



NEWSLETTER

THE ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 25/26, 2006 IN PORT ROWAN

The 2006 AGM meeting marks a significant milestone for the Ontario Bird Banding Association (OBBA) as the first official meeting of the association took place on 24 March 1956. A two-day event has been scheduled. The full agenda is provided inside.

The format of the Saturday agenda closely follows that of previous years, and will take place at **Bird Studies Canada's Headquarters**, 115 Front Street, Port Rowan, Ontario. There will be a social get together on Saturday evening.

On Sunday morning, participants can drop by the Long Point Bird Observatory OLD CUT field station anytime (banding will be occurring, weather permitting). The BSC events room will be open from 8:30 to noon on Sunday for an informal program of "show and tell", poster displays, and mingling for ideas. The main Sunday program will take place at the **Port Rowan Community Centre** and will feature a catered luncheon and other presentations to celebrate the Ontario Bird Banding Association's 50th anniversary.

Information on self-guiding driving tours will be available at the meeting for those wanting to view swans and other early spring migrants, or take a drive towards Port Burwell to see the new wind farm development.

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Registration Fee and Lunch Arrangements

To cover costs there will be a meeting registration fee of \$5.00 for members and non-members, payable at the door on Saturday. Coffee, tea and donuts will be served.

Saturday Lunch: Arrangements for a buffet lunch at a local restaurant have been made. Please indicate if you want this buffet lunch when you register on Saturday morning. Cost not available at this time. There are several other restaurants in Port Rowan.

Sunday Anniversary Luncheon: A catered luncheon is planned for Sunday. Tickets for the Anniversary Luncheon are \$25.00 and **must be reserved in advance (see insert for details)**. Note that the luncheon and Sunday afternoon program will be held at the **Port Rowan Community Centre** on 14 College Avenue, Port Rowan.

Saturday Evening Social: There will be a social on Saturday evening at the home of Terri Groh and Martin Wernaart. Directions will be available at the meeting. Food will be provided at a cost of \$10 per person. Members and guests planning to attend may BYOB.

Accommodations

Contact information for Bed and Breakfast accommodation in the Port Rowan area and for hotel/motel accommodation in the vicinity (30 to 45 minute drive from Port Rowan) is included on the back of the coloured insert in this newsletter.

Bucket Raffle

This year the bucket raffle will be held as part of the **Sunday** program. Your contributions make the bucket raffle successful. Anyone wishing to donate a prize should bring it to the meeting (or contact David Okines, 519-586-9464, davidokines@aol.com).

Show and Tell and Poster Session

Attendees are invited to bring items of interest to banders for the informal Show and Tell and Poster Session on Sunday morning. For example, you could bring a trap, reference book, nest box design or other piece of banding equipment that you find particularly useful. Or you could show photographs of a bird you captured with unusual features, such as a hybrid. Posters presenting the results of research projects involving banding are of particular interest. There will also be space available to set up a display about your banding organization. For more information or to reserve a spot please contact Audrey Heagy (aheagy@bsc-eoc.org, 1-888-448-2473 x 214, or 519-586-9464).

HAVE YOU RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP???????

Check your address label and if it does not have 2006 written in the top right hand corner then you have not paid your 2006 OBBA membership. You can renew at the upcoming AGM or send a cheque for \$20.00 (\$10.00 for students) made out to "Ontario Bird Banding Association" to Joanne Dewey, Treasurer, RR 8, 642 Elmbrook Road, Picton, ON K0K 2T0.

OBBA AGM AGENDA MARCH 25 & 26 2006

Saturday, March 25 (all events at BSC HQ except as noted)

- 09:00 to 10:00 Registration
- 10:00 to 10:30 Business Meeting
Introductions - Audrey Heagy
President's Report – Audrey Heagy
Treasurer's Report – Joanne Dewey
Election of an Auditor – Joanne Dewey
Nominations & Election of 2006-2007 Executive – Audrey Heagy
- 10:30 to 11:00 Coffee Break
- 11:00 to 11:30 Bird (slides and specimens) Quiz
- 11:30 to 12:30 Station Reports
Haldimand Bird Observatory (Rick Ludkin)
Hawk Cliff Raptor Banding Station (Cyril Crocker)
Holiday Beach Migration Observatory (to be confirmed)
- 12:30 to 14:00 Lunch
- 14:00 to 14:15 Report from the Bird Banding Office (Lesley-Anne Howes)
- 14:15 to 14:45 Speaker - **Dawn Laing, Bird Studies Canada**
- Banding & Technology: Insights into Past and Present Bald Eagle Productivity in southern Ontario**
- 14:45 to 15:15 Speaker – **Scott Petrie and Shannon Badzinski, Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Fund**
- Contaminant Burdens and Satellite Tracking of Lesser and Greater Scaup**
- 15:15 to 15:30 Coffee Break
- 15:30 to 16:00 Bird Quiz results
- 16:00 to 16:30 Speaker – **Stuart A. Mackenzie, Long Point Bird Observatory**
- The Sky is Falling: A look inside one of the spectacular phenomena of passerine migration, the Fall-Out.**
- 16:30 Close of first day of meeting
- 18:00 to 22:00 Evening social at the home of Terri Groh and Martin Wernaart
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Sunday, March 26 (various venues as indicated)

- 07:00 to 11:30 Open House at LPBO's OLD CUT field station, Long Point.
Ground trapping and banding
- 08:30 to 11:30 Open House at Bird Studies Canada HQ in Port Rowan.
Poster Displays / Show and Tell
- 11:30 to 12:00 Travel to Port Rowan Community Centre, 14 College Street
- 12:00 to 13:00 **Social Hour** and Bucket Raffle at the Port Rowan Community Centre
- 13:00 to 14:30 **OBBA Anniversary Luncheon**
- 14:30 to 14:45 **Janette Dean Award**
- 14:45 to 15:15 **The first 50 years of the Ontario Bird Banding Association.**
An audio-visual presentation.
- 15:15 to 15:30 Draw for Bucket Raffle prizes
- 15:30 Close of Conference
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PROPOSAL TO REPLACE LOCK-ON BANDS

Lesley-Anne Howes

From the Canadian bander memo:

“Lock-on Bands

It has been suggested that we discontinue lock-on bands and replace them with hard metal (incoloy) butt-end bands. We would like raptor banders to let us know their thoughts on this suggestion. Please e-mail Lesley-Anne.Howes@ec.gc.ca with your thoughts. We would still make rivet bands for eagles.”

At this point the banding offices are only soliciting banders opinions on the use of lock-ons and hard metal butt end bands for raptors. In particular we are interested in any safety concerns with either band type for use on raptors. While no decisions have been made, I expect that the banding office will not phase out lock-ons entirely but may eventually offer more band options for some species with the possibility that recommended bands for some species may change. We would still make rivet bands for eagles. The next memo to banders will include a note summarizing what I have heard from banders on this issue.

If the OBBA or individual banders would like to offer comments, opinions or recommendations, in general or for specific species, I would be very happy to consider your comments in any future decisions. In fact I am always happy to hear the concerns and opinions of banders and banding organizations on any issue that can help to improve our banding program and in particular bird safety and welfare. Ontario banders should send comments directly to me at the Canadian Banding Office: Lesley-Anne.Howes@ec.gc.ca

ONTARIO HUMMINGBIRD PROJECT

Cindy Cartwright

The Ontario Hummingbird Project had a successful start in 2005 with four migration monitoring stations and one raptor watch contributing migration data. Numerous individuals also contributed first and last dates during migration. Banding was conducted at six locations (three during the breeding season and three during migration), and a Rufous Hummingbird was documented coming to a feeder in London in late November and early December. The website is now on-line at www.ontariohummingbirds.ca. New pages will be added in upcoming months and the site will be updated on a regular basis.



photo by Shay Redmond

Rufous Hummingbird

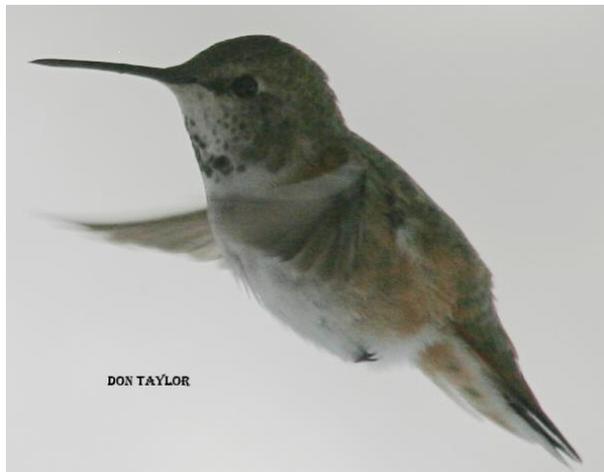


photo by Don Taylor

The goal of the project is to better understand the life cycle of Ontario's hummingbirds – both breeding Ruby-throats and vagrants. The project is designed to collect data from a wide variety of sources including hummingbird banders, incidental captures at migration monitoring stations, daily counts from raptor watches and migration monitoring stations, and observation data from the public. All banding groups and observatories are invited to contribute.

Thank you to Holiday Beach Migration Observatory, McGill Bird Observatory, Toronto Bird Observatory, Long Point Bird Observatory, and the Cranberry Marsh Raptor Watch for assisting with the project in 2005. Contact Cindy at hummingbirds@bmts.com for more information.

USED BANDING EQUIPMENT

Retiring banders, or any other banders, that have old banding equipment (pliers, nets, rulers, etc.) that they are not needing or if they are looking to dispose of any of this equipment, then they can donate it to the OBBA and we can try to match up this equipment with people that desperately need it, also if there are any banders out there that are in need of those pliers or equipment, they can contact the OBBA and we will try to find any of the spare equipment available for sending on to them.

NORTHERN SAW-WHET OWL NEST BOX PROJECT

David Okines

Although Northern Saw-whet Owls (NSWO) are frequently banded during migration, very little data is available on Ontario's breeding population of Saw-whets. It is hoped, that as there is a large number of Saw-whet banders trapping them to the south, the Saw-whets that will be raised in these boxes will be re-trapped after they migrate in the fall. This project is intended to provide some of the missing data on Saw-whets, i.e. where do the birds that are banded on migration in southern Ontario and in the United States actually breed.

The Friends of Algoma East were asked to help participate in this project by the Ontario Bird Banding Association (OBBA) in order to gather breeding data and to band these small owls on their nesting grounds. The Friends were asked to build, place, monitor and maintain 100 nest boxes, and, with great co-operation from many individuals, schools and groups they had 127 boxes built by mid December and volunteers are coming forward regularly to help with their monitoring.

For a number of reasons, things were running a little late for the 2005 nesting season but the remaining boxes will hopefully be installed before the owls return to breed in 2006. Some of the volunteers are even willing to use snowshoes to place them in the woods in order to have as many ready as possible for when the Saw-whets return in March and April. There will soon be boxes from Sault Ste. Marie to North Bay and the Friends hope to have between 150 to 200 installed and "adopted" by dedicated volunteers by next spring. So far boxes have been installed in North Bay, Sudbury, Sault Ste Marie, Massey, in the towns around these areas and also at Elliot Lake.

The Friends of Algoma East were quite excited about this project and have been very pleasantly surprised by the interest expressed across their region by other organizations and individuals who have agreed to assist with the monitoring. They looked forward to working with OBBA and to providing as much information as they can about the nesting habits and origins of the NSWO from this part of Ontario.

The major hurdles they had to overcome were the habitat and site selection, along with installing the boxes and GPS'ing the sites. The Friends were in e-mail correspondence with Randy Lauff who has been conducting NSWO research for the past few years in Antigonish, Nova Scotia. Randy was a great help with the design of the boxes, he offered suggestions for data sheets and also many other important "hints" about location, orientation and the monitoring guidelines. Several people were involved with doing research into the preferred habitat available in the Great Lakes Transitional Forests which constitutes the majority of the habitat across Algoma and on the Boreal transition to the north of them.

The Friends were very successful in getting individuals and groups involved in the project and this has been one of the strong points in this project as their membership is relatively small (a group of about 20 active volunteers). To date the Soo Naturalists, Manitoulin Nature Club, Massey Nature Study Group, both of the local High Schools, and at least a dozen other individuals including the Chief Biologist and the Mill Manager for Domtar and the person who re-sawed the timber for the boxes are all interested in monitoring some boxes on or around their properties. The Friends had successfully applied for a CFWIP grant to help buy the equipment needed for successfully monitoring and building the boxes.

Approx. 1000 to 1200 linear feet of 2" spruce and Jackpine lumber was donated by Nairn Sawmill (Domtar), and this was delivered to VFJ and ELSS High Schools in Elliot Lake where, under the direction of Jim Johnston who is the project organizer, the Friends worked with the schools to build the boxes. They found that they had enough wood to do maybe 200 boxes or thereabouts. A few of the early boxes were put

up on one property in the Massey area and the local volunteers were soon ready to start the placement and monitoring of more of the nest boxes as soon as the high schools had them made and ready.

The boxes are all identified with a single box number and a single location number. Nest record cards will be kept on any nesting attempts made in the boxes (whether it is by Saw-whet Owls, Boreal Owls, Great-crested Flycatchers, Kestrels, Flickers, etc.) and the cards will be returned to Mark Peck at the Royal Ontario Museum for inclusion in the Ontario Nest Record Scheme at the end of the year. Detailed recording log sheets are provided to all those who adopt the boxes and the volunteers then mail these data sheets back to the coordinator at the end of each season once the box has been cleaned out and is ready for the start of the next nesting season. These master data sheets are kept by the Friends and a copy will be passed on to the OBBA each year.

The volunteers monitoring the boxes are asked to call a contact person immediately should they see any sign of owl nesting activity in their boxes. This would give the Friends time to contact the two Master Banders in the area so that the banding of the owl nestlings (when they were 15 - 25 days old) could be arranged. Unfortunately no NSWOW used the boxes in 2005. Some flying squirrel nests, etc. were found in them.



This is viewed as a long-term endeavor (minimum of 5 years). This is a major project for the Friends and so far they have done a good job and will provide some so-far-unavailable data which will be useful to the OBBA and to others in the ornithological community.

The OBBA thanks the Friends of Algoma East for their participation in this wonderful endeavor and wish them well and lots of success for the coming years of NSWOW monitoring.

DATES TO REMEMBER

Renew your membership (renewal form in last issue)

due now

Deadline for submissions for July 2006 newsletter

July 1
