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Fall 2006



IPBO Newsletter

Innis Point Bird Observatory



Photo: Eve Ticknor

Announcements

Fall Saw-whet Owl Banding

Fall banding of Saw-whet Owls (and the exciting bonus species that turn up!) is currently underway, running through to the first week of November. Jude Phillips is once again coordinating these evening banding sessions. If you are still interested in participating, please contact Jude at jude.phillips@gmail.com.

IPBO Volunteer Appreciation BBQ another success

The annual event took place again this year on the last Saturday of SMMP, in the first week of June. A cold, damp and hungry crew of the day's volunteers were joined

In This Issue:

Announcements.....	1
SMMP 2006: A brief summary.....	2
2006 Innis Point Baillie Birdathon Day.....	3

by more than a dozen others for a BBQ treat of hamburgers,

hotdogs, and all the fixings. Once again, thanks to all our dedicated volunteers and hope to see everyone at next year's event!

IPBO thanks Mike Shaw for the new look of the banding building

Everyone at IPBO extends a big thanks to Mike Shaw, long-time volunteer and general Mr. Fixit always willing to help with all the little handyman things that need work. His biggest contribution of late is the donation and installation of the new (for us) garage door on the banding building, a definite improvement for safety, security and ease of use. Thanks, Mike!

Lack of hydro power to IPBO

The hydro lines supplying power to Innis Point are permanently down, as a result of a late winter storm. You may not have yet noticed the difference, except on early SMMP mornings. But if you're coming out for owl banding, please keep in mind that there will be no heat, so layering will be essential to keeping warm between net rounds.

We are currently considering ways to fund the repairs, which will run into the tens of thousands of dollars. We are also considering other options for producing our own power, so if you have some knowledge or expertise in this area, please let us know.

SMMP 2006: A brief summary

by Celia Bodnar

The 2006 Spring Migration Monitoring Program represented our 10th consecutive year running the program, and yet unfortunate circumstances all around meant that although we completed the season, there were very few days of complete coverage.

Weather always plays a role in our ability to obtain complete coverage on any given day. Complete coverage, according to the scale coded from 0-5 as defined in our migration monitoring protocol (incidentally, if your interested in more details

of our SMMP Protocol, there is a copy posted on the website, or you can request an electronic or paper copy from us), includes at least 95% of full netting, as well as a complete census and EDT summary, based on at least three Class 1 observers. Generally, a coverage code of 3-4 is due to weather allowing for only incomplete net hours (or, for code 3, of less than three Class 1 observers). This year, SMMP started off dismally, with many days of such steady heavy rain that no netting was possible at all. By mid-May, once the grey

clouds over Ottawa had dispersed, a stretch of oppressive heat and humidity restricted netting and the activities of BIC and volunteers.

Unfortunately, lack of volunteers also limited coverage on many days, particularly later in the season. Not only were there not enough Class 1 observers, but on several days there was only one volunteer besides the BIC, or even the BIC alone. Given the wide spacing of the nets at IPBO, this simply doesn't permit full net opening, nor adequate general observations for EDT.

Factors related to our location on Department of National Defence property also can prohibit adequate coverage. This year, more than a few days were lost as a result of military activity on the Range preventing our entering the property.



Melanie Moore extracts a bird from SE

Photo: Eve Ticknor

Nonetheless, we achieved a satisfactory season, with a total of 999 birds of 65 species banded. Moreover, several quite rare migrants for IPBO were observed within the EDT, something that makes the day, if not the season, for many a BIC and volunteer. A Glaucous Gull seen flying upriver on the first day started the parade. On May 10th, someone was lucky enough to hear a Willow Flycatcher singing around the swamp nets. Five days later, two more rather rare sightings were noted: American Pipit and Cooper's Hawk. On June 4th, two volunteers were fortunate to spot a Yellow-billed Cuckoo



Photo: Eve Ticknor

while on census. And finally, a Green Heron was sighted both on May 26th, and again on the last SMMP day, June 7th, when it was

seen lurking in appropriate nesting habitat in the swamp area.

When all was said and done, it appears that the 2006 SMMP was, if somewhat below average in terms of numbers, an interesting year nonetheless. Table 1 summarizes the top nine species by capture totals, and ranks were not much different from previous years. We look forward to our next decade of monitoring spring migration.

Table 1. Top nine species banded at IPBO during 2006 SMMP.

Rank	Species	No.banded	2005 Rank
1	Black-capped Chickadee	340	3
2	Yellow-rumped Warbler	105	2
3	Yellow Warbler	53	4
4	Cedar Waxwing	38	1
5	Baltimore Oriole	35	6
6	American Robin	28	-
7	Red-winged Blackbird	25	7
8	Magnolia Warbler	24	-
9	American Redstart	22	-

Become a Member of Innis Point Bird Observatory!

Support volunteers working to better understand what's happening to bird populations

Please remember to send in your 2006 membership

Innis Point Bird Observatory

P.O. Box 72137

North Kanata RPO

Kanata, Ontario

K2K 2P4

Membership Categories: Annual Membership: \$20, Contributing: \$25, Sustaining: \$50, Life: \$300.

2006 Innis Point Bird Observatory Baillie Birdathon Day by David Britton

The Baillie Birdathon fundraising program developed by Bird Studies Canada is an excellent way for organizations such as IPBO to help themselves and to aid bird conservation efforts because a portion of funds raised are dedicated to IPBO.

This year, in an effort to raise funds to continue the operations of IPBO, we organized a Baillie Birdathon Day on Saturday, May 13th. I organized the itinerary and led our group of intrepid Birdathoners on a day of exciting birding. Our goal this year was to beat both the species total and the fundraising total from our first IPBO Baillie Birdathon Day in 2005.

We began our day at the Innis Point gate at 6:00PM. I had hoped for better weather than the cold, wet day we had last year, but it was not in the cards. We managed to avoid rain all day, but were plagued by a howling north wind that made hearing bird song challenging to say the least! Nevertheless, we soldiered on. Birding was slow at first, but we picked up Eastern Bluebird and Field Sparrow in the Field area at Innis Point, as well as a bonus: a singing Northern Parula in the adjacent woods. We then worked

our way down to the Point area where we collected a few of the more common species, as well as a few more hard to find ones like Osprey and Common Tern.

Leaving Innis Point at about 9:00AM with over 40 species under our belts, we picked up Wild Turkey on March Valley Road and then headed for Britannia with a pit stop at the Nepean Yacht Club to get Purple Martin at the martin houses there. At Britannia woods, we added Eastern Kingbird, Warbling Vireo, the resident juvenile Great Horned Owls and a handful of warblers including Pine and a beautiful male Northern Parula in the woods at the southwest corner of Mud Lake.

We then headed south to the pits and ponds around Moodie Drive and Trail Roads. In a large congregation of gulls, we managed to pick out five species: the common Ring-billed, Herring and Great Black-backed, as well as a rarer Lesser Black-backed Gull and an immaculate white juvenile Iceland Gull, unusual in Ottawa this late in the spring.

By 12:00PM, we were in the fields south of the Ottawa International Airport, looking for

sparrows. The wind made things difficult, but we managed to get decent looks at both Vesper and Grasshopper Sparrows. As a bonus, we had Common Raven and Northern Harrier flying over together.

Around 1:00PM, we arrived at the Embrun Sewage Lagoons where the wind was absolutely roaring out of the north. We managed to get several duck species including Northern Pintail and Northern Shoveler, but shorebirds were a little thin, with only four species, including the very attractive Wilson's Phalarope. Other good birds seen here included several Black Terns hawking insects over the ponds, Cliff Swallow and a flock of American Pipits.

We headed north from Embrun and endured a rough crossing of the unusually choppy Ottawa River on the Cumberland Ferry. It was a quick drive from the ferry dock to the Masson Sewage Lagoon, a site that has come through for me on more than one occasion and this was no exception, upping our duck total with Gadwall, Bufflehead and Ring-necked Duck.

We headed west from there to Marais aux Grenouillettes, a fabulous large marsh on the Ottawa River. A walk out onto the berm there yielded great looks at a flying American Bittern as well as Wilson's Snipe, Pied-billed Grebe and more Black Terns. On the way back to the car, we got a single Northern Rough-winged Swallow, handily completing our sweep of all six swallow species!

At around 4:30PM we arrived at the Waterfall Trail in Gatineau Park where we hoped to find some of the woodland birds we missed during the cold, windy dawn chorus, including a possible Louisiana Waterthrush that had been seen there recently. Unfortunately the wind, combined with the noise of the waterfall, made hearing birds impossible and we were forced to retreat without adding a single species.

At 5:30PM we stopped at the rapids off of Parc Brébeuf in Hull where we managed to add Least

Sandpiper and Semipalmated Plover on the rocks and Common Loon and Red-breasted Merganser on the River. Realizing we still hadn't got American Black Duck, we high-tailed it to the Deschenes Lookout on the Ontario side, where we secured a single female Black paired with a Mallard-Black Duck hybrid male. As a bonus, we also managed to scope our last new species: Double-crested Cormorant in the rapids. We then retired to the Fletcher Wildlife Garden to count up our species, have some pizza and enjoy a presentation on Owl Banding by Jude Phillips.

Despite the weather, we finished with a total of 95 species, slightly fewer than last year but total which nevertheless included a number of lifers for the participants. Thanks to everyone who participated in the IPBO Baillie Birdathon, both as a participant (see list below; remember to congratulate them when you see them next!) or as a sponsor! Although totals are not

quite finalized, IPBO clearly surpassed last year's fundraising total, and we hope to continue to do better each year, as this is a fantastic way to stay self-supporting. Stay tuned for information on the 2007 Innis Point Baillie Birdathon.

Many thanks to the 2006 Baillie Birdathoners:

Celia Bodnar
Kieran Bodnar
David Britton
Margaret Campbell
Cecilia Lougheed
The Marshall Family
Jude Phillips
Adam Smith
Eve Ticknor

REMINDER:

Don't forget that Innis Point Bird Observatory operates year round! **Saturday banding** is a perfect way to improve your birding and banding skills. Gate times are not so extreme as during SMMP, and you don't have to stay up as late as during Saw-whet Owl Banding! Excepting those protocols, Saturday banding occurs throughout the year as follows: December to February: 10AM, March: 9AM, April to October: 8AM, November: 9AM. Please try to contact Bill Petrie (wfpetrie@mac.com or 613.820.8434) at least a day in advance to be sure someone will be at the gate.