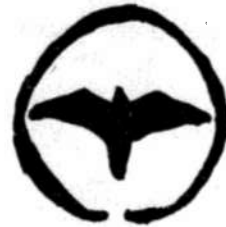


ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION



MARCH NEWSLETTER 1974

MARCH MEETING

On Tues. March 12th, at the home of Mrs. Heather Howkins, 24 Whitehall Road, Toronto, Don Baldwin will be the guest speaker. His topic will be on the British Honduras. It will be a very interesting evening and a very good diversion from the wintry weather. If you need directions on how to get there phone Heather at 929-3992. The meeting starts at 8p.m.

News from L.P.B.O.

Waterfowl Viewing Week-ends will be held at Long Point on two week-ends this year-March 23rd-24th and March 30th-31st. It is hoped this will divide the crowds (18,000 came last year) and ensure optimum birding on at least one of the week-ends. L.P.B.O. will again be taking part in manning the seven viewing points to help the public identify the birds. In addition, last year's banding demonstration at Backus Mill will be repeated.

We need lots of help from members and friends-able to identify waterfowl-to meet our commitment. Ministry of Natural Resources will rent overnight accommodation for all helpers- called interpreters-and supply a mid-day meal on all four days. If you can volunteer one or more days to help with the programme, please phone or write to D.H. Baldwin, 47 Duggan Avenue, Toronto, M4V 1Y1 (416-488-7769).

The Long Point Bird Observatory's third Annual Meeting will be held at Port Rowan, Ontario, on Saturday March 30th, 1974. This will coincide with the Long Point Waterfowl Weekend-jointly sponsored by the Long Point Bird Observatory, the Federation of Ontario Naturalists, and the Ministry of Natural Resources. Everyone is welcome to the banquet and the evening meeting. The Programme will be held in the Port Rowan Community Centre. A bar will be open at 5 p.m. and the banquet will begin at 6p.m.. The evening meeting featuring a guest speaker, will commence at 7.30 p.m.

If you wish to attend the banquet you must reserve your tickets in advance (reservations must be received by March 20th, 1974.).

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The cost for the roast beef dinner is \$5.00 per person. Send your reservation and cheque or money order to Mrs. D. Baldwin, 47 Duggan Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4V 1Y1.

Long Point Bird Observatory- Positions available 1974

The following positions are expected to be open for the 1974 season. Applications, stating qualifications, experience and time available, should be made in writing to: L.P.B.O. ,116 Three Valleys Drive, Don Mills, Ontario M3A 3B9.

LPBO Warden The Warden will be responsible for certain aspects of the field program on Long Point. Duties include observational work, banding and special projects, with the help of LPBO co-operators; and maintenance of Observatory facilities. The appointment will probably be from April 1 to October 31, with the possibility of extension to December 31, but applications are also welcome from anyone available for a large part of this period. Qualifications include experience in bird identification and banding, and ability to work with volunteers and other Observatory personnel. Remuneration will be up to \$375 per month, depending on experience. Applications due by Feb.22 1974.

Assistant Wardens Two assistant Wardens are needed for the period June 1 to August 31. The positions will probably be filled by high school students who wish to gain experience in bird banding and field work. They will be expected to assist the Warden with the Observatory Program, and will receive free room and board. These positions carry no remuneration. Applications due by Feb.22,1974.

Project Director for Breeding Bird Survey- This project is a continuation of the 1973 Breeding Bird Census and the position involves selecting and setting up plots, Organization of censuses and botanical surveys, and writing a report. The project runs from early April to late July. Remuneration will be \$50.00 per week plus room and board at the Observatory. Applications due by March 1,1974.

Volunteer Field Assistants for Breeding Bird Survey- Up to 6 volunteers are required to help with all aspects of the breeding bird survey. Enquiries are welcome from anyone available for part or all of the months April-July. These positions carry no remuneration, but successful applicants will receive free room and board. Applications due by March 1,1974.

Opportunities for field research The LPBO invites students and professional biologists to undertake research at its facilities on and near Long Point, Ontario, on the north central shore of Lake Erie.

The Observatory is an independent field station which fosters and promotes investigative studies, appreciation and conservation of birds and other aspects of the ecology and natural history of the Long Point region. It particularly encourages amateur participation, but has limited facilities for independent researchers whose projects complement its interests.

The facilities of the Observatory include a new Headquarters building near Port Rowan, with research space, a library, kitchen and temporary sleeping accommodation. There are also limited field station facilities on Long Point proper. A fee is charged for use of laboratory space and accommodation.

The Long Point region is well-known for the southern element in its flora and fauna, and the Backus Woods, adjacent to the Headquarters, is one of the finest examples of Carolinian forest remaining in Ontario. Other protected areas include numerous conservation tracts and forestry tracts, as well as extensive marshes famous for their waterfowl concentrations. Long Point itself is a narrow 20 mile sand spit with appropriate vegetation and animals. Active and abandoned farmland, streams, swamps and relatively unspoiled lakeshore add to the diversity of habitats in the area. Although the Observatory owns no land, we can usually help researchers arrange access to these properties.

For further information, application procedures or details of opportunities in your area of interest write:

Dr. E. H. Dunn
Independent Research Coordinator
Long Point Bird Observatory,
116 Three Valleys Drive
Don Mills, Ontario, Canada.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has sent us information with respect to opportunities for summer employment in the interpretation programmes of Ontario Provincial Parks. Many of these programmes seek to employ experienced naturalists. If you wish more information write to them at Toronto, Ont. M7A 1X5.

Sharpshins at Point Pelee

I hadn't banded hawks before; I hadn't even handled them. Yet I accepted with alacrity the chance to do just that. Pelee from all accounts is the most fantastic place in North America for visible migration, and the first week of October 1973 proved no disappointment. To be able to count a dozen different raptors in the air, if not at the same time, within the space of a short day, has to be remarkable anywhere. For me, my first visit to Pelee, I was in seventh heaven, the entire week.

But science is what took me there, and the migrations of the Sharp Shinned Hawk, *Accipiter striatus*. They were by far the most numerous of the hawks. At times one was able to count 50 or so in the air over the point at one time. Bird hawks prey on smaller birds. They hawk over the bushes and then terrifyingly swoop through the bushes for their prey. Unbeknownst to them, lurking in the bushes are our nets. Frequently both hawk and prey would be caught, sometimes after the kill. The success of the catching operation lies in the lessening height of the trees at the point itself. Here Pelee is barely a 100 yards wide, the trees were bushes. With the wind in the right quarter (NE to SE on our

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best catching days), the passerines would be kept low in the bushes, and concentrate near the point. This brought the hawks in very well.

Banding at Pelee this autumn was restricted to Sharpies and SAW-WHET OWLS. Jayne Evans had been there for two weeks in September, and Dennis Rupert and others continued the work through Oct. and Nov. Jayne's catch was something like 350 Sharp-shins with one days haul of 117 birds, a personal and Pelee record. In my week I totalled 263 birds, with one day tantalizingly short of 100 at 97 birds. This was on Sunday September 30th. Help was beautiful and good. I hardly left the banding hut between 8a.m. and 1p.m. Without willing and lively help removing birds from the nets the total would have been much lower. In the absence of another vehicle, I would like to thank the people who did help me at Pelee this autumn—thank you! Later in the week understandably as people returned to work, the number of helpers dwindled. The rate of catching didn't—so a lot hard work went into banding the next 150 birds! In particular my inexperience of handling hawks gave me heavily gashed fingers. The talons of hawks are not designed to be gentle. On Monday night I hid myself to Leamington for a tetanus shot.

Hawks have a unique odor to them, which is quite pleasing. Whether it stems from their diet, or a waxiness of the feathers, a sniff at their backs gives a strong sense of cleanliness. Some suggested they smelled of slightly scented soap. This was a reward one does not expect from banding. Another reward is the finding of a Cooper's Hawk in the net. In the field this larger cousin of the Sharp Shin may be difficult to separate, but in the net and the hand there is no question. The net sags to the ground; there's a blue jay, dead, beside him. Here's your Cooper's Hawk!! A magnificent bird. Twice the weight of a sharpie, and in the hand with a much more pronounced crest to the head. Without question banding hawks is great fun, and I can thoroughly recommend it.

Collin Griffiths
Dec 8th
4 Hadley Court, Bells Corners.

Tennessee warbler caught by a cat at Hornepayne, given to John Miles on August 6th, 1973 and released alive. This bird was banded on August 27, 1969 by Mrs. J. Micensky at Hibbing, Minnesota. (1150 36492)

John Miles comments on L.A. Smith's article in the Feb, 1974 newsletter. by saying that there are bird banding stations operating within 60 miles of the New national Park now being formed north of Sault St. Marie.

Please mail material for the newsletter to Dr. Ted Dinniwell,
7 Esquire Place, Hamilton, Ont. L9C 2R2.