

Issue 65-3  
March 2023

**Spring Migration  
Issue**



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
Vice-Presidents	Sheldon Harvey Ana Morales Kristen Lalla
Treasurer	Sheldon Harvey
Membership Secretary	Darlene Harvey
Lectures Coordinator	Jeff Harrison
Song Sparrow Editors	Connie Morgenstern Darlene Harvey

### Contact us:

[birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com](mailto:birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com)

Box 67089 - Lemoyne  
Saint-Lambert, QC J4R 2T8  
Tel.: 514-637-2141  
[www.birdprotectionquebec.org](http://www.birdprotectionquebec.org)

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

# In this Issue



## Features

26	30	34 & 37	42
Migration 104	The Thrill of the Count	Alec Lucas Sanctuary/Sanctuaire	Nocturnal Owl Monitoring



23  
2023/24  
GRANT RECIPIENTS  
24  
2023/24  
BÉNÉFICIAIRES DE SUBVENTIONS

04	A Word from the Editors
05	A Message from the President/ Message du président
06	Announcements / Annonces
08	Membership / Nos membres
10	Field Observations
13	Upcoming Field Trips / Excursions
16	Bird Views / Parlons d'oiseaux
20	Education & Monthly Lecture Series
21	Cheep Sheets
40	Citizen Science
44	Birding Basics
45	Les B.A.-BA de l'observation
46	Early Canadian Ornithology
49	BPQ Archives

## ON THE COVER

Brown-headed Cowbird  
*Photo: Suzanne Labbé*

# A Word FROM THE EDITORS

In this issue, we celebrate the wonders of spring migration. It would have been far too convenient, when contemplating how to start this message, to use something along the lines of the old “we can’t believe spring is upon us which means the proverbial spring migrants will soon abound” type cliché. So, to avoid this and come up with something a bit more creative, we looked to the articles in this issue for some quick inspiration. Well, to our surprise, the result wasn’t far off from the cliché - we really can’t believe spring migration is actually upon us! But not in the “time flies” kind of way; Wayne Grubert’s article on page 26 reveals the absolute marvel of the bird brain and how its built-in navigation aids allow migration to happen. It truly is a remarkable and fascinating topic. We hope you enjoy Wayne’s take on the subject and his usual entertaining writing style in *Migration 104* as much as we did.

Of course there's lots more to explore in the pages ahead! Our feature articles all focus on the joys of spring birding. Alison Hackney takes us along on a tour of the McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) property as seen through the eyes of the census taker, while Darlene writes about the April Nocturnal Owl Monitoring citizen science program. Our usual columnists are back and are joined by new columnist Zofia Laubitz. Zofia's column will provide recaps of BPQ monthly lectures. If you missed any, and even if you didn't, don't skip the new *Cheep Sheets* (we love our puns!) column, where she provides a comprehensive overview of past presentations.

This issue, we also begin a column that will appear occasionally and acquaint you with a different BPQ sanctuary each time. Our thanks go to Jules Delisle for this issue's *Eye on the Lucas Sanctuary*.

Wishing you a happy spring birding season, and hoping to see you in the field!

*Connie & Darlene*



# A Message from THE PRESIDENT

# Message DU PRÉSIDENT

It's hard to imagine spring is just around the corner when, as you look around, all you see is snow. The winter was long and snowy, but at least we escaped those long periods of cold.

Spring is one of the most exciting times of the year. From now on, every day you go out you might find a new species that has just arrived. I'm sure some of you have already spotted your first Turkey Vulture flying overhead, or maybe a Song Sparrow singing at the local park. Very soon these will be joined by an Eastern Phoebe or a Brown Thrasher atop a shrubby bush.

The next few weeks are prime time for us birders to enjoy the great outdoors and search for migrating birds. Spring is a beautiful season in itself, but birds always take it to the next level with their stunning breeding plumage. I very clearly remember seeing a male Blackburnian Warbler for the first time and asking myself "Wow, is this really a bird from here or has it gotten lost, maybe from South America?" Little did I know at the time that it more than likely did overwinter in South America! And while you're out enjoying migration, why not upload your observations to eBird to contribute to research made on bird populations? If you aren't familiar with eBird, be sure to read Richard Gregson's column this issue to learn how to take part.

For me, the next few weeks will be my last as president of Bird Protection Quebec. I informed the board of directors at the beginning of 2023 that I will be stepping down at the AGM in May from my position, as well as from the board, to concentrate on my family and my business. During the last three years, we have accomplished a lot. I'm proud of where the organization stands today and I have confidence that the people currently on the board will continue the work.

To close, I want to thank all the fellow board members that I've worked with during my seven years on the board and, last but certainly not least, all of you for being members of Bird Protection Quebec. All of this wouldn't be possible without you. Long live BPQ!

*Simon Duval*

Il est difficile d'imaginer que le printemps est à nos portes quand, en regardant autour de soi, on ne voit que de la neige. L'hiver a été long et neigeux, mais au moins nous avons échappé à ces longues périodes de froid. Le printemps est l'une des périodes les plus excitantes de l'année. Désormais, chaque jour où vous sortez à l'extérieur, vous pouvez trouver une nouvelle espèce qui vient d'arriver. Je suis sûr que certains d'entre vous ont déjà vu leur premier Urubu à tête rouge voler au-dessus de leur tête, ou peut-être un Bruant Chanteur dans le parc de votre quartier. Très bientôt, ils seront rejoints par un Moucherolle phébi ou un Moqueur roux au sommet d'un buisson.

Les semaines à venir sont pour nous, ornithologues, le temps de prendre l'air et de rechercher des oiseaux migrateurs. Le printemps est une saison magnifique en soi, mais les oiseaux la rehaussent toujours d'un cran avec leur superbe plumage nuptial. Je me souviens très bien de ma première rencontre avec un mâle Paruline à gorge orangée et de m'être demandé: "wow, est-ce vraiment un oiseau d'ici ou s'est-il perdu, peut-être en provenance d'Amérique du Sud ?" J'étais loin de me douter à l'époque que oui, il avait plus que probablement passé l'hiver en Amérique du Sud! Et pendant que vous profitez de la migration, pourquoi ne pas télécharger vos observations sur eBird pour contribuer à la recherche sur les populations d'oiseaux ? Si vous ne connaissez pas eBird, lisez la chronique de Richard Gregson dans ce numéro pour savoir comment y participer.

Pour ma part, les prochaines semaines seront mes dernières à titre de président de Protection des oiseaux du Québec. J'ai informé le conseil d'administration au début de l'année 2023 que je quitterai mon poste, ainsi que le conseil d'administration, lors de l'AGA de mai, afin de me concentrer sur ma famille et mon entreprise. Au cours des trois dernières années, nous avons accompli beaucoup de choses. Je suis fier de la situation actuelle de l'organisation et j'ai confiance dans les membres du conseil d'administration pour poursuivre le travail.

En terminant, je tiens à remercier tous les membres du conseil d'administration avec lesquels j'ai travaillé au cours de mes sept années au sein du conseil et un merci particulier à vous tous qui êtes membres de Protection des oiseaux du Québec. Tout cela ne serait pas possible sans vous. Longue vie à POQ!

*Simon Duval*

Save the date!  
À vos agendas !

## **Notice of Annual General Meeting Monday, May 29 at 7:00 p.m.**

This year, we are holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM) via videoconference on Monday, May 29, at 7:00 p.m. and hope you will join us. We encourage as many of you as possible to attend as there are several items that must be approved by a vote by the membership.

The agenda for the AGM will include annual reports by the president and treasurer and the election of directors to the board. A mandatory RSVP is required. Details on how to register will be made available closer to the date.

## **Avis - l'Assemblée Générale Annuelle lundi 29 mai à 19h00**

Cette année, nous tenons notre assemblée générale annuelle (AGA) par vidéoconférence le lundi 29 mai, à 19 h. Nous espérons que vous vous joindrez à nous. Nous aimerions vous voir aussi nombreux que possible, car plusieurs points doivent être approuvés par un vote des membres.

L'ordre du jour de l'AGA comprendra les rapports annuels du président et du trésorier et l'élection des administrateurs au conseil d'administration. L'inscription est obligatoire. Les détails sur la façon de s'inscrire seront disponibles à l'approche de la date.

# Call for Candidates for the BPQ Board of Directors

Each year at this time the BPQ Elections and Nominations Committee puts forth a call for nominations to the Bird Protection Quebec Board of Directors.

BPQ directors must be members in good standing and at least 18 years of age. They are elected by the members for two-year terms, after which they are eligible for re-election. They can serve for a maximum of ten consecutive years and then must leave the board for at least one year.

Our board is very "hands on", and so we are always looking for skills and experience in many different areas:

#### General administration

Finance, accounting, bookkeeping (ideally familiar with Sage software)

Social media platforms, website management

Legal

Education

Conservation

Publicity/Outreach

Equity/Diversity/Inclusion experience or interest

If you would like to nominate someone to the board or stand for election yourself, you must submit your nomination to the Elections and Nominations Committee. In addition to the nominee, each nomination must be supported by a proposer and a seconder who are BPQ members in good standing, and must be received before **April 17, 2023**. No nominations can be accepted beyond this date.

The election for new directors and those seeking re-election will be held at the Annual General Meeting on Monday, May 29, 2023. For a nomination form, or for any questions regarding the process, please contact Sheldon Harvey, Elections and Nominations Committee, at: [bpqfinance@gmail.com](mailto:bpqfinance@gmail.com).

# Appel de candidatures pour le conseil d'administration de POQ

Chaque année à cette époque, le comité des élections et des nominations de POQ lance un appel de candidatures pour le conseil d'administration de Protection des oiseaux Québec.

Les membres du conseil doivent être des membres de POQ en règle et être âgés d'au moins 18 ans. Ils sont élus par les membres pour un mandat de deux ans, après quoi ils sont rééligibles. Ils peuvent siéger pendant un maximum de dix années consécutives et doivent ensuite quitter le conseil pendant au moins un an.

Notre conseil d'administration est très actif et nous sommes donc toujours à la recherche de compétences et d'expérience dans de nombreux domaines :

#### Administration

Finances, comptabilité, tenue de livres (idéalement en utilisant le logiciel Sage)

Plateformes de médias sociaux, gestion de sites web

Juridique

Éducation

Conservation

Publicité

Expérience ou intérêt au sujet de l'Équité, la diversité et l'inclusion

Si vous souhaitez proposer un candidat au conseil d'administration ou vous porter vous-même candidat, vous devez soumettre votre candidature au comité des élections et des nominations. En plus du candidat, chaque candidature doit être appuyée par un proposant et un appuieur, qui sont des membres en règle de POQ, et être reçue avant **le 17 avril 2023**. Aucune candidature ne pourra être acceptée après cette date.

L'élection des nouveaux membres du conseil et des candidats à la réélection aura lieu lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle du lundi 29 mai 2023. Pour obtenir un formulaire de candidature, ou pour toute question concernant le processus, veuillez envoyer un courriel à Sheldon Harvey, Comité des élections et des candidatures, à [bpqfinance@gmail.com](mailto:bpqfinance@gmail.com).

Focus on

# OUR MEMBERS



## A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

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

*Donna Brown, Paulette Sauvé and Claude Laurin, Virginia Rasch, Stephane Desilets, Lorelei Muller and Linus Tucker, Malcolm McRae, Jean Côté, Aline Grenier and Louise Chenard, Paule Harmegnies, and Josué Machado and Stacey Gould.*

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.

## LEGACY GIFTING

As a charitable non-profit organization, BPQ relies on its members and supporters, through regular renewal fees and donations, to sustain its conservation work.

You may not be aware, though, that our largest support has come in the form of legacy donations - both money and land left to BPQ by incredible bird lovers and supporters, in their Wills. Most notably, Alfred Kelly left a sizeable portion of his estate to BPQ in the 1980s. The income generated by this generous legacy enabled us to expand, and is still the major source of income to support our conservation, grants and education programs. Our most recent bequest was made by Dr. Alec Lucas of a large and important parcel of undeveloped land in western Quebec that will be protected as one of our nature sanctuaries.

A legacy is more than a gift; it's a way to express your support for the things that matter most to you, and to continue your support into the future.

## BIENVENUE AUX NOUVEAUX MEMBRES

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

*Donna Brown, Paulette Sauvé et Claude Laurin, Virginia Rasch, Stephane Desilets, Lorelei Muller et Linus Tucker, Malcolm McRae, Jean Côté, Aline Grenier et Louise Chenard, Paule Harmegnies, et Josué Machado et Stacey Gould.*

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.

## DON PLANIFIÉ

En tant qu'organisme de bienfaisance sans but lucratif, POQ compte sur ses membres et ses sympathisants, par le biais de cotisations régulières et de dons, pour soutenir son travail de conservation.

Cependant, vous ne savez peut-être pas que notre soutien le plus important a pris la forme de dons en héritage - à la fois de l'argent et des terres laissés à POQ par d'incroyables amoureux des oiseaux et des supporters, dans leur testament. Alfred Kelly a notamment légué une partie importante de son patrimoine à POQ. Les revenus générés par ce généreux legs nous ont permis de développer, et continuent de soutenir, nos programmes de conservation, de subventions et d'éducation. Notre legs le plus récent est le don par le Dr Alec Lucas d'une grande parcelle de terre dans l'ouest du Québec, qui sera protégée comme l'un de nos sanctuaires naturels.

Un héritage est plus qu'un don ; c'est une façon d'exprimer votre soutien pour les choses qui vous importent le plus, et de poursuivre votre soutien à l'avenir.

## BPQ volunteers at work

On February 19, our project coordinator, Jules Delisle, visited BPQ's Alec Lucas Sanctuary in the Outaouais to install cameras and audio recorders on the property, with the help of enthusiastic volunteers Daniel Néron and Jane Cormack, as well as Brandon Rice, project support technician from the Kahnawà:ke Environmental Protection Office (KEPO).

We are grateful for this collaboration with KEPO, which has allowed us to select the best locations to capture mammal activity on this 187 hectare area. The audio recorders, kindly lent to us by the Canadian Wildlife Service, will help detect the presence of animals that vocalize at night during the next few months, such as Eastern Wolf and Northern Saw-Whet Owl.

## Bénévoles sur le terrain

Le 19 février dernier avait lieu une visite de la coordonnatrice de projets de POQ, Jules Delisle, à notre Sanctuaire Alec Lucas en Outaouais pour installer des caméras et des enregistreurs audio sur la propriété, avec l'aide des bénévoles enthousiastes Daniel Néron et Jane Cormack, ainsi que de Brandon Rice, technicien de soutien aux projets du Bureau de la protection de l'environnement de Kahnawà:ke (KEPO).

Nous sommes reconnaissant.es de cette collaboration avec le KEPO qui nous a permis de choisir les meilleurs emplacements pour capter l'activité des mammifères sur ce territoire de 187 hectares. Les enregistreurs audio, gracieusement prêtés par le Service canadien de la faune, nous aideront à détecter la présence d'animaux vocalisant la nuit durant les prochains mois, comme le Loup de l'Est et la Petite Nyctale.

*Photos : Jules Delisle / BPQ*



To learn more about the Lucas Sanctuary, see the story on page 34.

Pour en savoir plus sur le sanctuaire Lucas, voir l'article à la page 37.

## 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](mailto: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](mailto:protectionoiseauxquebec@gmail.com).

# Focus on FIELD OBSERVATIONS



## Past field trips

The winter season started with what many participants described as the most pleasant, weather-wise, of any of our trips to the Montreal Botanical Gardens in recent memory, though the species count was low. There were some nice finds at many of our other favourite winter spots, including a couple of early Red-winged Blackbirds on the January 28 trip. We, like you, are now looking ahead to spring migration! - *BPQ Field Trip Committee*

### 04/01/23 – Montreal Botanical Gardens

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Cold, -6 C

Number of Participants: 27; Number of Species: 15

Birds of Note: Common Redpoll, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-throated Sparrow

eBird Checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S126122433>

### 21/01/23 - Parc-nature du Bois-de-Liesse, Saint-Laurent

Guide: Wayne Grubert

Weather: warmer than anticipated, -4 C.

Number of Participants: 15 birders; Number of species: 16

Birds of Note: European Starling, American Robin, Mallard, Am. Black Duck, Brown Creeper

eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S127767509>

### 28/01/23 – Higgins and Martin Streets, Chateauguay & Recre-o-Parc and Parc Optimiste, Ste-Catherine

Guide: Tom Long

Weather: Overcast, with major snow squall in Ste-Catherine

Number of Participants: 9 birders; Number of species: 32

Birds of Note: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Cooper's Hawk, Red-winged Blackbird, Northern Flicker, Bald Eagle, Gadwall, Wood Duck, American Wigeon, Hooded Merganser

eBird trip report:

<https://ebird.org/canada/tripreport/104256>

### 05/02/23 – Technoparc, Saint-Laurent, Montreal

Guide: Katherine Collin

Weather: -15 to -11 C, light winds & overcast

Number of Participants: 19 birders; Number of species: 21

Birds of Note: Wild Turkey, Red-tailed Hawk, Great-horned Owl, Northern Flicker, Common Redpoll, Song Sparrow.

eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S127767376>



Great Horned Owl - Technoparc

Photo: Tom Long

## 11/02/23 – South Shore Driving Trip – Varennes, Boucherville, St-Bruno, St-Hubert

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Sunny & mild with light winds

Number of Participants: 16 birders; Number of Species: 22

Birds of Note: Red-tailed Hawk, Rough-legged Hawk, Bald Eagle, Snowy Owl, Common Raven, Bohemian Waxwing, Evening Grosbeak, Snow Bunting, American Tree Sparrow

eBird trip report: <https://ebird.org/canada/tripreport/113858>

## 17/02/23 to 20/02/23 -The Great Backyard Bird Count

Birders were encouraged to participate in the Birds Canada/Cornell/Audubon GBBC and share their eBird lists to BPQ's eBird account. Their reports were then compiled to create a snapshot of our own local GBBC. Most reports were from the Montreal region, but there was also one from Gatineau and another from the Hamilton-Niagara region.

Weather: The four-day period saw a variety of weather; rain, freezing rain, ice pellets and snow as well as some beautiful but cold sunny conditions and everything in between.

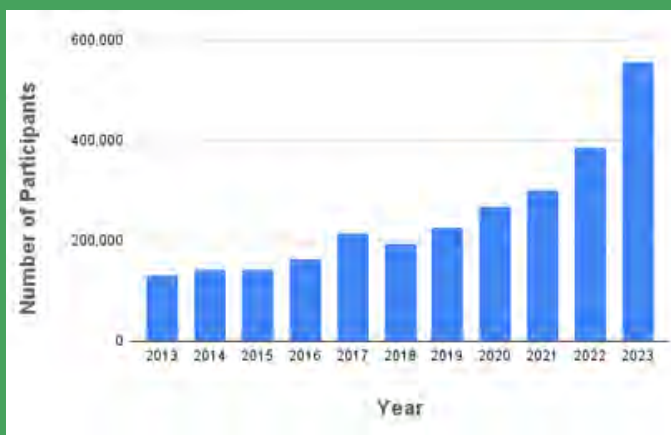
Number of Participants: 24  
Checklists submitted: 75  
Total combined species reported: 63

Birds of Note: Tundra Swan, Mute Swan, Ring-necked Duck, Surf Scoter, White-winged Scoter, Long-tailed Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye, Ring-billed Gull, Iceland Gull, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Great-horned Owl, Boreal Owl, Merlin, Horned Lark, Carolina Wren, Pine Siskin.

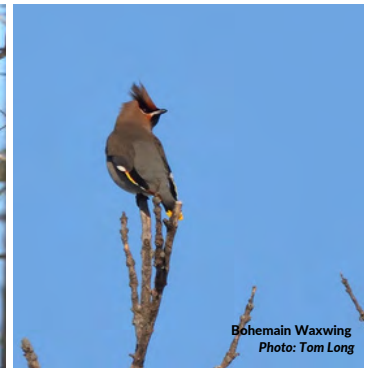
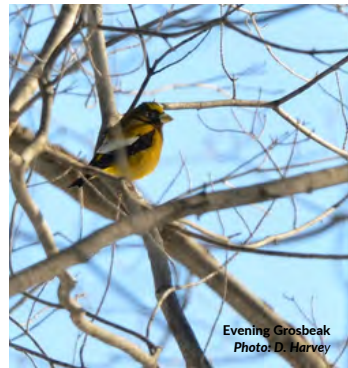
## From birdcount.org

### 2023 Great Backyard Bird Count Final Results In a snapshot

7,538 species of birds identified  
202 participating countries  
390,652 eBird checklists  
372,905 Merlin Bird IDs  
151,479 photos, videos, and sound recordings submitted  
555,291 estimated global participants



Graph shows the increase in participants year over year



## 25/02/23 – Ile-Ste-Helen/Ile-Notre-Dame/Ile-des-Soeurs Guide Fred Hareau

Weather: Cold, with a winter weather alert

Number of Participants: 4 birders; Number of Species: 35

Birds of Note: Common Goldeneye, Iceland Gull, Cooper's Hawk, Bald Eagle, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren, Red-winged Blackbird

eBird checklist: <https://eBird.org/qc/tripreport/110309>

## 04/03/23 – Hudson

Guide: Wayne Grubert

Weather: Thick, heavy snow, 20 cm. plus

Number of Participants: 2; Number of Species: 4

Birds of Note: American Crow, European Starlings, White-breasted Nuthatch, Black-capped Chickadee

Note: To be fair to our intrepid birders, blinding snow forced them to call it quits after 20 minutes so a species count twice the number of birders was pretty impressive!

## 11/03/23 - Mount Royal Cemetery/Mount Royal Park

Guide: George Levtchouk

Weather: Sunny, mild

Number of Participants: 26 birders; Number of Species: 14

Birds of Note: Red-bellied Woodpecker, Pine Siskin

eBird checklists: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S130886585>

<https://ebird.org/checklist/S130886584>

## 18/03/23 - Parc de la Frayère, Boucherville

Guide: Sheldon Harvey

Weather: Sunny, 2 C but cold at the water

Number of Participants: 14 birders; Number of Species: 18

Birds of Note: Short-eared Owl, Bald Eagle, Common Merganser, Common Goldeneye

eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S131176691>

## 25/03/23 - Parc Historique Pointe-du-Moulin

Guide: Ron Rind

Weather: -3 C, windy with variable clouds

Number of Participants: 33 birders; Number of Species: 31

Birds of Note: Eastern Screech Owl (lifer for several participants), Double-crested Cormorant

eBird checklist: <https://ebird.org/checklist/S131769651>

**Welcome to Spring!**

**Bonjour le printemps !**



*Photo: Suzanne Labbé*





# Upcoming Field Trips

As the winter season loosens its grip and the exciting spring season begins, we have planned a complete slate of our regular weekend field trips for you, right up to the end of May, and, as we usually do, added some bonus trips to take full advantage of peak migration! Unusual dates and/or times are in red. The list is long, so here you will find the dates and destinations so you can make sure to block them off in your calendar. Complete details with driving instructions will be communicated before each week's events through our eNews bulletin, the BPQ Facebook pages and the iO Song Sparrow email group.

Alors que la saison hivernale se termine et que la saison printanière commence, nous avons planifié pour vous une série complète de nos sorties de week-end habituelles, jusqu'à la fin du mois de mai, et, comme nous le faisons habituellement, quelques sorties supplémentaires pour profiter pleinement du pic de migration ! Les dates et/ou horaires inhabituels sont en rouge. La liste est longue, vous trouverez donc ici les dates et les destinations afin que vous puissiez les bloquer dans votre calendrier. Les détails complets et les instructions de conduite seront communiqués avant les événements de chaque semaine par le biais de notre bulletin électronique « eNews », la page Facebook du POQ, et la groupe de liste électronique iO « Song Sparrow » .

---

## **Saturday April 1 / samedi 1er avril**

08h00 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied  
Guide: Diane Demers

## **PARC DES RAPIDES, LASALLE & VERDUN WATERFRONT**

## **Saturday April 8 / samedi 8 avril**

08h00 - half day driving trip / demi-journée, en voiture  
Guides: Wayne Grubert, Sheldon Harvey

## **BEAUHARNOIS AND VALLEYFIELD AREA**

## **Saturday April 15 / samedi 15 avril**

08h00 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied  
Guide: Émile Brisson-Curadeau

## **PARC-NATURE DU BOIS-DE-L'ÎLE-BIZARD,**

<https://montreal.ca/lieux/parc-nature-du-bois-de-lile-bizard>

## **Saturday April 22 / samedi 22 avril**

08h30 - half day / demi-journée  
Guides: Sheldon and Darlene Harvey

## **BAIE-DU-FEBVRE, QC**

<https://www.baie-du-febvre.net/la-migration-des-oies-blanches>

## **Tuesday April 25 / mardi 25 avril**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied  
Guide: Jeff Harrison

## **WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/ BOISÉ SOMMET**

## **Saturday April 29 / samedi 29 avril**

08h00 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied  
Guide: Michel Beaupré

## **PARC-NATURE DE LA POINTE-AUX-PRAIRIES**

<https://montreal.ca/en/places/parc-nature-de-la-pointe-aux-prairies>

*There is a special nature event taking place at the park the same day so plan on sticking around after the trip. BPQ will have an information kiosk set up, be sure to stop by! / Un événement spécial sur la nature aura lieu au parc au même temps, alors prévoyez de rester dans les parages après l'excursion. POQ sera sur place avec un kiosque d'information, alors n'hésitez pas à vous y arrêter !*

**Tuesday May 2 / mardi 2 mai**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Jeff Harrison

**Saturday May 6 / samedi 6 mai**

07h30 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied

Guide: Tom Long

**Tuesday May 9 / mardi 9 mai**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Jeff Harrison

**Wednesday, May 10 / mercredi 10 mai**

18h00 - walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Barbara McDuff

**Saturday May 13 / samedi 13 mai**

**World Migratory Bird Day Combination Event / Événement combiné de la Journée mondiale des oiseaux migrateurs**

The theme of this year's World Migratory Bird Day is *Water* and its importance for birds, and there are two events taking place. / Le thème de la Journée mondiale des oiseaux migrateurs de cette année est l'eau et son importance pour les oiseaux, et deux événements sont prévus.

07h00 to 10h00 - walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Wayne Grubert

*This trip will end early to allow time for participants to visit Le Nichoir's Festival of Birds and Nature, being held the same day at nearby Jack Layton Park. BPQ is participating in the Festival, both with an information kiosk on site and by guiding a couple of short bird walks in the immediate area. / Cette excursion se terminera tôt pour permettre aux participants de visiter le Festival des oiseaux et de la nature du Nichoir, qui se tiendra aussi le 13 mai au parc Jack Layton, situé à proximité. Le POQ participe au festival en tenant un kiosque d'information sur place et en organisant quelques courtes sorties ornithologiques dans les environs immédiats.*

**Tuesday May 16 / mardi 16 mai**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Jeff Harrison

**Saturday May 20 / samedi 20 mai**

08h00 - half day walking and driving trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied et en voiture

Guides: Sheldon Harvey, Wayne Grubert

**Monday May 22 / lundi 22 mai**

08h00 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied

Guides: Darlene and Sheldon Harvey

**Tuesday May 23/ mardi 23 mai**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied

Guide: Jeff Harrison

**WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/  
BOISÉ SOMMET**

**REFUGE FAUNIQUE MARGUERITE-D'YOUVILLE,  
ÎLE SAINT-BERNARD, CHATEAUGUAY**

<http://ilesaintbernard.com/en/ilerefuge/>

**WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/  
BOISÉ SOMMET**

**EVENING WALK IN HUDSON, QC  
Area around the old Finnegan's Market**

**HUDSON - FINNEGAN'S MARKET AND AREA/  
MARCHÉ FINNEGAN ET ENVIRONS**

**WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/  
BOISÉ SOMMET**

**DUNDEE (LA RÉSERVE NATIONALE DE FAUNE DU  
LAC SAINT-FRANÇOIS)**

<https://www.amisrnfacstfrancois.com/en/>

**MOUNT ROYAL CEMETERY - CIMETIÈRE  
MONT-ROYAL**

**WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/  
BOISÉ SOMMET**

### **Saturday May 27 / samedi 27 mai**

08h30 - half day walking trip / demi-journée, excursion à pied

Guide: Nick Acheson

**GEORGE H. MONTGOMERY BIRD SANCTUARY,  
PHILLIPSBURG**

### **Tuesday May 30 / mardi 30 mai (final one)**

07h00 - 09h00 walking trip / excursion à pied

Guides: Jeff Harrison

**WOOD WARBLER WALK, WESTMOUNT SUMMIT/  
BOISÉ SOMMET**

## **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 (i.e. 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.

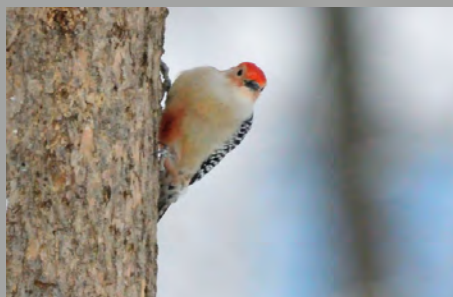


# Pierre Bannon's **BIRD VIEWS**

October - November 2022  
December - February 2023

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

Overall, the winter was very mild. Positive anomalies between 1.5 and 3.5 degrees Celsius were recorded between December and February. Sherbrooke observed the greatest deviation from normal during this period. The ice cover formed very late on the main streams, prompting several waterfowl to attempt to overwinter. Some species even wintered successfully for the first time and others lingered on new record dates. Probably the most interesting highlight of the period was the large number of Red-bellied Woodpeckers present throughout the province. Some have even reached regions as far north as Témiscamingue, Lac Saint-Jean, the North Shore and Gaspésie.



# PIERRE BANNON **PARLONS D'OISEAUX**

octobre - novembre 2022  
décembre - février 2023

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

Dans l'ensemble, l'hiver a été très doux. On a enregistré des anomalies positives entre 1,5 et 3,5 degrés Celsius entre décembre et février. Sherbrooke a observé le plus grand écart par rapport à la normale durant cette période. La couverture de glace s'est formée très tard sur les grands cours d'eau, ce qui a encouragé plusieurs oiseaux aquatiques à tenter d'hiverner. Certaines espèces ont même hiverné avec succès pour la première fois et d'autres se sont attardées à de nouvelles dates records. Probablement le fait saillant le plus marquant de la période fut sans doute le grand nombre de Pics à ventre roux présents un peu partout dans la province. Certains ont même atteint des régions aussi nordiques que le Témiscamingue, le lac Saint-Jean, la Côte nord et la Gaspésie.

## October - November 2022

**Tundra Bean-Goose:** one photographed at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 26-27 Nov was the fifth record for the province (Nathalie van acker et al.). **Pink-footed Goose:** now a regular spring and fall vagrant, single birds were seen in 7 different localities. **Barnacle Goose:** singles were recorded at Sainte-Martine 15-19 Oct (Camille Bélanger, Sylvie Huet), Saint-André-de-Kamouraska 17 Oct (Jean-François Giroux, Éveline Landa) and Île Perrot 26-27 Nov (Mathias and Sharon Mutzl). **Common Scoter:** the adult male seen and photographed at Île Siscoe (Val d'Or) 10-11 Oct represented the first record for Canada and the third only for North America (François Dubois et al., identified by Vincent Giroux).

**White-winged Dove:** one at Sainte-Sabine-de-Bellechasse 22-29 Nov + (Francois Chabot et al.). **Eastern Whip-poor-will:** one at Notre-Dame-du-Portage 20 Oct tied the latest date known for the province 6 years ago (Jean-Francois Giroux, Éveline Landa). **Purple Gallinule:** an exceptional number of records for this rare vagrant: a juv at Grande Rivière 3-16 Oct (Linda Pit Langlois), a female at Neuville 29 Oct (Paul Popovich), a juv at Matane 31 Oct (Nathalie Collin), and a juv at New-Richmond 2 Nov (Micheline Perron). **Marbled Godwit:** one at Petit Pabos 8 Oct (Andrée Gagnon et al.). **Purple Sandpiper:** singles at Coteau du Lac 21-25 Oct (Martine Parent, m.ob.) and at Carillon 6-10 Nov (Denis Corbeil) were rare for southwestern Québec. **Razorbill:** For the second consecutive year, a sizable displacement of birds was noted upriver in Oct; birds were reported at about 15 places between Montréal and Trois-Rivières with a maximum of 5 at Sainte-Catherine 18 Oct (Josée Gagnon, Alain Sylvain). Further east, near Québec City, up to 30 birds were tallied at Sainte-Pétronille 18 Oct (Alexandre Lajeunesse). **Atlantic Puffin:** also seen in unusual number in the estuary, eg 55 at Pointe-au-Père 16 Sep (Alex Plamondon) and 41 off Tadoussac 7 Oct (Jessé Roy-Drainville). One even reached Montreal and Laval 22-25 Oct (Marc-André Bouvier-Pelletier, Danielle Michaud), a third record for Montreal.

**Forster's Tern:** singles at Sainte-Catherine 21-22 Oct (Ismael Chavez, Cristina Araya, identified by Pierre Bannon), and at Leclercville 28-30 Oct (Maxence Valade, m.ob.). **Pacific Loon:** one at Saint-Simon-sur-Mer 25 Oct (Madeleine Fortin, ph.). **Cattle Egret:** with a total of about 50 birds seen in 20 different localities, the irruption that took place between 18 Oct and 15 Nov was probably the most extensive ever for the province. The maximum count was 16 individuals seen at Grande Rivière 26 Oct (Lucette Lyons). **Glossy Ibis:** one at Île Saint-Bernard (Châteauguay) 21 Oct (Sharon & Tom Long).

**Swainson's Hawk:** an ad light-morph at Pointe Lebel 11 Oct (Jean-Pierre Barry) followed by a juv light-morph in the same municipality 27 Oct (Daniel St-Laurent). **Red-headed Woodpecker:** singles seen in four different localities. **Red-bellied Woodpecker:** there was an extensive dispersal of birds towards eastern Québec in Oct-Nov. Single birds were actually found in at least 25 localities east of Lake Saint-Pierre where is situated the limit of its breeding range. This is in comparison to only one bird found last year for the same period and for the same territory, as estimated with eBird maps.

**Ash-throated Flycatcher:** one at Sept-Îles 6-9 Nov provided the 3rd record for the province (Jean-Francois Laporte et al.). **Western Kingbird:** one at Chandler 17-23 Oct (Albini Couture). **Gray Kingbird:** singles at Forillon NP 22 Oct (Glenda Jean) and at Pointe aux Outardes 2 Nov (Emmanuel Hains et al.) furnished the 4th and the 5th record for the province. **White-eyed Vireo:** singles at Ville Saint-Laurent (Montréal) 25 Sep (Doris Potter) and at Cap Tourmente 20 Oct (Alexandre Terrigeol et al.). **Fish Crow:** one continued in the district of Côte des Neiges in Montréal 26 Oct (Maxence Valade). **Mountain Bluebird:** a female at Cap Tourmente 25-26 Nov was the 13th recorded in the province (Daniel Campeau). **Townsend's Solitaire:** one at Verdun 25 Nov (Rebecca De Palma-Black). **Wood Thrush:** one in the Mount-Royal cemetery 31 Oct-1 Dec established a record late date for the province (George Levitchouk, m. ob.). **Fieldfare:** one at Sainte-Pétronille (Île d'Orléans) 21-23 Nov represented the 10th record for the province (Pierre Otis et al.). **Northern Wheatear:** one at Québec City 5-16 Oct (Nicole Gauthier, m. ob.)

**Grasshopper Sparrow:** singles at Baie-Comeau 17 Oct (Francois-Xavier Grandmont, Jessé Roy-Drainville) and at Mirabel 23 Oct (Pierre Martin) were unusual for the dates and for the localities. **Nelson's Sparrow:** single birds were observed at Ile aux Noix 1 Oct (Olivier Barden) and at Laval 16 Oct (Marc Boisvert, Nicolas Éthier), two new localities for the species. **Green-tailed Towhee:** one found at La Croche (LaTuque) 16-20 Nov provided the third record for the province (Monika Olschinski, ph.)

**Yellow-breasted Chat:** singles at Forillon NP 22 Oct (Arnaud Valade), and at Saint-Jacques-de-Montcalm 22-25 Nov (Bernard Dugas, Richard Prévost). **Hooded Warbler:** a female at Ile aux Basques 3 Oct (Bruno Drolet, Andrew Coughland). **Yellow-throated Warbler:** singles at Baie-Comeau 16-17 Oct (Thierry Grandmont), at Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 25 Oct (Claude Boucher) and at Val-Brillant 13 Nov (David Lavallée et al.). **Prairie Warbler:** 4 records, all in eastern Québec. **Summer Tanager:** one at Rouyn-Noranda 12-13 Nov (Michel Marsan, Édith van de Walle). **Western Tanager:** an ad male at Lavaltrie 20-30 Nov+ (Nicole Jolicoeur et al.).

## Octobre - novembre 2022

**Oie de la toundra :** une photographiée à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 26-27 nov procurait la 5ième mention pour la province (Nathalie van acker et al.). **Oie à bec court :** maintenant régulière en migration, des oiseaux ont été observés dans 7 localités différentes. **Bernache nonnette :** des oiseaux présents à Sainte-Martine 15-19 oct (Camille Bélanger, Sylvie Huet), Saint-André-de-Kamouraska 17 oct (Jean-François Giroux, Éveline Landa) et à l'Île Perrot 26-27 nov (Mathias and Sharon Mutzl). **Macreuse noire (d'Eurasie) :** un mâle adulte vu et photographié à l'Île Siscoe (Val d'Or) 10-11 oct représentait la 1ère mention pour le Canada et la 3ième pour l'Amérique du Nord (François Dubois et al., identifiée par Vincent Giroux).

**Tourterelle à ailes blanches :** une à Sainte-Sabine-de-Bellechasse 22-29 nov + (Francois Chabot et al.). **Engoulevant bois-pourri :** un à Notre-Dame-du-Portage 20 oct égalisait la date la plus tardive établie il y a 6 ans (Jean-Francois Giroux, Éveline Landa). **Talève violac é :** un nombre exceptionnel pour cette rareté: un juv à Grande Rivière 3-16 oct (Linda Pit Langlois), une femelle à Neuville 29 Oct (Paul Popovich), un juv à Matane 31 oct (Nathalie Collin), et un juv à New-Richmond 2 nov (Micheline Perron). **Barge marbrée:** une à Petit Pabos 8 oct (Andrée Gagnon et al.). **Bécasseau violet:** des oiseaux à Coteau du Lac 21-25 oct (Martine Parent, pl.ob.) et à Carillon 6-10 nov (Denis Corbeil) était rare pour le S.O. du Québec. **Petit Pingouin:** pour la 2ième année consécutive, un déplacement important vers l'amont a été noté en oct; des oiseaux furent signalés à environ 15 endroits entre Montréal et Trois-Rivières avec un max de 5 à Sainte-Catherine 18 oct (Josée Gagnon, Alain Sylvain). Plus à l'est, près de Québec, jusqu'à 30 oiseaux ont été dénombrés à Sainte-Pétronille 18 oct (Alexandre Lajeunesse). **Macareux moine:** aussi présent en grand nombre dans l'estuaire, eg 55 à Pointe-au-Père 16 sep (Alex Plamondon) et 41 à Tadoussac 7 oct (Jessé Roy-Drainville). Un s'est même déplacé à Montréal et Laval 22-25 oct (Marc-André Bouvier-Pelletier, Danielle Michaud), une 3ième présence pour Montréal.

**Sterne de Forster:** des oiseaux à Sainte-Catherine 21-22 oct (Ismael Chavez, Cristina Araya, identifiée par Pierre Bannon), et à Leclercville 28-30 oct (Maxence Valade, pl.ob.). **Plongeon du Pacifique:** un à Saint-Simon-sur-Mer 25 Oct (Madeleine Fortin, ph.). **Héron garde-boeufs:** totalisant 50 oiseaux dans 20 différentes localités, l'invasion qui s'est déployée du 18 oct au 15 nov est considérée comme probablement la plus importante dans la province. Un décompte maximum de 16 individus a été atteint à Grande Rivière 26 oct (Lucette Lyons). **Ibis falcinelle:** un à l'île Saint-Bernard (Châteauguay) 21 oct (Sharon & Tom Long).

**Buse de Swainson:** un ad de forme claire à Pointe Lebel 11 oct (Jean-Pierre Barry) suivi par un juv de forme claire dans la même municipalité le 27 oct (Daniel St-Laurent). **Pic à tête rouge:** des oiseaux présents dans 4 localités différentes. **Pic à ventre roux:** importante dispersion vers l'est en oct-nov. Des oiseaux ont été retrouvés dans au moins 25 localités à l'est du lac St-Pierre où se trouve la limite de son aire de reproduction. Ceci en comparaison d'un seul oiseau trouvé l'an dernier pour la même période et dans le même territoire, tel que retrouvé dans e-Bird.

**Tyran à gorge cendrée:** un à Sept-Îles 6-9 nov, procurant une 3ième mention pour la province (Jean-Francois Laporte et al.). **Tyran de l'Ouest:** un à Chandler 17-23 oct (Albini Couture). **Tyran gris:** des oiseaux au PN de Forillon 22 oct (Glenda Jean) et à Pointe aux Outardes 2 nov (Emmanuel Hains et al.), donnaient une 4ième et une 5ième mention pour la province.

**Viréo aux yeux blancs:** des oiseaux à Ville Saint-Laurent (Montréal) 25 sep (Doris Potter) et à Cap Tourmente 20 oct (Alexandre Terrigeol et al.). **Cornille de rivage:** une toujours présente dans l'arrondissement de Côte des Neiges à Montréal 26 oct (Maxence Valade). **Merlebleu azuré:** une femelle à Cap Tourmente 25-26 nov, procurait la 13ième mention pour la province (Daniel Campeau). **Solitaire de Townsend:** un à Verdun 25 nov (Rebecca De Palma-Black). **Grive des bois:** une dans le cimetièrre Mont-Royal 31 oct-1 déc établissait une nouvelle date de départ tardif pour la province (George Levitchouk, pl. ob.). **Grive litorne:** une à Sainte-Pétronille (Île d'Orléans) 21-23 nov représentait une 10ième mention pour la province (Pierre Otis et al.). **Traquet mousteux:** un à Québec 5-16 oct (Nicole Gauthier, pl. ob.)

**Bruant sauterelle:** des oiseaux à Baie-Comeau 17 oct (Francois-Xavier Grandmont, Jessé Roy-Drainville) et à Mirabel 23 oct (Pierre Martin) étaient inhabituels pour les dates et pour les localités. **Bruant de Nelson:** des oiseaux observés à l'Île aux Noix 1 oct (Olivier Barden) et à Laval 16 oct (Marc Boisvert, Nicolas Éthier), deux nouvelles localités pour l'espèce. **Tohi à queue verte:** un trouvé à La Croche (LaTuque) 16-20 nov fournissait une 3ième mention pour la province (Monika Olschinski, ph.)

**Ictérie polyglotte:** des oiseaux au PN de Forillon 22 oct (Arnaud Valade), et à Saint-Jacques-de-Montcalm 22-25 nov (Bernard Dugas, Richard Prévost). **Paruline à capuchon:** une femelle à l'Île aux Basques 3 oct (Bruno Drolet, Andrew Coughland). **Paruline à gorge jaune:** des oiseaux à Baie-Comeau 16-17 oct (Thierry Grandmont), à Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 25 oct (Claude Boucher) et à Val-Brillant 13 nov (David Lavallée et al.). **Paruline des prés:** 4 mentions, toutes dans l'est du Québec. **Piranga vermillon:** un à Rouyn-Noranda 12-13 nov (Michel Marsan, Édith van de Walle). **Piranga à tête rouge:** un mâle adulte à Lavaltrie 20-30 nov+ (Nicole Jolicoeur et al.).

**Snow Goose** : some migrants appeared early, eg 200 at Lacolle (Sylvie Robert), 200 at Ormstown (Micheline Ouellet) and 650 at Noyan (Tristan Jobin), all on 16 Feb. **Blue-winged Teal** : one at Québec City 20 Dec was record late for the province (André Desrochers). **Northern Shoveler** : 120 at Drummondville 7 Jan, a record number for such a late date (Yvon Roy), 8 still at Mascouche 18 Feb (Olivier Barden, Samuel Denault) and 4 at the same place 19 March (Manon Couture). **Green-winged Teal** : 13 at Mascouche 9 Jan and 6 on 11 Feb were unusual for the dates (Sylvie Duchemin, Michelle Bélanger). **Canvasback** : rare in winter, at least 25 birds were reported in Jan, singly or in small groups; some seemed to have overwintered successfully, eg. Grande-Rivière 17 Jan-18 Feb (Albini Couture, Yvette Cyr), Verdun 20 Jan-26 Feb (m. ob.), and Sainte-Catherine 11 Jan-16 Feb (m.ob.). **Redhead** : 111 at les Coteaux 22 Jan, a record number for such a late date (Olivier Barden). **Tufted Duck** : an ad male at Saint-Vallier 8 Dec was record late (Serge Lemieux). **Greater Scaup** : 240 at Les Coteaux 22 Jan (Olivier Barden), 110 at Verdun 15 Feb (Stéphane Barrette) and 750 at Lacolle 21 Feb (Sylvie Robert), rare in such high numbers in mid-winter. **Lesser Scaup** : 15 at Les Coteaux 22 Jan was unusual for mid-winter (Olivier Barden). **King Eider** : 5 males at Pointe Saint-Pierre 12 Feb (Stéphane Barrette). **Harlequin Duck**: inland records included singles at Gatineau 1 Dec-12 Jan (Donald Dallaire), Ile des Soeurs 20 Dec (Samuel Denault) and Saint-Jérôme 17-23 Jan (Carole Mattard). **Ruddy Duck** : still present in 6 localities in early Jan; 2 were last seen 10 Jan at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (Michel Asselin et al.). **White-winged Dove** : continuing bird at Sainte-Sabine-de-Bellechasse until 22 Dec (m. ob.). **American Coot** : 4 at Longueuil 8 Jan, unusual number for such a late date (Jennefer A, Amanda B). **Sandhill Crane** : one at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 26 Dec provided a record late date for the province (Jean Demers). **Killdeer**: single late birds at Chesterville (Steve Hamel) and at Ile des Soeurs (Samuel Denault) both on 26 Dec. **Spotted Sandpiper** : one at Ile Sainte-Hélène (Montréal) 5-9 Dec established a record late date for the province (Olivier Barden). **Razorbill** : single birds or small groups continued in different localities of the Upper St. Lawrence; the latest was seen 9 Jan at Beauharnois (Tristan Jobin) while one at Sorel 15 Feb was the first in the province for Feb (Jean Lemoine). A gathering of 15 at Fatima (Iles de la Madeleine) 7 Jan was more expected. **Black-legged Kittiwake** : 3 birds at Sainte-Catherine 1 Jan (Daniel Ouellette) and 3 at Beauharnois 4 Jan (Daniel Jauvin) ; this species is extremely rare in s. Québec for the dates. Also, 116 at Baie-Comeau 23 Jan were an unusual number for the North Shore at this date (Emmanuel Hains). **Bonaparte's Gull** : a few birds lingered in the Montréal area in early Jan, eg 3 at Beauharnois 4 Jan (Samuel Denault) and 4 at Sainte-Catherine 27 Dec (Sylvie Robert). **Glaucous Gull** : a high count of 1030 was tallied at Matane 30 Dec (Jules-Alex Banville). **Northern Fulmar** : four birds seen separately at inland localities were exceptional : Lévis 8 Dec (Serge Lemieux, Suzanne Blackburn), Chambly basin 14 Dec (Olivier Barden, Gilles Éthier, Jean-Pierre Tousignant), Cap Rouge 15 Dec (Gaétan Lord) and Saguenay 17 Dec (Jacques Ibarzabal). **Turkey Vulture**: singles at Mont-Laurier 5 Dec-23 Jan (Alain Boisclair) and at Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé 30 Jan (Albini Couture), rare in mid- winter. About 25 birds were recorded starting in mid-Feb, a very early northward movement associated with very mild temperatures (m. ob.). **Bald Eagle** : increasingly common in winter, eg 47 at Mont-Laurier 27 Dec (Alain Boisclair) and 43 at Compton 25 Jan (Julie Paquette). **Eastern Screech-Owl** : one at Québec City 27 Dec was exceptional (Francois Shaffer, Céline Maurice). **Red-bellied Woodpecker** : the incredible explosion of birds that started last fall continued throughout the winter. Their number was roughly estimated at 100 birds spread across the province, as far north as Lac Saint-Jean and the Gaspé peninsula. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** : one at Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 23-28 Feb, possibly an early migrant (Ron Rind). **Marsh Wren**: one at Châteauguay 2 Jan was late (Martin Arcand, Shawna Sévigny). **Brown Thrasher** : one at Longue-Pointe-de-Mingan 17 Nov-28 Feb+ (Desmond Ward). **Townsend's Solitaire** : singles at Boucherville 11-29 Dec (Pierre Wery et al.), at Saint-Jérôme 25 Dec-15 Jan (Céline Desjardins), and at Métabetchouan 2-8 Jan (Éric Wilmot et al.). **Veery** : one at Saint-Jacques-de-Montcalm 22 Nov-9 Dec, the third record in Dec since 2015 (Bernard Dugas, Pierrette Gaudet, ph.).

**Oie des neiges**: les premiers migrants sont apparus très tôt, eg 200 à Lacolle (Sylvie Robert), 200 à Ormstown (Micheline Ouellet) et 650 à Noyan (Tristan Jobin), toutes le 16 fév. **Sarcelle à ailes bleues**: une à Québec 20 déc était la plus hâtive connue pour la province (André Desrochers). **Canard souchet**: 120 à Drummondville 7 janv, un nombre record pour cette date (Yvon Roy), 8 à Mascouche 18 fév (Olivier Barden, Samuel Denault) et 4 au même endroit le 10 mars (Manon Couture), ce qui confirme un hivernage réussi. Sarcelle d'hiver: 13 à Mascouche 9 janv et 6 le 11 fév étaient inhabituelles pour la date (Sylvie Duchemin, Michelle Bélanger). **Fuligule à dos blanc** : rare en hiver, au moins 25 individus signalés en janv, seuls ou en petits groupes; certains semblent avoir hiverné, eg. Grande-Rivière 17 janv-18 fév (Albini Couture, Yvette Cyr), Verdun 20 janv-26 fév (pl. ob.), et Sainte-Catherine 11 janv-16 fév (pl.ob.). **Fuligule à tête rouge** : 111 à les Coteaux 22 janv, un nombre record pour cette date tardive (Olivier Barden). Fuligule morillon: an mâle ad à Saint- Vallier 8 déc, une date tardive record (Serge Lemieux). **Fuligule milouinan**: 240 à Les Coteaux 22 janv (Olivier Barden), 110 à Verdun 15 fév (Stéphane Barrette) et 750 à Lacolle 21 fév (Sylvie Robert), des nombres élevés pour la mi-hiver. **Petit fuligule**: 15 à Les Coteaux 22 janv, inhabituel pour la mi-hiver (Olivier Barden). **Eider à tête grise**: 5 mâles à Pointe Saint-Pierre 12 fév (Stéphane Barrette). **Arlequin plongeur**: des oiseaux à Gatineau 1 déc-12 janv (Donald Dallaire), Ile des Soeurs 20 déc (Samuel Denault) et Saint-Jérôme 17-23 janv (Carole Mattard). **Érismature rousse** : encore présents dans 6 localités au début de janv; 2 encore observés 10 janv à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (Michel Asselin et al.). **Tourterelle à ailes blanches**: un oiseau a persisté à Sainte-Sabine-de-Bellechasse jusqu'au 22 déc (pl. ob.). **Foulque d'Amérique**: 4 à Longueuil 8 janv, un nombre élevé à cette date tardive (Jennefer A, Amanda B). **Grue du Canada**: une à Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 26 déc, une date record pour la province (Jean Demers). **Pluvier kildir**: des oiseaux tardifs à Chesterville (Steve Hamel) et à l'Ile des Soeurs (Samuel Denault) tous les deux le 26 déc. **Chevalier grivelé** : un à l'Ile Sainte-Hélène (Montréal) 5-9 déc a établi une date tardive record pour la province (Olivier Barden). **Petit Pingouin** : des oiseaux seuls ou en petits groupes ont persisté dans différentes localités du Haut Saint-Laurent, le plus tardif étant à Beauharnois 9 janv (Tristan Jobin) tandis qu'un oiseau à Sorel 15 fév était le premier signalé en fév dans la province (Jean Lemoine). Un rassemblement de 15 à Fatima (Iles de la Madeleine) 7 janv était plus prévisible. **Mouette tridactyle**: 3 oiseaux à Sainte-Catherine 1 janv (Daniel Ouellette) et 3 à Beauharnois 4 janv (Daniel Jauvin) ; cette espèce est très rare dans le sud du Québec pour ces dates. Par ailleurs, 116 à Baie-Comeau 23 janv constituaient un nombre inhabituel pour la Côte Nord à cette date (Emmanuel Hains). **Mouette de Bonaparte**: des oiseaux se sont attardés près de Montréal au début de janv, eg 3 à Beauharnois 4 janv (Samuel Denault) et 4 à Sainte-Catherine 27 déc (Sylvie Robert). **Goéland bourgmestre**: un nombre élevé de 1030 recensés à Matane 30 déc (Jules-Alex Banville). **Fulmar boréal**: 4 oiseaux détectés à 4 endroits différents à l'intérieur des terres : Lévis 8 déc (Serge Lemieux, Suzanne Blackburn), bassin de Chambly 14 déc (Olivier Barden, Gilles Éthier, Jean-Pierre Tousignant), Cap Rouge 15 déc (Gaétan Lord) et Saguenay 17 déc (Jacques Ibarzabal). **Urubu à tête rouge**: des oiseaux à Mont-Laurier 5 déc-23 janv (Alain Boisclair) et à Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé 30 janv (Albini Couture), rare pour la mi-hiver. Au moins 25 oiseaux sont apparus à partir de la mi-février, un déplacement vers le nord très hâtif associé aux températures douces (pl. ob.). **Pygargue à tête blanche** : de plus en plus commun en hiver, eg 47 à Mont-Laurier 27 déc (Alain Boisclair) et 43 à Compton 25 janv (Julie Paquette). **Petit-duc maculé**: un à Québec 27 déc, une mention exceptionnelle (Francois Shaffer, Céline Maurice). **Pic à ventre roux**: l'expansion phénoménale de cette espèce déjà notée à l'automne s'est poursuivie tout l'hiver. Leur nombre a été évalué à une centaine répartie dans la province, incluant des oiseaux aussi au nord qu'au lac Saint-Jean et en Gaspésie. **Pic maculé**: un à Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 23-28 fév, possiblement un migrateur hâtif (Ron Rind). **Troglodyte des marais** : un oiseau tardif à Châteauguay 2 janv (Martin Arcand, Shawna Sévigny). **Moqueur roux**: un à Longue- Pointe-de-17 nov-28 fév+ (Desmond Ward). **Solitaire de Townsend** : des oiseaux à Boucherville 11- 29 déc (Pierre Wery et al.), Saint-Jérôme 25 déc-15 janv (Céline Desjardins), et à Métabetchouan 2-8 janv (Éric Wilmot et al.). **Grive fauve**: une à Saint-Jacques-de-Montcalm 22 nov-9 déc, une 3ième mention en déc depuis

**Swainson's Thrush** : one at the Montréal Technopark 29 Dec was late (Marieta Manolova). **Wood Thrush** : continuing birds seen singly at the Mount-Royal cemeteries until 12 Dec (Raphael Millot) and at Ile-aux-Chats (Argenteuil) 18 Dec (Nancy Simon, ph.) were both record late for the province. **Redwing** : a bird photographed at Sept-Iles 3 Dec provided the fourth record for the province of Québec (Serge Gaudreau). **Varied Thrush**: one at Mont Saint-Bruno 9 Dec (Danielle Cayer). **American Pipit** : a late bird at Fort Chambly 28 Dec (Maude Savoie, Daniel Savoie). **Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon)**: single females at Montréal 28 Dec-2 Jan (Jean-François Franche) and at Saint-Isidore-de-Laprairie 28 Jan (Samuel Denault). Harris's Sparrow: one at Fabre (Témiscamingue) 29 Dec (Lucie Laforest). Vesper Sparrow: singles at Saint-Jérôme 5 Jan-17 Feb (Daniel Forget), Mascouche 8 Jan (Jean-François Piché), and at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 14 Jan-14 Feb (Réal Boulet). Lincoln's Sparrow: singles at Bonaventure 29 Dec (Sophie Bourdages, Éric Guénette) and in Montréal 1-7 Feb (Samuel Denault). Eastern Meadowlark: singles at Saint-Barthélemy 19 Dec-10 March (Micheline Ouellet), and at Val-Barrette 23-30 Dec (Francine Leduc). **Tennessee Warbler** : one at Ile Sainte-Hélène 9 Dec was record late (Olivier Barden). **Orange-crowned Warbler** : one last seen at Verdun 6 Jan (Frédéric Hareau). **Nashville Warbler** : one at Sainte-Catherine 9-10 Dec (Sylvain Cardinal). **Common Yellowthroat** : one at Granby 11 Dec (Samuel Jetté). **Cape May Warbler** : one at Ile des Soeurs 21-22 Dec was late (Richard Guillet). **Northern Parula** : one at Sainte-Catherine 2-10 Dec (Normand Trottier). **Yellow-throated Warbler** : one photographed at Terrebonne 2 Dec (Diane Ouimet). **Western Tanager** : one continued at Lavaltrie until 8 Dec (m. ob.).

Please report your interesting bird sightings to Pierre Bannon, by email: [pierre.bannon@icloud.com](mailto:pierre.bannon@icloud.com)

2015 (Bernard Dugas, Pierrette Gaudet, ph.).

**Grive à dos olive**: une tardive au Technoparc de Montréal 29 déc (Marieta Manolova). **Grive des bois**: un oiseau présent au cimetière Mont-Royal jusqu'au 12 déc (Raphael Millot) et un à l'Ile-aux-Chats (Argenteuil) 18 déc (Nancy Simon, ph.), tous les deux à des dates records. **Grive mauvis** : un oiseau photographié à Sept-Iles 3 déc a produit une 4ième mention pour la province (Serge Gaudreau). **Grive à collier**: une au mont Saint-Bruno 9 déc (Danielle Cayer). **Pipit d'Amérique**: un oiseau tardif à Fort Chambly 28 déc (Maude Savoie, Daniel Savoie).

**Junco ardoisé (Oregon)**: des femelles à Montréal 28 déc-2 janv (Jean-François Franche) et à Saint-Isidore-de-Laprairie 28 janv (Samuel Denault).

**Bruant à face noire**: un à Fabre (Témiscamingue) 29 déc (Lucie Laforest).

**Bruant vespéral**: des oiseaux à Saint-Jérôme 5 janv-17 fév (Daniel Forget), Mascouche 8 janv (Jean-François Piché), et à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 14 janv-14 fév (Réal Boulet). **Bruant de Lincoln**: des oiseaux à Bonaventure 29 déc (Sophie Bourdages, Éric Guénette) et à Montréal 1-7 fév (Samuel Denault). **Sturnelle des prés**: des oiseaux à Saint-Barthélemy 19 déc-10 mars (Micheline Ouellet), et à Val-Barrette 23-30 déc (Francine Leduc).

**Paruline obscure**: une à l'Ile Sainte-Hélène 9 déc, une date tardive record (Olivier Barden). **Paruline verdâtre**: une toujours présente à Verdun 6 janv (Frédéric Hareau). **Paruline à joues grises**: une à Sainte-Catherine 9-10 déc (Sylvain Cardinal). **Paruline masquée**: une à Granby 11 déc (Samuel Jetté).

**Paruline tigrée**: une à l'Ile des Soeurs 21-22 déc (Richard Guillet). **Paruline à collier**: une à Sainte-Catherine 2-10 déc (Normand Trottier). **Paruline à gorge jaune**: une photographiée à Terrebonne 2 déc (Diane Ouimet). **Piranga à tête rouge**: un toujours à Lavaltrie jusqu'au 8 déc (pl. ob.).

Veillez communiquer vos observations intéressantes à Pierre Bannon par courriel à: [pierre.bannon@icloud.com](mailto: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, 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.

---

### **Birding for Beginners**

Come learn the basics of bird identification in the field and observe some early migrants with guide Barbara MacDuff, BPQ Education Committee (email: [barb.macduff@sympatico.ca](mailto:barb.macduff@sympatico.ca) ; telephone: 514-942-6330).

**Thursday 27 April - jeudi 27 Avril**

**Morgan Arboretum** Website: <https://www.mcgill.ca/morganarboretum/>

Rendezvous point: <http://goo.gl/maps/etLSX>

**Thursday 4 May – jeudi 4 May**

**Parc-nature du Bois-de-L'Île-Bizard** Website: <https://montreal.ca/lieux/parc-nature-du-bois-de-lile-bizard>

Rendezvous point: <http://goo.gl/maps/JFpO4>

The April meeting will be the last for the 2022-2023 lecture series. We are sure you join us in thanking Jeff Harrison, our monthly meeting coordinator, for having organized such an interesting line-up of speakers. We look forward to what he has in store for next season!

If you missed any of this year's lectures, be sure to read Zofia Laubitz's new column debuting this issue, where she summarizes the high points for you. Read on!

by Zofia Laubitz

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

## Shorebirds and the Arctic Tundra Ecosystem

*Presented by: Don-Jean Léandri-Breton - October 3, 2022*

At BPQ's first meeting of the new season, speaker Don-Jean Léandri-Breton reported on his fieldwork in the Arctic, not only in Canada but also in Russia, Alaska and Svalbard. Don-Jean spent five summers, from 2013 to 2017, at the Bylot Island Research Station, doing his undergraduate and master's research, with a focus on the Common Ringed Plover. He was later invited to implement monitoring protocols near Sabetta, on the Yamal Peninsula, in the Nenets Region of Russia.

As Don-Jean pointed out, the tundra is a good place to study predator-prey interactions, as there are few vertebrate species, compared to richer ecosystems, and the food web is relatively simple. Thus, it's easy to see how predator-prey interactions shape the food web. Bylot Island, for example, hosts some 40 species of breeding birds, including 12 species of shorebirds. Greater Snow Geese are the primary herbivores on the island, since there are no ungulates present. The Arctic Fox is the main predator of bird nests and chicks, as it is throughout the Arctic.

At the centre of the Arctic food web are the various species of lemmings, the main prey item of all predators. Like the Arctic Fox, lemmings are found almost everywhere in the Arctic, except for a few islands. Fluctuations in the lemming population, which follow a cycle of three to four years, affect every other species, predator and prey alike. A key question, as Don-Jean explained, is why lemming populations are cyclical. Is population controlled bottom-up (i.e., by the production of the plants the lemmings eat) or top-down (i.e., by the presence of predators)? On Bylot Island, the answer, as experiments have shown, is that lemming populations are controlled by predators: if enclosures are set up to keep predators out, lemming populations inside the enclosures grow. Food, however, is not a major factor: even with the boom in Snow Goose populations, herbivores consume less than 10% of plant production each year.

In peak population years, everything eats lemmings, which are everywhere and easy to catch. Consequently, predators enjoy high breeding success. Some predators, such as Snowy Owls and Long-tailed Jaegers, are lemming specialists and may not breed at all in years when lemmings aren't abundant. Others are more opportunistic.

Arctic Foxes are the greatest predator of birds' nests in the Arctic. This means that there is an important interaction between lemmings and all bird species: since lemmings are the foxes' main prey, when there are plenty of lemmings around, birds' breeding success goes up.

Another interesting interaction is the one between Snowy Owls and Snow Geese. Snow Geese actively try to nest near an owl's nest. The reason is that owls will chase foxes away, thereby protecting the geese as well as themselves. On the other hand, it is disadvantageous for other birds to nest near a Snow Goose colony, as they're more likely to be eaten by foxes and other predators attracted by the very visible geese, especially in low lemming years.

Birds resist predation better if they nest in hard-to-reach habitats such as small islands and rocky shores. There is a trade-off here: food may be harder to find and space can be limited. But it's a trade worth making for some: for example, American Golden-Plovers, which nest on the tundra, have only 28% nesting success, whereas Common Ringed Plovers, which nest on stony shores, achieve 86% nesting success. Experiments with artificial nests and quail eggs have shown that adaptation to such "refuge habitats" is highly beneficial to a species. Some shorebirds that don't use refuge habitats breed only where predation pressure is regularly relieved by lemmings; on the other hand, shorebirds that do use refuge habitats tend to have a wider distribution, including in areas that have no lemmings at all.

As Don-Jean showed us, lemmings are the key to everything in the Arctic. However, lemming cycles can collapse due to fluctuating weather conditions associated with climate change, such as rain over snow. This has consequences for the entire food web, since all Arctic species depend on lemmings, whether they eat them or not.



# Diving into the Penguins' World

Presented by: *Émile Brisson-Curadeau - December 5, 2022*

At our December meeting, Émile Brisson-Curadeau introduced us to the King Penguins of the Kerguelen Islands, a French territory in the sub-Antarctic. Émile has been interested in penguins since he was a child. His mother works at the Biodome, where he learned to love King Penguins in particular. His master's research concerned Thick-billed Murres in Hudson's Bay, and for his doctoral work, he decided to keep studying diving seabirds in remote places. Thus, he returned to his first love and decided to study the King Penguins of the Kerguelens, where one of the largest colonies in the world is located.

The Kerguelens are all but uninhabited and have been designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Some 60 to 80 scientists and military personnel inhabit a base on the largest island, Grande Terre. There is no airport and the islands can only be reached by ship and with considerable effort. In fact, it took Émile 12 days to get from Montreal to the penguin colony on Grande Terre! There he worked with noted French penguin researcher Charly Bost. This research was carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic since, for strategic reasons, a French presence had to be maintained on the islands.

Émile informed us that the King Penguin is a sub-Antarctic species, which breeds on various islands and on Antarctica itself. These penguins dive very deep and feed primarily on myctophids (lanternfish), which are an extremely numerous and widespread family of fish.

King Penguins have the longest breeding cycle of all birds: it takes over a year to fledge a chick, and adults can only reproduce every two years. Before breeding, these penguins undergo what's known as catastrophic moult: they lose and replace all their feathers in just three or four weeks. During this period, they're stuck on land and can't really do anything; because they're unable to feed, they lose a lot of weight at this time. Once their feathers have grown in, the penguins return to the sea to feed before breeding.

These birds are not monogamous and find new partners most years; in fact, they have a "divorce rate" of 70%, which is higher than most penguins. They don't defend a specific nesting territory and adult penguins return from the sea at different times, so they can't afford to wait for a particular breeding partner.

The female King Penguin lays one egg, which is incubated for 50 days; both parents take 20-day shifts since they're unable to feed on land. There is considerable predation by skuas, which steal eggs whenever they can. When the chicks hatch, parent penguins start taking shifts of 4 to 11 days; one parent looks after the chick while the other goes off on a foraging trip that typically lasts 8 days. The returning parent then regurgitates food for the chick very slowly. At this point in the cycle, a new predator starts patrolling the penguin colony: the Giant Petrel. These birds are less agile than skuas but extremely aggressive.

When the chicks reach adult size, both parents leave to fish at the same time, while the chicks remain in a crèche. The most extraordinary period in the King Penguin's life cycle is the chicks' first winter, when they must fast for five months. The adults leave the colony for the whole winter, the chicks aren't ready to fledge, and there is no food to be had on land. Chicks can lose over half their body weight during this winter, and it's no surprise that mortality can be high. In the spring, the parent penguins return to the colony and resume feeding their young, which now start to regain weight. More than a year after the eggs were laid, the penguin chicks finally grow waterproof plumage and are able to swim and feed themselves.

Émile joined a long-term (since 1998) penguin monitoring program in which birds are fitted with tracking devices containing depth loggers and GPS so their foraging and breeding behaviour can be tracked. The penguins are captured as they leave the colony, so that the scientists don't have to enter the colony itself and disturb the birds. The big problem is recapturing the birds and getting the tracking devices back; the solution is painting numbers on the penguins' bellies (with L'Oréal dye!) so they can be recognized and recaptured.

The Kerguelen King Penguins, like all other King Penguins, forage in the Polar Front current. With climate change, the Polar Front is expected to contract, moving closer to Antarctica, which is likely to cause problems for the penguins, since they'll have to travel farther to fish; in fact, this phenomenon has already been detected at the Crozet Islands colony. At the Kerguelen Islands, however, the Polar Front is closer and is even contained to some extent by a canyon. In fact, the warmer waters are currently favouring the penguins' hunting since there are more fish around; furthermore, chicks are more likely to survive when winters are milder. Thus, based on the data available so far, Émile suspects that climate change will be bad for Crozet King Penguins but good for the Kerguelen colony; climate change is very complex, and the effects may vary widely even in neighbouring areas. There can be winners and losers even within a single species.





# FOCUS ON GRANTS

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

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

## 2023 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Every year, BPQ offers financial support for research and environmental education projects that accord with our mission and focus on ornithological research, conservation or education activities within Quebec.

Grants are awarded to a wide range of projects that meet these criteria, including small projects such as those associated with undergraduate or graduate studies or community-based educational initiatives. Larger grants are available for more mature projects from established groups or individuals, especially for those expected to continue their research over multiple years.

The grants committee solicits and evaluates applications each year and presents its recommendations to the board as to which projects qualify for funding in the upcoming financial year.

For fiscal year 2023/2024, the board has approved grants totalling more than \$82,000. This amount includes several multi-year projects approved in previous years for which funding support is ongoing. It also includes the renewal of an agreement that expired early this year between BPQ and the McGill Bird Observatory that will see BPQ continue to provide important and stable financial support to the MBO for the next five years.

A list of the new projects approved for this year, and of the ongoing multi-year projects, follows.



# POINT DE MIRE SUR LES SUBVENTIONS

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

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

## BÉNÉFICIAIRES DE SUBVENTIONS - 2023

Chaque année, POQ offre un soutien financier à des projets de recherche et d'éducation à l'environnement qui correspondent à notre mission et qui concernent des activités de recherche, de conservation ou d'éducation ornithologiques au Québec.

Les subventions sont accordées à un large éventail de projets qui répondent à ces critères, y compris les petits projets, comme ceux associés aux études de premier cycle ou de deuxième cycle ou aux initiatives éducatives communautaires. Des subventions plus importantes sont disponibles pour les projets plus matures de groupes ou d'individus établis, en particulier pour ceux qui doivent poursuivre leurs recherches sur plusieurs années.

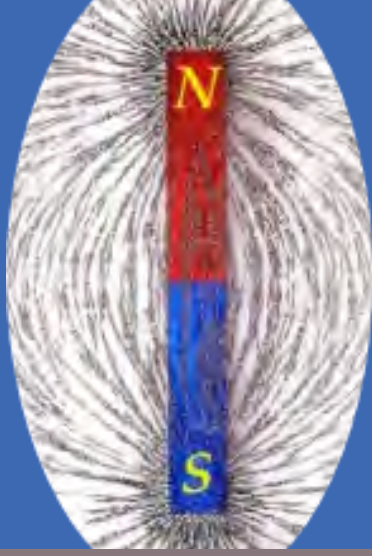
Le comité des subventions sollicite et évalue les demandes chaque année et présente ses recommandations au conseil d'administration quant aux projets susceptibles d'être financés au cours de l'exercice financier à venir.

Pour l'exercice 2023/2024, le conseil d'administration a approuvé des subventions d'un montant total de plus de 82 000 \$. Ce montant comprend plusieurs projets pluriannuels approuvés au cours des années précédentes et dont le soutien financier se poursuit. Il comprend également le renouvellement d'un accord qui a expiré au début de l'année entre la POQ et l'Observatoire d'oiseaux de McGill, qui permettra à la POQ de continuer à fournir un soutien financier important et stable à l'OOM pour les cinq prochaines années.

Une liste des nouveaux projets approuvés cette année, et des projets pluriannuels en cours, suit.

# RESEARCH & EDUCATION GRANTS TO BE AWARDED IN 2023

<b>PRE-COMMITTED MULTI-YEAR PROJECTS</b>	
McGill Bird Observatory	MAPS program at Biggar
Observatoire d'oiseaux de Rimouski	Banding
Vanier College	Motus project at their field station
Corridor appalachien	Peregrine Falcon/Bicknell's Thrush monitoring
Observatoire d'oiseaux de Tadoussac	Study of Horned Lark, Saw-whet and Boreal Owl, Purple Finch
<b>NEW GRANTS</b>	
<b>Research and Conservation</b>	
DOA -Développement Ornithologique Argenteuil	Follow-up survey of nesting Chimney Swift populations in Argenteuil, which will allow comparisons to be made to surveys done in 2019-2020
PhD Student - Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, McGill University	Studying gulls as vectors of plastic and chemical contaminants
<b>Education</b>	
Wakefield Elementary School	Building nest boxes and providing nature education
Connexion Nature (Centre de la nature du Mont Saint-Hilaire)	In the hopes of slowing the decline of grassland bird populations in the region, this project aims to promote partnerships with the agricultural community to improve practices and, thus, protect the species.
UQROP (Union Québécoise de réhabilitation des oiseaux de proie)	Developing exhibits for the future Discovery Centre
McGill Bird Observatory	Support funding for the organization



# MIGRATION 104

## How to get from Point A to Point B or "Which way is Yonge Street?"

by  
Wayne  
Grubert

### "Hey, birdbrain! Yes, you, I'm talking to you!"

How often were you given that moniker by an elementary school classmate or, worse still, an exasperated teacher/parent after being caught performing some boneheaded stunt? The negative connotation associated with the term could only mean that they felt you shared a diminished brain capacity with our avian friends.

The idea of such lower mental capabilities, however, could not be further from the truth, at least not as far as the birds are concerned. Case in point: consider the extraordinary feat of annual migration as carried out by many species.

In our last essay on the topic of migration, we mentioned how each new scientific discovery seems to unveil a further set of queries for future research. But now it is time to put the brakes on any new questions and summarize what we think we know about how birds orient and navigate.

As a starting point, we should define these last two related, but different, terms:

- *Orientation*, in the context of bird migration, deals with choosing a direction of travel.
- *Navigation* means knowing where you are at any time in relation to your starting point and your ultimate destination.

If you are like this author, then you were probably told at a young age that juvenile birds learn their migration routes by travelling with their parents. Although this seems logical, and may be at least partially true for some avian groups such as geese, the majority of birds do not migrate as family groups. So if they do not accompany their own family, then at least they get to follow other adults, right? The problem with that notion is that with many groups of birds, such as sandpipers, the adults often migrate first. That leaves the juveniles to fend for themselves. Genetically they appear to be given some tools with which to work but the young will have to wing it and learn much - literally - on the fly.

Consider this analogy. Two human parents head off from Montreal to Toronto ahead of their teenage child. Before leaving, the adults present the youngster with a compass, a clock, and a set of very basic instructions (and the keys to a brand new but untested DNA automobile): "Travel SSW for 6 hours of driving time and we will see you on Yonge Street. Don't be late." If the child is successful in picking the right direction, and travelling at an appropriate speed, for the correct length of time, they will arrive at their destination. They will also build a mental map that will help them next year when they have to repeat the process. "Ah, there is Lake Ontario on my right, so more than halfway there. There is the Pickering Nuclear Power Plant, getting closer." But the first time, it will all be new. So it seems these young birds inherit the compass for orientation and the clock for navigation to the final stopping point, but must learn the map for themselves. If this was a movie, it would either be a "coming of age film" or (more likely, in the case of juvenile humans) a "disaster flick"!



*Snow Geese may migrate as family groups.*



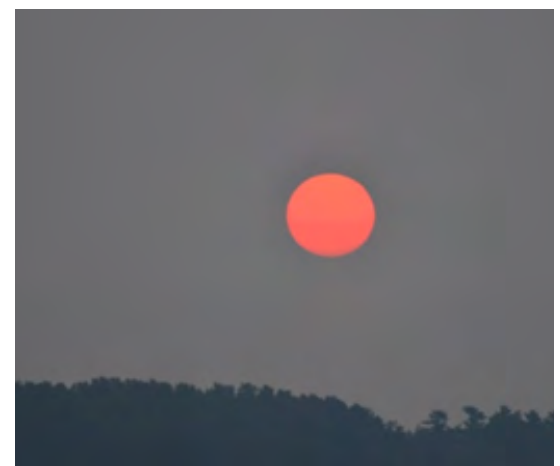
*Juvenile Baird's Sandpiper migrates later than its parents.*



So how do our young feathered friends accomplish the task? Research seems to indicate that many birds do not have just a single compass, but may possess as many as four different ones. For the most part, these operate fairly independently of each other. Working with captive birds of various species and Emlen Funnels ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emlen\\_funnel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emlen_funnel)), scientists have shown that the sun, polarized light, stars, and the earth's magnetic field may all be used to determine approximately where the direction "north" lies. This can help birds to orient themselves. Each compass has its own benefits but is also plagued by problems and limitations. Therefore many birds use more than one simultaneously and sometimes all of them.

### Let's have a look at each

*Sunrise and sunset* give good reference points for the approximate positions of east and west and, by extrapolation, north, but only twice a day. We say approximate position because the time of year and the latitude at which a bird is travelling obviously change the exact direction of sunrise and sunset. For diurnal migrants (like the Barn Swallows on the first page) to really make use of the sun, a good internal clock is needed both for time of year and, especially, time of day: "The sun has now been up for 'x' number of hours and moved 'y' number of degrees across the horizon. So, I must adjust my idea of where north is found and reorient appropriately." Cloudy days are an obvious problem and apparently the fine tuning of daily and yearly clocks may take some practice. Nocturnal migrants might use sunset for an initial orientation but would then need to switch to a different technique.



Cloud cover is an annoyance that can be partially overcome by the second compass type, namely the ability to see *polarized light*. Polarization is the degree to which light waves are scattered or aligned. Humans are most familiar with this concept with regard to polarized sun glasses that reduce reflective glare by only allowing light rays of a certain orientation to pass through. Polarized lenses for cameras also exist. The atmosphere affects light rays in such a way that they are most scattered directly toward or away from the sun and most aligned at 90° from the sun. Birds (and possibly some humans) can actually detect these differences. The technique even works on most cloudy days, especially at sunrise or sunset. So in this way, even if they cannot see it directly, birds may know where the sun is and still be able to use it for orientation.

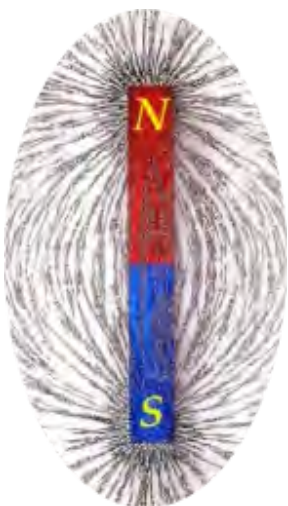
The sun is of limited use, though, to nocturnal migrants as it may only give them initial orientation at the beginning of the night. This is where the third compass type comes into play: determining direction by observing the *stars*. Birds apparently do not use the position of individual stars or constellations for an aid as these will change over the course of the night. For example, if one watches the "Big Dipper" portion of Ursa Major during a twelve hour night, one will see it rotate around an external point, starting out as a "ladle" that can hold water and ending in an upside down position that will spill out the water (or vice versa). Not only do the Dipper's component stars rotate about that same fixed point in space but so do all others in the northern hemisphere. Well, all except one, which happens



to sit directly on that crucial point of axial rotation. You guessed it - Polaris, or the North Star as it is more commonly known (<https://science.howstuffworks.com/north-star.htm>). It is this point of rotation that birds seem to use for determining true north and, as stated above, not the actual stars. Much of this is thought to be learned but, hey, what else does a young bird have to do while waiting in its nest all night for its morning breakfast?!

All three of the above compasses are at least partly affected by severe cloudy conditions.

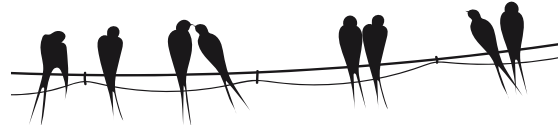
The fourth technique in the avian orientation tool box is the use of the earth's *magnetic field* as a guide. This technique works independently of weather. Think of those grade school science demonstrations using iron filings to map magnetic fields. Remember how the lines of force ran virtually parallel to the magnet at its center but curved and were concentrated toward the poles? Birds can apparently "see" those lines of force and determine the position of the magnetic poles of the earth (even if the technique does not differentiate north from south).



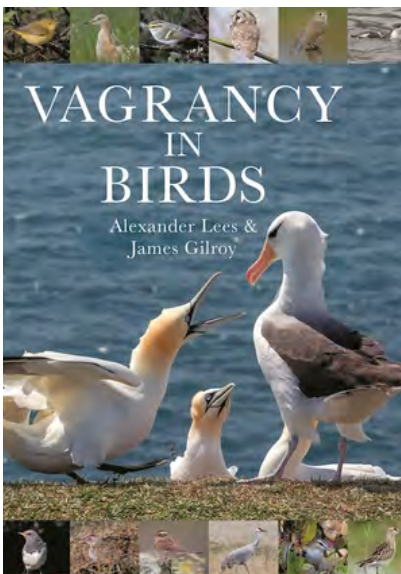
All birds seem to have this magnetic compass in their arsenal so the question arises: "Why bother with the other techniques if this one operates at any time of day and in any weather?" The answer to that seems to be that even using the magnetic field has some limitations. One problem may be that the "dip" of the lines is not obvious near the equator. Also "magnetic" north (south) and "true" north (south) are not located at the exact same geographical position on the earth's surface. For example, a compass in Montreal points approximately 15° west of true north. Not bad, but places on Baffin Island can be anywhere between 35° and 60° off. Also, there are anomalies in the earth's geological structure which can deflect magnetic compasses. So, it seems that birds may well need to use one or more of the other compasses to calibrate their magnetic one. (We won't attempt an explanation of why what we call the earth's North Magnetic Pole is actually a south pole - mainly because birds don't worry about such terminology!)

In conclusion, imagine juggling all the information coming from these four compasses when travelling between breeding and wintering grounds, all the while trying to find places to eat, avoid predators and deal with the vagaries of weather and light pollution. And we have barely mentioned those internal clocks or the ever enlarging mental map gained through experience.

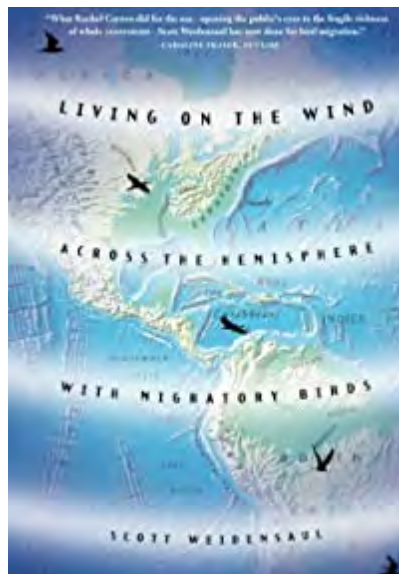
Now, do you still think it is an insult to be called a "birdbrain"? In the future, if it happens, say "thank you" and wear the title as a badge of honour. Maybe even have a T-shirt designed!



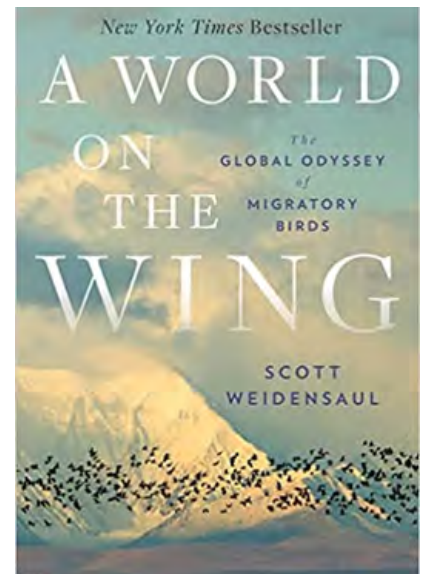
For further reading, the author recommends the following books from which many of the ideas presented here were gleaned. The first has an introductory section describing how birds orient and navigate, followed by what can go wrong for various bird groups that results in some of the vagrancy we see. The third book is an interesting follow-up to the second and shows how much has been learned about migration during the twenty years between publications. Scott Weidensaul is an easy to read, entertaining author with years of migration research experience.



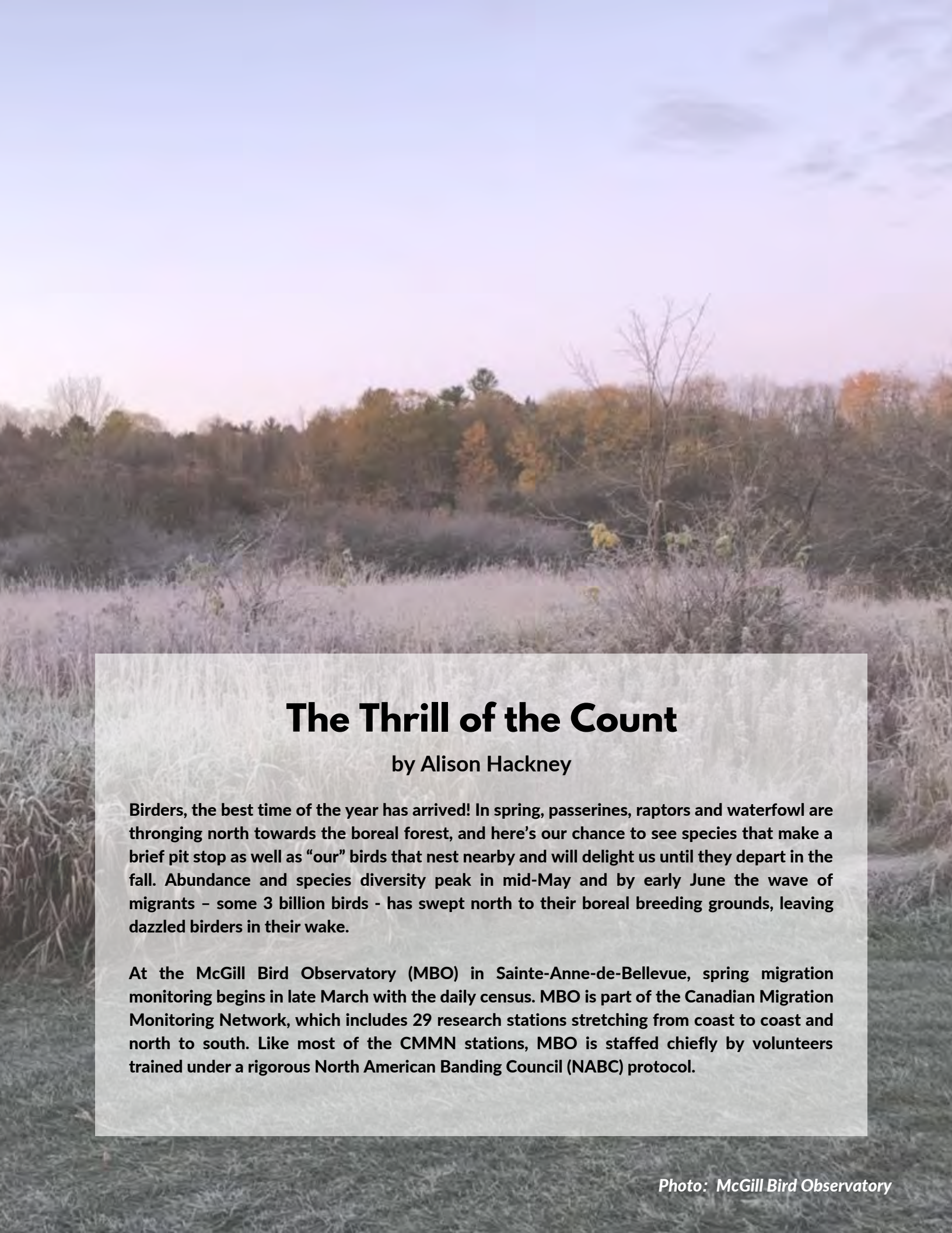
Lees, Alexander and Gilroy, James  
Vagrancy in Birds. 2021



Weidensaul, Scott  
Living on the Wind:  
Across the Hemisphere with Migratory  
Birds.1999.



Weidensaul, Scott  
A World on the Wing:  
The Global Odyssey of Migratory  
Birds. 2021.



# The Thrill of the Count

by Alison Hackney

**Birders, the best time of the year has arrived! In spring, passerines, raptors and waterfowl are thronging north towards the boreal forest, and here's our chance to see species that make a brief pit stop as well as "our" birds that nest nearby and will delight us until they depart in the fall. Abundance and species diversity peak in mid-May and by early June the wave of migrants – some 3 billion birds - has swept north to their boreal breeding grounds, leaving dazzled birders in their wake.**

**At the McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, spring migration monitoring begins in late March with the daily census. MBO is part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, which includes 29 research stations stretching from coast to coast and north to south. Like most of the CMMN stations, MBO is staffed chiefly by volunteers trained under a rigorous North American Banding Council (NABC) protocol.**

Data on migration are collected in several ways at MBO, mainly by capturing and tagging birds with standardized metal leg bands issued by Environment Canada's Bird Banding Office. Some birds are fitted with Motus emitters, allowing researchers to pinpoint their location to within a few metres quite precisely. According to the NABC, banding is the most cost-effective method to acquire certain data on bird populations. Having wild birds in the hand permits the collection of far more data than can be gleaned by observation alone: age, sex, breeding condition, moult status. Data serve to establish migration routes and links between breeding and wintering grounds, clarify migrants' use of habitats at stopover locations, and estimate population recruitment and survival of different age classes. Banding makes it possible to gather data from birds which nest in inaccessible parts of the boreal forest where the Breeding Bird Survey and Breeding Bird Atlas cannot reach.

A typical day at MBO begins half an hour before sunrise (about five a.m. in mid-May) when the sixteen mist nets are opened, ready to gently catch birds. As well as banding, all volunteers keep a tally of their observations. The third element of data collection, apart from specialized research projects, is the daily census. Volunteers' "ob's" and the census are essential complements to the banding data as they take into account species flying high overhead such as Canada Goose and others that typically elude the mist nets. The data from the three activities combined make up the DET, or Daily Estimated Total, of species and of individuals.

Census starts an hour after sunrise and is conducted by one census taker, following a two-kilometre-long trail that winds through a variety of habitats. Although protocol requires only one census taker, sometimes a second birder comes along for company. For me, doing the census is thrilling. Even familiar birds surprise me with odd vocalizations or behaviour. Seeing a boreal nester such as an Olive-sided Flycatcher is a special treat. The very best part is expecting a particular species at a certain spot and finding it there, where it should be. Unfortunately, the one-hour timeframe allotted for the census means that one must sometimes curtail watching fascinating bird behaviour in order that the census effort be comparable from one day to the next!

Almost twenty years ago, observant graduate students from McGill University had a hunch that the confluence of habitat types would make an ideal location for sampling bird species. MBO is nestled between the Morgan Arboretum, a 250 hectare forest reserve, and Macdonald College's farm fields. The census trail passes through dense hawthorn thickets (Grey Catbirds! Northern Cardinals!) edged by open fields (Indigo Buntings!), mature stands of Cottonwood (Baltimore Orioles!) before grazing the edge of the mature sugar maple bush of the Morgan Arboretum (Eastern Wood Pewee! Wood Thrush!). The trail then follows a berm raised thirty-odd years ago to create wetlands for ducks where we can expect Wood Duck, Hooded Merganser, Green-winged Teal, and Gadwall, and where we strain our ears to hear the first Northern Waterthrush, one of our earliest warbler arrivals.



**The pond at the MBO attracts water birds such as this Solitary Sandpiper.** *Photo: Connie Morgenstern*

Back in the sunlight, the trail winds around the other side of the wetland through sparse hawthorns and apple trees, giving the census taker an opportunity to look up for Turkey Vultures and other raptors, then crosses a small bridge (Common Yellowthroat! Swamp Sparrow!) to edge along the bottom of a steep ridge between a red oak dominated forest on the right and a phragmites-choked pond and squashy wetland on the left. Here is where we might hear a Virginia Rail and, if very lucky, the occasional Sora. The trail passes next to a clump of white spruce where nets are set in the fall for Northern Saw-whet Owl monitoring; here is where to listen for Red-breasted Nuthatches and hopefully Cape May Warblers!

Fifty metres along, we conclude the census by checking the tall dead elm, where a Red-bellied Woodpecker may put in an appearance to cap off our morning.

Alison asked three fellow birders to also share their experience as MBO volunteer census takers.

### Émile Brisson-Curadeau

*“Censuses are the best way for MBO to get reliable phenology data on birds that do not get caught in nets, such as canopy birds (Olive-sided Flycatcher), raptors, waterfowl, and so on”.*

*Émile mentioned that one of his most memorable experiences as a censuser was having an elusive fisher cross the trail right in front of him!*

### Frédéric Hareau

*« Le census du MBO est toujours pour moi un moment spécial que j'apprécie particulièrement. C'est une heure qui semble beaucoup plus dans un milieu d'une diversité incroyable. Une heure seul dans la nature, tous les sens aux aguets pour être certain de ne pas manquer une espèce ou un individu. Et toujours la possibilité d'une surprise, d'une trouvaille. Cela me permet d'allier ma passion pour l'observation des oiseaux avec une contribution à la science citoyenne et à la protection de la biodiversité.*

*Un moment qui reste profondément marqué dans mon esprit lors d'un census, bizarrement n'est pas lié aux oiseaux mais aux mammifères. Au printemps 2020, les baguages n'étaient pas possibles et j'étais donc tout seul au MBO. De plus, les déplacements restant limités à cause de la pandémie, la ville était étrangement calme. C'est alors que les loups de l'Ecomuseum se sont mis à hurler. Toute la meute chantait. C'était incroyable et leur chant m'a pris aux tripes. Un sentiment de retour au fin fond de la nature sauvage pour de longues minutes. J'ai probablement manqué le chant de quelques oiseaux au milieu des hurlements... »*

**Spring might still mean census-by-snowshoe at the MBO**  
Photo of volunteer Jean Demers by Clémence Soulard

### Barbara MacDuff

*“In March I am wondering if I will have to wear snowshoes for my first census. Before long I am looking for earthy patches with hopes of finding a woodcock. A lot of my birding is done by ear, and I eagerly listen for the first Brown Thrasher and Eastern Bluebird. The woods are soon crawling with White-throated Sparrows and shortly after the warblers arrive. It is a little sad when the first Blackpoll Warbler arrives as it means the warbler migration is over.*

*The census taker has time to look up and count high flying migrants as well as listening to bird calls that may be overlooked by banders. It is always a learning experience.”*



# Early spring arrivals

# Arrivées précoces de printemps



Turkey Vulture  
Urubu à tête rouge  
Photo: Mathias Mutzl



Golden Eagle  
Aigle royal  
Photo: Mathias Mutzl



Common Grackle | Quiscale bronzé  
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Red-winged Blackbird | Carouge à épaulettes  
Photo: Tom Long



Goélands à bec cerclé se courtisent  
Ring-billed Gulls courting  
Photo: Tom Long



Oies des neiges  
Snow geese  
Photo: Darlene Harvey

# EYE ON OUR SANCTUARIES

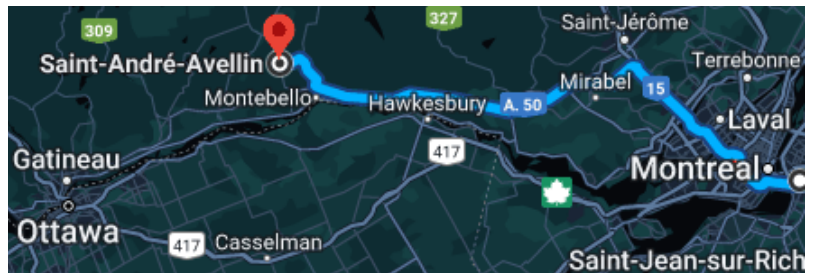
This feature column introduces our readers to the wildlife reserves that BPQ owns and manages as part of its efforts to actively protect bird habitat

## The Alec Lucas Sanctuary

St-André-Avellin

(and a little bit in St-Sixte), Quebec

by Jules Delisle



**May 1, 2022, 6:45 am** The sun has been up for less than an hour when we arrive and park at a spot generously provided by a neighbour. The sanctuary we are visiting has no official entrance and we have to walk several hundred metres through dense, humid and rolling forest before arriving at the property limits. It's the first time that both Alison, the volunteer who accompanies me, and I have visited BPQ's Alec Lucas sanctuary, located in the Outaouais. We are equipped with a map, a GPS and our lunch; we are on a scouting mission to plan the bird surveys for the coming season.

As it starts to warm up, the forest awakens and, under the watchful eye of an Eastern Peewee, we search for the orange ribbons of the surveyor who came through the area before us. We cross a swamp and a river before arriving at the paths once made by the comings and goings of logging vehicles transporting felled trees. The first wetland is revealed to us, the old cattail stalks edging its borders giving it a golden appearance in the sun.



Pond in the north-east sector of the property - May 1, 2022

Photo: Jules Delisle | BPQ

## History of the property

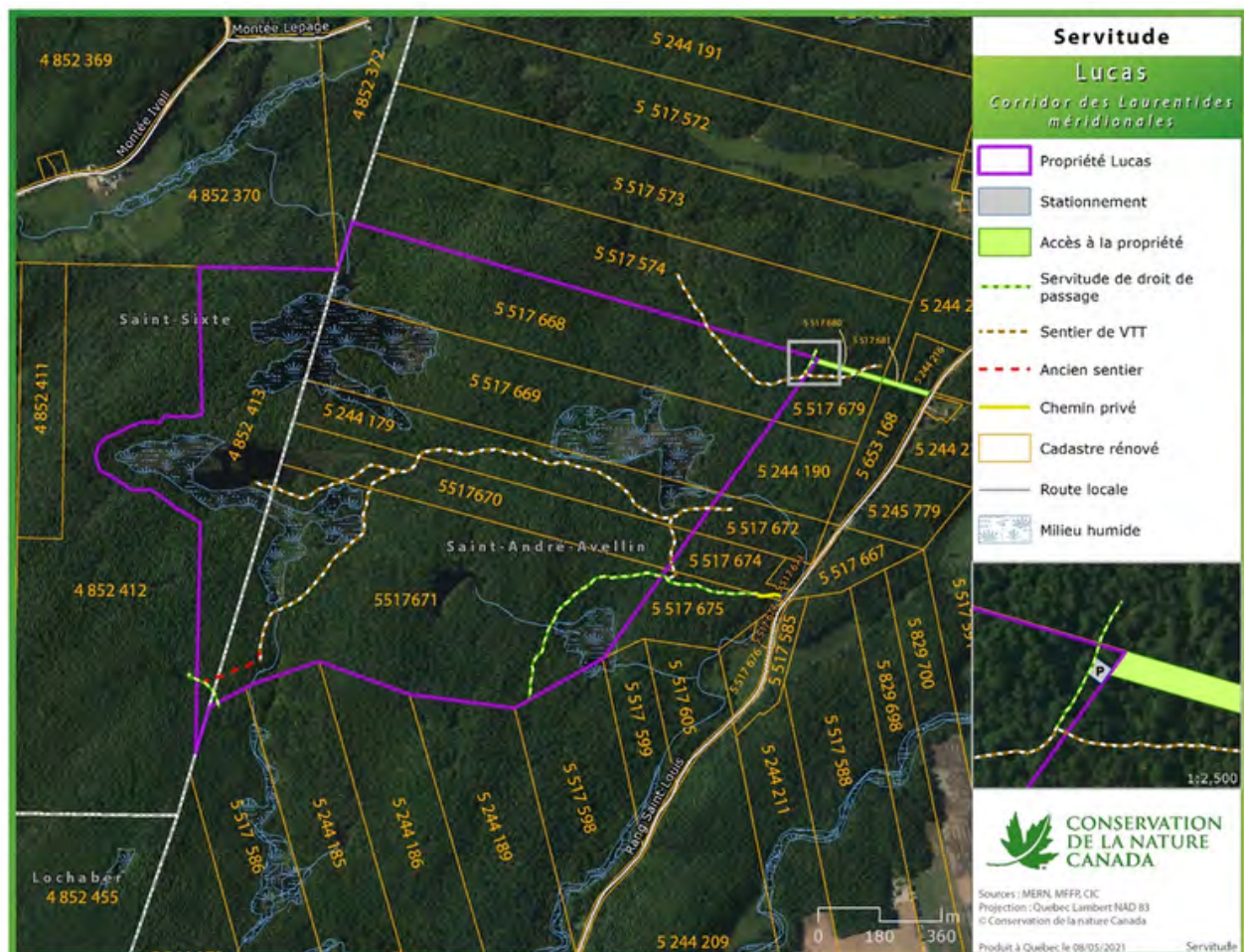
Although the sanctuary was bequeathed by Dr. Alec Lucas to Bird Protection Quebec in his Will in 2003, it was not until 2016 that the process of transferring title began. Nature Conservancy of Canada provided assistance in finalizing the transfer and, with the help of legal counsel, the property was finally transferred to BPQ in 2018. In 2021, NCC completed a survey, identified the right-of-way easements and conducted an initial site visit.

During that site visit, NCC mapped the forest trails that cross the property, which were once used to transport cut wood. According to the neighbouring landowners, logging operations in the early 20th century resulted in an altered forest landscape. The most recent changes involved clear-cutting and the subsequent planting of spruces in the western portion of the property some 60 years ago. The forest is younger and more homogeneous in composition than other areas, with a dominance of sugar maple and white birch.

These trails were later used for travel, on foot and by ATV, by the Lucas family and the tenants of the houses on land east of the sanctuary. They are now reserved for the exclusive use of BPQ, which owns, manages and will protect the property in perpetuity.

## Location and description

The sanctuary is located north of Highway 50, in the peripheral zone of Plaisance National Park, less than 10 kilometers from the park. The property consists of six cadastres: five in the municipality of St-André-Avellin, and one in the municipality of Saint-Sixte, in the Outaouais region of Quebec, and totals approximately 187 hectares - or 460 acres - of primarily forested habitat. Its western boundary is bordered by the Lauzon logging company, which is under discussion with Nature Conservancy of Canada for possible acquisition. The territory is mainly forested, with mixed stands of sugar maple and American beech. Beautiful mature white pines, hemlocks, firs and cedars dot the landscape. Three streams and four bodies of water feed the wetlands.



## Conservation and Projects

Since our first visit in May 2022, several projects have been carried out to increase our knowledge of the territory. An inventory of breeding birds using listening point methodology and an inventory using the framework of Birds Canada's Marsh Monitoring Program were completed during the summer of 2022. During these visits, notable species included a Canada Warbler, several woodpeckers, a Yellow Rail and two Barred Owls - and a pair of nesting herons was observed in the pond at the westernmost tip of the property. A family of otters and several beaver dams populate the ponds.

More recently, a winter visit to install motion-activated cameras and preprogrammed stand-alone audio recorders revealed the presence of foxes, hares, fishers, martens, deer, and large canids moving in groups. The images captured on the cameras will allow us to identify more accurately the species of mammals present, and the sounds captured by the audio recorders will allow us to know if there are any species vocalizing at night. More on this to come!

In 2023, we will continue our participation in the marsh monitoring program, and the analysis of the audio tapes will provide an overall picture of breeding species for a second consecutive year. The goal of these projects is to have a better knowledge of the territory, which will inform our management plan for the years to come.



Pond on the northwestern part of the property on June 3, 2022. Herons are nesting at the farthest point in the center of the photo.  
Photo: Jules Delisle | BPQ



# COUP D'ŒIL SUR NOS SANCTUAIRES

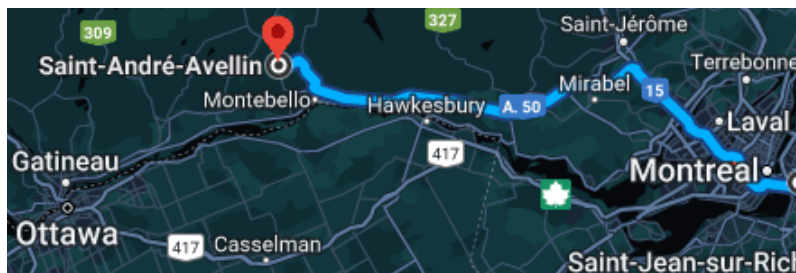
Cette rubrique présente à nos lecteurs les réserves fauniques que la POQ détient et gère dans le cadre des efforts déployés pour protéger activement l'habitat des oiseaux.

## Le Sanctuaire Alec Lucas

St-André-Avellin

(et un petit peu à St-Sixte), Québec

par Jules Delisle



**1er mai 2022, 6h45.** Le soleil s'est levé il y a moins d'une heure alors que nous arrivons au stationnement généreusement mis à notre disposition par un voisin et ami de POQ. C'est que le sanctuaire que nous visitons est enclavé; il n'y a pas d'entrée officielle et c'est plusieurs centaines de mètres qui sont à marcher dans la forêt dense, humide et valoneuse avant d'arriver à sa limite. Pour Alison, la bénévole qui m'accompagne, et moi, c'est la première fois que nous visitons le sanctuaire Alec Lucas situé en Outaouais. Nous sommes équipés d'une carte, d'un GPS et de notre dîner; nous sommes en mission de repérage des lieux pour planifier les inventaires d'oiseaux de la saison à venir.

La forêt se réveille et se réchauffe alors que nous cherchons les rubans oranges de l'arpenteur qui est passé ici avant nous, sous le regard attentif d'un Moucherole phébi qui nous souhaite la bienvenue. Nous traversons un marécage et une rivière avant d'arriver aux sentiers tracés autrefois par le vas-et-viens de véhicules forestiers transportant des arbres abattus. Le premier milieu humide se dévoile à nous, les vieilles tiges de quenouilles recouvrant ses contours lui donnent une allure dorée sous le soleil.



Étang du Nord-Est de la propriété en date du 1er mai 2022

Photo: Jules Delisle | BPQ

## L'histoire de la propriété

Bien que le sanctuaire ait été légué par Dr. Alec Lucas à Protection des oiseaux du Québec par don testamentaire en 2003, ce n'est qu'en 2016 que les démarches pour transférer les titres sont commencées. Conservation de la Nature Canada est mandaté pour faciliter la finalisation du transfert et à l'aide d'un conseiller juridique la propriété est transférée à POQ en 2018. En 2021, CNC complète l'arpentage, identifie les servitudes de passage et en réalise une première visite de reconnaissance des lieux.

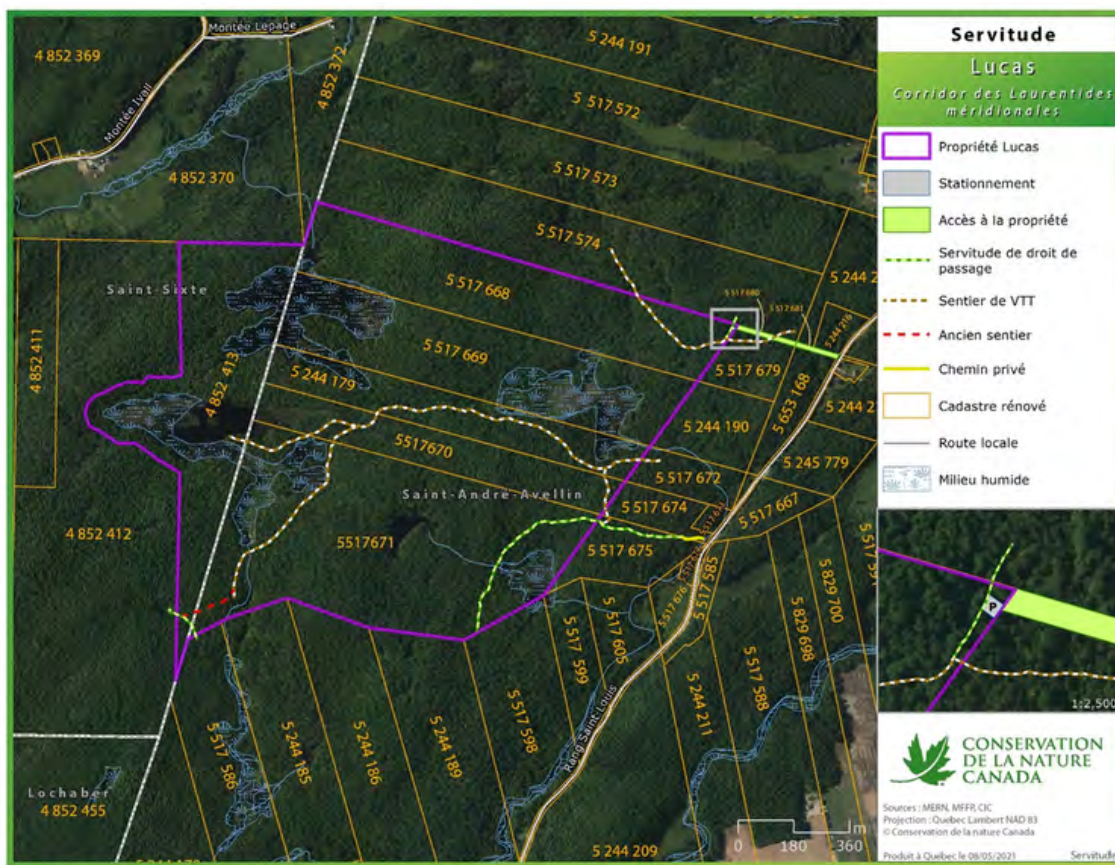
Lors de sa visite des lieux, CNC cartographie des sentiers forestiers traversent la propriété, autrefois utilisés pour transporter le bois coupé. Selon les personnes qui habitent les terres voisines il y avait des interventions d'exploitation forestière au début du 20<sup>ième</sup> siècle, dont les plus récentes ont été des coupes à blanc et des plantations d'épinette dans la portion ouest de la propriété il y a plus de 60 ans. La forêt y est plus jeune et d'une composition plus homogène que dans les autres secteurs, avec une dominance d'érables à sucre et de bouleau blanc.

Ces sentiers ont été par la suite utilisés pour se déplacer, à pied et en VTT par la famille Lucas et les locataires des maisons contenues dans les parcelles à l'est du sanctuaire. Ils sont maintenant réservés à l'usage exclusif de POQ, qui gère et protège la propriété à perpétuité.

## Localisation et description

Ce sanctuaire est situé au nord de l'autoroute 50, dans la zone périphérique du parc national de Plaisance, à moins de 10 kilomètres du parc. La propriété comprend 6 cadastres; 5 dans la municipalité de St-André-Avellin, et 1 dans la municipalité de Saint-Sixte, dans la région de l'Outaouais au Québec, pour un total d'environ 187 hectares - ou 460 acres d'habitat principalement forestier. Sa limite ouest est bordée par la compagnie d'exploitation forestière Lauzon, qui fait l'objet de discussions avec Conservation de la Nature Canada dans l'espoir d'une éventuelle acquisition.

Le territoire est principalement forestier, avec des peuplements mixtes à dominance d'érables à sucre et d'hêtres à grandes feuilles. De magnifiques pins blancs matures, pruches, sapins et thuyas parsèment le paysage. Trois ruisseaux et quatre plans d'eau alimentent les milieux humides.



Carte produite par Conservation de la Nature Canada

## Conservation et projets

Depuis cette première visite en mai 2022, plusieurs projets ont été réalisés afin d'approfondir nos connaissances du territoire. Un inventaire d'oiseaux nicheurs par points d'écoute et un inventaire dans le cadre du programme de surveillance des marais d'Oiseaux Canada ont été complétés durant la saison estivale 2022. Lors de ces visites, parmi les espèces notables, une paruline du Canada, plusieurs pioui de l'Est, un râle jaune et deux chouettes rayées ont été entendues – et un couple de hérons nicheurs a été observé dans la pointe de l'étang le plus à l'ouest de la propriété. Une famille de loutres et plusieurs barrages de castors peuplent les étangs.

Plus récemment, une visite hivernale pour l'installation de caméras de chasse activées par le mouvement et d'enregistreurs audio autonomes programmés d'avance nous a permis de constater la présence de renards, lièvres, pékan, martres, cerfs et de canidés de grande taille se déplaçant en groupe. Les images captées sur caméras permettront d'identifier avec plus d'exactitude les espèces de mammifères présentes, et les sons captés par les enregistreurs audio de savoir s'il y a des espèces vocalisant la nuit. À suivre!

En 2023, nous poursuivons notre participation au programme de surveillance des marais, et l'analyse des bandes sonores permettra d'avoir un portrait global des espèces nicheuses pour une deuxième année consécutive. Ces projets ont pour but d'avoir une meilleure connaissance du territoire, qui informera notre plan de gestion pour les années à venir.



Étang du Nord-Ouest de la propriété en date du 3 juin 2022. Les hérons nichent à la pointe au centre de la photo.  
Photo: Jules Delisle | BPQ



# Citizen Science

by: Richard Gregson

## eBirding the Spring Migration

As birders across the province slowly emerge from their snow caves, eyes squinting in the bright sunlight, to greet the rush of spring bird migration, it might a good time for a refresher on the finer points of using eBird. This massive world-wide, database of bird sightings is managed by the Cornell University Laboratory of Ornithology in the US and supported by Birds Canada locally. The Quebec portal is managed by Regroupement QuébecOiseaux (RQO).

eBird enables birders around the world to submit, explore and share their personal bird observations. The platform has become an indispensable tool for birders, researchers, and conservationists, providing a wealth of data on bird populations, migration patterns, and distribution. Users can contribute to global conservation efforts, deepen their understanding of avian biodiversity, and connect with a community of like-minded individuals. The platform's comprehensive database, interactive features, and user-friendly interface make it an essential resource for anyone interested in birding or ornithology. The platform has revolutionized the way we study and appreciate birds.

Beyond recording your observations, eBird allows you to dive deeper and compare your observations with those others are reporting. It also allows you to create permanent personal lists of the birds you see, no matter where your personal patch is located; be that in your garden, a local park, or throughout the entire province.

You can aggregate multiple separate checklists made on a week's vacation and create a trip list for your personal interest, or even to share via social media if you wish. You may also browse through regional hotspots to see which birds are being observed nearby. Additionally, you can explore eBird's data visualizations and maps. As you can see, eBird is not just an electronic alternative to a pencil and paper - it is a portal to a vast store of information to explore.

To keep your own records up to date, and to ensure that your observations are shared with the wider birding and scientific community, the following is a quick overview of how to share your bird sightings.

To start - go to eBird's Quebec portal at <https://ebird.org/qc/home> or download the eBird app to your phone. New users will need to create an account.

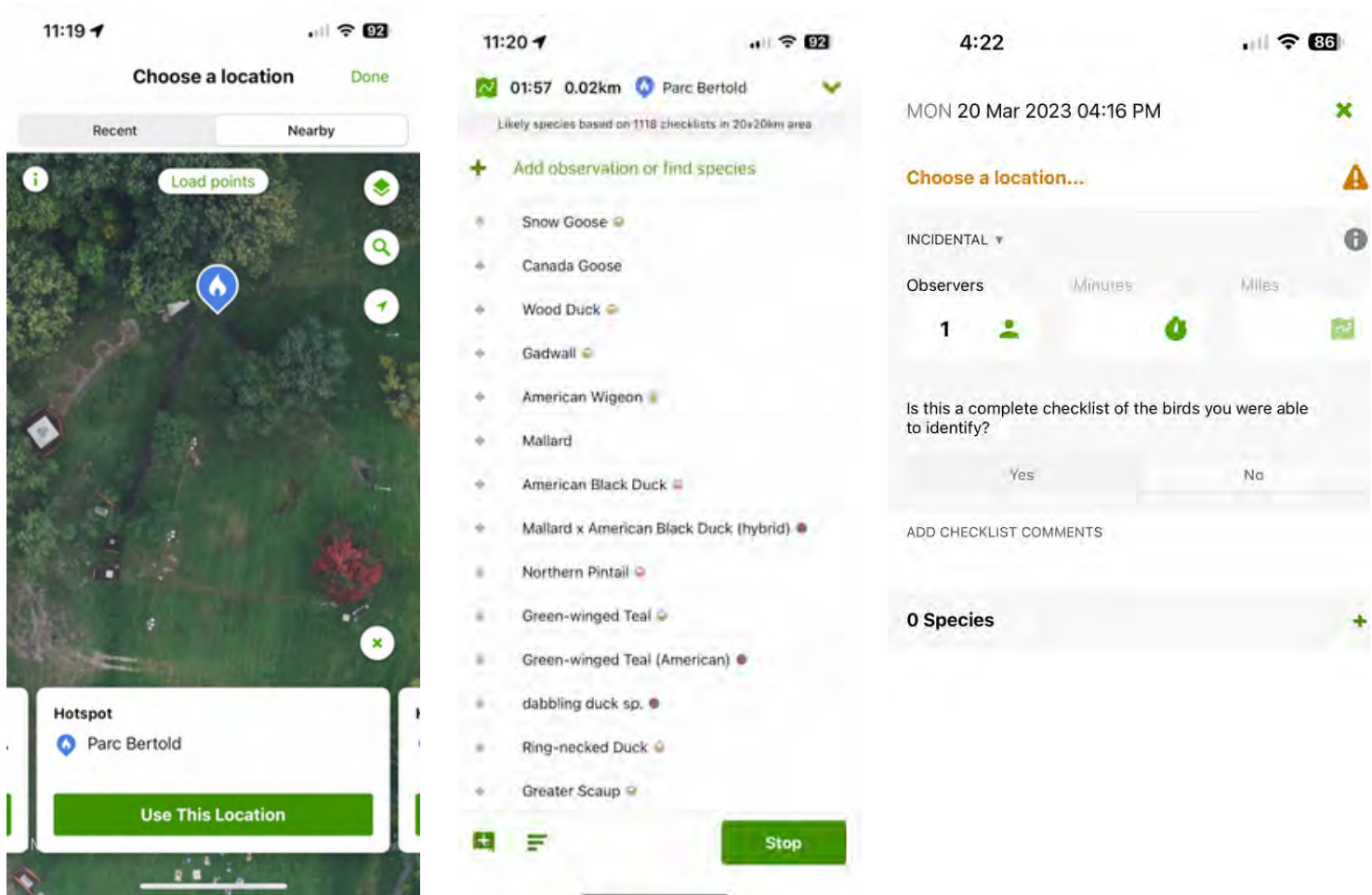
You can enter your handwritten field notes manually through the portal, but the easiest way to upload your observations is to use your phone app and record observations in real time. The app even generates a map of your route and calculates the time spent observing and distances covered - important things to be recorded.

To submit observations through the app:

Select the "Start Checklist" button and follow the prompts to add your location, date, and time of observation. The app will know where you are and suggest a name for your location (see screenshot) but you can override that at will. You can choose to add any photos or audio recordings you may have, in support of your observations.

Simply enter the number of birds seen for each species - adding more during the outing as you encounter them. The app automatically suggests likely species based on your location and time of year,

When finished birding, check the review page to confirm you have entered all the species you were able to identify, select the number of people in your party, then press Submit. That's it. You have made a small but extremely valuable contribution to bird distribution knowledge.



# Nocturnal Owl Monitoring

Story and photos by Darlene Harvey



Can you picture yourself standing on the side of a country road ... for three hours ... in the pitch black ... bundled up against the April evening chill ... while owl calls blare from a speaker? Don't knock it til you try it!

The Nocturnal Owl Surveys (NOS) came into being when the research community recognized that owl numbers were not being adequately captured by other monitoring programs such as Christmas Bird Counts and Breeding Bird Surveys because of the nocturnal nature of these species. The first of the surveys in Canada was done in 1991 in Manitoba and since then programs have been started in most regions of the country. Birds Canada coordinates those conducted in Yukon, British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, mainland Nova Scotia and on Prince Edward Island. The Quebec NOS was started in 2008.

This annual spring roadside survey is conducted by more than 1,000 volunteers across the country, with dates and species monitored varying depending on the region. The protocol in Quebec requires that 10 roadside stops on a pre-determined route be monitored on any night of your choosing in April, with the first started 30 minutes after sunset and the last completed by midnight at the latest. Like any survey, continuity is important, so a commitment to ongoing monitoring of your route is best. My husband and I have monitored the same 20-kilometre stretch of road in the Ormstown area since the survey began in 2008, only skipping the “Covid years” of 2020 and 2021.

So, back to standing around in the dark! This is a playback survey, so we literally stand on the side of the road broadcasting owl calls, interspersed with silent minutes, to try to provoke a response. Although any owl species heard or seen is to be recorded, the broadcast recording includes Boreal Owl (Northern Saw-whets are known to respond to the Boreal call) and Barred Owl. After playing the 12-minute broadcast and recording your results, it's back into the car and on to the next of the ten stops.

I won't lie - owl monitoring can be frustrating! In all our years doing the route, we have managed to find only Barred Owls (although a friendly farmer couldn't resist bragging to us about the many Saw-whets he has seen on his property that we have yet to find). But, wow, have we found *them*! During our best night, in 2018, we saw or heard 24 - the highest number reported on any of the routes in Quebec. One purely personal trend we have noticed is that our “good” years are often followed by a year with low numbers. For example, in 2019 we headed out, excited to beat that 2018 high ... and located just three all night. Another high of 17 in 2016 was followed by only seven the following year. 2022 was our second highest year ever, with 20 seen or heard, so with the trend in mind we're not quite as excited to head out this year but, suckers for a good owl count that we are, we have already begun convincing ourselves that *this* year will be the exception to prove the rule! We have also managed to record many Woodcock and Snipe, two other species surveyors are asked to listen for.



Along with recognizing that the lack of birds is data that is just as important to researchers as their presence, what keeps us going back is the surreal experience of standing in almost total quiet, in the pitch black except for a sky full of stars, and hearing the distinctive (and loud!) “Who, who, who cooks for you?” sound of a Barred Owl coming out of the woods in front of you, with an answering call coming from behind you ... and to the right ... then the left ... and, then, a large ghostly shape flying across the road in front of you and, if you’re really lucky, another. It truly is awe-inspiring.



Other than making friends with the owls, we have been accosted by a farmer who thought we were about to rob her house, been yelled at by another farmer who said we woke his kids up, stopped by the police (now we know to call ahead to the local SQ branch to let them know we’re coming), barked at by dogs, and almost fallen in a few ditches! We have also, though, had interesting chats with local residents, had several people stop to offer help because they thought our car had broken down, and even had fun discussing owls with those SQ officers.

Owls are directly impacted by changes to their environment, and distribution and abundance data are necessary to help identify those species in need of conservation action, to develop conservation strategies, and to assess the effectiveness of forest management programs. By taking part in this survey that only requires you to commit one night of your time out of the entire year, you can be a part of the work being done to protect these special birds - and have a pretty special experience while doing it.

Volunteers are needed to take on existing routes in Quebec that are not being surveyed and new routes in areas that have not been covered in the past. If you are interested, go to <https://www.birdscanada.org/volunteers-needed-quebec-nocturnal-owl-survey> to learn more.



# Birding Basics



## Field guides for your smartphone

Every birder knows the value of carrying a bird guide while in the field. These are essential tools, especially for beginning birders, to help with those tricky IDs: "How do I know if that's a Downy or a Hairy Woodpecker?" "Am I seeing a Cedar Waxwing ... or a Bohemian?"

Although the advent of pocket field guides made it a lot easier to take bird identification books with us, the miracle of smartphones and electronic field guides has made it even easier. And these carry an added bonus: bird songs are available right in your "guide", making it easy to familiarize yourself with bird songs while on the go. Remember: don't play songs in the field, particularly during breeding season when you may disturb nesting birds. Use the recordings to familiarize yourself with what to listen for, or to confirm what you have heard.

Here are a few popular apps, available from both the Apple Store and Google Play:

### Merlin

Particularly as a novice birder, if you haven't downloaded this app yet, you will want to do so now (well, after you finish reading this article of course!). This free app, available from The Cornell Lab of Ornithology, allows you to get identification help by inputting specifics you note about the bird you are seeing - where and when, size, colour, behaviour - or by uploading one of your photos. However, by far its most popular feature is its ability to record a bird you hear while in the field and suggest possible IDs in real time.

### Audubon

The National Audubon Society offers their field guide, surprisingly, as a free app. It contains the same information as their printed guide, and includes descriptions of each species, range maps, song and call recordings, preferred habitat, behaviours, etc. You also have the option, by opening a My Audubon account, to keep track of your sightings and life lists and more right in the app.

### Sibley eGuide to Birds

A favourite pocket guide for many is their *Sibley's*, by well-known American ornithologist David Sibley. The books are published in both English and French, and are available in two volumes, split into species common to eastern and western North America. The beauty of the app version is that it covers all of North America, making it useful for travel, and contains all of the information available in the books. What differentiates Sibley's guides is his use of his own illustrations, rather than photographs. With his detailed drawings, he is able to highlight particular field marks to look for on each species. This app comes at a price though: it is currently selling for \$27.99 in the Apple Store, \$26.99 in Google Play.

### The Warbler Guide

This specialty app is a must-have when trying to identify these little beauties. Not only does it give complete details of these hard-to-identify songbirds, it can be set to compare only a particular part of these birds that may give the best ID clues. For example, you can choose to see only the undertails, or only faces. Two favourite features: since warblers tend to perch at the tops of trees, you can also choose a 3D view that allows you to rotate the drawing of the bird so you can see it from every angle, including the most common view from underneath; and, since spring and fall plumages are so different in some warblers that they can look like two completely different species, the app can be set to spring/summer or fall/winter. Another great thing about this app is that it combines the best of other guides, including both drawings and photos of each species. Price: \$17.99 (\$16.99 on Android, but not available on all devices as this is an older app).

# LES B.A.-BA DE L'OBSERVATION



## Guides de poches pour votre téléphone intelligent

Tous les ornithologues connaissent l'utilité d'un guide ornithologique lorsqu'ils sont sur le terrain. Ce sont des outils essentiels, en particulier pour les ornithologues débutants, qui les aident à identifier les oiseaux : "Comment savoir s'il s'agit d'un Pic mineur ou d'un Pic chevelu ? "Est-ce que je vois un Jaseur d'Amérique ... ou boréal ?"

Si l'avènement des guides de poches a considérablement facilité l'emport des livres d'identification, le miracle des téléphones intelligents et des guides de terrain électroniques a rendu les choses encore plus faciles. Ces derniers offrent un avantage supplémentaire : les chants d'oiseaux sont disponibles directement dans votre « guide », ce qui vous permet de vous familiariser facilement avec les chants d'oiseaux lorsque vous êtes en déplacement. (N'oubliez pas : ne transmettez pas les chants sur le terrain, en particulier pendant la saison de reproduction où vous risquez de déranger les oiseaux qui nichent. Utilisez les enregistrements pour vous familiariser avec ce que vous devez écouter ou pour confirmer ce que vous avez entendu).

Voici quelques applications populaires, disponibles dans « The Apple Store » et à Google Play :

### Merlin

Si vous êtes un ornithologue débutant et que vous n'avez pas encore téléchargé cette application, vous devriez le faire dès maintenant (après avoir lu cet article, bien sûr !). Cette application gratuite, disponible auprès du Cornell Lab of Ornithology, vous permet d'obtenir de l'aide pour l'identification en saisissant les détails que vous avez notés sur l'oiseau que vous observez - où et quand, taille, couleur, comportement - ou en téléchargeant l'une de vos photos. Cependant, sa fonction la plus populaire est de loin sa capacité à enregistrer un oiseau que vous entendez sur le terrain et à suggérer des identifications possibles en temps réel.

### Audubon

National Audubon Society propose son guide de terrain, étonnamment, sous la forme d'une application gratuite. Il contient les mêmes informations que le guide imprimé, et comprend des descriptions de chaque espèce, des cartes de l'aire de répartition, des enregistrements de chants et de cris, l'habitat préféré, les comportements, etc. Vous avez également la possibilité, en ouvrant un compte My Audubon, de suivre vos observations, vos listes de vie et bien d'autres choses encore, directement dans l'application.

### Sibley Guide électronique des oiseaux

*Le guide de poche Sibley*, du célèbre ornithologue américain David Sibley, est le guide préféré de beaucoup. Les livres sont publiés en anglais et en français, et sont disponibles en deux volumes, divisés en espèces communes à l'est et à l'ouest de l'Amérique du Nord. L'intérêt de l'application est qu'elle couvre l'ensemble de l'Amérique du Nord, ce qui la rend utile pour les voyages, et qu'elle contient toutes les informations disponibles dans les livres. Ce qui différencie les guides de Sibley, c'est l'utilisation de ses propres illustrations, plutôt que de photographies. Grâce à ses dessins détaillés, il est en mesure de mettre en évidence les marques de terrain particulières à rechercher sur chaque espèce. Cette application a toutefois un prix : elle est actuellement vendue 27,99 \$ dans l'Apple Store et 26,99 \$ dans Google Play.

### The Warbler Guide

Cette application spécialisée est indispensable pour identifier ces petites beautés. Non seulement elle donne des détails complets sur ces oiseaux chanteurs difficiles à identifier, mais elle peut être paramétrée pour ne comparer qu'une partie particulière de ces oiseaux qui peut donner les meilleurs indices d'identification. Par exemple, vous pouvez choisir de ne voir que les queues inférieures ou que les visages. Deux fonctions favorites : comme les parulines ont tendance à se percher au sommet des arbres, vous pouvez également choisir une vue en 3D qui vous permet de faire pivoter le dessin de l'oiseau afin de le voir sous tous les angles, y compris la vue la plus courante du dessous ; et, comme les plumages de printemps et d'automne sont si différents chez certaines parulines qu'elles peuvent ressembler à deux espèces complètement différentes, l'application peut être réglée pour le printemps/été ou l'automne/hiver. Un autre point fort de cette application est qu'elle combine le meilleur des autres guides, avec des dessins et des photos de chaque espèce. Prix : 17,99 \$ (16,99 \$ sur Android, mais cette application n'est pas disponible sur tous les appareils).

# Exploring Early Canadian Ornithology

with Jeff Harrison

## René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683-1757)

New France was a French colony from its founding until the British conquest of Quebec in 1759 and Montreal in 1760. Given France's important place in European natural science, the lack of early ornithological material from New France is puzzling. The first important bird records from New France included in Mathurin-Jacques Brisson's (1723-1806) *Ornithologie*, were not published until 1760, just at the moment when France was forced to give up its first North American colony.

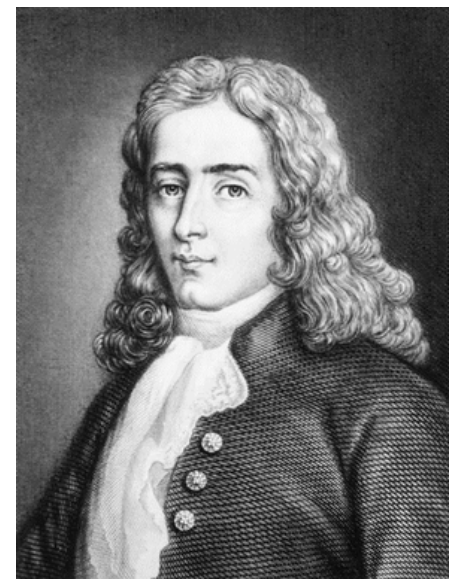
Brisson's *Ornithologie* was a pioneering work in the development of the science of ornithology. It also contained many scientific descriptions of Canadian birds. While Brisson had access to the published ornithological writings of early visitors to New France such as Sagard, Denys, LaHontan, Kalm and Charlevoix, he made little reference to their records in *Ornithologie*. Without a specimen, a brief description of a bird giving only its name or a brief account was not considered an acceptable record.

For written material on North American birds, Brisson relied on the works of the British naturalists, in particular Mark Catesby's *Natural History of the Carolinas, Florida and the Bahamas, 1729-47*, and George Edwards' *A Natural History of Uncommon Birds (1743-1751)* and *Gleanings in Natural History (1758-1764)*. Both Catesby and Edwards based their descriptions on living birds as well as skins or mounted specimens in public and private collections. Edwards included records of Canadian birds collected by traders in Newfoundland and employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. Neither Catesby or Edwards described a specimen collected in New France.

Brisson also relied on specimens from around the world in the collections of France's most important 18th-century collector, René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur (1683-1757). Réaumur's collection contained specimens from New France.

René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur was a prominent member of the Académie des Sciences, and a wealthy nobleman who held no official positions in science or government. Réaumur originally studied law and then mathematics. He was elected to the Académie in 1708 at the age of 25. Initially Réaumur studied the properties of iron and steel and invented a new thermometer before turning his attention to insects. He is best known for his *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des insectes* in 6 volumes, published between 1734 and 1742.

Like his contemporary Sir Hans Sloane (1660-1753) in England, through his wealth and contacts Réaumur accumulated the finest collection of natural history specimens of his time. He started his bird collection in 1743 (Trembley: 1936).



René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur  
Wikipedia

In the mid-18th century the science of preserving bird skins was, however, still in its infancy. Farber noted in *The Emergence of Ornithology as a Scientific Discipline 1760-1850* Réaumur's frustrations with the difficulties of preservation:

"No considerable collections have hitherto been made [because of] the Mortification to see them every Day destroyed by ravenous Insects in spite of all the care that had been taken to preserve them against their Teeth."

To assist in the preparation of specimens Réaumur studied taxidermy, examining mounting techniques and perfecting a method of preparing skins by drying in an oven, which helped to retain a lifelike appearance. He published his findings and encouraged his many natural history correspondents to apply his techniques and send him prepared birds. (His treatise was also translated into English as "Divers Means for Preserving from Corruption Dead Birds, Intended to Be Sent to Remote Countries, So That They May Arrive There in a Good Condition. Some of the Same Means May be Employed for Preserving Quadrupeds, Reptiles, Fishes, and Insects", and published by the Royal Society in 1748.) Réaumur also instructed his collectors to send numerous specimens and their nests, and to write notes on habitat and behaviour.

Réaumur was the most important natural scientist of his generation. Using his curiosity, careful observation and experimentation, he carried out numerous studies that advanced other aspects of ornithology. These included experiments on the digestive juices of birds, the artificial incubation of domestic fowl and speculations on the forms of birds' nests.

To deal with his growing collection, in 1749 Réaumur hired Mathurin-Jacques Brisson. Thus, in preparing his *Ornithologie*, Brisson benefited from the vast amount of information collected by Réaumur, and was able to identify where species came from, who collected them and to provide ecological and life history details.

For birds collected from Canada (New France) Brisson relied heavily for his descriptions on specimens sent to Réaumur by Jean-Francois Gaultier, the Médecin du Roi for New France, and Roland-Michel Barrin de La Galissonnière, who for a short time (1748-49) was Governor of New France. *Ornithologie* also featured some of the first engravings of Canadian birds, prepared by the French artist, François Nicolas Martinet.

Despite the important contribution of the colony of New France, the vast majority of specimens in Réaumur's collection described by Brisson, were from Europe, Central and South America, Africa and Asia. The waterfowl and raptors of northern Europe, which are larger birds and easier to collect, were similar or identical to Canadian species, and hence the acquisition of Canadian birds was deemed unnecessary. Species from less known lands, especially from the tropics, were often more colourful and many were morphologically distinct, and thus more desirable to collect.

Nevertheless, Brisson attributed about twenty-seven records in the Réaumur collection to New France. The majority - twenty-one - were collected by Gaultier, and the rest by de la Galissonnière. Additional species attributed to New France, but excluded here, were collected from Louisiana by de la Galissonnière. Erwin Stresemann in his *Ornithology from Aristotle to the Present* noted that Brisson also used the "extensive collections" of Abbe Jean-Thomas Aubry (1714-1785) and the physician Mauduyt de la Varenne (1732-1792). Brisson found five additional species from New France in the cabinet of Aubry. At this time, it is not known where Aubry obtained his Canadian specimens. Brisson does not mention any specimens from Canada from de la Varenne's collection, which was largely assembled at a later date.

Quebec ornithological historian, Michel Gosselin, has written a paper "Les Oiseaux de Jean-François Gaultier" published in *Québec Oiseaux* (Winter 2019). Accounting for duplicate records, he attributes twenty species to Gaultier and seven species to de la Galissonnière.

Brisson's records from New France are unique. They represent species from a geographical area far removed from the Hudson and James Bay lowlands, the other major collecting site in early Canadian ornithology. As a result, they include many first records for Canada.

With the arrival of Georges Leclerc, Baron Buffon (1707-1788) as superintendent of the Jardin du Roi in the 1730s, and Réaumur's death in 1757, Réaumur's huge collections became the property of the Jardin du Roi. In the last half of the 18th century Buffon continued to maintain the Jardin's natural history collections, the finest in Europe. Buffon wrote extensively on natural history, including his ten-volume *Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux* published between 1770 and 1786. Buffon's reputation as an ornithologist, based on his strong interest in field studies and ecology, greatly benefitted from the pioneering work of Réaumur and Brisson. Perhaps cut off from ties to Canada, Buffon's *Histoire Naturelle* contains no new records from Canada.

Réaumur, through his encouragement of collectors in the French colonies, including New France, and similarly Sir Hans Sloane, who encouraged the collecting of specimens by the Hudson's Bay Company employees, laid the foundation on which our knowledge of 18th-century Canadian ornithology is based.

Today Réaumur is primarily known as one of the first ethologists (behaviourists), with a particular passion for insects. As a pioneer in ethology, his writings influenced not only Buffon but also Gilbert White (1720-1793), who published his famous book, *Natural History and Antiquities of Selborne* in 1791. No doubt Réaumur's interest in insects and behaviour also had a significant influence on the great French naturalist, Jean-Henri Fabre (1823-1915), who is considered by many the father of modern entomology.

Darwin's champion, Thomas Henry Huxley, was a great admirer of Réaumur. Introducing Darwin on his receipt of an honorary LLB from Cambridge he noted "I know of no one who is to be placed in the same rank with [Darwin] except Réaumur." (L. Huxley, *Life and Letters of Tomas Henry Huxley*).

## **Bibliography**

*Brisson, Mathurin-Jacques. 1760. Ornithologie. Paris: L'Imprimerie d'Antoine Boudet, Imprimeur du Roi.*

*Buffon, Baron. 1771-1786. Histoire Naturelle des Oiseaux 10 Vols. Paris: l'Imprimerie royale*

*Farber, Paul. 1997. The Emergence of Ornithology as a Scientific Discipline 1760-1850 Baltimore MD: John Hopkins University Press*

*Huxley, Leonard. 1900. Life and Letters of Tomas Henry Huxley. 2 Vols. London: Macmillan.*

*Réaumur, René Antoine Ferchault de. 1734-1742. Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des insectes 6 vols Paris: Académie Royale des Sciences.*

*Stresemann, Erwin. 1975. Ornithology from Aristotle to the Present. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press*

*Trembley, Maurice. Edit. 1936. Correspondence inédite entre Réaumur. et Abraham Trembley. Geneva: Desclée de Brouvier*

*Wikipedia. "René Antoine Ferchault de Réaumur" [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9\\_Antoine\\_Ferchault\\_de\\_R%C3%A9aumur](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ren%C3%A9_Antoine_Ferchault_de_R%C3%A9aumur)*

With spring migration upon us, one naturally tends to think of more rural locations first when considering where to go to observe interesting bird species. At least, for a bird such as a Killdeer one likely doesn't immediately think of downtown Montreal. This is why the amusing anecdote below from the P.Q.S.P.B. Annual Report of 1951 caught our eye. The description of there being a cultivated field along Sainte-Catherine Street, in the now fully-developed area between Clark and Redfern in the Westmount of today, is hard to imagine now. The account illustrates the value of documents such as our annual reports that contain first-hand descriptions of how our landscape has changed over the decades, and the impact of this change on our wildlife.

**Killdeer** - the earliest nest reported was one with three eggs at Ste. Dorothee on April 22.

On several occasions since 1946 a pair of Killdeer has been observed in a vacant lot of busy Sainte-Catherine Street between Clark and Redfern avenues, in the heart of Westmount. Prior to 1951 intensive cultivation of this lot may have thwarted them in their evident desire to nest there, but this year the lot was not cultivated, and the birds were successful in rearing a normal brood of four. The gradual melting of snow piled in the lot provided pools of water, attractive to the killdeer as well as the grackles, starlings and cowbirds. Even a few Red-wings lingered into May, perhaps hoping that cattails might appear!

First noted on April 2nd, the uneasy cries of the Killdeer could be heard, especially at night, throughout April and May, but only in early June was there actual evidence of nesting. On June 4 a spaniel was observed chasing a Killdeer which kept just ahead of the dog, calling agitatedly. Dropping to the ground occasionally, it would run a few feet and take wing again when overtaken. The field was encircled twice in course of the chase. On at least three occasions the Killdeer swooped at the dog; once it flew over Sainte-Catherine Street just above the passing traffic. Several pedestrians stopped to watch the chase in which the Killdeer's mate joined, but it was now a case of bird chasing dog. The spaniel soon tired of this, found a bone, buried it, and left the field to the victors. Later, while one of the Killdeer was standing motionless on guard, the four young came into focus one by one, as they fed within a hundred feet of the watchful parent. They were probably about 10 days old. It speaks volumes for the watchfulness and courage of the devoted parents that their young had thus far been safely reared in such a busy spot.

**Source:** P.Q.S.P.B. Annual Report, 1951, page 25



Killdeer illustration from P.A. Taverner's 1922 edition of *Birds of Eastern Canada*,

# SquirrelBuster®

PLUS

SPRING  
MEANS  
HUNGRY  
BIRDS!



[www.brome.com](http://www.brome.com)

**INFO** 1-800-856-5685



## Why drink Bird Protection Quebec's Shade-grown Coffee?

Your purchase helps support our work here at home and winter habitat for northern breeding birds. Species like the Golden-winged Warbler found at BPQ's Montée Biggar sanctuary migrate to shade-grown coffee farms in the winter. The coffee you choose matters to BPQ and the birds. [Click](#) to discover seven simple actions you can take to live bird friendly!

### Good News for Decaf Lovers!

Finally our Smithsonian Bird Friendly Organic Peru Royal Select MWP is back!!! This exclusive coffee is harvested from a group of 2,000 small-scale coffee farmers from La Florida Cooperative in the Chanchamayo region and is a mixed varietal of Bourbon, Catimor, Pache and Typica arabica beans grown at an elevation of 1,200 metres. This delicious decaf coffee presents with full body, low acidity and a touch of sweetness with flavour notes of chocolate, caramel and almond.

Available at [cafebirdfriendly.org](http://cafebirdfriendly.org)



## Available in 3 formats

342 g - \$18.50

1Kg - \$47.50

2.5 Kg \$100.00

2 roasts: Medium and dark

Whole beans or 2 grinds: Filter and espresso

Plus decaf option available in 1 kg bags

**Flat Rate Shipping \$12**

*Café AVIA is the result of a collaboration between Le Nichoir Wild Bird Conservation Centre and Totem Roasters. To help get the word out they partnered with other organizations such as Bird Protection Quebec. It's simple: Many voices are stronger than one. Each participating non-profit organization believes that the coffee you choose can change the world. By putting their logo on Bird Friendly® certified coffee they are helping to get the word out to more people. We hope you select Bird Protection Quebec as your partner of choice when purchasing coffee on [cafebirdfriendly.org](http://cafebirdfriendly.org)*