

Issue 65-2

January 2023



Vacation and Migration

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 | Simon Duval |
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| Treasurer | Sheldon Harvey |
| Membership Secretary | Darlene Harvey |
| Lectures Coordinator | Jeff Harrison |
| Song Sparrow Editors | Connie Morgenstern Darlene Harvey |

Contact us:

birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com

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

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ON THE COVER

Fuerteventura Stonechat
Photo: Joe McGill

Photo this page: Chris Cloutier

A Word FROM THE EDITORS

Happy 2023 everyone! We hope you had a wonderful holiday season with friends and family, and a return to some semblance of normalcy after the last couple of pandemic years.

With the December issue pushed into January because of other commitments, we decided that by now a break from the depths of a Quebec winter would probably be welcomed by all, thus the gorgeous non-wintery cover photo and theme of this volume: Vacation and Migration.

Our feature article this issue, "When Avians and Aviation Meet", is an interesting story about something most of us have probably never thought about while sitting around the airport terminal, waiting to fly out to sunnier climes: as birders know, a great place to find our favourite winter visitor, the Snowy Owl, is hanging around an airport, but is it a good idea for them to be there? Shawna Sevigny answers this question as she takes us behind the scenes at Trudeau Airport and explains how she and the Falcon Environmental team work hard every day to keep these beautiful birds - and we human migrants! - safe from interactions. And speaking of sunnier climes, join feature writers Joe McGill and Richard Gregson as they share two very different birding vacation experiences: Joe takes us on "A Journey through the Canary Islands" and his quest to increase his life list (and, boy, did he!), while Richard describes a delightful summer getaway closer to home as he takes us on a tour of les Iles de la Madeleine. We are grateful to all three for sharing these experiences!

And on the subject of birds, both migrants and residents, compilers Sheldon Harvey and Chris Cloutier share the results of the 2022 Montreal and Hudson Christmas Bird Counts and, in some of our regular columns, the field trip committee presents a slate of weekend field trips and the monthly meeting committee has once again lined up some fascinating lectures in the coming months.

We hope you enjoy these stories, and our other regular features, as you watch the snow outside and dream of sunnier days!

Darlene & Connie



A Message from THE PRESIDENT

Message DU PRÉSIDENT

Already nearing the end of January, what happened to fall? Now that we've had our first snowfalls of the winter, and temperatures are dipping below zero quite frequently, I'm sure all birders are looking forward to a winter filled with finches. According to the Winter Finch Forecast by Tyler Hoar (previously done by Ron Pittaway), winter 2022-2023 is shaping up to be quite the year, with movements of about every finch except maybe White-winged Crossbill. Be on the lookout, predictions are sometimes wrong but often right!

One of the best places to look to see if any finch species have made it to your neighbourhood is eBird. This massive citizen science project has become the easiest way to record and share your observations with others. Scientists use eBird to develop population trends for each species, based on observations throughout North America. These trends are later compared with other sources of data such as Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) or migration monitoring trends such as the data gathered by the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network.

On a separate note, on behalf of the members of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank you for renewing your membership. It is a real pleasure to count you as a member. (If you have not yet done so, it is never too late to renew!)

I wish you and your family all the best for 2023.

Simon Duval

Déjà janvier, l'automne est passé si vite ! Maintenant que nous avons eu les premières chutes de neige de l'hiver et que les températures descendent sous zéro assez fréquemment, je suis sûr que tous les ornithologues attendent avec impatience un hiver rempli de fringillidés. Selon le « Winter Finch Forecast » de Tyler Hoar (précédemment réalisé par Ron Pittaway), l'hiver 2022-2023 s'annonce comme une année exceptionnelle, avec des mouvements de presque tous les fringillidés, à l'exception peut-être du Bec-croisé bifascié. Soyez à l'affût, les prédictions sont parfois fausses mais souvent justes !

L'un des meilleurs endroits pour vérifier si des espèces de fringillidés sont arrivées dans votre quartier est eBird. Ce vaste projet scientifique citoyen est devenu le moyen le plus simple d'enregistrer et de partager ses observations avec d'autres. Les scientifiques utilisent eBird pour établir des tendances démographiques pour chaque espèce, sur la base d'observations effectuées dans toute l'Amérique du Nord. Ces tendances sont ensuite comparées à d'autres sources de données, comme le Relevé des oiseaux nicheurs (BBS) de l'Amérique du Nord, ou les tendances de surveillance des migrations comme les données recueillies par le Réseau canadien de surveillance des migrations.

Par ailleurs, au nom des membres du conseil d'administration, je tiens à vous remercier d'avoir renouvelé votre adhésion. C'est un grand plaisir de vous compter parmi les membres. (Si vous ne l'avez pas encore fait, il n'est jamais trop tard pour le faire !)

Je vous souhaite à vous et à votre famille mes meilleurs vœux pour 2023.

Simon Duval

Focus on

OUR MEMBERS



A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Please join us in welcoming the following new and returning members:

Linda Doe, Ginette Sanfacon, Yukio Nagano, Francis Stöckel, Sarah Marshall, Bill Thompson, Mario DeRepentigny, Anne Godbout, Loup Godbout, Hélélene Laliberté, Julie Wang, and James Stewart.

We look forward to meeting you, either on Zoom at a monthly meeting or on a field trip! Keep reading this issue for details of our planned activities, and be sure to follow us on Facebook and to join our Song Sparrow [e-list group](#) to connect with fellow members.

LAST CALL !

Are you enjoying The Song Sparrow? Unfortunately *this will be your last issue* if you haven't renewed your membership for 2022/23!

Remember, no matter what date you renewed last year, all annual memberships (with the exception of new members who joined after March 1, 2022) expired on September 30.

So, if it has slipped through the cracks, click [here](#) now to go to our website, where it is easy to renew online with your credit card or to find information on how to renew by mail.

PLEASE NOTE: YOU DO NOT NEED A PAYPAL ACCOUNT TO PAY ONLINE.

BIENVENUE AUX NOUVEAUX MEMBRES

Veillez vous joindre à nous pour accueillir les nouveaux membres et anciens membres qui ont renouvelé leur adhésion qui suivent:

Linda Doe, Ginette Sanfacon, Yukio Nagano, Francis Stöckel, Sarah Marshall, Bill Thompson, Mario DeRepentigny, Anne Godbout, Loup Godbout, Hélélene Laliberté, Julie Wang, et James Stewart.

Nous sommes impatients de vous rencontrer, que ce soit par Zoom lors d'une réunion mensuelle ou lors de l'une de nos excursions ! Continuez à lire ce numéro pour plus de détails sur les activités prévues, et n'oubliez pas de nous suivre sur Facebook et de rejoindre notre [groupe de liste électronique](#) « Songsparrow » pour vous connecter avec d'autres membres.

DERNIER APPEL !

Appréciez-vous « The Song Sparrow » ? Malheureusement, *ce numéro sera le dernier* si vous n'avez pas renouvelé votre adhésion 2022/23 !

N'oubliez pas que, quelle que soit la date à laquelle vous avez renouvelé l'année dernière, toutes les adhésions annuelles (à l'exception des nouveaux membres qui ont adhéré après le 1er mars 2022) ont expiré le 30 septembre.

Donc, si vous n'avez pas eu l'occasion de renouveler votre adhésion, [cliquez ici](#) pour accéder à notre site Web, où il est facile de renouveler en ligne avec votre carte de crédit, ou de trouver des informations sur la façon de renouveler par courrier. PRENEZ NOTE : VOUS N'AVEZ PAS BESOIN D'UN COMPTE PAYPAL POUR PAYER EN LIGNE.

BPQ wishes to extend a special thanks to the many members who sent donations along with their membership fees when renewing this year. We are grateful for this generous expression of support for the work we are doing!

POQ tiens à remercier tout particulièrement les nombreux membres qui ont envoyé des dons en même temps que leur cotisation lors du renouvellement de leur adhésion cette année. Nous sommes reconnaissants pour cette expression d'appréciation de votre part pour le travail que nous faisons !

BPQ volunteers at work

In October we did some routine but important trail maintenance work at our George H. Montgomery Sanctuary in Philipsburg. This included cutting the many trees that had fallen across the paths and moving the pieces off to the side, and replacing missing trail markers on trees and posts.

Many thanks to the neighbours and volunteers who came out to lend a hand, and even made their tools available.

Bénévoles sur le terrain

En octobre, nous avons commencé à travailler sur l'entretien des sentiers du sanctuaire George H. Montgomery à Philipsburg. Nous avons scié les nombreux arbres tombés en travers du sentier et déplacé les morceaux sur le côté, et certains marqueurs de sentier ont été remplacés sur les arbres et les poteaux.

Un grand merci aux voisins et aux bénévoles qui sont venus donner un coup de main et qui ont mis leurs outils à disposition.

Photos : Jules Delisle



How can you do more for the birds? Volunteer!

If you would like to be added to our volunteers mailing list and be kept up to date on upcoming activities that may be of interest to you, let us know at protectionoiseauxquebec@gmail.com

Que pouvez-vous faire de plus pour aider les oiseaux ? Faire du bénévolat !

Si vous souhaitez être ajouté.e à la liste de diffusion des bénévoles et être tenu.e au courant des activités qui vous intéressent, écrivez-nous à protectionoiseauxquebec@gmail.com.

Montreal Christmas Bird Count 2022 Results

by Sheldon Harvey, Montreal Count Coordinator



The 2022 Montreal Christmas Bird Count, Audubon's 123rd annual event, and BPQ's 87th, was held on Saturday, December 17, 2022.

The weather this year was challenging due to a winter storm having gone through our area the day before. Most of the trees were coated in heavy, wet snow and visibility, particularly along the waterfront, was limited in the morning hours due to fog. The temperature was quite mild though, hovering around 0 C throughout most of the day. Wind was fairly light, with the wind speed ranging between 15 and 20 kph. Much of the water remained open, providing the opportunity to find waterfowl in those sectors having riverfront territory.

Sixty-eight people took part in the count, covering 19 different sectors within the count circle. The teams covered a combined total of 522 kilometres of driving and walking, generating a total effort of 98 hours. Two-and-a-quarter hours of owling were conducted during this year's count.

We completed the day with a total of 59 species, substantially below our all-time record of 76 species. The total number of individual birds recorded was 14,112. No high-record counts were observed this year and only

one previous high-record count was tied, that being one Rusty Blackbird that matched a sighting of one bird in a previous Montreal count.

The Top 5 highest numbers of birds per species this year were: 1) European Starling - 4,693; 2) Rock Pigeon - 2,392; 3) American Robin - 1,170; 4) Canada Goose - 984; and 5) House Sparrow - 713. Once again this year, the major American Crow roost was not located, resulting in a total of just 400 crows being reported.

No less than 17 species of birds were observed during Count Week (three days prior and 3 days following the December 17 Count Day). These species are not reflected in the totals for the day, but are noted in our submission to Audubon. Those species were Bald Eagle, Mew Gull, Black-crowned Night Heron, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Common Redpoll, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Snowy Owl, Great-horned Owl, Black-legged Kittiwake, Winter Wren, Red-breasted Merganser, Swamp Sparrow, Orange-crowned Warbler, Harlequin Duck, Northern Saw-whet Owl, Lesser Black-backed Gull, and a first-ever report for the Montreal CBC of a Cape May Warbler, seen and photographed at the Recre-o-Parc in Ste-Catherine on December 18 by Louis Lemay.

A summary report of the species and the number of each recorded in this year's count follows on the next page, and includes: Species; Individual birds seen; Highest number of each species recorded historically in the Montreal count, indicating the count year (this year was Count #123); and the number of counts on which each species has been recorded. Note: "US" indicates "Unusual Species" and "HC" indicates "High Count".

A compilation gathering was held at Brasserie Manoir on St-Jacques Street West, where food and drink, courtesy of Bird Protection Quebec, and conversation were enjoyed by a number of participants from this year's count.

Thank you to all who participated in this important citizen science project.



Horned Lark
Photo: Darlene Harvey

Bird Protection Quebec - 2022 Montreal Christmas Bird Count Final Report

| Species | Number or CountWeek (cw) | Max Number / Audubon Count Yr | # Of Counts Observed | Species | Number or CountWeek (cw) | Max Number / Audubon Count Yr | # Of Counts Observed |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Snow Goose | 1 | 251 / 113 | 10 | Hairy Woodpecker | 33 | 70 / 108 | 86 |
| Canada Goose | 984 | 4184 / 112 | 35 | Northern Flicker | 10 | 14 / 93 | 22 |
| American Wigeon | 11 | 150 / 72 | 48 | Pileated Woodpecker | 13 | 20 / 121 | 41 |
| American Black Duck | 13 | 1575 / 54 | 75 | Merlin | 3 | 10 / 111 | 30 |
| Mallard | 670 | 3835 / 99 | 73 | Peregrine Falcon | 2 | 7 / 119 | 33 |
| Greater Scaup | 670 | 1425 / 116 | 55 | Northern Shrike | 1 | 10 / 88 | 62 |
| Lesser Scaup | 240 | 1502 / 100 | 38 | Blue Jay | 20 | 64 / 111 | 66 |
| Harlequin Duck * | CW | 2 / 121 | 13 | American Crow | 400 | 9149 / 111 | 77 |
| Bufflehead | 9 | 10 / 117 | 30 | Common Raven | 21 | 150 / 82 | 26 |
| Common Goldeneye | 448 | 2423 / 60 | 87 | Horned Lark | 60 | 119 / 106 | 26 |
| Barrow's Goldeneye | 1 | 5 / 117 | 23 | Black-capped Chickadee | 431 | 876 / 111 | 86 |
| Hooded Merganser | 80 | 106 / 113 | 44 | Tufted Titmouse | 11 | 12 / 122 | 19 |
| Common Merganser | 24 | 1316 / 87 | 83 | Red-breasted Nuthatch | 6 | 20 / 121 | 32 |
| Red-breasted Merganser * | CW | 120 / 67 | 36 | White-breasted Nuthatch | 83 | 201 / 121 | 86 |
| Wild Turkey | 14 | 18 / 122 | 8 | Brown Creeper | 7 | 39 / 86 | 82 |
| Common Loon | 1 | 8 / 118 | 33 | Winter Wren * | CW | 4 / 121 | 11 |
| Double-crested Cormorant | 2 | 75 / 106 | 33 | Carolina Wren | 2 | 5 / 111 | 24 |
| Great Blue Heron | 1 | 6 / 94 | 21 | Golden-crowned Kinglet | 1 | 36 / 103 | 38 |
| Black-crowned Night Heron* | CW | 1 / 113 | 4 | Ruby-crowned Kinglet* | CW | 3 / 100 | 15 |
| Cooper's Hawk | 9 | 15 / 121 | 32 | Hermit Thrush | 1 | 3 / 122 | 18 |
| Bald Eagle * | CW | 5 / 122 | 13 | American Robin | 1170 | 4135 / 117 | 79 |
| Red-tailed Hawk | 3 | 28 / 113 | 44 | Northern Mockingbird | 1 | 5 / 91 | 37 |
| Black-legged Kittiwake | CW | 1 / 97 | 3 | European Starling | 4693 | 14000 / 71 | 87 |
| Ring-billed Gull | 103 | 8260 / 102 | 63 | Cedar Waxwing | 4 | 210 / 71 | 46 |
| Herring Gull | 99 | 9731 / 91 | 83 | Snow Bunting | 31 | 740 / 71 | 74 |
| Iceland Gull | 1 | 64 / 77 | 53 | Orange-crowned Warbler * | CW | 1 / 106 | 6 |
| Mew Gull* | CW | 1 / 108 | 4 | Cape May Warbler* | CW US, HC | 0 / 123 | 1 |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull* | CW | 3 / 94 | 10 | American Tree Sparrow | 36 | 170 / 103 | 69 |
| Great Black-backed Gull | 24 | 1839 / 87 | 76 | Dark-eyed Junco | 104 | 178 / 122 | 19 |
| Rock Pigeon (FeralPigeon) | 2392 | 4816 / 98 | 49 | White-throated Sparrow | 21 | 32 / 117 | 47 |
| Mourning Dove | 51 | 253 / 96 | 49 | Song Sparrow | 1 | 31 / 89 | 69 |
| Eastern Screech-Owl | 3 | 15 / 116 | 40 | Swamp Sparrow * | CW | 2 / 118 | 13 |
| Great Horned Owl | CW | 11 / 103 | 62 | Northern Cardinal | 126 | 230 / 117 | 53 |
| Snowy Owl | CW | 10 / 65 | 58 | Rusty Blackbird | 1 | 1 / 128 | 8 |
| Barred Owl | 1 | 4 / 111 | 32 | House Finch | 87 | 421 / 96 | 39 |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl * | CW | 3 / 76 | 13 | Common Redpoll* | CW | 537 / 82 | 57 |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 3 | 6 / 121 | 18 | American Goldfinch | 98 | 439 / 109 | 63 |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker * | CW | 2 / 122 | 3 | House Sparrow | 713 | 2794 / 96 | 86 |
| Downy Woodpecker | 65 | 150 / 119 | 87 | | | | |
| | | | | Total Individuals | 14,112 | | |
| | | | | Total Species Reported | 59 | | |



Hudson Christmas Bird Count 2022 Results

by Chris Cloutier, Hudson Count Coordinator

Following this report, you will find a brief overview of the results and some highlights from the 82nd Hudson Christmas Bird Count. Lots of interesting finds this year!

The weather was unseasonably warm at around 6C for an afternoon high with overall overcast conditions and minor drizzle throughout the day. All in all, it made for a decent count day.

Early attempts to reach local community groups for the towns included in our circle seemed to have worked. Many feeders were filled the day of the count, which made for some promising opportunities to observe birds in the more residential areas within the circle. One comment received multiple times, however, was the noticeable lack of birds on those feeders and for those doing feeder-watch...it seems strange that a veritable buffet of food was being left untouched (or seemingly so) with no real explanation for it. Things like the unexpectedly warm temperatures could maybe have something to do with it.

A total of 54 route participants (17 teams) covered the territory from top to bottom and scanned a total of 918 km by both car and foot combined, over a cumulative time of 125 hours. Our feeder-watch participants totaled 15 individuals and they logged an impressive 53.5 hours. Thank you to everyone for coming out and participating! Great job everyone! A special thank you goes out to the route leaders for the extra task of organizing your teams to cover the routes, and compiling the information at the end.

Let's look at some of the numbers. Species total was 63 (62 on routes + a Red-bellied Woodpecker on feeder-watch). This number is higher than the average over the last 20 or so years, which sits at approximately 57 species (record high was 68 species in 2015). Total number of birds counted was 8,382, just off the average over the last 20 years that sits at around 8,644. The top three most numerous birds were Black-capped Chickadee (1,524), European Starling (994), and Herring Gull (672!). Some noticeable no-shows among the species recorded were many of the "open area" birds, namely Snowy Owl, Lapland Longspur, and Snow Buntings. Luckily a single Horned Lark was reported to spoil the shutout! Lots of singleton birds were found this year, 13 to be exact, and some really interesting birds at that!

As a thank you, Bird Protection Quebec generously covered the cost of snacks and refreshments at a post-count gathering, bringing teams together at our usual St-Hubert restaurant.

If you would like a more detailed breakdown of the day's tally, or have any follow up questions, please do not hesitate to ask. Again, thank you for your continued participation in this wonderful event. I hope to see you all again next year.



Common Redpolls
Photo: Darlene Harvey

À la suite de ce rapport, vous trouverez un bref aperçu des résultats et quelques faits saillants du 82e Recensement des oiseaux de Noël de Hudson. Beaucoup de trouvailles intéressantes cette année!

Le temps était exceptionnellement chaud à environ 6 ° C pour l'après-midi avec des conditions générales nuageuses et de la bruine mineure tout au long de la journée.

Les premières tentatives pour atteindre les groupes communautaires locaux pour les villes incluses dans notre cercle semblaient avoir fonctionné. De nombreuses mangeoires ont été remplies le jour du recensement, ce qui a permis d'observer les oiseaux dans les zones plus résidentielles du cercle. Un commentaire reçu à plusieurs reprises cependant, était le manque notable d'oiseaux sur ces mangeoires et pour ceux qui font de la surveillance des mangeoires... Il semble étrange qu'un véritable buffet de nourriture ait été laissé intact (ou apparemment intact) sans véritable explication. Des choses comme les températures chaudes inattendues pourraient peut-être avoir quelque chose à voir avec cela.

Au total, 54 participants (17 équipes) ont parcouru le territoire pour un total de 918 km en voiture et à pied combinés, sur une durée cumulée de 125 heures. Nos participants à la surveillance de mangeoire totalisaient 15 personnes et ils ont accumulé un nombre impressionnant de 53,5 heures. Merci à tous d'être venus et d'avoir participé! Excellent travail à tous! Un merci spécial aux responsables de groupe (team leaders) pour la tâche supplémentaire d'organiser vos équipes pour couvrir les territoires et de compiler les informations à la fin.

Recensement des oiseaux de Noël de Hudson

Resultats 2022 - suite

Regardons quelques-uns des chiffres. Le total des espèces était de 63 (62 sur les routes + un Pic à ventre roux sur la surveillance des mangeoires) Génial! Ce nombre est supérieur à la moyenne des 20 dernières années, qui s'élève à environ 57 espèces (le record était de 68 espèces en 2015). Le nombre total d'oiseaux dénombrés était de 8382, ce qui est juste à côté de la moyenne des 20 dernières années, qui se situe autour de 8644. Les trois oiseaux les plus nombreux étaient la mésange à tête noire (1524), l'étourneau sansonnet (994) et le goéland argenté (672!).

Parmi les espèces enregistrées, de nombreux oiseaux de l'habitat « zone ouverte », à savoir le harfang des neiges, le Plectrophane lapon et le Plectrophane des neiges, ont été notables parmi les espèces non-enregistrées. Heureusement, une seule alouette hausse-col a été signalée pour gâcher le jeu blanc! Beaucoup d'oiseaux singleton (seul individu vu) ont été trouvés cette année, 13 pour être exact, et des oiseaux vraiment intéressants en plus!

En guise de remerciement, Protection des oiseaux Québec a généreusement couvert les coûts des collations et des rafraîchissements lors de la rencontre post-comptage, qui a réuni les participants au restaurant St-Hubert Rotisserie.

Si vous souhaitez une sommaire plus détaillée du décompte du jour, ou si vous avez des questions de suivi, n'hésitez pas à demander.

Encore une fois, merci de votre participation continue à cet événement merveilleux. J'espère vous revoir tous l'année prochaine.



Photos: Darlene Harvey



Bird Protection Quebec - 2022 Hudson Christmas Bird Count Final Report

| Species | Route Totals | Feeder-watchers | TOTAL | Species | Route Totals | Feeder-watchers | TOTAL |
|---|--------------|-----------------|-------|---|--------------|-----------------|-------|
| Canada Goose/Bernache du Canada | 85 | 0 | 85 | Red-bellied Woodpecker/Pic à ventre roux | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| American Black Duck/Canard noir | 10 | 0 | 10 | Northern Shrike/Pie-grièche grise | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Cackling Goose/Bernache de Hutchins | 1 | 0 | 1 | Blue Jay/Geai bleu | 258 | 6 | 264 |
| Mallard/Canard colvert | 199 | 0 | 199 | American Crow/Corneille d'Amérique | 324 | 41 | 365 |
| American Wigeon/Canard d'Amérique | 0 | 0 | 0 | Common Raven/Grand Corbeau | 29 | 0 | 29 |
| Gadwall/Canard chipeau | 0 | 0 | 0 | Horned Lark/Alouette hausse-col | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Northern Pintail/Canard pilet | 0 | 0 | 0 | Black-capped Chickadee/Mésange à tête noire | 1464 | 60 | 1524 |
| Green-winged Teal/Sarcelle d'hiver | 1 | 0 | 1 | Tufted Titmouse/Mésange bicolore | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Greater Scaup/Fuligule milouinan | 0 | 0 | 0 | Red-breasted Nuthatch/Sittelle à poitrine rousse | 16 | 4 | 20 |
| Common Goldeneye/Garrot à oeil d'or | 100 | 0 | 100 | White-breasted Nuthatch/Sittelle à poitrine blanche | 172 | 10 | 182 |
| Hooded Merganser/Harle couronné | 19 | 0 | 19 | Brown Creeper/Grimpère brun | 21 | 0 | 21 |
| Common Merganser/Grand Harle | 23 | 0 | 23 | Winter Wren/Troglodyte des forêts | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Great Blue Heron/Grand Héron | 1 | 0 | 1 | Carolina Wren/Troglodyte de Caroline | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Wild Turkey / Dindon sauvage | 385 | 0 | 385 | GC Kinglet/Roitelet à couronne dorée | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Gray Partridge/Perdrix grise | 4 | 0 | 4 | American Robin/Merle d'Amérique | 356 | 12 | 368 |
| Ruffed Grouse/Gélinotte huppée | 3 | 0 | 3 | Eastern Bluebird/Merlebleu de l'Est | 20 | 0 | 20 |
| Bald Eagle / Pygargue à tête blanche* | 3 | 0 | 3 | European Starling/Etourneau sansonnet | 991 | 3 | 994 |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk/Epervier brun* | 1 | 0 | 1 | Cedar Waxwing/Jaseur d'Amérique | 33 | 0 | 33 |
| Cooper's Hawk/Epervier de Cooper* | 6 | 0 | 6 | Bohemian Waxwing/Jaseur boréal | 148 | 0 | 148 |
| Red-tailed Hawk/Buse à queue rousse* | 6 | 0 | 6 | American Tree Sparrow/Bruant hudsonien | 58 | 0 | 58 |
| American Kestrel/Crécerelle d'Amérique* | 0 | 0 | 0 | Song Sparrow/Bruant chanteur | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| Merlin/Faucon émerillon* | 2 | 0 | 2 | White-throated Sparrow/Bruant à gorge blanche | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Peregrine Falcon/Faucon Pèlerin* | 1 | 0 | 1 | Dark-eyed Junco/Junco ardoisé | 228 | 21 | 249 |
| Ring-billed Gull/Goéland à bec cerclé | 68 | 0 | 68 | Snow Bunting/Plectropane des neiges | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Herring Gull/Goéland argenté | 672 | 0 | 672 | Lapland Longspur/Plectropane lapon | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Iceland Gull/Goéland arctique | 1 | 0 | 1 | Red-winged Blackbird/Carouge à épaulettes | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Glaucous Gull/Goéland bourgmestre | 6 | 0 | 6 | Brown-headed Cowbird/Vacher à tête brune | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Great Black-backed Gull/Goéland marin | 113 | 0 | 113 | Northern Cardinal/Cardinal rouge | 146 | 13 | 159 |
| Rock Pigeon/Pigeon biset | 582 | 0 | 582 | Pine Grosbeak/Durbec des sapins | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| Mourning Dove/Tourterelle triste | 275 | 36 | 311 | Evening Grosbeak/Gros-bec errant | 66 | 0 | 66 |
| Eastern Screech Owl/Petit-duc maculé | 3 | 0 | 3 | Red Crossbill/Bec-croisé des sapins | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Barred Owl/Chouette rayée | 2 | 0 | 2 | Purple Finch/Roselin pourpré | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Snowy Owl / Harfang des neiges | 0 | 0 | 0 | House Finch/Roselin familier | 43 | 4 | 47 |
| Great Horned Owl/Grand-duc d'Amérique | 0 | 0 | 0 | Common Redpoll/Sizerin flammé | 341 | 3 | 344 |
| Downy Woodpecker/Pic mineur | 119 | 11 | 130 | Pine Siskin/Tarin des pins | 16 | 0 | 16 |
| Hairy Woodpecker/Pic chevelu | 52 | 6 | 58 | American Goldfinch/Chardonneret jaune | 259 | 137 | 396 |
| Northern Flicker/Pic flamboyant | 6 | 0 | 6 | House Sparrow/Moineau domestique | 192 | 0 | 192 |
| Pileated Woodpecker/Grand Pic | 48 | 2 | 50 | | | | |

Total Species: 63

Total Individuals: 8,382

Singleton species: 13

Most species observed on a single route: 36

Most birds counted on a single route: 1,080

Most species observed while feederwatching: 14

Most birds counted at a single feeder: 172

Focus on FIELD OBSERVATIONS



Past field trips

We visited our usual haunts to enjoy fall migration and they did not disappoint - and neither did the birders who came out in good numbers to every trip. It was particularly gratifying to see so many new birders coming out on a regular basis, and to watch their life lists grow! - BPQ Field Trip Committee

03/09/22 - Hudson

Guide: Wayne Grubert

Weather: Warm; sparse cloud cover

Number of Participants: 23; Number of Species: 61

Birds of Note: Blue-winged Teal, Green-winged Teal, Common Nighthawk, Least Sandpiper, American Bittern, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Merlin, 8 warbler species.

e-Bird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118027627>

10/09/22 - Saint-Lazare Sandpits, Saint-Lazare

Guide: Frédéric Hareau

Weather: Hot and humid

Number of Participants: 22; Number of Species: 44

Birds of Note: Pectoral Sandpiper, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Killdeer, Red-shouldered Hawk, Broad-winged Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Common Raven, 7 warbler species

e-Bird Checklists: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118558970> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S118558974>

17/09/22 - Refuge Faunique Marguerite-D'Youville, Île Saint-Bernard, Chateauguy

Guide: Tom Long

Weather: Cool morning, but warming quickly

Number of Participants: 22; Number of Species: 51

Birds of Note: Wild Turkey, Common Loon, American Bittern, Bald Eagle, Tufted Titmouse, Purple Finch, three warbler species

e-Bird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/qc/checklist/S118910448>

24/09/22 - Technoparc, Saint-Laurent (Montreal)

Guide: Emile Brisson-Curadeau

Weather: Sunny, 17 C.

Number of Participants: 22; Number of Species: 58

Birds of Note: Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Northern Harrier, Red-shouldered Hawk, Kestrel, Merlin, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's Thrush, Rusty Blackbird, 9 warbler species

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S119344189>

01/10/22 - Parc de la Frayere, Boucherville

Guides: Darlene and Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Sunny, light wind

Number of Participants: 17; Number of Species: 40

Birds of Note: Common Goldeneye, Common Gallinule, Common Raven, Hermit Thrush, Swamp Sparrow, 3 warbler species

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S119767283>

08/10/22 - Parc nature de la Pte-aux-Prairies, Montreal

Guide: Claude Cloutier

Weather: 5 C., windy conditions

Number of Participants: 13; Number of Species: 33

Birds of Note: American Wigeon, Green-winged Teal, Turkey Vulture, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Common Raven, Dark-eyed Junco

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S120505488>

15/10/22 - Parc-nature du Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard, Ile-Bizard

Guide :Wayne Grubert

Weather: Foggy conditions early, then clear and sunny

Number of Participants: 31; Number of Species : 31

Birds of Note: Scaup, Common Merganser, Hooded Merganser, Merlin, Swamp Sparrow, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S120709324>



Northern Harrier - Technoparc
Photo: Darlene Harvey

22/10/22 – Lac St-Francois Reserve, Dundee

Guides: Wayne Grubert & Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Sunny skies; 20 C.

Number of Participants: 13; Number of Species: 37

Birds of Note: Northern Harrier, Evening Grosbeak, Rusty Blackbird, Sandhill Crane, Great Egret, Cooper's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Red-winged Blackbird, Yellow-rumped Warbler

eBird Checklists: : <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121122978> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121122988>

29/10/22 – Parc des Rapides & Verdun Waterfront, LaSalle/Verdun

Guide: Diane Demers

Weather: Mild, sunny, light wind

Number of Participants: 26; Number of Species: 37

Birds of Note: Black-crowned Night Heron, Bald Eagle

eBird Checklists: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121517813> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121517850>

05/11/22 - Centre d'interprétation de la nature du lac Boivin (CINLB), Granby, and Roxton Pond

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Surprisingly warm and sunny!

Number of Participants: 23; Number of Species: 27

Birds of Note: Black Scoter, Ruddy Duck, Red-necked Grebe, Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Fox Sparrow

eBird Checklists: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121902819> and <https://ebird.org/checklist/S121902795>

12/11/22 - Hungry Bay, Beauharnois, St-Louis-de-Gonzague, St Timothée, QC

Guides: Wayne Grubert & Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Fog early; cloudy with a few sunny periods

Number of Participants: 9; Number of Species: 36

Birds of Note: Snow Goose, Northern Shoveler, Ring-necked Duck, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, White-winged Scoter, American Coot, Common Loon, Bald Eagle, Merlin, Am. Tree Sparrow

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/tripreport/84526>

19/11/22 – Parc de l'Arrondissement, La Prairie / Parc Saint-Marie & Parc André Coté, Candiac / Parc Optimiste, Sainte-Catherine

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Cold, 1 C.

Number of Participants: 9; Number of Species: 23

Birds of Note: Snow Goose, Greater Scaup, Lesser Scaup, Ring-necked Duck, Red-breasted Merganser, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Raven

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/canada/tripreport/85546>

26/11/22 - Parc-nature de Cap-Saint-Jacques

Guide: Wayne Grubert

Weather: Cloudy early, then sunny periods

Number of Participants: 25; Number of Species: 25

Birds of Note: Black-backed Woodpecker! Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Harrier, Merlin, Bohemian Waxwing, Goldeneye, Bufflehead

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S123090368>



Ile-Bizard Boardwalk
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Sandhill Cranes - Dundee
Photo: Tom Long



Red-breasted Nuthatch - CINLB
Photo: Wendy Conn



Parc de l'Arrondissement, La Prairie
Photo: Sheldon Harvey



Upcoming Field Trips

The winter season started on Saturday, January 14, with a field trip to the Montreal Botanical Garden, led by Sheldon Harvey, followed on January 21 by a walk through Parc-Nature du Bois-de-Liesse guided by Wayne Grubert.

La saison hivernale a débuté le samedi 14 janvier par une excursion au Jardin botanique de Montréal dirigée par Sheldon Harvey, suivie le 21 janvier par une sortie au Parc-Nature du Bois-de-Liesse guidée par Wayne Grubert.

Saturday January 28 / samedi 28 janvier

CHATEAUGUAY: RUE HIGGINS AND AREA

<https://goo.gl/maps/MWFd2>

Guide: Tom Long
Tel: 450-692-1590
Email : cardinalis.1997@gmail.com

8:00 a.m. Meet at rue Higgins in Chateauguay. The birds to look for, at Higgins, will be Red-bellied Woodpecker and Tufted Titmouse. After checking out Higgins area, our next destination will depend on species seen recently and weather conditions. It may be Ile-St-Bernard or the Récré-o-Parc in Sainte-Catherine. Be prepared to walk and dress appropriately as these possible destinations are close to the water. *Half day walking and driving*

8h00 Rendez-vous à la rue Higgins. Sur la rue Higgins à Châteauguay les espèces recherchées sont le Pic à ventre roux et la Mésange bicolore. Après avoir visité la région de Higgins, notre prochaine destination dépendra des observations récentes rapportées et des conditions météorologiques. Il peut s'agir de l'île-St-Bernard ou du Récré-O-Parc à Sainte-Catherine. Soyez prêt à marcher et habillez-vous de manière appropriée - ces destinations possibles sont proches de l'eau. *Demi-journée - excursion à pied et en voiture*

Directions: From Montreal, take Hwy 138 and cross the Mercier Bridge. Stay right coming off the bridge and take Hwy 138 through Kahnawake into Châteauguay. As you enter Châteauguay, turn right onto Boul. St-Francis. Follow St. Francis all the way to the end where it meets the Châteauguay River at Blvd. Salaberry Nord. Turn right on to Salaberry Nord and continue till rue Higgins and turn right. There is a small parking area on the left next to the cell-phone tower.

De Montréal, prendre la route 138 et traverser le pont Mercier. Rester à droite en venant du pont et prenez l'autoroute 138 à Kahnawake dans Châteauguay. Lorsque vous entrez dans Châteauguay, tourner à droite sur le boul. St-François. Suivez St. François jusqu'au bout à la rencontre de la rivière Châteauguay au boul. Salaberry Nord. Tourner à droite sur Salaberry Nord et continuer jusqu'à la rue Higgins et tourner à droite. Stationnement sur la gauche à côté de la tour de téléphonie cellulaire.

NOTE THAT THIS IS A SUNDAY TRIP!

VEUILLEZ NOTER QUE CETTE EXCURSION A LIEU LE DIMANCHE!

Sunday February 5 / dimanche 5 février

TECHNOPARC MONTRÉAL

<https://tinyurl.com/yc7n7yb8>

Guide: Katherine Collin
Email: katherinecollin@mac.com

8:00 a.m. Meet at the end of Chemin Saint-François in Saint-Laurent. See map above. Roadside parking is permitted. No bathroom facilities. Looking for a variety of winter and resident birds.

8h00 Rendez-vous au bout du chemin Saint-François à Saint-Laurent. Voir la carte ci-dessus. Le stationnement sur la rue est autorisé. Pas d'installations sanitaires. À la recherche d'une variété d'oiseaux d'hivers et résidents.

Half-day - walking trip

Demi-journée - excursion à pied

Saturday February 11 / samedi 11 février

SOUTH SHORE SURPRISE TRIP

In the winter months it is difficult to know in advance the best places to go birding. As a result, the destination of this trip will be determined mere days before the actual outing. It will be chosen based on a number of factors including weather conditions, bird activity and any special or rare bird sightings reported in the days leading up to the trip. Complete details of the field trip, including the destination, the start time, the meeting spot and the duration, will be posted on the BPQ Facebook pages, our *Song Sparrow* iO Group and on an eNews email bulletin two or three days in advance of the Saturday outing.

Guide: Sheldon Harvey
Tel: 450-462-1459 **Cell (morning of trip only):** 514-629-3874
Email: ve2shw@yahoo.com

Durant les mois d'hiver il est difficile de connaître à l'avance les meilleurs endroits pour observer les oiseaux. Par conséquent, la destination de cette excursion ne sera choisie que quelques jours à l'avance. Elle sera choisie en fonction de certains facteurs dont les conditions météorologiques, l'activité des oiseaux et toutes observations d'oiseaux rares ou spéciaux signalés dans les jours précédents. Deux ou trois jours avant la sortie du samedi, surveillez notre page Facebook, notre groupe iO *Songsparrow*, et attendez le bulletin eNews pour y trouver les détails complets de l'excursion, sa destination, l'heure, le lieu du rassemblement et la durée.

Pause in our regular field trip schedule for

THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT (GBBC): Friday, February 17 to Monday, February 20

See page 18 for details on how you can become part of this global birding event!

Pause dans notre programme d'excursions régulières pour

LE GRAND DÉNOMBREMENT DES OISEAUX DE FÉVRIER : vendredi 17 février - lundi 20 février

Voir la page 19 pour savoir comment participer à cet événement mondial !

Saturday February 25/ samedi 25 février

L'ÎLE NOTRE-DAME/L'ÎLE SAINTE-HÉLÈNE

Rendezvous: <https://goo.gl/maps/mLY52uaqHJHyQZqp7>

Guide: Frédéric Hareau
Cell: 514-805-8491 (morning of trip only)
Email: fredhareau1@yahoo.ca

Please take note of the special starting time

7:30 a.m Rendez-vous point: The parking lot P5 on Île Notre-Dame (Pavillon du Canada). Parking fee is \$11 for the day. We will start by walking the area and will then drive short distances on l'Île Notre-Dame and l'Île St-Helene to visit both wooded areas and open water, looking for winter and lingering birds as well as early migrants. Time permitting, we will end the morning by driving to Nun's Island to visit a few other birding spots.

Half day - walking and driving trip

Veillez noter l'heure de départ inhabituelle

7h30 Point de rendez-vous : Le parking P5 sur l'Île Notre-Dame - Pavillon du Canada. Les frais de stationnement sont de 11\$ pour la journée. Nous commencerons par marcher dans cette zone et conduirons également sur de courtes distances sur l'Île Notre-Dame et l'Île Sainte-Hélène pour visiter à la fois des zones boisées et des eaux libres, à la recherche d'oiseaux d'hiver et de passage ainsi que de migrateurs précoces. Si le temps le permet, nous terminerons la journée en conduisant jusqu'à l'Île des Sœurs.

Demi-journée - excursion à pied et en voiture

A few things to know about BPQ field trips

- Trips are open to all, members and non-members alike, so feel free to bring a friend (maybe they'll decide to join!). No reservations required.
- Our trips are learning and sharing experiences - beginner birders are always welcome and our experienced guides are eager to share their knowledge. Sometimes this means we take our time on the trails, often discussing the details of what is being seen.
- Please arrive on time. It's unfair to ask those who do to hang around when they could be looking for birds! Our guides won't wait more than a few minutes past the start time to head out.
- Trips are very rarely cancelled because of weather, and cancellations are at the discretion of the guide. Check the forecast the morning of the trip and bring appropriate shoes, raingear, etc. In extreme conditions (ie. a blizzard!), check the BPQ Facebook page for a cancellation notice and use your own judgement if you don't see one.
- Ticks are a problem. We stick to trails but they are persistent. It is strongly recommended not to wear shorts or sandals.
- We love our dogs too! But not everyone is comfortable around them, and many of the sites we visit have eco-sensitive areas, so please leave pets at home.
- Although guides will try to build in comfort breaks when possible, be aware that there are not always facilities at the locations we visit.
- Many of our guides graciously provide their email addresses with their trip descriptions. If an instruction is unclear or you have a trip-related question, you can contact them directly.



THE GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17 TO MONDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 2023

Once again it is time for the Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), jointly sponsored by Birds Canada, The Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology, and Audubon. This project has grown immensely since its modest start in 1998. Worldwide, last year, over 7,099 species were observed in 192 countries by approximately 385,000 participants submitting 360,000 eBird lists. That's a lot of numbers to digest, but the bottom line is that this endeavour gives an incredible snapshot of avian life on our planet - and all the result of a citizen-science based project.

Bird Protection Québec members have been regular contributors and so why not continue the tradition? The BPQ field trip committee urges you to take part. It really is simple. Just GO BIRDING during the four-day period for at least 15 minutes and record your number of individuals seen for each species, as well as your effort in terms of time and distance. Go out as many times to as many different areas as you wish. Just make sure to keep a separate set of data for each excursion. Then submit your reports to eBird to be part of the official count.

How to submit your results? If you already have an eBird account, enter your data as you normally would. For the dates in question your lists will *automatically* be added to the GBBC statistics! If you do not yet have an account it is easy to set one up and a great way to participate in a whole range of citizen science projects. Just [click here](#) to read more about eBird and then follow the Get Started link at the bottom of the page.

For more information on the GBBC, visit <https://www.birdcount.org>. You can also reread Richard Gregson's Citizen Science column in our [February 2022](#) Song Sparrow newsletter for even more background information.

So that we can make a summary of our members' participation, why not "share" your eBird lists with BPQ's eBird account. If you have never officially shared an eBird list in the past, it's another easy feature:

- after completing and saving your eBird list, hit the blue "Share" button near the top left side of the page
- in the "To" rectangle which pops up, enter our eBird user name *bpquebec*, along with the user name or email address of any other user with whom you may wish to share
- scroll down and click on the green "Share Checklist" button.

That's it, you're done!

So, to summarize:

- go birding as much as you want over the four-day period from February 17 to February 20
- submit your sightings to eBird
- share your eBird checklists with us

Happy winter birding!

LE GRAND DÉNOMBREMENT DES OISEAUX DU FÉVRIER

VENREDI, 17 FÉVRIER À LUNDI, 20 FÉVRIER

C'est de nouveau l'heure du Grand dénombrement des oiseaux du février (GDOF), parrainé conjointement par Birds Canada, le Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology et Audubon. Ce projet a pris une ampleur considérable depuis ses modestes débuts en 1998. L'année dernière, plus de 7 099 espèces ont été observées dans 192 pays par environ 385 000 participants qui ont soumis 360 000 listes eBird. Cela fait beaucoup de chiffres à digérer, mais l'essentiel est que cette initiative donne un aperçu incroyable de la vie aviaire sur notre planète - et tout cela est le résultat d'un projet de science citoyenne.

Les membres de Protection des oiseaux du Québec ont été des contributeurs réguliers, alors pourquoi ne pas continuer la tradition ? Le comité des excursions de POQ vous invite à participer. C'est très simple. Il suffit d'aller OBSERVER LES OISEAUX pendant la période de quatre jours pendant au moins 15 minutes et de noter le nombre d'individus vus pour chaque espèce, ainsi que votre effort en termes de temps et de distance. Sortez autant de fois que vous le souhaitez dans autant de zones différentes que vous le souhaitez. Vous devez simplement vous assurer de conserver un ensemble de données distinct pour chaque sortie. Soumettez ensuite vos rapports à eBird pour faire partie du dénombrement officiel.

Comment soumettre vos résultats ? Si vous avez déjà un compte eBird, saisissez vos données comme vous le feriez normalement. Pour les dates en question, vos listes seront *automatiquement* ajoutées aux statistiques du GDOF ! Si vous n'avez pas encore de compte, il est facile d'en créer un et c'est un excellent moyen de participer à toute une série de projets science citoyenne. Il suffit de [cliquer ici](#) pour en savoir plus à part d'eBird .

Pour plus d'informations sur le GDOF, visitez le site <https://www.birdcount.org/fr>. Vous pouvez également relire la chronique de Richard Gregson sur la science citoyenne dans notre bulletin « The Song Sparrow » de [février 2022](#) pour obtenir encore plus d'informations de base.

Afin que nous puissions faire un résumé de la participation de nos membres, pourquoi ne pas partager vos listes eBird avec le compte eBird de POQ. Si vous n'avez jamais officiellement partagé une liste eBird, c'est une autre fonction facile :

- après avoir complété et sauvegardé votre liste eBird, cliquez sur le bouton bleu "Partager" situé en haut de la page, à gauche
- dans le rectangle "À" qui s'affiche, entrez notre nom d'utilisateur eBird, qui est *bpquebec*, ainsi que le nom d'utilisateur ou l'adresse électronique de tout autre utilisateur avec lequel vous souhaitez partager votre liste
- allez vers le bas et cliquez sur le bouton vert « Partager cette liste » .

Et voilà, c'est fait !

Donc, pour résumer :

- allez observer autant d'oiseaux que vous le souhaitez pendant la période de quatre jours entre le 17 et le 20 février
- envoyez vos observations à eBird
- partagez vos listes de contrôle eBird avec nous.

Bonne découverte de l'hiver !



Pierre Bannon's
BIRD VIEWS

August - September 2022

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

PIERRE BANNON
PARLONS D'OISEAUX

août-septembre 2022

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

Tufted Duck: one in eclipse plumage continued at Métabetchouan until at least 3 Oct (m. obs.) **Rufous Hummingbird:** a male at Saint-Jules de Beauce 1 Aug (Suzie Vachon, ph.). **Marbled Godwit:** one at Barachois 30 Aug (David Soares). **Buff-breasted Sandpiper:** reported in only 6 localities, but 4 birds at Kamouraska 11 Sep were worthy of note (Claude Auchu et al.). **Long-billed Dowitcher:** seen in 5 localities with a max of 3 birds at Montmagny 20 Sep-3 Oct (m. obs.). **Razorbill:** one reached Beauharnois 16-17 Sep (Pierre Beaudoin, Frederik Gustavsson). **Atlantic Puffin:** the westernmost reached Lévis 20 Sep (Robin Gingras) while a max of 15 at Rivière-Ouelle 18 Sep was noteworthy (Claude Auchu, Christiane Girard).

Sabine's Gull: the arrival of a juvenile at Beauharnois 5 Sep (Bob Barnhurst) was followed by many more, attaining six individuals on 15 Sep (Olivier Barden, Samuel Denault). **Forster's Tern:** one in the Lake St. Francis National Wildlife Area at Dundee 11 Sep (Daniel Alain Dagenais, ph.). **Sooty Shearwater:** max 17 off Kegaska 9 Sep (Sylvie Robert, Pierre Fradette). **Manx Shearwater:** max 31 off Pointe des Monts 4 Sep (Alain Côté, Guy Lemelin). **Magnificent Frigatebird:** a juvenile seen perched on a Coast Guard vessel near Percé 23 Sep (Andrew Darcy, ph.) and another one (or the same) perched on a shrimp boat near Sept-Iles 28 Sep (Mathieu-Anthony Fortin, *fade* Mireille Poulin).

American White Pelican: single birds persisted until 4 Aug at Chandler (Patsy Skene, Jean-Raymond Lepage), until 7 Aug at Victoriaville (Lise Bergeron) and until 9 Aug at Pointe aux Trembles (Montréal)(Yves Gauthier). **Least Bittern:** a juvenile at Bridgeville 3 Sep was rather exceptional for the Gaspé Peninsula (Alexandre Éthier et al.). **Snowy Egret:** one at Montmagny 8 Aug (Jacques Lachance). **Little Blue Heron:** a juv at Gaspé 7 Aug (Denis Talbot, Diane Bédard), and an ad at Pabos 10 Aug (Michel Larivée et al.). **Glossy Ibis:** singles at Cacouna 1 Aug (Jean-Claude Pelletier), Trois-Pistoles 11-13 Aug (Élaine Bouchard, Jean-Claude Pelletier), Québec City 3 Sep (Simon Villeneuve et al.) and Lac Vachon (Chandler) 3 Sep (Albini Couture, Yvette Cyr). **White-faced Ibis:** one at Sorel 5 Aug (Jean Lemoyne) and one at Terrebonne 21-23 Aug (Marc Jolicoeur, Samuel Denault).

Black Vulture: two birds photographed near La Baie 24 Aug (Monique Boudreault, Serg Tremblay). **Swallow-tailed Kite:** a bird photographed at Cap Tourmente 3 Sep provided the 7th record for the province (Lise Paquette, Robert Faucher). **Swainson's Hawk:** a juv light morph photographed at Tadoussac 15 Sep (Stéphane Blais, Jessé Roy-Drainville), and a juv dark morph photographed at Portneuf-sur-Mer 15 Sep (Robin Gingras, Jocelyne Forgues). **Red-headed Woodpecker:** singles at Val-des-Monts 1 Aug (Danielle Gélinas, Louise Chénier) and at Colombier 14 Sep (Emmanuel Hains et al.). **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** a pair of adults accompanying a juv 6 Aug at Saint-Ignace confirmed a third breeding locality around Lake Saint-Pierre (Jean Lemoyne). **Fish Crow:** one heard and seen in the district of Côte des Neiges in Montréal 25 Aug (Étienne Artigau). **Northern Wheatear:** singles at Pabos 5 Sep (Jean-Raymond Lepage et al.) and at L'Isle Verte 18-25 Sep (Francine Cadieux-Roy et al.).

Lark Sparrow: now a regular vagrant in the fall, it was reported in 5 localities during the period. **Yellow-breasted Chat:** a single bird at Barachois (Gaspésie) 28 Sep (Daniel Ouellette); reported over 21 years during the past 24 years, this species can be designated as a regular vagrant in the province. **Yellow-headed Blackbird:** a female at Macamic 24 Sep (Maryse Lessard). **Blue-winged Warbler:** one seen at Cap Tourmente 23 Sep (Thomas Gianoli, Mathieu Landry). **Prothonotary Warbler:** one nicely photographed at Laval 22 Aug (Louise Courtemanche). **Prairie Warbler:** one at Cap des Rosiers 26 Sep (Thomas Beyer, Arianne Reda et al.). **Townsend's Warbler:** representing the fourth record for the province, a male was enjoyed by dozens of observers at Sainte-Catherine 30 Sep-1 Oct (Marcel Gagnon, Tristan Jobin).

Please report your interesting bird sightings to Pierre Bannon by email: pierre.bannon@icloud.com

Fuligule morillon: un oiseau en plumage éclipse toujours à Métabetchouan jusqu'au 3 oct (pl. obs.) **Colibri roux:** un mâle à Saint-Jules de Beauce le 1er août (Suzie Vachon, ph.). **Barge marbrée:** une à Barachois 30 août (David Soares). **Bécasseau roussâtre:** signalé dans 6 localités seulement mais 4 oiseaux à Kamouraska 11 sep étaient dignes de mention (Claude Auchu et al.). **Bécassin à long bec:** aperçu dans 5 localités dont un max de 3 à Montmagny 20 sep-3 oct (pl. obs.). **Petit Pingouin:** un aperçu à Beauharnois 16-17 sep (Pierre Beaudoin, Frederik Gustavsson). **Macareux moine:** le plus à l'ouest a été signalé à Lévis 20 sep (Robin Gingras) mais un max de 15 à Rivière-Ouelle 18 sep méritaient aussi un signalement (Claude Auchu, Christiane Girard).

Mouette de Sabine: l'arrivée d'un juvénile à Beauharnois 5 sep (Bob Barnhurst) a été suivie par plusieurs autres, pour atteindre 6 individus 15 sep (Olivier Barden, Samuel Denault). **Sterne de Forster:** une dans la réserve nationale de faune du lac St-Francois à Dundee 11 sep (Daniel Alain Dagenais, ph.). **Puffin fuligineux:** max de 17 à Kegaska 9 sep (Sylvie Robert, Pierre Fradette). **Puffin des Anglais:** max 31 à Pointe des Monts 4 sep (Alain Côté, Guy Lemelin). **Frégate superbe:** un juvénile perché sur un paquebot de la Garde côtière près de Percé 23 sep (Andrew Darcy, ph.) puis un autre (ou le même) perché sur un crevettier près de Sept-Iles 28 sep (Mathieu-Anthony Fortin, *fade* Mireille Poulin).

Pelican d'Amérique: des oiseaux jusqu'au 4 août à Chandler (Patsy Skene, Jean-Raymond Lepage), jusqu'au 7 août à Victoriaville (Lise Bergeron) et jusqu'au 9 août à Pointe aux Trembles (Montréal)(Yves Gauthier). **Petit Blongios:** un juvénile à Bridgeville 3 sep était exceptionnel pour la péninsule gaspésienne (Alexandre Éthier et al.). **Aigrette neigeuse:** une à Montmagny 8 août (Jacques Lachance). **Aigrette bleue:** une juv à Gaspé 7 août (Denis Talbot, Diane Bédard), et un ad à Pabos 10 Aug (Michel Larivée et al.). **Ibis falcinelle:** des oiseaux à Cacouna 1 août (Jean-Claude Pelletier), Trois-Pistoles 11-13 août (Élaine Bouchard, Jean-Claude Pelletier), Québec 3 sep (Simon Villeneuve et al.) et au Lac Vachon (Chandler) 3 sep (Albini Couture, Yvette Cyr). **Ibis à face blanche:** un à Sorel 5 août (Jean Lemoyne) et un à Terrebonne 21-23 août (Marc Jolicoeur, Samuel Denault).

Urubu noir: 2 oiseaux photographiés près de La Baie 24 août (Monique Boudreault, Serg Tremblay). **Naucler à queue fourchue:** un oiseau photographié à Cap Tourmente 3 sep constituait la 7ième présence pour la province (Lise Paquette, Robert Faucher). **Buse de Swainson:** un juv de type pâle photographié à Tadoussac 15 sep (Stéphane Blais, Jessé Roy-Drainville) et un juv de type sombre photographié à Portneuf-sur-Mer 15 sep (Robin Gingras, Jocelyne Forgues). **Pic à tête rouge:** des oiseaux à Val-des-Monts 1 août (Danielle Gélinas, Louise Chénier) et à Colombier 14 sep (Emmanuel Hains et al.). **Pic à ventre roux:** un couple d'adultes accompagnant un juv 6 août à Saint-Ignace confirmait la nidification pour un 3ième site autour du lac Saint-Pierre (Jean Lemoyne). **Corneille de rivage:** une vue et entendue dans le quartier Côte des Neiges de Montréal 25 août (Étienne Artigau). **Traquet motteux:** des oiseaux à Pabos 5 sep (Jean-Raymond Lepage et al.) et à L'Isle Verte 18-25 sep (Francine Cadieux-Roy et al.).

Bruant à joues marron: maintenant un visiteur régulier à l'automne, l'espèce fut signalée à 5 endroits durant la période. **Ictérie polyglotte:** un oiseau à Barachois (Gaspésie) 28 sep (Daniel Ouellette); signalée 21 années lors des 24 dernières années, cette espèce est devenue un visiteur régulier dans la province. **Carouge à tête jaune:** une femelle à Macamic 24 sep (Maryse Lessard). **Paruline à ailes bleues:** une vue à Cap Tourmente 23 sep (Thomas Gianoli, Mathieu Landry). **Paruline orangée:** une très bien photographiée à Laval 22 août (Louise Courtemanche). **Paruline des prés:** une à Cap des Rosiers 26 sep (Thomas Beyer, Arianne Reda et al.). **Paruline de Townsend:** représentant la 4ième mention dans la province, un mâle a été admiré par des douzaines d'observateurs à Sainte-Catherine 30 sep-1 oct (Marcel Gagnon, Tristan Jobin).

S'il-vous-plait, signalez vos observations intéressantes à Pierre Bannon par courriel à pierre.bannon@icloud.com



Focus On Education

BPQ presents a series of monthly lectures from October through April. Events are for the most part held via Zoom in order to reach a broader audience.

Monday, January 9, 2023

7:00 PM - Via Zoom - [Register Here](#)

Zero to 9,700 - A Lifetime of Birding

Speaker: Peter Kaestner



Peter Kaestner is a retired U.S. Diplomat and a world-renowned independent birder. His first international trip was in 1962 when he visited the Bahamas at age 9. Since then, he has birded in 187 "eBird countries" and currently holds eBird's biggest world life list (9,541). His IOC list stands at 9,710 as of October 2022 – and is only exceeded by one birder. His talk chronicles his life as he has travelled the world in search of birds.

Did you miss one of our lectures? Good news! Starting in our next issue, Zofia Laubitz will be authoring a new feature column for The Song Sparrow, in which she will summarize the presentations made by our guest lecturers.

Monday, February 6, 2023

7 PM - Via Zoom - [Register Here](#)

How the berries of exotic shrubs are altering the plumage colouration of North American birds

Speaker: Jocelyn Hudon, PhD (Pronouns he/him), Curator, Ornithology, Royal Alberta Museum

Consumption of the berries of two introduced species of bush honeysuckles, the Morrow's (*Lonicera morrowii*) and Tatarian (*L. tatarica*) honeysuckles, has for the last several decades been altering the plumage colouration of birds of several species in North America. Avian species affected by the honeysuckles include not only birds that feed predominantly on fruits, but also insectivorous species that incorporate fruits in their diets at the time of the fall prebasic molt. But what are the consequences for the birds? Jocelyn will highlight several examples of plumage reddening he has studied.



About our Speaker

Jocelyn Hudon was born in Lac Etchemin, Québec. He acquired an early a fascination for birds, particularly their gaudy colours. After obtaining a B.Sc. in Biology from Université Laval, he went to the University of Connecticut, where he earned a PhD studying the evolution of carotenoid usage in birds. Jocelyn spent the next 3 years at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon as a postdoctoral fellow, investigating the pigmentation of the iris of birds. In 1992 he was appointed to his present position as Curator of Ornithology at the Royal Alberta Museum. Jocelyn is interested generally in the nature and evolution of colour ornamentation in birds and is using a variety of techniques to help understand the origins of new forms.

NOTE: Part of this month's talk includes research on the impact of climate change on birds. This important subject will be featured in other upcoming BPQ lectures.

Monday, March 6, 2023

7 PM - Via Zoom - [Register Here](#)

From Boreal Dark Skies to Bright City Lights: Bird Migration in a Changing World

Speaker: Ben Winger

Every year hundreds of millions of birds are lost to building collisions in North America. Ben Winger, Assistant Professor in the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan, will discuss his research on migratory birds and window strikes using data spanning over four decades. Dr. Winger will discuss the connection between bird collisions and light pollution, as well as scientific insights about ongoing global change that he and colleagues have learned from studying specimens of birds that died from building collisions.



About our Speaker

Dr. Ben Winger is Assistant Professor of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology at the University of Michigan, where he is also the Curator of Birds at the UM Museum of Zoology. Ben is an ornithologist and evolutionary biologist with broad interests in the ecology, behaviour and evolution of birds. Ben's research on the evolution of bird migration has won awards from the American Ornithological Society, Ecological Society of America and the Society of Systematic Biologists and has been featured in popular media such as Radiolab, National Geographic Magazine, and Living Bird. Ben received his B.A. from Cornell University in 2007 and his PhD from the University of Chicago in 2015. He and his students at UM study a wide variety of questions related to bird speciation, migration, and conservation. More about Ben's research can be found at www.wingerlab.org.

Monday, April 3, 2023

7 PM - Via Zoom - [Register Here](#)

Why Birds Sing at Dawn

Speaker: Robert Montgomerie, Ornithologist, Queens University

The dawn chorus of birds is familiar to everyone who wakes up early enough anywhere in the world. Despite the familiarity of this singing pattern, we still know very little about why so much singing is performed so early in the morning. In his talk, Bob will provide some plausible answers to this question from his own research in the high arctic and in tropical Australia, and on the American Robin and several wood warblers in Ontario.



About our Speaker

Bob Montgomerie (seen here with a friendly Sabine's Gull) is Professor Emeritus at the Department of Biology, Queen's University. He retired in 2019 after 40 years on the faculty at Queen's, to devote full time to research and writing. While much of his research has focused on arctic birds, he has studied more than 50 species worldwide, mainly asking questions about sexual selection, parental care, and the evolution of gametes (sperm and eggs). He has also published widely on the history of ornithology, including an award-winning book on that topic in 2014—*Ten Thousand Birds*—coauthored with Tim Birkhead and Jo Wimpenny.



FOCUS ON GRANTS

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

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

Motus Wildlife Tracking System Tower

Original Grant Proposal submitted by the Vanier College Environmental and Wildlife Management program

"The decline in migratory songbird populations is well documented, and recent technological developments provide the tools to better understand one of the least known bird behaviours - migration. The Motus Wildlife Tracking System was developed to operate in collaboration with many organizations, institutions, and researchers who share the common goal of better understanding migration and animal movements. With a Field Station in the Laurentians and providing hands-on training for technologists, the Environmental and Wildlife Management program of Vanier College seems a perfect fit to become a contributor to this ever-growing network.

After a year of planning, much of the initial work is already underway. A grant from Bird Protection Québec would help in funding this project, hopefully for many years to come. The grant would cover costs associated primarily with annual Motus registration, NanoTag purchase, and hiring of an experienced tagger for the first few years (~3000\$)."

Decision:

The original application sought a commitment of \$3,000 per year for five years. Following the recommendation of the grants committee, and in line with its policies, the board approved the awarding of a three-year grant of \$3,000 per year from 2021 to 2023.

In addition to the grant from BPQ, this project also received important financial support directly from Vanier College. With the combined grants, the students were able to set up the tracking tower, and secure equipment and training. The project is on track, with the first trials on tagging birds having been run in the summer of 2021. A brief report on their first year's achievements follows.

NOT FAMILIAR WITH MOTUS? Learn more [here](#)



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 ECO. Ces subventions représentent notre plus grande dépense financière annuelle.

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

Station pour le Système de surveillance faunique Motus

Proposition de subvention de : Programme de gestion de l'environnement et de la faune à Vanier CEGEP

"Le déclin des populations d'oiseaux chanteurs migrateurs est bien documenté et les développements technologiques récents fournissent les outils pour mieux comprendre l'un des comportements les moins connus des oiseaux - la migration. Le système de suivi de la faune Motus a été développé pour fonctionner en collaboration avec de nombreuses organisations, institutions et chercheurs qui partagent l'objectif commun de mieux comprendre les migrations et les mouvements d'animaux. Avec une station de terrain dans les Laurentides et offrant une formation pratique aux technologues, le programme de gestion de l'environnement et de la faune du Collège Vanier semble tout indiqué pour devenir un contributeur à ce réseau en pleine croissance.

Après un an de planification, une grande partie des travaux initiaux est déjà en cours. Une subvention de Protection des Oiseaux du Québec aiderait à financer ce projet, espérons-le pour de nombreuses années à venir. La subvention couvrirait les coûts associés principalement à l'inscription annuelle de Motus, à l'achat de Nano Tag et à l'embauche d'un tagueur expérimenté pour les premières années (~ 3000 \$)."

Décision :

La demande originale demandait un engagement de 3 000 \$ par année pendant cinq ans. Suite à la recommandation du comité des subventions et conformément à ses politiques, le conseil a approuvé l'octroi d'une subvention de 3 000 \$ par année sur trois ans de 2021 à 2023.

En plus de la subvention du POQ, ce projet a également reçu un important soutien financier directement du Vanier CEGEP. Grâce aux subventions combinées, les étudiants ont pu mettre en place la tour de suivi et obtenir l'équipement et la formation. Le projet est sur la bonne voie, les premiers essais de marquage des oiseaux ayant eu lieu à l'été 2021. Un bref rapport (en anglais) sur les réalisations de leur première année suit.

Vous ne connaissez pas Motus ? En savoir plus [ici](#)

Vanier College Motus Project -Year 1: Report for 2021

by: Chris Cloutier, Teacher/Field Station Coordinator & Project Co-Lead

In Early 2020, the Vanier College Environmental and Wildlife Management program began exploring the possibility of erecting a Motus Wildlife Tracking System tower array and Sensorgnome, at our Field Station in the Laurentians. We applied for grants both internally and externally and were awarded \$4,500 from Vanier College, as well as a grant from Bird Protection Quebec for \$3,000 per year, for three years (2021-2023). With this financial aid, we were able to set up a tower, register our project with the Motus Network, acquire several NanoTags, and hire an outside specialist to train our resident bander. In the summer of 2021, we were able to launch our first trials, deploying NanoTags on four Ovenbirds (*Seiurus aurocapilla*) and three Red-eyed vireos (*Vireo olivaceus*) at our field station. The specific goals of our project are to identify the habitat use and yearly movements of these two commonly encountered species that nest in the area.



Our guest bander, Pierre-Alexandre Dumas, from OOT (l'Observatoire d'oiseaux de Tadoussac) spent the better part of two weeks at the station, demonstrating how to activate the tags, make the appropriately-sized harnesses, and subsequently secure them to live birds. This proved to be a fantastic learning experience for our resident bander (Brandee Diner) and for the students, allowing them to observe this process first-hand. Subsequently, Brandee spent 10 days at OOT in September 2021 to further her training in affixing Nanotags to passerines and making those properly sized backpack harnesses herself.

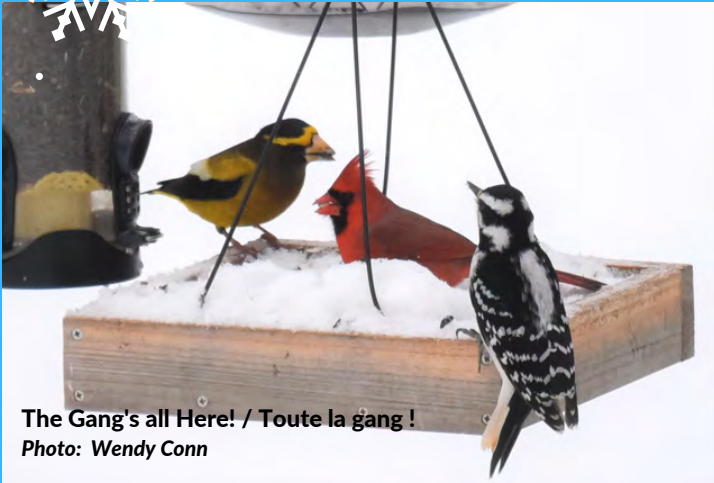
We will continue to receive grant money for the next two years, and with this we hope to continue to hone the skills necessary to become autonomous in the application of NanoTags and subsequently the monitoring of local nesting species, as well as to contribute valuable information to the Motus network and to avian science as a whole. For the 2022 season, we intend to piggyback on the Motus registration network of OOT in order to dedicate all of our funds to acquiring NanoTags. This will allow us to purchase 15 radio tags, which we can then track using VHF antennas. We are hoping to gain valuable information on nest locations, M vs. F brood rearing, dispersal strategies, and differential migration departure dates for both Ovenbirds and Red-eyed vireos, all the while training our students in the fields of ornithology, radio telemetry, and wildlife monitoring.



- Left:** Sizing chart used to build appropriately-sized harnesses for different bird species.
- Centre:** Harness being secured to an Ovenbird (*Seiurus aurocapilla*).
- Right:** Guest bander from OOT supervising the process of tag activation

Winter is for feeder birds !

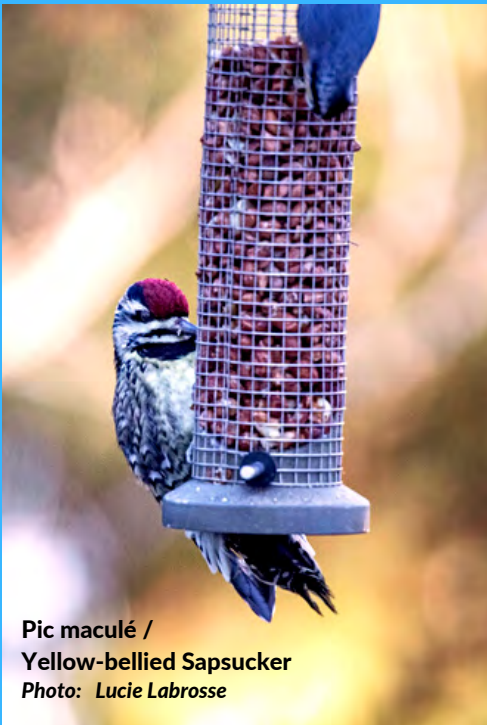
Les oiseaux d'hiver mangent chez nous !



The Gang's all Here! / Toute la gang !
Photo: Wendy Conn



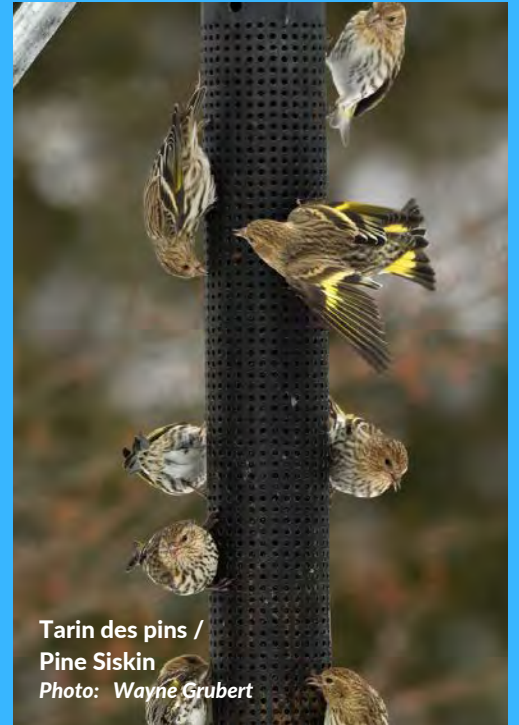
Pileated Woodpecker / Grand Pic
Photo: Wayne Grubert



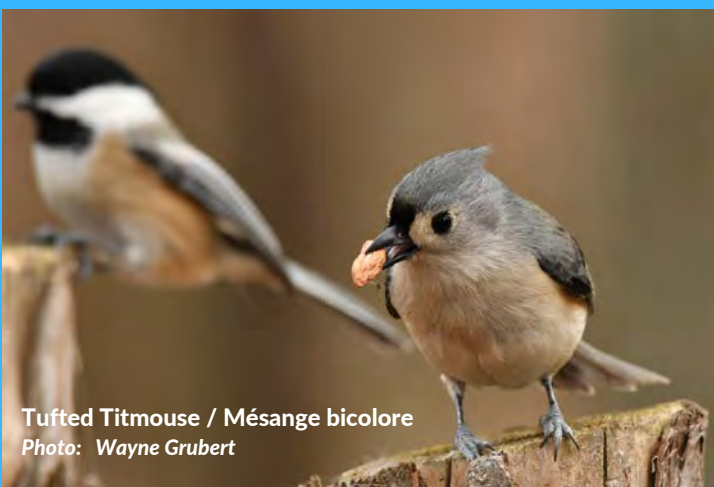
Pic maculé /
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Photo: Lucie Labrosse



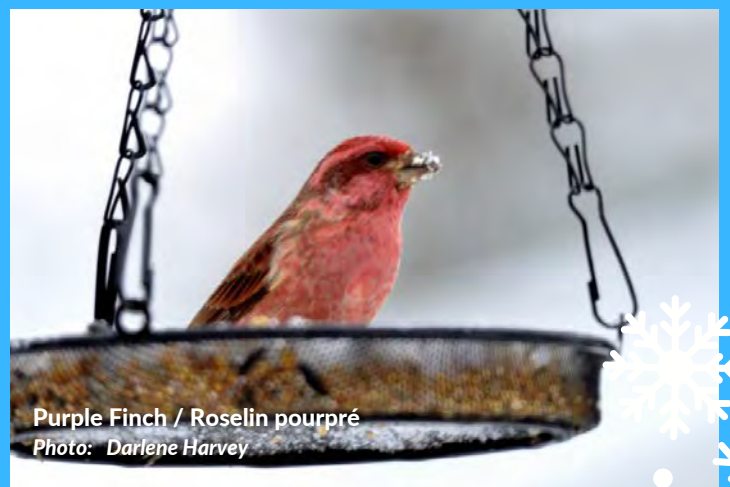
Sitelle à poitrine blanche /
White-breasted Nuthatch
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Tarin des pins /
Pine Siskin
Photo: Wayne Grubert



Tufted Titmouse / Mésange bicolore
Photo: Wayne Grubert



Purple Finch / Roselin pourpré
Photo: Darlene Harvey

Photo: Shawna Sévigny



WHEN AVIANS AND AVIATION MEET

by
Shawna
Sevigny

FALCON
ENVIRONMENTAL

Shawna is an environment and wildlife management technician and senior trainer with Falcon Environmental. She volunteers as a member of BPQ's board of directors and as an active member of our education committee.

For the past three decades, Falcon Environmental Inc. has been working year-round to keep Montreal Trudeau airport (and five other airfields in Canada) safe from bird strikes.

Not just anyone can do this job. I won't go into detail here but before we can even begin to perform our work at these airports, multiple permits and authorizations are required from all levels of government agencies.

Every day, as the sun rises, a team of wildlife control officers, along with their birds of prey counterparts, begins its day of wildlife control, and doesn't stop until the sun sets.

Every shift begins with preparing all the necessary equipment. This includes a pyrotechnic device, falconry bird, iPad, two-way radio, as well as many other indispensable tools that are required for the day ahead.

Pyrotechnics have been used for many years in wildlife control. The tool resembles a firearm or flare gun and is used to discharge a variety of cartridges containing a sort of mini-firework display. The sound and colour emitted from these cartridges helps in dispersing wildlife, driving it away from the airfield.

Once our vehicle is packed and ready to go, we set off on our inspection of the runways. We verify that all airport runways are clear of debris, be it paper or plastic bags, rubber pieces, pieces of asphalt or even hard pieces of snow or ice. These are all things that could be ingested by the airplane engines during take-offs and landings and cause costly repairs and delays.

One of our bigger concerns is finding bird remains on the runway, which would indicate that there has been a bird strike. When this happens, we must remove the remains, identify the species if possible (if not possible, we send a blood sample for DNA testing), perform an inspection of the plane that the bird struck, speak to the pilot, take photos, and finally write an incident report.



Shawna discharging the pyrotechnic device

Any item, be it an inanimate object or animal's remains, must be cleared from the runway immediately and the information relayed to the communication tower to confirm that the runway has been inspected and is now clear and safe.

Once the runways have been verified, we're off to inspect the rest of the airport. Driving on the restricted side of the airport demands much training and expertise. This training is required before we can take the examination that allows us to qualify to drive "air side". We need to know the airfield by heart in order to intervene in situations with the fastest response time possible. We make it a point to spend a certain percentage of our day out and about verifying taxiways and runways to make sure that there are no animals that could impede air traffic.

Ducks, geese, gulls, starlings, and many raptors are among the bird species that we will come across at the airport. All of these birds can be successfully managed thanks to our team of highly trained falconry birds. This team of hawks and falcons (eagles are used in other airports!) will chase after the nuisance species and scare them away from the airport site. For other types of animals such as groundhogs, raccoons, skunks, rabbits and many more, we use a variety of traps to capture and remove the individuals from the area.

Shawna with a Harris's Hawk, one of the team of trained falconry birds used to control birds at the airport



Photo: Lisandre Robichaud

Wild birds of prey are also among the animals we must manage at the airfield. When we encounter a troublesome raptor on the airfield, i.e., one that stays too close to the runways or frequently crosses the runway, we capture them with special traps. Because they are protected by provincial laws, we follow very tight protocols when handling them.



Once the bird has been removed from the trap, we band it using a special metal band that will identify it in future captures. We take wing and tail measurements, weigh them and identify their age, and sex them with the help of feather patterns and molt limits. This takes a few short minutes, and we then release them 100 kilometres away “as the crow flies” from the airport.

During the summer months, you can expect there to be a large variety of animals at the airport, but once winter hits, you would assume that everything is either gone or hibernating. For the most part, this is true but there are creatures that descend from the north to spend their winter with us (Santa!?). I’m talking about Snowy Owls, of course, the avian emblem of our province - and the famous Hedwig from Harry Potter!

Each year, from November until April we must turn our focus towards these beautiful arctic birds. As you may know, there has been an important influx of Snowy Owls coming down to our southern region since 2013.



According to recent studies, one of the main causes is climate change, but availability of food is also another factor. The Snowy Owl is the largest owl species by weight here in Québec and they seek large open spaces that resemble the great white North where they hunt small rodents like field mice and voles. The Montreal Airport has, therefore, become a very interesting place for these winter migrants. Unfortunately, the Snowy Owl is a huge hazard to aircraft because they are large birds and crepuscular, which means they move around mostly at dawn and dusk, crossing runways to catch unwary rodents. One of our biggest concerns is that they are fearless when it comes to aircraft; they pay no attention to the airplanes taking off and landing in their midst.

To catch the Snowy Owls, we use traps called Swedish Goshawk traps and Bownet traps. Once an owl is caught, we follow the same procedure as with any other raptor caught on the airfield: we record the usual measurements and place a metal band on one of its legs.

Falcon Environmental also participates in a special science study called "Project SNOWstorm". This study helps to better understand the movements of Snowy Owls by equipping some individuals with a GPS transmitter that records their location, altitude and even their flight speed.

Here is a link to Project SNOWstorm's website, which includes information on all the owls that have been equipped with a GPS tracker:

<https://www.projectsnowstorm.org/owls/>

The work that we do at the airport is extremely important for both the safety of pilots and travellers, as well as the wildlife that chooses to live in this high-traffic environment. The aviation industry is highly regulated because safety is paramount for both the regulator and the operator.

Our teams do their best to make sure that both humans and animals are safe and that everyone gets to their destination in a timely fashion - whether for vacation or migration!

Alderbrooke - not the marsh, the Owl

Did you know BPQ has its own connection to Project SNOWstorm? One of the Snowy Owls captured at the Montreal airport was named in honour of our Alderbrooke Marsh sanctuary located near Sutton, Quebec.

Rebecca McCabe, who was a PhD candidate at McGill at the time (and since then, we were pleased to learn, successfully defended her PhD dissertation) received a BPQ research grant to help fund her work studying the winter movement ecology of Snowies, including best practices in relocating airport owls so that they stayed relocated. She made extensive use of Project SNOWstorm's database for her work and actually tagged Alderbrooke, who ironically turned out to be one of the owls that proved difficult to keep relocated!

You can read about Rebecca's work with Alderbrooke and about his "boomeranging" antics [here](#).

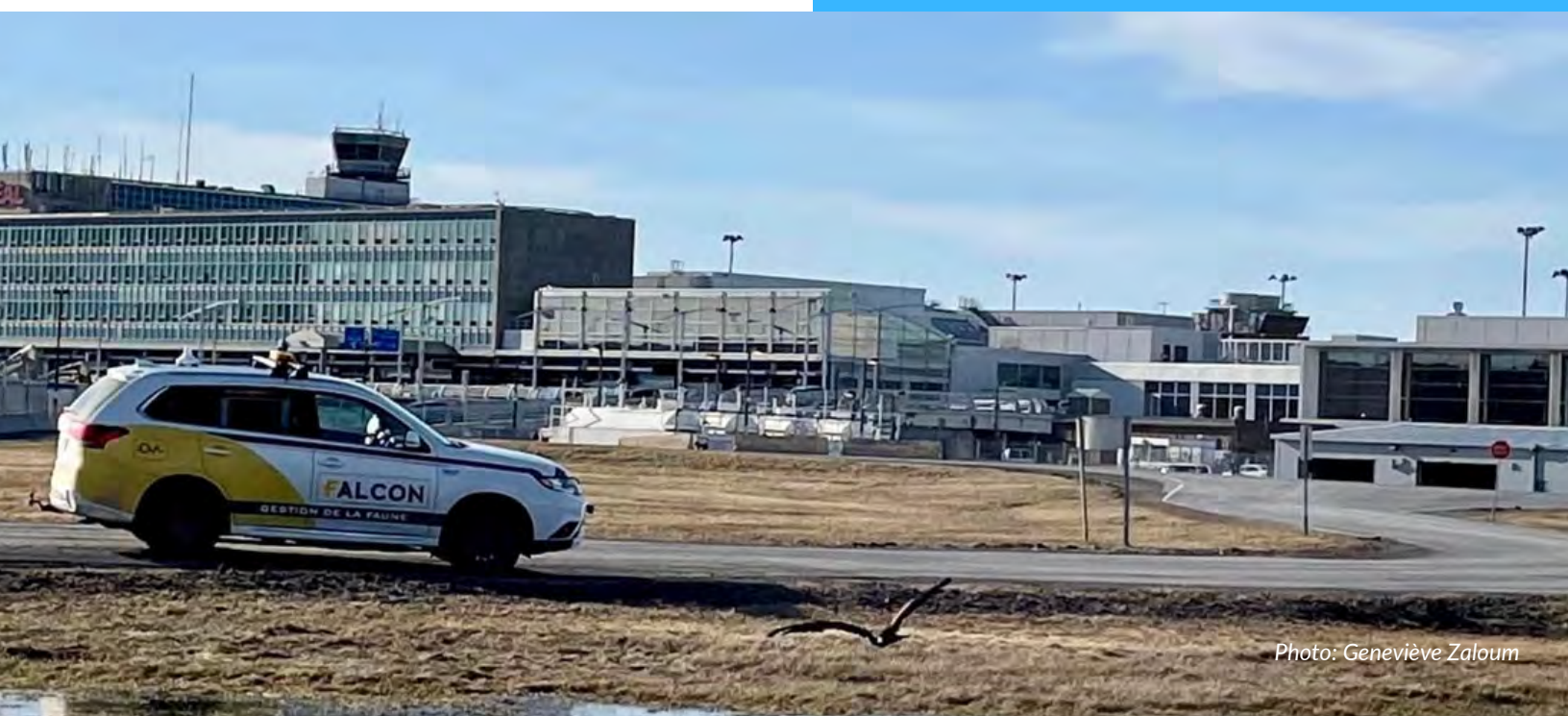


Photo: Geneviève Zaloum



A Journey through the Canary Islands

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JOE MCGILL

After what seemed like an eternity, the day of our trip finally arrived! My husband and I were off to the Canary Islands to meet up with my twin brother, Pat, on the island of Gran Canaria.

The Canary Islands, off the west coast of Africa, are made up of seven islands, three of which we would be visiting during the nine-day trip: Gran Canaria, which has a good mix of desert scrub and pine forest mountains; Tenerife, with its ancient Laurel Forest, thermophile woodland, and pine forest and is the greenest of the three on our itinerary; and Fuerteventura, which consists mostly of desert and is the driest island as it lies only 96 kilometres from the African coast.



The Island chain has six endemic bird species, all of which we hoped to see, along with many introduced and migrant species. The six endemics are: Laurel Pigeon, Bolle's Pigeon, Fuerteventura Stonechat, Canary Island Chiffchaff, Tenerife Blue Chaffinch, and the Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch. We had purchased two field guides to prepare for the trip: Helm Field Guides' *Birds of the Canary Islands* by Eduardo Garcia-del-Rey and *Wildlife of Madeira and the Canary Islands* by John Bowler. The Helm guide was a great resource as it lists birding hotspot GPS coordinates for each island and the birds that can possibly be seen at each site - a must for finding the six endemics. Since most of our time would be spent on Gran Canaria, I used the GPS coordinates to plan our stops on Tenerife and Fuerteventura, where time would be shorter, and Google Maps' "My Trips", downloaded for offline use, a great tool to plan out the routes between stops.

The Adventure Begins: Island #1 - Gran Canaria

After checking out our beautiful bungalow on Gran Canaria, we decided to head to the beach. Just before leaving, we had a first bird visit to our garden: the Canary Island Chiffchaff, one of the six endemic species, right in our yard! These birds were subsequently seen just about everywhere we went, except on Fuerteventura. After this great start to our birding adventure, we were off to the beach.

We walked over five kilometres through the dunes to the oasis at Maspalomas beach. The dunes were high and made for amazing views. The oasis, called La Charca, is a tidal pool surrounded by lush greenery that was great for all types of birds. We found a lot of lifers on our first visit here: Eurasian Moorhens, Common and Little Ringed Plovers, Common Greenshank and Redshank, African Blue Tit, Island Canary, European Greenfinch and Serin, Plain Swifts, and African Collared-Dove. The place is a green paradise surrounded by sand dunes, with such beauty everywhere.

After walking all the way back to our bungalow, we headed out for dinner - where the birding continued. While dining outside, a Eurasian Hoopoe flew in and landed on a light pole, a very cool looking bird!



Canary Island Chiffchaff



Common Greenshank and Ruff

The next day, we allowed ourselves a late start as we adjusted to the time difference. Despite spending the afternoon around the pool, we still managed another lifer, spotting two Eurasian Blackcaps skulking in the bushes!

Around 7 pm, Pat and I headed back to the oasis, this time keeping more to the dunes, where we had amazing views of a lifer Sardinian Warbler, with his red eye and red eye-ring. We also came across lots of Island Canaries, Spanish Sparrows and Rose-Ringed Parakeets.



For our next adventure, we decided to head up into the pine forest mountains but, before we had even headed out the day started in the yard with, you guessed it, another lifer - a Little Egret flying by overhead!

Our first stop in the pine forest was at a picnic site, Llanos de la Pez. The guidebook listed the site as a go-to spot for the Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch and other forest dwelling birds. We were greeted by a group of Island Canaries and a couple of gorgeous Great Spotted Woodpeckers but searched everywhere for the Blue Chaffinch with no luck. After walking one of the trails for a bit, our consolation was a group of African Blue Tits and a beautiful European Robin.

We spotted a Eurasian Kestrel patrolling the pines, perhaps keeping some of the birds at bay.

We moved on, deeper into mature Canary pine forest, and did some more hiking. Still no luck for the endemic Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch, and so we decided to try again another day since it was getting late - and hot!



The drive out of the forest on the mountain roads turned up two Berthelot's Pipits foraging right next to the road. (A quick note about driving conditions on the islands: they were crazy! There were no places to pull over and the winding roads were quite scary at times.



Island #2 - Tenerife

The next morning saw us boarding a ferry to the island of Tenerife, with its majestic volcano Mount Teide. The ride was only an hour and a half long, but we had many Shearwaters along the way, most being Cory's Shearwater. We did view two lifer Manx Shearwater, and a lifer Barolo Shearwater, each with a different flight pattern.

We landed on Tenerife to the sight of huge mountains with clouds stretching all up their sides. We drove around, stopping in some farmland areas, where we had great views of Barbary Partridge and lots of Island Canaries. Each island has its own sub-species of African Blue Tit, and we picked them up as well. Itching to get to the endemics, we moved on to park Anaga to look for pigeons. We came across a mixed flock of Blue Tits, Canaries and lifer Goldcrest, Tenerife subspecies. We also had European Robin, and 12 lifer Common Chaffinch, Canary Island subspecies. No luck with the pigeons so we moved on, stopping at three different viewing platforms up in the mountains. Unfortunately, the cloud cover was literally "in your face" and didn't leave much opportunity for viewing. We would have to get lucky to see these pigeons! At the third stop in the clouds, barranco des Ruiz, another car pull-over for scenic viewing, there was a trail going down the mountainside. The clouds were breaking slightly so we walked down the trail and, as we came to a turn, six Laurel Pigeons were on the ground feeding - right there in front of us! As soon as they were spotted, they flew off one at a time into the clouds. We searched and heard wings flapping but had no other views. One pigeon species down, but the Bolle's Pigeon would have to wait until tomorrow.

That night we stayed in the cloud forests in an authentic Spanish bungalow and the next morning, Pat and I decided to explore the property. Cloud cover was still dense but, right in the driveway, we happened on two Laurel Pigeons that flew up and headed deep into the forest. We followed them to try for pics but only heard their wings flapping away from us into the silent woods.

After that good start to the morning, the clouds broke up so we started pigeon hunting again. First stop was a trail head in the middle of a town in the mountains. There were lots of farmland birds thanks to a nearby goat farm and we spotted a Gray Wagtail, a Greenfinch and about 40 Canaries - but no pigeons. Reluctantly, we decided to give up on the Bolle's Pigeon and concentrate on finding the Tenerife Blue Chaffinch. As we were leaving the area, all of a sudden two Bolle's Pigeons flew up from the side of the road, about 25 feet from the car! The two birds had dark tail bands, distinguishing them from the Laurel with its light, almost white, tail band. So, happy at having found both pigeon species, we headed straight to the pine forest to try our luck on the endemic Tenerife Blue Chaffinch.



Tenerife Blue Chaffinch



The guidebook listed a picnic area at Las Lajas as a go-to spot because of a water source the birds frequented there. My husband, the non-birder, needed to use the facilities and I could hear birds in that area. When we walked over, I immediately spotted our target birds sitting in a pine right behind the bathroom! We started snapping pictures and realized the whole tree was covered, with about 10 birds just sitting and waiting to use a birdbath formed in the rock below the tree. We got some amazing shots as the birds weren't shy at all. Their dark blue colour shone beautifully in the sunlight, such a score!!

Feeling lucky we went back to try for pigeon pictures at barranco de Ruiz. The cloud cover was pretty much the same as the day before. Just past the site of yesterday's six pigeons, we saw two fly up and off into the clouds - still no luck on the pictures, though.

We next headed to our hotel for the night in the beautiful coastal town of Puerto de la Cruz. The town had several park squares with lots of birds, including Rose-ringed Parakeets, Blackbirds, Canary and Common Chiffchaff.

All in all, we considered our two days on the island of Tenerife to have been quite successful.

Island #3 - Fuerteventura

My husband dropped Pat and I off at the airport early the next morning for our eight-hour excursion to the desert island of Fuerteventura, while he ferried back to Gran Canaria later that morning. With lots of stops planned, we immediately headed to la Oliva reservoir. A target bird, Fuerteventura Stonechat, was on the list for la Oliva. Just after exiting the car, a Great Gray Shrike landed right next to us, giving great photo ops. A lifer - as was the Spectacled Warbler pair that came to greet us next.

We walked over to check out the reservoir and were rewarded with lifer Ruddy Shelducks and Black-winged Stilts, then headed to the base of the hills looking for the Stone Chat, without any luck. Next, we headed to Tindaya plains, which is pretty much a desert with some scrub. We had a few target birds we were trying for here but had no luck at all, missing out on Houbara Bustard, Cream-coloured Courser, and a few others. We had also spent too much time there and now were going to have to seriously target the Stonechat - I wasn't leaving without it!



Great Gray Shrike



Spectacled Warbler

We headed straight to Los Molinos dam, where the Stonechats are known to breed, and saw around 250 Ruddy Shelducks in the muddy water below. Suddenly, about 200 Black-bellied Sandgrouse came flying over a hillside right over our heads - a lifer for us and what a sight! They landed at a goat farm so we walked closer and spotted an Egyptian Vulture sitting on the ground in the area of the goat pens.

While walking back to the car, Pat heard something. He was able to pin it down in a gully and, at long last, the Fuerteventura Stonechat!! In fact, two of them were foraging through rocks on the ground. We were able to walk a trail into the gully and snap great pictures of these tough little beauties.



Fuerteventura Stonechat

Having found our target bird, we had time to head to a planted Canary pine forest in the desert and try for the African Blue Tit. The pines had all burned down except for a few around the parking lot, but in those few trees we found quite a number of the target Tits, allowing us to check off this island subspecies.

Our eight-hour excursion to Fuerteventura was way too short; we would have loved to have much more time to explore this special desert island. Still, we were flying back to Gran Canaria with another endemic under our belts, and only one left to find!

Back to where it all began

Back on Gran Canaria, we got up early the next morning and drove up into the pine forest. We started at Nublo rock park, a trail with pines all around it. The area was being patrolled by two Eurasian Kestrels, so there was little bird activity. We jumped back in the car and headed back to Llanos de la Pez. Just before we parked, a group of six Red-legged Partridge crossed the road in front of us, another lifer. We explored all around and had Blue Tits, Great Spotted Woodpecker and lots of Ravens. As we were heading back to the car, I heard something different, looked high up in a pine and found a female Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch! There turned out to be two high up foraging through pinecones. I was able to snap off two pictures, but they kept moving deeper off trail into the pine forest. We looked at each other and did a little dance. We had done it - we had found all six endemic birds of the Canary Islands!



Gran Canaria Blue Chaffinch, female

The rest of our vacation consisted of beach time, with forays to the Oasis to pick up a few more lifers: Curlew Sandpiper, Common Waxbill and Common Sandpiper.

This trip has definitely made it onto my favourites list! The landscape was beautiful, the people were nice, the birds fantastic! We ended with a total of 66 species, out of which 48 were lifers for me, and 54 for Pat. We also accomplished our goal of seeing all six endemic birds.

If only we had had more time in paradise ...

Travelogue: Exploring les Iles de la Madeleine

with Richard Gregson



There is a tendency for Montreal birders to turn their thoughts to the south when planning a birding vacation and to head off to the tropics or a Caribbean island. While very nice, these places tend to be hot and humid, something we don't need to leave Montreal to experience! So, this past summer, after three years without travel, my wife Jean and I turned our thoughts to cooler options.

Eagerly seeking to go somewhere with lots of birds and very few people, we instead chose to head north to find pleasant temperatures, sandy beaches, wonderful food and, oh yes, birds!

There is a small archipelago of beautiful islands no more than a couple of hours' flight north-east of Montreal in the middle of the Gulf of St-Lawrence: Les Iles-de-la-Madeleine. This is a group of a half-dozen or so small islands and 300 km of white, sandy beach, all linked by sandbars along the tops of which are excellent roads. There is an additional island that must be accessed by ferry. I mentioned beaches - think Piping Plovers - but there are also cliffs and stunted forests (it can get windy!).



Our travel, along with a small group of 14 people, was organized by NatureQuest, with whom we have birded several times before both here and in Europe. They provide a full-time troubleshooting tour leader who knows the location well, plus additional local resident guides familiar with the hot spots and rarities. If you or your travelling companions are interested in botany and insects and local history, then adequate opportunities are provided for enjoying those as well. The hotel we stayed at, Le Salicorn, is at the northern end of the island chain. If you are travelling independently, the hotel provides guides and transport every day as part of their standard package - and excellent food too.

Obviously remote islands out in the Gulf are not going to have the hundreds of species to be enjoyed elsewhere in Quebec. Those they do have, though, are habitat specific, surprisingly rich in variety, well worth spending time with, and include plenty of species that are hard to find near Montreal. Our checklist by the end of the week amounted to 64 species; you can find it at: <https://ebird.org/qc/tripreport/64767>.

Ducks and gulls, as one would expect, feature large but the islands are really the kingdom of the Savannah Sparrow. Wherever we went, whatever else we were looking at, there was a Savannah Sparrow calling and showing within a very short distance!



There were also, this year, the sad corpses of bird-flu infected Northern Gannets and Guillemots washed up on the beaches, though that has not been unique to this area by any means. Fingers crossed that this is an issue that will pass. Happily, we saw plenty of healthy specimens of those species flying and fishing as well.



Savannah Sparrow

Despite successes, which I will get to soon, there are always disappointments when birding. One of the local birders gave us directions to a Short-eared Owl that had several times been seen near or on a specific power pole along the highway and so, of course, we went in search of it. It was quite a walk from the nearest off-road parking to the numbered pole. After more than a half-hour, and with 14 pairs of binoculars scanning every tree and bush and shady nook in sight, we were forced to conclude that the Owl was not there. Consequently, several members of the group were introduced to the infamous words "twitch" and "dip". All had fun though. (Three cars passed along the highway as we searched - rush hour on the islands!)

During the first afternoon, while waiting for the rest of the party (we were the only ones coming from Quebec), we strolled down to the shore after a lunch of fresh lobster rolls. We had been directed towards a trail leading to the fishing wharf about 3 km distance but we didn't get half-way there due to interruptions from birds and wild-flowers. The Savannah Sparrows, of course, but also shoreline Belted Kingfishers, Great Black-backed Gulls and various birds such as Blue Jays that we would not have had to leave home to see. In a patch of stunted but dense forest, we were called to by Yellow Warblers, which took a long time to spot out in the open. (I must add at this point that the seafood in the restaurants is spectacular and at very reasonable prices - perhaps the best lobsters we have ever eaten. I tried seal poutine too - interesting.)



Black-and-white Warbler

The next morning we were up at 5 am to visit the nearby Pointe-de-l'Est nature park. This is an extensive area of sand dunes, scrub forest and brackish wetlands, which we explored in quite thick morning mist.

Not surprisingly, Savannah Sparrows again, accompanied by Song, Fox and White-throated Sparrows as well as Blackpoll, Yellow, Bay-breasted, Nashville and Black-and White Warblers, were found. A Wilson's Snipe welcomed us too.

It is worth a mention, because sometimes birders are accompanied by wildlife enthusiasts with alternative interests, that there are some fascinatingly unusual and habitat-specific flowering plants to enjoy along the very sandy trails, including several examples of the Hygroscopic Earthstar (worth looking up).

During the next few days, we visited inland and seashore, beach and cliff habitats replete with some great birds. One morning was spent with a local guide walking trails in a wooded reserve, La Bouill e de bois, in which we added Yellow-rumped and Magnolia Warblers, Redstart and Common Yellowthroat to our warbler collection. Of note, these are species that were on breeding territory and not simply birds of passage as we meet them in Montreal. For all the time we were there, the woodland rang to the continued singing of Winter Wrens. Unexpected encounters included hearing Bobolinks from a grassy clearing and seeing Boreal Chickadees very close up.

Halfway down the island chain, a pause by an extensive area of marshy wetland yielded, yes, more Savannah Sparrows, Wood Duck, Gadwall, Eurasian Wigeon, Mallards, Black and Ring-necked Ducks, and a group of active Common Terns. At one point, as we turned around to look across the road to the sea, we witnessed a fly-past by a squadron of White-winged Scoters, which later settled in the swell so that we could better admire them. At various times, sea-watching brought us such goodies as Guillemots, Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Eider, Scaup and Northern Gannets. Cormorants were very common, usually sitting in long lines drying their wings on sand bars. Other birds of note included Alder Flycatcher, Bonaparte's Gulls and a single Black-headed Gull, a Common Loon, several Northern Harriers and "the usual suspects", among others.

We also took a trip to Entry Island, which is an hour's boat ride away from the southern end of the archipelago. We had beautiful weather for our journey and enjoyed a strenuous walk to the top of "La Big Hill" (yes, that is its actual name!). While there, we encountered a fox that, having spotted us on the hillside, curled up in the grass for a snooze - with one eye open, no doubt.

If you ever visit the islands, and you really should, do look down at the varied botanical gems and carpets of flowers. The botanical equivalent of the Savannah Sparrow is probably the glowing white flowers of sheets of bunchberry plants. For the entomologically inclined the options are not as diverse, but we found two of the more unusual species of Bumblebees (Tricoloured and Red-banded) and some Odonata species. We became intrigued by the often-seen Swallowtail butterflies, which we assumed were male Black Swallowtails but, on examining the photographs, it turned out that they were Short-tailed Swallowtails, which are very similar to the Black Swallowtails with, as the name suggests, short "tails" on the wings. To our eyes they seemed a bit deeper in colour than the Black Swallowtails we see here. Apparently the population on Cape Breton - not that far south across the sea - is known for its orange markings so that all fits. They mostly occur in coastal regions where lovage grows near the seashore and are restricted entirely to this eastern end of the Gulf of St-Lawrence. Mammals were scarce; there are ten species on the islands of which, as we learned from one of our guides, five are mice!

I offered to write this article and share our adventure when it was mentioned to me by one of the Song Sparrow editors that "Our readers enjoy a good birdy travelogue." Hopefully you will be inspired by this one the next time you get the urge to wander!



Winter water birds

Les oiseaux aquatiques en hiver



Ring-necked Duck
Photo: Tom Long



Iceland Gull / Goéland arctique
Photo: Wayne Grubert



Common Goldeneye
Photo: Tom Long



Barrow's Goldeneye
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Hooded Merganser
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Citizen Science

by: Richard Gregson

Citizen Science Tips

For this month's column, Richard offers us some tips on how to make your citizen science more enjoyable and fruitful, taken from his book "1001-Species".

Keep Notes

Carrying a notebook when outside is a good habit to get into. Simple notes about interesting things you have seen and identified, a few sketches if you can manage them, will be a very useful aide memoire in the future.

Take Photographs

If you are wanting to illustrate a book or a blog then you need some expertise or experience but for most naturalists, most of the time, it's just nice to have record shots of birds (and flowers and trees and insects) that have caught your eye. All the more so if you cannot identify them in the field because you then have a visual record to work on when you return home and can make use of your field guides and the internet.

Contribute to Data Collection

If we are to halt the decline in habitat and biodiversity at all then the scientists need to have the best data available about what is living around us, when it comes and goes and how it is thriving - or not. There are quite a few citizen science projects you can report your observations to. I strongly urge you to consider the following three:

- **iNaturalist**

This online community app is perhaps the easiest to use and also gives you assistance with tricky identifications. It is also universal in its species range and not restricted to birds or butterflies or plants. Find out more at <https://www.inaturalist.org>

- **eBird**

If you are reasonably confident of your ability to identify birds then do open an account with eBird. eBird is among the world's largest biodiversity-related science projects, with more than 100 million bird sightings contributed annually by eBirders around the world. Find out more at the Quebec portal for eBird at <https://ebird.org/qc/home>

- **Feederwatch**

Another bird-related citizen science project which runs for six months each winter and during which you are asked to report the birds you see in your garden. Sit in the warm by the window with a cup of tea and note down what visits. Find the project here: <https://feederwatch.org/about/project-overview/>

When it comes to data collection, there really is something for everyone. Take a look at this list of citizen science projects and monitoring programs organized by Birds Canada: <https://www.birdscanada.org/you-can-help/citizen-science> and, if you are also interested in things not bird-specific as well, visit <https://citizenscienceforeveryone.wordpress.com/nationwide-projects/>

Birding Basics



Birding Getaway Ideas

Never mind the castles in Spain, the nightlife of Paris or the beaches of Thailand, you want to see birds on your next vacation you say? Well, perhaps you've noticed that the bird on our cover this month is not one of the usual Quebec birds we normally like to feature and that, instead, we chose the Fuerteventura Stonechat. This endemic species is found only on its namesake island and features in this issue's travel article about the Canary Islands.

With this in mind, we thought we'd give you some ideas of travel destinations with a high number of endemic birds to inspire you as you think about where you may travel next. Following is a list of 12 popular travel destinations and how they fare when it comes to the number of endemic bird species found there. All data is sourced from [Avibase - The World Bird Database](#), which, if you aren't familiar with it, is a fun website to explore.

If you do happen to choose one of these destinations, please let us know so that we can share your experience in a future edition of the Song Sparrow!

Birds by the Numbers

- # 1. **Indonesia** - endemics 479 - total 1,808
- # 2. **Australia** - endemics 357 - total 971
- # 3. **Brazil** - endemics 236 - total 1,893
- # 4. **Philippines** - endemics 228 - total 739
- # 5. **Peru** - endemics 121 - total 1,903
- # 6. **Mexico** - endemics 114 - total 1,136
- # 7. **Madagascar** - endemics 108 - total 310
- # 8. **Colombia** - endemics 84 - total 1,996
- # 9. **New Zealand** - endemics 84 - total 393
- # 10. **India** - endemics 82 - total 1,364
- # 11. **Ecuador** - endemics 37 - total 1,714
- # 12. **Fiji** - endemics 31 - total 179



What is meant by "endemic"? Endemic species only exist in one geographical area. They are more common in isolated environments, such as islands, due to the unique conditions and barriers to immigration. As a result of long-term geographic isolation, it is more likely that distinct and unique species will evolve in these isolated areas.

LES B.A.-BA DE L'OBSERVATION



Idées d'escapades ornithologiques

Peu importe les châteaux d'Espagne, la vie nocturne de Paris ou les plages de Thaïlande, vous voulez voir des oiseaux lors de vos prochaines vacances, dites-vous ? Eh bien, vous avez peut-être remarqué que l'oiseau qui figure sur notre couverture ce mois-ci n'est pas l'un des oiseaux québécois que nous aimons habituellement présenter et que, à la place, nous avons choisi le Tarier des Canaries (Fuerteventura). Cette espèce endémique ne se trouve que sur son île éponyme et fait l'objet de l'article de voyage de ce numéro sur les îles Canaries.

Dans cet esprit, nous avons pensé vous proposer des destinations touristiques comptant un grand nombre d'oiseaux endémiques, afin de vous inspirer dans vos réflexions sur votre prochain voyage. Voici une liste de 12 destinations de voyage populaires et leur classement en fonction du nombre d'espèces d'oiseaux endémiques qu'elles abritent. Toutes les données proviennent d'[Avibase - la base de données mondiale des oiseaux](#), un site web amusant à explorer. Si vous choisissez l'une de ces destinations, faites-le nous savoir afin que nous puissions partager votre expérience dans une prochaine édition de « The Song Sparrow » !

Les oiseaux en chiffres

- # 1. **Indonesia** - endémiques 479 - total 1,808
- # 2. **Australia** - endémiques 357 - total 971
- # 3. **Brazil** - endémiques 236 - total 1,893
- # 4. **Philippines** - endémiques 228 - total 739
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- #11. **Ecuador** - endémiques 37 - total 1,714
- #12. **Fiji** - endémiques 31 - total 179



Que signifie le terme "endémique" ? Les espèces endémiques n'existent que dans une seule zone géographique. Elles sont plus habituelles dans les environnements isolés, comme les îles, en raison des conditions uniques et des obstacles à l'immigration. En raison de l'isolement géographique à long terme, il est plus probable que des espèces distinctes et uniques évoluent dans ces zones isolées.



Exploring Early Canadian Ornithology

with Jeff Harrison

Harriet Campbell Sheppard

After the departure from Quebec of Thomas Davies in 1790, the most important ornithologist working in the province was Harriet Sheppard who, with her husband William, was among the early contributors to documenting Quebec's natural history.

William and Harriet were both children of immigrants. William Jr (1786-1867) came to Montreal in 1792 from Scotland with his parents William Sheppard Sr and Sarah Maxfield. Harriet Campbell (1786-1858) was the daughter of Archibald Campbell and Charlotte Saxton, Americans who emigrated first to Nova Scotia and moved on to Quebec in 1790. Both sets of parents acquired considerable wealth as merchants in the square timber trade, which thrived during the Napoleonic Wars. The Campbell family was particularly prosperous. A younger brother, Archibald Jr (1790-1862), became a prominent Quebec lawyer who purchased the seigneurie at Bic on the lower St-Lawrence. Harriet's sister Louisa Sophia married into the seigneurie in Le Bas-Richelieu owned by Johnathan Wurtele. Throughout the 19th century the Sheppard and Wurtele families were closely associated with the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (LHSQ).

In 1809 William, who had entered his father's business, married Harriet and settled in Quebec. In 1815, William entered into a partnership in the merchant shipping business with Harriet's brother John. The following year the Sheppards purchased a 100-acre property at Sillery. Originally known as *Samos*, the Sheppards renamed it *Woodfield* and proceeded to transform their house and the property.

Both were interested in natural history. According to historian Pierre Savard they installed "a library of 3,000 volumes, a picture gallery, a small natural history museum ... aviaries and greenhouses; and took up gardening ...". They were also major contributors to the founding of the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec (LHSQ) in 1824. William served as President on four occasions between 1833 and 1847, and published four articles on botany in the LHSQ Transactions, while Harriet wrote on shells and birds.

Harriet Sheppard was also interested in botany and was fortunate in her neighbour Anne Mary Perceval who, with her husband Michael, had purchased the adjoining property, *Spencer Wood*, in 1815. Anne Mary was daughter of Sir Charles Flower, the Lord Mayor of London, and through her family connections knew the botanist William Jackson Hooker at Kew Gardens. She also knew Dr. John Torrey, a founder of the New York Lyceum of Natural History. With mutual interests in botany and natural history, Harriet and Anne Mary became firm friends, and both contributed specimens and identifications to Hooker's *Flora boreali-americana* (1840).[1]

In 1828, Henry Perceval died and Anne Mary returned to England, but the Sheppards were again fortunate in their new neighbour. Spencer Wood was purchased by Henry Atkinson, a timber baron with a passionate interest in horticulture.

[1] Christian Ramsay, Lady Dalhousie, and Harriet Sheppard, Anne Mary Perceval and Mary Brenton are the subject of an article "Collecting with 'botanical friends': Four Women in Colonial Quebec and Newfoundland" by Ann Shteir and Jacques Cayouette, which appeared in *Scientia Canadensis* 41 (2019).

Harriet Sheppard's Contributions to Canadian Ornithology

The Sheppards' interests also extended to birds. There are records of their donations of bird skins and mounted specimens to the LHSQ museum in the early 1830s. In the early 1840s a young James MacPherson LeMoine (1825-1915) became acquainted with the Atkinson and Sheppard families, and was fortunate to meet Audubon at the Atkinson residence during the latter's visit to Quebec in 1842. (LeMoine eventually married Atkinson's niece Mary, in 1860.)

LeMoine, in his *Ornithologie du Canada* (1861: 38) described the Sheppard aviary. He noted the following North American birds: Horned Lark, Eastern Bluebird, Wood Thrush, Cedar Waxwing, Purple Finch, American Goldfinch, White-crowned Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Bobolink, Baltimore Oriole and Red-winged Blackbird. While LeMoine's list was likely incomplete, it is evident that the Sheppards selected their birds both for their beauty and the quality of their song.

Harriet wrote on her observations of birds. According to Mary Creese in her book *Ladies in the Laboratory III*, she contributed to an article by James Rennie in the Magazine of Natural History Vol 1 (1829), "Sketches of Twenty-four North American Songbirds". Rennie, a Scottish naturalist, appears to have relied for his material mostly on the writings of Scottish-born American ornithologist Alexander Wilson (American Ornithology, 1808-1813). Harriet Sheppard's name is not listed as a contributor and the article has no specific mention of Canadian birds. Creese notes, however, that eight of the 24 birds Rennie discussed were known to be either in the Sheppards' aviary or included in Harriet's presentation to the LHSQ in 1833, later published in LHSQ Transactions ("Notes on some of the Canadian songbirds" - Transactions 3, 1837).

In "Notes" Harriet made reference to Rennie's article and mentioned she was offering in her article "a few additional examples of singing birds not mentioned as such by Wilson". She discussed in some detail the songs of four Canadian birds: Fox Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow, Purple Finch and Hermit Thrush. There is also a passing reference to six additional birds: Pine Grosbeak, Common Redpoll, Red and White-winged Crossbill, Wood Thrush and Black-capped Chickadee.

Her comments on the song of the Hermit Thrush, largely unknown to Alexander Wilson, are worth reading:

"The Hermit Thrush, (Turdus minor. Gm.) although perhaps inferior to the Wood Thrush, is a cheerful and melodious songster, not uncommon here. He will sing through part of June, July and August, with much sweetness and some variety. Part of the song resembles the higher notes of a distant violin, at times only just audible, then a few notes may be distinctly heard more full and mellow, as if proceeding from some sweet wind instrument; his strains "Now louder and yet louder rise" and are continued for twenty or thirty minutes. — Sometimes, though rarely, the delighted listener is disappointed by the provoking little creature suddenly changing his dulcet notes for sounds very like the mewling of a kitten. Few birds excel this in elegance of motion, when tamed they become quite fascinating by their graceful movements; they will at times alight gently in a theatrical posture, and examine what may be going on with a scrutinizing and most intelligent eye."



Hermit Thrush: Plate 58
John James Audubon Birds of America

Harriet Sheppard was unusual in her early interest in bird song, a notoriously difficult thing to describe in print as later ornithologists have noted. In a review in 1935 in *The Canadian Field-naturalist*, Percy Taverner described the innovative approach pioneered by the American ornithologist, Aretas Saunders, in a review of *A Guide to Bird Songs* (1935):

"Mr. Saunders has abandoned these traditional methods of song recording and developed a system that seems to render bird songs in a manner more exact and satisfactory than any that has heretofore been current.

He represents the sound by a line, broken or connected as the occasion calls for. Length indicates length of time; weight the intensity or loudness; and relative position, up or down the pitch."

More recently the poet John Bevis wrote "A Complete History of Collecting and Imitating Birdsong", available online at the MIT Reader. (You can also borrow his entire book - *Aaaaw to zzzzd: The Words of Birds* - from the Internet Archive.)

Harriet's early comments on the song of the Hermit Thrush are also discussed in a wider historical context by Emily Doolittle in an article entitled "Scarce inferior to the Nightingale" in *Ecomusicology Review* 8 (2020-2021).

The Sheppards' *Woodfield* was destroyed in a fire in 1842 with great loss of the collections. They rebuilt the house but were forced to sell it when the timber business collapsed in 1847. The Sheppards moved to the Drummondville area where Harriet died in 1858. William died in 1867. There remain today at Sillery the original stables and traces of the garden that Harriet and her husband planted.

To my knowledge Harriet Sheppard is the first Canadian to publish details on Canadian bird songs. In a field at the time almost entirely dominated by men, she made a considerable contribution to Canadian natural history. Until recently virtually unknown, she is now recognized as a pioneering Canadian ornithologist, and merits a place among the better known early Canadian women naturalists like Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill.

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