

Ontario Bird Banding Association September Newsletter 1975

Coming events-

Wednesday Sept. 10 -at 8:00 p.m. William Rapley (the veterinarian at the new Metro zoo) will be speaking on "Birds of California" This meeting will be held at the home of Heather Howkins, 24 Whitehall Road, Toronto, Ont.

Saturday Sept. 20- There will be a banding workshop at Backus House at 10:00 a.m.

Luther Marsh Canoe Trip, 14 June 1975.

Your committee has in the past shown a positive genius for picking days with the most inclement and unsuitable weather for field trips, and initially it looked as though the June 14 trip to Luther Marsh was going to be no exception. At 9:30 the area was the scene of a violent thunderstorm and torrential downpour which brought traffic on Hy. #6 down to a crawl, but miraculously when we met at 10 a.m. the weather had cleared; there remained only a stiff breeze which rendered the surface of the lake "som lappy" as they say in Newfoundland, but not so lappy as to prevent canoeing. The party set out from the dam, and first inspected the shores of Windmill Island without landing, where several Long-billed Marsh Wren nests were found, a Least Bittern was flushed and an excellent view was obtained of a pair of Wilson's Phalaropes. The North Bog was next visited, where we found several Black Tern's nests, one other mysterious nest with three white stained eggs whose parenthood is still being disputed, and had a distant view of a red-necked grebe.. Big Island was then inspected; we passed at a respectful distance from the heronry, where the Great Blues already had well grown , found another pair of phalaropes in a place where they had not been seen hitherto and on landing flushed a gadwall off eleven eggs. We then went to within four hundred yards of the ospey eyrie and returned to the dam via Prairie Island, where we saw a third pair of phalaropes. Nearby we also saw a ruddy duck, numerous widgeon and (on June 15) a bufflehead. Altogether about five miles was travelled by canoe. The party broke up at 3 p.m.

Thanks are due to the Grand River Conservation Authority for permission to visit the marsh , and to Mr. Al. Sanderlands (G.R.C.A.) and to Mr. Toni Reaume (Ministry of Natural Resources) for giving their own time to accompany us.

submitted by David Brewer

Please send material for the newsletter to Ted Dinniwell, 7 Esquire Place, Hamilton, Ont.

Long Point Bird Observatory Headquarters Opened

The new headquarters of the Long Point Bird Observatory was officially opened on April 5, 1975. In spite of a late spring snowstorm which blocked roads across much of southern Ontario during the previous two days, about sixty people attended the opening, which was held in conjunction with LPBO's 1975 Annual meeting.

The opening ceremonies were performed by Mr. Fred Bodsworth, an Honorary Director of the Observatory and a noted author and naturalist. He stressed the role of avian research in detecting environmental deterioration and congratulated LPBO on its progress, as well as entertaining the audience with several anecdotes about Long Point's history.

Founded by the OBBA in 1960 as a migration monitoring and banding station, the LPBO became an independent organization in 1968. Until now most LPBO projects and activities have centred on the two field stations on Long Point proper. The new headquarters, at a readily accessible location on the mainland, is within easy reach of many of the most important wildlife habitats in the vicinity of Long Point Bay and will enable the Observatory to broaden the scope of its research and educational activities.

FIRST FIELDFARE BANDED IN NORTH AMERICA

A North American bird banding first was scored recently by LPBO. On May 24, 1975, a Fieldfare was caught, banded, photographed and released. The Bird Banding Laboratory of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which maintains the central file of all North American bandings, confirmed that this was the first Fieldfare banded on the continent.

A close relative of the American Robin, the Fieldfare was at least 2,000 miles off course from the nearest breeding colony in Greenland. The main breeding range is north and central Europe east to Siberia. Previous North American records include specimens from Jens Munk Island, Foxe Basin, and Stamford, Connecticut, a photograph of a bird at St. John's, Newfoundland, and sight records in Ontario, New York, and Delaware.

The Fieldfare was caught in a mist net at one of LPBO's field stations on Long Point by Dr. Michael J. Porter and Mr. Alex Steele, and was seen by several experienced ornithologists including participants in a Federation of Ontario Naturalists field trip, who were visiting the Observatory at the time.

The Fieldfare was certainly the most unusual bird banded in the 15 year history of the Observatory. Another extreme rarity, however, was captured and banded at LPBO the same day. A Blue Grosbeak, also netted and banded by Dr. Porter and Mr. Steele, was only the second ever recorded at LPBO, and may be the first banded in Canada.

These two birds were netted during a regular migration monitoring and banding program which is carried on by LPBO throughout the migration seasons with the help of volunteer naturalist, bird watchers and bird banders. For further information write to: LPBO, P.O. Box 160,
Port Rowan, Ont.
NOE 1M0

David J. T. Hussell
Long Point Bird Observatory

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