

The SONG SPARROW

Bird Protection Quebec - Protection des oiseaux du Québec

September 2020 (vol: 63.1)

Bird Protection
Quebec

Protection
des oiseaux
du Québec



For the Birds since 1917
Pour les oiseaux depuis 1917

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The Song Sparrow: ISSN 1710-3371

Legal Deposit: National Library and Archives of Canada

Publication Mail No.: 40044323

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Cover Photo

An October moment / Un moment en octobre © Richard Gregson

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Editor's Message

by Jane Cormack
Editor, *The Song Sparrow*



Sitelle à poitrine rousse / Red-breasted Nuthatch / © Chuck Kling 2020

The Song Sparrow wishes to congratulate the new directors on their election to the BPQ board at the June 2020 eAGM. As the 2020–2021 season of board meetings has now begun in earnest, we look forward to the contribution of Anne Archambault, Sue Denoncourt, Le Duing Yong Lang, and Maya Longpré-Croteau. They the new President, Simon Duval, Treasurer and Vice President Sheldon Harvey, Vice President Connie Morgenstern, Secretary, Helen Meredith,

and Directors Émile Brisson Curadeau, Chris Cloutier, Claude Cloutier, Kyle Elliott, Mélanie Guigueno, Jeff Harrison, Darlene Harvey, Kristen Lalla, Don-Jean Léandri-Breton, Ana Morales, and Bonnie Sautor.

BPQ celebrated its centennial in 2017. Obviously, this is not the first time, in its rich history, the board is finding itself face-to-face with new challenges, having to adapt and find new ways to continue to develop the Education, Conservation, and Observation (ECO) of birds and bird habitat in Quebec.

The board began holding meetings via videoconference in March. The fall and winter season of its monthly meetings and presentations will be held also via videoconference until further notice, and our in-person field trips have shifted to a virtual version.

Although there are new restrictions on social gatherings, birders can continue to enjoy their favourite activity. Birdwatching has a long history in Quebec. BPQ is proud of its 100 plus years and is also encouraged by the longevity of many other birding clubs in the province. We would like to congratulate in particular the Société de loisir ornithologique de l'Estrie (SLOE) who will celebrate their 40th year in 2021, the Club des ornithologues de Québec (COQ) who are celebrating 65th

year this year, and the Société de biologie de Montréal (SBM) who will celebrate their centennial in 2022. We look forward to celebrating along with them.

This is the perfect time to celebrate birdwatching or to encourage your friends and family to take it up, or even get more involved with BPQ. If you are interested in helping BPQ to achieve its goals, contact us birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com



Great Blue Heron / Grand Héron
© Chuck Kling 2020

New Members

by Darlene Harvey,
membership secretary

We are happy to welcome the following new and returning members who joined our flock over the summer: Louis-Philippe Doré, Jean Béliveau, Linda Pérez, Suzy Slavin, Elisabeth Breski and Chris Thompson

We look forward to meeting you, hopefully in the near future, when it is safe for us to resume our group activities. In the meantime, don't forget to join our Song Sparrow e-list to connect with other members <https://groups.io/g/bpqsongsparrow> and to follow us on Facebook.

On behalf of all of us, welcome to BPQ!

It's Time to Renew Your Membership

BPQ memberships expire on the 30th of September of every year. Unless you're a Life Member or a new member who joined after March 1, 2020, it's time to renew your support and remain a part of BPQ, one of the oldest bird conservation charities in Canada!

Click [here](#) to go to our website, where it is easy to renew on line with your credit card through Paypal (no Paypal account needed) or, if you prefer to pay by cheque, by following the instructions for "Becoming a Member by Mail" at the bottom of the page.

C'est le temps de renouveler votre adhésion

Les adhésions à POQ-BPQ expirent chaque année le 30 septembre, donc, à moins que vous ne soyez un membre à vie ou un nouveau membre qui s'est joint après le 1^{er} mars 2020, le temps est venu de renouveler votre soutien et de faire partie de POQ, l'un des plus anciens organismes de bienfaisance de la conservation au Canada!

Cliquez [ici](#) pour accéder à notre site Web et renouveler facilement en ligne avec votre carte de crédit par l'entremise de Paypal (aucun compte Paypal nécessaire) ou, si vous préférez payer par chèque, en suivant les instructions «Si vous préférez payer par chèque» au bas de la page.

Ian Alexander McLaren 1931-2020

by Robert Carswell



I am sorry to report the death of an old friend, well known to earlier generations of birders in Montreal, Ian McLaren, on July 29, 2020, in Halifax.

Ian was born and brought up in Montreal, and remained here until lured away to Nova Scotia in 1967. He was an active member of the PQSPB, as it then was, and

a member of its Board of Directors from as early as 1954. He was named president of the Society in 1966.

He studied at McGill, where he did his BSc and MSc in biology, and then did a PhD at Yale. He married Bernice in 1956, and they spent wonderful summers in the Canadian arctic doing field work. Ian was kind enough to send me his diary of one of those summers, an idyllic remembrance of living in tents and observing wildlife.

He taught and did research work at McGill for a few years, but got an offer he couldn't refuse from Dalhousie, where he spent the rest of his professional life, close to better maritime environments. He found Nova Scotia to be an avian paradise.

He was the best birder I ever encountered. Along with other Montrealers (including at various times stalwart PQSPBers such as George Montgomery, Brooke Clibbon, Eric Tull, Ilay Ferrier and Peter Mitchell) I made four or five trips with Ian to Seal Island, off the southern tip of Nova Scotia. He could identify fall Warblers and Empids on the wing. We routinely saw great seabirds (such as Sooty Shearwaters, Wilson's Storm-Petrels, a Puffin on one occasion) and strays (Blue Grosbeak, Goshawk). Ian said it was the only place in the world where you could have in your telescope at

the same time, a Manx Shearwater and a Prothonotary Warbler. Seal Island was like that. A day's hiking, with lots of good birds, would be followed with lively lobster dinners, sometimes with local lobstermen.

On one memorable occasion the island was invaded by a hundred or more Russian fisherman, who were delighted to walk on land after months at sea in their huge factory boat. The locals (of whom there were a few) and our little group were happy to welcome them.

I recall once, when we were birding on the mainland, that Ian and I disagreed on the identification of a shorebird. He said it was a Yellowlegs, I said it was a Ruff. It turned out we were both right – we were looking at different birds.

In 1984, some of us were lucky enough to accompany Ian on a once-in-a-lifetime trip, in beautiful weather, to Sable Island, 290 km east of Halifax. The first bird we saw when alighting from our helicopter (provided by a company doing oil exploration work in nearby waters) was an Ipswich Sparrow. There were all sorts of amazing seabirds, such as Jaegers, and shorebirds, including a Curlew Sandpiper.

Apart from the Ipswich Sparrows there were other passerines, most of them lost migrants. As we walked along the endless

beaches on the island we were followed, just offshore, by a number of curious seals. The famous ponies (really smallish horses) were there in numbers.



McLaren, Ian A. All The Birds of Nova Scotia: Status and Critical Identification. 2012. Gaspereau Press. Hardbound: 247 pages

Ian was instrumental in getting both Sable Island and Seal Island protected. Seal Island was acquired by the Nova Scotia Nature Trust, and Sable Island is managed by Parks Canada.

Ian was primarily a marine biologist (think copepods...), publishing more than 100 peer-reviewed articles. He helped dozens of graduate students, including Montrealer Jean Boulva. The Department of Biology of Dalhousie established a graduate bursary in his name.

But he also made outstanding contributions to ornithology. He provided the data and wrote the paper which led to the lumping of the Ipswich and Savannah Sparrows. He wrote frequently for the Nova Scotia Bird Society's quarterly, *Nova Scotia Birds*. He edited the third edition of Robie Tufts' *Birds of Nova Scotia*, and as recently as 2011 wrote *All the Birds of Nova Scotia, Status and Critical Identification*. This latter book is a model of valuable information (useful for birders anywhere) presented in a superbly engaging way, He writes beautifully.

He was awarded the ABA's Ludlow Griscom Award for Outstanding

Contributions in Regional Ornithology. He recently received the Douglas Pimlott Award for lifetime achievements in conservation.

He is survived by Bernice and their three children, Mary, Andrew and James.

Bob Carswell joined BPQ with his friend Peter Mitchell in 1950. Both became popular field trips leaders. Bob was president of BPQ from 1968 to 1970. He has served on an impressive number of boards of directors relating to nature and the environment. He was president of the Toronto Ornithological Club from 2005 to 2007, a director of the Nature Conservancy of Canada from 1982 to 2017, and a director of the boards of Bird Studies Canada, Wildlife Habitat Canada, and the Canadian Nature Federation.

Bird Views

A summary of interesting bird sightings in Montréal and around the province of Québec

April - May 2020

by Pierre Bannon

Greater White-fronted Goose: a group of 6 at Hinchinbrooke 27 Mar was worthy of note (I. Chavez, C. Araya). **Pink-footed Goose:** single birds were reported at Saint-Blaise 16 Mar (A. Lanouette), Sainte-Catherine 22 Mar (S. Robert et al.), Baie-du-Febvre 4 Apr (D. Jauvin, J. Lavoie), Pabos 8 Apr (JM. Smith) and at Sainte-Luce 29 Apr (V. Giroux). **Barnacle Goose:** singles were seen in 8 different municipalities except for 2 birds at Saint-Blaise 14-15 Mar (S. Riel, m.ob.). **Barnacle Goose X Canada Goose hybrid:** one photographed at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 18 Mar (S. Duchemin, M. Bélanger et N. Gendron). **Mute Swan:** one seen at different places around the Québec City area 30 Apr-27 May (*m. ob.*). **Trumpeter Swan:** east of its expected migration corridor in western Québec, two birds were at Beauharnois 23 May (F. Hareau) and 2 other birds were reported at Baie-du-Febvre 27-30 May (*m. ob.*). **Tundra Swan:** up to 8 birds were present at Saint-Anicet 17-31 Mar (*m. ob.*). One was also at Irlande 17-27 May (AM. Galand). **Green-winged Teal (ssp crecca):** singles at La Martinique (IDLM) 1 May (C. Roy, A. Richard) and at Sept-Îles 19 May (C. Lalonde). **Canvasback:** very rare in spring for Abitibi region; 3 at Matagami 7 May (MH. Bousquet) and 4 at Rouyn-Noranda 10 May (J. Gagnon). **Tufted Duck:** singles at Sept-Îles 2-3 May and again 30 May (B. Duchesne, P. Lalonde) and at

Parlons d'oiseaux

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

Avril - mai 2020

par Pierre Bannon

Oie rieuse: un groupe de 6 à Hinchinbrooke 27 mar était digne de mention (I. Chavez, C. Araya). **Oie à bec court:** des individus présents à Saint-Blaise 16 Mar (A. Lanouette), Sainte-Catherine 22 mar (S. Robert et al.), Baie-du-Febvre 4 avr (D. Jauvin, J. Lavoie), Pabos 8 avr (JM. Smith) et à Sainte-Luce 29 avr (V. Giroux). **Bernache nonnette:** des indiv solitaires aperçus dans 8 municipalités différentes à l'exception de 2 oiseaux à Saint-Blaise 14-15 mar (S. Riel, pl.ob.). **Hybride Bernache nonnette X Bernache du Canada:** cet hybride a été photographié à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 18 mar (S. Duchemin, M. Bélanger et N. Gendron). **Cygne tuberculé:** un indiv aperçu à différents endroits autour de Québec 30 avr-27 mai (pl. ob.). **Cygne trompette:** à l'est de son corridor migratoire habituel dans l'ouest du Québec, 2 oiseaux ont été trouvés à Beauharnois 23 mai (F. Hareau) et 2 autres à Baie-du-Febvre 27-30 mai (pl. ob.). **Cygne siffleur:** jusqu'à 8 oiseaux étaient présents à Saint-Anicet 17-31 mar (*pl. ob.*). un s'est retrouvé à Irlande 17-27 mai (AM. Galand). **Sarcelle d'hiver (ssp crecca):** des indiv à La Martinique (IDLM) 1 mai (C. Roy, A. Richard) et à Sept-Îles 19 mai (C. Lalonde). **Fuligule à dos blanc:** très rare au printemps en Abitibi; 3 à Matagami 7 mai (MH. Bousquet) et 4 à Rouyn-Noranda 10 mai (J. Gagnon). **Fuligule morillon:** des indiv à Sept-Îles 2-3 mai ainsi

Beauport 5 May (G. Cyr, G. Lord). **Wild Turkey**: continued to spread east as shown by one at Saint-Fabien 29 Apr (L. Saint-Laurent) and one at Saint-Anaclet 3 May (M. Jaffré).

American Avocet: one at Gatineau 20 Apr was record early for the province (D. Dallaire et al., ph.) and one at Contrecoeur 30 May (D. Tétreault). **American Golden-Plover**: rare in spring, singles stopped at Berthier-sur-Mer 4 Apr (C. Deschênes), Rivière-du-Loup 31 May (JC. Pelletier), and Réservoir Baskatong 31 May (MA. Monpetit). **Willet**: one at Baie-du-Febvre 28 May (M. Lachance et al.). **Wilson's Phalarope**: rare on the island of Montréal, a pair paused at Anjou 14-15 May (O. Barden et al.).

Manx Shearwater: one at Québec City 20 May provided the first record in spring for the province (A. Terrigeol, B. Drolet, A. Caughlan). **Great Cormorant**: singles seen at Carillon 10 May (A. Chevrette) and at Verdun 10-30 May (D. Demers, *m.ob.*). **American White Pelican**: singles at Châteauguay 4 May (C. Trudel, P. Berthe) and at Saint-Anicet 30-31 May (É. Meunier, F. Robillard). A flock of 9 birds on Lake Abitibi 25 May was surprising (G. Audet). **Least Bittern**: one at Saint-Timothée 18 Apr was very early (F. Gravel, S. Couillard). **Little Blue Heron**: singles at Sainte-Anne-des-Monts 19 May (G. Chabot), at Gatineau 21 May (C. Sollow) and at Rivière-Ouelle 26-28 May (S. Dionne, M. Borjia). **Cattle Egret**: one at Longueuil 26 May (D. Bird). **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**: an ad photographed at Bécancour 11 May (Isab-I Sav). **Glossy Ibis**: one at Saint-Siméon de Bonaventure 24-26 Apr (J. Lamarche), 3 at Mirabel 5-7 May (D. Corbeil), one at Stoke 17-18 May (D. Langlois, B. Turgeon), one at Rivière Ouelle 21 May (B. Borgia) and finally 3 at Beauharnois 31 May (C. Samoisette-Pilon, MP Langlois). **Black Vulture**: continued to spread into s. Québec as shown by at least 9 records this spring. **Short-eared Owl**: sightings of migrating birds were much more numerous than usual during the last week of April in Abitibi, Lake Saint-Jean and Lower North Shore regions. In fact, data from eBird for the whole province showed almost 10 times more sightings compared to the mean of the

que le 30 mai (B. Duchesne, P. Lalonde) et à Beauport 5 mai (G. Cyr, G. Lord). **Dindon sauvage**: continue de s'étendre vers l'est tel que révélé par un indiv à Saint-Fabien 29 avr (L. Saint-Laurent) et un autre à Saint-Anaclet 3 mai (M. Jaffré).

Avocette d'Amérique: une à Gatineau 20 avr, une date record pour la province (Dallaire et al., ph.) et une autre à Contrecoeur 30 mai (D. Tétreault). **Pluvier bronzé**: rare au printemps, des indiv se sont arrêtés à Berthier-sur-Mer 4 avr (C. Deschênes), Rivière-du-Loup 31 mai (JC. Pelletier), et au réservoir Baskatong 31 mai (MA. Montpetit). **Chevalier semipalmé**: un à Baie-du-Febvre 28 mai (M. Lachance et al.). **Phalarope de Wilson**: rare sur l'île de Montréal, un couple a séjourné à Anjou 14-15 mai (O. Barden et al.).

Puffin des Anglais: un à Québec 20 mai fournit la première mention au printemps pour la province (A. Terrigeol, B. Drolet, A. Caughlan). **Grand Cormoran**: des indiv à Carillon 10 mai (A. Chevrette) et à Verdun 10-30 mai (D. Demers, pl.ob.). **Pélican d'Amérique**: des indiv à Châteauguay 4 mai (C. Trudel, P. Berthe) et à Saint-Anicet 30-31 mai (É. Meunier, F. Robillard). Un groupe de 9 oiseaux sur le lac Abitibi 25 mai était étonnant (G. Audet). **Petit Blongios**: un à Saint-Timothée 18 avr était très hâtif (F. Gravel, S. Couillard). **Aigrette bleue**: des indiv à Sainte-Anne-des-Monts 19 mai (G. Chabot), à Gatineau 21 mai (C. Sollow) et à Rivière-Ouelle 26-28 mai (S. Dionne, M. Borjia). **Héron garde-boeufs**: un à Longueuil 26 mai (D. Bird). **Bihoreau violaçé**: un ad photographié à Bécancour 11 mai (Isab-I Sav). **Ibis falcinelle**: un à Saint-Siméon-de-Bonaventure 24-26 avr (J. Lamarche), 3 à Mirabel 5-7 mai (D. Corbeil), un à Stoke 17-18 mai (D. Langlois, B. Turgeon), un à Rivière Ouelle 21 mai (B. Borgia) et finalement 3 à Beauharnois 31 mai (C. Samoisette-Pilon, MP Langlois). **Urubu noir**: continue d'envahir le sud du Québec tel que révélé par au moins 9 mentions ce printemps. **Hibou des marais**: présences beaucoup plus nombreuses que d'habitude lors de la dernière semaine d'avril en Abitibi, au lac Saint-Jean et sur la basse Côte Nord. En fait, les données eBird pour la province

last 10 years. Whether this increase was weather-related or resulted from an abundance of prey in their habitat remains unknown.

Red-headed Woodpecker: one at Québec City 31 May (A. Giroux). **Acadian Flycatcher:** a singing bird was recorded with a cell phone at Sorel-Tracy 27 May (J. Lemoyne). **Say's Phoebe:** singles at Québec City 25 Apr (A. Caughlan, B. Drolet) and at Vinton 3 May (M. Baril).

White-eyed Vireo: one at Sainte-Foy 24-28 May (A. Terrigeol et al.). **Northern Wheatear:** singles at New Carlisle 8 May (M. Bradet) and at Rivière-Éternité 24 May (Y. Fleury, A. Lavoie, M. Bélanger).

Field Sparrow X Chipping Sparrow: this presumed hybrid was photographed at Matane 1 May (JA. Banville). **Grasshopper Sparrow:** one at Luskville 2 May tied the provincial record early date set in 1981 (E. Patry). More expected were 3 birds at Bristol 16-19 May (E. Patry). **Harris's Sparrow:** a third bird since the beginning of the year was discovered at Trois-Rivières 1 Apr (Charlie Webb, ph.). **LeConte's Sparrow:** one nicely photographed at Châteauguay 13 May (J. Dubé). **Yellow-breasted Chat:** one at LaSalle 19 May (S. Robert et al.).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: seen at 9 locations, including one at Blanc Sablon (*Lower North Shore*) 10-21 May (J. Joncas). **Western Meadowlark:** one at Aylmer 17-18 May (G. Rand, D. Dallaire). **Orchard Oriole:** increasingly reported in spring, birds were seen in 9 different localities, including one as far north as Pointe-aux-Outardes 23 May (R. Beaupré). **Hooded Oriole:** 3 reports of an ad male photographed at hummingbird feeders in different localities over a period of 5 days seem almost unbelievable, but here is the sequence of events: the first report occurred at Blainville 8-9 May (Francine Petitclerc), the second report, 97 miles to the east at Victoriaville 11 May (Lou Rondeau, m.ob), and the third report 32 miles further east at Disraéli 12 May (C. Beauregard). Whether there was more than one bird involved

montraient 10 fois plus de mentions comparativement à la moyenne pour les 10 dernières années. Il est difficile toutefois de savoir si cette augmentation est dépendante de la météo ou reliée à une abondance de proie dans son habitat.

Pic à tête rouge: un à Québec 31 mai (A. Giroux). **Moucherolle vert:** un mâle chanteur a été enregistré à l'aide d'un téléphone cellulaire à Sorel-Tracy 27 mai (J. Lemoyne). **Moucherolle à ventre roux:** des indiv à Québec 25 avr (A. Caughlan, B. Drolet) et à Vinton 3 May (M. Baril).

Viréo aux yeux blancs: un à Sainte-Foy 24-28 mai (A. Terrigeol et al.). **Traquel motteux:** des indiv à New Carlisle 8 mai (M. Bradet) et à Rivière-Éternité 24 mai (Y. Fleury, A. Lavoie, M. Bélanger).

Bruant des champs X Bruant familier: un hybride présumé photographié à Matane 1 mai (JA. Banville). **Bruant sauterelle:** un à Luskville 2 mai égalisait le record de date hâtive établi en 1981 (E. Patry). La présence de 3 oiseaux à Bristol 16-19 mai étaient plus habituelle (E. Patry). **Bruant à face noire:** un 3ième oiseau depuis le début de l'année a été découvert à Trois-Rivières 1 avr (Charlie Webb, ph.). **Bruant de LeConte:** un bien photographié à Châteauguay 13 mai (J. Dubé). **Ictérie polyglotte:** une à LaSalle 19 mai (S. Robert et al.).

Carouge à tête jaune: aperçu dans 9 localités, incluant un à Blanc Sablon (*Basse Côte Nord*) 10-21 mai (J. Joncas). **Sturnelle de l'Ouest:** une à Aylmer 17-18 mai (G. Rand, D. Dallaire). **Oriole des vergers:** signalé de plus en plus souvent au printemps; des oiseaux ont été vus dans 9 localités, incluant un aussi au nord que Pointe-aux-Outardes 23 mai (R. Beaupré). **Oriole masqué:** 3 signalements d'un mâle ad photographié dans des abreuvoirs à colibris dans des localités différentes sur une période de 5 jours semblaient improbables, mais voici la séquence des événements: le premier témoignage provenait de Blainville 8-9 mai (Francine Petitclerc), le second de Victoriaville 11 mai, 97

in this case will remain a mystery. **Lawrence's Warbler (F2 Hybrid)**: a male nicely photographed at Godmanchester 22 May (J. McGill). **Yellow-throated Warbler**: one at Cap Tourmente 20 May (M. Raymond). **Prairie Warbler**: a male nicely photographed at Saint-Jean-Port-Joli 26 May (Marie-Hélène Saint-Pierre).

Summer Tanager: singles at Cantley 30 Apr (R. Venne Landry), Saint-Bernard de Lacolle 14 May (A. Sylvain), Ile de la Visitation (Montréal) 18 May (J. Coutu, S. Demers), Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 23 May (J. Ricard, m.ob.), and Les Escoumins 31 May (C. & D. Turgeon). **Western Tanager**: singles at La Patrie 22-29 Apr was record early for the province (E. Dubreuil et al.) and at Pointe-aux-Outardes 22 May (C. Gagnon). **Blue Grosbeak**: an imm male at Neuville 16-17 May (A. Tremblay, N. Robert) and an ad male at Stoneham 15-17 May (S. Baillargeon). **Painted Bunting**: a male at Percé 12-15 May (B. Laflamme).

Please report your interesting bird observations by email at pbannon@videotron.ca

miles plus éloigné vers l'est (Lou Rondeau, m.ob) et le 3ième de Disraéli 12 mai, encore 32 miles plus loin vers l'est (C. Beaugard). Quant à savoir s'il y avait plus d'un individu impliqué, le mystère demeure non résolu pour l'instant. **Paruline de Lawrence (hybride F2)**: un mâle superbement photographié à Godmanchester 22 mai (J. McGill). **Paruline à gorge jaune**: une à Cap Tourmente 20 mai (M. Raymond). **Paruline des prés**: un mâle bien photographié à Saint-Jean-Port-Joli 26 mai (Marie-Hélène Saint-Pierre).

Piranga vermillon: des indiv à Cantley 30 avr (R. Venne Landry), Saint-Bernard de Lacolle 14 mai (A. Sylvain), Ile de la Visitation (Montréal) 18 mai (J. Coutu, S. Demers), Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 23 mai (J. Ricard, pl.ob.), et Les Escoumins 31 mai (C. & D. Turgeon). **Piranga à tête rouge**: des indiv à La Patrie 22-29 avr, une date record pour la province (E. Dubreuil et al.) et un autre à Pointe-aux-Outardes 22 mai (C. Gagnon). **Guiraca bleu**: un mâle imm à Neuville 16-17 mai (A. Tremblay, N. Robert) et un mâle ad à Stoneham 15-17 mai (S. Baillargeon). **Passerin nonpareil**: un mâle à Percé 12-15 mai (B. Laflamme).

Signalez vos observations intéressantes par courriel à pbannon@videotron.ca

Our October Presentation via Videoconference

Monday, October 5, 2020,
at 7:00 p.m.

The Third Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas

Lance Laviolette, Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas Regional Co-ordinator

Join us via Zoom for our first meeting of the season. While we are not holding in-person meetings at this time, we are pleased to be able to bring you our upcoming lectures via video conference until we are able to resume our regular meetings.

Most of us are now familiar with breeding bird atlases. Since the first atlases began in the 1980s in Canada, they have evolved to become a vital resource documenting the distribution and abundance of bird species in Canada. Most of Canada has been covered by two cycles of atlases and the third cycle is about to start.

During this presentation, Lance Laviolette will discuss breeding bird atlases, the third Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas in particular and how you can contribute to the upcoming Ontario atlas.



Born and raised south of Montreal, Lance Laviolette started birding at the age of ten. He is a graduate of Acadia University in Nova Scotia and has been managing the Brier Island Bird Migration Research Station for more than 40 years.

Lance was a Director of Bird Protection Quebec for over 20 years and is still a member of several BPQ committees. He has been involved with a number of breeding bird atlas projects in Quebec, Ontario, and the Maritime provinces and is one of a four-person team that will coordinate the Cornwall-Hawksbury Region during the upcoming third Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas.

Registration Information

- RSVP by Oct 5th 12PM
- All are welcome! For security reasons, anyone joining the meeting will need a Zoom account. You can create one free of charge if you don't have one already, then download the desktop, mobile, or tablet version of the Zoom app. For more details, click [here](#).
- Register for the BPQ lecture via [this link](#).
- You will receive a confirmation email containing the meeting link and a unique password once the BPQ Zoom team has approved your registration.
- Registration for upcoming lectures will be circulated closer to the date of the presentation.

Questions?

Please contact the BPQ Zoom Team at bpq-zm-admin@pqspb.org

Our November Presentation via Videoconference

**Monday, November 2,
at 7:00 p.m.**

Research in a Changing Arctic: Conservation Biology of Arctic Birds

**by Grant Gilchrist,
Environment and Climate
Change Canada**

We often view the Arctic as a pristine wilderness largely free of environmental threats but times are changing. Grant will discuss several examples of how birds in the eastern Canadian Arctic are being affected by ongoing environmental change. Examples include how harvest, emerging diseases, and changing predator regimes are affecting common eider ducks simultaneously. Climate change can also influence species directly by modifying their physical environment or indirectly by altering interactions among organisms. Changes affecting the ecology of top predators such as Polar

Bears are expected to be a particular concern because variation in predator behaviour has the potential to restructure food webs and lead to cascading ecological impacts on prey populations. Advancement in the timing of spring sea ice break-up has recently reduced the access of seals to bears, and has been associated with increased bear predation of eider eggs on islands in summer. Eider nest success has declined raising concern about the long-term viability of ground-nesting bird populations such as eiders that are unaccustomed to such intensive depredation by bears. Finally, Grant will discuss how abundant snow goose populations are degrading Arctic wetlands through their intensive herbivory, and how this vegetation loss in lowering the breeding success of ground-nesting shorebirds.

Grant Gilchrist is a Research Scientist at the National Wildlife Research Centre in Ottawa (Environment and Climate Change Canada) and currently an adjunct professor at four universities including McGill. Early in his career he was influenced and inspired by several long-term ecological studies by leading Canadian biologists. These studies quantified environmental change over time and the often-complex responses by wildlife. These rare studies were instrumental when detecting ecological change driven by extreme weather events, diet shifts, the emergence of

diseases, and climate change; all issues that might otherwise have gone undetected. After joining Environment Canada in 1995, Grant worked to emulate these studies when designing his own research program to address federal priorities to conserve Arctic birds and ecosystems. He now leads multidisciplinary research programs in the field to provide insights into the underlying processes of Arctic bird ecology.



Joining a BPQ Presentation via Zoom

by Connie Morgenstern,
the BPQ Zoom Team

When the world shut down due to Covid-19 BPQ had to adapt on the fly. So while the Field Trip Committee found ways to keep everyone entertained with virtual versions of our weekly field trips on the front end, behind the scenes we've been using Zoom to keep up. The video conferencing app has proved invaluable for our board and committee meetings and we even managed to pull off our eAGM without any major technical issues. Now we are pleased to announce the launch of the 2020-2021 lecture series starting on October 5th with Zoom.

If you somehow managed to escape from using some sort of video conferencing app over the last six months, we hope you will consider jumping into the fray and joining us on Zoom. The app is easy to use but below are a few tips to help make things go smoothly. Of course, if you've been using videoconferencing all along during this time, then transitioning to BPQ Virtual will be a snap. Either way, no matter if you're new to this technology or an old hand by now, we hope to welcome

as many of you as possible on our screens starting in October as we move along with this new way of doing business.

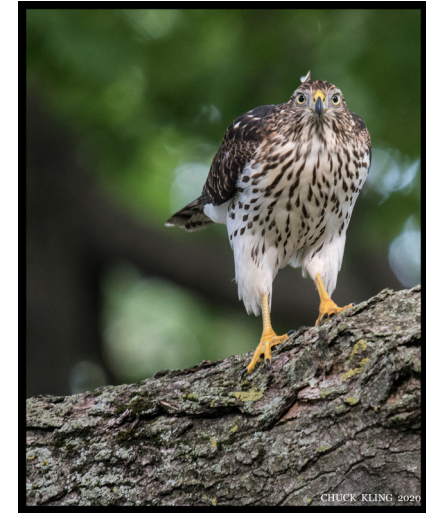
A Zoom Primer



Green Heron / Héron vert
© Chuck Kling 2020

- If you don't already have a free Zoom account you will need to create one and download either the desktop, mobile or tablet version of the Zoom app. Create your free Zoom account [here](#).
- Learn Zoom's features and test your microphone and speakers ahead of time to avoid fumbling around at the time of the actual meeting. Join a test meeting [here](#)
- Log in to the meeting a few minutes ahead of the start time - 10-15

minutes is ideal. This gets everything underway on time and helps iron out any technical issues you may have.



Cooper's Hawk / Épervier de Cooper
© Chuck Kling 2020

- Learn Zoom's various communication features before your first meeting. These let you interact with the host or other participants directly and avoid disrupting the flow of the meeting. You can use the chat feature or a non-verbal feedback icon such as a raised hand.



Black-throated Green Warbler /
Paruline à gorge noire © Chuck
Kling 2020

- Take a look at the chat feature. It is customary in large group settings to ask questions via chat. The host will then read out the questions to be answered by whoever the question is directed to.
- Remember to mute your audio when logging in to avoid transmitting background noise, such as someone talking to you or your dog barking and interrupting the presentation. Learn more about audio and video configuration [here](#).
- Consider using headphones for better audio and microphone transmission.

- Choose to participate with or without video but where's the fun in that? Rest assured you can turn off your own video camera and still watch the presentation.
- Remember to adjust the camera so that it's at eye level – this is a more flattering view. Hint: no one wants to look up your nostrils! With a laptop try placing a book or other item underneath to raise up the camera if needed.
- Give some thought to room lighting and try to place yourself in a well-lit area. Unless you want to appear to be broadcasting from a cave?
- Keep in mind the room background captured by your camera. For even more fun explore the virtual background options in the video menu. You can use any photo on your computer to create your own personal background – perfect for hiding a messy room or people walking by behind you!
- Choose a different video layout mode depending on whether someone in the meeting is screen sharing. You can choose from Active Speaker View, Gallery View or a floating thumbnail window if there is no screen sharing in progress.
- During a presentation with screen sharing you can still view both the

speaker and the presentation at the same time by selecting [Side-by-side Mode](#). You can read a full explanation all of the screen viewing options [here](#).

- Take a look at the Zoom website. It has many useful resources including videos. Access their help centre [here](#).
- If you have any questions about participating in our meetings please email the BPQ Zoom Team at bpq-zm-admin@pqspb.org. We'll be happy to help!



Spotted Sandpiper / Chevalier
grivelé © Chuck Kling 2020

Field Trip Committee News for September 2020 Newsletter

by Wayne Gruber, BPQ Field Trip Committee

In the last issue of *The Song Sparrow*, the Field Trip Committee announced that our "in person" field trips were cancelled for the spring migration season to be replaced by socially responsible "virtual outings." Little did we know when that announcement was made that we would still be operating in a similar mode more than six months later.

Virtual Field Trips - Birding from Home - Spring Migration

Our foray into this different birding world began with ten weeks of "Virtual Field Trips from Home" stretching from April 4 to June 6. The degree to which this concept was positively received well exceeded our wildest expectations. Twenty-seven people participated in the inaugural event with that number growing to fifty-five by mid-May. Seventy-four birders took part with

fifteen "showing up" every weekend. Most seemed to enjoy watching the migration season progress in their own personal space and we amassed a total of 138 species by the end of spring migration. Not bad for birding from the comforts of home.

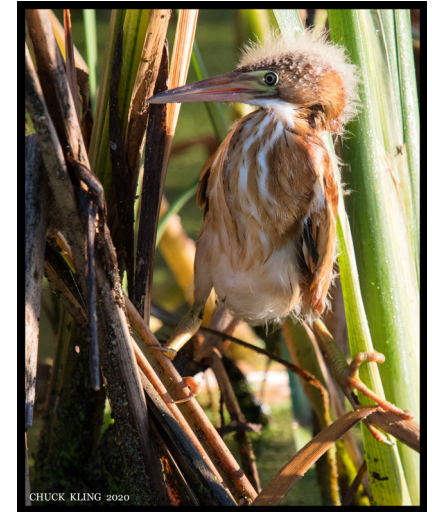
A complete summary report for the ten weeks can be found here.

[Virtual Field Trips from Home Final Report](#)

Summer Solstice Challenge

Our next event was a "Summer Solstice Weekend Virtual Team Challenge" held on June 20 and 21, which pitted Team Saturday against Team Sunday in a friendly competition to see which group could observe the most species within a 5-kilometre radius of home. Weather was far from ideal with hot and humid conditions dominating, but twenty-nine birders comprising eleven groups each day soldiered on through the sweltering conditions and found 108 species. Which team won depends, as always, on how you analyze the statistics! eBird may be the biggest winner with many participants submitting their observations to this massive citizen science database.

Virtual Summer Series of Birding



Least Bittern / Petit Blongios
© Chuck Kling 2020

In a normal year our "Summer Series of Birding" takes over after the Solstice weekend with a destination being chosen in the immediate days preceding the event. Again it was felt that conditions were not yet right for a resumption of "in person" events but we still wanted birders to explore their favourite summer haunts. So a compromise solution was created, having participants select their own locale in which to bird, reporting all their findings to us. A summary of participation and sightings would then be

generated for each weekend and posted, with accompanying photo albums, on BPQ's social media platforms. 10 consecutive weekends of birding between June 27 and August 30 resulted in a total of 187 species reported; an average of 99 species per weekend. A total of 22 different people participated over the summer, birding at 86 different locations. 23,774 individual birds were reported. The second weekend of the series (July 4 and 5) was the most productive, with 118 species reported.



Ruby-throated Hummingbird /
Colibri à gorge rubis
© Chuck Kling 2020

BPQ Autumn Birding - What's in Store?

With autumn migration upon us we are still wary of the problems associated with the pandemic and so will proceed with caution. As of now our plan is to present a number of theme-related "virtual birding" trips for autumn.

The first of these has already taken place in the form of a Labour Day Weekend Birding Blitz (September 5th to 7th). Participants were given the entire weekend to find as many species as possible from as many locations as they could visit. Some birded from home, most visited a favourite hotspot or two, while still others caught the "rarity" bug and sought out the birds being reported from various hotline services. Reports were received from the immediate Montreal area, Eastern Ontario, the Laurentides, Eastern Townships and as far away as the Bas St Laurent. Twenty birders submitted lists and when all were tabulated we had a very impressive total of 165 species.

At the time of this writing we are compiling the results from another "Birding From Home" weekend meant to coincide with what should be a peak autumn migration period. This will allow participants to do a comparative study with their spring results from home.

In the coming weeks we hope you will enjoy the birding theme days/weekends, while we consider possibilities for safely resuming "in person" outings, at least on a limited basis. We know that the social atmosphere of our outings, combined with the chance to share the expertise of our trip leaders, has great appeal to many of our participants and we, too, look forward to seeing everyone again. Rest assured that the Field Trip Committee, along with BPQ board of directors, is watching developments concerning COVID-19 very carefully.



Common Nighthawk /
Engoulevent d'Amérique
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