

Issue 64-3
February 2022



**Winter Birding
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.



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Vice-Presidents	Sheldon Harvey Ana Morales Connie Morgenstern
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Cover Photo: *Pierre Masse*
Photo this page: *Isabelle-Anne Bisson*

A Word FROM THE EDITORS

Valentine's Day has just passed us by as we publish this issue but there's still lots to love about birding in February! This issue is dedicated to showing you there's no need to hide inside even if you'd rather be wrapped cozily in a fluffy blanket with a glass of your favorite warming beverage handy to hide out from the cold and snow. Although, if you do, hopefully this issue's articles will keep you entertained and your mind on the birds. Our aim, though, is to inspire you to brave the elements and go out in search of the many "birds of winter" which can only be found at this time of year. We promise, they are out there! You just have to look.

As always, we thank our columnists. This month, Alain Goulet takes a deep dive into selecting the perfect set of binoculars. Pierre Bannon summarizes which species decided to hang around or pop in despite the winter weather. Our feature writer, Richard Gregson, starts off his new *Citizen Science* column with an overview of the Great Backyard Bird Count, showing us examples of how the data collected play an important role in studying avian population movements. We also welcome BPQ director Jeff Harrison to our team of writers, with another new column debuting this issue. Jeff has a passion for the history of early Quebec and Canadian ornithology and will be highlighting some of the interesting characters who have contributed to the field in each issue.

The Snow Bunting (not that long ago considered a delicacy for your table and only protected as a migratory species since the 1960s) is the subject of this month's feature article. Long time bird bander and BPQ member Gay McDougall Gruner provides insight into this species' winter survival strategies and challenges, as well as what is being done to study the adorable little "snowflake."

Of course, there is lots more content but we'd like to end this month's Editor's Message with a welcome to Jules Delisle, who has joined BPQ as its full-time coordinator. We were going to announce that this is a first for BPQ but instead we invite you to read our *Tales from the Archives* column. You'll find out, as we did while researching for this issue, that it's a good idea to review the history book every so often!

Connie and Darlene

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Winter is never an easy season to bird. Low temperatures and snowstorms make it hard for birders to get out there but the season is also a special one in that we get to see species we don't typically encounter like Snow Buntings and Snowy Owls. Some years we may hit the jackpot and see some irruptive species like Common Redpolls or Great Gray Owls. Other species, like Black-capped Chickadee and Northern Cardinal, are present year-round but I personally certainly appreciate their presence even more in the winter.

For those of you who have been birding for some decades, you probably have seen some noticeable changes too. American Robins, for example, have become a regular winter resident in Montreal and some large groups can be seen on Mount Royal and in the West Island. Eastern Bluebirds also seem to be following along the lines of robins, although less abundant of course. It's interesting to see these changes, and one can't help but to relate them to the environment around us. Both Mourning Doves and Dark-eyed Juncos have been increasing since the 1990s, certainly due to the increased number of feeders and the growing interest in birding.

Bird Protection Quebec, for its part, is continuing its "pandemic" activities. I feel like I've been saying this for months but we're really looking forward to getting back together with you on the field trips. We certainly hope that the conditions allow us to do so for spring migration.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to welcome Jules Delisle, our new project coordinator. You can read more about Jules and their role with BPQ on page 8.

Simon Duval

MESSAGE DU PRÉSIDENT

L'hiver n'est jamais une saison facile pour faire l'observation des oiseaux. Les températures basses et les tempêtes de neige rendent la tâche difficile aux observateurs d'oiseaux, mais cette saison est aussi spéciale car nous pouvons observer des espèces moins communes comme le Plectrophane des neiges ou le Harfang des neiges. Certaines années, on peut même être chanceux et frapper le gros lot en observant des espèces irruptives comme le Sizerin flammé ou la Chouette lapone. D'autres espèces comme la Mésange à tête noire ou le Cardinal rouge sont présents à l'année, mais personnellement, j'apprécie encore plus leur présence durant l'hiver.

Pour ceux et celles d'entre vous qui font de l'observation depuis quelques décennies, vous avez probablement remarqué des gros changements. Le Merle d'Amérique par exemple est devenu un résident hivernal assez régulier dans la région de Montréal et des gros groupes peuvent être vus notamment au Mont Royal ou dans l'Ouest de l'Île. Le Merlebleu de l'Est semble aussi s'inscrire dans la même tendance que le merle, quoi que moins abondant. C'est intéressant de voir ces changements et on ne peut s'empêcher de les relier à l'environnement qui nous entoure. La Tourterelle triste et le Junco ardoisé sont en augmentation durant l'hiver depuis les années 1990, certainement dû à une augmentation du nombre de mangeoires et de l'intérêt grandissante de la population envers l'observation des oiseaux.

Pour nous à Protection des Oiseaux du Québec, nous continuons nos activités en contexte « de pandémie ». J'ai l'impression de me répéter, depuis des mois, mais nous avons vraiment hâte de vous revoir en personne lors de nos sorties sur le terrain. Nous espérons que les directives gouvernementales nous permettront de remettre en place nos activités régulières pour la migration printanière.

Je profite aussi de l'occasion pour vous présenter Jules Delisle, notre nouvelle coordonnatrice de projets. Vous pouvez en savoir plus sur Jules et son rôle au sein de POQ à la page 8.

Simon Duval

Save the date!
À vos agendas !

Notice of Annual General Meeting Monday, May 30 at 7:00 p.m.

This year, we are holding our Annual General Meeting (AGM) via videoconference on Monday, May 30, at 7:00 p.m. We hope you will join us. We'd like to see as many members as possible. 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 30 mai à 19h00

L'Assemblée générale (AGA) aura lieu le lundi 30 mai à 19h00 via vidéoconférence. Venez nous rejoindre! Nous vous attendons en grand nombre. L'inscription est obligatoire. Les modalités d'inscription seront communiquées à l'approche de la date. L'ordre du jour de l'AGA inclura comme d'habitude les rapports annuels respectifs du président et du trésorier, ainsi que l'élection des membres du conseil d'administration.

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.

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 be received by April 18, 2022. 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 30, 2022. For a nomination form, or for any questions regarding the process, please email the Elections and Nominations Committee at:

bpqadmin@pqspb.org

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.

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 BPQ, et être reçue avant le 18 avril 2022. 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 30 mai 2022. Pour obtenir un formulaire de candidature, ou pour toute question concernant le processus, veuillez envoyer un courriel au Comité des élections et des candidatures à l'adresse **bpqadmin@pqspb.org**

ANNOUNCEMENT - PROJECT COORDINATOR

AVIS - COORDONNATRICE DES PROJETS

We are pleased to share with you that Jules Delisle joined Bird Protection Quebec in January 2022. As project coordinator, Jules will help further the work of the board and our various committees, with particular emphasis on sanctuary management and proposals for improvement. They will also be assisting by setting up a volunteer management system to better coordinate the use of our invaluable and talented volunteer base.

Jules holds a Bachelor's Degree in Biology (Ecology) from l'Université du Québec à Rimouski and a Masters in Biological Sciences from l'Université de Montréal. They worked with Les Amis de la Montagne for several years, working with and educating the public about Mount-Royal Park and managing the volunteers, as well as being a part of the conservation team.

This is a departure for BPQ, which for most of its 105 year history has relied exclusively on volunteers to carry out its mission. The board is excited about the opportunities that having Jules on board will bring to advancing our many ongoing projects.

Nous sommes heureux de vous annoncer que Jules Delisle s'est joint à Protection des oiseaux du Québec en janvier 2022. En tant que coordonnatrice des projets, Jules aidera à faire avancer le travail du conseil d'administration et de nos différents comités, en mettant l'accent sur la gestion des sanctuaires et les propositions d'amélioration. Elle apportera également son aide en mettant en place un système de gestion des bénévoles afin de mieux coordonner l'utilisation de notre précieuse et talentueuse base de bénévoles.

Jules est titulaire d'un baccalauréat en biologie (écologie) de l'Université du Québec à Rimouski et d'une maîtrise en sciences biologiques de l'Université de Montréal. Elle a travaillé avec Les Amis de la Montagne pendant plusieurs années, en travaillant avec le public et en le sensibilisant au parc du Mont-Royal, en gérant les bénévoles et en faisant partie de l'équipe de conservation.

Il s'agit d'un changement pour POQ qui, pendant la plupart de son 105 ans d'existence, a compté exclusivement sur des bénévoles pour mener à bien sa mission. Le conseil d'administration se réjouit des possibilités qu'offrira l'arrivée de Jules pour faire avancer nos nombreux projets en cours.



Jules and a Grey Catbird at Forillon National Park's banding station

Jules avec un moqueur chat à la station de baguage au parc national Forillon

The Birds of Winter

Les oiseaux d'hiver



American Tree Sparrow
Bruant hudsonien
Photo: Tom Long

Common Redpoll
Sizerin flammé
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Northern Hawk Owl
Chouette épervière
Photo: Frederik Gustavsson



Focus on

OUR MEMBERS



A BIG WELCOME TO OUR NEW AND RETURNING MEMBERS

David Sweetlove, Kay-Maria Sweetlove, Robert Vincent, Debra Titone, Dominic Bourret, Peter Nicholson, Christine Muhling, Lori Perkins, Jennifer Southam and family, Mirra Ferlatte, Ashley-Maria Reed, and Suzie Bergeron.

We look forward to meeting you in person one day soon! In the meantime, be sure to follow us on Facebook and to join our Song Sparrow e-list group [here](#) to connect with fellow members. And be sure to check out our upcoming Zoom lectures on page 22.

MEMBERSHIPS

Our membership drive for this season is over and we are grateful that so many of you chose to continue to support BPQ and its mission, particularly given the challenges everyone has been dealing with due to the pandemic. Despite the reduction in some activities, our monthly lectures have continued by Zoom and have proven very popular, our virtual field trips have kept us connected, and our other work - such as funding research and education projects, managing our sanctuaries and, of course, publishing *The Song Sparrow* - continues unaffected.

GIFTING

Trying to think of a unique gift for a nature lover in your life? Consider a one-year BPQ membership! Use the "Join" link on our website by [clicking here](#), complete the personal information for your gift recipient, and make a note in the "additional information" section that it is a gift from you. We can even send a gift acknowledgement if you request it.

BIENVENUE AUX NOUVEAUX MEMBRES

David Sweetlove, Kay-Maria Sweetlove, Robert Vincent, Debra Titone, Dominic Bourret, Peter Nicholson, Christine Muhling, Lori Perkins, Jennifer Southam et famille, Mirra Ferlatte, Ashley-Maria Reed, et Suzie Bergeron.

Nous sommes impatients de vous rencontrer! En attendant, n'oubliez pas de vous inscrire à notre liste d'abonnés virtuels « Song Sparrow » [en cliquant ici](#) pour vous connecter avec d'autres membres ainsi que nous suivre sur Facebook. Et consultez nos prochaines conférences Zoom à la page 22.

ADHÉSIONS

Notre campagne d'adhésion pour cette saison est terminée et nous apprécions grandement le nombre d'entre vous qui ont choisi de continuer à soutenir POQ et sa mission, en particulier compte tenu des défis que chacun a dû relever en raison de la pandémie. Malgré la réduction de certaines activités, nos conférences mensuelles se sont poursuivies par Zoom et se sont avérées très populaires, nos sorties ornitho virtuelles nous ont permis de rester connectés, et nos autres activités - telles que le financement de projets de recherche et d'éducation, la gestion de nos sanctuaires et, bien sûr, la publication de « *The Song Sparrow* » - se poursuivent sans être affectées.

IDÉE CADEAU

Vous cherchez un cadeau unique pour un amoureux de la nature dans votre entourage ? Pensez à offrir une adhésion d'un an à la BPQ ! Utilisez le lien « Adhésion » sur notre site Web [en cliquant ici](#), remplissez les informations actuelles du destinataire du cadeau et indiquez dans la section « Informations complémentaires » qu'il s'agit d'un cadeau de votre part. Nous pouvons même envoyer un accusé de réception du cadeau si vous le demandez.

AND NOW ... A WORD OF THANKS

Last year, member and artist Lisa Kimberly Glickman came up with a unique way to use her talents to get through a quarantine period, while at the same time doing something positive to protect birds and their habitat.

Lisa is based in Montreal and has had her work shown at dozens of exhibitions, primarily on the West Island and in Montreal but also as far afield as Toronto and Rhode Island. She decided to combine her artistic talent and love of birds to produce "Whimsical Birds to Colour - Nos Beaux Oiseaux: dessins à colorier," a bilingual educational colouring book comprising 25 of the author/artist's favourite creatures, and committed to sharing a portion of the sale proceeds with BPQ. To date book sales have resulted in Lisa generously donating \$900 to support our work.

So pleased was she - and her many customers! - with the results, Lisa tells us she is currently working on book #2, which will focus on water birds. She is determined to reach her original goal of donating \$1,000 to support birds, and we are grateful to her for choosing BPQ as the beneficiary.

Go to <https://globalnews.ca/video/7654485/whimsical-birds-to-colour> to hear Lisa tell her story - and get your pencils sharpened for book #2!

ET MAINTENANT ... UN MOT DE REMERCIEMENT

L'année dernière, Lisa Kimberly Glickman, membre et artiste, a trouvé une façon unique d'utiliser ses talents pour passer une période de quarantaine, tout en faisant quelque chose de positif pour protéger les oiseaux et leur habitat.

Lisa est établie à Montréal et ses œuvres ont été présentées dans des dizaines d'expositions, principalement dans l'Ouest-de-l'Île et à Montréal, mais aussi à Toronto et à Rhode Island. Elle a décidé de combiner son talent artistique et son amour des oiseaux pour produire « Whimsical Birds to Colour - Nos Beaux Oiseaux : dessins à colorier », un livre à colorier éducatif bilingue comprenant 25 des créatures préférées de l'auteur/artiste, et s'est engagée à partager une partie des recettes de la vente avec POQ. À ce jour, les ventes du livre ont permis à Lisa de faire un généreux don de 900 \$ pour soutenir notre travail.

Elle était si heureuse - et ses nombreux clients ! - qu'elle travaille actuellement sur le livre n° 2, qui portera sur les oiseaux aquatiques. Elle est déterminée à atteindre son objectif initial de faire un don de 1 000 \$ pour soutenir les oiseaux, et nous lui sommes reconnaissants d'avoir choisi POQ comme bénéficiaire.

Rendez-vous sur le site

<https://globalnews.ca/video/7654485/whimsical-birds-to-colour> pour écouter Lisa raconter son histoire - et taillez vos crayons pour le livre n°2 !

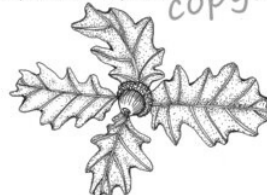


BLUE JAY IN OAK TREES

GEAI BLEU DANS UN CHÊNE (CYANOCITTA CRISTATA)

Blue Jays are related to Crows and Ravens, and, like them, are super smart. In captivity, they have been seen using tools to get food. They adore acorns and have been credited with propagating oak trees after the last glacial period. They aren't even blue -- it's a trick of the light, as their pigment is caused by melanin, which is brown. Wet Blue Jay feathers look brown, as the light refraction that makes it look blue (to our eyes) is disrupted. The black striations across their faces, nape and throat vary from bird to bird and may help them to recognize one another. They are known to mimic the calls of hawks. Males and females look alike. They keep their crests down when eating with family members or taking care of babies. Their call rings boisterous at the feeders.

Les Geais bleus sont de la même famille que les Corbeaux et les Corneilles et, comme eux, sont très intelligents. En captivité, ils ont été observés en train d'utiliser des outils pour obtenir de la nourriture. Ils raffolent des glands et ils ont aidé à propager les chênes après la dernière période glaciaire. En fait, ils ne sont pas vraiment bleus; ce n'est qu'un effet de la lumière. Leur pigmentation est causée par la mélanine, qui est brune. Quand une plume de Geai bleu est mouillée, elle paraît brune, car la réfraction de la lumière qui la fait paraître bleue est perturbée. Les rayures noires de leur visage, nuque et gorge varient d'un oiseau à l'autre et peuvent les aider à se reconnaître. Les Geais imitent parfois le cri de rapaces. Les mâles et les femelles se ressemblent. Ils gardent leur huppe dressée lorsqu'ils mangent avec des membres de leur famille ou lorsqu'ils occupent leurs bébés. Ils sont parmi les oiseaux les plus actifs et bruyants au mangeoires.

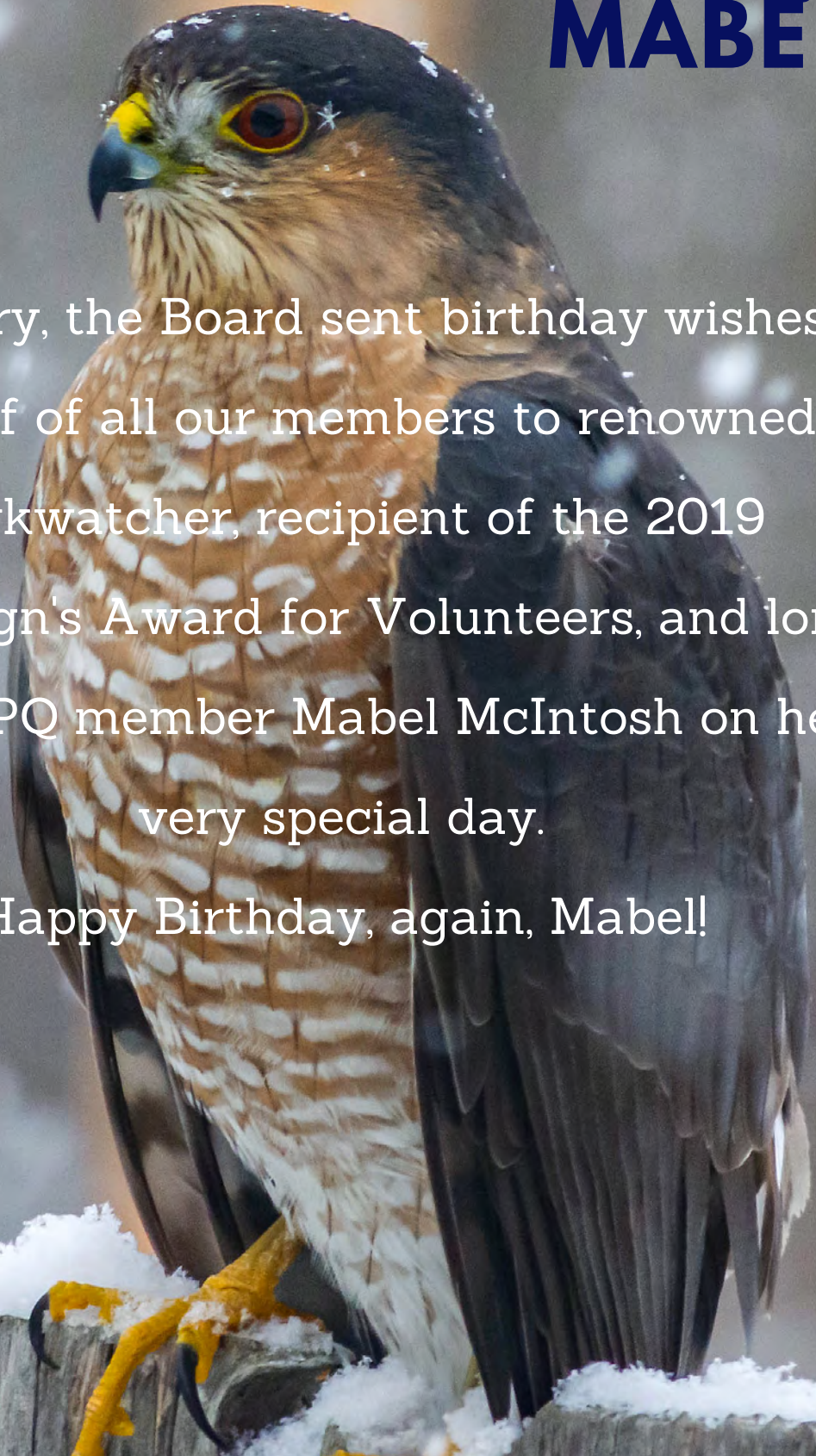




*Happy 100th
Birthday!*
MABEL

In January, the Board sent birthday wishes on behalf of all our members to renowned hawkwatcher, recipient of the 2019 Sovereign's Award for Volunteers, and long-time BPQ member Mabel McIntosh on her very special day.

Happy Birthday, again, Mabel!



Focus on

FIELD OBSERVATIONS



Field Trip Committee Report by Wayne Grubert, Chair

With many COVID recommendations and restrictions still in place, and our usual switch to concentrate on Christmas Bird Counts, our BPQ Field Trip Committee events have been limited since our last newsletter report. We did, however, hold one day of in person "mini-trips" to end the 2021 season and one "virtual" trip to kick off the New Year.

November 27th saw two groups battle the elements as strong cold northwest winds had replaced the previous day's heavy wet snowfall. Dark cloudy conditions only added to the difficulties of finding and identifying birds. George Levitchouk led a small contingent of five birders to the Mount Royal Cemetery, where they managed to find 12 species under harsh conditions, most of which were concentrated around feeders. Wayne Grubert, and Darlene and Sheldon Harvey led a group of 11 intrepid individuals farther afield to the Beauharnois, Melocheville and St-Louis-de-Gonzague areas. Given the conditions, they were happy with their list of 32 species which included a close Golden Eagle, several Bald Eagles, a Red-necked Grebe and two American Coots.

To kick off the New Year, a virtual field trip was held with participants asked to submit their first avian observations from January 1 in chronological order. The idea was to crown a particular species as "First Bird of the Year." This event proved very popular, no doubt aided by COVID-muted New Year's Eve celebrations the night before! A total of 44 participants submitted 36 reports. In the end it seems that American Crow took the honour of "First Bird" having been observed first by more groups than any other

species. Appeals could be made on behalf of Black-capped Chickadees and Northern Cardinals as they were actually on more people's lists for the day. In any case, it was a nice way to start the year even if the warm, foggy conditions did not really seem like January.

The Field Trip Committee continues to monitor the situation with regard to COVID. Activity updates will be made available via our usual social media accounts.



Golden Eagle
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Pierre Bannon's

BIRD VIEWS

December 2021-January 2022

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

The winter started with mild temperatures in December but turned much colder in January. Highlights for the period were the amazing discovery of three Bramblings, a passerine of northern Eurasia previously found only once in the province, a Northern Lapwing, a Mountain Bluebird and an Ivory Gull. Western visitors almost annual in Québec during the winter were represented by the Townsend's Solitaire, the Varied Thrush, the Lark Sparrow, the Harris's Sparrow, and the Yellow-headed Blackbird. Some summer resident species that appear to be more frequent in recent winters were also represented by the Red-shouldered Hawk, the Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, the Eastern Bluebird, and the Hermit Thrush.



PIERRE BANNON

PARLONS D'OISEAUX

Décembre 2021 - janvier 2022

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

L'hiver a débuté avec des températures douces en décembre mais est devenu beaucoup plus froid en janvier. Les faits saillants de la période ont été l'étonnante découverte de trois Pinsons du Nord, un passereau du nord de l'Eurasie qui n'a été aperçu qu'une seule fois auparavant dans la province, un Vanneau huppé, un Merlebleu azuré et une Mouette blanche. Les visiteurs de l'Ouest quasi annuels au Québec durant l'hiver étaient représentés par le Solitaire de Townsend, la Grive à collier, le Bruant à joues marron, le Bruant à face noire et le Carouge à tête jaune. Par ailleurs, certaines espèces communes en été mais qui semblent devenir de plus en plus fréquentes en hiver étaient représentées par la Buse à épaulettes, le Pic maculé, le Merlebleu de l'Est, et la Grive solitaire.

Greater White-fronted Goose: singles at Noyan 5-12 Dec (T. Jobin) and at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 15-17 Dec (R. Boulet). **Tundra Bean-Goose:** the bird present in southern Québec last fall was last reported at Noyan 5 Dec (T. Jobin) and at Saint-Georges-de-Clarenceville 6 Dec (M. Landry). **Gadwall:** a female at Matane 15 Jan, very unusual for the date (JA. Banville). **King Eider:** an imm male was harvested by a hunter on Lake Saint-Louis near Dorval 30 Dec (*fide* D. Bellemare). **Harlequin Duck:** single birds at Laval 18-23 Dec (S. Duchemin, m. obs.), Sorel 24 Dec (J. Lemoyne) and Beauharnois 12-28 Jan (D. Collins). **Willow Ptarmigan:** a hunter harvested 2 birds (from a group of three) about 20 km north of Saint-Michel-des-Saints on 28 Nov (*fide* J. Gagnon, A. Sylvain); rarely reported so far south. **Rock Ptarmigan:** three birds reported 20 km south of Fermont 31 Dec (B. Jolicoeur, A. Plourde, ph.). **Wild Turkey:** a group of six birds near the limits of its range at Saint-Fabien, in the Lower St. Lawrence 2-15 Jan (D. Berteaux).

Northern Lapwing: a bird stopped at l'Anse aux Baleiniers (Les îles de la Madeleine) 2-3 Dec, giving the 7th record for the province (André Couture, A. Richard, DG. Gaudet). **Killdeer:** one at Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 6 Jan (F. Roy). **Dunlin:** singles at Yamachiche 4 Dec (JP. Ruddy), Rimouski 9-10 Dec (G. Gendron) and at Les Îles de la Madeleine 11 Dec (André Couture). **Ivory Gull:** an immature bird made a short stop at Sept-Îles 25-26 Dec (B. Duchesne, C. Couture, ph.). **Common Gull (canus canus):** one last seen at Les Escoumins 1 Dec (D. Turgeon). **Great Shearwater:** a record late bird was well described at Cap-des-Rosiers 18 Dec (D. Jalbert, A. Gagnon, P. Skene, K. St-Onge). **Double-crested Cormorant:** eight birds seen at Ile Rouge (Les Îles de la Madeleine) 31 Dec (Claude Roy, J. Roy). **Black-crowned Night-Heron:** one at Aylmer 10 Dec-3 Jan (M. Turcot).

Black Vulture: single birds seen 20 km north of Baie-Comeau 19 Dec (A. Bélanger, G. Farcy, ph.), at Matane 5-8 Jan (S. Girard, ph.) and at Saint-André-Avellin 31 Jan + (T. Gicquel de Menou, ph.). Curiously, this species has now been reported in the last 4 winters. **Turkey Vulture:** some notable groups still present in Dec, eg. 5 at Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 7 Dec (R. Boulet), 5 at Ayer's Cliff 9 Dec (H. Ghali), and 5 at Otterburn Park 23 Dec (V. Sévigny). **Red-shouldered Hawk:** at least 20 sites were visited by this species during the period. **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker:** notably, at least 16 birds were reported during the period, especially in the Montréal area, but one at Mont-Joli 9-28 Jan was remarkable (P. Fradette)

Marsh Wren: a bird was late at Nicolet 31 Dec (D. Trescak). **Eastern Bluebird:** several lingering groups involving no less than 150 birds were still reported in the province in Dec-Jan, clearly an enormous increase for the period compared to 10 years ago. **Mountain Bluebird:** a female was enjoyed by numerous observers and photographers at Saint-Pierre-de-Broughton 24 Dec-18 Jan, the 13th record for the province (M. Vachon, F. Cloutier). **Townsend's Solitaire:** singles at Saint-Anaclet-de-Lessard 18 Dec (G. Bouchard), Lévis 26 Dec (B. Jobin), Terrebonne 24 Dec- 1 Jan (J. Roy, m. obs.), Douglstown 30 Dec-23 Jan (S. Bourdages) and at Sept-Îles 19-31 Jan+ (S. Gaudreau, m. obs.). **Swainson's Thrush:** a bird turned up at Québec City 15 Dec-3 Jan (P. Lane) and another bird at Gatineau 5-7 Jan that provided a record late date for the province (D. Dallaire, R. Dubois). **Hermit Thrush:** in the last few years, this species has extended its winter territory to the north. This year, at least 50 localities were visited by the species in Dec-Jan, the northernmost being Forestville 2-7 Dec (B. Gagnon), Sainte-Flavie 15 Dec (S. Bérubé), and Les Escoumins 6 Jan (S. Delisle). **Varied Thrush:** one continued at Saint-Émilie-de-l'Énergie until 21 Jan (m. obs.) and another at Saint-Fulgence 9-15 Jan (J. Fortin) and at Dégelis 24-28 Jan (*fide* P. Fradette). **Gray Catbird:** 4 birds reported during the period, including one at Val-d'Or 2 Jan (S. Bilodeau).

Oie rieuse: des oiseaux à Noyan 5-12 déc (T. Jobin) et à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 15-17 déc (R. Boulet). **Oie de la toundra:** l'individu présent dans le sud du Québec l'automne dernier a été signalé pour la dernière fois à Noyan 5 déc (T. Jobin) et à Saint-Georges-de-Clarenceville 6 déc (M. Landry). **Canard chipeau:** une femelle à Matane 15 janv, très inhabituel pour la date (JA. Banville). **Eider à tête grise:** un mâle imm a été récolté par un chasseur au lac Saint-Louis près de Dorval 30 déc (*fide* D. Bellemare). **Arlequin plongeur:** des oiseaux à Laval 18-23 déc (S. Duchemin, pl. obs.), Sorel 24 déc (J. Lemoyne) et Beauharnois 12-28 jan (D. Collins). **Lagopède des saules:** un chasseur a récolté 2 oiseaux (d'un groupe de trois) à environ 20 km au nord de Saint-Michel-des-Saints 28 nov (*fide* J. Gagnon, A. Sylvain); rarement signalée si loin au sud. **Lagopède alpin:** trois oiseaux signalés à 20 km au sud de Fermont 31 déc (B. Jolicoeur, A. Plourde, ph.). **Dindon sauvage :** un groupe de six près des limites de son aire de répartition à Saint-Fabien, Bas-Saint-Laurent 2-15 jan (D. Berteaux).

Vanneau huppé: un oiseau s'est arrêté à l'Anse aux Baleiniers (Les îles de la Madeleine) 2-3 déc, la 7e mention pour la province (André Couture, A. Richard, DG. Gaudet). **Pluvier kildir:** un à Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 6 janv (F. Roy). **Bécasseau variable:** des oiseaux à Yamachiche 4 déc (JP. Ruddy), Rimouski 9-10 déc (G. Gendron) et aux Îles de la Madeleine 11 déc (André Couture). **Mouette blanche:** un immature a fait une courte escale à Sept-Îles 25-26 déc. (B. Duchesne, C. Couture, ph.). **Goéland cendré (canus canus):** un encore présent à Les Escoumins 1er déc (D. Turgeon). **Puffin majeur:** un oiseau bien décrit à Cap-des-Rosiers le 18 déc, une nouvelle date tardive (D. Jalbert, A. Gagnon, P. Skene, K. St-Onge). **Cormoran à aigrettes:** huit oiseaux vus à l'Île Rouge (Les Îles de la Madeleine) 31 déc (Claude Roy, J. Roy). **Bihoreau gris:** un à Aylmer 10 déc-3 janv (M. Turcot).

Urubu noir: des oiseaux vus à 20 km au nord de Baie-Comeau 19 déc. (A. Bélanger, G. Farcy, ph.), à Matane 5-8 janv. (S. Girard, ph.) et à Saint-André-Avellin 31 jan + (T. Gicquel de Menou, ph.). Curieusement, cette espèce a maintenant été signalée au cour des 4 derniers hivers. **Urubu à tête rouge:** quelques groupes notables encore présents en déc, eg. 5 à Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu 7 déc (R. Boulet), 5 à Ayer's Cliff 9 déc (H. Ghali) et 5 à Otterburn Park 23 déc (V. Sévigny). **Buse à épauettes:** au moins une vingtaine de sites ont été visités par l'espèce durant la période. **Pic maculé:** remarquablement, au moins 16 oiseaux ont été signalés durant la période, surtout près de Montréal, mais un à Mont-Joli 9-28 Jan était surprenant (P. Fradette).

Troglodyte des marais: un oiseau tardif à Nicolet 31 déc (D. Trescak). **Merlebleu de l'Est:** plusieurs groupes impliquant pas moins de 150 oiseaux étaient encore signalés dans la province en déc-jan, clairement une énorme augmentation comparé à la même période il y a 10 ans. **Merlebleu azuré:** une femelle a séduit de nombreux observateurs et photographes à Saint-Pierre-de-Broughton 24 déc-18 jan, la 13e mention pour la province (M. Vachon, F. Cloutier). **Solitaire de Townsend:** des oiseaux à Saint-Anaclet-de-Lessard 18 déc (G. Bouchard), Lévis 26 déc (B. Jobin), Terrebonne 24 déc-1 janv (J. Roy, m. obs.), Douglstown 30 déc-23 janv (S. Bourdages) et à Sept-Îles 19-31 janv + (S. Gaudreau, pl. obs.). **Grive à dos olive:** un oiseau s'est présenté à Québec 15 déc-3 janv (P. Lane) et un autre à Gatineau 5-7 janv, ce qui a procuré une date tardive record pour la province (D. Dallaire, R. Dubois). **Grive solitaire:** ces dernières années, cette espèce a étendu son territoire d'hivernage vers le nord. Cette année, au moins 50 localités ont été visitées par l'espèce en déc-janv, les plus au nord étant Forestville 2-7 déc (B. Gagnon), Sainte-Flavie 15 déc (S. Bérubé) et Les Escoumins 6 janv (S. Delisle). **Grive à collier:** un individu toujours présent à Saint-Émilie-de-l'Énergie 21 janv (pl. obs.), puis un autre à Saint-Fulgence 9-15 janv (J. Fortin) et à Dégelis 24-28 Jan (*fide* P. Fradette).

Eurasian Tree Sparrow: the bird that showed up at Saint-Barthélemy in Nov was last seen 29 Dec (m. obs.). **Brambling:** another mega rarity for 2021-22; up to 3 birds were reported. The first at Val-David 29 Nov-10 Dec (J. Marquis, J. Laperrière, m. obs.), the second at Pierrefonds 10-11 Dec (J. Campeau, F. Duhamel), and the third at Grondines 8-30 Jan (C. Beaupré, m. obs.). These exceptional presences correspond to a peak of abundance in western Europe this past fall. **Lark Sparrow:** one at Cap d'Espoir (Gaspésie) 17 Dec-23 Jan (Albini Couture). **Dark-eyed Junco (Oregon):** single females at Cap Tourmente (S. Martel, G. Giroux) and at Salaberry-de-Valleyfield (D. Simon) both 25-28 Jan +. **Harris's Sparrow:** one at Saint-Rosaire 19 Dec-31 Jan (M. Saint-Louis). **Vesper Sparrow:** single birds were at Saint-Basile-le-Grand 21 Dec-12 Jan (K. Bouzidi, m. obs.), Coteau-du-Lac 22 Dec (M. Parent), and at Saint-Urbain 23-24 Dec (Lucien Lemay). **Lincoln's Sparrow:** up to 3 birds were present in the Québec City harbor 5-28 Dec (G. Cyr et al.) and one visited Sainte-Catherine 29 Dec (Lucien Lemay). **Yellow-headed Blackbird:** the bird present at Saint-Barthélemy in Nov was last reported 19 Dec (m. obs.). Single birds also appeared at Saint-Basile-le-Grand 1-16 Jan (E. Desfossés Foucault, m. obs.) and at Sainte-Anne-de-Sorel 13-28 Jan (L. Lemoyne et al.). **Eastern Meadowlark:** one at Dundee 22 Dec was late (D. Simon).

Orange-crowned Warbler: singles at Gatineau 21 Nov-9 Jan (*vide* F. Bédard), at Rivière-du-Loup 8-11 Jan (S. Beau) and at Sainte-Catherine 13-14 Jan (J. Coté, m. obs.). **Cape May Warbler:** a late bird at Sainte-Catherine 12 Dec (A. Quenneville, S. Cardinal). **Yellow-throated Warbler:** the bird present at Lavaltrie since Nov was found dead 12 Jan (A. Marcoux). **Summer Tanager:** one at Gaspé 3-5 Dec (S. Arbour). **Rose-breasted Grosbeak:** an imm male at Percé 11 Jan (L. Brochet). **Indigo Bunting:** a female at Madeleine-Centre (Gaspésie) 15-24 Dec (W. Fortin, ph.), an imm male at Saint-Philippe-de-Laprairie 27 Dec (L. St-Jean, ph.) and most probably the same individual 8 km further at LaPrairie 30-31 Jan (G. Guibord, ph.). This is the 3rd consecutive year with the presence of this species in winter in the province.

Addendum: A **Ross's Goose** at Drummondville 26 Dec 2015 established a record late date for the province (Claude Roy).

Please report your interesting bird sightings to Pierre Bannon, by E-mail at pierre.bannon@icloud.com

Moqueur chat: 4 oiseaux signalés, dont un à Val-d'Or 2 janv (S. Bilodeau).

Moineau friquet: l'oiseau présent à Saint-Barthélemy en nov a été vu pour la dernière fois 29 déc (pl. obs.). **Pinson du nord:** une autre méga rareté pour 2021-22; jusqu'à 3 individus ont été signalés. Le 1er à Val-David 29 nov-10 déc (J. Marquis, J. Laperrière, pl. obs.), le 2ième à Pierrefonds 10-11 déc (J. Campeau, F. Duhamel), et le 3ième à Grondines 8-30 janv (C. Beaupré, pl. obs.). Ces présences exceptionnelles coïncident avec un pic d'abondance en Europe de l'Ouest cet automne. **Bruant à joues marron:** un à Cap d'Espoir (Gaspé) 17 déc-23 jan (Albini Couture). **Junco ardoisé (Oregon):** des femelles à Cap Tourmente (S. Martel, G. Giroux) et à Salaberry-de-Valleyfield (D. Simon) toutes les deux 25-28 janv +. **Bruant à face noire:** un à Saint-Rosaire 19 déc-31 janv. (M. St-Louis). **Bruant vespéral:** des oiseaux à Saint-Basile-le-Grand 21 déc-12 janv. (K. Bouzidi, pl. obs.), Coteau-du-Lac 22 déc (M. Parent), et à Saint-Urbain 23-24 déc (Lucien Lemay). **Bruant de Lincoln:** jusqu'à 3 oiseaux étaient présents dans le port de Québec 5-28 déc (G. Cyr et al.) et un a visité Sainte-Catherine 29 déc (Lucien Lemay). **Carouge à tête jaune:** l'oiseau présent à Saint-Barthélemy en nov a été signalé pour la dernière fois le 19 déc (pl. obs.). Des oiseaux sont également apparus à Saint-Basile-le-Grand 1-16 janv (E. Desfossés Foucault, pl. obs.) et à Sainte-Anne-de-Sorel 13-28 janv (L. Lemoyne et al.). **Sturnelle des prés:** un oiseau à Dundee 22 déc était tardif (D. Simon).

Paruline verdâtre: des oiseaux à Gatineau 21 nov-9 janv (*vide* F. Bédard), à Rivière-du-Loup 8-11 janv (S. Beau) et à Sainte-Catherine 13-14 janv (J. Coté, pl. obs.). **Paruline tigrée:** un oiseau tardif à Sainte-Catherine 12 déc (A. Quenneville, S. Cardinal). **Paruline à gorge jaune:** l'oiseau présent à Lavaltrie depuis nov a été retrouvé mort 12 janv (A. Marcoux). **Piranga vermillon:** un à Gaspé 3-5 déc (S. Arbour). **Cardinal à poitrine rose:** un mâle imm à Percé 11 janv (L. Brochet). **Passerin indigo:** une femelle à Madeleine-Centre (Gaspésie) 15-24 déc (W. Fortin, ph.), un mâle imm à Saint-Philippe-de-Laprairie 27 déc (L. St-Jean, ph.) et probablement le même individu 8 km plus loin à LaPrairie 30-31 janv (G. Guibord, ph.). Il s'agit de la 3ième année consécutive avec présence hivernale de cette espèce dans la province.

Addendum: Une **Oie de Ross** à Drummondville le 26 déc 2015 a procuré une date tardive record pour la province (Claude Roy).

Veillez communiquer vos observations intéressantes à Pierre Bannon par courriel à: pierre.bannon@icloud.com



FOCUS ON GRANTS

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

In this column we will provide progress reports from our grant recipients.

SPRING MIGRATORY BIRD SURVEY TO SUPPORT THE PROTECTION OF SANDY BEACH FOREST IN HUDSON, QUEBEC

2021 Grant Proposal from Nature Hudson: Funding for a 3-month survey in support of conserving this area

Loss of urban greenspaces is a serious problem in the Greater Montreal Region but the small town of Hudson is still home to important forest and wetland bird habitats. The iconic Sandy Beach forest has been identified by municipal, regional, provincial and national governments as a priority conservation area.

Despite the high ecological, social and cultural value of this area, urbanization pressure has resulted in a 214 unit residential development being proposed. The development would result in wetlands and a large proportion of the diverse mixed forest being removed. Previous biological studies lack critical spring bird surveys but databases suggest complete spring surveys will identify many migratory bird species. [The requested grant] from BPQ is to complete a 3-month spring 2021 bird survey to support conservation of this vital, iconic and regionally significant habitat. It will offer hands-on learning opportunities for an undergraduate student and numerous community and BPQ volunteers.

Decision:

On the recommendation of the grants committee, the board approved the awarding of a grant in the amount of \$3,566 for this project.

An excerpt from the biological report prepared for Nature Hudson by TerraHumana Solutions follows. If you are interested in reviewing the complete report, [click here](#).



POINT DE MIRE SUR LES SUBVENTIONS

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

RELEVÉ DES OISEAUX MIGRATEURS AU PRINTEMPS POUR APPUYER LA PROTECTION DE LA FORÊT DE SANDY BEACH À HUDSON, QUÉBEC

**Proposition de subvention de Nature Hudson :
Financement d'une étude de trois mois pour soutenir la conservation de cette zone.**

La perte d'espaces verts urbains est un problème grave dans la région du Grand Montréal, mais la petite ville de Hudson abrite encore d'importants habitats forestiers et humides pour les oiseaux. La forêt emblématique de Sandy Beach a été identifiée par les gouvernements municipal, régional, provincial et national comme une priorité de conservation.

Malgré la grande valeur écologique, sociale et culturelle de cette zone, la pression de l'urbanisation a entraîné la proposition d'un développement résidentiel de 214 unités. Ce projet entraînerait la disparition des zones humides et d'une grande partie de la forêt mixte diversifiée. Les études biologiques antérieures manquent de relevés critiques des oiseaux au printemps, mais les bases de données suggèrent que des relevés complets au printemps permettront d'identifier de nombreuses espèces d'oiseaux migrateurs. (La subvention demandée à BPQ permettra de réaliser une étude de trois mois sur les oiseaux au printemps 2021 afin de soutenir la conservation de cet habitat vital, emblématique et d'importance régionale. Elle offrira des possibilités d'apprentissage pratique à un étudiant de premier cycle et à de nombreux bénévoles de la communauté et de POQ.

Décision :

Sur recommandation du comité des subventions, le conseil d'administration a approuvé l'octroi d'une subvention d'un montant de 3 566 \$ pour ce projet.

Un extrait du rapport biologique préparé pour Nature Hudson par TerraHumana Solutions suit. Si vous souhaitez consulter le rapport complet, [cliquez ici](#). (Le rapport a été rédigé en anglais. Une version française sera disponible prochainement à l'adresse <http://naturehudson.org/fr/past-news/>.)

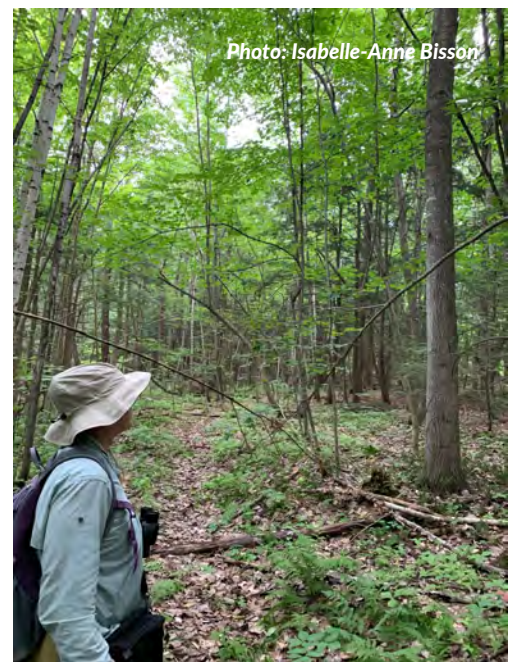
EXTRACTED FROM: REPORT BY TERRAHUMANA SOLUTIONS
ECOLOGICAL CHARACTERIZATION OF AN AREA OF INTEREST IN HUDSON, QUÉBEC
November 2021

Executive Summary

A 10.35 ha forested wetland situated on the shores of the Ottawa River in the town of Hudson, Québec, has recently been targeted for residential development. In the spring of 2021, Nature Hudson, and the Legacy Fund for the Environment mandated TerraHumana Solutions to conduct an ecological evaluation of this area (the study area). The study area included the natural space between Royalview street and Jack Layton Park (Lot MH2 or eastern block), and the area called Sandy Beach (Lot MH3 or western block). Previous studies have listed this area as the highest priority for conservation. We completed 26 field surveys to assess plants, insects, amphibians, reptiles, birds, and bats from 4 April to 22 July 2021. The objectives of this ecological characterization were to delimit the wetlands, inventory the flora and fauna, identify species at risk, and provide recommendations based on the study's findings. We observed and positively identified 354 species of flora and fauna, including a total of 29 species at risk. Among the species at risk, we identified 13 plant species, three insect species, three turtle species, six bird species, and four bat species. We therefore conclude that the area is of ecological significance. We would recommend that the town of Hudson take the findings of this study into account and consider revisiting its plan to develop the study area.



Figure 1.
Map of the 2021 study area in Hudson, Québec, showing georectified developer property lines, the wetland delimitation measured in this study, and the sampled vernal pool locations. Georectification is a mapping tool used to align the proposed development plans to the coordinates on the maps. Some differences will occur. Only a land surveyor is authorized under the law to conduct delimitation or positioning of properties. Map prepared with OpenStreetMap (in French), Nicanco Holdings Plan 2: Plan d'Implantation, 30 June 2020 (in French).



Conclusion and recommendations

The study area is a vital resource for the flora, fauna, and human population of this region and beyond. It is unique to the area, and its loss will affect species well beyond the boundaries of the site itself. The existing backfill plans (Figure 2) of the wetlands will have negative consequences for many at-risk species. Wetlands slated to be filled include some of the richest biota of the study area. At-risk plants would be removed, birds would lose feeding perches and nests, bats would lose roosts and potential maternity trees, fish and amphibians would be impacted by reduced dissolved oxygen in the water and turtles would suffer from the loss of habitat and traffic mortality from increased human presence. Of the 29 species at risk documented in our study, the government lists only the map turtle within an eight-km radius of the study area, implying that few surveys exist of the site. The 28 currently unlisted species at risk we observed should be registered with the CDPNQ. The database tracks populations of animal and plant species to inform biodiversity conservation efforts at the provincial level. The province's current knowledge of the site is therefore insufficient, and development permits granted on that basis do not reflect the value of the site.

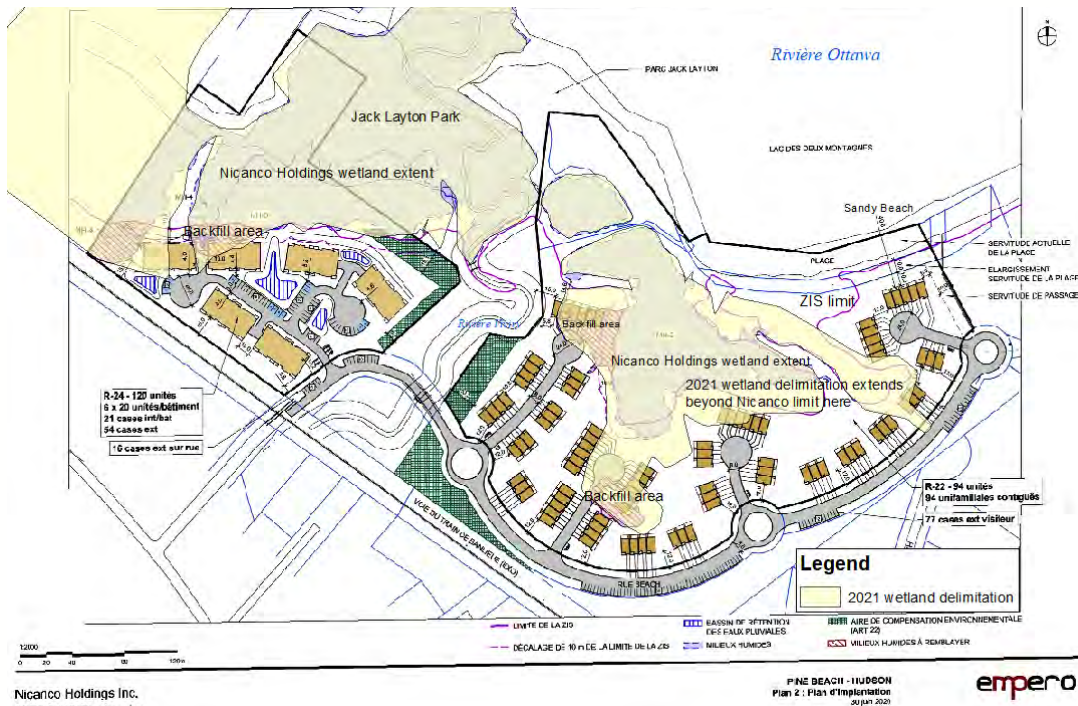


Figure 2. Georectification comparing Nicanco wetland limit and 2021 delimitation. Map prepared with OpenStreetMap (in French), Nicanco Holdings Plan 2: Plan d'Implantation, 30 June 2020 (in French).

We therefore recommend the following:

- 1. Wetlands.** As the value of vernal pools has often gone unrecognized, we recommend additional vernal pool surveys earlier in the spring of 2022, to observe species that may have already reproduced and vanished from the water column.
- 2. Flora.** We recommended additional botanical surveys to be conducted in mid to late summer to acquire a complete inventory. The site should be a candidate for classification as an Exceptional Forest Ecosystem (EFE) (MFFP 2016-2019). EFEs are generally smaller forested areas that fall into one of three categories: rare forests, which are either naturally rare or have become rare due to human activity; old-growth forests, which have not been disturbed by human activity and which are made up of extremely old trees; and shelter forests, which house either a threatened or vulnerable species. Québec's Sustainable Forest Development Act stipulates that all forest development activities are prohibited in an EFE.
- 3. Fauna.** The presence of one federally endangered, one critically imperilled, and one vulnerable insect species in a single morning's survey indicates the potential presence of many more species at risk. A more extensive survey should be conducted, perhaps involving the Montreal Insectarium, or inviting entomologists for a Bioblitz. Fish and snake surveys should be conducted in 2022 given the observation by the CDPNQ of three at-risk snake species and four fish species. Turtle nesting sites in the area are currently vulnerable to human destruction as well as predation, and protection should be considered. A breeding bird survey is recommended to confirm the presence of the wood thrush, among other birds at risk.
- 4. Finally,** because of the study area's ecological significance, we recommend that the town of Hudson take the findings of this study into account and consider revisiting its plan to develop the study area.

The Birds of Winter

Les oiseaux d'hiver



Bohemian Waxwings / Jaseur boréal

Photo: Tom Long



Purple Finch / Roselin pourpré

Photo: Darlene Harvey



Evening Grosbeak (female)

Gros-bec errant (femelle)

Photo: Darlene Harvey



Focus On Education

BPQ presents a series of monthly lectures from October through April. Events will continue via Zoom until the situation permits a return to in-person meetings.

Monday, March 7, 2022

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

Hummingbirds are energy ninjas, day and night!

Speaker: Anusha Shankar



Hummingbirds live fast. They have among the highest metabolic rates of all vertebrates, and must eat constantly to stay alive. Their existence is closely tied to the availability of their food resources - nectar plants and insects. I would love to share with you some of what I found by studying hummingbirds day and night! Especially at night. What do hummingbirds do when they can't see their food plants or eat - do they just drop dead, or starve, or perhaps ... go into a hibernation-like state? Come attend this talk to find out some of the surprising nightlife of hummingbirds!

About our Speaker

Anusha Shankar studies hummingbirds as a Rose Postdoctoral Fellow at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. She is fascinated by hummingbirds' ability to use a hibernation-like state called torpor to save energy at night. She is investigating how they can get cold (50°F) and rewarm safely every night, without damaging organs like their hearts and brains. During her PhD, Anusha captured hummingbird nightlife with infrared video, and before that tracked king cobras and studied giant birds - hornbills - in India.

Monday, April 4, 2022

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

Contaminants in Seabirds of the Gulf of St. Lawrence

Speaker: Raphael Lavoie

Aquatic birds that inhabit the St. Lawrence are particularly at risk of exposure to contaminants from anthropogenic sources. Birds integrate environmental signals over a wide spatio-temporal scale, are sensitive to changes, and are good bioindicators of the ecosystem. This presentation will provide an overview of seabirds and the stressors they face while passing through the Gulf of St. Lawrence.



About our Speaker

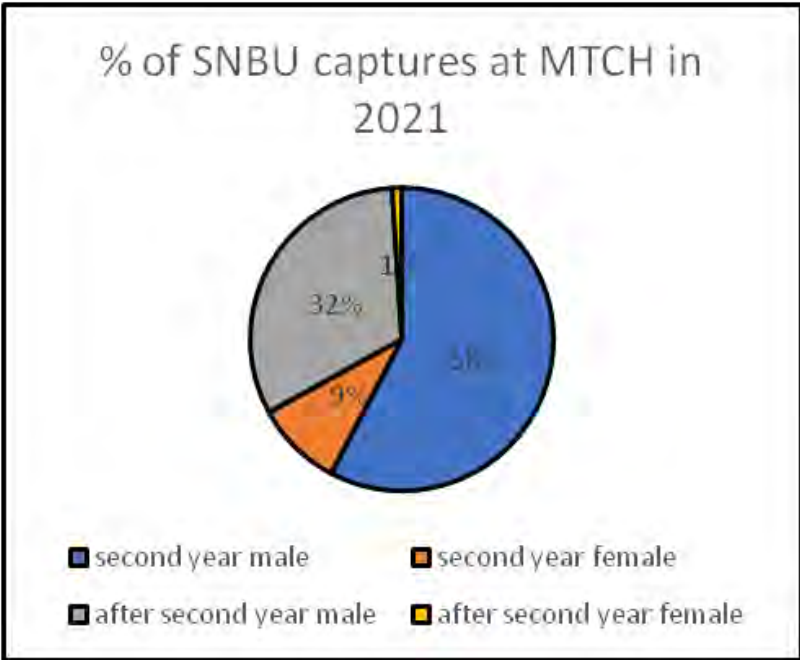
Raphaël Lavoie studied in ecology with an emphasis in ecotoxicology of aquatic birds. He worked at the Canadian Wildlife Service, Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) as a biologist and coordinator for environmental emergencies affecting migratory birds and species at risk in the St. Lawrence. He is now a Research Scientist in Ecotoxicology at ECCC studying the exposure of birds to contaminants that are persistent in the environment, bioaccumulate in organisms and are toxic to wildlife.

The population of the Snow Bunting (SNBU) is declining. The decrease was initially estimated at an alarming 64%, but that has now been revised to a disturbing 38% according to data collected from the Canadian Snow Bunting Network (CSBN), its volunteers and Christmas Bird Counts. Within Bird Protection Quebec's checklist area there are four active CSBN field sites operated in collaboration with McGill Bird Observatory (MBO): Mirabel; Montée Chenier; St-Roch-Ouest; and Sherrington.

Each station records the age, sex, wing length, fat, and weight of each banded individual and submits the data to the Bird Banding Office, as do other field and banding sites across Canada.

At sites managed by MBO, an impressive number of SNBU was processed between 2012 and 2021: 18,570 new birds, 943 recaps and 25 foreign recaps. These records are pooled with other stations across North America, creating a significant data set on the Snow Bunting. This helps us better understand the age and sex-class structure of the SNBU flocks as well as their movements and population trends.

Generally, the first Snow Buntings to arrive in our area are males of both age classes. A second-year bird is in its second year- it hatched the previous summer. An after second year bird hatched at least a year and a half ago. Females follow soon, but they are second year birds for the most part. Of 1194 Snow Buntings banded at Montée Chenier (MTCH) in 2021, only 20 were after second year females, a mere 1% of total captures. According to CSBN data there is a correlation between gender and temperatures: the colder the temperature, the higher the percentage of males. For example, more females were banded at sites near Windsor, Ontario, than further north at colder locations. Males are larger by wing length and weight than females; this might make them better equipped to survive colder conditions.



Snow Buntings form large swirling flocks during the winter day. (The collective name for a flock is a drift of buntings.) At night, however, it is a different story. They divide into small groups and, if the snow is soft, they push in and snuggle down for the night. If the snow is hard packed, the small flocks sleep in the open, protected only by small rises or drifts.

Snow Buntings have dense feathers which trap warm air and lessen exposure to the cold. Unlike most passerines, Snow Buntings have feathered tarsi which help reduce heat loss as the birds move along the snow. SNBU are also voracious eaters and quickly consume the cracked corn that we provide in our traps. We often recapture the same SNBU in a morning and see that its fat level has increased in just two hours! This gorging behaviour is useful as the fat increases the bird's insulation.

Cracked corn is a big draw for other species too; we often see and band Lapland Longspur and Horned Lark as well as SNBU. The three species largely ignore one another, although there may be the occasional raised wing over a choice piece of corn. The cracked corn attracts rodents at night; this feature appeals to the Snowy Owl, consequently the owls are observed regularly at each site. Song Sparrow and American Tree Sparrow have also been caught, banded, and released at some sites.



Second year Lapland Longspur ♂



After hatch year Horned Lark ♂



After second year Snow Bunting ♂ , non-breeding plumage. The alula and primaries are jet black, and the coverts are bold white. Note also the bill is yellow with a darkish tip in winter. The bill is black during the breeding season.

It used to be believed that SNBU flocks arrived at a winter site and wandered within a few kilometres of that area. Thanks to nanotags, MOTUS towers, and banding and recapture data, we now know that SNBU may range far as 200± kilometres during the winter and that does not include their longer migration routes. Snow Buntings are very loyal to their winter sites, returning to the same area and food source each year. We often recapture the same bird from year to year at a particular site or within our four sites.

Christie Macdonald (1) found that the population of Snow Buntings in North America is divided. SNBU nesting to the east of Hudson Bay do not mix with the ones to the west of Hudson Bay. Studies using geolocators, stable-isotope analysis, as well as CSBN banding data, show a migratory link among eastern wintering buntings. Local examples of such site and route fidelity are the recaptures between the MTCH site and Arthur, Ontario (over 580 kilometres), as well as King City, Ontario.



CSBN sites and SNBU routes in North America.

(1) Macdonald, Christie, "Annual patterns of movement and distribution in the arctic breeding snow bunting (*Plectrophenax nivalis*)" (2012). Electronic Theses and Dissertations. 4798.

We are fortunate in Quebec to have a reliable winter population of Snow Buntings. Watching a flock of swirling buntings against a blue sky is a joy of winter. However, their breeding grounds in the Arctic are warming due to climate change. The insidious rise in temperature impacts the tundra and has negative implications for the Snow Bunting. Warmer spring temperatures cause earlier abundance of food (seeds, insects) and put the birds out of sync with availability of food sources. Other bird species are extending their ranges north and competing for the same nesting sites and food as the buntings. Sadly, the buntings do not have an option to move further north; their range can only shrink. The future of the Snow Bunting is uncertain. As birders we contribute to the knowledge base of climate change and its effects on bird species via citizen science projects such as Christmas Bird Counts, eBird reports, volunteering or observing at our CSBN sites etc. Continue to do your part with a visit to one of our CSBN sites. Hopefully you will see a drift of buntings.



Photo: Connie Morgenstern

Map showing 4 CSNBU banding sites in Quebec and 2 locations in Ontario where recaptures have occurred

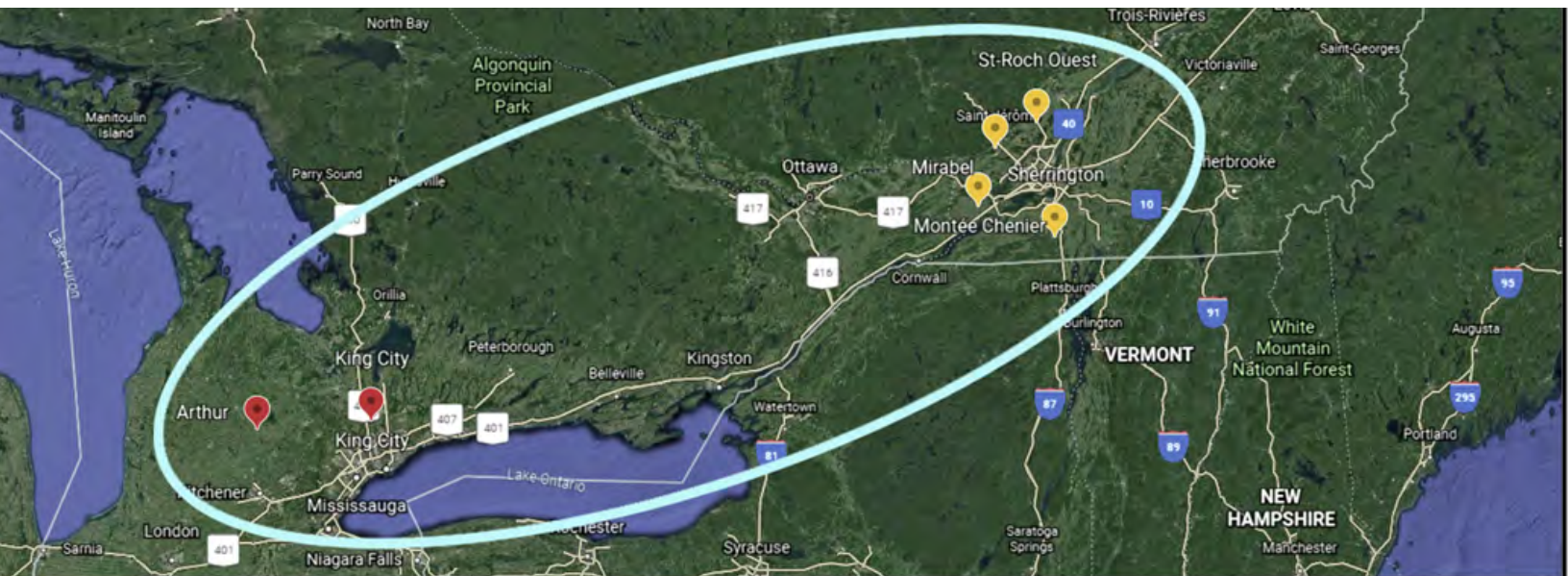
Site Coordinates:

Mirabel 45°73'12 73°97'83

St-Roch-Ouest 45°51'02.38 73°3 9'05.51

Montée Chenier 45°20'02.4 74°11'26.6

Sherrington 45°07'57.2 73°30'56



A group of Snow Buntings, small birds with brown and white plumage, are scattered across a snowy field. Some are standing, while others are partially visible in the background. The snow is bright white, and the background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape.

Top five FAQs from visitors at our Canadian Snow Bunting Network sites

How long does a Snow Bunting live?

In 2021 we recaptured a SNBU that was banded in 2016. So, at least 5.5 years of blithely foraging in bitterly cold and harsh environments. There are reports of older recaptures elsewhere, but we can only speak to our experience.

Do Snow Buntings ever mix it up with other species?

Yes, but it is a rare happening. In 2011 in Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, a male Snow Bunting X Lapland Longspur hybrid was observed and photographed. We keep looking, but no luck yet.

Is it true that Snow Buntings were once hunted and eaten?

Yes. In the early 1900s and before, Snow Buntings were considered a tasty protein source by many. This, along with a fashion trend of feathered hats and other accessories was a threat to the Snow Bunting population.

Does the Snowy Owl ever try to grab a bunting?

We have observed this, but only once. It was a very icy winter and hunting must have been difficult for the owl, leaving it hungry. It hovered over the traps thinking the buntings might be easy pickings. However, the SNBUs in the traps were inaccessible and the ones near the traps were wise and quickly dispersed. Hopefully the owl found a rodent or two later that evening.

When do you start banding Snow Buntings?

Late December or the start of January and we continue to mid-March, depending on the temperatures. We set our traps out just before sunrise and operate for about 2 to 3 hours.

Montreal Christmas Bird Count 2021 Results

by Sheldon Harvey, Montreal Count Coordinator

The 2021 Montreal Christmas Bird Count, Audubon's 122nd annual event, and BPQ's 86th, was held on Saturday, December 18, 2021. Again this year we were faced with the challenge of COVID-19 regulations and restrictions. However, with the cooperation of all of our participants, everything went smoothly, resulting in another successful event. The weather conditions were not a major concern. Although cloudy, with some ice fog in the morning, the temperature ranged between -4°C and -6°C throughout the day. The wind speed ranged between 15 and 20 kph throughout the day. With the milder temperatures most water remained open, providing good conditions for observing waterfowl.

Eighty-four people took part in the count, making up 19 different teams. The teams covered a combined total of 688 kilometres of driving and walking, generating a total effort of 125 hours. Three hours of owling were conducted during this year's count.

We completed the day with a total of 74 species, matching last year's total and just two short of our all-time record of 76 species. The total number of individual birds recorded was 17,015, up substantially from last year's 11,877. One of the major highlights of this year's count was the first-ever recorded Green Heron on the Montreal CBC, discovered by Bob Barnhurst and Mabel McIntosh.

Our field teams were able to surpass or tie the previous high record for the following species (Black Scoter-2; Wild Turkey-18; Bald Eagle-5; Red-shouldered Hawk-1; Tufted Titmouse-12; Hermit Thrush-3; Dark-eyed Junco-178; Yellow-bellied Sapsucker-2; Yellow-rumped Warbler-2; White-crowned Sparrow-1).

The Top 5 highest numbers of birds per species this year were: 1) European Starling-4,892; 2) Rock Pigeon-3,607; 3) Canada Goose-1,494; 4) House Sparrow-1,312; and 5) American Robin-690. The low total of American Crows was a surprise with just 676 reported. The location of this year's crow roost was not found.

Nine species of birds were observed during Count Week (three days prior and three days following the December 18th Count Day). These species are not reflected in the totals for the day, but are recorded with our submission to Audubon. Those species were Red-throated Loon, Northern Pintail, Lesser Scaup, Red-breasted Merganser, Orange-crowned Warbler, White-winged Scoter, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Northern Shrike, and Northern Saw-whet Owl.

A virtual compilation gathering was held on Zoom following the count.

On the following page is a summary report of the species recorded and the number of each in this year's count: Species; Number of individual birds seen; Highest number of each species recorded historically on the Montreal count, indicating the count year (this year was Count #122); and the Number of count years each species has been recorded. Note: "HC" indicates "High Count".

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



Photo: Darlene Harvey

86th MONTREAL CHRISTMAS COUNT - 2021

Species	Number or Count/Week (cw)	Max Number / Audubon Count Yr	# Of Counts Observed	Species	Number or Count/Week (cw)	Max Number / Audubon Count Yr	# Of Counts Observed
Canada Goose	1494	4184/112	34	Red-bellied Woodpecker	2	6/121	17
Wood Duck	1	3/119	13	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	2	2/122	2
Gadwall	6	115/103	36	Downy Woodpecker	102	150/119	86
American Wigeon	6	150/72	47	Hairy Woodpecker	28	70/108	85
American Black Duck	20	1575/54	74	Northern Flicker	6	14/93	39
Mallard	675	3835/99	72	Pileated Woodpecker	12	20/121	40
Northern Pintail	cw	217/79	56	American Kestrel	1	23/94	69
Greater Scaup	145	1425/116	54	Merlin	5	10/111	29
Lesser Scaup	cw	1502/100	37	Peregrine Falcon	1	7/119	32
White-winged Scoter	cw	37/38	17	Northern Shrike	cw	10/88	61
Black Scoter	2	2/122	10	Blue Jay	18	64/111	65
Bufflehead	4	10/117	29	American Crow	676	9149/111	76
Common Goldeneye	574	2423/60	86	Common Raven	37	150/82	25
Barrow's Goldeneye	2	5/117	22	Black-capped Chickadee	654	876/111	85
Hooded Merganser	55	106/113	43	Tufted Titmouse	12	12/122	18
Common Merganser	365	1316/87	82	Red-breasted Nuthatch	2	20/121	31
Red-breasted Merganser	cw	120/67	35	White-breasted Nuthatch	154	201/121	85
Wild Turkey	18	18/122	7	Brown Creeper	18	39/86	81
Red-throated Loon	cw	1/107	7	Winter Wren	1	4/121	10
Common Loon	2	8/118	32	Carolina Wren	2	5/111	23
Double-crested Cormorant	2	75/106	33	Golden-crowned Kinglet	1	36/103	37
Green Heron	1	1/122	1	Hermit Thrush	3	3/122	17
Northern Harrier	2	7/93	15	American Robin	690	4135/117	78
Sharp-shinned Hawk	cw	6/107	32	European Starling	4892	14000/71	86
Cooper's Hawk	8	15/121	31	Cedar Waxwing	1	210/71	45
Northern Goshawk	1	5/75	21	Snow Bunting	2	740/71	73
Bald Eagle	5	5/122	12	Orange-crowned Warbler	cw	1/106	5
Red-shouldered Hawk	1	1/122	4	Pine Warbler	1	2/120	6
Red-tailed Hawk	11	28/113	43	Yellow-rumped Warbler	2	2/122	9
Rough-legged Hawk	1	32/65	63	American Tree Sparrow	61	170/103	68
Ring-billed Gull	159	8260/102	62	Dark-eyed Junco	178	178/122	18
Herring Gull	160	9731/91	82	White-crowned Sparrow	1	1/122	8
Iceland Gull	2	64/77	52	White-throated Sparrow	23	32/117	46
Glaucous Gull	1	69/77	48	Song Sparrow	2	31/89	68
Great Black-backed Gull	46	1839/87	75	Swamp Sparrow	1	2/118	12
Rock Pigeon	3607	4816/98	48	Northern Cardinal	170	230/117	52
Mourning Dove	51	253/96	48	Common Grackle	1	16/99	25
Eastern Screech-Owl	10	15/116	39	House Finch	228	421/96	38
Great Horned Owl	1	11/103	61	American Goldfinch	272	439/109	62
Snowy Owl	2	10/65	57	House Sparrow	1312	2794/96	85
Barred Owl	1	4/111	31				
Northern Saw-whet Owl	cw	3/76	12				
Belted Kingfisher	1	3/93	13				
				Total Individuals	17016		
				Total Species Reported	74		

Hudson Christmas Bird Count 2021 Results

by Chris Cloutier, Hudson Count Coordinator

For those who have participated in this count before, you would have known right from the get-go that Jean Demers had stepped away from his coordinating duties this year. I was excited to take up the torch and continue on with this long-standing count, or as some (me included) would say, a holiday tradition. Thank you, Jean and Clémence, for your initial and continued guidance through the many coordinator responsibilities associated with the count. I hope to continue this role for many years to come.

The 27th of December 2021 marked the date for the 81st installment of the annual Hudson Christmas Bird Count. The day started off like many other CBCs before it, cloudy and cold! The morning hit a low of -12 °C and by the afternoon, we reached a balmy high of -9°C for most of the count circle. The weather was mostly overcast with a few sunny breaks. The limited snowfall leading up to the count made driving easy though. Despite the chilly air temps, our brave route volunteers, all 52 of them across 17 distinct routes, contributed a total of 203 hours of observation and covered approximately 835 km (80km on foot, 755km by car). In addition to that, a group of 16 feederwatchers gathered data from their home feeders throughout the day for an additional 64 hours of birdwatching.

The combined effort produced a total number of 10,225 birds, comprising 70 species! 65 of those species were detected on December 27, while five additional species were recorded within “count week”, a period of three days immediately before or after the scheduled count day but



Photo: Darlene Harvey

within the limits of the circle (Table 1). Most of the open water areas had completely frozen over by count day, with the exception of a select few running water areas that allowed for a decent number of waterfowl and gulls to be detected. The “top 3” most counted birds were European Starling (1,992), Black-capped Chickadee (1,456) and Dark-eyed Junco (780)

Some species highlights include:

Winter Wren- first time seen since 1973!

Tufted Titmouse – The only species recorded exclusively by Feederwatch and not on route.

Unique or singleton species (only a single individual observed) - Northern Harrier was the only hawk seen exclusively by a single group of observers and, in an interesting twist, ALL four falcon species (Gyr Falcon, Merlin, American Kestrel, and Peregrine) each produced only a SINGLE individual! Many others, including the Song Sparrow, Pine Grosbeak, Purple Finch, Red-winged Blackbird, and Red-bellied Woodpecker round off the list of solo individuals tallied, proving once again that birding is a matter of being in the right place, at the right time.

Some species common to all count parties on routes - Downy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, American Crow, Black-capped Chickadee, White-breasted Nuthatch, Dark-eyed Junco, American Goldfinch.

Four species hold on to the title of 100% observed (i.e. detected in every single Hudson CBC) since the very beginning, these being: Hairy Woodpecker, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee and White-breasted Nuthatch.

The following species were recorded in their greatest number this year compared to at least the last 50 years: Wild Turkey (441), Barred Owl (4), Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker (2), Eastern Bluebird (20), Dark-eyed Junco (780), Northern Cardinal (175), and Common Raven (50). A few other species, such as the Red-Bellied Woodpecker (1) and Iceland Gull (3), tied their highest ever numbers this year.

81st HUDSON CHRISTMAS COUNT - 2021

Species	Total for Count	Species	Total for Count
Canada Goose/Bernache du Canada	51	American Crow/Corneille d'Amérique	386
American Black Duck/Canard noir	5	Common Raven/Grand Corbeau	50
Mallard/Canard colvert	317	Red-winged Blackbird/Carouge à épaulettes	1
Greater Scaup/Fuligule milouinan	2	Horned Lark/Alouette hausse-col	9
Common Goldeneye/Garrot à oeil d'or	71	Black-capped Chickadee/Mésange à tête noire	1456
Hooded Merganser/Harle couronné	7	Tufted Titmouse/Mésange bicolore	1
Common Merganser/Grand Harle	63	Red-breasted Nuthatch/Sittelle à poitrine rousse	32
Wild Turkey / Dindon sauvage	441	White-breasted Nuthatch/Sittelle à poitrine blanche	220
Bald Eagle / Pygargue à tête blanche	2	Brown Creeper/Grimpereau brun	13
Sharp-shinned Hawk/Epervier brun	7	Winter Wren/Troglodyte mignon	1
Gyr Falcon / Falcon gerfaut	1	GC Kinglet/Roitelet à couronne dorée	2
Cooper's Hawk/Epervier de Cooper	7	American Robin/Merle d'Amérique	230
Northern Harrier / Busard des marais	1	Eastern Bluebird/Merlebleu de l'Est	20
Red-tailed Hawk/Buse à queue rousse	18	European Starling/Etourneau sansonnet	1992
American Kestrel/Crécerelle d'Amérique	1	Cedar Waxwing/Jaseur d'Amérique	66
Merlin/Faucon émerillon	1	Song Sparrow/Bruant chanteur	1
Peregrine Falcon/Faucon Pélerin	1	American Tree Sparrow/Bruant hudsonien	83
Rough-legged Hawk/Buse pattue	4	White-throated Sparrow/Bruant à gorge blanche	5
Ring-billed Gull/Goéland à bec cerclé	3	Dark-eyed Junco/Junco ardoisé	780
Glaucous Gull/Goéland bourgmestre	12	Snow Bunting/Bruant des neiges	303
Herring Gull/Goéland argenté	388	Northern Cardinal/Cardinal rouge	175
Iceland Gull/Goéland arctique	3	Pine Grosbeak/Durbec des sapins	1
Great Black-backed Gull/Goéland marin	44	House Finch/Roselin familier	149
Rock Pigeon/Pigeon biset	787	Common Redpoll/Sizerin flammé	3
Mourning Dove/Tourterelle triste	333	Pine Siskin/Tarin des pins	6
Snowy Owl / Harfang des neiges	5	Purple Finch / Roselin pourpré	1
Barred Owl/Chouette rayée	4	American Goldfinch/Chardonneret jaune	632
Eastern Screech Owl/Petit-duc maculé	3	House Sparrow/Moineau domestique	243
Downy Woodpecker/Pic mineur	116	Ruffed Grouse / Gélinotte huppée	8
Red-bellied woodpecker / Pic a ventre roux	1	TOTAL BIRDS:	10225
Hairy Woodpecker/Pic chevelu	77	<u>COUNT WEEK ADDITIONS</u>	
Yellow-Bellied Sapsucker/Pic maculé	2	Great Horned Owl / Grand-duc d'Amérique	
Northern Flicker/Pic flamboyant	2	Brown-headed Cowbird/ Vacher à tête brune	
Pileated Woodpecker/Grand Pic	31	Wood Duck/ Canard branchu	
Northern Shrike/Pie-grieche grise	4	Great Blue Heron/ Grand Héron	
Blue Jay/Geai bleu	541	Evening Grosbeak/ Gros-bec errant	
		TOTAL SPECIES:	70



The Birds of Winter

Les oiseaux d'hiver



Pine Grosbeak / Durbec des sapins
Photo: Wayne Grubert



Red Crossbill / Bec croisé des sapins
Photo: Darlene Harvey



Cooper's Hawk / Épervier de Cooper
Photo: Tom Long

A historical map of North America, showing the eastern coast and parts of the interior. The map is aged and has a yellowish tint. Overlaid on the map is the title 'Exploring Early Canadian Ornithology' in a large, bold, black serif font. To the right of the title, in a smaller, bold, black sans-serif font, is the text 'with Jeff Harrison'. The map features various geographical labels in French and English, such as 'Sewern', 'BATES JAMES', 'L A B R', 'Achouanipi', 'ESQUIMAUX', 'G. de TERRE NEUVE', 'C. Bonin', 'Raxe', and 'Tol'. There are also several star symbols scattered across the map.

Exploring Early Canadian Ornithology

with Jeff Harrison

Philip Henry Gosse (1810-1888)

Philip Henry Gosse was one of Britain's most important 19th-century naturalists and authors. Described as the David Attenborough of his day, Gosse wrote one of his most engaging books about the nature and birdlife of the Eastern Townships. How did Gosse come to write *The Canadian Naturalist*, a book worth reading today over 180 years after it was published?

In his youth Gosse developed an interest in natural history and travel, and in 1826 at age 16 he became a clerk in a merchant premises in Carbonear in the then colony of Newfoundland. Over the next five years his avocation for natural history turned into a passion, inspiring him to write and illustrate a treatise on Newfoundland insects. (The manuscript of "Entomologia Terrae Novae" is in the collections of the Canadian Museum of Nature.)

In 1832, uncertain of his future, Gosse bought a farm in the hamlet of Waterville, near North Hatley in the Eastern Townships. He was known locally as "that crazy Englishman who goes about picking up bugs." His farm was unsuccessful, but his exposure to Canadian flora and fauna cemented his interests in natural history. Gosse joined the newly founded Montreal Natural History Society (MNHS) and wrote about what he observed during his years on a Quebec farm in *The Canadian Naturalist*, published in 1840.

In 1838, Gosse went to Philadelphia where he met the leading American ornithologists of the period. He returned to England in 1839, and by 1844 he had written two more books, but found his new career was leading to penury. To make ends meet he went to Jamaica to collect natural history specimens. The books he wrote as a result established his reputation and made him famous - *The Birds of Jamaica* (1847) and *A Naturalist's Sojourn to Jamaica* (1851). David Lack suggested Gosse's work "was far ahead of its time and [Birds of Jamaica] remained one of the best bird books on any part of the world for at least half a century." Stephen Jay Gould wrote that *A Naturalist's Sojourn* made Gosse "the David Attenborough of his day, Britain's finest popular narrator of nature's fascination."

The Canadian Naturalist, with its popular accessible style and interesting facts about Canadian wildlife and environment, is unique in the pre-Confederation natural history literature in Canada. From a Quebec ornithology point of view, it complements the works of two other early ornithologists, John James Audubon and Archibald Hall. Audubon visited the Quebec north shore in 1833 and published his research, which included the discovery of the Lincoln's Sparrow, in the *Ornithological Biography* that accompanied his *Birds of America*. Medical doctor Archibald Hall's sole but important contribution to Quebec and Canadian ornithology consisted of his detailed analysis of 175 birds in the ornithological collection of the MNHS in 1839.

In *The Canadian Naturalist*, Gosse discusses 65 species of birds. All are identified by their common and scientific names of the period. Eight birds have cursory mentions but the remaining 57 species are discussed in detail.

Gosse chose an informal style, using the device of a conversation between father and son. While in a more formal work such as *Birds of Jamaica*, where he included detailed description and standard ecological details for each species, here he occasionally groups different species together, such as the woodpeckers and finches, and provides personal field observations on individual species. For example, he has the father answer his son's query about Canadian finches with this charming description:

"...there is a flock of those beautiful birds, the Pine Grosbeaks (*Loxia Enudeator*). They are by far the most splendid of our winter birds; observe how rich the crimson of the males: the females, as in most instances where the males are red, are of a yellowish-olive colour. They delight in the horrors of winter ..."

The father also answers a question about Snow Buntings and Juncos in winter and the confusion of their common names:

"...this [Junco] may be easily distinguished [from the Snow Bunting] by its colour: it being of a dark slate colour, with a very light, almost white, bill, the contrast of which with the nearly black head, makes it a very marked bird. It is here vulgarly called the Chip-bird. This *Fringilla* does not winter with us; I believe its name of Snowbird is derived from its appearing in Pennsylvania about the time of first snow."

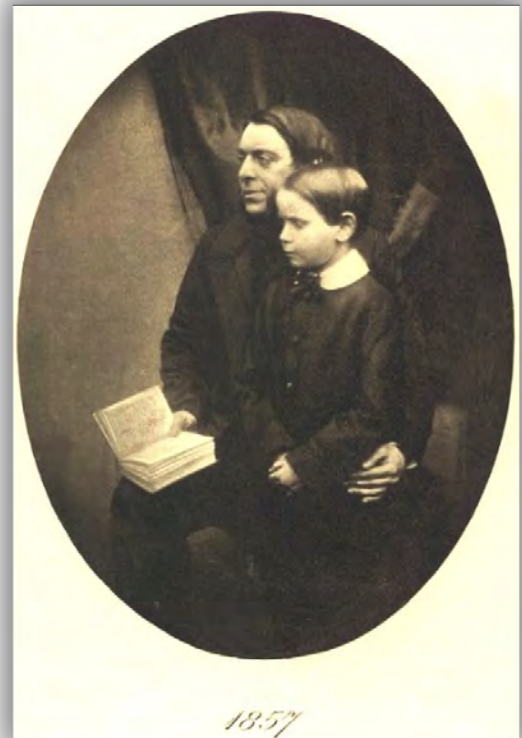
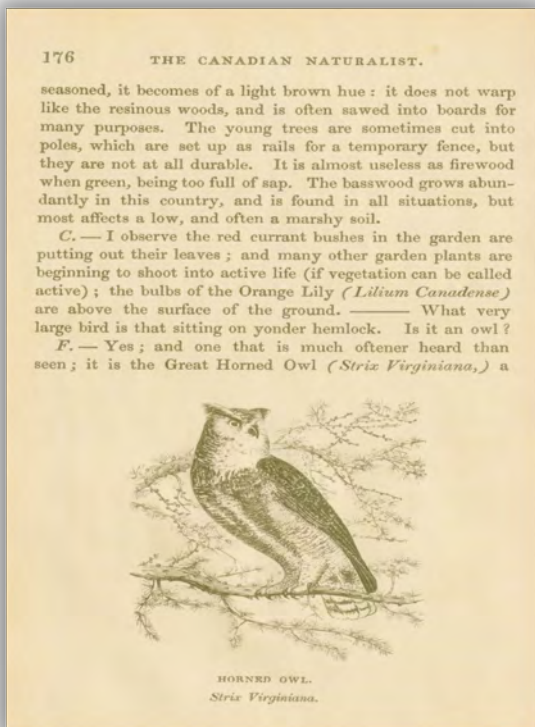
Gosse was more than a closet naturalist. His interest in imparting the joy of birds is embodied in this passage about bird song:

"I never hear the song of birds ... without feeling my spirits raised, my heart gladdened, and filled with delightful emotions. It is not so much the song itself, as the thousand associations of time, place, and circumstances, which are at once conjured up: it brings the verdant meadow, the blossomed hedgerow, or the softened sunbeams playing through the leafy trees, with the happy, gleeful days long gone by."

Gosse also provides some early evidence of human and climate impacts as can be seen in his discussion of the winter-time visits of the Canada Jay to the Townships in 1835:

"The Canada Jay (*Corvus Canadensis*) is quite numerous now: it appears with us about the middle of October ... it is by no means a bird of solitary habits, almost always appearing in parties of three or four: neither does it, with us, confine itself to "unfrequented shaded retreats," as his informant [Alexander Wilson] reports, but, on the contrary, seems to be a saucy, familiar, fearless bird, often coming about the house, and playing about till one gets very near it."

After almost two centuries *The Canadian Naturalist* is still a Canadian classic. Given the paucity of 19th-century Canadian ornithological writings, one can only lament what contribution Gosse might have made if he had stayed in Canada.



A page from *The Canadian Naturalist*.

View the full version of the book [here](#).

Source: [Memorial University of Newfoundland - Digital Archives Initiative](#)

Philip Henry Gosse and his son Edmund Gosse, 1857.

Source: Unknown photographer - Frontispiece of "[Father and Son](#)" by Edmund Gosse, 1907.



The Great Backyard Bird Count

In this first regular Citizen Science column we take a look at The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC).

The GBBC does not involve the long-term commitment of Project Feederwatch as it only runs for a period of four days each year. In 2022 it will be held from February 18 - 21. The project is organized by Birds Canada in collaboration with the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon in the US. Founded in 1998 as a North American venture, it is now a world-wide event and this year marks its 25th anniversary. Participation in the GBBC has been growing steadily over the last decade. In 2021 some 6,351 checklists were submitted from Quebec with 1,763 Quebec birders taking part. In comparison, ten years ago the numbers paled in comparison: only 394 birders took part and netted just 1436 checklist submissions.

The goal of the GBBC is to create a real-time snapshot of where our North American birds are towards the end of winter. Whether you are a novice or expert birder, your observations are important to the project. The amount of time you put in is entirely up to you as is the location you go birding. It can be for as little as 15 minutes on a single day, or for as long as you like on every one of the four days of the event. It's free, fun, and easy – and it helps the birds! The data gathered over the count period are entered into the immense eBird database at Cornell and help scientists better understand global bird population movements. Without these data and the consistent collecting of data over decades we would be relying on little more than anecdotes to guide our knowledge of growing or, usually, declining bird populations in the world.

What kinds of things can we learn from GBBC data?

While some birds start migrating in late February and March, last year it was noted a few of those species were almost a month ahead of schedule. This was reported in nearby Maine and Nova Scotia and most likely applies to Quebec's birds as well. You can explore the GBBC data for our area by visiting the eBird website for Montreal and selecting species of interest and specific years/periods to compare numbers and trends. The main entry for these data can be found [here](#).

The Horned Lark - a short-distance migrant that we can sometimes see in Quebec during winter but which is usually more readily observed to the south of us - is one of the species that displayed the above mentioned uncharacteristic movement. Their return north historically has been noted from the first half of March. However, in 2021 small numbers were seen near Montreal around the GBBC time frame and some huge assemblages ready to push northwards were reported further to the south some weeks earlier than expected.

Another example is the Carolina Wren, which has been slowly and carefully establishing itself as a winter resident in some favoured corners of Quebec, one of which is the West Island. Ten years ago observed birds were just ones or twos whereas last year there were between 15 and 20 reported. These numbers are just a snapshot, making it all the more important for us to have them available from year to year.

It's these "unconsidered trifles" that we birders are best placed to gather and submit. Indeed, if not us then who? Of course, it's also a lot of fun and what else are you doing in winter? Full details can be found on www.birdcount.org

Birding Basics



Presented by: Alain Goulet

and  Nature-Expert
Specialists in binoculars and birding
products in Quebec

Binoculars: I can see clearly now!

Buying binoculars can be complicated. There are many aspects to consider such as power, size, format, warranty, weight and image quality. With hundreds of different ones on the market, the task of choosing the ideal model that will give the best performance is very difficult. Fortunately, by learning the basics of how binoculars work, your decision will be much easier. People who have been frustrated by the poor performance of the binoculars they have had for the past 20 years or so will be surprised at how much binocular technology has improved over the years while still keeping prices affordable.

Before you begin your search, it is important to answer four questions: 1) How much money can I invest? (2) What will my principal use be? (3) How much power should I buy? (4) Which format will suit me best?

How much to invest

Binoculars on the market range from \$10 to \$7,000. The low-end models range from \$10 to \$150. These binoculars are made in China and are rarely waterproof. The low-end models are also very fragile because their prisms are only glued and their housings are less resistant to shock. The prisms of a binocular have the role of redirecting the image transmitted through the lenses to the eyepieces. Without the prisms, a binocular would be much longer and look like a ship's captain's telescope in a pirate movie (hence the name "long sights"). Lastly, in these binoculars the prisms are of poorer quality and the optical surfaces are poorly coated.

Mid-range models range from \$150 to \$1,000. These binoculars, usually made in China or Japan, are almost all waterproof and are much stronger. Their prisms are of better quality and are screwed rather than glued. The Chinese market has improved greatly over the last thirty years and there are now some excellent mid-range Chinese binoculars and even a few high-end ones.

For a high-end model, you will have to pay over \$1,000. The popular high-end models are made in Germany, Austria, Japan and some in China. They are very robustly designed and have very sophisticated lenses, as well as extensive multi-layer coatings on all optical surfaces. These coatings allow a greater percentage of light to enter the binocular. The general rule in optics is: the more you spend, the more quality and durability you get. It is strongly recommended that you do not skimp on the price of the binoculars, while staying within your budget, in order to get the best quality product possible.

Principal use

The actual needs of the user are very important. For example, a birder who uses binoculars on long field trips will have completely different needs than a person who uses them for feeder observations. The binoculars will not be handled in the same way and will not face the same conditions.

Waterproofing is a very important factor to consider when making a purchase. There are several definitions of waterproof (water resistant, waterproof, etc.) and each varies by manufacturer. The binoculars with the best seal are those that are waterproof or nitrogen purged, a treatment that replaces air and moisture inside with nitrogen (or sometimes argon, an inert gas). Purging the binoculars with nitrogen ensures that no dust, sand or condensation will ever get inside. This is especially important when you go from -20°C outdoors to 20°C indoors. Today, binoculars over \$100 are usually waterproof.

Power and brightness

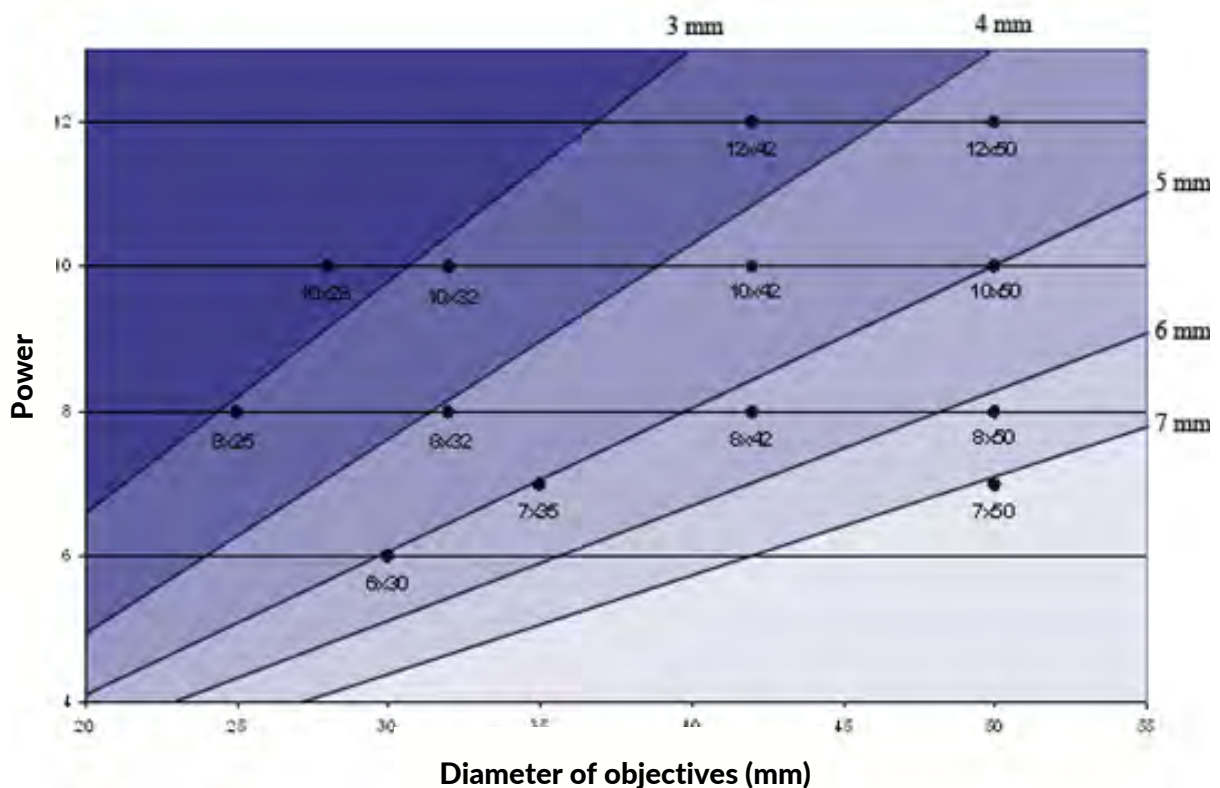
What do the numbers 8x42 on binoculars mean? The first number represents the magnification, so an 8x42 binocular will magnify, or bring the subject closer by 8 times. A 10x42 model will magnify 10 times. The second number is the diameter in millimetres of the lenses. So our 8x42 binoculars have 42mm objective lenses. A compact binocular, which has smaller objective lenses, is identified by the second number: 8x20, 10x25, etc. The larger the objective lenses, the clearer the image will be because the light enters the binocular through the objective lens, illuminating the image reflected by the prisms. 8x50 binoculars will be brighter than 8x42 binoculars of the same quality, as they have larger lenses and therefore allow much more light to enter the binocular.

The ratio of power to lens size is obtained by dividing the lens diameter by the power of the binocular. For example: $42\text{mm} \div 8 = 5.25$. This number represents the diameter of the exit pupil (the circular part in the centre of the eyepieces that we mentioned earlier). In our example, we have a pupil of 5.25mm. The pupil of the human eye has a diameter of 2 to 3mm in normal light conditions. It expands to 4 or 5mm in low light conditions and to 7 or 8mm in near darkness. A binocular will appear very bright when the exit pupil is equal to or larger than that of the eyes. An exit pupil of at least 5 mm is recommended for clear images in most conditions.

Now let's compare an 8x42 binocular with a compact 8x20 binocular. The exit pupil of the 8x42 is 5.25mm and that of the compact 8x20 is 2.5mm. On a sunny day, the human pupil measures 2 to 3 mm. Both binoculars will therefore have the minimum exit pupil diameter required to see well. In low light situations, in the early morning or late evening, the human eye requires an exit pupil of 4 or 5mm. Our compact binoculars fall well short of this minimum, with an exit pupil of 2.5mm, so they will give you much darker images. Comparing two binoculars of the same size and quality, an 8x42 (5.25mm exit pupil) and a 10x42 (4.2mm exit pupil) the 8x power binocular will be brighter than the 10x power binocular. Finally, high-end 8x power binoculars will be brighter and have more contrast than mid-range and low-end 8x models, due to the quality of the prisms and lenses.

I invite you to compare the brightness of different binoculars, of similar range, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 - Binocular brightness by exit pupil diameter



The table shows the brightness of different binocular models according to the diameter of the exit pupil in millimetres. The more a model tends towards the bright section in the bottom right corner, the brighter the binocular will be in low light conditions (e.g. a 7x50 model). Note that the less magnification power a binocular offers and the larger its objectives, the brighter it will be. At the other end of the spectrum, the more magnification power a binocular offers and the smaller its objectives, the less bright it will be in low light conditions (e.g. a 10x28 model). This category of binoculars tends towards the darker section, the upper left corner. The exit pupil diameter is shown to the right of each diagonal line.

It is also important to consider hand shake and field of view when comparing 8x, 10x or any other power binoculars. The higher the magnification of a binocular, the more hand shake will be amplified by this factor. For example, a 10x binocular will amplify your hand movements much more than an 8x binocular. When comparing binoculars of different powers, if hand tremor is not a major problem we can choose the power that will best suit our needs.

It is my personal opinion that an 8x42 binocular is an excellent compromise between power, field of view, brightness and comfort.

Wide angle models

Some people want a wide angle model for their observations. The field of view (the width of what you see through the binocular) is usually indicated on the binocular, either in angle or width (in feet at 1000 yards or in metres at 1000 metres). For example, a standard 8x power binocular will have a field of view of about 7° or 8° or 420 feet at 1000 yards. The field of view will be larger for an 8x binocular than for a 10x binocular of the same model, since it gets closer. When choosing wide angle binoculars, beyond 8°, it is important to ensure that the entire image is clear. A large field of view is not always an advantage, especially when the periphery of the field of view is not clear (a term known as field curvature). This field curvature is mostly found in low-end models. It is a defect caused by the rounded shape of the lenses, which makes the image blurrier at the periphery of the field of view than in the centre. As the quality of the binoculars increases, this defect becomes less obvious.

Adjusting your binoculars

Before we talk about adjustment, it is important to understand the definition of *eye relief*. This is the distance you should have between your eyes and the eyepieces in order to see the entire field of view. When this distance is too short, the periphery of the image is poorly clipped and it is difficult to see the whole field of view. For those who wear eyeglasses, the minimum eye distance should be 15mm. The comfort distance is individual and can be easily adjusted with binoculars that have retractable eyepieces:



Retractable eyepieces

The eyepiece is the part that unscrews, as shown extended at the top left.

Many binoculars have retractable or adjustable eyepieces. The distance between the eyepiece and your eyes may vary slightly from person to person, but in general, to see well through the binoculars, keep to the 15 mm distance. If you do not wear glasses, the eyepieces should be extended (unscrewed) to the point that allows you to see well. If you wear glasses, you should retract the eyepiece to bring the lenses closer to your eyes. Note that not all vision problems (nearsightedness, farsightedness) are a problem for binocular users. Binoculars can be used with or without glasses. However, people with astigmatism must wear their glasses while using their binoculars.

Another adjustment that some binoculars have is the diopter adjustment. This allows you to correct the difference in power between your two eyes. This adjustment is usually found on one of the eyepieces or sometimes on the central wheel.

In addition, the hinge of the binoculars can also be adjusted so that the eyepieces can be moved apart to suit the distance between your eyes. For those with very small faces, it is important to ensure that the binoculars bend sufficiently to allow the eyepieces to line up perfectly with the eyes. Some bulky models do not offer adequate eyepiece alignment.

Some essential tips when buying

- Try several models from different companies and compare binoculars of different powers, 8x and 10x. People who shake a lot should avoid 10x. High power models (12x, 16x) should be avoided as they do not give good, bright images (refer back to Table 1).
- The quality of binoculars increases with the price. Buy the best possible binoculars that you can fit in your budget. It is better to spend a little more than to be stuck with a mediocre pair that will perform poorly and that you will soon relegate to the back of the closet.
- If you place a high priority on dark-weather vision, shop around at dusk. This will allow you to compare the brightness of different models in low light.
- The binoculars that your brother-in-law loves and recommends to everyone may not be right for you. The shape of your hands and face and your needs are unique to you. Don't let that brother-in-law influence you!
- If you often use your binoculars outdoors in very cold weather, try them out in the store with a pair of gloves on. Some models are easier to use with gloves than others.
- Ask about the warranty and service offered by different manufacturers. Some offer no warranty, some offer a 25-year warranty, and most offer a lifetime warranty against manufacturing defects. On the other hand, some manufacturers offer a lifetime (or a few years) warranty with no strings attached. If you're not the type to be careful with your binoculars, consider a model from a company that offers an unconditional warranty that covers damage caused by accidents or negligence. Finally, you should favour binocular manufacturers that offer a repair service in Canada. If you ever need it, after-sales service can be a serious headache; some companies offer service in Canada rather than the US and will therefore have lower shipping costs and better service in the event of a repair. A good shop should be able to tell you about this. Also check the manufacturer's warranty on the water seal, which varies from company to company. Nitrogen-purged binoculars usually have a lifetime warranty against infiltration by water, condensation and dust.
- A final tip is that you purchase a harness to reduce the weight of the binoculars on your neck. The harness attaches to the binoculars and slips over the shoulders, so the weight of the binoculars is distributed over the shoulders and back. This accessory also prevents the binoculars from swinging back and forth much more effectively than a simple strap.



Example of a harness (anti-swing)

Finally, to make things easier for you while at the store, here are five things to test to evaluate the difference between a good binocular and a poor one.

- The softness of the dial. A good quality binocular will have a soft dial. If the dial is hard to turn in the store, it will be worse when it is outside in the cold. Also make sure it is easily accessible and of a good width.

- **The exit pupil of the eyepieces.** Exit pupils that are not perfectly round are of poorer quality.
- **Glare.** When looking at a bright area, check whether you can see any reflections in the binoculars. Binoculars that do not have enough coating have this defect.
- **Lightness.** Beware of models that seem surprisingly light. This may be the result of a flimsy plastic housing or poorer quality prisms and lenses. The best prisms have a higher weight.
- **Resolution.** Compare the quality of the whole image you are looking at. A good binocular has a clear, well-defined image at both the edge and the centre. When comparing binoculars in the store, always look at the same two or three objects with the binoculars you are comparing. Focus on objects with detail. This could be a power pole, a brick building, etc. In this way you will be better able to compare the resolution and definition of the details.

Conclusion

Unfortunately, there is no such thing as a perfect binocular. When making binoculars, manufacturers have to make compromises. The consumer also has to make compromises. One of these compromises is the size of the lenses and the weight. The larger the lenses, the clearer the images, but the result is a bulky and heavy binocular. High quality lenses and prisms are also heavier. Binocular manufacturers, wanting to reduce the weight of the binoculars, must therefore use lighter materials in the design of their housings rather than compromising the quality of the lenses and prisms. Another trade-off is power. The more powerful the binocular (10x, 12x), the smaller the field of view, the shallower the depth of field and the greater the effects of hand shaking. The other disadvantage of going for a very powerful binocular is the risk of having a poorer performance in low light conditions. Check the exit pupil size (objective diameter \div power) and don't go below 5mm if you want a minimum image quality in dark conditions. However, the higher the quality you are looking at, the more you can consider a binocular with smaller objectives, as 'top of the range' binoculars obviously transmit light much better.

With a good knowledge of optics, buying a pair of quality binoculars is no longer a risky exercise. You are now equipped with all the knowledge you need and have the advantage of using all of the practical tips in this article to find the right binocular for you. Enjoy your choice of binoculars!



LES B.A.-BA DE L'OBSERVATION



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Jumelles : voyez-y clair !

L'achat de jumelles peut s'avérer compliqué. On doit considérer plusieurs aspects comme la puissance, la grosseur, le format, la garantie, le poids et la qualité de l'image. Comme le marché offre plusieurs centaines de modèles différents, la tâche de choisir le modèle idéal qui nous procurera le meilleur rendement est très difficile. Heureusement, en apprenant les principes de base du fonctionnement des jumelles, votre décision sera beaucoup plus facile. Les gens frustrés par le mauvais rendement des jumelles qu'ils ont depuis une vingtaine d'années seront surpris de constater combien la technologie de celles-ci s'est améliorée au fil des années tout en conservant des prix abordables.

Avant de commencer votre recherche, il est important de répondre à quatre questions :

- 1) Combien d'argent puis-je investir?
- 2) Quel en sera l'usage principal?
- 3) Quelle puissance dois-je acheter?
- 4) Quel format me conviendra le mieux?

Combien investir

Les jumelles disponibles sur le marché varient entre 10 \$ et 7 000 \$. Les modèles « bas de gamme » se situent entre 10 \$ et 150 \$. Ces jumelles sont fabriquées en Chine et sont rarement étanches. Les modèles « bas de gamme » sont aussi très fragiles car leurs prismes ne sont que collés et leurs boîtiers sont moins résistants aux chocs. À titre d'information, les prismes d'une jumelle ont le rôle de rediriger l'image transmise à travers des objectifs vers les oculaires. Sans les prismes, une jumelle serait beaucoup plus longue et ressemblerait à la lunette d'un capitaine de bateau dans les films de pirates (d'où le nom « longues vues »). Enfin, les prismes des jumelles « bas de gammes » sont de moins bonne qualité et les surfaces optiques sont peu traitées.

Les modèles de « gamme intermédiaire » se situent entre 150 \$ et 1000 \$. Ces jumelles, généralement fabriquées en Chine ou au Japon, sont presque toutes étanches et sont beaucoup plus solides. Leurs prismes sont de meilleures qualités et sont vissés plutôt que collés. Le marché chinois s'est beaucoup amélioré au cours des trente dernières années et l'on retrouve aujourd'hui d'excellents modèles de jumelles chinoises de « gamme intermédiaire » et même quelques haut de gamme.

Pour un modèle « haut de gamme », vous devrez déboursier au-delà de 1000 \$. Les modèles populaires « haut de gamme » sont fabriqués en Allemagne, en Autriche, au Japon et quelques-uns en Chine. Ils ont une conception très robuste et possèdent des lentilles très sophistiquées ainsi que de nombreux revêtements multicouches complets sur toutes les surfaces optiques. Ces revêtements permettent à un plus grand pourcentage de lumière de pénétrer la jumelle. La règle générale en optique est la suivante : Plus vous dépensez, plus vous obtenez un produit de qualité et de grande solidité. Il est fortement recommandé de ne pas lésiner sur le prix des jumelles, tout en respectant votre budget, afin d'obtenir un produit de la meilleure qualité possible.

L'usage principal

De prime abord, les besoins réels de l'utilisateur sont très importants. Le choix de jumelle doit se faire en fonction des conditions rigoureuses auxquelles les ornithologues doivent faire face. L'ornithologue qui utilise des jumelles lors de longs voyages sur le terrain aura des besoins complètement différents de la personne qui en a besoin pour l'observation aux mangeoires. De plus, leurs jumelles ne subiront pas le même traitement et n'affronteront pas les mêmes conditions.

L'étanchéité est un facteur très important à considérer lors de votre achat. Il y a plusieurs définitions d'étanchéité (résistantes à l'eau, étanches, etc.) et chaque définition varie selon le fabricant. Les jumelles qui vous procureront la meilleure étanchéité sont celles dites « étanches » ou « purgées à l'azote ». Ce traitement remplace l'air et l'humidité à l'intérieur de l'appareil par de l'azote (ou parfois de l'argon, un gaz inerte). Purger les jumelles à l'azote garantit qu'il n'y aura jamais de poussière, de sable ou de condensation qui entrera à l'intérieur. Cette caractéristique est particulièrement importante lorsque vous passerez de -20 °C à l'extérieur à 20 °C à l'intérieur. De nos jours, les jumelles au-delà de 100\$ sont habituellement étanches.

La puissance et la luminosité

Que veulent dire les chiffres 8x42 que l'on retrouve sur les jumelles? Le premier chiffre représente le grossissement, donc une jumelle 8x42 grossit ou rapproche 8 fois. Un modèle 10x42 grossit ou rapproche 10 fois. Le deuxième chiffre représente le diamètre en millimètres des objectifs. Donc notre jumelle 8x42 possède des lentilles d'objectif de 42 mm. Une jumelle compacte, qui a des objectifs plus petits, se reconnaît par le deuxième chiffre : 8x20, 10x25, etc. Plus les objectifs sont gros, plus les images seront claires car la lumière pénètre la jumelle par les objectifs, éclairant ainsi l'image réfléchiée par les prismes. Des jumelles 8x50 seront plus lumineuses que des 8x42, de qualité égale, car elles ont de plus gros objectifs et permettent donc à beaucoup plus de lumière de pénétrer la jumelle.

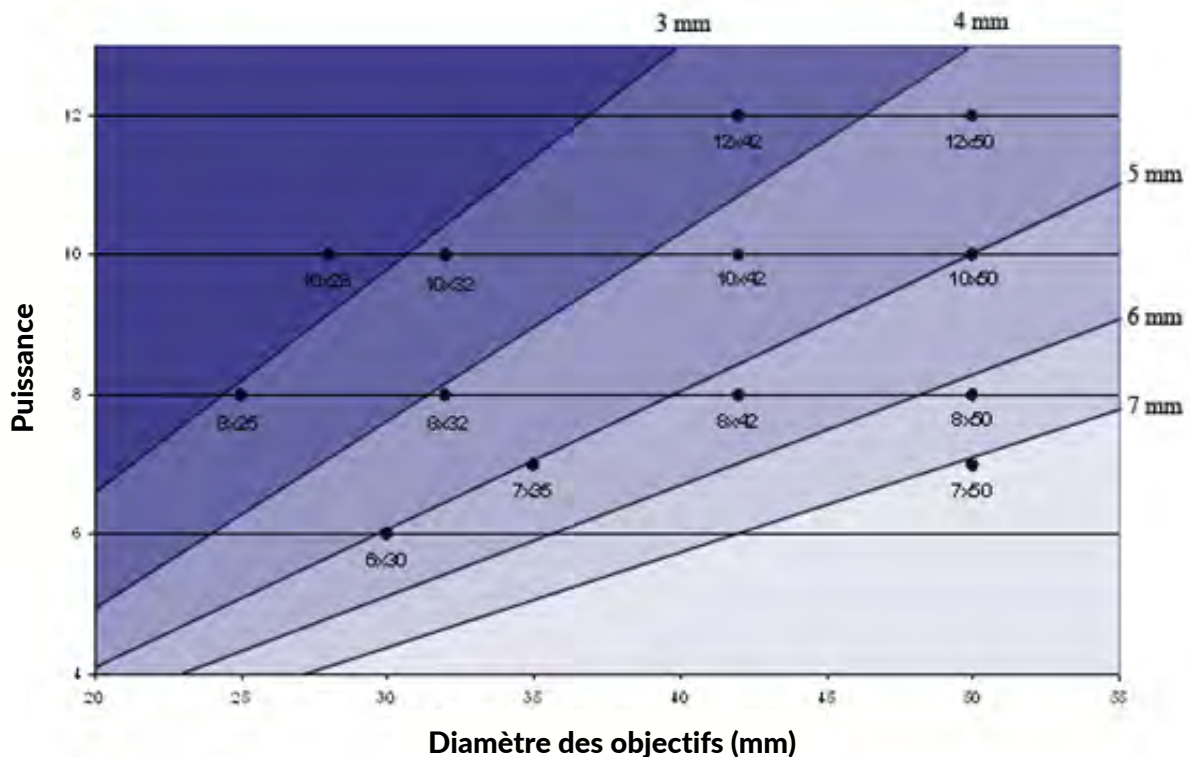
Le rapport entre la puissance et la grosseur des objectifs s'obtient en divisant le diamètre des objectifs par la puissance de la jumelle. Par exemple : $42 \text{ mm} \div 8 = 5,25$. Ce chiffre représente le diamètre de la pupille de sortie (la partie circulaire au centre des oculaires dont nous avons parlé un peu plus tôt). Dans notre exemple, nous avons une pupille de 5,25 mm. La pupille de l'œil humain a un diamètre de 2 à 3 mm en conditions normales de lumière. Cette dernière se dilate jusqu'à 4 ou 5 mm dans des conditions de faible luminosité et jusqu'à 7 ou 8 mm dans la quasi-noirceur. Une jumelle paraîtra très claire lorsque la pupille de sortie sera égale ou supérieure à celle des yeux. Une pupille de sortie d'un minimum de 5 mm est recommandée pour obtenir des images claires dans la plupart des conditions.

Comparons maintenant une jumelle 8x42 et une jumelle compacte 8x20. La pupille de sortie de la 8x42 est de 5,25 mm et celle de la compacte 8x20 est de 2,5 mm. Lors d'une journée ensoleillée, la pupille humaine mesure de 2 à 3 mm. Les deux jumelles auront donc un diamètre de pupille de sortie minimum requis pour bien voir. En situation de faible luminosité, tôt le matin ou en fin de soirée, l'œil humain demande une pupille de sortie de 4 ou 5 mm. Notre jumelle compacte est bien loin de ce minimum, avec une pupille de sortie de 2,5 mm, elle vous donnera donc des images beaucoup plus sombres. En comparant deux jumelles de même grosseur et de même qualité, une 8x42 (pupille de sortie de 5,25 mm) et une 10x42 (pupille de sortie de 4,2 mm) la jumelle de puissance 8x sera plus lumineuse que la jumelle de puissance 10x. Enfin, des jumelles de puissance 8x de « haut de gamme » seront plus lumineuses et plus contrastées que les modèles 8x de « gamme intermédiaire » et de « bas de gamme », en raison de la qualité des prismes et des lentilles.

Je vous invite à comparer la luminosité de différentes jumelles, de gamme semblable, en vous référant au tableau 1.

Le tableau montre la luminosité de différents modèles de jumelles selon le diamètre de la pupille de sortie en millimètres. Plus un modèle tend vers la section claire dans le coin inférieur droit, plus la jumelle sera lumineuse en conditions de faible lumière (par exemple, un modèle 7x50). Notez que moins une jumelle offre de puissance de grossissement et plus elle possède de grands objectifs, plus elle sera lumineuse. À l'autre opposé, plus une jumelle offre de la puissance de grossissement et possède de petits objectifs, moins elle sera lumineuse en condition de faible luminosité (par exemple, un modèle 10x28). Cette catégorie de jumelles tend vers la section sombre, soit le coin supérieur gauche. Le diamètre de la pupille de sortie est indiqué à droite de chaque ligne diagonale.

Tableau 1 – Luminosité des jumelles selon le diamètre de la pupille de sortie



Il est aussi important de considérer le tremblement des mains et le champ de vision lorsque l'on compare les jumelles de puissance 8x, 10x ou toute autre puissance. Plus une jumelle offre un grossissement important, plus le tremblement des mains sera amplifié en raison de ce facteur. Ainsi, une jumelle 10x amplifiera les mouvements de vos mains beaucoup plus qu'une jumelle 8x. Lorsque l'on compare des jumelles de puissances différentes, et que le tremblement des mains n'est pas un problème important, on choisit la puissance qui conviendra le mieux à nos besoins.

À mon humble avis, une jumelle 8x42 représente un excellent compromis entre la puissance, le champ de vision, la luminosité et le confort.

Modèles grand angle

Certaines personnes désirent avoir un modèle grand angle pour leurs observations. Le champ de vision (la largeur de ce que l'on voit à travers la jumelle) est habituellement indiqué sur la jumelle, soit en angle ou en largeur (en pieds à 1000 verges ou encore en mètres à 1000 mètres). Par exemple, une jumelle standard, de puissance 8x, aura un champ de vision d'environ 7° ou 8° ou 420 pieds à 1000 verges. Le champ de vision sera plus grand pour une jumelle 8x que pour une jumelle 10x de même modèle, puisqu'elle rapproche moins. Lorsque vous faites un choix de jumelles grand angle, au delà de 8°, il est important de s'assurer que la totalité de l'image soit claire. Un grand champ de vision n'est pas toujours un avantage surtout lorsque la périphérie du champ de vision n'est pas claire (un terme que l'on appelle courbure de champ). Cette courbure de champ se retrouve surtout dans les modèles « bas de gamme ». Il s'agit d'un défaut causé par la forme arrondie des lentilles qui fait que l'image est plus floue à la périphérie du champ de vision qu'au centre. Plus la qualité des jumelles augmente, moins ce défaut est évident.

Le réglage de vos jumelles

Avant de vous parler de réglage, il est important de bien comprendre la définition des termes « dégagement oculaire ». Il s'agit de la distance à laquelle on doit placer nos yeux derrière les oculaires afin de voir la totalité du champ de vision. Lorsque cette distance est trop courte, la périphérie de l'image est mal découpée et il est difficile de voir tout le champ de vision. Le dégagement oculaire minimum doit être de 15 mm pour accommoder les porteurs de lunettes. La distance de confort est propre à chaque individu et s'ajuste facilement avec des jumelles ayant des œilletons rétractables.



Ouilletons rétractables

L'ouilleton est la partie qui se dévisse en haut à gauche.

Plusieurs modèles de jumelles possèdent des œuilletons rétractables ou ajustables. La distance entre l'oculaire et vos yeux peut varier légèrement d'une personne à l'autre mais en général, pour bien voir à travers les jumelles, elle devrait être d'environ 15 mm. Si vous ne portez pas de lunettes, ces œuilletons doivent être déployés (dévisés) selon votre préférence, pour vous permettre de bien voir. Si vous portez des lunettes, vous devez refermer les œuilletons afin de rapprocher les oculaires vers leurs yeux. Notez que tous les problèmes de vision (myopie, presbytie) ne sont pas problématiques pour les utilisateurs de jumelles. Ils peuvent utiliser leurs jumelles avec ou sans lunettes. Par contre, les gens atteints d'astigmatisme doivent porter leurs lunettes en utilisant leurs jumelles.

Un autre ajustement que possèdent certaines jumelles est l'ajustement dioptrique. Celui-ci vous permet de corriger la différence de puissance entre vos deux yeux. Cet ajustement se retrouve généralement sur l'un des oculaires ou parfois sur la molette centrale.

Par ailleurs, la charnière des jumelles s'ajuste aussi afin que les oculaires puissent être écartés selon la distance entre vos yeux. Pour les personnes qui ont un très petit visage, il est important de s'assurer que les jumelles se plient suffisamment afin que les oculaires s'alignent parfaitement avec leurs yeux. Certains modèles volumineux n'offrent pas un rapprochement adéquat des oculaires.

Quelques conseils indispensables lors de l'achat

- Essayez plusieurs modèles de différentes compagnies et comparez les jumelles de différentes puissances, 8x et 10x. Les personnes qui tremblent beaucoup devraient éviter les 10x. Les modèles de grandes puissances (12x, 16x) sont à éviter car ils ne donnent pas de bonnes images lumineuses (se référer au tableau 1).
- La qualité des jumelles augmente en fonction du prix. Achetez les meilleures jumelles possibles selon votre budget. Mieux vaut dépenser un peu plus que d'être pris avec un modèle médiocre qui sera peu performant et que vous relèguerez vite au fond d'une garde-robe.
- Si vous accordez une grande priorité à la vision par temps sombre, effectuez votre magasinage à la tombée du jour. Vous pourrez ainsi comparer la luminosité des différents modèles en magasins, en conditions de faible luminosité.
- Les jumelles que votre beau-frère adore et qu'il recommande à tout le monde ne vous conviendront pas nécessairement. La forme de vos mains et de votre visage ainsi que vos besoins sont propres à vous. Ne vous laissez pas influencer par ce beau-frère!
- Si vous utilisez souvent vos jumelles à l'extérieur lorsqu'il fait très froid, essayez-les en magasin avec une paire de gants. Certains modèles s'utilisent plus facilement avec des gants que d'autres.
- Informez-vous de la garantie et du service offerts par les différents fabricants. Certains n'offrent aucune garantie, quelques-uns offrent une garantie de 25 ans, et la plupart offrent une garantie à vie contre tout défaut de fabrication. Par ailleurs, quelques fabricants offrent une garantie à vie (ou de quelques années) et cela sans condition. Si vous n'êtes pas du genre délicat avec vos jumelles, considérez un modèle d'une compagnie qui offre une garantie sans condition qui couvre les dommages causés par les accidents ou la négligence. Enfin, on devrait favoriser les fabricants de jumelles qui offrent un service de réparation au Canada. Si jamais vous en avez besoin, le service après vente peut vous causer de sérieux maux de tête. Quelques compagnies offrent du service au Canada plutôt qu'au États-Unis et auront donc des frais d'envoi moins élevés et un meilleur service en cas de réparation. Un bon magasin devrait pouvoir vous renseigner à ce sujet. Vérifier également la garantie d'étanchéité du manufacturier. Cette garantie varie d'une compagnie à l'autre.

Les jumelles purgées à l'azote sont habituellement garanties à vie contre toute infiltration d'eau, de condensation ou de poussière.

- Un dernier conseil, il est possible de se procurer une courroie harnais afin de minimiser le poids des jumelles à votre cou. Cette courroie s'attache aux jumelles et se glisse sur les épaules; le poids de la jumelle est donc réparti sur les épaules et le dos. Cet accessoire, appelé couramment courroie anti-ballotement, empêchera aussi les jumelles de balloter de gauche à droite beaucoup mieux qu'une simple courroie.



*Exemple de courroie harnais
(courroie anti-ballotement)*

Enfin, pour vous faciliter les choses en magasin, voici cinq éléments à tester pour discerner la différence entre une bonne jumelle et une jumelle de faible qualité.

- **La souplesse de la molette.** Une jumelle de bonne qualité aura une molette souple. Si la molette est dure à tourner en magasin, ce sera pire lorsqu'il fera froid à l'extérieur. Assurez-vous également qu'elle est facilement accessible et d'une bonne largeur.
- **La pupille de sortie des oculaires.** Les pupilles de sortie qui ne sont pas parfaitement rondes sont de moins bonne qualité.
- **Les reflets.** Lorsque vous regardez un endroit lumineux, vérifiez si vous voyez des reflets dans la jumelle. Les jumelles qui n'ont pas assez de revêtements ont ce défaut.
- **Légèreté.** Méfiez-vous des modèles qui semblent étonnamment légers. Cette légèreté peut être le résultat d'un boîtier fragile en plastique ou de prismes et de lentilles de moins bonne qualité. Les meilleurs prismes ont un poids plus élevé.
- **Résolution.** Comparez la qualité de toute l'image que vous regardez. Une bonne jumelle a une image claire et bien définie autant au rebord qu'au centre. Lors de vos tests de comparaison en magasin, regardez toujours les deux ou trois mêmes objets avec les jumelles que vous comparez. Favorisez des objets avec du détail. Ce peut être un poteau d'électricité, un bâtiment en brique ou autres. De cette manière, vous serez mieux en mesure de comparer la résolution et la définition des détails.

Conclusion

Malheureusement, la jumelle parfaite n'existe pas. Lors de la fabrication d'une jumelle, les fabricants doivent faire des compromis. Ainsi, le consommateur doit lui aussi faire des compromis. L'un de ces compromis est celui de la grosseur des objectifs et du poids. Plus les objectifs sont gros, plus les images sont claires mais le résultat est une jumelle encombrante et lourde. Les lentilles et les prismes de haute qualité sont aussi plus lourds. Les fabricants de jumelles, voulant réduire le poids des jumelles, doivent donc utiliser des matériaux plus légers pour la conception de leurs boîtiers au lieu de compromettre la qualité des lentilles et des prismes. Un autre compromis doit se faire du côté de la puissance. Plus la jumelle est puissante (10x,12x), moins le champ de vision est large, plus la profondeur de champ diminue et plus les effets du tremblement des mains s'intensifient. L'autre inconvénient d'aller vers une jumelle très puissante, est le risque d'avoir un moins bon rendement en conditions de faible luminosité. Vérifiez la grosseur de la pupille de sortie (diamètre des objectifs ÷ puissance) et n'allez pas en bas de 5 mm si vous voulez un minimum de qualité d'image par temps sombre. Cependant, plus on se tourne vers des jumelles de qualité, plus on peut se permettre une jumelle ayant des objectifs plus petits car les jumelles « haut de gamme » transmettent évidemment beaucoup mieux la lumière.

Grâce à une bonne connaissance en optique, l'achat d'une paire de jumelles de qualité ne représente plus une expérience risquée. Vous êtes maintenant équipé de vos connaissances et vous avez l'avantage d'utiliser tous les conseils pratiques de cet article afin de rechercher la jumelle qui vous convient. Bon choix de jumelle!

Tales from the BPQ ARCHIVES

This year we mark the impressive milestone of the 105th anniversary of BPQ's founding. Most of us thought it also marked another milestone - namely the hiring of a full-time coordinator (see page 8). However, the archive records show that a person has been hired once before to support the volunteer-driven management structure of BPQ! J. Donald Cleghorn was appointed as full-time secretary and field officer in 1937. Unsurprisingly, according to Bird Protection Quebec's official history book (aptly named *A Bird in the Bush*) the merit of this salary expenditure was not without its internal debate. Interestingly, the contentious issue was resolved thanks to the "generosity of one of our members" who covered the expense anonymously, and it appears the hiring decision was generally met with approval. In the annual report of 1936-37, it was noted about him that it "...is safe to say that never have birds received such active and energetic protection at they do at this time."

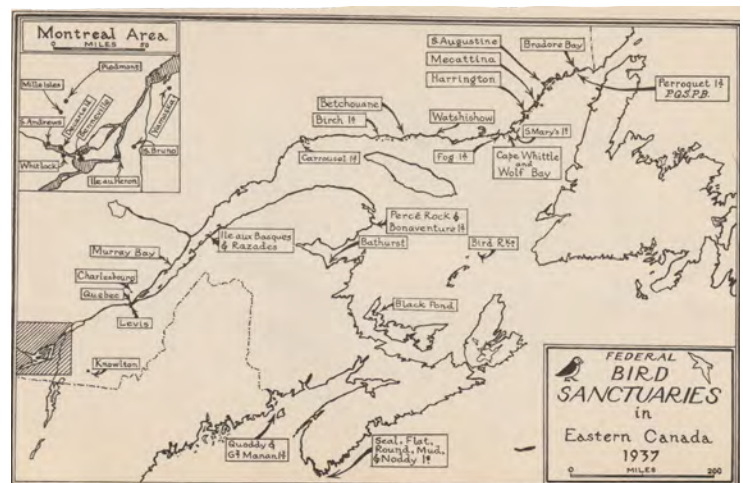
Cleghorn had appeared on the PQSPB scene the previous year when he joined the executive committee. His paid duties included taking care of routine correspondence and answering queries from individuals and organisations. He also represented the society at AOU and other meetings. According to *A Bird in the Bush*, Cleghorn had a close working relationship with the federal government's Parks Branch. This resulted in a cooperative relationship between the PQSPB and RCMP with Cleghorn, in his role as an honorary game warden, reporting violations of the Migratory Birds Convention Act to the RCMP as well as providing bird identification advice to its officers.

An expert outdoorsman, great naturalist and enthusiastic networker, Cleghorn established many meaningful contacts for the organization. He remained an active PQSPB member for many years but stayed in the secretary role only until 1939 when he left to serve overseas during WWII. The paid secretary position was taken on in 1940 by a McGill grad student but then in 1942, it reverted to being a volunteer position.

Celebrating 85 years protecting sea birds at Ile aux Perroquets Bird Sanctuary

1937 was also an important year in BPQ history as it was the year we acquired our first bird sanctuary. The following paragraph and map appeared in the 1936-1937 annual report to record the purchase.

We have acquired ownership of Perroquet Island, situated in Bradore Bay Bird Sanctuary, near the Quebec Labrador boundary. Though inaccessible to most members, we may be content in knowing that we have title to the most populous bird-island in the gulf of St. Lawrence and that the puffins and other sea-fowl which breed on it are safe from molestation. A guardian for this island is employed by the Lands, Parks and Forests Branch of the Department of Mines and Resources.



Interested in more BPQ History?

Contact communications@pqspb.org to purchase a copy of *A Bird in the Bush* by Margaret Pye Arnaudin, Bird Protection Quebec's official history book.

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