

# The Song Sparrow

Newsletter of Bird Protection Quebec  
Bulletin de la Protection des oiseaux du Québec



Volume 51 Number 3

December 2008

## Do You Want to Continue to Receive The Song Sparrow? We Must Hear From You!

This is the last printed edition of *The Song Sparrow*. Starting in the New Year, we will be distributing our newsletter electronically so we can be more environmentally responsible and reduce our costs.

**IF** you haven't yet provided us with your up-to-date email address, please email [mhudson@videotron.ca](mailto:mhudson@videotron.ca) before January 1.

**IF** you don't have internet access, please phone (514-637-2141) or mail us (P.O. Box 43, Station B, Montreal, Quebec, H3B 3J5) so you can receive one of the very few printed copies that will remain available.

**IF** you don't notify us at all before January 1, regrettably, you will receive neither the electronic nor the printed version of the newsletter!

For the reasoning behind this decision, please see issue 51-1 or visit the website at <http://www.pqspb.org/newsletter.html>.

## Join the Great Backyard Bird Count and Project FeederWatch!

Bird and nature fans throughout North America are invited to join tens of thousands of everyday birdwatchers for the 12th annual Great Backyard Bird Count, February 13-16, 2009. The National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are calling on everyone to "Count for Fun, Count for the Future!" Participants did just that in record numbers for the 2008 count, submitting more than 85,000 checklists and identifying 635 species.

Anyone can take part, from novice birdwatchers to experts, by counting birds for as little as 15 minutes (or as long as they wish) on one or more days of the event and reporting their sightings online at [www.birdcount.org](http://www.birdcount.org). Participants can also explore what birds others are finding in their backyards - whether in their own neighbourhood or thousands of kilometres away.

The 2008-09 season of Project FeederWatch began November 8, but you can still sign up. FeederWatchers keep track of their birds and report their tallies each week. Watching birds benefits science, but it can also be a healthy part of your routine. Hundreds of studies have verified that time spent watching nature can reduce stress. So why not slow down and watch the birds?

Please visit the Bird Studies Canada web page, or call 888-448-2473.



Chuck Kling

Majestic Snowy Owls are moving south this winter in search of food after an excellent breeding season. Please respect them and keep your distance if you spot one.



*Season's Greetings!  
We wish you much  
joy and many lifers in  
the New Year!*

*The Song Sparrow Team*

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## Message From Our President

Last month we witnessed the very satisfactory culmination of more than ten years of work by one of the least public of Bird Protection Quebec's committees. The case in point is the Archives Committee, chaired by Helen Meredith. As 20-plus acid-free boxes, full of fascinating, well-catalogued documents, were being transported to the McCord Museum, I mused on how fortunate Bird Protection Quebec is to have so many members and friends willing to offer their time and expertise to advance the mission of the Society, and in so many ways. It seems we can always count on people to come forward and help out.

The Archives Committee has been working quietly for years, collecting and putting order into the chaos of 90 years of our records, publications, letters, etc. Under Helen's leadership and archivist Nathalie Blanchard's professional inspiration, great headway was made during the summer of 2006, but the job wasn't finished: September came, Nathalie moved to Ottawa, more "stuff" accumulated, and we worried that we would never manage to complete the project. But somehow serendipity intervened. Nathalie moved back to Montreal and Helen leaped at the opportunity. Nathalie, who had become quite interested in birds and birders during her work the previous summer, happily agreed to help some more, and Sheila Arthur offered her welcoming dining room as Archives Central. Other members of the committee spent hours identifying photos and sorting out duplicate documents. Helen contacted the McCord Museum again, Chris Murphy's van did more duty as a relocation vehicle and our complete "institutional history" is now safely sequestered at the McCord where it will be well-preserved and available for future researchers to make use of.

Archives may seem a dusty, dull subject when compared to chasing a White-eyed Vireo or censusing Grasshopper Sparrows, but it's important and we thank everyone who has been involved, over many years, to achieve this satisfactory resolution.

At the December Monthly Meeting, we gave Nathalie a BPQ jacket and an honorary one-year membership to the Society. We hope to see her often at future meetings and on field trips.

Good birding all,



### 2009 Winter Lecture Series Which is Which? LBJs and Others

Some birds are harder to identify due to indistinct colouration, distance from you or a difficult-to-remember song. We have the specialists to share their expertise and help you to unravel the mystery, presented at two-week intervals:

- \* Rodger Titman on Duck ID.....February 11
- \* Lance Laviolette on Sparrow ID.....February 25
- \* Betsy McFarlane on Birdsong ID.....March 11
- \* Michel Bertrand on Shorebird ID....March 25

**Place:** Knox Crescent Kensington & First Presbyterian Church, 6225 Godfrey Ave, NDG  
**Time:** 7:30 pm

**Cost:** \$15 a lecture for members and \$20 for non-members

Further details and registration forms will be available at monthly meetings or on the website [www.birdprotectionquebec.org](http://www.birdprotectionquebec.org). Please contact Gail Desnoyers at 514-634-1028 or at [gail.desnoyers@sympatico.ca](mailto:gail.desnoyers@sympatico.ca) for more information.

## Bird Protection Quebec



■ Observation ■ Education ■ Conservation

Bird Protection Quebec is the operational name of The Province of Quebec Society for the Protection of Birds.

Established January 4, 1917

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Registration # 11925 2161 RR0001.

All donations are tax deductible.

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The Song Sparrow ISSN 1710-3371  
Legal Deposit: National Library and Archives of Canada

Publication Mail No. 40044323

Deadline for the next newsletter:  
January 5, 2009

## Nature Canada Honours BPQer

Barbara MacDuff, member of the Board and a past president of Bird Protection Quebec, was presented with Nature Canada's Volunteer of the Year Award at the Monthly Meeting in October. In making the presentation, Ken Thorpe, Nature Canada Treasurer, drew attention to Barbara's outstanding work on the Education Committee over the past twenty years, leading children's field trips, making presentations in libraries and classrooms and introducing adults and children to the wonders of the bird world. As a keen and skilled observer and as a natural and professional teacher, Barbara's friendly, open manner has encouraged many a beginner to take up the banner of birder and conservationist.

On the conservation side, Barbara has been active in monitoring bird populations in almost every way possible for a "citizen scientist." She has: 1) monitored our bluebird boxes in Hudson for many years, 2) maintained the sign and feeders at BPQ's Driscoll/Naylor Sanctuary in Hudson, 3) been co-director of the Hudson Christmas Count and participated in the Montreal count, 4) done bird surveys for the *Quebec Breeding Bird Atlas*, 5) participated in Project FeederWatch, 6) done a Loon Lake Survey for the past five years, 7) done Marsh Monitoring for two years, 8) participated in BPQ's Philipsburg Sanctuary bird surveys, 9) recently completed an Owl Survey for Quebec, 10) volunteered at the McGill Bird Observatory as census-taker and assistant to the Bander-in-Charge, and 11) helped organize and run Summer Nature Camps for children for several years.

Barbara is well-deserving of the honour of being named Volunteer of Year by Nature Canada and we of Bird Protection Quebec congratulate her most heartily.

**Eve Marshall**

Ken Thorpe and Barbara MacDuff posing with her freshly presented Nature Canada Volunteer of the Year Award.



## A Refreshing Change

Membership Services is very pleased to announce improvements to the refreshments offered at monthly meetings. In future, Clémence Soulard and Jean Demers will be brewing up a fresh pot of the delicious "Song Bird" organic, shade-grown, fair-trade coffee sold at the Membership Services table, and will also offer organic Earl Grey tea and tisanes. Come early to the meeting, and enjoy a "cup that cheers" while mingling with other members.

## Education

On November 4, 2008, three members of Bird Protection Quebec's Education Committee gave a presentation on winter birds to about 20 interested participants at the Beaconsfield Library. Good contacts were made that should lead to a greater involvement with birds in that community. The committee is also looking forward to working with students at École Saint-Rémi, where classes will be working on bird themes. Volunteers are always needed to help with this work. Please contact Barbara MacDuff at [barb.macduff@sympatico.ca](mailto:barb.macduff@sympatico.ca) if you are available.

Know any kids with a bird project on the go? Check out the bird of the month on BPQ's website, where the Snowy Owl will be featured in December and the Common Redpoll in January.

**Barbara MacDuff**



André Pelletier

James Junda, the Bander-in-Charge at the McGill Bird Observatory this fall, showing a young scout a bird during the BPQ-sponsored scout outing last September.

## Membership News

Warm greetings to Nicholas Acheson, Montreal; Kernan & Maureen Bell, Pierrefonds; and Nicholas & Louise Hanlon, Westmount. We look forward to seeing you on our field trips and at our meetings and hope you will attend our winter lecture series!

Don't forget that BPQ's stunning calendar full of bird photographs will still be available for purchase at the January monthly meeting. Arrangements can also be made to mail them at cost by sending an email to: [birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com](mailto:birdprotectionquebec@gmail.com).

## BPQ Monthly Meetings 2008-2009

Meetings are held at 7:30 pm at Knox Crescent Kensington and First Presbyterian Church, 6225 Godfrey Avenue, NDG (between Grand Boulevard & Kensington Ave, 1<sup>1/2</sup> blocks north of Sherbrooke, bus #105)

**January 5, February 2, March 2, April 6,  
May 11, 2009 (AGM)**

### An update since the DDT catastrophe...

On October 6, 2008, about 60 members listened to Sarah Marteinson's interesting talk on the impact of chemical pollutants on birds. Sarah is working on her Ph.D. at McGill's MacDonald Campus under the supervision of Dr. David Bird of McGill and Dr. Kim Fernie of the Canadian Wildlife Service.

Sarah introduced her talk with a brief historical summary of the issues surrounding contaminants entering the environment. This started with DDT and our gradual awareness of DDT's deadly impacts, first exposed in Rachel Carson's famous book, *Silent Spring*. She then talked about the growing awareness of the dangers of other toxic chemicals.

Sarah traced the main ways that these chemicals can enter the environment through the disposal of industrial and pharmaceutical waste and through chemical sprays used in agriculture and disease prevention. Indeed, the reality is that thousands of these chemicals have been introduced into the environment since DDT was banned. Unfortunately, we know little about their environmental impacts or how they are affecting birds today.

Sarah introduced her research on brominated flame retardants (BFRs). BFRs are added to many commercial products for the purpose of fire prevention, including textiles, foams, upholstery, electronics, insulation and building materials. BFRs are similar in nature to PCBs, but are currently less well understood. The chemical properties of BFRs allow them to disperse through air and water and accumulate in wildlife. They are also capable of bio-magnification and so are particularly dangerous for species at the top of the food chain such as raptors. Since their introduction in the 1970s, they have been used extensively and are showing up in the environment worldwide and in wildlife at exponential rates. Current research on these chemicals indicates a variety of physiological effects including the disruption of hormonal and neurological systems.

Sarah then outlined her preliminary results, focusing on the effects of two kinds of BFRs on exposed, captive male American Kestrels (*Falco sparverius*) at the Avian Science and Conservation Centre. She hopes to determine if and how these chemicals affect birds in the wild. Sarah is currently focusing her research on how BFRs affect reproduction in kestrels including effects on courtship and brood-rearing behaviour as well as examining some physiological factors such as testis and sperm integrity, and hormone levels. Preliminary results are pointing to serious effects including decreased copulation frequency, increased testis weight and decreased fertility.

**Jeff Harrison**

### Two Speakers in One!

On November 3, 2008, we had the opportunity to hear not one, but two excellent speakers. First, Kathleen Blanchard of the Québec Labrador foundation, and founder and president of Intervale Associates Inc., spoke about engaging communities in conservation and stewardship.

Kathleen shared three case studies in which her organization worked with rural people in order to understand their views on conservation and to foster a feeling of stewardship in the community while also protecting the integrity of their livelihoods.

The first case study was on the Wolf Fish (three species of ocean catfish), a by-catch in all East Coast fisheries. Kathleen and her team met with the fishermen face to face to inquire about their views on the conservation of the Wolf Fish. The purpose was to gain meaningful knowledge of the fishermen's attitudes toward fishery laws seeking to protect the Wolf Fish. They produced a DVD for fish harvesters showing the ecological role of the Wolf Fish. This tool was very successful in changing the attitude from simple compliance with the law to one of stewardship.

The second case study was that of the turr hunt. The term "turr" refers to Common and Thick-billed Murres. Newfoundland and Labrador are the only places where turrs are legally

hunted. The turr hunt occurs in the fall and is deeply rooted in tradition. The sustainability of this hunt and the fact that hunters are often in close proximity to bird sanctuaries are often questioned.

The third case study focused on seabirds of the Quebec north shore that nest in the Baie de Brador Migratory Bird Sanctuary. Île aux Perroquets, owned by BPQ, is part of this sanctuary. This area is the oldest monitored seabird sanctuary. The decline of Puffin, Razorbill and other seabird populations was studied and local awareness was raised of the need to restore populations of nesting seabirds while preserving cultural integrity. The team worked with families, used interpretive signs and engaged people in the field. This was very effective: Île aux Perroquets is the only place in North America where Puffin numbers are increasing. It is also close to our hearts at BPQ as it's one of the many sanctuaries we are currently managing.

Our second speaker of the night, Gregor Beck, co-editor of the newly published *Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas*, gave us a brief but comprehensive look of the results of the Atlas. This colossal achievement was conducted over five years by 3,400 volunteers who logged in 150,000 hours of field work, conducted 69,000 point counts, filled out 1.2 million species records and 10,000 rare/colonial species records. Data were received for 49,000 squares. In fact, the entire province was surveyed (1.1 million square km).

The results of this Atlas (2001-2005) were compared with those of the first Atlas (1981-1985). Some species have increased in number since the last Atlas (mostly raptors and large birds, e.g. Bald Eagle, Merlin, Cooper's Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Sandhill Crane, Wild Turkey and Canada Goose). Many birds increased their range southward (e.g. Common Raven, Yellow-rumped Warbler) or northward (e.g. Carolina Wren, Northern Cardinal, House Finch, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse). Those suffering the greatest loss over the last 20 years were grassland and shrubland species: Loggerhead Shrike, Upland Sandpiper and Grasshopper Sparrow, likely due to habitat loss.

**Continued on next page...**

## Speaker's Corner Continued...

Aerial foragers, including all species of swallows, nighthawks and swifts, also showed a major decline, the reasons for which are not yet clear.

A major improvement in this Atlas is the species abundance maps, which show the relative abundance of each species across the province. These results can be used to identify species of special concern as well as important areas for birds across Ontario. This is a great tool for conservation. Furthermore, its format and methodology have been used by other atlas projects such as the *Maritime Breeding Bird Atlas*. All species maps and data summaries can be found on the Atlas website [www.birdsontario.org](http://www.birdsontario.org) and a book showing the results of the Atlas is now available for purchase.

After hearing this presentation, and as a participant of the *Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas*, I am really looking forward to the 2nd *Quebec Breeding Bird Atlas*, which is in the works.

**Alain Goulet**

### A Real "Bird" Course!

**With David Bird and Rodger Titman  
Monday, January 5, 2009, at 7:45 PM**



Two peas in a pod: Dave and Rodger pause while enjoying some chilly winter birding.

Many of you know that ornithologists David and Rodger have been offering their multiple-session adult education "bird" course to interested Montrealers for many years. Bearing in mind their McGill credentials, no doubt more than one participant has dubbed their course "Ornithology 101." Without question, David and Rodger have had a very positive impact on educating people about birds and have funnelled many new members to our Society.

Both David and Rodger have entertained us at monthly meetings over the years with their knowledge and insight into all things ornithological. At the January meeting, they will pool their formidable talents to make a special presentation that will combine some of their best material. They have promised a quiz but insist that veterans, novices and non-birders alike will have a fun evening and no one will be embarrassed!

Dr. David Bird is a professor of Wildlife Biology and Director of the Avian Science and Conservation Centre at McGill University. Dr. Rodger Titman is Associate Professor of Wildlife Biology in the Department of Natural Resource Sciences at McGill University. Rodger is also the past President

of BPQ. Rodger is nearing retirement and David is not far behind, so this may be one of your last chances to see them in action together. Do not miss this evening!

**Jeff Harrison**

### An Intro to BPQ Sanctuaries

**With Richard Gregson  
Monday, February 2, 2009, at 7:30 PM**

BPQ is the owner of surprisingly extensive tracts of land throughout Quebec that have either been purchased, willed or donated. Innumerable other sites have also been purchased by major conservation bodies with the assistance, financial or otherwise, of BPQ. We look after forest, marsh, islands and grasslands - a wide range of habitats for a huge range of birds.

In the past two years, BPQ's Sanctuaries Committee has visited some of these sites to get an idea of what they hold today. This presentation will take the audience on a rapid tour of Quebec, dropping in at our various sanctuaries and getting a feel for the birds they hold and their value to wildlife conservation in general. We will also look at some of BPQ's historical involvement in land management and wildlife habitat preservation.

Richard Gregson is a Director of BPQ, co-chair of the Sanctuaries Committee and responsible for the society's website and electronic media. He also serves on the Conservation, Communications and Property Acquisitions Committees. He is a biologist from England who (re)discovered birds when he immigrated to Quebec over a decade ago and he has not put down his binoculars since. His other interests include the provision of web services to charities operating in the wildlife and conservation field, and he also serves as a director of the Morgan Arboretum. His personal mission in life is stated as being the rehabilitation of *Passer domesticus*, arguably the most interesting and handsome bird we have, in the hearts of the North American birding community. In his professional life, he is employed at a senior level as a pathologist within the pharmaceutical industry

**Jeff Harrison**



Richard smiling happily for the camera whilst birding.

## Parlons d'oiseaux

Bilan des observations intéressantes à travers la province  
par Pierre Bannon

## Birdviews

Summary of interesting sightings from around the province  
by Pierre Bannon

Communiquez vos observations intéressantes à :

Pierre Bannon, 1517 Leprohon, Montréal, QC H4E 1P1. Tél: 514-766-8767 en soirée/after 7:00 pm. Courriel: [pbannon@videotron.ca](mailto:pbannon@videotron.ca)

Please report your interesting bird observations to:

### Août-octobre 2008

**Oie à bec court** : pour une 2e année consécutive, un indiv. a été abattu par un chasseur, cette fois le 6 oct à La Pocatière (P. Dupuis). **Cygne tuberculé** : un à Maple Grove 2-31 oct (MP. Christophe, I. Bourget). **Cygne trompette** : deux oiseaux près de Duparquet 9 sept au même endroit que le printemps dernier (ph., G. Trépanier *et al.*). **Cygne siffleur** : deux à Angers 20-23 oct (A. Cloutier, D. Dallaire). **Canard siffleur** : un couple à Lachenaie 14 oct (G. Cyr *et al.*), un mâle à Plaisance 26 oct (J. Savard) et enfin un à l'île des Sœurs 29 oct (S. Duval). **Fulmar boréal** : l'espèce était plus ou moins régulière aussi loin à l'ouest que Tadoussac; l'un s'est rendu encore plus à l'ouest, à Rivière-Ouelle, 6 août (JF. Rousseau). **Puffin fuligineux** : un à Tadoussac 19 sept, inhabituel aussi loin en amont du fleuve (S. Denault, O. Barden, S. Belleau). **Puffin des Anglais** : des oiseaux signalés à Tadoussac 30 août-5 sept (R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan, pl.ob.), Saint-Vallier 14 sept (G. Lord) et Trois-Pistoles 20 sept (*vide* JP. Lebel). **Fou de Bassan** : deux à Trois-Rivières 7 août (*vide* R. Barbeau) et un à Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 7 sept (G. Gruner, M. Gahbauer). **Pélican d'Amérique** : un à Plaisance 22 août (JF. Houle).

**Aigrette neigeuse** : deux à Bécancour 1er sept (B. & R. Martin) et une à Nicolet 15 sept (L. Jacques). **Aigrette bleue** : un imm. à Angers 20 oct (A. Cloutier, D. Dallaire). **Bihoreau violacé** : un ad. à Deschênes 5 août (R. Dubois, *vide* M. Gosselin). **Ibis Plegadis** : des oiseaux au lac Letondal près de Parent 1er août (S. Lasalle), Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 21 août (A. Gilbert, *vide* L. Légaré) et Neuville 14 oct (*vide* A. Couture) étaient probablement des Ibis falcinelles.

**Pluvier bronzé** : un groupe de 300-400 indiv. à Baie-du-Febvre 26 oct était le plus important signalé depuis une décennie (R. Barbeau, J. Brunelle). **Avocette d'Amérique** : une à Cap Tourmente 28 sept-19 oct (ph., J. Normandeau, pl. ob.). **Chevalier semipalmé** : des indiv. à Yamachiche 26 août-14 sept (J. Gélinas, pl. ob.) et à Rimouski 28 août (Y. Gauthier *et al.*). **Bécassin à long bec** : un ad. à Saint-Siméon 17 août (A. Couture *et al.*) et un juv. à Montmagny 19-27 oct (M. Lavoie).

**Mouette tridactyle** : il y a eu une invasion estivale inhabituelle dans l'extrême sud de la province comme en témoignent 10 oiseaux au début d'août à Beauharnois (R. Fortin, pl. ob.) et deux à Piedmont le 9 août (Y. Payette). **Mouette de Sabine** : pour la 2e année consécutive, on a observé une irruption majeure de cette espèce dans la région de Tadoussac où jusqu'à 9 oiseaux furent signalés le 4 sept (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). La plupart étaient des juv. mais quelques ad. sont aussi apparus. L'espèce fut aussi signalée dans d'autres localités. Un dernier oiseau était à Tadoussac le 28 oct (R. Pintiaux).

**Mouette rieuse** : des oiseaux étaient à Port-Daniel 1er-14 sept (A. Couture *et al.*) et à Bonaventure 18 sept (A. Couture). Jusqu'à deux indiv. ont fréquenté Tadoussac 4-13 oct (R. Pintiaux *et al.*) et un est apparu à Forillon 12 oct (D. Jalbert). **Mouette atricille** : une à Victoriaville 20 sept (C. Roy). **Mouette de Franklin** : des

### August-October 2008

**Pink-footed Goose**: for a 2nd consecutive year, an indiv. was shot by a hunter, this time at La Pocatière 6 Oct (P. Dupuis). **Mute Swan**: one at Maple Grove 2-31 Oct (MP. Christopher I. Bourget). **Trumpeter Swan**: 2 birds near Duparquet 9 Sept at the same spot where they were reported last spring (ph., G. Trépanier *et al.*). **Tundra Swan**: 2 at Angers 20-23 Oct (A. Cloutier, D. Dallaire). **Eurasian Wigeon**: a pair at Lachenaie 14 Oct (G. Cyr *et al.*), a male at Plaisance 26 Oct (J. Savard), and one at Île des Sœurs 29 Oct (S. Duval). **Northern Fulmar**: single birds were more or less regular as far west as Tadoussac and one strayed even further west to Rivière-Ouelle 6 Aug (JF. Rousseau). **Sooty Shearwater**: one was seen at Tadoussac 19 Sept, very unusual so far upriver (S. Denault, O. Barden, S. Belleau). **Manx Shearwater**: singles seen in the Tadoussac area 30 Aug-5 Sept (R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan, m.ob.), at Saint-Vallier 14 Sept (G. Lord) and at Trois-Pistoles 20 Sept (*vide* JP. Lebel). **Northern Gannet**: 2 strayed to Trois-Rivières 7 Aug (*vide* R. Barbeau) and one to Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 7 Sept (G. Gruner, M. Gahbauer). **American White Pelican**: one at Plaisance 22 Aug (JF. Houle).

**Snowy Egret**: 2 at Bécancour 1 Sept (B. & R. Martin), and one at Nicolet 15 Sept (L. Jacques). **Little Blue Heron**: an imm. at Angers 20 Oct (A. Cloutier, D. Dallaire). **Yellow-crowned Night-Heron**: an ad. at Deschênes 5 Aug (R. Dubois, *vide* M. Gosselin). **Plegadis Ibis**: singles at Lake Letondal near Parent 1 Aug (S. Lasalle), Saint-Georges-de-Beauce 21 Aug. (A. Gilbert, *vide* L. Légaré) and Neuville 14 Oct (*vide* A. Couture) were most probably Glossy Ibis.

**American Golden-Plover**: a group of 300-400 indiv. at Baie-du-Febvre 26 Oct was the largest reported in the last decade (R. Barbeau, J. Brunelle). **American Avocet**: one at Cap Tourmente 28 Sept-19 Oct (ph., J. Normandeau, m. ob.). **Willet**: singles at Yamachiche 26 Aug-14 Sept (J. Gélinas, m. ob.) and at Rimouski 28 Aug (Y. Gauthier *et al.*). **Long-billed Dowitcher**: an ad. at Saint-Siméon 17 Aug (A. Couture *et al.*), and a juv. at Montmagny 19-27 Oct (M. Lavoie).

**Black-legged Kittiwake**: there was a very unusual summer irruption in extreme s. Quebec with up to 10 birds in early Aug. at the Beauharnois dam (R. Fortin, m.ob.) and 2 at the Piedmont sewage lagoon 9 Aug (Y. Payette). **Sabine's Gull**: for the second consecutive year, there was a major irruption in the Tadoussac area where a maximum of 9 birds was reached 4 Sept (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). Most were juveniles but a few adults were also reported. Single birds appeared at other locations. The last bird was at Tadoussac 28 Oct (R. Pintiaux).

**Black-headed Gull**: singles were at Port-Daniel 1-14 Sept (A. Couture *et al.*) and at Bonaventure 18 Sept (A. Couture). Two birds were at Tadoussac 4-13 Oct (R. Pintiaux *et al.*) and finally one appeared at Forillon 12 Oct (D. Jalbert). **Laughing Gull**: one at Victoriaville 20 Sept (C. Roy). **Franklin's Gull**: singles at Rimouski 5 Aug (JP. Ouellet), Longue-Rive 30 Aug (S. Denault,

indiv. à Rimouski 5 août (JP. Ouellet), Longue-Rive 30 août (S. Denault, S. Belleau), Victoriaville 19-24 oct (C. Roy *et al.*), et Saint-Charles-de-Bellechasse 24 oct (G. Lemelin).

**Sterne de Forster** : une trouvée à Tadoussac 26 sept (S. Denault, O. Barden, S. Belleau). **Sterne caugék** : un ad. en mue fut décrit de façon convaincante à Cap-du-Bon-Désir 22 août (S. Belleau *et al.*). Probablement le même indiv. fut bien observé et documenté à l'aide d'un croquis à Les Escoumins 1er sept (D. Gagné, Y. Hamel). Puis, l'oiseau fut observé par plusieurs et photographié à Tadoussac 26 sept (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). Revu les 3 & 8 oct. Il s'agit d'une 2ème mention pour le Québec et la première documentée par une photo. **Labbe à longue queue** : quelques indiv. signalés, surtout à Tadoussac. Les plus intéressantes mentions concernent deux indiv. de forme sombre, l'un à Rivière-Ouelle 25 août (JF. Rousseau) et l'autre à Tadoussac 26 août (ph., R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan). **Mergule nain** : quelques indiv. sont apparus à Tadoussac en oct (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). **Guillemot de Brünnich** : un indiv. à Bergeronnes 10 août (R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan) et 4 oct (O. Barden).

**Tourterelle turque** : une est réapparue 21 août à Saint-Anselme où un oiseau avait passé l'hiver dernier (S. Audet, R. Labadie). **Coulicou à bec jaune** : un nid avec jeunes trouvé entre Granby et Farnham 4 août (ph., G. Landry), puis le même observateur a signalé un indiv. entre Iberville et Farnham à la mi-août. Finalement, des indiv. aperçus à Saint-Athanase 13 sept (P. Laporte, S. Matthieu) et Boucherville 16-18 sept (Y. Drouin *et al.*). **Harfang des neiges** : l'espèce est apparue très tôt dans le sud du Québec, comme en témoignent plus de 20 indiv. dénombrés à la fin d'oct. **Colibri thalassin** : un indiv. qui semble être de cette espèce a été bien décrit et photographié à Saint-Hyacinthe 11 oct, une première mention pour le Québec (R. Buteau, L. Robert, O. Buteau). **Pic à tête rouge** : des indiv. à Neuville 25 sept (J. Lanctil) et Métabetchouan 26 oct (C. Potvin).

**Viréo aux yeux blancs** : des indiv. à Saint-Barnabé-Sud 13 sept (D. Ouellette) et au cimetière Mont-Royal 1er nov + (ph., N. Soucy, M. Isabelle *et al.*). **Mésange à tête brune** : près de 16,000 indiv. en migration dénombrés à Saint-Fulgence entre la mi-sept et le 24 oct (C. Cormier, G. Savard). **Troglodyte de Caroline** : des indiv. à l'île des Sœurs 11-25 sept (P. Bannon), Lévis 18 sept (G. Lemelin), parc-nature de la Pointe-aux-Prairies 27 août (D. Demers) et Rimouski 13 oct (G. Proulx, F. Therrien-Proulx). **Traquet motteux** : 6 oiseaux signalés - Saint-David d'Yamaska 1er sept (Y. Roy), Rimouski 13-18 sept (ph., G. Proulx, M. Therriault), Sainte-Foy 15-18 sept (ph., C. Marcotte, pl. ob), Oka 16 sept (S. Vanier, G. Papillon), Rivière-au-Renard 28 sept (D. Jalbert) et Nicolet 14-17 oct (ph., Y. Dugré, pl. ob.). Il est intéressant de constater que la moitié des mentions provenaient de l'ouest du Québec, ce qui est très inhabituel. **Solitaire de Townsend** : un à Tadoussac 29-30 oct (R. Pintiaux). **Grive de Bicknell** : un imm. bague à l'observatoire d'oiseaux de McGill à Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue 6 oct, le 2ème dans l'histoire de cette station de baguage (ph., B. Frei). **Grive à collier** : une à l'île Charron 23 oct (Y. Gauthier, J. Héneault).

**Paruline à gorge jaune** : une à Baie-Comeau 25 oct (ph., JP. Barry). **Paruline des prés** : une femelle au parc de Forillon 11 sept (G. Lachaine, É. Presseau) et une femelle imm. à l'île Bonaventure 5 oct (P. Poulin *et al.*). **Paruline à gorge grise** : des

S. Belleau), Victoriaville 19-24 Oct (C. Roy *et al.*), and Saint-Charles-de-Bellechasse 24 Oct (G. Lemelin).

**Forster's Tern**: one found at Tadoussac 26 Sept (S. Denault, O. Barden, S. Belleau). **Sandwich Tern**: a moulting adult was convincingly described at Cap-du-Bon-Désir 22 Aug (S. Belleau *et al.*). Most probably the same bird was seen and sketched at nearby Les Escoumins 1 Sept (D. Gagné, Y. Hamel). Finally, the bird was seen by many and photographed at Tadoussac 26 Sept (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). It was seen again 3 & 8 Oct. This provided the second record for Quebec and the first confirmed with a photograph. **Long-tailed Jaeger**: several birds reported mainly in the Tadoussac area. Quite interesting: single dark morphs seen at Rivière-Ouelle 25 Aug (JF. Rousseau) and Tadoussac 26 Aug (R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan). **Dovekie**: a few birds appeared at Tadoussac in Oct (R. Pintiaux *et al.*). **Thick-billed Murre**: one at Bergeronnes 10 Aug (R. Pintiaux, M. Moisan). The same or another one was seen 4 Oct (O. Barden).

**Eurasian Collared-Dove**: a bird reappeared 21 Aug at Saint-Anselme where one had spent last winter (S. Audet, R. Labadie). **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**: a nest with young was found between Granby and Farnham 4 Aug (ph., G. Landry), and the same observer reported a single bird between Iberville and Farnham in mid-Aug. Finally, singles were at nearby Saint-Athanase 13 Sept (P. Laporte, S. Matthieu) and also at Boucherville 16-18 Sept (Y. Drouin *et al.*). **Snowy Owl**: there was a very early movement in s. Quebec in late October, with over 20 birds by the end of the month. **Green Violet-ear**: a bird which appeared to be this species was well seen and photographed at Saint-Hyacinthe 11 Oct, providing a first record for the province (R. Buteau, L. Robert, O. Buteau). **Red-headed Woodpecker**: singles at Neuville 25 Sept (J. Lanctil) and Métabetchouan 26 Oct (C. Potvin).

**White-eyed Vireo**: singles at Saint-Barnabé-Sud 13 Sept (D. Ouellette) and Mount-Royal Cemetery 1 Nov + (ph., N. Soucy, M. Isabelle *et al.*). **Boreal Chickadee**: from mid-Sept through 24 Oct, close to 16,000 indiv. were counted migrating through Saint-Fulgence (C. Cormier, G. Savard). **Carolina Wren**: singles at Île des Sœurs 11-25 Sep (P. Bannon), Lévis 18 Sep (G. Lemelin), Pointe-des-Prairies Nature Park 27 Aug (D. Demers) and Rimouski 13 Oct (G. Proulx, F. Therrien-Proulx). **Northern Wheatear**: 6 birds reported - singles at Saint-David d'Yamaska 1 Sept (Y. Roy), Rimouski 13-18 Sept (ph., G. Proulx, M. Therriault), Sainte-Foy 15-18 Sept (ph., C. Marcotte, m. ob), Oka 16 Sept (S. Vanier, G. Papillon), Rivière-au-Renard 28 Sept (D. Jalbert) and Nicolet 14-17 Oct (ph., Y. Dugré, m. ob.). Of interest, half of the birds seen this fall were west of Quebec City, which is unusual. **Townsend's Solitaire**: one at Tadoussac 29-30 Oct (R. Pintiaux). **Bicknell's Thrush**: a hatch-year bird was banded at the McGill Bird Observatory, Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue, 6 Oct, the second bird to be banded in the history of this station (ph., B. Frei). **Varied Thrush**: one at Île Charron 23 Oct (Y. Gauthier, J. Héneault).

**Yellow-throated Warbler**: one at Baie-Comeau 25 Oct (ph., JP. Barry). **Prairie Warbler**: a female in Forillon Park 11 Sept (G. Lachaine, É. Presseau), and an imm. female at Bonaventure Island 5 Oct (P. Poulin *et al.*). **Connecticut Warbler**: singles at Saint-Hubert 28 Aug (R. Belhumeur) and

indiv. à Saint-Hubert 28 août (R. Belhumeur) et Québec 7 oct (R. & F. Dion). **Tangara vermillon** : un oiseau affaibli recueilli à Sherbrooke 30 oct (S. Deshaies). **Bruant des plaines** : des indiv. à Tadoussac 10-18 oct (B. Maybank *et al.*) et Bergeronnes 19 oct (S. Denault, O. Barden). **Bruant à joues marron** : des indiv. à Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé 15 sept (ph., A. Couture) et Tadoussac 22-26 sept (R. Pintiaux). **Bruant noir et blanc** : une femelle à Sainte-Félicité 9-10 sept (J. Deschênes, ph., J. Larivée). **Bruant de Le Conte** : un au réservoir Baskatong 18 oct (MA. Montpetit, A. Crépeau). **Dickcissel d'Amérique** : des indiv. à Chandler 26 sept (JR. Lepage *et al.*) et Percé 5 oct (D. Mercier, JR. Lepage). Trois oiseaux différents entendus en migration au-dessus de Tadoussac en oct (S. Belleau, O. Barden). **Carouge à tête jaune** : une femelle à Cap Tourmente 23 août (P. Cabard, *fide* R. Baeta). **Sizerin flammé** : un afflux majeur noté à Tadoussac à partir du 22 oct. Environ 40,000 indiv. dénombrés à la fin du mois (S. Denault, S. Belleau.).

Québec City 7 Oct (R. & F. Dion). **Summer Tanager**: one picked up in weakened condition at Sherbrooke 30 Oct (S. Deshaies). **Clay-colored Sparrow**: singles at Tadoussac 10-18 Oct (B. Maybank *et al.*) and at Bergeronnes 19 Oct (S. Denault, O. Barden). **Lark Sparrow**: singles at Sainte-Thérèse-de-Gaspé 15 Sept (ph., A. Couture), and at Tadoussac 22-26 Sept (R. Pintiaux). **Lark Bunting**: a female at Sainte-Félicité 9-10 Sept (J. Deschênes, ph., J. Larivée). **Le Conte's Sparrow**: one at the Baskatong Res. 18 Oct (MA. Montpetit, A. Crépeau). **Dickcissel**: singles at Chandler 26 Sept (JR. Lepage *et al.*) and Percé 5 Oct (D. Mercier, JR. Lepage). Three different birds were heard calling over Tadoussac while migrating s.w. in Oct (S. Belleau, O. Barden). **Yellow-headed Blackbird**: a female at Cap Tourmente 23 Aug (P. Cabard, *fide* R. Baeta). **Common Redpoll**: a huge influx was noted at Tadoussac starting 22 Oct. By the end of the month, over 40,000 indiv. had been counted (S. Denault, S. Belleau.).

## In Memoriam

On September 26, 2008, Marianne (Marika) Gosztonyi Ainley lost her long battle with breast cancer in Victoria, B.C. She leaves her husband David and children Vicky and Mark.

Marika was born in Hungary in 1937, later fleeing to Sweden to escape the Soviet invasion of 1956. She trained as a chemist and worked in Hungary and Sweden before coming to Canada. Once in Montreal, she undertook studies in aesthetics, music appreciation and literature at Sir George Williams University. She completed a Master's degree in the history, sociology and philosophy of science at the Université de Montréal. She became particularly interested in the history of science, and received a Ph.D. from McGill in 1985 for her dissertation: *From Natural History to Avian Biology: Canadian Ornithology 1860-1950*.

Beginning in 1988, Marika developed and taught courses on "women and science" and "women and the environment" at the Simone de Beauvoir Institute of Concordia University. For four years, 1991-95, she served as principal of the Institute and director of women's studies. In 1995, she and husband David moved to Prince George, B.C., where she set up a women's studies program at the University of Northern British Columbia before retiring to Victoria. Amongst other writings, she authored an autobiography of William Rowan, a Canadian ornithologist renowned for his work on bird migration, penned numerous articles and contributed chapters for, as well as edited, several books devoted to Canadian women scientists. She also researched and wrote articles on the contributions of amateurs to North

American ornithology including William Henry Moseley, Lewis McIver Terrell, ex-President of the PQSPB, and Catherine Parr Traill. It was during this time that she became president of the Canadian Science and Technology Historical Association.

Marika developed a passion for birdwatching and she, David, and their young family joined the PQSPB and went on many field trips. Marika formed many long-standing friendships in the Society, becoming known for her knowledge and enthusiasm of all things avian. She became a Director of the Society and was Chair of the Research Committee from 1982 to 1992. She also served on the Education Committee for many years and was a member of the editorial board of *tchébec*. When the rare bird hotline, now made obsolete by the Internet, was in danger of collapse, Marika offered to organize and run it, which she did for many years, and for which the listers were very thankful.

Marika often said that one of her proudest achievements was the instigation of the early morning field trips to Westmount Summit where she could indulge herself in the study of warblers and share her appreciation of them with so many willing learners. After moving to B.C., she sorely missed the "fallouts" of migrant warblers, which we so take for granted here in the east. Fortunately, she and David were able to complete their once-in-a-lifetime cruise to Alaska before she became ill and entered the hospital for the last time. We are sure that she had her binoculars with her. Marika will be much missed.

**Mabel McIntosh and Bob Barnhurst**



Marika and Mabel McIntosh in September of 2007 during Marika's last visit to Montreal: smiling and ready to bird!

## Field Trip Diaries

- 13/09/08**      **COOPER MARSH, SOUTH LANCASTER, ON**      **Leader: Martin Bowman**  
Sunny, warm, 21°C      14 birders      43 species  
**Birds of the Day:** Virginia Rail, Northern Harrier  
**Other Birds of Note:** Wood Duck, American Bittern, Green Heron, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Red-breasted Nuthatch, Marsh Wren, Yellow-rumped Warbler
- 
- 20/09/08**      **GEORGE H. MONTGOMERY BIRD SANCTUARY, PHILIPSBURG, QC**      **Leader: Sandy Montgomery**  
Windy, 20°C      20 birders      60 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Scarlet Tanager  
**Other Birds of Note:** Wood Duck, Blue-winged Teal, Northern Shoveler, Great Egret, Osprey, N. Harrier, Red-shouldered and Red-tailed Hawk, Merlin, Pileated Woodpecker, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Common Raven, Eastern Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Wood Thrush
- 
- 27/09/08**      **HUDSON, QC**      **Leader: Barbara MacDuff**  
Cloudy but rain-free      12 birders      46 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Pine Siskin  
**Other Birds of Note:** Ruffed Grouse, Pileated Woodpecker, Golden-crowned and Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, Black-throated Green and Blackpoll Warbler, Rusty Blackbird, Pine Siskin
- 
- 04/10/08**      **ALFRED BOG & SEWAGE LAGOONS, ALFRED, ON**      **Leader: Jacques Bouvier & Martin Bowman**  
Windy, 11°C      16 birders      56 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Pectoral Sandpiper  
**Other Birds of Note:** Snow Goose, Redhead, Ruddy Duck, Wild Turkey, Virginia Rail, Sora, Black-bellied Plover, Wilson's Snipe, Dowitcher sp., Horned Lark, American Pipit, Pine Siskin, Palm Warbler, Eastern Meadowlark
- 
- 11/10/08**      **ÎLE BIZARD, QC**      **Leader: Felix Hilton**  
Beautiful, mild day      21 birders      50 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Ruffed Grouse  
**Other Birds of Note:** Blue-winged and Green-winged Teal, Red-breasted Merganser, Turkey Vulture, Cooper's Hawk, N. Goshawk, Red-shouldered and Broad-winged Hawk, Merlin, Pileated Woodpecker, Brown Creeper, Marsh Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Rusty Blackbird, Pine Siskin
- 
- 18/10/08**      **MORGAN ARBORETUM, STE-ANNE-DE-BELLEVUE, QC**      **Leader: Betsy McFarlane**  
Clear, sunny, 6°C      31 birders      29 species  
**Birds of the Day:** Brown Creeper, White-winged Crossbill, Cedar Waxwing and Eastern Bluebird  
**Other Birds of Note:** Sharp-shinned and Red-tailed Hawk (imm.), Golden-crowned Kinglet, Hermit Thrush, Purple Finch
- 
- 25/10/08**      **PARC NATIONAL D'OKA, OKA, QC**      **Leader: Wayne Grubert**  
Clouds and rain, 6-12°C, breezy late in the morning      15 birders      35 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Northern Shrike  
**Other Birds of Note:** Northern Pintail, Green-winged Teal, Ring-necked Duck, Common Goldeneye, Ruffed Grouse, American Coot
- 
- 01/11/08**      **PARC POINTE-AUX-PRAIRIES, MONTREAL, QC**      **Leader: Diane Demers**  
Sunny, 5°C      14 birders      42 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Black Scoter  
**Other Birds of Note:** Gadwall, White-winged Scoter, Bufflehead, Cooper's, Red-tailed and Rough-legged Hawk, American Pipit, American Tree Sparrow, Snow Bunting, Purple Finch, Common Redpoll
- 
- 08/11/08**      **STE-MARTINE/ST-ÉTIENNE/BEAUHARNOIS, QC**      **Leader: Felix Hilton**  
Fog turning to rain      8 birders      23 species  
**Bird of the Day:** Snowy Owl  
**Other Birds of Note:** Snow Goose, Cackling Goose, Belted Kingfisher, Snow Bunting, Red-winged Blackbird

Compiled by Sheldon Harvey

## Aigle royal et Pygargue à tête blanche hivernant dans les Hautes-Laurentides

La région des Hautes-Laurentides, plus précisément le secteur lauriermontois, offre certains territoires très propices à l'observation des Aigles royaux et des Pygargues à tête blanche pendant la longue période hivernale. La migration de ces grands rapaces a lieu généralement vers la mi-octobre dans ce secteur. À ce moment, les aigles arrivent du Grand Nord et les pygargues arrivent surtout des grands lacs inhabités, situés un peu plus au nord. Plusieurs aigles et pygargues interrompent leur migration et demeurent dans le secteur jusqu'au printemps, plus précisément jusqu'au début d'avril. Ils y trouvent de la nourriture, ce qui leur permet de passer les six mois d'hiver difficiles dans la région alors que tous les autres rapaces, exception faite du rare Autour des palombes, ont quitté pour aller vers le sud. Même la Buse pattue délaisse la région en hiver.

La cause principale de cet hivernage, régulier dans notre secteur mais assez rare pour le Québec et l'Ontario, vient de l'attrait de la grande population de Cerf de Virginie. Les cerfs se concentrent dans des ravages (aire de confinement hivernal). La chasse, la grande épaisseur de neige combinée au froid, les accidents d'auto et la prédation par les petites populations de Loup gris causent une mortalité suffisamment importante chez les cerfs au cours de la période hivernale pour fournir une source de nourriture accessible autant aux nombreux corbeaux qu'à ceux que je surnomme les gros, les aigles et pygargues.

Avec un peu de chance, on peut apercevoir l'Aigle royal, le Pygargue à

tête blanche et le Grand corbeau voler ensemble puisqu'ils recherchent la même chose. Voir les Grands corbeaux planer dans le ciel est un bon signe pour savoir si les vents seront propices aux voltiges des aigles. Il m'arrive parfois de voir un Pygargue à tête blanche et un Aigle royal à travers mes jumelles au même moment, mais pas aussi souvent que je le voudrais. Lors de bonnes journées, il n'est pas rare d'en voir plusieurs dans le ciel. J'ai déjà observé un nombre maximal de trois Aigles royaux voler ensemble et de sept Pygargues à tête blanche voler ensemble.

Il m'est difficile de savoir combien de pygargues et d'aigles fréquentent la région. Mais avec le temps, j'ai appris à les trouver régulièrement, surtout les pygargues. Je peux aussi identifier certains individus. L'hiver dernier un Aigle royal immature avait la queue blanche mais ne présentait pas les marques blanches caractéristiques sur les ailes, ce qui me permettait de le distinguer des autres aigles. C'était le plus assidu à l'un des sites d'observation. À un second site je voyais régulièrement, en décembre et en janvier, un Aigle royal adulte très souvent solitaire. Par la suite, en février et mars, un immature fréquentait le même secteur. Sa taille paraissait nettement inférieure à celle de l'adulte lorsque les deux oiseaux se trouvaient côte à côte. Puis, par une belle journée du début du mois de mars, l'immature s'est mis à exécuter des acrobaties aériennes pour attirer l'attention de l'adulte. C'était peut-être un jeune mâle qui courtisait une femelle adulte.

À force d'observer ces oiseaux, on arrive à mieux connaître leurs

habitudes. Par exemple, le froid ne semble pas avoir beaucoup d'impact sur leur activité. J'ai observé planer pendant de longues minutes des aigles dans le ciel à des températures inférieures à -30°C. La meilleure période de la journée semble être de 10 h à 14 h, mais il est possible d'en observer tant qu'il fait jour. Pour les trouver, on peut se fier à certains arbres que les aigles préfèrent utiliser comme perchoirs. Je prends le temps de vérifier régulièrement ceux que j'ai appris à connaître. Il y a aussi des montagnes que les aigles préfèrent survoler tandis que d'autres montagnes sont plus faciles à surveiller. Un lac gelé peut permettre de mieux scruter le ciel en forêt et un chemin dégagé permet d'observer au loin l'approche des oiseaux.

Trois secteurs sont particulièrement efficaces pour voir ces oiseaux : le lac Louvigny dans la municipalité de Kiamika, le lac Pierre dans la municipalité de Chute-Saint-Philippe et le lac Tapani dans la municipalité de Sainte-Anne-du-Lac. Dans ce dernier secteur, on ne trouve pas de cerfs ; c'est plutôt la présence d'un club de chasse privé, relâchant des Faisans de Colchide, qui amène une nourriture abondante.

Si vous passez par chez moi, il me fera grand plaisir de vous accompagner dans une belle randonnée. Venez passer une fin de semaine dans la belle municipalité de Chute-Saint-Philippe et découvrir un côté agréable du long hiver québécois. Au plaisir !

**Marc-Antoine Montpetit**  
[marcmontpetit@hotmail.com](mailto:marcmontpetit@hotmail.com)

### 2009 Parking Permit for Montreal Nature Parks

If you participate in BPQ field trips or go birding on your own in any of Montreal's network of nature parks, you probably know that the daily parking rate is currently \$7. You might therefore consider purchasing a parking sticker for your car from the City of Montreal. The annual permit allows unlimited parking in any of the following parks: Anse-à-l'Orme, Cap-Saint-Jacques, Bois-de-l'Île-Bizard, Bois-de-Liesse, Île-de-la-Visitation and Pointe-aux-Prairies. For residents of the island of Montreal, the price is \$40. The 2009 permit is available now and is valid immediately, so people buying in December will benefit. For more information, contact: Philippe Murphy, Préposé à la perception des revenus, Ville de Montréal, Gestion des grand parcs, 801 rue Brennan - pavillon Duke, Bureau 4146, Montréal, QC, H3C 0G4. To pay by credit card, telephone him at 514-280-6766.



## Upcoming Field Trips - Prochaines Excursions

Coordinators: Martin Bowman, 613-347-1655; Wayne Grubert, 450-458-5498

Saturday, January 10 - samedi 10 janvier

### MONTREAL BOTANICAL GARDEN - JARDIN BOTANIQUE DE MONTRÉAL

Leader: **8:00 AM** Meet in front of the restaurant, near the entrance on Sherbrooke St. East. There is a charge for parking inside the gates. Looking for winter finches. **Half day.**  
Guy Zenaitis  
514-256-8118 **8 h 00** Rassemblement devant le restaurant, près de l'entrée du jardin sur la rue Sherbrooke Est.  
[gzenaitis@videotron.ca](mailto:gzenaitis@videotron.ca) Prévoir des frais de stationnement. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday, January 17 - samedi 17 janvier

### STE-MARTHE, ST-CLET, STE-JUSTINE

Leader: **8:00 AM** Meet at Hudson Inn, exit 17 off Highway 40. From Montreal, take Highway 40 west towards Ottawa. Allow an hour's drive from Montreal. Looking for Snowy Owls, Rough-legged Hawks, Snow Buntings and other open-country winter birds. Bring warm clothes for standing around or taking short walks (or in case weather conditions dictate a complete change of itinerary). We will try to keep the number of cars to a minimum; therefore, car-pooling arranged ahead of time and/or at our rendezvous would be greatly appreciated. **Half day.**  
Wayne Grubert  
450-458-5498 **8 h 00** Rassemblement au Hudson Inn, sortie 17 de l'autoroute 40. De Montréal, prendre l'autoroute 40 ouest, en direction d'Ottawa. Prévoir une heure à partir de Montréal. Espèces recherchées : Harfang des neiges, Buse pattue, Bruant des neiges et autres oiseaux d'hiver.  
[wgrubert@hotmail.com](mailto:wgrubert@hotmail.com) Apporter des vêtements suffisamment chauds pour de courtes marches et permettant de passer du temps à l'extérieur; ces vêtements pourraient être utiles lors d'éventuels changements de plans dus à la météo. Nous vous encourageons à faire du covoiturage en vue de limiter le nombre de voitures. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday, January 24 - samedi 24 janvier

### PARC-NATURE DU BOIS-DE-LIESSE

Leader: **8:30 AM** Meet at the south entrance. Take Henri-Bourassa exit 60 off Highway 40 west. Stay on the north service road west to Henri-Bourassa Blvd (approx. 2 km). Exit east on Henri-Bourassa Blvd. Almost immediately turn left onto rue Etingin. Drive to the end of the street. Parking: \$7.00. Looking for winter finches, owls, Pileated Woodpecker. **Half day.**  
Wayne Grubert  
450-458-5498 **8 h 30** Rassemblement à l'entrée sud. Prendre la sortie # 60 Henri-Bourassa de l'autoroute 40 ouest. Demeurer sur la voie de service nord vers l'ouest jusqu'au boul. Henri-Bourassa (environ 2 km). Prendre la sortie est du boul. Henri-Bourassa. Presqu'immédiatement, tourner à gauche sur la rue Etingin et se rendre au bout de la rue. Stationnement : 7,00\$ Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver et Grand pic. **Demi-journée.**  
[wgrubert@hotmail.com](mailto:wgrubert@hotmail.com)

Saturday, January 31 - samedi 31 janvier

### SOUTH SHORE SURPRISE EXCURSION/ EXCURSION HIVERNALE - RIVE-SUD

Leader: **N.B. Trip destination will depend on interesting sightings prior to the trip. Check the Songsparrow Group email as the date approaches.**  
Sheldon Harvey  
450-671-3773 **N. B. L'excursion aura lieu là où des observations intéressantes d'oiseaux auront été faites dans les jours précédant l'excursion. Pour connaître la destination exacte, consulter le groupe de discussion Songsparrow quelques jours avant la sortie.**  
[ve2shw@yahoo.com](mailto:ve2shw@yahoo.com) **8:00 AM** Meet in the parking lot in front of former Wal-Mart (soon to be Zeller's) on Taschereau Blvd, west of the Champlain Bridge. From Montreal, take the Champlain Bridge to Exit 8 (Taschereau Blvd). Turn right on Taschereau Blvd. Former Wal-Mart will be immediately on your right. There will be lots of driving (weather permitting), but little walking. Car-pooling is recommended. **Half day.**  
**8 h 00** Rassemblement sur le terrain de stationnement de l'ancien Wal-Mart (bientôt un Zeller) au boul. Taschereau, à l'ouest du pont Champlain. De Montréal, prendre le pont Champlain et continuer jusqu'à la sortie 8 (boul. Taschereau). Tourner à droite sur le boul. Taschereau. L'ancien Wal-Mart se trouve immédiatement à droite. La sortie implique beaucoup de déplacements en voiture, en supposant la température favorable, mais peu de marche. Nous recommandons le covoiturage. **Demi-journée.**

Continued on next page...

Saturday, February 7 - samedi 7 février

## HUDSON

Leader:

Barbara MacDuff

514-457-2222

[barb.macduff@sympatico.ca](mailto:barb.macduff@sympatico.ca)

**8:00 AM** Meet at the CPR station on Wharf Street in Hudson. Highway 40, exit 22 onto Côte St. Charles north, right on Main Street, left on Wharf Street. Looking for winter finches, owls, Pileated Woodpecker, crossbills. **Half day.**

**8 h 00** Rassemblement à la gare C.P. sur la rue Wharf, à Hudson. Prendre l'autoroute 40, sortie 22, et tourner à droite sur la Côte St-Charles nord. Continuer jusqu'à la rue Main et tourner à droite sur celle-ci. Continuer jusqu'à la rue Wharf puis tourner à gauche sur celle-ci. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver, hiboux, becs-croisés et Grand pic. **Demi-journée.**

Saturday, February 14 - samedi 14 février

## MOUNT ROYAL CEMETERY - CIMETIÈRE MONT-ROYAL

Leader:

Chuck Kling

514-277-2567

[chuckk@videotron.ca](mailto:chuckk@videotron.ca)

**8:00 AM** Meet at the main gate to the cemetery on chemin de la Forêt, Outremont. Looking for finches and other winter birds. **Half day.**

**8 h 00** Rassemblement à la porte principale du cimetière sur le chemin de la Forêt, à Outremont. Espèces recherchées : oiseaux d'hiver. **Demi-journée.**

Trip Advice - De rigueur pour les excursions



André Pelletier

Transportation: Contact the leader or the Songsparrow email group if you need or can offer a lift.

Cancellations: Trips are rarely cancelled, but in case of extreme weather check with the leader.

Clothing: Dress warmly and wear waterproof footwear, even if the day seems mild and dry.

Food: Bring plenty to eat and drink, even on half-day trips.

Transport : Téléphoner au responsable ou contacter le groupe Songsparrow pour faire du covoiturage.

Annulations : En cas d'intempérie, vérifier la possibilité d'une annulation avec le responsable.

Habillement : Vêtements chauds et bottes imperméables sont toujours de rigueur.

Nourriture : Toujours prévoir une collation et quelque chose à boire.

## Central Park in the Dark: More Mysteries of Urban Wildlife

By Marie Winn. 2008. Douglas & McIntyre. ISBN: 0374120110.

Central Park in New York was, as all devoted birders on "The Mountain" know, designed by the same chap who gave Montreal its own downtown bird heaven. So when a book is published about the wonders of bird - and other - life in that strange southern city, we should pay attention up here too. It seems that when it comes to homes for wildlife, Mr. Olmstead's parks are the place to be.

Central Park is well known as a major site for watching migrating birds in the spring when tens of thousands of warblers can drop out of the sky to the amazement of the gathered binocular-wielding observers. It is also, of course, home to that famous Red-tailed Hawk that went by the name of Pale Male until his nest site was destroyed by unthinking socialites on Fifth Avenue. This book touches only tangentially on those daylight splendours, since it concentrates on Central Park's nocturnal wildlife. What an eye-opener! I guarantee that, having read this book, you'll not be watching hockey on Saturday evenings any longer.

Marie Winn is an articulate member of a small group of skilled amateur

naturalists that haunt the park at night looking for the things that live their lives after the sun has gone down. She doesn't simply write about birds, but gives us some hugely entertaining and informative chapters on moths (we learn that there are "moth-ers" out there listing their insect observations as assiduously as we birders check off our birds), on raccoons and foxes and bats and more, much more, than you ever needed to know about slug sex. We should never complain about the deficiencies of our bird field guides - apparently there is only one field guide for moths that is anything better than a picture book and it is so badly written and generally hard to work with that anyone using it screams with frustration. But that's all there is, so birders, be thankful! All in all, the book is such a treat and so entertainingly written: her description of watching Cicada ecdysis is riveting.

Did you know that despite all the work of biologists over the centuries, almost nothing is known about how birds sleep? Ms. Winn's group made some fascinating observations about roosting American Robins, but when they checked them with the world's

robin experts, they were told that they were probably the first people ever to observe and document these things and that this is a huge gap in scientific knowledge about bird behaviour: how do birds sleep, how do they avoid being eaten by night predators, is it light levels or temperature that tells them to wake in the morning, and why do they roost in trees under street lamps in preference to trees in shady corners? Questions for the citizen scientists amongst us to try to answer perhaps... Real biologists give up at sunset unless they are studying owls - of which there is much in this book to inform us. Some of the gems regarding owls: the description of the owls flying in at dawn and out at twilight, and the released Eastern Screech-Owls that spent the next few weeks assiduously shrugging off their radio-tags.

There is a world of wonder in *Central Park in the Dark*, which makes one eager for some Mount Royal roaming in the gloaming... All in all a good read for a winter night - order yourselves a copy online today, or run out to your local bookstore.

LBJ