

Issue 66-4
July 2024

Summer Issue
**BREEDING BIRDS &
CONSERVATION**

News for Members



The
SONG SPARROW

Bird Protection Quebec - Mission Statement

VISION

We envision a world in which people appreciate the intrinsic benefits of birds and act to protect our planet and its wildlife.

MISSION

Our mission is to protect birds and bird habitat while fostering an appreciation of them through conservation, observation, research, and education.



President	Kristen Lalla
Vice-Presidents	Sheldon Harvey Darlene Harvey
Treasurer	Sheldon Harvey
Privacy Officer	Suzanne Bélanger
Membership Secretary	Darlene Harvey
Lectures Coordinator	Jeff Harrison
Song Sparrow Editors	Connie Morgenstern Darlene Harvey

Contact us:

General inquiries: info@birdprotectionquebec.org
Publication: songsparrow@birdprotectionquebec.org

Box 67089 - Lemoyne
Saint-Lambert, QC J4R 2T8
Tel.: 514-637-2141
www.birdprotectionquebec.org

The Song Sparrow is published four times per year for members of Bird Protection Quebec.

In this Issue



Features

22
SOS-POP: Birds at Risk Monitoring Program

26
SOS-POP: le programme de Suivi des
populations d'oiseaux en péril

29
Birding Adventures: Japan



20

Focus on Grants

21

Point de mire sur les subventions

*Restoration, research and education to
protect migrating birds in l'Ouest-de-l'Île*

04

A Word from the Editors

05

A Message from the President/
Message du président

06

Announcements

07

Annonces

08

Membership / Nos membres

10

Field Observations

- Upcoming trips / excursions
- Summaries of past trips

15

Education

16

Cheep Sheets

32

Birding Basics

33

Les B.A.BA de l'observation

34

Early Canadian Ornithology

ON THE COVER

Bobolink

Photo: Tom Long

This Page

MSc student Vanessa Poirier tracks radio-
tagged birds

Photo: Kyle Elliot

A Word FROM THE EDITORS

Here we are again: summer has arrived and another spring migration is behind us. Hopefully everyone got in as much birding as was humanly possible! Certainly, if you take a look at the Field Trip Committee's Past Field Trips report on page 11, you'll see that those who took advantage of BPQ's regular and special spring trips had a lot of success.

In this summer issue, we focus on the importance of conservation efforts to breeding birds, and species at risk in particular. In our feature article "SOP-POP: Quebec's Birds at Risk Monitoring Program", Frédéric Hareau explains why this program that has been around since 1988 is so important to breeding birds at risk, and how you can help it continue to succeed. In the Grants column, read the report on the results of a project to protect migrating songbirds on the West Island of Montreal, through habitat restoration, student research, and outreach.

Next, for some exotic birding, we take you on an adventure to Japan with Émile Brisson-Curadeau as he finds an amazing...well, we won't spoil it for you but... a *lot* of species, including one that was a first for one of the islands he visited!

In regular columns, Jeff Harrison introduces us to James MacPherson LeMoine, an early ornithologist who wrote extensively about the birds of Quebec, and, in Cheep Sheets, Zofia Laubitz rounds up the 2023/2024 lecture series with summaries of what we learned from the last three presentations. Then, speaking of learning, Focus on Education offers a summer reading list of birding-related books to help you while away a few hours in the sun.

Connie wasn't available to edit this issue so any errors, omissions or slip-ups land on my doorstep alone.

Hope you enjoy the summer, see you again in the fall!

Darlene



A Message from THE PRESIDENT

Message DE LA PRÉSIDENTE

Summer is upon us, and that means nesting season is here! You may have already noticed some baby birds; I had a fledgling robin in my backyard a few days ago.

If you haven't seen any yourself as of yet, you may have read the sad news story of the 100+ young Ring-billed Gulls that were rescued by Le Nichoir after falling from downtown roofs during a heatwave. Le Nichoir has some great resource material on what to do - and not do - if you find a baby bird. In general, if you see a young bird that has already grown its flight feathers and looks alert, you can leave it be, but if you see a featherless or downy baby bird (with the exception of precocial young, like geese, ducks, and shorebirds, that normally leave the nest before they grow flight feathers) and/or see a bird that looks injured, then you should consult resources to figure out what to do.

Despite many of our volunteers being busy for the summer with exciting plans, work continues at BPQ. Bird surveys at many of our sanctuaries are underway, inventorying the breeding birds like Cerulean Warblers at our George Montgomery Sanctuary. As well, summer field trips will take place again this year, and, if you're around, we hope you take part!

At the Annual General Meeting on May 27, we elected our new board for the year [see pg. 6], with many returning board members and a few new ones. I'm excited to see what BPQ accomplishes in the coming year!

Wishing you all a summer of relaxation, adventure, and good bird sightings,

Kristen

L'été est à nos portes, ce qui signifie que la saison de nidification est arrivée ! Vous avez peut-être déjà vu des bébés oiseaux. Il y a quelques jours, j'avais un jeune merle dans ma arrière-cour.

Si vous n'en avez pas encore vu vous-même, vous avez peut-être lu la triste histoire de plus de 100 jeunes Goélands à bec cerclé qui ont été sauvés par Le Nichoir après être tombés des toits du centre-ville pendant une vague de chaleur. Le Nichoir dispose d'une excellente documentation sur ce qu'il faut faire si on trouve un oisillon. En général, si vous voyez un jeune oiseau qui a déjà développé ses plumes de vol et qui semble alerte, vous pouvez le laisser tranquille, mais si vous voyez un bébé oiseau sans plumes ou duveteux (à l'exception des jeunes précoces, comme les oies, les canards et les oiseaux de rivage, qui quittent normalement le nid avant d'avoir développé leurs plumes de vol) et/ou si vous voyez un oiseau qui semble blessé, vous devez consulter des ressources pour savoir ce qu'il faut faire.

Bien que plusieurs de nos bénévoles soient occupés à des projets excitants pour l'été, le travail se poursuit à POQ. Des enquêtes sur les oiseaux sont en cours dans plusieurs de nos sanctuaires, afin d'inventorier les oiseaux nicheurs, comme la Paruline azurée dans notre sanctuaire George Montgomery. En plus, les excursions d'été auront lieu à nouveau cette année et, si vous êtes dans les parages, nous espérons que vous y participerez !

Lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle du 27 mai, nous avons élu notre nouveau conseil d'administration pour l'année [voir la page 7], avec de nombreux membres qui reviennent et quelques nouveaux. Je suis impatient de voir ce que le POQ accomplira au cours de l'année à venir !

Nous vous souhaitons à tous.tes un été de détente, d'aventure et d'observation d'oiseaux,

Kristen

A Message from the Elections & Nominations Committee

New Board Elected by the Members at the Annual General Meeting - May 27, 2024

At our recent AGM, four new candidates were elected and six sitting directors were re-elected to the Board of Directors to serve with five others who were elected last year for a two-year term.

A call for nominations had been put forward earlier in the year. Two positions had been vacant since last year, and two directors stepped down midway through their terms; one of these directors was replaced last summer by board appointment to finish out their term until this year's election. Four candidates submitted their duly signed and supported nomination forms to the Elections/Nominations Committee: Katherine Collin, Anne-Marie Cousineau, Zofia Laubitz, and Sarah Marshall. Happily, all six directors whose terms were ending this year agreed to stand for re-election. There being no other nominations, it was motioned that the slate of 10 people presented be approved by the membership. The motion having passed, we have a full board of 15 directors for the coming year.

The board thanks Ana Morales and Shawna Sevigny for their many contributions during their time as directors. We're pleased that, even though they stepped down as directors, both remain involved with BPQ as committee members.

Board of Directors - 2024/2025

Suzanne Bélanger	Sheldon Harvey *
Émile Brisson-Curadeau *	Kristen Lalla *
Claude Cloutier	Zofia Laubitz (new)
Katherine Collin (new)	Sarah Marshall (new)
Anne-Marie Cousineau (new)	Helen Meredith *
Kyle Elliott *	Ron Rind
Jeff Harrison *	Bonnie Soutar
Darlene Harvey	

* re-elected

At a special meeting following the AGM, the board appointed Suzanne Bélanger as Secretary. After filling this important role for many years, Helen Meredith had decided it was time for a break, and the board thanked her for all she had done to keep our corporate records straight. Sheldon Harvey was reappointed Vice-President, Administration and Treasurer for a further two years. The other officers had been appointed to a two-year term last year.

Officers - Elected by the Board

President:	Kristen Lalla
Vice-President, Administration:	Sheldon Harvey
Vice-President, Conservation:	Vacant
Vice-President, Education & Outreach:	Darlene Harvey
Treasurer:	Sheldon Harvey
Secretary:	Suzanne Bélanger

The Executive Committee, as appointed by the board for the coming year, will be comprised of the President, the three V-Ps, and the Secretary.

Message du comité des élections et des nominations

Nouveau conseil d'administration élu par les membres lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle - 27 mai 2024

Lors de notre récente assemblée générale annuelle, quatre nouveaux candidats ont été élus et six administrateurs en exercice ont été réélus au conseil d'administration pour siéger aux côtés de cinq autres élus l'année dernière pour un mandat de deux ans.

Un appel à candidatures avait été lancé plus tôt dans l'année. Deux postes étaient vacants depuis l'année dernière, et deux administrateurs se sont retirés à mi-parcours de leur mandat ; l'un de ces administrateurs a été remplacé l'été dernier par le conseil d'administration pour terminer son mandat jusqu'à l'élection de cette année. Quatre candidats ont soumis à la commission des élections et des nominations leurs formulaires de candidature dûment signés et appuyés : Katherine Collin, Anne-Marie Cousineau, Zofia Laubitz et Sarah Marshall. Heureusement, les six administrateurs dont le mandat s'achevait cette année ont accepté de se représenter. En l'absence d'autres candidatures, il a été proposé que la liste des 10 personnes présentées soit approuvée par les membres. Nous disposons donc d'un conseil d'administration complet de 15 membres.

Le conseil d'administration remercie Ana Morales et Shawna Sevigny pour les nombreuses contributions qu'elles ont apportées durant leur mandat. Nous sommes heureux qu'elles restent toutes deux impliquées dans le POQ en tant que membres de comités.

Conseil d'administration - 2024/25

Suzanne Bélanger	Sheldon Harvey *
Émile Brisson-Curadeau *	Kristen Lalla *
Claude Cloutier	Zofia Laubitz (nouveau)
Katherine Collin (nouveau)	Sarah Marshall (nouveau)
Anne-Marie Cousineau (nouveau)	Helen Meredith *
Kyle Elliott *	Ron Rind
Jeff Harrison *	Bonnie Soutar
Darlene Harvey	

* réélu

Lors d'une réunion spéciale qui a suivi l'assemblée générale annuelle, le conseil d'administration a nommé Suzanne Bélanger pour remplacer Helen Meredith au poste de secrétaire. Après avoir rempli ce rôle important pendant de nombreuses années, Helen était prête à faire une pause, et le conseil d'administration la remercie pour tout ce qu'elle a fait pour que les dossiers de l'entreprise restent corrects. Sheldon Harvey a été reconduit dans ses fonctions de vice-président, administration et trésorier pour un nouveau mandat de deux ans.

Membres de la direction - élus par le conseil

Présidente:	Kristen Lalla
Vice-président, administration:	Sheldon Harvey
Vice-présidente, conservation:	Poste vacant
Vice-présidente, éducation & sensibilisation:	Darlene Harvey
Trésorier:	Sheldon Harvey
Secrétaire:	Suzanne Bélanger

Le comité exécutif, nommé par le conseil, est constitué de la présidente, des trois vice-président.e.s. et de la secrétaire.

Focus on

OUR MEMBERS



A big welcome to our new members

We are very happy to welcome the following new and returning members:

Raymond Simond, Sheetal Patel, Ashley Milbury, Ben Hynes, Isabelle Tremblay and family, Vytautas Bucionis, Eric Mandel, and Thierry Klesse and family.

We look forward to meeting you, either on Zoom once our monthly meetings resume or on a field trip! Be sure to follow us on Facebook and Instagram, and to join our Song Sparrow [e-list group](#) to connect with fellow members.

A unique way to donate to the birds

Are you looking to dispose of an old vehicle, and trying to figure out how to junk it or sell it? Why not consider *donating* it, using the hassle-free service of Donate a Car Canada.

We are in the process of registering with this all-in service that turns your unwanted vehicle into a valuable donation that will support our work to protect birds and habitat in Quebec. And you get a tax receipt!

All the details of how donation works, and a FAQ that should answer all your questions, are available at donatecar.ca. Once you are ready, just be sure to select Bird Protection Quebec as your charity of choice. (If you don't find us listed, follow the prompt that says "If you would like to donate to a charity that is not on our list, Click Here" and type in our name.) They'll handle the rest, including towing, and processing of all necessary paperwork.

Bienvenue aux nouveaux membres

Nous sommes très heureux d'accueillir les nouveaux membres et les anciens membres suivants qui ont renouvelé leur adhésion :

Raymond Simond, Sheetal Patel, Ashley Milbury, Ben Hynes, Isabelle Tremblay et famille, Vytautas Bucionis, Eric Mandel, et Thierry Klesse et famille.

Nous sommes impatients de vous rencontrer, que ce soit sur Zoom lors de la reprise de nos réunions mensuelles ou lors de l'une de nos excursions ! N'oubliez pas de nous suivre sur Facebook et Instagram, et de rejoindre notre [groupe de liste électronique](#) « Songsparrow » pour vous connecter avec d'autres membres.

Une façon unique de faire un don aux oiseaux

Vous cherchez à vous débarrasser d'un vieux véhicule et vous ne savez pas comment le mettre au rebut ou le vendre ? Pourquoi ne pas envisager d'en *faire don* en utilisant le service sans tracas de « Donate a Car Canada ».

Nous sommes en train de nous inscrire à ce service complet qui transforme votre véhicule indésirable en un don de valeur pour soutenir le travail que nous faisons pour protéger les oiseaux et leur habitat au Québec. Et vous obtenez un reçu pour fins d'impôt !

Tous les détails sur le fonctionnement du don, ainsi qu'une FAQ qui devrait répondre à toutes vos questions, sont disponibles sur le site donatecar.ca. Une fois que vous êtes prêt, assurez-vous de sélectionner Protection des oiseaux du Québec comme organisme de bienfaisance. (Si vous ne trouvez pas notre nom dans la liste, suivez l'invite qui dit " Si vous voulez faire un don à un organisme de bienfaisance qui n'est pas sur notre liste, cliquez ici " et tapez notre nom). Ils s'occuperont du reste, y compris du remorquage et du traitement de tous les documents nécessaires.

BPQ volunteers at work

On April 20, members of the outreach committee participated in the Earth Day FORUM in Ormstown, along with close to 40 other exhibitors. We had a great time getting to meet people from the region, including some of our members, and talking to them about birds. Many were unfamiliar with BPQ's long history of protecting habitat in the province by actual ownership of bird sanctuaries and were suitably impressed!

Photos: Darlene Harvey



Bénévoles sur le terrain

Le 20 avril dernier, les membres du comité de sensibilisation ont participé au FORUM Jour de la Terre à Ormstown, avec près de 40 autres exposants. Nous avons eu beaucoup de plaisir à rencontrer des gens de la région, y compris certains de nos membres, et à leur parler des oiseaux. Beaucoup d'entre eux ne connaissaient pas la longue histoire de POQ en matière de protection de l'habitat dans la province grâce à la propriété de sanctuaires d'oiseaux, et ils ont été impressionnés comme il se doit !

On May 25, BPQ joined forces with CIME Haut-Richelieu, which led the annual garlic mustard pulling at our George H. Montgomery sanctuary. This activity allows volunteers to get their hands dirty and remove an invasive exotic plant before it produces seeds, thus protecting the sanctuary's native and endangered plant species.

A big thank you to BPQ volunteers and local people for getting involved in protecting the sanctuary's biodiversity, and to the Queer Birders de Montréal group for participating in such large numbers again this year. An impressive 124kg was collected in just a few hours!

Le 25 mai dernier avait lieu la Corvée annuelle d'arrachage d'alliaire officinale à notre sanctuaire George H. Montgomery. Chapeauté par CIME Haut-Richelieu, cette activité permet aux bénévoles de mettre la main à pâte et de retirer une plante exotique envahissante avant qu'elle ne produise des graines, protégeant ainsi les plantes indigènes et à statut du sanctuaire.

Un grand merci aux bénévoles de POQ et aux personnes locales de s'engager dans la protection de la biodiversité du sanctuaire, et au groupe « Queer Birders de Montréal » pour leur participation en grand nombre encore cette année. C'est une quantité impressionnante de 124kg qui a été récoltée en quelques heures !

Photos : Jules Delisle | BPQ





Upcoming field trips

Spring migration has come and gone and we hope you were able to take full advantage of the wonders that came to visit, in some cases so briefly!

As you will see in the Past Field Trips report that follows, we certainly did everything we could to get you out in the field, with 20 events held from April to June! With the last regularly scheduled trip having taken place on June 24, we will move into our popular "Summer Series of Birding", organized by Sheldon Harvey, which will be back for its 21st season. When the summer trips were first added to our schedule, none of us were sure they would take off but here we are over 20 years later, with a cumulative total of 199 species (excluding individual finds during the Covid years) on the summer trips list!

Could we offer a more tempting challenge to birders than the possibility of finding that elusive number 200? To help you start a target list of the "possibles", Sheldon has put together a spreadsheet showing the species seen on each of the summer trips in each year; you can download it [here](#) if you're curious to see which ones have eluded us til now!

Each weekend's destination for these outings will be announced only a few days before, which allows us (well, Sheldon!) to take advantage of any special sightings or newly discovered locations, while also taking the weather into account. Details with driving instructions will be communicated before each week's event through our eNews bulletin, the BPQ Facebook pages and the iO Song Sparrow email.

Happy summer birding, everyone!

BPQ Field Trip Committee

Birders on summer outings
Photos: Darlene Harvey





Focus on FIELD OBSERVATIONS

Past field trips

Our early spring trips met with rather unspringlike conditions, with weather reports for the first one at Parc des Rapides that promised heavy rain and low temperatures no doubt scaring off some participants. As we moved into May, we added extra trips to our regular weekend schedule to take full advantage of spring migration. These included our traditional weekday Wood Warbler Walks at Summit Woods (our thanks, again, to Jeff and George for getting up early to guide these early morning trips!), a Victoria Day Monday trip, as well as two beginners' trips organized in conjunction with Barbara MacDuff and the Education Committee.

BPQ Field Trip Committee

06/04/24 - Parc des Rapides, Lasalle/Verdun waterfronts **Guide: Diane Demers**

Weather: Cloudy, mild, light rain, then sunshine
Number of Participants: 23, Number of Species: 33
Birds of Note: Bald Eagles, Tree Swallows, Common Merganser, Red-breasted Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Mallard/Am. Black Duck hybrid, Bufflehead, Greater Scaup... and a Harbour Seal!
eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/219045>

13/04/24 - Beauharnois, Pointe-du-Buisson, St-Timothée, & St-Louis-de-Gonzague

Guides: Wayne Grubert & Sheldon Harvey
Number of Participants: 21; Number of Species: 53
Birds of Note: Common Loon, Wood Duck, Turkey Vulture, Eastern Towhee, Green-winged Teal, Bonaparte's Gulls, Winter Wren, Rusty Blackbird, Snow Goose, Peregrine Falcon
eBird Checklists:
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S168429323>
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S168429598>
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S168431355>
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S168431546>

18/04/24 - Birding for Beginners at Morgan Arboretum, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue **Guide: Barbara MacDuff**

Weather: Cool
Number of Participants: 10; Number of Species 21
Birds of Note: Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Brown-headed Cowbird, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Cedar Waxwing, Pileated Woodpecker, Purple Finch
eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S170416039>

21/04/24 - Parc-Nature du Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard **Guide: Émile Brisson-Curadeau**

Weather: Cold, windy
Number of Participants: 20; Number of Species: 43
Birds of Note: Palm Warbler, Red-bellied Woodpecker and 5 other woodpecker species, Broad-winged Hawk, Osprey, Winter Wren, Fox Sparrow
eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S169638882>

25/04/24 - Birding for Beginners at Morgan Arboretum, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue

Guide: Barbara MacDuff
Weather: Cool
Number of Participants: 9; Number of Species: 28
Birds of Note: Wood Duck, Cooper's Hawk, 5 woodpecker species, Common Raven, Winter Wren, Purple Finch, Yellow-rumped Warbler
eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S170416039>

27/04/24 - Dundee (La Réserve Nationale de Faune du Lac Saint-François)

Guides: Wayne Grubert, Sheldon Harvey, Darlene Harvey
Weather: Mild, calm winds, sunny with cloudy periods
Number of Participants: 24; Number of Species: 48
Birds of Note: Wilson's Snipe, Sandhill Crane, Osprey, Northern Harrier, Greater Yellowlegs, Solitary Sandpiper, American Bittern, Bald Eagle, Turkey Vulture, Broad-winged Hawk, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Rusty Blackbird
eBird Checklists:
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S170596049>
<https://ebird.org/checklist/S170579034>

30/04/24 - Warbler Walk #1 - Mount Royal Cemetery

Guide: George Levtchouk

Weather: Heavy rain

Number of Participants: 3; Number of Species: 16

Birds of Note: Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Eastern Bluebird, Chipping Sparrow, Turkey Vulture

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S171240945>

04/05/24 - Parc-nature du Bois-de-Liesse, St-Laurent

Guide: Suzan Denoncourt

Weather: Overcast, cool

Number of Participants: 20; Number of Species: 47

Birds of Note: White-throated Sparrow, Northern Waterthrush, Northern Parula, Black-throated-blue Warbler, Black-throated-green warbler, Black-and-White Warbler, Blue-headed Vireos, Great-crested Flycatcher, Spotted Sandpiper, Great Egret, Wood Duck

eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/230967>

07/05/24 - Warbler Walk #2 - Summit Park, Westmount

Guide: Jeff Harrison

Weather: not reported

Number of Participants: 10; Number of Species: 37

Birds of Note: Chimney Swift, Cooper's Hawk, Blue-headed Vireo, Winter Wren, Pine Siskin, 6 warbler species

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S174549228>

11/05/24 - World Migratory Bird Day Event, Hudson

Guide: Wayne Grubert

Weather: Sunny, 17 C, light winds

Number of Participants: 25; Number of Species: 57

Birds of Note: Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Baltimore Oriole, Yellow Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Green-winged Teal, Gadwall, Solitary Sandpiper, Eastern Bluebird, Bobolink, Chimney Swift, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-shouldered Hawk, Bald Eagle, American Bittern

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S173584044>

14/05/24 - Warbler Walk #3 - Summit Park, Westmount

Guide: Jeff Harrison

Weather: not reported

Number of Participants: 5; Number of Species: 41

Birds of Note: Merlin, Blue-headed Vireo, 14 species of warblers, Scarlet Tanager

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S1744604>



Yellow Warbler nesting
Photo: Tom Long

18/05/24 - Refuge Faunique Marguerite-D'Youville, Île Saint-Bernard

Guide: Tom Long

Weather: Mild, sunny

Number of Participants: 23; Number of Species: 67

Birds of Note: 12 warbler species, Red-breasted Merganser, Common Gallinule, Wilson's Snipe, Common Tern, Osprey, Bald Eagle, Tufted Titmouse, Marsh Wren, Swainson's Thrush, Fox Sparrow

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S175411530>



Birding Hudson on World Migratory Bird Day

Photo: Francis Stöckel

20/05/24 - Victoria Day Field Trip - Mount Royal Cemetery, Montreal

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Sunny, warm

Number of Participants: 26; Number of Species: 38

Birds of Note: Eastern Bluebird, Indigo Bunting, 6 warbler species, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Northern Harrier, Swainson's Thrush, Cedar Waxwing

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S176169600>



Cedar Waxwings on Victoria Day

Photo: Bill Thompson

21/05/24 - Warbler Walk #4 - Summit Park, Westmount

Guide: Jeff Harrison

Weather: not reported

Number of Participants: 8; Number of Species: 30

Birds of Note: Bald Eagle, 5 warbler species, Scarlet Tanager, Indigo Bunting

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S176165082>

25/05/24 - Morgan Arboretum, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue

Guide: Ron Rind

Weather: Warm, sunny, LOTS of mosquitoes!

Number of Participants: 16; Number of Species: 37

Birds of Note: Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Baltimore Oriole, Ovenbird, Magnolia Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S177463622>

28/05/24 - Warbler Walk #5 - Mount-Royal Cemetery

Guide: George Levitchouk

Weather: Sunny, warm

Number of Participants: 13; Number of Species: 34

Birds of Note: 10 warbler species, Indigo Bunting, Merlin, Eastern Bluebird, Pine Siskin.

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S178035133>

01/06/24 - Philipsburg, St-Armand, Pike River (Rue Bradley & Ch. Duquette)

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Warm, sunny

Number of Participants: 18; Number of Species: 55

Birds of Note: Chimney Swift, Killdeer, Caspian Tern, Red-tailed Hawk, Kestrel, Marsh Wren, Brown Thrasher, American Bluebird, Bobolink, Eastern Meadowlark, 5 warbler species.

eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/247424>

08/06/24 - Angrignon Park, Verdun/LaSalle

Guide: Virginia Elliott

Weather: Overcast, mild

Number of Participants: 11; Number of Species: 34

Birds of Note: Yellow Warbler, American Redstart, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Warbling Vireo, Great Blue Heron, Chimney Swift, Common Tern, Baltimore Oriole

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S180113256>

15/06/24 - Pincourt Hydro Cut, Pincourt,

Guides: Claude Cloutier, Chris Cloutier

Weather: Sunny, pleasant temperatures

Number of Participants: 14; Number of Species: 46

Birds of Note: Red-shouldered Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, American Kestrel, Gray Catbird, Veery, Savannah Sparrow, Scarlet Tanager and Indigo Bunting

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S181914643>

22/06/24 - BPQ Annual Summer Solstice Field Trip - Ormstown/Hinchinbrook/Huntingdon

Guides: Wayne Grubert, Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Cloudy, light showers, moderate temperatures

Number of Participants: 13; Number of Species: 67

Birds of Note: American Bittern, Virginia Rail, Field Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Brown Thrasher, American Kestrel, Wilson's Snipe

eBird Trip Report: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/254448>

In the family way...

Les mamans, les papas, les bébés...



*Geese and goslings / Bernaches et oisons
Photo: Wayne Grubert*

Feeding the “babies”



Photo: Wayne Grubert



Photo: Bill Thompson

Nourrissement des « bébés »



Photo: Bill Thompson



*Hooded Merganser and ducklings /
Harle couronnée avec les jeunes
Photo: Tom Long*



Focus On Education

BPQ presents a series of monthly lectures from October through April, usually on the first Monday of each month. Events are for the most part held via Zoom in order to reach a broader audience.

Summer Reading

While waiting for our lectures to resume in the fall, why not fill the learning gap with some summer reading? The following list of books was curated for us by Princeton University Press from their Nature Catalogue and includes a wide range of titles from field and identification guides to large-format photographic guides to fascinating books on bird behaviour. Even better: we have obtained a 30% discount for BPQ members, good on purchases made until August 31, 2024 by using the unique code **BPQ30** when ordering online. (It might just about cover the currency exchange rate.)

Click on any of the titles below to link directly to the book description and purchase option. Interestingly, at the shopping cart link, a list of independent bookstores in each province that carry the title is available, should you prefer to shop in a store. The discount won't apply though.

[The Shorebirds of North America](#)

[Terns of North America](#)

[Avian Architecture Revised and Expanded Edition](#)

[Gulls Simplified](#)

[Oceanic Birds of the World](#)

[The Warbler Guide](#)

[Field Guide to North American Flycatchers: Kingbirds and Myiarchus](#)

[Field Guide to North American Flycatchers: Empidonax and Pewees](#)

[All About Birds Northeast: Northeast US and Canada](#)

[Backyard Birds Flashcards - Eastern & Central North America](#)

[Birders Life List & Journal](#)

[Backyard Birdsong Guide Eastern and Central North America](#)

[Hummingbirds](#)

[The Complete Birds of the World](#)

[What Is a Bird?](#)

[Understanding Bird Behavior](#)

[Penguins: The Ultimate Guide Second Edition](#)

[How Birds Live Together](#)

[Bird Love](#)

[How Birds Evolve](#)

[Vagrancy in Birds](#)

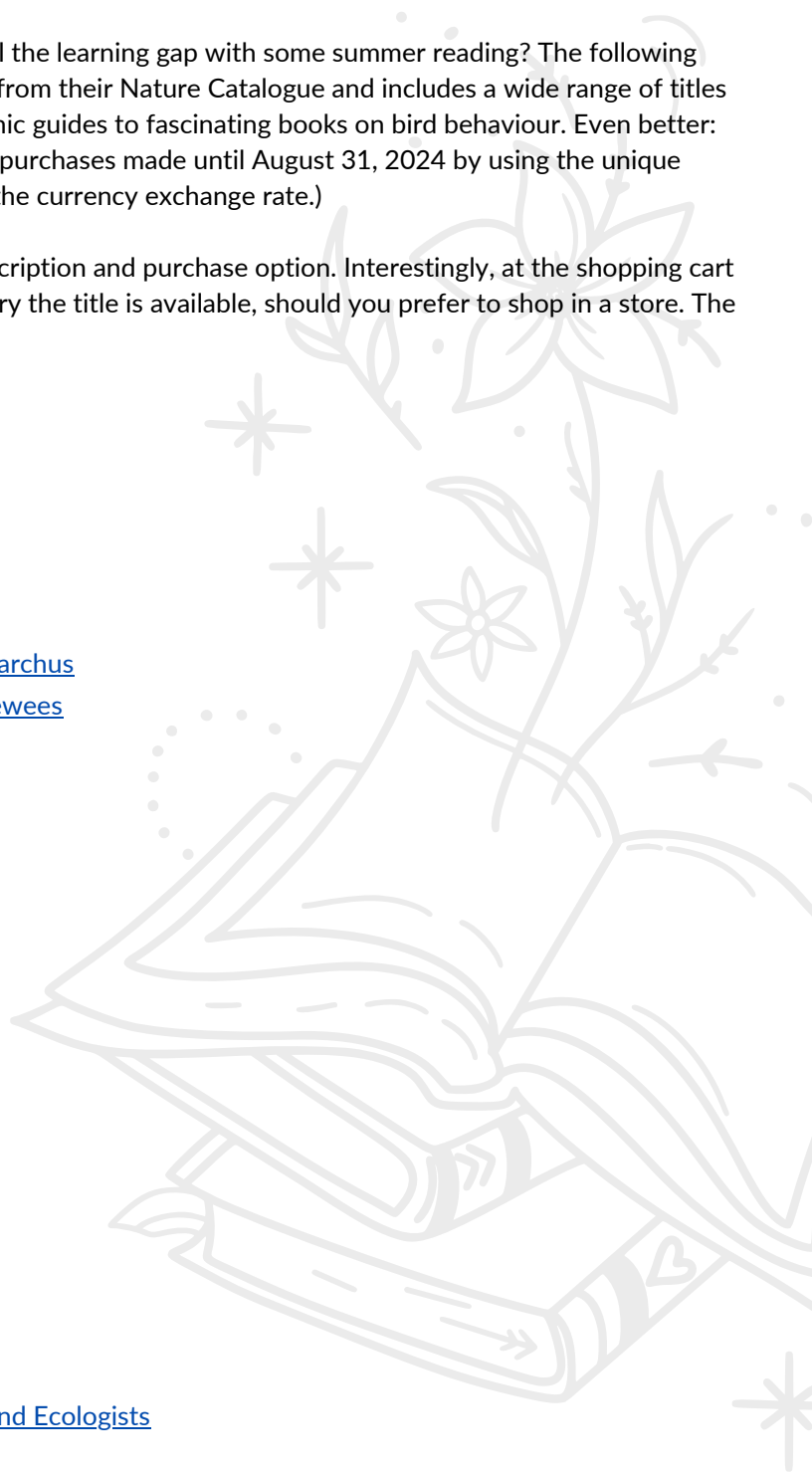
[The Bird Name Book](#)

[Birds and Us](#)

[Birdpedia](#)

[Habitats of the World: A Field Guide for Birders, Naturalists, and Ecologists](#)

[In the Footsteps of Audubon](#)



by Zofia Laubitz

Missed out on one of our lectures? Here are some cheep...er...
cheat...sheets created from our speakers' presentations

A bird's-eye view of BPQ's active sanctuaries, with a focus on the conservation projects at the Alec Lucas Sanctuary - by Jules Delisle February 5, 2024



In February, we got to find out some of the things that BPQ's very own project coordinator, Jules Delisle, has been doing since they came on board. Jules is a conservation biologist who has worked for various organizations before joining BPQ, including at Mount Royal Park, where they were in charge of volunteers.

According to Jules, the term “active sanctuaries” refers to those of our nine sanctuaries that receive regular visits from BPQ or our partners’ personnel and where management or conservation projects are carried out. Jules reviewed recent work at several of these sanctuaries and then did a deeper dive on some projects under way at the Alec Lucas Sanctuary, one of our newer ones.

Îlet Vert and Île aux Canards, near Varennes, were acquired in 1984 and are managed by the Nature Conservancy of Canada (NCC), whose interns patrol the islands. These islands are only accessible by canoe or kayak, and people do, in fact, access them for picnicking, which is allowed on Îlet Vert (and nearby Île à l'Aigle) but not on Île aux Canards, where public access is prohibited. BPQ has posted information panels in the area.

Ghost Hill Farm, west of Gatineau, was donated to BPQ in 2004 and is also managed by NCC. There is limited public access to this sanctuary, which has no trails; in fact, it is part of a wildlife corridor connecting the Ottawa River to Gatineau Park. Permission to visit must be obtained from the NCC. This was the site of a Loggerhead Shrike reintroduction program readers may remember. The Outaouais bird club (Club des ornithologues de l'Outaouais) conducted a bird survey in 2023 and listed 67 species there.

Alderbrooke Marsh, near Sutton, was purchased in 1995–1996 and is managed by the Alderbrooke Marsh Land Trust and NCC. It is one of the few marshes that have been preserved in an agricultural area. Since it is mainly wetland, it is hard to access and a canoe or kayak is required. A member of the Brome-Missisquoi bird club (Club des ornithologues de Brome-Missisquoi) ran a set of Marsh Monitoring Program (MMP) listening points in 2023. On one boundary tagging trip with NCC, bobcat tracks were found there, which is exciting!

The Alfred Kelly Reserve, between Piedmont and Prévost, was bequeathed to BPQ in 1981. It is managed by NCC and is accessible to the public. Peregrine Falcons and Common Ravens nest in the cliffs and are monitored. Several bird surveys were conducted in 2023, on owls, migratory birds and breeding birds. Jules is a member of the reserve’s advisory committee.

The Montée Biggar property in Godmanchester was purchased in 2018. It is accessible to the public only from the road (but Jules’s audience was disappointed to learn that parking is still prohibited—negotiations on that matter are ongoing). This is an important area for grassland and shrubland birds; it hosts over 130 species, including Golden-winged and Blue-winged Warblers. Birders are urged not to enter the sanctuary because of its sensitive flora, ground-nesting species—and many voracious ticks! Bird surveys were done in 2022 and 2023, and gates were installed in 2023 to prevent four-wheelers from trespassing. Snowmobiles, on the other hand, have been granted a right-of-way there in winter. Information panels will soon be installed and a conservation plan for the shrubland should be completed by the end of 2024.

The George H. Montgomery Sanctuary, in Philipsburg, is probably the sanctuary BPQ members are most familiar with and most likely to have visited. Parcels were acquired in 1992 and 2007 and it is part of a federal migratory bird sanctuary. It is, of course, open to the public and is frequently visited. This sanctuary is an important breeding area for Cerulean Warblers, and 225 bird species have been found there. Many activities are carried out there, including Wood Duck nest box maintenance, a Cerulean Warbler inventory, garlic mustard pulling (with conservation group CIME), and general trail and sign maintenance.

Jules devoted most time to the Alec Lucas Sanctuary, near St-André-Avellin, which was donated to BPQ in 2018. This landlocked reserve is managed by BPQ itself; access is difficult, as there is no parking lot and few trails. The area is mostly woodland and has three streams and four water bodies. Since 2022, it has been the location of many visits and projects. A breeding bird survey and MMP survey were carried out in 2022; another MMP survey was done in 2023, as was a dragonfly survey. Seventy-five bird species have been identified there, including Virginia Rail, Canada Warbler and Barred Owl, and there is a growing heronry. This reserve also hosts various species of amphibians, reptiles and mammals.

Probably most fascinating to the audience was Jules's description of the motion-activated camera traps and autonomous audio recorders (ARUs) set up in the sanctuary in 2023; this work was done in collaboration with Daniel Néron and with Brandon Rice of the Kahnawà:ke Environment Protection Office (KEPO). The purpose of the camera traps was to learn about use by large mammals (including humans). Three cameras were set up in areas with many tracks. The cameras have detected coyotes, white-tailed deer, moose, black bear, red fox, fisher and more; altogether, 13 species have been recorded in the area. As for the six ARUs, they were installed to detect the presence of owls and wolves in winter and of passerines and other birds in spring and summer. They were programmed to turn on at specific times. Each one recorded for 80 hours, for a grand total of 480 hours of recording! Ten samples will be taken at random for each of the six sites, and even that represents 32 hours of recording to be processed; this work is now under way.

If you've ever wondered what actually gets done with your BPQ membership dues, Jules was there to tell you: a lot!

One of the new sets of gates at Montée Biggar



Taking the Pulse of Our Northern Birds, by Jean-François Therrien

March 4, 2024

Our March speaker, Jean-François (JF) Therrien, is scientific director at the Tadoussac Bird Observatory (TBO) and senior scientist at the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania. He studies bird ecology in the context of conservation. JF has spoken to BPQ in the past, on the topic of Snowy Owls. This time, his subject was northern (i.e., boreal and arctic) species more generally. As the expression “taking the pulse” suggests, his overall intent was to consider how things are going for northern birds as a group, with a closer focus on certain key species.



Tadoussac is a migration bottleneck on the Eastern Flyway. Migrating birds want to cross the St. Lawrence River where it's narrow, so they tend to funnel down from the St. Lawrence Estuary and Gulf to Tadoussac and even farther upstream. Thus, Tadoussac witnesses impressive flights of birds in spring and fall migration, although the latter is what it's really known for. The TBO has institutional collaborators throughout the Americas and is engaged in studies with its partners at different sites.

JF discussed a few programs in detail. The TBO participates in the Raptor Population Index (RPI) program. Many raptors (e.g., Peregrine Falcon) have increased in numbers since DDT was banned. However, others, such as the American Kestrel, are declining. Nevertheless, this species has experienced a small increase at the TBO in recent years. Why is this? One hypothesis is that kestrels may be nesting more often in charred areas of the boreal forest, as farmland becomes less available to them.

Another program, Project OwlNet, focuses on Boreal and Northern Saw-whet Owls. Tadoussac is the only place in the network where both species are found; the Boreal Owl is at its southern limit there. Numbers of saw-whets are increasing somewhat at the TBO (but not elsewhere), whereas Boreal Owls are tapering off and not reaching the peak numbers they used to; for instance, an expected peak in 2021 never materialized. On the plus side, the population of juvenile owls is stable. Measurements reveal no reduction in owls' size or mass over time, but there has been a decrease in body fat, which suggests a decline in the quality of breeding habitat. Few nesting surveys of Boreal Owls have been done in the boreal forest. As for Northern Saw-whet Owls, banding reports indicate that they move around a lot; they also seem to be delaying their fall migration, perhaps due to climate change.

The Motus Wildlife Tracking System is used to track smaller birds, and even insects, since nanotags are used. The Motus network in Quebec has grown a lot: more and more towers are tracking birds as they migrate. The TBO tracks mainly boreal forest species, such as Swainson's, Bicknell's and Gray-Cheeked Thrushes, which have been shown to follow different routes; in fact, distinct populations of Swainson's Thrushes also take different routes. Other species being studied with Motus include Rusty Blackbirds, American Pipits, Horned Larks, Pine Siskins, and Purple Finches.

The TBO is a good place to observe the effects of northern wildfires. How many juvenile birds show up in the fall? The data for 2023 are still being processed, but no major changes were seen in any species. (The McGill Bird Observatory, on the other hand, did see fewer birds, but no large drops.) Another effect of climate change is milder winters up north, which can create ice crusts over the snow that result in declines in rodent numbers, and therefore in owl numbers. Thus, like many of our other recent speakers, JF reminded us that climate change affects every aspect of birds' lives.

Booms and peents in the twilight – an insight into the life of the enigmatic Common Nighthawk, by Andrew Coughlan

April 8, 2024



On the day the sun went dark in Montreal, it was surely appropriate that Andrew Coughlan spoke to us about birds of the dusk! Andrew is Birds Canada's Associate Director for the Quebec and Atlantic region and is also a member of the Tadoussac Bird Observatory's scientific committee. His topic was Common Nighthawks and the Canadian Nightjar Survey.

Andrew started with some background on nightjars, or "goatsuckers" (Caprimulgiformes). The term "goatsuckers," by the way, stems from the fact that nightjars really do associate with livestock because farm animals attract the insects they feed on. There are about 100 species of nightjars worldwide, on every continent but Antarctica, but most live in the Neotropics. As aerial insectivores, these birds generally have long wings, large eyes, and small beaks but large gapes, often with bristles around them.

Three species of nightjars regularly breed in Canada: the Eastern Whip-poor-will, the Common Poorwill, and Andrew's main subject, the Common Nighthawk. All these birds are crepuscular or nocturnal and well camouflaged in their daytime roosts, which means they are more often heard than seen – and sadly, they're not heard nearly as often as they used to be. Like our other aerial insectivores (swallows, swifts), they have been declining in numbers. When seen, Common Nighthawks stand out from the other two species by their white wing bands and their very different flight pattern. During the day, nighthawks roost on the ground, on tree branches, or on rooftops in the case of urban birds. Because they are entirely dependent on insects and thus very vulnerable to cold snaps, they are among our last migrants to arrive and the first to leave. They detect their insect prey visually (hence the big eyes). Like many other nocturnal animals, nighthawks have a tapetum lucidum, a layer of shiny tissue in the eye that reflects light, helping them see in the dark; this means that ground-nesting females can be detected by their eyeshine. Nighthawks share a niche with bats, which take over as dusk turns to night.

Common Nighthawks are long-distance migrants. In fact, they have one of the longest migrations of any land bird: up to 10,000 kilometres. In the breeding season, they are found in all the provinces and territories except Nunavut. They migrate through the Caribbean and Central America and winter throughout South America. Vagrant nighthawks have been found in some surprisingly distant places.

During courtship, male nighthawks, which have a V-shaped throat patch, display in the air above the nesting area where the females wait. They utter peent calls and dive, making a booming sound with their wings as they emerge from their dives. Mating and nesting take place on the ground (or on rooftops), usually in early June; outside of cities, nighthawks favour more open areas for nesting, including burns, whether natural or human-caused. Both sexes show considerable site fidelity. A typical clutch is only one or two eggs, and normally only one clutch is laid per year. Chicks are semi-precocial: they can leave the nest and thermoregulate immediately but can't feed themselves. Both parents care for the brood, and chicks are independent by six weeks of age.

Threats to the Common Nighthawk include predation, especially during the nesting period; loss of habitat due to reforestation and fire suppression, among other things; reduced availability of insects and/or mismatched timing of insect emergence; collisions with vehicles and power lines; airborne pollutants; and, of course, climate change. Nighthawk populations have declined by 68% since 1970, and the species now has Special Concern status.

The Canadian Nightjar Survey (CNS) was launched because up-to-date data were needed for conservation, but nightjars, being crepuscular, are often missed by other bird surveys, which take place at the wrong time of the day and of the year for these birds. Thus, this survey is conducted in the evening (in southern Canada) or late at night (up north) from June 15 to July 15. CNS volunteers do one roadside survey per year, looking and listening for six minutes at each stop. Everyone is invited to take part in this cross-country citizen science initiative and contribute much-needed data on some of our most mysterious birds!



FOCUS ON GRANTS

Every year BPQ is proud to award grants to fund research, conservation and education projects that are deemed to advance our mission to protect birds and their habitat. These grants represent our largest annual financial outlay.

In this column we share progress reports from our grant recipients.

This issue, we share a slightly different grant-related project that came to fruition thanks to the efforts of BPQ board member Kyle Elliot and past board member Ana Morales. In this instance, BPQ supported a grant application to obtain funds from Environment & Climate Change Canada for a project whose goal was to protect migratory songbirds in the West Island, through “Restoration, research and education.”

The synopsis and a link to the final report on the activities and results of this innovative project follow.

Restoration, research and education to protect migrating birds in l’Ouest-de-l’Île

By Kyle Elliott, Ana Morales & Elena Tranze-Drabinia

In 2021-24, Bird Protection Quebec, in conjunction with McGill Bird Observatory (MBO), Migration Research Foundation (MRF) and McGill University, received a grant for \$390,000 from Environment & Climate Change Canada’s Environmental Damages Fund. A major goal of the project was to support MBO, which received \$40-44k/y for the three years, to support their operations. BPQ’s support included both volunteer hours and an in-kind contribution of \$25k/y. (This is on top of the \$40k/y in grants that MBO has received from Bird Protection Quebec over the past five years, with ongoing commitments for another three years.) A special thanks to Marcel Gahbauer (MRF), Barbara Frei (MBO) and Simon Duval (BPQ) for their help writing the grant and getting the project “off the ground”.

Project background and objective

Our goal was to protect migratory songbirds in the West Island of Montreal. The funding was used to achieve three objectives: (1) restore native habitat for songbirds in the west island by removing invasive species and planting over 1000 native trees and shrubs; (2) research the habitat use and mortality of migratory songbirds in the west island [sic] across space and time; and (3) engage in outreach to the local Montreal community, particularly the youths, on the importance of urban greenspaces for migratory songbirds and how to improve local habitat for bird diversity.

Click the link below to read the full report:

https://mcusercontent.com/f61ed58d0b0d46a54e350642f/files/243d55d1-7a9e-c452-108c-884d1eb992ee/Report_EDF_project.pdf



POINT DE MIRE SUR LES SUBVENTIONS

Chaque année, POQ est fier d'accorder des subventions pour financer des projets de recherche, de conservation et d'éducation qui sont considérés comme faisant avancer notre mission de protection des oiseaux et de leur habitat. Ces subventions représentent notre plus grande dépense financière annuelle.

Dans cette rubrique, nous vous présenterons les rapports d'activité de nos bénéficiaires de subventions.

Dans ce numéro, nous partageons un projet de subvention légèrement différent qui s'est concrétisé grâce aux efforts de Kyle Elliott, membre du conseil d'administration du POQ, et d'Ana Morales, ancienne membre du conseil. En l'occurrence, le POQ a soutenu une demande de subvention auprès d'Environnement et Changement climatique Canada pour un projet dont l'objectif était de protéger les oiseaux chanteurs migrateurs dans l'ouest de l'île, par le biais de la restauration, de la recherche et de l'éducation.

Le synopsis extrait du rapport final et un lien vers le rapport final (en anglais) sur les activités et les résultats de ce projet innovant suivent :

Restoration, research and education to protect migrating birds in l'Ouest-de-l'Île

By Kyle Elliott, Ana Morales & Elena Tranze-Drabinia

In 2021-24, Bird Protection Quebec, in conjunction with McGill Bird Observatory (MBO), Migration Research Foundation (MRF) and McGill University, received a grant for \$390,000 from Environment & Climate Change Canada's Environmental Damages Fund. A major goal of the project was to support MBO, which received \$40-44k/y for the three years, to support their operations. BPQ's support included both volunteer hours and an in-kind contribution of \$25k/y. (This is on top of the \$40k/y in grants that MBO has received from Bird Protection Quebec over the past five years, with ongoing commitments for another three years.) A special thanks to Marcel Gahbauer (MRF), Barbara Frei (MBO) and Simon Duval (BPQ) for their help writing the grant and getting the project "off the ground".

Project background and objective

Our goal was to protect migratory songbirds in the West Island of Montreal. The funding was used to achieve three objectives: (1) restore native habitat for songbirds in the west island [sic] by removing invasive species and planting over 1000 native trees and shrubs; (2) research the habitat use and mortality of migratory songbirds in the west island [sic] across space and time; and (3) engage in outreach to the local Montreal community, particularly the youths, on the importance of urban greenspaces for migratory songbirds and how to improve local habitat for bird diversity.

Cliquez sur le lien pour continuer à lire le rapport complet :

https://mcusercontent.com/f61ed58d0b0d46a54e350642f/files/243d55d1-7a9e-c452-108c-884d1eb992ee/Report_EDF_project.pdf



SOP-POP: Quebec's Birds at Risk Monitoring Program

An opportunity to get involved in citizen science and make a difference for Quebec's birds

by Frédéric Hareau

As the articles published in *The Song Sparrow* over the last few months have amply demonstrated, there is no shortage of citizen science initiatives, and these initiatives are proving to be essential. Indeed, the threats to our biodiversity are manifold, and over the last few decades the situation has deteriorated to the point of becoming worrying and even critical for many bird species.

In this context, reliable data are crucial to initiate and orient conservation actions. It is often the only way to convince, or even 'compel', state actors and private interests to act for conservation. And, given the limited resources available to conservation organizations, the voluntary commitment of ornithologists, both professional and amateur, is indispensable and is playing an increasingly important role.

In Quebec, the SOS-POP program is a flagship for the conservation of species at risk, and is fundamentally based on citizen participation, notably through the involvement of birding clubs such as BPQ.

The origins and evolution of the SOS-POP program

The SOS-POP program was launched as part of the St. Lawrence Action Plan in 1988. One of the objectives of the initial phase (1988 to 1993) was to identify threatened or vulnerable species. During this phase, the AQGO (now QuébecOiseaux) was commissioned by the Canadian Wildlife Service to produce an initial global assessment of the situation of “threatened birds” in Quebec. Michel Robert produced this assessment, and compiled the first data in what came to be known as the 'Quebec Threatened Bird Database'.

This initial phase led to the creation of the SOS-POP program, which has been in existence for over 30 years, and is managed by QuébecOiseaux in collaboration with numerous partners, including Environment and Climate Change Canada, the Canadian Wildlife Service and all the birdwatching clubs, to name but a few.

The program has grown considerably over the years. The number of species tracked by the program has risen from 17 at the outset to 45 in 2022, and the number of sites recorded in the database has increased from a few hundred to almost 20,000. The program has also evolved over time, integrating various technological tools such as data from eBird over the last ten years.

This evolution has been possible thanks to QuébecOiseaux, the involvement of the clubs and, above all, the countless ornithologists who have actively contributed to it. But we can't talk about SOS-POP without mentioning the essential role Pierre Fradette played in this program. Pierre coordinated SOS-POP for the past 30 years and has only recently taken a well-deserved retirement!

The objectives of SOS-POP

The province of Quebec's location and characteristics make it an area of great ornithological interest. A total of 472 species have been recorded, of which 283 are breeding, only 24 are migratory, 161 are rare visitors and 4 have unfortunately disappeared.

(<https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/liste-oiseaux-quebec#:~:text=Among%20the%20472%20species%20recorded,rare%20and%204%20have%20disappeare>).

The 283 breeding and 24 migratory species are the avian diversity to be conserved first and foremost. Yet, many of them have seen their situation deteriorate in recent decades. For example, the populations of three species (Red-headed Woodpecker, Loggerhead Shrike and Roseate Tern) have declined to the point where there is currently no annual breeding population occupying territory in Quebec. Clearly, it is essential to take action to ensure that such a situation does not recur for other species.

This is why the aim of the SOS-POP program is to identify important sites for the conservation of birds at risk and to monitor their occupation over time, enabling us to better understand the status of bird species at risk and to develop conservation strategies.

Why is the author involved with SOS-POP and conservation initiatives?

A personal testimonial

For about two decades now, ornithology has been an essential part of my life, and is coupled with all my adventures, whether professional - especially when traveling internationally - or personal - it's rare that our family vacation homes are chosen without considering a few nearby ornithological sites. Many people will probably say that I'm a bit intense...

For me, ornithology has always had three dimensions: the discovery of new species and new natural environments; learning and education, both for myself and for others by, for example, guiding groups; and conservation, through the many inventories I take part in and by mobilizing other ornithologists to get involved.

The latter is where the SOS-POP program comes in. I've been involved for the past ten years both directly, by monitoring several sites each year, and indirectly, by helping numerous birdwatchers to get involved, in particular through BPQ in the Montreal region.

Taking part in this program has not only enabled me to contribute to essential conservation actions, but also to discover places I would never have imagined, to meet many birders, and to learn a lot about the species monitored and the conservation actions.

One moment among many...

I have a vivid memory of one of my outings for SOS-POP in 2022. This outing in Montreal's West End, which took place on a delightful early morning (if you exclude the mosquitoes), enabled me not only to observe a magnificent diversity of birds, but also to confirm nine Wood Thrush nesting sites. And each time, it was with a feeling of hope that I heard the song of the Thrush, the most beautiful in Quebec in my opinion! A feeling of hope because it meant that the Thrush was still alive and well, and that it was time to take action to preserve it.



Wood Thrush
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Cerulean Warbler
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Bank Swallows
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Chimney Swift
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Short-eared Owl
Photo: Denis Tétreault

To achieve its goals, SOS-POP incorporates several components:

- Population monitoring, with regular surveys to track the evolution of endangered bird populations in Quebec.
- Identification of critical sites for endangered species and the factors determining site use.
- Identification of threats to these species and the critical habitats they occupy.
- Raising awareness and educating the public about the importance of bird conservation, and encouraging conservation action.

SOS-POP currently monitors more than 45 species designated at risk, either federally by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) under the Species at Risk Act (SARA), or provincially under the Loi sur les espèces menacées ou vulnérables (LEVMI). The list of species monitored is available in the SOS-POP FAQ section -

<https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/sos-pop> (in French only).

To achieve the program's objectives, the SOS-POP database contains a wealth of information on species at risk, including conservation status, identified threats, conservation actions and occupied habitats (nesting sites and concentration areas). It incorporates daily surveys produced since 1980, as well as complete historical data for certain species. SOS-POP also contains data from eBird, Quebec breeding bird atlases, reports, publications and many other sources.

SOS-POP is also the CDPNQ's source database for birds at risk for the Centre de données sur le patrimoine naturel du Québec (CDPNQ).

Getting involved

For many years, BPQ members have been involved in the SOS-POP program, monitoring species such as Chimney Swift, Peregrine Falcon, Wood Thrush, Least Bittern, Cerulean Warbler, Bank Swallow and many others.

Each year, the SOS-POP program committee sets priorities in terms of species to monitor and sites to visit. This year, the program is concentrating on monitoring potential nesting sites for Chimney Swift and Short-eared Owl. For the Montreal region, the Chimney Swift is in the spotlight.

There are more than 60 Chimney Swift nesting sites to be covered in Montreal, and I'm grateful to say that, in just one week, more than 15 volunteers have responded to the call for volunteers that was launched. Thank you for your contribution!

In addition to the priority species established each year, all birdwatchers are invited to participate by reporting their sightings of species at risk to SOS-POP. You'll find a wealth of useful information and tools on the website, including a presentation of the program and monitoring protocols for certain species at risk, as well as data entry forms and answers to frequently asked questions (unfortunately only in French): <https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/sos-pop>

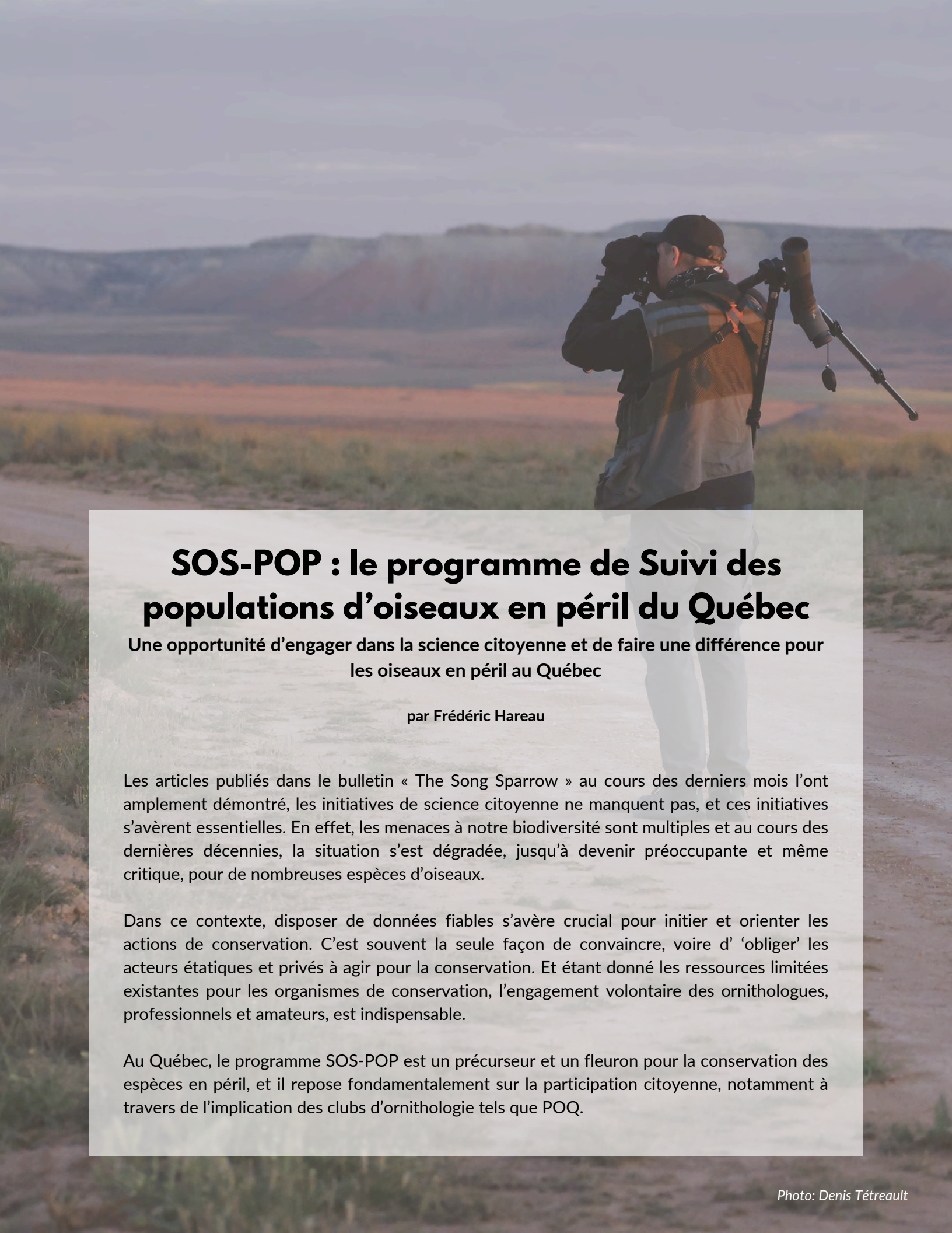
Whether through BPQ or individually, we encourage you to get involved! For our beloved birds, and for you too!

(Thanks to QuébecOiseaux for providing information used in this article.)

My precious chimney swift
 Envy alone
Has named you so mundane
Tethered to the slightest pause
Amid your life upon the wing
 Describing you as drab
 Cigar shaped
 And flying like a bat
 While within me
 Your beauty burns
And I thank you so for that
For from my human complications
 The conditions of my sin
 You do so delightfully
 Delightfully distract.

Maureen Mcgreavy





SOS-POP : le programme de Suivi des populations d'oiseaux en péril du Québec

Une opportunité d'engager dans la science citoyenne et de faire une différence pour les oiseaux en péril au Québec

par Frédéric Hareau

Les articles publiés dans le bulletin « The Song Sparrow » au cours des derniers mois l'ont amplement démontré, les initiatives de science citoyenne ne manquent pas, et ces initiatives s'avèrent essentielles. En effet, les menaces à notre biodiversité sont multiples et au cours des dernières décennies, la situation s'est dégradée, jusqu'à devenir préoccupante et même critique, pour de nombreuses espèces d'oiseaux.

Dans ce contexte, disposer de données fiables s'avère crucial pour initier et orienter les actions de conservation. C'est souvent la seule façon de convaincre, voire d' 'obliger' les acteurs étatiques et privés à agir pour la conservation. Et étant donné les ressources limitées existantes pour les organismes de conservation, l'engagement volontaire des ornithologues, professionnels et amateurs, est indispensable.

Au Québec, le programme SOS-POP est un précurseur et un fleuron pour la conservation des espèces en péril, et il repose fondamentalement sur la participation citoyenne, notamment à travers de l'implication des clubs d'ornithologie tels que POQ.

Les origines et l'évolution du programme SOS-POP

Le programme SOS-POP a vu le jour dans le cadre du Plan d'action Saint-Laurent en 1988. Un des objectifs de la phase initiale (1988 à 1993) était d'identifier les espèces menacées ou vulnérables. Lors de cette phase, l'AQGO (devenue depuis lors Québec Oiseaux) a été mandatée par le Service canadien de la faune pour produire un premier bilan global de la situation des « oiseaux menacés » au Québec. Michel Robert a produit ce bilan et a constitué une première compilation de données dans ce qui a été nommé la 'banque de données sur les oiseaux menacés du Québec'.

Cette phase initiale a mené à la création du programme SOS-POP qui existe donc depuis plus de 30 ans, et qui est géré par QuébecOiseaux en collaboration avec de nombreux partenaires, dont Environnement et Changements climatiques Canada, le Service canadien de la faune et tous les clubs d'ornithologie, pour ne nommer qu'eux.

Le programme s'est considérablement développé au fil des années. Ainsi, le nombre d'espèces suivies par le programme est passé de 17 à ses débuts à 45 en 2022 et le nombre de sites répertoriés est passé de quelques centaines à presque 20,000. Le programme a également évolué au cours du temps, intégrant les différents outils technologiques, tels que ebird notamment depuis une dizaine d'années.

Cette évolution a été possible grâce au rôle joué par QuébecOiseaux, à l'implication des clubs et avant tout aux innombrables ornithologues qui y ont contribué activement. Mais on ne pourrait parler de SOS-POP sans mentionner le rôle essentiel que Pierre Fradette, qui a été à la barre de SOS-POP durant les 30 dernières années et vient tout juste de prendre une retraite bien méritée, a joué pour ce programme pendant de nombreuses années !

Les objectifs de SOS-POP

La localisation et les caractéristiques du Québec en font un territoire d'un grand intérêt ornithologique. On y a répertorié 472 espèces, dont 283 sont nicheuses, et seulement 24 seulement migratrices, 161 étant des visiteurs rares et 4 espèces malheureusement disparues.

(<https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/liste-oiseaux-quebec#:~:text=Parmi%20les%20472%20espèces%20répertoriées,rare%20et%204%20ont%20disparu>)

Les 283 espèces nicheuses et 24 migratrices constituent le patrimoine aviaire à conserver en premier lieu, or un nombre d'entre elles ont vu au cours des dernières décennies, leur situation se dégrader. A titre d'exemple, les populations de 3 espèces (Pic à tête Rouge, Pie grièche migratrice et Sterne de Dougall) ont diminué jusqu'au point où il n'y a plus présentement de population reproductrice occupant annuellement le territoire québécois. Il est évidemment essentiel d'agir afin qu'une telle situation ne se reproduise pas pour d'autres espèces.

C'est pourquoi le programme SOS-POP vise à identifier les sites importants pour la conservation des oiseaux en péril et à assurer le suivi de leur occupation au fil des ans. Il permet ainsi de mieux comprendre l'état des espèces d'oiseaux en péril et d'élaborer des stratégies de conservation.

Pour ce faire, il intègre plusieurs éléments :

Pourquoi m'engager dans SOS-POP et les initiatives de conservation

Un témoignage personnel

L'ornithologie est depuis maintenant 2 décennies, une partie essentielle de ma vie, et est couplée à toutes mes aventures, qu'elles soient professionnelles -notamment lors de mes déplacements internationaux, ou familiales - il est rare que de nos lieux de résidence durant les vacances ne soient pas choisis sans considérer quelques sites ornithologiques proches. Plusieurs personnes diront probablement que je suis un peu intense...

L'ornithologie intègre trois dimensions pour moi : la découverte de nouvelles espèces et de nouveaux milieux naturels, l'apprentissage et l'éducation, tant pour moi que pour les autres en guidant des groupes par exemple et la conservation à laquelle je contribue au travers des multiples inventaires auxquels je participe ou en mobilisant d'autres ornithologues à s'y engager.

Et c'est là qu'intervient le programme SOS-POP. J'y participe depuis une dizaine d'années, à la fois directement en assurant le suivi de plusieurs sites chaque année et en même temps en appuyant de nombreux ornithologues à s'y engager, en particulier avec POQ dans la région de Montréal.

Participer à ce programme m'a permis non seulement de contribuer à des actions de conservation essentielles, mais également de découvrir des lieux que je n'aurais jamais soupçonné, de rencontrer de nombreux ornithologues et d'en apprendre beaucoup sur les espèces suivies et les actions de conservation.

Un moment parmi tant d'autres...

Je garde un souvenir marquant d'une de mes sorties pour SOS-POP en 2022. Cette sortie matinale l'Ouest de Montréal qui s'est déroulée dans un petit matin enchanteur (si l'on exclut les moustiques) m'a permis en plus d'observer une magnifique diversité d'oiseaux, de confirmer 9 sites de nidification pour la Grive des bois. Et à chaque fois, c'était avec un pincement au cœur et un sentiment d'espoir que j'entendais le chant de la Grive, le plus beau du Québec selon moi! Pincement au cœur car cela voulait dire qu'elle est encore belle et bien là et qu'il est temps d'agir pour la préserver.



Grive des bois
Photo: Denis Tétréault



Paruline azurée
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Hironde de rivage
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Martinet ramoneur
Photo: Denis Tétreault



Hibou de marais
Photo: Denis Tétreault

- Suivi des Populations en effectuant des relevés réguliers pour suivre l'évolution des populations d'oiseaux en péril au Québec.
- Identification des sites critiques pour les espèces menacées et des facteurs déterminant l'utilisation des sites.
- Identification des Menaces pesant sur ces espèces et les habitats critiques qu'elles occupent.
- Sensibilisation et Éducation du public à l'importance de la conservation des oiseaux pour encourager les actions de préservation.

SOS-POP assure présentement le suivi de plus de 45 espèces désignées en péril que ce soit au niveau fédéral par le Comité sur la situation des espèces en péril au Canada (COSEPAC) en vertu de la Loi sur les espèces en péril (LEP), ou au niveau provincial selon la Loi sur les espèces menacées ou vulnérables (LEVM). La liste des espèces suivies est disponible dans la foire aux questions de SOS-POP - <https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/sos-pop> .

Pour atteindre les objectifs fixés par le programme, la banque de données SOS-POP contient une grande richesse d'informations sur les espèces en péril comme les statuts de conservation, les menaces identifiées, les actions de conservation et les habitats occupés (sites de nidification et aires de concentration). Elle intègre les relevés quotidiens produits depuis 1980, de même que les données historiques complètes pour certaines espèces. SOS-POP contient également des données provenant d'eBird, des atlas des oiseaux nicheurs du Québec, de rapports, de publications et de plusieurs autres sources.

SOS-POP constitue de plus la banque source du CDPNQ en matière d'oiseaux en péril pour le Centre de données sur le patrimoine naturel du Québec (CDPNQ).

S'impliquer

Depuis de nombreuses années, les membres de POQ sont engagés dans le programme SOS-POP pour assurer un suivi pour des espèces telles que le Martinet Ramoneur, le Faucon pèlerin, la Grive des bois, le Petit blongios, la Paruline azurée, l'Hironde de rivage et bien d'autres.

Chaque année, le comité du programme SOS-POP établit des priorités en termes d'espèces à suivre et de sites à visiter. Cette année, le programme se concentre sur le suivi des sites potentiels de nidification du Martinet ramoneur et du Hibou des marais. En ce qui concerne notre région, c'est le Martinet ramoneur qui est à l'honneur.

Ce sont plus de 60 sites de nidification du Martinet ramoneur qui sont à couvrir à Montréal, et c'est avec gratitude que je partage qu' seulement une semaine, plus de quinze bénévoles se sont manifestés lors de l'appel lancé. Merci pour votre contribution!

De plus, en dehors des priorités établies annuellement, toutes et tous les ornithologues qui le souhaitent sont invités à participer en rapportant leurs observations d'espèces en péril à SOS-POP. Vous trouverez sur le site de multiples informations et outils utiles : présentation du programme et protocoles de suivi pour certaines espèces en péril, ainsi que les formulaires de saisie de données et une foire aux questions. <https://www.quebecoiseaux.org/fr/sos-pop>.

Que ce soit au travers de POQ, ou individuellement, nous vous invitons très fortement à vous impliquer! Pour les oiseaux qui nous sont chers et pour vous tout autant!

(Merci à QuébecOiseaux pour le partage d'informations qui ont permis la rédaction de cet article.)

Birding Adventures: Japan

Story and photos by Émile Brisson-Curadeau

There are many reasons why one would want to travel to Japan: the temples, the unique culture, the cherry blossoms, you name it! Of course, as an avid (not to say “intense”) birdwatcher, the first thing I think when I visit a country is “what birds can I see here?”

Japan is one of the rare temperate countries that might actually be better to bird in winter. Indeed, many Siberian migrants winter in Japan, while an overwhelming portion of the breeding species are resident, and so can also be found in winter. Birding in winter is, however, very different from what I’m used to. Usually when I visit a country, I plan my route based on habitat, as I visit at least one breeding ground for each species of the region. These breeding grounds are the same year after year, so a lot of information can be found about where to find them. In winter, though, birds can be more unpredictable, as they are more mobile and often less faithful to one site. Furthermore, we can expect more rare birds passing by in the region, with some lost individuals sometimes overwintering in the same spot for a long period, far from their usual wintering ground. Therefore, it is crucial to follow rare bird alerts, and identify individuals that seem to be staying in the same place long enough to be worth trying for!

Among these rare birds, two caught my attention months before I even set foot in Japan. The first one was the Japanese Night-Heron. This species has a very low population and spends most of its time motionless in dense undergrowth, making it nearly impossible to see. It breeds in Japan, but is extremely hard to find during the reproductive season, as only a few people know the location of its breeding ground (data is hidden on eBird!). It winters in the Philippines, where it is just as hard to observe. However, an individual was found in November in a park in the middle of Tokyo! It attracted hundreds of birdwatchers throughout the winter but could still go weeks without being noticed, hidden in the vegetation. As it had become quite an attraction in Tokyo, I naturally tried to see it the very first day I arrived in Japan, on February 16. Fortunately, some birders had already found it earlier that morning, as I’m sure I would never have managed it myself! As it was, all I had to do was find the large group of photographers, which really wasn’t very hard at all...



Japanese Night-Heron



Hooded and White-naped Cranes

A second rare bird that caught my attention was a lone Siberian Crane that was overwintering in a field in southern Japan. Siberian Cranes are not supposed to be seen in Japan in any season, but this one individual seemed to have found its place among large flocks composed of no less than four other species of cranes that winter in the area. It was quite a spectacle to see thousands of cranes in the agricultural fields! The two most abundant species, the Hooded Crane and the White-naped Crane, were both lifers for me, while the rarer Common Crane (ironic) and the familiar Sandhill Crane were not. I found the Siberian Crane easily as it is the only all-white crane (all other species are predominantly grey). It is also a massive bird, easily a foot larger than the other species! Apart from being visually impressive, the Siberian Crane has a “mythical” status due to its rarity: the population is less than 4,000 individuals, which almost all winter in a single region in China. I was quite lucky to visit Japan when one decided to visit the country!

After eight days of visiting the Tokyo area and the south of Japan, it was time to head north. While temperatures are generally mild in Japan in winter, the northern island of Hokkaido is the exception. I was particularly unlucky with the weather - five of the six days I was there were dominated by incessant snowstorms. I must admit, the driving was not always fun as whiteouts caused by the 80 km winds would sometimes make the road totally disappear from sight!

It was all worth it, though, as Hokkaido holds among the most iconic bird species in the country. This includes the Steller’s Sea-Eagle (you’ve heard of this one, right?), as well as yet another species of crane: the Red-crowned Crane. The latter is often depicted in Japanese artwork and is famous, among other things, for displaying its breeding dance in late winter in the snowy landscape. Yet, perhaps THE most iconic species is the Blakiston’s Fish-Owl, the largest species of owl in the world. It is extremely rare and can reliably be seen only in a single river in eastern Hokkaido, at night obviously. I was lucky to see all these species, as well as a couple of Thick-billed Murres, my study species during my Master’s that I had not seen since doing fieldwork in 2017. I also found a Steller’s Eider, another beauty that had not been observed in Japan in five years!



Red-crowned Cranes



Blakiston's Fish-Owl

After the snow, I decided that I needed a little warm and sunny weather. I ended my trip in two southern islands of Japan, Okinawa and Amami, where climate is considered sub-tropical. My plan was to “clean sweep” the endemics there, which ended up being a bit harder than I had expected. However, I had a full week planned for these two islands combined, and I ended up achieving my goal. The highlight was one of the nocturnal outings that I did, where I had a close encounter with all three species of owls found there: Ryukyu Screech-Owl, Japanese Scops-Owl, and Northern Boobook. I also found a Baillon’s Crake in Amami, a first for the island!

After three weeks of birding, I ended with a final count of 228 species. This was way beyond my expectations (my most optimistic estimate was 200). I only missed a handful of my target species, and so I was extremely satisfied. Among the other highlights was a Brown-headed Gull that I found on a boat off Tokyo. It was only the second observation ever for the country!

I came back to Canada with a lot of memories, but maybe a *bit* tired? Yeah, when I travel, I get a little intense. I definitely need a rest after all my birding vacations!

Ryukyu Screech-Owl, an endemic of Okinawa and Amami



Birding Basics



If you are a just starting out as a birdwatcher, or if you are are a novice looking to improve your knowledge, why not spend a summer afternoon or two exploring the **free** courses available online from Birds Canada.

To get started, **Birding for Beginners** will teach you the **Birding Basics** you need to know to start birding, including (1) how to choose binoculars, guidebooks, and other tools to identify birds; (2) the five core ways to identify birds; (3) how to find suitable habitats when you want to go birding; and (4) how to spot the birds around you. Click anywhere in the box below to get all the details:


FEATURED FREE

Birding for Beginners

Learn the basics to start birding. Learn about helpful tools, how to start identifying birds, and where to go birding.

[Learn More](#)


American Goldfinch by Geoff McDonell



Learn by Listening: About Birds

Grasshopper Sparrow by Peter Hawrylyshyn

This alternative course has been designed especially for those with a visual impairment who are interested in getting started in birding. It uses a format that allows for learning the concepts of bird anatomy, habitat, and behaviours by listening rather than through text and images. All are welcome, and any beginning birder might enjoy this method of learning basics, as well as the introduction to identifying birds by sound.



Gardening for Birds

Eastern Kingbird by Roberto Haveroth

Discover how you can help birds struggling with loss of habitat.

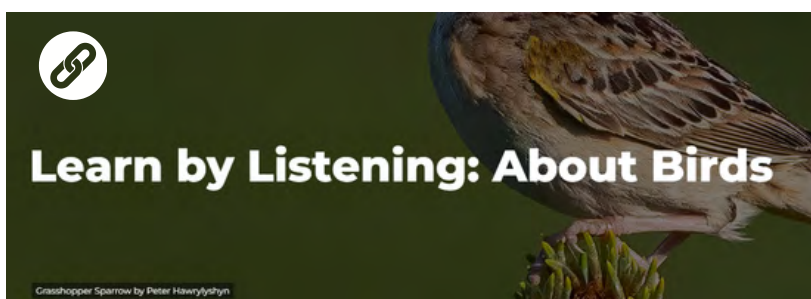
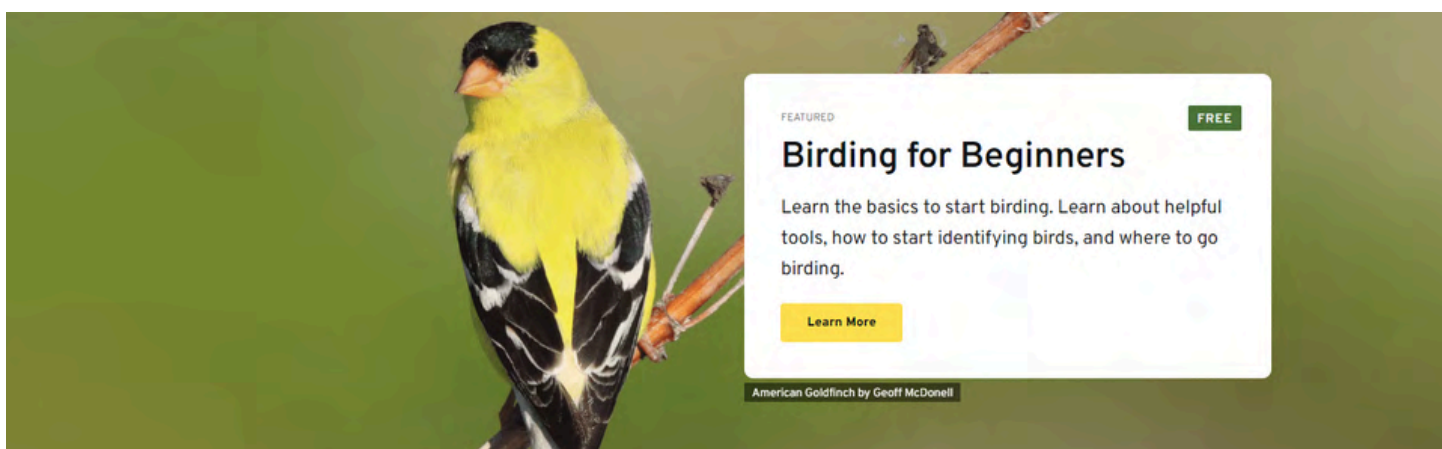
You'll learn the core concepts of bird-friendly habitat and how to apply them in your own backyard.

LES B.A.-BA DE L'OBSERVATION

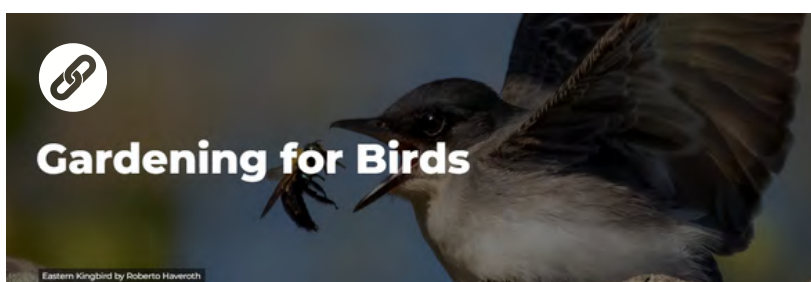


Si vous êtes un ornithologue débutant ou un novice désireux d'améliorer ses connaissances, pourquoi ne pas passer un ou deux après-midi d'été à explorer les cours gratuits (en anglais) offerts en ligne par Oiseaux Canada.

Pour commencer, le cours « **Birding for Beginners** » vous enseignera les principes de base de l'ornithologie amateur que vous devez connaître pour commencer à observer les oiseaux, y compris (1) comment choisir des jumelles, des guides et d'autres outils pour identifier les oiseaux ; (2) les cinq principales façons d'identifier les oiseaux ; (3) comment trouver des habitats appropriés lorsque vous voulez aller observer les oiseaux ; et (4) comment repérer les oiseaux qui vous entourent. Cliquez n'importe où dans l'encadré ci-dessous pour obtenir tous les détails :



Ce cours a été conçu pour les personnes souffrant d'une déficience visuelle qui souhaitent s'initier à l'ornithologie. Il utilise un format qui permet d'apprendre les concepts de l'anatomie, de l'habitat et des comportements des oiseaux en écoutant plutôt qu'en lisant des textes et des images. Tous sont les bienvenus, et tout ornithologue débutant pourrait apprécier cette méthode d'apprentissage, ainsi que l'introduction à l'identification des oiseaux par le son.



Découvrez comment vous pouvez aider les oiseaux qui luttent contre la perte de leur habitat.

Vous apprendrez les concepts fondamentaux de l'habitat favorable aux oiseaux et comment les appliquer dans votre propre jardin.

Exploring Early Canadian Ornithology

with Jeff Harrison

James MacPherson LeMoine (1825-1912)

James MacPherson LeMoine was born into wealth and privilege. His father, Benjamin LeMoine, descended from a seigneurial family, while his mother, Julia MacPherson, was the daughter of United Empire Loyalists who acquired the seigneurie of Île-aux-Grues (Crane Island). LeMoine received a classical education and pursued a career as a lawyer and public servant. He lived most of his adult life at his residence, Spencer Grange, near Sillery, in Quebec.

Over a lifetime, LeMoine wrote extensively on Quebec ornithology. He began researching, reading about and observing birds from an early age, likely greatly influenced by his exposure to the natural environment on Île-aux-Grues.

The publication of Baird's *The Birds of North America* in 1858 encouraged LeMoine to write *Ornithologie du Canada*. As he notes in his Avant-Propos (Foreward), "Une lacune existait dans le champ des lettres: le Canada avait ses orateurs, ses historiens, ses litterateurs, ses poètes, mais de naturalistes, point." (transl. "There is a something missing in the field of letters: Canada has its orators, its historians, its writers, its poets, as for naturalists, none.") He also cites the experience of M. J. Maxham, a young Quebec medical student studying at the University of Edinburgh, who found that the Scottish university library possessed a superb collection of Canadian birds, better than anything he had seen in Quebec.

The first edition of *Ornithologie*, published in 1860, quickly sold out. This encouraged LeMoine to write a second, revised edition that was published in 1861. This review of LeMoine's significance to Quebec ornithology is based largely on the 1861 edition, which contains a more traditional species account than the rare, more eclectic, 1860 edition.

Lemoine's Canada

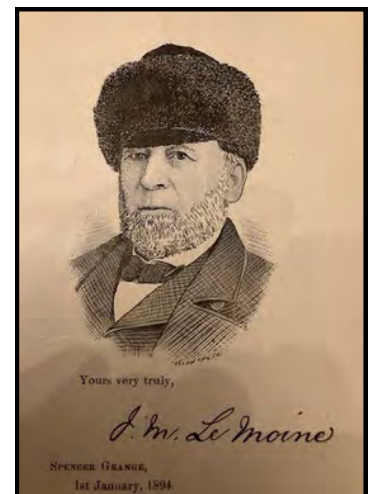
On reading *Ornithologie* it is evident that LeMoine's "Canada" only included the united provinces of Quebec (Lower Canada) and Ontario (Upper Canada) known as "The Canadas". (The provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick united to form the confederation known as Canada in 1867.) LeMoine's title, *Ornithologie du Canada*, while misleading to us today, is understandable.

For ornithological material from Upper Canada, LeMoine relied on the published bird records of George Allan of Toronto, as well as Samuel Passmore May's article on birds in *The Handbook of Toronto*, and on the early works of pioneering Ontario ornithologist

Thomas Mcllwraith. The first of Mcllwraith's extensive bird records from the Hamilton area were published in *The Canadian Journal* in 1860. It is not known if LeMoine and Mcllwraith communicated with each other.

Ornithologie du Canada

LeMoine was a member of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (LHSQ), and the Montreal Natural History Society (MNHS). Both these natural history societies maintained extensive bird collections, but there are enough omissions from both collections to suggest that they did not form the basis for the Quebec records in *Ornithologie*.



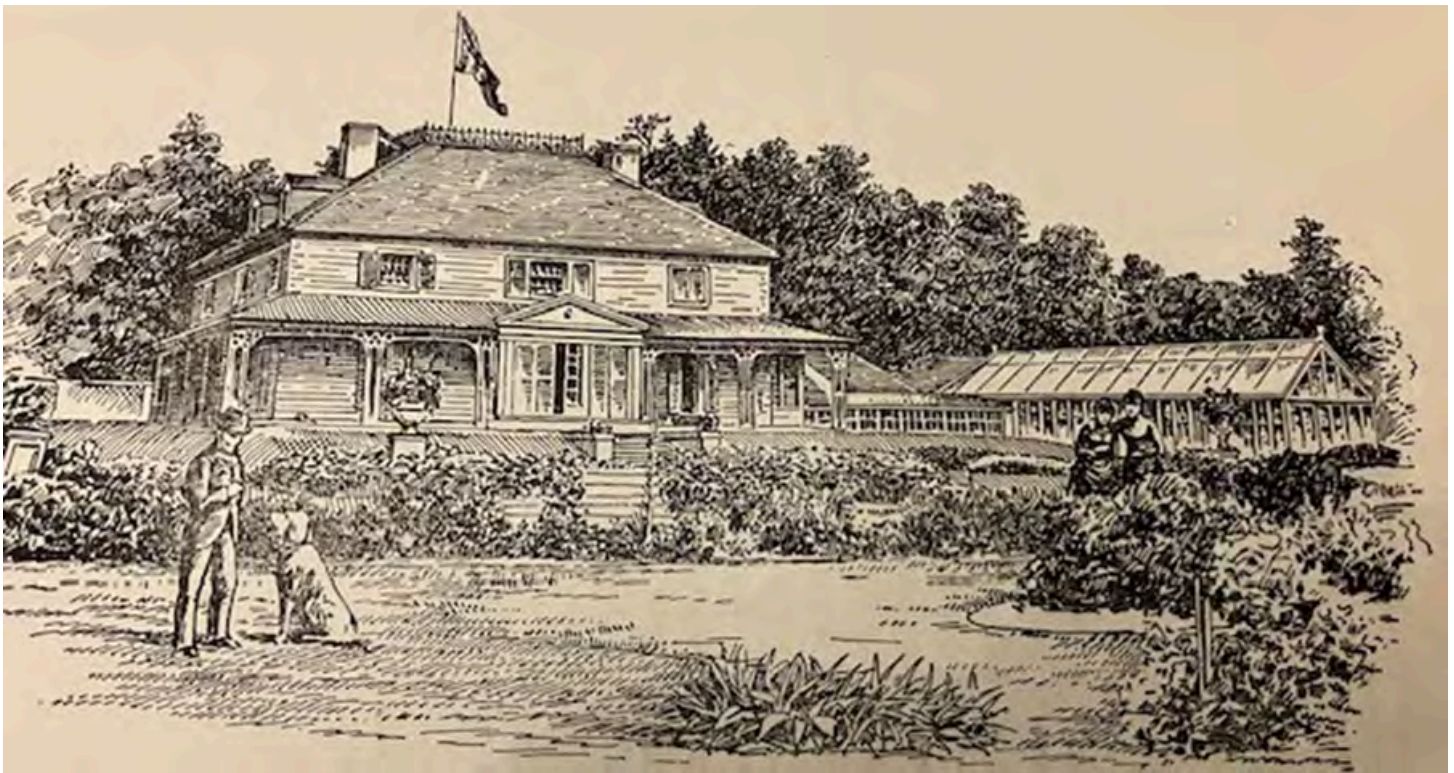
LeMoine, J. M. 1894. Sketch of James LeMoine
Maple Leaves. Quebec: L. J. Demers & Frère

LeMoine himself assembled a significant ornithological collection at Spencer Grange, which he used for some of his bird descriptions. He also made extensive use of his field notes from Quebec and from trips he made to Montreal, the lower St. Lawrence and the Gaspé. LeMoine also cites widely from the records of his contacts with observers and collectors in Quebec. In addition to a few references to Archibald Hall, an expert on the MNHS collection, he mentions, among others, correspondence with Dr. Duquet in Rimouski and with John Strang and William Sheppard in Quebec.

Ornithologie represents LeMoine's most significant ornithological work. It is a singular work which reflects the personal stamp of the author, a curious mix of the encyclopaedists, and historical and contemporary authors. As a result *Ornithologie* includes articles on falconry, discussion about birds from Aristotle to Aldrovandi, plus references to more contemporary naturalists and ornithologists including Gilbert White, Johann Bechstein, Alexander Wilson, John James Audubon and John Richardson. It is evident that LeMoine read many of these authors carefully. For example, he uses the Bechstein phonetics to describe the song of the Song Sparrow.

LeMoine also includes observations of early Quebec naturalists Leclerc, Le Jeune, Boucher and Charlevoix. Omitted are Sagard and Denys, and the most important source of early Quebec bird records, Brisson's *Ornithologie*, published in 1760. Despite the omissions, LeMoine's work adds a historical dimension missing from the publications of all other 19th-century Quebec ornithologists. LeMoine supplemented his written Quebec species accounts by the extensive use of descriptions, field notes and range information from the works of American ornithologists. LeMoine cites Vieillot, Wilson, Audubon, Cassin and Baird. For other Canadian records he relied on Richardson's *Fauna Boreali Americana 2: The Birds* (1831).

LeMoine considered Audubon the most important ornithologist in North America. He used Audubon's impressive *Ornithological Biography* (of bird species) and quotes him extensively. The strong appeal of Audubon probably had personal historical associations. When Audubon visited Quebec City in 1842 to sell subscriptions to *Birds of America* he sought out wealthy businessman Henry Atkinson, who owned Spencer Wood. In 1851, LeMoine purchased 40 acres of Spencer Wood from Atkinson. In 1860 he married Atkinson's niece and built Spencer Grange on the property.



SPENCER GRANGE, from garden.

A family group. Looking up to his master Wolfe the big St. Bernard Dog, a brave and true friend.

Ornithologie was essentially a popular account of the birds of Ontario and Quebec, and the first significant ornithological work published by a resident Canadian. Most of LeMoine's bird entries contain descriptions of the male and female bird, information on range, nesting, migration, calls, etc. Many of the observations about migration dates and ranges are derived from his personal experience but his treatment can be hurried and inconsistent. In this sense, LeMoine's work lacks the rigour of his ornithological contemporaries Archibald Hall and William Couper. Reading *Ornithologie* leaves the impression that LeMoine was strictly an amateur Quebec ornithologist and historian.

LeMoine's work does provide insight into his connections with the ornithological community and reveals what he and his contemporaries knew about the abundance, migration patterns and distribution of birds, particularly in the Quebec area. His accounts of particular species, such as the presence of Golden Eagles at Lac Mephamagog and Night-Heron colonies at Île-aux-Oies and Beauport, are important historical records. Using McIlwraith's research and his own, LeMoine was likely the first Canadian ornithologist to recognize that temperature differences between southern Ontario and Quebec affected species distribution and overwintering.

Ornithologie lists 178 identifiable Canadian species, though lack of clarity about individual species status in Quebec is often an issue. Some examples:

- Canadian species that he does not specifically ascribe to Quebec include uncommon species, which no previous Quebec naturalist had mentioned, including: Stilt Sandpiper, Curlew Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Cooper's Hawk, Barn Owl, Short-eared Owl, Warbling Vireo and Summer Tanager. (Some, but not all, of these species are listed in the McIlwraith article.)
- It is sometimes unclear from reading the text if LeMoine knew the bird had been recorded in Quebec or was merely guessing, based on its known presence in the Canadian Arctic and in the United States. Some examples include Killdeer, his discussion of the status of Screech, Saw-whet and Boreal Owls, and Hermit Thrush.
- In some cases, he states individual species are found in all of Canada without specific reference to Quebec.

LeMoine also provides useful information on the identity of the "Rossignol", a bird widely mentioned in early Quebecois literature. While most species accounts amount to one or two pages, he devotes fifteen pages to the Song Sparrow. This bird is clearly beloved and has great meaning to Quebecers and is mentioned in virtually all accounts of early Quebec naturalists.

It is not surprising, given the limitations of *Ornithologie* as a combined work on the bird life of south-eastern Canada and the fact that it was published in French, that it was little known and rarely cited by the predominately English-speaking ornithologists in the United States. This neglect also led to the virtual omission of the significant American ornithological work of Jean François Vieillot, leaving a large gap in Americans' knowledge of their early ornithology.

[1] Archibald Hall's much more important work on Quebec ornithology, *Mammals and Birds of the Montreal District*, was written in 1839 but not published until 1862. It is evident in reading *Ornithologie* that LeMoine was aware of Hall but probably did not have access to the Hall manuscript, which was in the possession of American ornithologists at the time. This was particularly unfortunate for Canadian ornithology. If LeMoine had combined the content of the Hall manuscript, which encompassed an expansive area around Montreal, with his knowledge of the avifauna of the lower St. Lawrence valley in the Quebec area, his contribution to early Canadian ornithology would have been more substantial.

Charles Dionne wrote his *Catalogue des Oiseaux de la Province de Quebec* in 1889. *Catalogue* is the second-most important scholarly work in Quebec ornithology after Archibald Hall's 1862 article. It contains records of 273 species found in the province. It is significant to note that while Dionne includes records from contemporary naturalist William Couper, who resided mostly in Quebec between 1860 and 1884, no record from LeMoine is specifically cited.

LeMoine wrote many other books on Quebec ornithology. Perhaps the most relevant is his *Maple Leaves*, published in 1894. This volume contains a 45-page article "The Birds of Quebec. A Popular Lecture Delivered Before the Natural History Society, at Montreal on 12th March, 1891."

Bibliography

Audubon, John James 1831-1839. *Ornithological Biography*. Philadelphia: Judah Dobson

Audubon, John James. 1827-1838. *Birds of America*. London: J. J. Audubon

Baird, S. F, J. Cassin and G. B. Lawrence. 1858. *The Birds of North America*. Philadelphia: J. P. Lippincot & Co.

Gosselin, M. 2014. "De Pierre Chasseur à Ernest Wintle: 110 ans d'oiseaux". *Québec Oiseaux*, Spring, 2014

Hall, Archibald. 1862. "Mammals and Birds of the Montreal District". *Canadian Naturalist and Geologist* 4 &5. Montreal: Dawson Bros.

LeMoine, J. M. 1859. "Notes on Land and Sea Birds observed around Quebec". *Canadian Naturalist and Geologist*, Volume 4: Part 1. Montreal: B. Dawson

LeMoine, J. M. 1861. *Ornithologie du Canada*, Second Edition. Part One. Quebec: J. T. Brousseau. Part Two. Quebec: E. R. Frechette

LeMoine, J.M. 1882. *Picturesque Quebec: a sequel to Quebec past and present*. Montreal: Dawson Brothers

LeMoine, J. M. 1894. *Maple Leaves. Canadian History - Literature - Ornithology*. Quebec: L. J. Demers & Frère

McIlwraith, T. 1860. "List of Birds observed in the vicinity of Hamilton, CW arranged after the system of Audubon". *The Canadian Journal of Industry Science, and Art, New Series* Vol. 5 No. 28, July 1860: 387-396. Toronto: Lovell and Gibson

McIlwraith, T. 1861. "Notices of Birds Observed Near Hamilton, C.W." *The Canadian Journal of Industry, Science and Art, New Series* Number 31, January 1861: 6-18; No. 32: 129-138. Toronto: Lovell and Gibson

Dr Duquet of Rimouski

file:///C:/Users/lagop/Downloads/Naturaliste%20canadien_1963%20(1).pdf

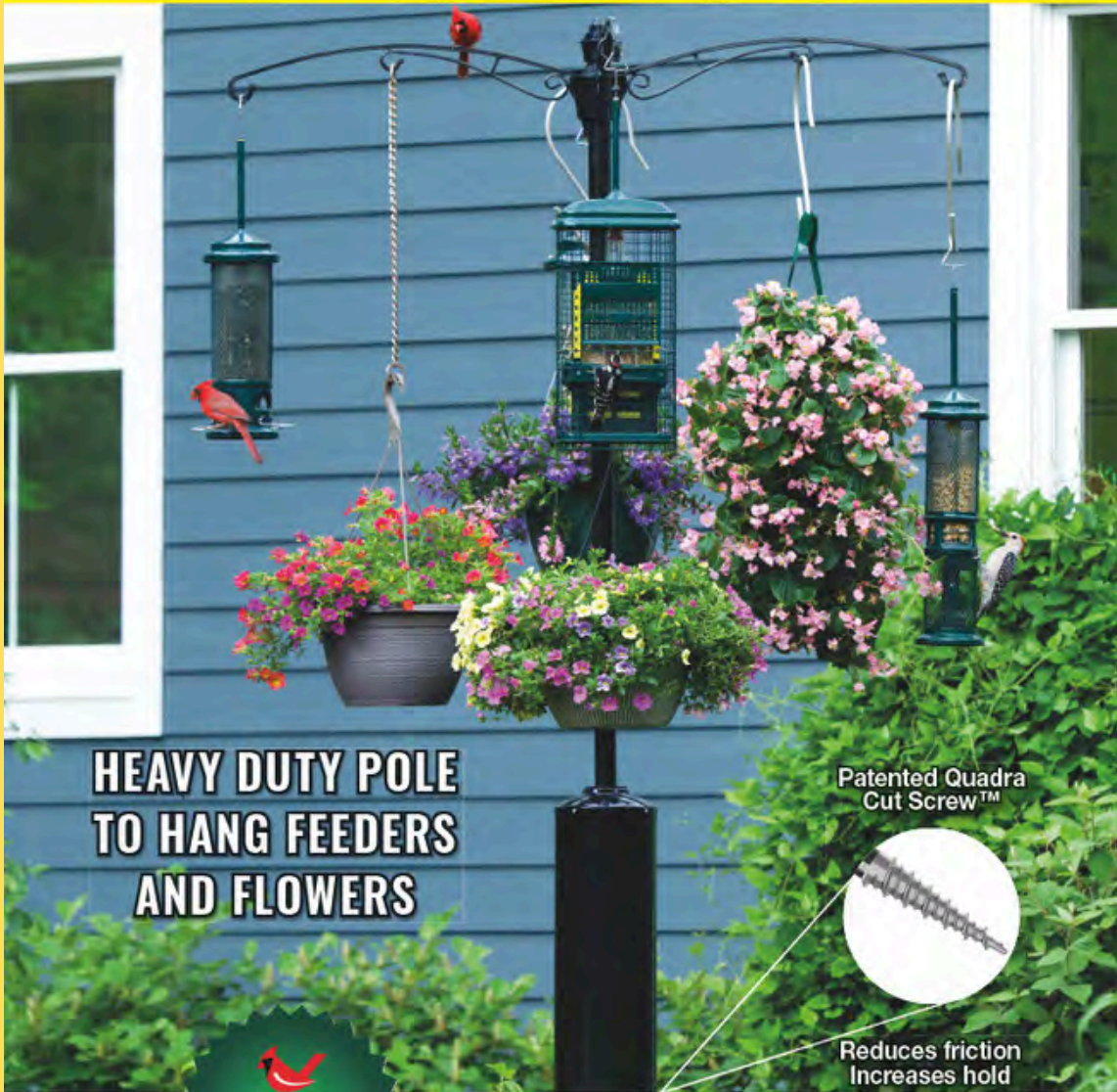
NEW

RaccoonBuster®



SEE VIDEO

GUARDIAN POLE SYSTEM



**HEAVY DUTY POLE
TO HANG FEEDERS
AND FLOWERS**

Patented Quadra
Cut Screw™



Reduces friction
Increases hold



brome.com

1-800-856-5685

BROME® 



Why drink Bird Protection Quebec's shade-grown coffee?

Your purchase helps support our work here at home as well as protecting the winter habitat of our migrating birds. Species like the Golden-winged Warbler found at BPQ's Montée Biggar Sanctuary migrate to shade-grown coffee farms in the winter. The coffee you choose matters to BPQ and the birds.

Bird Friendly coffee isn't just good for birds and wildlife — it's better for the planet. To find out more, visit cafebirdfriendly.org

3 Formats	2 Roasts		decaf*	2 Grinds available		
	Medium	dark		Bean	filter	espresso
342 g / \$19.25 (*Decaf \$20.50)	•	•	•	•	•	•
1 kg / \$52.50	•	•		•	•	•
2.5 kg / \$102.00	•	•		•	•	•

Flat Rate Shipping \$14

Café AVIA partners with other organizations such as Bird Protection Quebec. Each participating non-profit organization believes that the coffee you choose can change the world. By putting their logo on Bird Friendly® certified coffee they are helping to get the word out to more people. We hope you select Bird Protection Quebec as your partner of choice when purchasing coffee on cafebirdfriendly.org



Order Online at
cafebirdfriendly.org

