



NEWSLETTER

OBBA TO DEVELOP A NEW COOPERATIVE BANDING PROJECT

As a result of discussions at the workshop on Northern Saw-whet Owl banding at the OBBA Annual Meeting in February 2004, the OBBA has decided to develop a new cooperative banding project focusing on saw-whet owls. A full proposal will be developed prior to the fall 2004 banding season.

Many bird observatories and banding stations in Ontario are already capturing and banding many owls during migration. In fall 2003, at least 15 stations in Ontario were conducted audio-luring operations to catch saw-whets. These 15 stations banded a total of more than 3000 saw-whet owls during that one season.

The OBBA project will be coordinated with the efforts of the international Project OwlNet network. The Ontario project would have a regional scope and focus on specific goals. The overall project is designed to encourage and coordinate three types of saw-whet banding operations in Ontario:

- Standardized owl migration monitoring operation designed to track changes in populations (as is currently being done at Thunder Cape and Prince Edward Point Bird Observatories)
- Non-standardized owl migration banding operations (such as the cluster of banding stations operating along the north shore of Lake Erie) designed to increase the number of inter-station and inter-year recaptures to provide more information on the saw-whet migration and moult in Ontario.
- A nest-box banding program designed to find out more about saw-whet productivity, site fidelity and the origins of the owls captured on migration (high priority but very little breeding season banding is currently being done).

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General guidelines for each of the above project types will be prepared. In addition, educational resource materials for those conducting public owl banding demonstrations will be compiled. Stations participating in the project will be asked to collect, computerize and submit particular data (e.g. effort and moult) in a standardized format. The results of this project will be compiled annually and summarized in the OBBA Journal. A preliminary scientific analysis of the results will be carried out following the 3rd year of the project.

Banders interested in participating in this project are encouraged to contact Audrey Heagy at aheagy@kwic.com or 519-586-9464 for more information. We are also looking for individuals to serve on a technical committee to oversee the design and implementation of this research project or assist with other aspects of the project.

This is the first new cooperative banding project to be launched by OBBA in more than a decade. As one of the few regional banding organizations in North America, OBBA is in an excellent position to develop cooperative projects. Hopefully this regional project will form the basis for a continental-scale project as envisioned by Project OwlNet. OBBA still has an important role to play in promoting bird banding as a scientific research tool.

PRINCE EDWARD POINT BIRD OBSERVATORY

Eric Machell

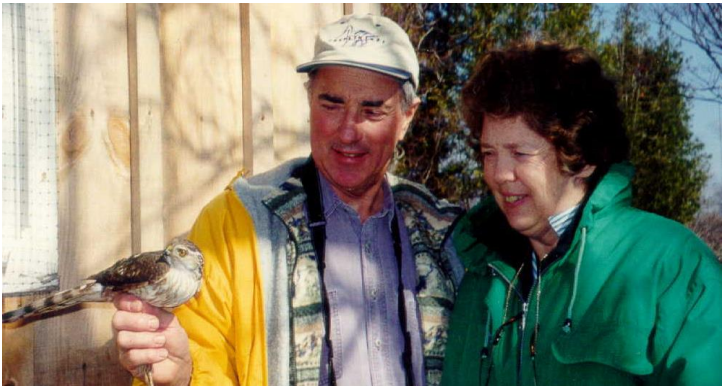
Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory (PEPtBO) is located in the southeast corner of Prince Edward County, approximately one hours drive from Belleville. The Observatory began as an idea of Brian Joyce and Eric Machell. With a grant of \$2,500 from the James L. Baillie Fund and the use of two buildings owned by the Canadian Wildlife Service, PEPtBO instituted a pilot banding and migration monitoring station in the Prince Edward Point National Wildlife Area in the spring of 1995.

In 1998 the community of Prince Edward County was canvassed for volunteer support. The response was tremendous and fifteen individuals volunteered to clean up the buildings and set up mist nets. Community support was so favourable that a Board of Directors was established later that year, including people from the County. In the same year the Canadian Nature Federation and Birdlife International designated Prince Edward Point a Globally Important Bird Area (IBA) as the numbers of three species at the Point, namely, Long-tailed Duck, Greater Scaup and White-winged Scoter exceed 1% of the world's population.



In 1999 Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory was incorporated in the Province of Ontario, and obtained charitable status. This enabled the observatory to seek funding within foundations and corporations to help sustain its research. Also in 1999 PEPtBO was designated a full member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, a program of Bird Studies Canada.

In 2001 PEPtBO received its most exciting news with the approval of an Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$150,000, and the Observatory took a large step into the future with its goal of sustainability. PEPtBO expanded its migration monitoring with a fall program, hired a full-time Bander-In-Charge, renovated the Van Cott Cottage, and installed solar power.



Since 1996 Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory has delivered educational programs to the local School Board on the importance of migration monitoring. New programs have been developed including one on butterflies and one on owls, and additional programs are planned for the future. PEPtBO continues to demonstrate its valued contribution as a full-time migration monitoring station with the large number of birds banded, significant foreign recoveries, and other observations. Word has spread of the avian significance of Prince Edward Point, and the remarkable work of the Observatory. This has resulted in individuals from as far away as New Zealand volunteering at PEPtBO.

The main focus of the observatory is the banding of neotropical migrants, and this is complemented with a significant Northern Saw-whet Owl banding program in October. One month ago the observatory completed its tenth consecutive spring program, and in August will be opening for its fourth full fall program. To date, Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory has banded over 51,000 birds.

The future continues to look bright for Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory, aided by the active involvement of its members and volunteers, and the support from Prince Edward County. Prince Edward Point Bird Observatory appreciates all the assistance given by the Canadian Wildlife Service.

EDITOR'S NOTE

The newsletter is an important link between OBBA members. It is also one of the organization's biggest expenses. With the increase in home computers and use of the internet, many other organizations have successfully switched to an electronic version of their newsletters.

An electronic newsletter has many benefits over the present printed newsletters including availability of colour photos, easy storage of past issues, instant delivery and the ability to easily link to additional information.

Starting in 2005, OBBA has decided to offer an electronic version of the newsletter as an added service to all our members. The electronic version of the newsletter will be available for download through a "members-only" section of the OBBA website. More information on how to access this section will be provided once it is up and running. All members (including exchange members and institutions) will continue to receive the printed newsletter until they opt out of getting a hard copy.

THUNDER CAPE BIRD OBSERVATORY SPRING 2004 HIGHLIGHTS

John Woodcock, Program Coordinator

Top 10 Bandings:

- 1 Chipping Sparrow 696
- 2 Black-capped Chickadee 541
- 3 Myrtle Warbler 249
- 4 Blue Jay 225
- 5 Nashville Warbler 161
- 6 Western Palm Warbler 133
- 7 Slate-colored Junco 109
- 8 Savannah Sparrow 89
- 9 White-throated Sparrow 85
- 10 Magnolia Warbler 76

New Species Banded This Season:

- European Goldfinch June 2
- Northern Rough-winged Swallow May 14
- Red-headed Woodpecker June 8



All Time High Numbers Banded:

- Golden-winged Warbler 4 (3 on May 19th)
- Black and White Warbler 65
- Blackpoll Warbler 15
- Brown Creeper 34
- Common Grackle 61
- Downey Woodpecker 9
- Golden-crowned Kinglet 27



photos for this article by John Woodcock, TCBO

Other Highlights:

- Red-throated Loon: 93 observed this spring, (25 on April 29th)
- Pacific Loon: one observed on June 2nd
- Red-bellied Woodpecker: 1 banded on May 19th
- House Wren: 1 banded on May 18th
- Sage Thrasher: 1 banded on May 21st, the 2nd one banded at the Cape

EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A special invitation is extended to OBBA members to attend the 82nd Annual Meeting of the Eastern Bird Banding Association that will be hosted by Braddock Bay Bird Observatory at the Airport Holiday Inn in Rochester, NY on April 15-17 2005. Information, as it becomes available, on the paper session, workshops, poster session, accommodations, field trips, and the bucket raffle will be posted on the EBBA website <http://www.pronetisp.net/~bpbird/> or contact Betsy Brooks at ebrooks@bbbo.org.

GREAT GRAY OWL OBSERVED RESTING ON WATER

JohnWoodcock

A Great Gray Owl was observed flying low over the water, NE from Pie Island (western Lake Superior) to Thunder Cape, a distance of 10 km, on June 6th 2004. It was first observed at 0530 through a Swarovski spotting scope at 50x when it was more than 5km away and had not been identified when it settled down on the water and could not be clearly discerned in the poor light at that distance. After about 2 minutes the bird was observed lifting off the water and flying directly at the observer on Thunder Cape. The bird was tracked and after a few more minutes had elapsed, the distinctive facial disc of 'an owl' could be discerned, and then the yellow eyes of a Great Grey could be seen. While the bird was clearly in view, and very obviously a Great Gray Owl, it broke its' steady, slow wing beat, scooping the air as if to land, and then proceeded to do so, folding-up its' wings and settling down on the water. It rode fairly high on the water and sat there looking about for at most 2 minutes. This owl then scooped the air a couple of times with its' great wings and continued directly towards the observer at the tip of Thunder Cape. The bird was tracked flying to the top of a boulder (50m from the observer) in the water at the tip of Thunder Cape where it was immediately set-upon by a pair of nesting American Crows. In evading the dive-bombing crows this unfortunate owl fell back into the water of Lake Superior. It was observed sitting on the water for about 2 minutes as it scrutinized the crows swooping by. Just when it was thought that the waders should be brought out so that the owl could be 'rescued', the owl lifted off the water and flew into the woods behind the banding station (with the crows in hot pursuit).

The hawk nets were opened early due to the owl and at 0720 a second year Great Gray Owl was captured. Since this bird was soaked to the skin on the breast and abdomen we assumed it was the same individual observed crossing the lake earlier. This bird did not appear in poor condition. The keel of the sternum was not particularly exposed and the bird appeared robust. It flew strongly when released and was observed resting in a fir tree through the remainder of the morning. By noon the crows had ceased their alarms and the owl was not seen again.

Thunder Cape's second Great Gray Owl was captured and banded at 1230 on June 9th. Though this bird was not observed prior to capture, it too had breast and abdomen feathers wet to the skin. Did this bird also rest on the water? Do Great Gray Owls commonly rest do this?



PRESIDENT'S REPORT AT THE 2004 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Audrey Heagy

This past year was again a productive year for the Ontario Bird Banding Association. The Annual General Meeting held at the new Bird Studies Canada headquarters in February 2003 was very well attended – especially since it coincided with a late winter snow and ice storm.

A new feature of that meeting was a variety of events held on the Sunday following the AGM. These events included ground trapping at LPBO, a very successful show and tell session, net repair demonstrations and a very much hands-on lesson in preparing bird skins. Both the venue and the extended program were well received and are being repeated again this year. We did, however, decide not to repeat last year's weather.

Although there were no other OBBA sponsored events in 2003, the organization continued to be active on several fronts. The newsletter editor, Cindy Cartwright, produced three excellent issues of the OBBA newsletter. Jason Sodergrin did a great job of maintaining a professional web site for our organization. Terri Groh, compiled and edited another volume (2003) of the OBBA Journal. Members can pick up their copy at this meeting.

OBBA representatives, David Okines and John Miles, continue to participate in the North American Banding Council and the Long Point Bird Observatory's Committee, respectively. The organization's officers carried out their duties admirably, especially Joanne Dewey the treasurer and membership secretary, and also Eric Machell the recording secretary. One member of the Board, Jody Allair, resigned part way through his second term because he had moved to a remote First Nations community in northern Saskatchewan and could no longer participate in board meetings.

The number of OBBA memberships and our financial situation remained fairly stable in 2003. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the 2003 OBBA Board and the various Board appointees for their support over the past year, and for their hard work on keeping this organization on track.

I would also like to remind the membership that there are a number of noteworthy milestone years that are not far off now:

2005 will mark the 100th anniversary of banding in Ontario

2006 will be the 50th anniversary of OBBA

2009 will be the 50th anniversary of LPBO.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Deadline for submissions for November 2004 newsletter

November 1

Eastern Bird Banding Association AGM

April 15-17, 2005

2004 ANNUAL TREASURERS REPORT - ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

Joanne Dewey

Balance Forward	\$ 2,093.38
Revenue	
Memberships	\$2,500.00
Donations	\$2,004.43
Bird-a-thon	\$ 257.04
US Exchange	\$ 112.71
AGM	\$ 583.60
Equipment Sales	\$ 65.00
Service Charge	\$ 40.61
GST Membership	<u>\$ 1.40</u>
TOTAL	\$5,564.79

+\$ 5,564.79

Disbursements	
Newsletter	\$ 842.27
Office	\$ 46.32
AGM	\$ 299.71
JFD Award	\$ 64.17
Member Rebate	\$ 20.00
Service Charge	\$ 13.95
AGM Travel	\$ 180.00
Mileage	\$1,519.71
GST refund	\$ 1.40
Janette Dean Fund	\$1,000.00
Life Member Fund	<u>\$ 400.00</u>
TOTAL	\$4,387.53

-\$4,387.53

TOTAL	\$3,270.64
GST Rebate	\$ 106.05
	\$ 106.05
Life Member Transfer	\$ 140.00
	<u>\$ 140.00</u>
TOTAL	\$3516.69

Outstanding Cheque GST refund	\$ 1.40
Banking Error	
	<u>\$10.00</u>
	Total
	\$11.40
	<u>\$ 11.40</u>

Balance in account \$3528.09

Note: Of the \$3,528.09 in the account \$549.63 is part of the Janette Dean Award money.

Memberships: 7 – Exchange, 8 – Institutional, 93 – Household, Total 108 memberships

Fund Report

Life Member Fund		
Jan 1, 2003 -		\$2,160.29
Interest		\$ 45.17
Debit		\$ 140.00
Credit		<u>\$ 400.00</u>
Balance		\$2,465.46

Donations Fund

Jan. 1, 2003		\$1,665.41
Interest		<u>\$ 32.21</u>
Balance Dec. 31, 2003		\$1697.62

Janette Dean Fund

\$1,000.00 is in a GIC @1.5% that is due Feb. 20, 2004

TOTAL OBBA assets as of December 31, 2003

Chequing Account	\$3,528.09
Life Member Fund	\$2,465.46
Donations Fund	\$1,697.62
JFD GIC`	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
TOTAL Assets	\$8,691.17

Audited and found correct.