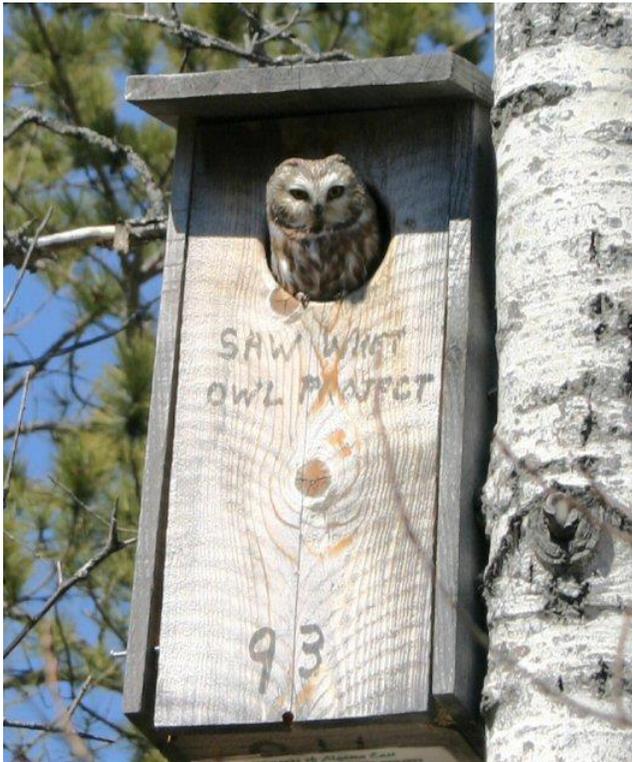




NEWSLETTER

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL NEST BOX PROJECT SUCCESS

The Friends of Algoma East, in partnership with the Ontario Bird Banding Association, built 100 nest boxes for Northern Saw-whet Owls in 2005. Martin Wernaart and Terri Groh assisted with starting the project and the Friends of Algoma East monitor the boxes and band the birds that use them. In 2006, three boxes were used by American Kestrels. These photos are from April 2007 near Elliot Lake.



Inside

Green-tailed Towhee.....	2
Banding Highlights.....	3
President's Report from AGM.....	4
OBBA Birdathon.....	5
Banding Office Update	6
Dates to Remember.....	7

GREEN-TAILED TOWHEE – LOST AND FOUND



This Green-tailed Towhee was captured at Thunder Cape Bird Observatory in a heligoland trap at 5:50 am on June 10 2006. This was the second last day of migration monitoring for the spring at TCBO and there were few birds around, but following our protocol heligoland trap drives were done each of the first 3 net checks. The second run of the day yielded the towhee. It was an after second year male with a large cloacal protuberance. You can imagine our surprise to see this rufous-capped green bird in the collection box of the trap. Unfortunately all our

volunteers had left for the season by this time and there was only myself and my wife Maureen present to appreciate the catch. This was the 6th record for Ontario. What an exciting end to a most interesting season that also started off with an unusual bird as the first bird banded of the season: an Ash-throated Flycatcher banded on April 26.

Green-tailed Towhees are one of the least known birds in North America, and are typically quite migratory from their breeding range in the American south-west to their wintering range in central Mexico. It is assumed that a lot of these 'lost' birds eventually find their way back home, but how would one find out? Near the end of November a banded Green-tailed Towhee was found at a bird feeder in Mountain Lake, in south west Minnesota, and it has been there ever since. This is one



photo by David Cahlander

of the most northerly wintering records for the species! With a skilful eye, and some great digital photographs, the band number was recovered and sure enough its origin was Thunder Cape! This is one of the first documented records of survival and behaviour for one of these 'lost' birds, but it also adds to the mystery of where it's been since June. When the bird was originally captured it was approximately 1800km north-west of its dominant breeding range. The 690km south-west movement this bird displayed over the past six months was certainly a flight in the right direction, but not quite far enough. Had the bird been at home in Colorado it would probably be soaking up the sun somewhere in Arizona.



The series of photos that was used to read the band number on the Green-tailed Towhee in Minnesota. photos by David Cahlander.

BANDING HIGHLIGHTS

John and Maureen Woodcock are busy banders. On top of operating Thunder Cape during the spring and fall migration, where over 6,000 birds are banded each year, they also operate MoSI stations in Costa Rica during the winter months. On November 23, 2006 they recaptured a HY TEWA at Playa Grande (3 km N of Tamarindo, Guanacaste, Costa Rica) which had been originally banded on August 8 2006 at Delta Marsh Bird Observatory (24 km N of Portage la Prairie, Manitoba). This 8.1 g. hatch year bird covered a straight line distance of over 4,300 km in 107 days, averaging at least 40 km per day.

PEPtBO caught an ASY-M RBGR during the spring 2007 season. The excitement built when the band number C 00335 was read along with the web address AVE@PROAVES.ORG A quick check on the internet proved it was a genuine Columbian bird. The only other Ontario-Columbia RBGR recapture was a bird banded at Long Point in 1966 and found in Columbia in 1970. David Okines reminds everyone to keep an eye open for more Columbian banded birds.

AMGO banded by Cindy Cartwright on May 21/05 at Dunblane, ON was recaptured at the new Ausable Bird Observatory in Pinery Provincial Park, ON on May 7/06.

DUCK BANDING WORKSHOP

OBBA members Norm North, Martin Wernaart, Terri Groh, David Okines, Lesley Howes and Cindy Cartwright attended an interesting and informative workshop in North Bay on July 31 and August 1. Plans are underway to include NABC waterfowl certification at next year's workshop. Interested banders should contact Norm, David or Lesley for more information.

OBBA Presidents Report to the AGM February 24 2007

Eric Machell

Welcome to Port Rowan and thanks to Bird Studies Canada for again giving us the opportunity to hold our AGM in their facilities. We have a full and interesting agenda for this weekend meeting.

In some respects it has been a sad year, overshadowed by several deaths in the past four months. On behalf of all the members of OBBA I would like those of us here to pay tribute to three people who were all dedicated not only to birds but also to the pursuit of natural history, the preservation of the environment, and who had a great desire to share their knowledge. Unfortunately they are no longer with us.

In November, Bruce Duncan, died following a dreadful head-on car collision. Bruce was a great birder, and I have worked with him on the board of Long Point Bird Observatory, and the Ontario Bird Banding Association. He was a founder of The Niagara Peninsula Hawk Watch, and was very involved with many other birding and banding organizations. In 1987 it was Bruce who first introduced me to Hawk banding at his station at Hawk Cliff. He was 60 years young, and left behind his wife Janet, and two children James and Katie aged 13 and 10. There was a celebration of Bruce's life later that month in Hamilton, an occasion which was attended by a great number of people, testimony to how respected he was as a teacher and a conservationist.

It was on that occasion that I last saw John Miles. He did not look well, and it was only a few weeks later, when my wife and I were in Regina attending the funeral of her aunt, that I received a phone call to tell me that John had died that morning. For many years John and I had served together on both the boards of OBBA and LPBO. John will also be remembered for his tremendous enthusiasm in participating and leading Christmas Bird Counts and also in the huge number of outings that he led in all weathers. He was totally dedicated to bird banding and bird watching. John could also poke fun at himself. I remember the time at a meeting when he told of how he was experimenting with different black dyes to offset the fading of mist nets. He was using an aluminum turkey roaster, and had heated it on the gas stove with the mist net in it. Next he carried it across his kitchen to the sink area only to find out that the pan had a hole in it, and had left a stream of inky black liquid across the carpet. We all expressed horror, but he was most amused.

Earlier this month Dr. Arthur Langford passed away at the age of 96; he had not been well for some time, but we who did know him recall that he was still playing squash when well past his 90th birthday. Arthur did not only teach as a professor of biology at Bishop's University, but it was he who established the same biology department. I first met Arthur about 25 years ago when he had moved to Port Rowan from Montreal after he retired from his University career. For a time he was the Executive Director of LPBO, but he is probably best remembered for his work with the Long Point World Biosphere Reserve Foundation.

Three people; three conservationists, three teachers, three sharers of knowledge. Their loss is our loss, but we gained by having known them. May we just stop and reflect for a few moments on what we knew of them.

A point I wish to speak to is how many of our member organizations wish to become a member organization of OBBA. This point was raised at a recent Bird Observatory Board Meeting, and the response was unanimous "we should be an organizational member", and the treasurer immediately wrote

out a cheque to OBBA. So, to the organizations here today if you would like the application form would one member you put up your right hand, and David Okines will give you the form.

Now, I have a couple of questions for you that were raised at a recent board meeting. Remember this meeting, the AGM, is your meeting. I would like a show of hands on these questions so that for future AGM's we can follow your wishes when setting the date and the agenda.

1. Preferred date; traditionally it has been last w/e in February. Last year we held it in March because of the 50th Anniversary. Result of vote – continue holding the AGM in February.

2. Do you prefer a longer lunch break on the Saturday giving more time for mingling or do you prefer to have a shorter one, and more lectures? Result of vote – shorter break.

I thank all of you for coming here today, I thank the speakers in advance for agreeing to be here, and I am looking forward to their presentations.

I also wish to thank the Banding Office for their interest, their support and their help. It is always a pleasure to have their attendance and involvement at our meetings. Leslie and Louise would you please stand up and wave to the crowd just in case there is someone out there who doesn't know you.

Christian Friis who did the Baillie Birdathon on behalf of OBBA last year is unable to be with us today, but he has volunteered to do it again this year, and Audrey has sponsor sheets here for him. Last year he raised a total of \$1504 of which 25% i.e. \$376 was OBBA's share. Please this year again be generous.

In closing I really wish to thank all the members of a hard working board who have put out a lot of effort to make not only this meeting a success, but to ensure that OBBA continues to be a strong viable organization. Not wishing to single out anyone I would just ask that all the board stand and be recognized for their contribution to OBBA.

OBBA BIRDATHON A HUGE SUCCESS

Christian Friis

Stu Mackenzie and I started on 1 June in Long Point at 1230h and finished 2 June in Long Point at 1230h. We had travelled along the lakefront of Lake Erie and the western end of Lake Ontario, hit-up sewage lagoons, wood lots, coffee shops, agricultural fields, grasslands, swamps, wetlands and favourite birding spots and found a total of 162 species. This total actually beats last year's total of 157, so I was pretty happy, considering the date and the extreme heat we faced on 2 June.

Some of the highlight species include Acadian Flycatcher, Lark Sparrow, Sedge Wren, Prothonotary and Cerulean warblers, and Louisiana Waterthrush. For the full story check out the OBBA website. A huge Thank You to all those who donated on my behalf. Thanks to you I was able to raise over \$1500 total, a percentage of which will go towards the OBBA.

A complete account of Christian and Stu's birdathon is available in the member's-only section on the OBBA website www.ontbanding.org The username is: obba password is: obbanews

BIRD BANDING OFFICE UPDATE

Lesley Howes

The BBO has a full band supply in stock for 2007 including most sizes of hard metal bands. We are encouraging banders who work on long-lived birds, birds that tend to damage their bands, or birds that frequent marine environments to consider switching to hard metal bands.

The BBO has some new band size recommendations including: Wood Duck (5A butt end), Swans (9 flat), Common Eider (7A and 7B), Small Bald Eagles (8A rivet) and Large Golden Eagles (9R rivet).

Banders who collect cloacal, tracheal or oral swabs during banding of migratory birds as part of a research project are required to have this activity listed on their banding permit. An environmental assessment screening needs to be conducted before sampling can be authorized on banding permits. Be advised that the assessment process includes a two-week posting on the Canadian Environmental Assessment Registry, so be sure to apply in plenty of time.

Bandit is now available for use as the banding programs primary software for managing and submitting banding data. Bandit is compatible with Windows versions 2000 and later and with Macintosh operating systems, compatible with Microsoft Excel spreadsheets and accepts Band Manager files.

Bandit is available for download from the BBL webpage, or by following the link from the BBO page. Banders can download demonstration videos and a printable Reference Guide to help them become acquainted with Bandit's features.

Bandit will be supported directly by the BBO. The Bird Banding Office will continue to accept banding data from Band Manager, and Louise will continue to offer Band Manager support.

Encounter reporting is now available on the web at www.reportband.gov. If you report encounters on the web you will get immediate feedback on banding data, e-mail confirmation that your report was received, have the option to print certificate of appreciation from home. We hope to soon provide a short cut for hunters and bird banders. A key benefit of web reporting are encounters can be reported from anywhere, anytime including outside of North America in French, English or Spanish. This spring the banding program will launch a poster campaign with tear off cards to advertise on line reporting and the program in general. Posters have been developed in French, English and Spanish.

A new web address reportband.gov, will replace the postal address on all bands starting in 2007. The toll-free telephone number will remain. During 2007, banders will continue to receive the postal address bands until the supply has been exhausted. However, those who wish to study how this change will affect reporting rates on their project may request web address bands. Changes in reporting will be monitored by the banding program over the next few years. We expect to see an increase in reporting within North America due to the ease of reporting and increased reporting options as well as outside North America due to recognisable internet address, ease of reporting and language options.

Anyone with questions about permits, data or the banding program in general is always welcome to contact Lesley, Louise and Chantal at BBO_CWS@ec.gc.ca.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Ohio Bird Banding Association Fall Meeting

August 18

Deadline for submissions for November 2007 issue

November 1

Articles for publication, with a preferred maximum length of two pages in font 12, should be submitted in a Word document as an email attachment or on a diskette. Please do not number pages. Photos (.jpg) and drawings would be appreciated. Items from other sources and publications are acceptable, provided that permission for use in the OBBA newsletter is included with the submission.



