray Jays). This was a lifer for me, and as I calmed down I got a lot of enjoyment from watching and photographing the choughs -- the hope of french fries makes them very cooperative models! All in all, a memorable experience!

**Continued on page 7...**

## **Speaker's Corner**

### **The Least Bittern in Quebec**

On Monday, December 1, our membership was treated to an excellent talk on Least Bitterns by Benoit Jobin, a species-at-risk biologist with the CWS in Quebec City. Benoit has conducted several research projects on habitat and population distribution of rare species in southern Quebec including Least Bittern, Loggerhead Shrike and Grasshopper Sparrow. He currently heads up the national Least Bittern Recovery Team which is monitoring and recommending actions for the preservation and enhancement of the approximately 1,000 pairs of Least Bitterns in Canada.

Even experienced naturalists and birders occasionally need a refresher course to understand the complexities of the terms "endangered," "threatened" and "species of concern." Benoit did an excellent job explaining these designations. Our Least Bittern is listed as "threatened." It is the world's smallest bittern; at 80 g it is not much heavier than the Blue Jay and American Robin. Its population has long been thought to be in decline, mostly due to habitat loss. Benoit took us through the discovery process by which he has learned about the population of this species in Quebec. He has been able to do this by painstaking research into habitat needs of this species, and tracking down reported calls and sightings over many years. Population estimates have involved taking data from the Quebec Breeding Bird Atlas, working with local birding clubs to locate sites, surveying likely looking habitats, and participating in other initiatives such as the Marsh Monitoring Program.

Benoit talked about the difficulties of doing survey work.

Least Bitterns are best located by listening for their calls in the early morning during the first two weeks of June. To access the most likely spots, survey crews use canoes and work in pairs, not only for safety but because the bird's soft calls are often missed when only one observer is present.

Benoit was able to show all the known breeding sites in Quebec. His approach has allowed CWS to estimate the Least Bittern population at about 400 breeding pairs. This is a considerably higher number than was thought 20 years ago, but clearly a fraction of the population of most breeding species in our province.

Benoit's discussion of the habitat needs of Least Bittern was also a revelation. Unlike its larger cousin, the American Bittern, Least Bitterns prefer to build their nests closer to the outer edges of cattail marshes and buttonbush wetlands. They prefer beds of vegetation with numerous openings rather than solid vegetation, and situations where water levels are stable rather than fluctuating. This allows them to occasionally nest in beaver ponds in Shield country although they are mostly confined to the watersheds of the upper St. Lawrence Valley. Unlike the American Bittern, Least Bitterns use their feet to grasp the reeds as they move about, build their nests, and secure their prey.

The largest known breeding site for Least Bitterns is at the National Defence property at Baie-du-Febvre. We are singularly blessed in the Montreal area, where sizable populations are found in the easily accessible marshes at Île Bizard, St. Timothée and St. Étienne.

**Jeff Harrison**

## Speaker's Corner Continued...

### Madagascar: The 8th Continent



Jay Vander Gaast

The Sickie-billed Vanga is endemic to Madagascar.

**With Jay Vander Gaast**  
**Monday, March 2, 2009 at 7:30 PM**

Physically separated from continental Africa for more than 160 million years, the island nation of Madagascar has developed some of the most unique and fascinating life forms on earth. All of its native land mammals, nearly all of its reptiles and amphibians, and more than 50% of its birds are unique to the island, an incredible level of endemism unmatched anywhere else on the planet. Jay will take you on a virtual tour of the island and introduce you to its many varied life forms, with a special emphasis on its birds.

The nearby Indian Ocean islands of Mauritius and Réunion, as well as the Seychelles, have far less diversity, but are also home to a number of endemic bird species, among them some of the world's most critically endangered birds including the Pink Pigeon and Seychelles Magpie-robin. We'll also spend some time getting to know these birds and learn of the special efforts made to ensure their continued survival.

While other boys dreamed of growing up to become firemen and astronauts, Jay Vander Gaast had the unlikely dream of watching birds for a living. To his surprise, this dream became reality and he is now a full-time tour leader for Field Guides Inc., a birding tour company based in Texas. Though his main area of expertise is the rainforests of Central and South America, he also regularly leads tours to a number of more far-flung destinations from Papua New Guinea, to China, South Africa, and of course Madagascar.

**Jeff Harrison**

### Bird Photography - Pure & Simple

**With Christopher Dodds**  
**Monday, April 6, 2009 at 7:30 PM**

Christopher Dodds is a full-time freelance nature photographer, teacher and lecturer specializing in birds. Many of his images have been published in world-class publications including *National Geographic*, *Outdoor Photographer Canada* and *Bird Conservation*, to name just a few. You have probably seen some of his work locally in *QuébecOiseaux*.

Chris first discovered his love of the great Canadian outdoors during family and Boy Scout camping, and canoe and backpacking trips, after moving to Canada from England when he was eight. By the time he was fourteen, Chris thrilled at freezing fleeting glimpses of birds with his camera and the resulting ability to study every detail of their intricate beauty. Chris's passion for photography has taken several paths through the years: photojournalism, studio portraiture, commercial and wedding photography. He apprenticed in colour and black-and-white chemical darkrooms, but today embraces the computerized, digital workflow. Chris is passionate about capturing images of nature in an artistic, yet technically perfect, manner.

Today Chris travels to some of the best locations in the world, photographing and teaching nature photography workshops; he is a popular lecturer. His images are collected and regularly published. You can visit [www.chrisdoddsphoto.com](http://www.chrisdoddsphoto.com) to see more.



©ChrisDoddsPhoto.com

Join noted Canadian professional nature photographer and teacher Chris Dodds as he shares many tips, tricks and techniques during this entertaining and informative presentation about bird photography.

**Jeff Harrison**

A beautiful example of Chris's work: a Black Tern caught on the wing.

## Camping at Point Pelee, May 18-21, 2009

The Field Trip Committee is pleased to announce the spring camping trip to Point Pelee National Park. We have reserved 13 camping spots in the park for the nights of May 18-21, departing on May 22. Wake up and start birding from your tent! Tent lifers have included Clay-colored Sparrow and Connecticut Warbler, and finding 100 species a day is not uncommon. From the campsite, it is a five-minute walk to the Interpretation Centre, walking trails and tram service to the tip. Although this is not a field trip per se, several Pelee veterans will likely be on hand to orient you to the park and its amenities. For further information or to reserve camping (first come, first served basis), please contact Martin Bowman at [pict@riverlink.ca](mailto:pict@riverlink.ca). Martin will confirm receipt of e-mail within a week of receiving it. If you do not have access to e-mail, phone Martin at 613-347-1655.

## Parlons d'oiseaux

Bilan des observations intéressantes à travers la province  
par Pierre Bannon

## Birdviews

Summary of interesting sightings from around the province  
by Pierre Bannon

Communiquez vos observations intéressantes à :

Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montréal, QC, H4E 1P1. Tél: 514-766-8767 en soirée/after 7:00 pm. Courriel: [pbannon@videotron.ca](mailto:pbannon@videotron.ca)

Please report your interesting bird observations to:

Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montréal, QC, H4E 1P1. Tél: 514-766-8767 en soirée/after 7:00 pm. Courriel: [pbannon@videotron.ca](mailto:pbannon@videotron.ca)

### Novembre-décembre 2008

**Cygne tuberculé** : l'indiv. présent à Maple Grove fut encore observé le 7 déc. D'autres ont été découverts à Saint-Aimé-du-Lac-des-Îles 8-13 nov (F. Carrière) et Alma 13 nov-21 déc (S. Boivin *et al.*). **Cygne siffleur** : un à Hébertville 29 nov-7 déc (M. Tremblay). **Fuligule à dos blanc** : un au parc national de la Yamaska 13 nov (M. Berlinguette, M. Maheu). **Arlequin plongeur** : des oiseaux à l'île Sainte-Hélène 1-3 déc (S. Denault), Verdun 16-20 déc (D. Demers) et Laval 14-18 déc (P. Fortin *et al.*). **Grand Harle** : environ 10 000 oiseaux estimés à Philipsburg 27 nov (J.G. Papineau). **Dindon sauvage** : un à Saint-Lin 11 déc était le premier pour Lanaudière (C. Yelle); 42 à Lambton 13 déc (D. McCutcheon), neuf à Saint-Martin 30 nov (N. Jolin, P. Rodrigue) et un à Plessisville 16 déc (*vide* M. Gosselin) confirmaient l'expansion de l'espèce vers le nord. **Fou de Bassan** : un imm. s'est égaré à Chambly 4 nov (L. d'Amours).

**Grande Aigrette** : une à Valleyfield 10 déc établissait une nouvelle date record pour la province (D. Langlais, ph.). C'est la 3e année consécutive qu'un tel record est enregistré pour cette espèce. **Héron garde-boeuf** : des oiseaux à Port-Daniel 6-12 nov (Y. Cyr, A. Couture) et à Grande-Rivière 12 nov (J. Quesnel). **Urubu noir** : un à Gaspé 26-27 nov (ph., J. Roberts). **Buse à épauettes** : des oiseaux tardifs à Cowansville (C. Lalande *et al.*) et à LaSalle (B. Barnhurst) le 20 déc. Bécasseau violet : un à Chambly 2 déc (R. Belhumeur *et al.*).

**Mouette tridactyle** : une s'est égarée à Saint-Hubert 18 nov (R. Belhumeur). **Mouette de Bonaparte** : 2 000 à Philipsburg 11 nov représentaient un nombre très élevé (J.G. Papineau). **Mouette rieuse** : un ad. à Tadoussac 7 nov (R. Pintiaux). **Mouette atricille** : des oiseaux à Lévis 3-7 déc (J. Bernier) et Beauport 8 déc (O. Barden). **Goéland cendré** : un oiseau de 1ère année à Pointe-Claire 3 déc (B. Barnhurst). **Goéland brun** : signalé dans une douzaine de localités durant la période.

**Harfang des neiges** : plusieurs oiseaux ont continué d'affluer en nov. Certains étaient par ailleurs en mauvais état et n'ont pas survécu. **Chouette épervière** : plusieurs sont apparues dans le sud de la province à partir du début de nov, leur nombre atteignant au moins une quarantaine à la fin de la période. **Chouette lapone** : une douzaine sont apparues dans le sud du Québec à partir du début de déc. **Nyctale de Tengmalm** : un nombre record totalisant 178 indiv. bagués à Tadoussac jusqu'à la fin de nov, la plupart des oiseaux de 2e année; cinq ont été signalés dans le sud plus tard en déc. **Pic à tête rouge** : un imm. trouvé à Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive 15 nov (S. Denault). **Pic à ventre roux** : six indiv. signalés durant la période, incluant un à Grande-Entrée (IDL) 12-25 déc (J.C. Richard). **Moucherolle phébi** : un oiseau très tardif à l'île Sainte-Hélène 20 déc (D. Millar).

**Viréo aux yeux blancs** : un oiseau a fait le bonheur des observateurs au cimetière Mont-Royal 1-10 nov, une date record pour la province (ph., N. Soucy, M. Isabelle *et al.*). **Hirondelle à**

### November-December 2008

**Mute Swan**: the indiv. at Maple Grove remained until at least 7 Dec. Singles also appeared at Saint-Aimé-du-Lac-des-Îles 8-13 Nov (F. Carrière) and at Alma 13 Nov-21 Dec (S. Boivin *et al.*). **Tundra Swan**: one at Hébertville 29 Nov-7 Dec (M. Tremblay). **Canvasback**: one at Yamaska Park 13 Nov (M. Berlinguette, M. Maheu). **Harlequin Duck**: singles at Île Sainte-Hélène 1-3 Dec (S. Denault), Verdun 16-20 Dec (D. Demers), and Laval 14-18 Dec (P. Fortin *et al.*). **Common Merganser**: an estimated 10,000 birds at Philipsburg 27 Nov (J.G. Papineau). **Wild Turkey**: one at Saint-Lin 11 Dec was apparently the first for Lanaudière region (C. Yelle); 42 at Lambton 13 Dec (D. McCutcheon), 9 at Saint-Martin 30 Nov (N. Jolin, P. Rodrigue) and one at Plessisville 16 Dec (*vide* M. Gosselin) provided more evidence of a northern range extension. **Northern Gannet**: an imm. strayed to Chambly 4 Nov (L. d'Amours).

**Great Egret**: one at Valleyfield 10 Dec provided a new late date for the province (D. Langlais, ph.). This is the third consecutive year with such a record-breaking event. **Cattle Egret**: singles at Port-Daniel 6-12 Nov (Y. Cyr, A. Couture) and at Grande-Rivière 12 Nov (J. Quesnel). **Black Vulture**: one at Gaspé 26-27 Nov (ph., J. Roberts). **Red-shouldered Hawk**: singles at Cowansville (C. Lalande *et al.*) and at LaSalle (B. Barnhurst) 20 Dec were late. **Purple Sandpiper**: one at Chambly 2 Dec (R. Belhumeur *et al.*).

**Black-legged Kittiwake**: one strayed to Saint-Hubert 18 Nov (R. Belhumeur). **Bonaparte's Gull**: 2,000 at Philipsburg 11 Nov represented a high count (J.G. Papineau). **Black-headed Gull**: an ad. at Tadoussac 7 Nov (R. Pintiaux). **Laughing Gull**: singles at Lévis 3-7 Dec (J. Bernier) and Beauport 8 Dec (O. Barden). **Mew Gull**: a first-year bird at Pointe-Claire 3 Dec (B. Barnhurst). **Lesser Black-backed Gull**: reported from at least 12 different locations throughout the period.

**Snowy Owl**: many birds continued to pour into the region through Nov. Unfortunately, several were emaciated and did not survive. **Northern Hawk Owl**: birds started to appear in s. Quebec in early Nov with a total of at least 40 indiv. by the end of the period. **Great Gray Owl**: roughly a dozen appeared in the s. part of the province from early Dec onward. **Boreal Owl**: a major irruption totaling 178 indiv. was recorded at Tadoussac, most of them second-year birds; five eventually reached s. Quebec later in Dec. **Red-headed Woodpecker**: an imm. was found at Saint-Joseph-de-la-Rive 15 Nov (S. Denault). **Red-bellied Woodpecker**: 6 indiv. were reported throughout the period, one reaching Grande-Entrée (Magdalen Is.) 12-25 Dec (J.C. Richard). **Eastern Phoebe**: a very late bird at Île Sainte-Hélène 20 Dec (D. Millar).

**White-eyed Vireo**: a record-late bird was enjoyed by many observers in the Mount Royal Cemetery 1-10 Nov (ph., N. Soucy, M. Isabelle *et al.*). **Cave Swallow**: a widespread

**front brun** : une invasion dans le nord-est du continent s'est aussi répercutée au Québec, avec deux indiv. à Tadoussac 7 nov (S. Denault), deux à Rimouski 9 nov (R. Saint-Laurent, D. Ruest), trois à Lac Brompton 10 nov (Y. Charrette, *vide* J. Turgeon) et deux à La Malbaie 11 nov (R. Pintiaux, V. Laplante). **Troglodyte de Caroline** : environ 16 indiv. signalés pendant la période. **Solitaire de Townsend** : un a persisté à Tadoussac jusqu'au 4 nov (R. Pintiaux). **Grive à collier** : une à Gatineau 2 déc. **Jaseur boréal** : un afflux sans précédant de 7 643 indiv. signalés à la fin de nov à Tadoussac. Des estimations de 10 000 indiv. ou plus à Percé, Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau et Rimouski en déc, tandis que 7 600 étaient dénombrés à Québec le 18 déc.

**Paruline noir et blanc** : un oiseau à l'île Sainte-Hélène 30 nov-6 déc établissait un nouveau record de date tardive (L. d'Amours *et al.*). **Paruline à calotte noire** : un oiseau tardif à Québec 1-5 déc (R. Gingras *et al.*). **Paruline polyglotte** : une photographiée dans un jardin à Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville 18-19 oct (L. Beaulieu, B. Leduc). **Tangara écarlate** : un mâle tardif à Robertsonville 22 nov (ph., G. Routhier, H. Jacques). **Bruant des prés** : un à Saint-Armand 8 déc (JG. Papineau). **Bruant à couronne blanche** : un indiv. de la sous-espèce gambelii aperçu à Cap Tourmente 13 déc (O. Barden). **Junco "à flancs rosés"** : cette sous-espèce a été signalée à Les Cèdres 27 déc (B. Barnhurst). **Dickcissel d'Amérique** : des oiseaux à Pointe-au-Père 29-31 oct (A. Brisson) et à Rimouski 6 nov (G. Gendron). **Oriole de Baltimore** : un à Rimouski 1er déc (*vide* R. Fortin). **Sizerin flammé** : le compte final de la saison à Tadoussac s'élevait à 47 989 indiv. (S. Denault, S. Belleau). Peu d'oiseaux se sont rendus dans l'extrême sud de la province avant la fin de la période. **Tarin des pins** : signalés en bons nombres dans l'extrême sud de la province vers la fin de la période.

irruption in the n.e. of the continent was also experienced in Quebec and included 2 indiv at Tadoussac 7 Nov (S. Denault), 2 at Rimouski 9 Nov (R. Saint-Laurent, D. Ruest), 3 at Brompton Lake 10 Nov (Y. Charrette, *vide* J. Turgeon), and 2 at La Malbaie 11 Nov (R. Pintiaux, V. Laplante). **Carolina Wren**: about 16 indiv. were reported throughout the period. **Townsend's Solitaire**: one remained at Tadoussac through 4 Nov (R. Pintiaux). **Varied Thrush**: one at Gatineau 2 Dec. **Bohemian Waxwing**: an unprecedented influx of 7,643 indiv. was recorded by the end of Nov at Tadoussac. Estimates of 10,000 or more were made at Percé, Sept-Îles, Baie-Comeau, and Rimouski in Dec, while Quebec City had 7,600 on 18 Dec.

**Black-and-white Warbler**: a record-late bird appeared on Île Sainte-Hélène 30 Nov-6 Dec (L. d'Amours *et al.*). **Wilson's Warbler**: a late bird in Quebec City 1-5 Dec (R. Gingras *et al.*). **Yellow-breasted Chat**: one was photographed in a garden at Sainte-Thérèse-de-Blainville 18-19 Oct (L. Beaulieu, B. Leduc). **Scarlet Tanager**: a late male at Robertsonville 22 Nov (ph., G. Routhier, H. Jacques). **Savannah Sparrow**: one at Saint-Armand 8 Dec (JG. Papineau). **White-crowned Sparrow**: an indiv. of the *gambelii* race was seen at Cap Tourmente 13 Dec (O. Barden). **"Pink-sided" Junco**: this subspecies was recorded at Les Cèdres 27 Dec (B. Barnhurst). **Dickcissel**: singles at Pointe-au-Père 29-31 Oct (A. Brisson) and at Rimouski 6 Nov (G. Gendron). **Baltimore Oriole**: one at Rimouski 1 Dec (*vide* R. Fortin). **Common Redpoll**: the final count for the season at Tadoussac was 47,989 (S. Denault, S. Belleau). Few had reached extreme s. Quebec by the end of the period. **Pine Siskin**: recorded in good numbers in extreme s. Quebec by the end of the period.

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#### Harrowing Birding cont'd from page 4...

A few hardy BPQers related stories from up north. Audrey Speck wrote: Photographing and birding on a small island off Ellesmere Island a number of years ago, I was repeatedly dive-bombed by very angry Arctic Terns near their nests. I couldn't leave the island as I was only due to be picked up in another two hours, but I learned to quickly lift the legs of the tripod over my head when I saw one of them coming at me! They would then veer off - otherwise, they would hit a bare head or hat with their sharp little beaks. A hiking stick would also work, though I'm not sure it would deter a skua! By the way, upended tripods are also useful in the North for attracting caribou: they are very curious and will often approach!

Betsy McFarlane wrote: I have a couple, all of them involving northern birding. I was once birding up in James Bay with Peter Mitchell. We were on one

of those logging roads in the interior and a bear came along and stood on its hindquarters and looked at us. Peter had not seen the bear so I said to him very calmly that I thought it was time for us to get back in the truck. *Understatement of the year, we think - The Editorial Team.*

The scariest, I think, was north of Sioux Lookout with Martin and David Millar, when we were working on the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas. We had a 150- or 200-km trip to our site along narrow and very dusty logging roads. The usual protocol for other vehicles using the road was to be equipped with a CB radio to communicate with the trucks but our rental car of course had no such radio. Going around a curve to have a huge logging truck filled with logs loom suddenly in front of us, apply its brakes and then start jackknifing was absolutely terrifying. A typical trip on the road put us in the way of several such encounters.

And last but not least, Steve Charlton wrote: One of my most harrowing experiences was right here in Canada, trying for Ivory Gull, taking a white-knuckle flight from Deer Lake, Newfoundland, to St. Anthony on the extreme northern tip of the island, in a very small plane, in a very bad January snowstorm, many years ago when I was young and foolish. It was followed by an equally foolhardy drive out into the same storm to l'Anse-aux-Meadows, in a battered-up rental car equipped with Baldinis, a type of Italian snow tire. Visibility was almost nil, and it was bitterly cold. There was not another car on the road! One member of our small group had lost his luggage, and had only his long underwear - we all had to share clothes with him so he could go with us in the car, dreadful vehicle that it was. We did see "The Bird", but I was never so happy in my life to get back to our motel...

## The 2008 Montreal Christmas Bird Count

The final tally from the 73rd Montreal Christmas Bird Count held on Saturday December 20, 2008, was 67 species. Four additional species, Gadwall, Red-necked Grebe, Rough-legged Hawk and Northern Mockingbird, were recorded during Count Week (December 17-23) but not on Count day. This brought the overall total to 71, a respectable total given the weather conditions. Sixty-seven is just below the 10-year average of 68 species. The record for the Montreal count is 75, set in 1993, and equaled in 2004.

Two new species were recorded on the count this year: an immature Red-shouldered Hawk seen flying over the Parc des Rapides in LaSalle, and an Eastern Phoebe seen near the Concorde Bridge on St. Helen's Island. This brings the total of species recorded on all Montreal Christmas Bird Counts to 152.

Jean Demers has joined the count as Assistant Compiler in charge of developing our feeder-watcher program. In total we had 12 feeder-watchers this year, scattered widely around the count area. Already, their contribution is being felt. The only Common Redpoll recorded on the count was reported by a feeder-watcher in NDG, and the only coverage in the downtown core was provided by feeder-watchers. Feeder-watchers also contributed to the record number of Dark-eyed Juncos and American Goldfinches. Their records were added to species totals for each area, which in a few cases significantly increased the variety and numbers recorded. Complete

results for each area can be found online: <http://www.pqspb.org/downloads/cbc/Montreal CBC 2008.pdf>.

Record highs were recorded for the following six species, with the old record and year in brackets: Snow Goose 15 (1 in 2000, '05 and '06); Merlin 7 (5 in 2007); American Crow 5,116 (3,975 in 2005); Tufted Titmouse 4 (3 in 2004); Dark-eyed Junco 115 (100 in 1992); and American Goldfinch 439 (351 in 1998).

A total of 15,920 birds were recorded this year. This was slightly greater than the 15,202 recorded last year. The number and variety of waterbirds was down. The recent cold snap, which increased the amount of ice cover on the rivers, and the persistent mist, which considerably reduced visibility, partly explain it; however, the absence of a great variety of waterbirds is probably the greatest factor in lower counts in recent years.

The record total of 5,116 American Crows made them the most abundant species recorded on the count. Other species seen in large numbers included European Starlings (3,702), Rock Pigeons (1,627) and House Sparrows (1,143). An exciting new development was the discovery of a major European Starling roost at the Maple Leaf Rendering Plant at St. Catherine on the south shore.

In addition to our feeder-watchers, we had a record number of field participants (68) in 16 teams. This included a new team covering the Meadowbrook Golf Course and Côte-St-Luc. Unfortunately, we did not have a

team at Kahnawake this year, and my attempt to entice a team to cover downtown Montreal (East End) proved fruitless. In future years I hope to have 18 teams, including teams covering both these areas. As has traditionally been the case, the most productive teams were those with territories along the St. Lawrence River. One team covering the area from Dorval to Douglas Hospital, and another covering Nuns and the Expo Islands, each recorded 36 species. The team covering Chateauguay and Kahnawake recorded 30 species. Up-to-date historical results, which include 2008 data, can be found on our website at <http://www.pqspb.org/christmasbc.html>.

The after-count compilation was held at Sheila Arthur's house in NDG. This event was modestly attended by about 30 people. After a variety of hot dishes and finger food was consumed, we held a brief meeting where team leaders discussed highlights of their day. This format worked well as those who attended had the opportunity to learn where the more uncommon birds were found.

Special thanks to Eve Marshall and Victoria Dickenson for their delicious hot food, to Jean Demers and Clémence Soulard for assisting with eating accoutrements, and especially to Sheila and her daughter Isabelle, for being such gracious hosts, and Richard Gregson, our webmaster, for his continued excellent support.

**Jeff Harrison, Compiler**

For species totals, please see next page.

## The 2008 Hudson Christmas Bird Count

On December 27, 56 birders from the Hudson area and from as far away as Quebec City counted birds in a 24-km-wide circle centred roughly on St-Lazare. A further 15 feeder-watchers reported birds visiting their feeders on count day. Additional species observed in the area during the count period stretching three days either side of the count day were also noted. All this gave an accurate snapshot of the winter distribution and status of birds in our area.

As can be seen from the data on the next page and from the online results (<http://www.pqspb.org/downloads/cbc/Hudson CBC 2008.pdf>), the 17 field parties and 15 feeder-watchers found a total of 6,011 individual birds in the Hudson area, representing 53 species. An additional species was observed during the count period. Freezing rain and heavy fog in the

afternoon created less than ideal conditions. Hawks were almost non-existent, field species such as Horned Lark and Snow Bunting were reported only in small numbers, and watchers on the river were unable to find many ducks or gulls.

Thanks go to everyone who helped out on the count in the field or at their feeder. Observations from the Christmas Counts are amassed into a huge database reflecting the distribution and numbers of winter birds over time. This, in turn, is used to pinpoint areas of concern where habitat destruction or contamination has impacted bird populations and to identify threatened species. Anyone wanting more information on the count can contact Alison Bentley at 450-458-8076 or by email at [alison.bentley@sympatico.ca](mailto:alison.bentley@sympatico.ca).

**Alison Bentley, Compiler**

For species totals, please see next page.



## The 2008 Montreal Christmas Bird Count Species List

*Please note:*

CW = Count Week

Snow Goose 15	Cooper's Hawk 3	Red-bellied Woodpecker 1	European Starling 3702
Canada Goose 91	Accipiter Species 2	Downy Woodpecker 81	Bohemian Waxwing 100
Gadwall CW	Red-shouldered Hawk 1	Hairy Woodpecker 34	Cedar Waxwing 31
American Black Duck 101	Red-tailed Hawk 5	Northern Flicker 3	Tree Sparrow 49
Mallard 805	Rough-legged Hawk CW	Pileated Woodpecker 5	Song Sparrow 4
American Wigeon 2	Buteo Species 1	Eastern Phoebe 1	White-throated Sparrow 5
Greater Scaup 2	American Kestrel 1	Northern Shrike 1	Dark-eyed Junco 115
Lesser Scaup 6	Merlin 7	Blue Jay 23	Snow Bunting 8
Harlequin Duck 1	Ring-billed Gull 10	American Crow 5116	Northern Cardinal 139
Common Goldeneye 306	Herring Gull 273	Common Raven 3	Red-winged Blackbird 20
Barrow's Goldeneye 1	Iceland Gull 1	Horned Lark 12	Pine Grosbeak 9
Hooded Merganser 1	Lesser Black-backed Gull 1	Black-capped Chickadee 596	House Finch 298
Common Merganser 132	Great Black-backed Gull 156	Tufted Titmouse 4	White-winged Crossbill 3
Ruffed Grouse 1	Gull Species 3	White-breasted Nuthatch 70	Common Redpoll 1
Common Loon 1	Rock Pigeon 1627	Brown Creeper 21	Pine Siskin 6
Red-necked Grebe CW	Mourning Dove 64	Carolina Wren 3	American Goldfinch 439
Sharp-shinned Hawk 1	Eastern Screech Owl 3	Winter Wren 1	House Sparrow 1143
	Great Horned Owl 3	Golden-crowned Kinglet 5	
	Barred Owl 1	American Robin 245	
	Snowy Owl 1	Northern Mockingbird CW	

## The 2008 Hudson Christmas Bird Count Species List

Domestic Goose 5	Great Black-backed Gull 1	Brown Creeper 8	Northern Cardinal 107
American Black Duck 5	Rock Pigeon 333	Carolina Wren 1	Red-winged Blackbird 1
Mallard 342	Mourning Dove 259	Golden-crowned Kinglet 23	Pine Grosbeak 46
Common Goldeneye 36	Eastern Screech Owl 2	American Robin 8	Purple Finch 1
Common Merganser 32	Great Horned Owl 1	European Starling 393	House Finch 42
Sharp-shinned Hawk CW	Snowy Owl 1	Waxwing sp. 20	Red Crossbill 20
Cooper's Hawk 4	Downy Woodpecker 95	Bohemian Waxwing 400	White-winged Crossbill 67
Rough-legged Hawk 1	Hairy Woodpecker 40	Cedar Waxwing 73	Common Redpoll 9
Red-tailed Hawk 1	Pileated Woodpecker 16	American Tree Sparrow 96	Pine Siskin 106
Falcon sp. 1	Northern Shrike 2	Song Sparrow 1	American Goldfinch 508
Merlin 1	Horned Lark 4	White-throated Sparrow 1	Evening Grosbeak 3
Ruffed Grouse 7	Black-capped Chickadee 1170	Dark-eyed Junco 274	House Sparrow 573
Wild Turkey 30	Red-breasted Nuthatch 31	Pink-sided Junco subsp. 1	
Ring-billed Gull 7	White-breasted Nuthatch 100	Snow Bunting 129	

**BPQ would like to thank Jeff Harrison and Alison Bentley for organizing another year of Christmas Bird Counts, and to thank everyone for their dedication and perseverance in the face of another year of bad weather!**

### BPQ Support Grants

Bird Protection Quebec offers support grants to organizations involved with activities supportive of our mission and solicits applications for assistance. Applications may be submitted at any time of the year, but the Support Grants Committee meets only twice a year, in April (deadline for submissions March 31) and October (deadline for submissions September 30). Please see <http://www.pqspb.org/supportgrants.html> for more information; though please be advised that the contact has changed to Jean Demers at [jeandemers@sympatico.ca](mailto:jeandemers@sympatico.ca).

### POQ Subventions au Soutien

Protection des Oiseaux du Québec offre des subventions aux organismes impliqués dans des activités qui appuient notre mission et qui sollicitent notre aide pour y parvenir. Les demandes de subvention peuvent être soumises à toute période de l'année, mais le Comité des subventions au soutien se réunit seulement deux fois par année: en avril (la date limite pour les demandes est le 31 mars) et en octobre (la date limite pour les demandes est le 30 septembre). Pour plus d'information, consulter notre site <http://www.pqspb.org/supportgrants.html>, en tenant compte du changement suivant: la nouvelle personne de référence est maintenant Jean Demers, que vous pouvez rejoindre à l'adresse [jeandemers@sympatico.ca](mailto:jeandemers@sympatico.ca).

## Field Trip Diaries

15/11/08 PARC REGIONAL DE LONGUEUIL/ST. HUBERT AIRPORT, QC

Leader: Sheldon Harvey

Heavy fog and rain

12 birders 21 species

**Bird of the Day:** Snowy Owl

**Other Birds of Note:** Wood Duck, Great Blue Heron, Cooper's, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks, Common Raven, Dark-eyed Junco

22/11/08 CAP ST. JACQUES PARK, QC

Leader: Wayne Grubert

-8°C to -4°C, NW winds gusting to 50 kph, cloudy with sunny breaks

21 birders 25 species

**Bird of the Day:** Northern Shrike

**Other Birds of Note:** Long-tailed duck, Common Goldeneye, Hooded and Common Mergansers, Double-crested Cormorant, Great Blue Heron, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Brown Creeper, American Tree Sparrow

29/11/08 BOIS PAPINEAU, LAVAL, QC

Leader: Chuck Kling

-3°C

12 birders 12 species

**Bird of the Day:** American Tree Sparrow

**Other Birds of Note:** Canada Goose, White-breasted Nuthatch, Northern Cardinal, House Finch

06/12/08 VARIOUS LOCATIONS, EASTERN ONTARIO

Leader: Jacques Bouvier

Sunny periods and windy

9 birders 24 species

**Birds of the Day:** Snowy Owl, White-winged Crossbill

**Other Birds of Note:** Snow Goose, Wild Turkey, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawks, Common Raven, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Brown Creeper

Compiled by Sheldon Harvey

## Smithsonian Field Guide to the Birds of North America

Ted Floyd (Editor). Harper Collins Canada. 2008. ISBN: 0061120405

I have been raised by the drawings good/photographs bad school of field guide appreciation and hitherto this has proven to be a wise approach. When I was asked to look into the new Smithsonian photographic field guide, I admit to being somewhat prejudiced before I opened the cover. Nevertheless, the Smithsonian does not lend its name to trivia and the main editor, Ted Floyd, is the editor of *Birding* and thus, by definition, knows a lot more about this than I do. Consequently, I kept an open mind.

Overall, I still prefer my drawings, but I am very happy to say that this new guide has finally made photographs worth taking seriously as aids to field identification, and the book will get considerable use by me as a reference alongside the Sibley and National Geographic (NG) tomes. The Smithsonian has managed to put together collections of multiple photographs (up to five per species), carefully selected to show the main plumage as well as seasonal variations. What is more, they are rather good photographs, well presented, bright and carefully posed, that do bear some resemblance to what one might see in the wild; of course some species' selections work better than others, but that criticism applies to any field guide (even Sibley/NG), so they cannot be criticized too heavily on that account. The birds are presented in taxonomic sequence and there is a useful introduction to each order/family which includes some general and important information about plumage, behaviour and habitat for groups as a whole. Species accounts are surprisingly detailed given the limits on available space imposed by the format and make the point that not just

visible field marks are important in field identification, but also behaviour, habitat, and song. The author talks about taking a "holistic" approach to bird identification and uses the presentation of species in this book to that end.

The Smithsonian goes one step further than other guides by also including a DVD with the calls of some 130+ species that can be played from the disc, downloaded to your computer or loaded onto an MP3 player that you can carry in your pocket. These tracks include a photograph of the bird that your player will show while you listen to the tracks and will often present regional variations in dialect as well as the usual selection of calls. There are not, perhaps, as many species as are available from Stokes/Peterson, but those that are included are the ones most commonly heard and, in my opinion, are often better and more fully presented than in the larger collections, making this a very useful adjunct resource.

As a practical field guide, it is perhaps just a little too heavy for the pocket, but it fits nicely into a pack. Certainly, it has its place on the reference bookshelf at home. One day perhaps someone will combine drawings and photographs in a truly portable field guide together with species descriptions of the depth and quality established by the recent European field guide published by Collins. Until then, this new work is a very useful addition to our armamentarium. At 976 g, it won't be my guide of choice if travelling light, but I thoroughly recommend it - it's nice to look at too.

LBJ



## Upcoming Field Trips - Prochaines Excursions

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

Saturday, February 21 - samedi 21 février

### MORGAN ARBORETUM - ARBORETUM MORGAN

**Leader:** 8:00 AM From Montreal take Hwy 40 west. Exit at exit 44 (Morgan Blvd). Turn left on chemin Ste-Marie. Drive 1.4 km to second stop sign (at Arboretum road). Turn right. Drive 1 km to main parking on left. \$5.00 admission charge for non-Arboretum members. Looking for winter finches, owls and woodpeckers. **Half day.**  
Betsy McFarlane 8 h 00 De Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 40 ouest, sortie 44 (boul. Morgan). Tourner à gauche sur le chemin Ste-Marie et continuer sur une distance de 1,4 km jusqu'au second arrêt (rue Arboretum). Tourner à droite et rouler 1 km jusqu'au stationnement principal, situé à gauche. Frais d'entrée : 5,00 \$ pour les non-membres. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver, hiboux et pics. **Demi-journée.**  
514-457-9315  
[betsy.mcfarlane@sympatico.ca](mailto:betsy.mcfarlane@sympatico.ca)

Saturday, February 28 - samedi 28 février

### GRENVILLE AREA

**Leaders:** 8:00 AM From Montreal take Hwy 40 to the Ontario border (40 km from Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue). Continue on Hwy 417 and take Exit 9 (9 km) for Hawkesbury. Continue on Hwy 17 approximately 7 km and take the Tupper Street exit on your right (signed for Province de/of Quebec). At 1.8 km at the T Junction, turn left on Main Street. After another 1.8 km, turn right onto John Street (opposite the big church). Continue on John St. across Long Sault Bridge over the Ottawa River. At the first traffic light in Grenville, turn right on Rue Principale and make an immediate right into the SAQ parking lot where we will meet. The distance is approximately 52 km from the Île-aux-Tourtes Bridge at the west end of Montreal Island on Hwy 40. This is an exploratory field trip to the area around Grenville. It will be a driving trip, and some roads will not be paved. The leaders will have scouted the area beforehand. We will probably bird along Chemin Scotch, which can be good for winter finches and other passerines, as well as exploring other interesting habitat in the area. **Half day.**  
Martin Bowman 8 h 00 À partir de Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 40 et poursuivre jusqu'à la frontière ontarienne (40 km à partir de Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue). Continuer sur l'autoroute 417 sur une distance d'environ 9 km et prendre la sortie 9 pour Hawkesbury. Continuer sur la route 17 sur une distance d'environ 7 km et prendre la sortie pour rue Tupper, à votre droite (indiquant Province de Québec). Après 1,8 km, à la jonction en T, tourner à gauche sur Main Street. Après encore 1,8 km, tourner à droite sur John Street (en face de l'église). Continuer sur John Street et traverser le pont Long Sault qui passe au-dessus de la rivière des Outaouais. Au premier feu de circulation de Grenville, tourner à droite sur la rue Principale puis tourner immédiatement à droite dans le stationnement de la SAQ où a lieu le rassemblement. La distance totale à partir du pont Île-aux-Tourtes, situé à l'extrémité ouest de l'île de Montréal, est d'environ 52 km. Il s'agit d'une excursion exploratoire de la région de Grenville. Les déplacements auront lieu en auto sur des routes dont certaines ne sont pas asphaltées. Les responsables de l'excursion auront exploré les lieux durant les jours précédant l'excursion. Le chemin Scotch, qui peut offrir des observations intéressantes d'oiseaux d'hiver et d'autres passereaux, fera sans doute partie des points d'observation, de même que d'autres habitats intéressants de la région. **Demi-journée.**  
613-347-1655  
[pict@riverlink.ca](mailto:pict@riverlink.ca)

Jacques Bouvier 8 h 00 De l'autoroute 40 (boul. Métropolitain) prendre la sortie Papineau nord (rte 19). Traverser le pont qui mène à Laval. À la 3e sortie, prendre le boul. Saint-Martin est et continuer sur une distance d'environ 1,5 km. À gauche se trouvent un garage de police et un centre communautaire. Prendre la ruelle entre les deux édifices et continuer jusqu'au stationnement situé à l'arrière. Espèces recherchées : hiboux, oiseaux d'hiver et migrateurs hâtifs. **Demi-journée.**  
613-524-1154  
[bouvier@magma.ca](mailto:bouvier@magma.ca)

Saturday, March 7 - samedi 7 mars

### BOIS PAPINEAU, LAVAL

**Leader:** 8:00 AM From Hwy 40 (Metropolitan Blvd) take exit for Papineau Ave. north (Hwy 19). Cross bridge into Laval. At the third exit take St. Martin east for approximately 1.5 km. On the left are a police garage and a community centre. Take the lane between them to a parking area at the back. Looking for owls, winter finches and early migrants. **Half day.**  
Chuck Kling 8 h 00 De l'autoroute 40 (boul. Métropolitain) prendre la sortie Papineau nord (rte 19). Traverser le pont qui mène à Laval. À la 3e sortie, prendre le boul. Saint-Martin est et continuer sur une distance d'environ 1,5 km. À gauche se trouvent un garage de police et un centre communautaire. Prendre la ruelle entre les deux édifices et continuer jusqu'au stationnement situé à l'arrière. Espèces recherchées : hiboux, oiseaux d'hiver et migrateurs hâtifs. **Demi-journée.**  
514-277-2567  
[chuckk@videotron.ca](mailto:chuckk@videotron.ca)



Saturday, March 14 - samedi 14 mars

### MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDEN-JARDIN BOTANIQUE DE MONTRÉAL

**Leader:** 8:00 AM Meet in front of the restaurant, near the entrance on Sherbrooke St. East. There is a charge for parking inside the gates. Looking for winter finches. **Half day.**  
David Mulholland  
514-630-6082 8 h 00 Rassemblement devant le restaurant, près de l'entrée du jardin sur la rue Sherbrooke-est. Prévoir des frais de stationnement. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver. **Demi-journée.**  
[davidjmulholland@sympatico.ca](mailto:davidjmulholland@sympatico.ca)

Saturday, March 21 - samedi 21 mars

### PARC-NATURE DU CAP-ST-JACQUES

**Leader:** 8:00 AM Take Hwy 40 West. Exit Chemin Ste-Marie. Turn left to Anse-à-l'Orme Road. Turn right and continue to the end. Turn right on Senneville Road (Gouin Blvd). Continue for 2 km to the chalet d'accueil of the park. Parking: \$7.00. **Half day.**  
Wayne Grubert  
450-458-5498 8 h 00 Prendre l'autoroute 40 ouest. Prendre la sortie pour le chemin Ste-Marie et tourner à gauche sur celui-ci. Continuer jusqu'au chemin de l'Anse-à-l'Orme. Tourner à droite sur celui-ci et continuer jusqu'au bout. Tourner à droite sur le chemin Senneville (boul. Gouin) et continuer sur une distance de 2 km jusqu'au chalet d'accueil du parc. Frais de stationnement : 7,00 \$. **Demi-journée.**  
[wgrubert@hotmail.com](mailto:wgrubert@hotmail.com)

Saturday, March 28 - samedi 28 mars

### ÎLE PERROT

**Leader:** 8:00 AM From Hwy 20, exit Don Quichotte. Meet at Windmill Point at the end of Don Quichotte Blvd. Looking for waterfowl, hawks and early migrants. **Half day.**  
Peter Mitchell  
819-687-2850 8 h 00 De l'autoroute 20, Prendre le boul. Don Quichotte jusqu'au bout. Rassemblement à la Pointe du Moulin. Espèces recherchées : sauvagine, buses et migrateurs hâtifs. **Demi-journée.**  
[lpitchell@sympatico.ca](mailto:lpitchell@sympatico.ca)

Saturday, April 4 - samedi 4 avril

### PARC DES RAPIDES, LASALLE AND VERDUN WATERFRONT

**Leader:** 8:00 AM Meet in the parking lot at Parc des Rapides, corner of LaSalle Blvd and 6th Avenue in Ville LaSalle (just east of Bishop Power Blvd). Take Hwy 20 to the Blvd de la Vérendrye exit. Heading west on de la Vérendrye, turn left onto the Stephens Street Bridge that crosses the Aqueduct. Follow this street south to the waterfront on LaSalle Blvd. Turn right on LaSalle Blvd and follow it to the parking lot at the corner of 6th Avenue. Looking for waterfowl and early migrants. If there is enough time left, we will visit the riverfront at Nun's Island. Be prepared to drive. **Half day.**  
Diane Demers  
514-729-3051 8 h 00 Rassemblement dans le stationnement du Parc des Rapides. Celui-ci est situé à l'intersection du boul. LaSalle et de la 6e avenue à ville LaSalle (juste à l'est du boul. Bishop Power). Prendre l'autoroute 20 et prendre la sortie du boul. de la Vérendrye. Aller en direction ouest sur ce boul. À la rue Stephens, prendre le pont qui traverse le canal de l'Aqueduc. Continuer sur la rue Stephens jusqu'au boul. LaSalle, qui longe le fleuve. Tourner à droite sur ce boul. et continuer jusqu'à stationnement, situé au coin de la 6e avenue. Espèces recherchées : sauvagine et migrateurs hâtifs. S'il reste suffisamment de temps, nous visiterons la rive du côté sud de l'île des Soeurs. Il faudra s'attendre à conduire. **Demi-journée.**  
[ddemers03@hotmail.com](mailto:ddemers03@hotmail.com)

#### Trip Advice - De rigueur pour les excursions



André Pelletier

Transportation: Contact the leader or the Songsparrow email group if you need or can offer a lift.  
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.  
Food: Bring plenty to eat and drink, even on half-day trips.  
Transport : Téléphoner au responsable ou contacter le groupe Songsparrow pour faire du covoiturage.  
Annulations : En cas d'intempérie, vérifier la possibilité d'une annulation avec le responsable.  
Habillement : Vêtements chauds et bottes imperméables sont toujours de rigueur.  
Nourriture : Toujours prévoir une collation et quelque chose à boire.

Bird Protection Quebec  
Protection des oiseaux du Québec  
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Montreal, QC H3B 3J5

Publications Mail Agreement Number 40044323