



THE POINT

2020 Year-end Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM JULIE WHITE, PRESIDENT

On behalf of PEptBO's Board of Directors, I send you and your family best wishes for the holiday season and for a healthy and safe 2021.

In this year-end edition of our newsletter, The Point, we bring you up to date on our activities and preview what's coming up early in the new year.

It's been a tough year all round. We hold onto the hope that 2021 will allow us all to breathe easier and to welcome you back to the Observatory in person.

Thank you for your love of birds and nature. Thank you for your support of PEptBO's migration monitoring, education and reporting work and for our caretaking role in the IBA.

UPDATES

FALL BANDING HIGHLIGHTS

Watch PEptBO's website for its migration monitoring report on the fall season.

Banders Blair, Megan, Ketha and Michaela, with the assistance of our fine volunteers, enjoyed a very successful migration monitoring season.

They recorded 90 species and banded 4003 birds, including passerines and raptors. Northern Saw-Whet Owl banding netted 242 birds.

Banding highlights include three Merlins at the beginning of the season, a Carolina Wren which was the 6th banded here, and a Bicknell's Thrush that still needs confirmation from the rare bird committee of Ontario. One recaptured Pileated Woodpecker was originally banded in 2017. We also banded two Yellow-billed Cuckoos and beat the fall record for Black-billed Cuckoos as well as for Swainson's Thrush.

PEPtBO SPEAKS OUT

In the Fall, PEPtBO commented publicly on a proposal to develop a residential subdivision and large-scale tourist resort at Half Moon Point along County Road 13. As Caretaker of the IBA, PEPtBO drew the attention of PEC Council and the Planning Department to the documented avian species using that natural habitat and species at risk in the IBA and argued the development was inappropriate for that location. Along with our members and friends, our voices helped influence the developer who withdrew the proposal. The land in question is still for sale.

PEPtBO recognizes the crucial importance of wetlands, shorelands and water courses to Ontario's ecosystems and environment. Conservation Authorities have the responsibility and the scientific know-how to protect these vital habitats and also to protect adjacent lands from flood damage.

PEPtBO called upon the Premier and key Ontario ministers to repeal Schedule 6 of Bill 229, which received third reading in the Ontario Legislature on Dec. 8. Its provisions will curtail severely the ability of Conservation Authorities to protect their watersheds from development. PEPtBO stressed that Ontario's 36 Conservation Authorities' important work should not be undermined but strengthened.

MEMBERSHIP AND FUNDRAISING DRIVES

As you know, PEPtBO pivoted in 2020 and found new ways to raise [delete the] funds needed to operate the station, pay the banding team and provide them with the accommodation and tools they use in their important migration monitoring work. Without being able to host visitors and programs at the Observatory, we presented Bruce Di Labio in a 'live' setting and virtually, and we held new drives around Giving Tuesday (December 1.) and membership renewal.

Thanks to everyone for responding so generously to these appeals. Your contributions allow us to replace worn-out equipment and compensate our Banders for their hard work.

If you have not had the opportunity to help us with a donation or have not yet renewed your membership for 2021, there's still time. Donations and renewals by December 31 are eligible for 2020 tax receipts. Here's the link to make a donation at any time. <https://peptbo.ca/giving-tuesday.php>

Still in time for the holidays, PEPtBO biodiversity friendly coffee makes a warming addition to any gift or is perfect on its own. Available in dark or medium roast, espresso and decaf, whole bean and ground @\$18/400 g. Coffee is available by emailing Kathy Felker (kfelkar@xplornet.ca)



PEPtBO's NATUREHOOD PROGRAM IS ALIVE, WELL, VIRTUAL & FREE

In 2020, PEPtBO's NatureHood program became the Get Out Kids Club. With over 70 activities already posted, new, intriguing adventures, creative projects and even story readings are added monthly. The Club provides children and families with great ideas and ways to engage with nature through the winter months. Here's the link to join: <https://peptbo.ca/getout.php>

Go to <https://www.facebook.com/GET-OUT-Kids-Club-with-Naturehood-106377267709036/> for intern bander Ketha Gillespie's LIVE chats with a focus on birds and backyard fun.

NOVEMBER 12 WATERFOWL COUNT—A ONE-DAY SNAPSHOT OF BIRD ACTIVITY IN THE SOUTH SHORE

Peter Fuller's fine report focuses on the fifty-six species that volunteers Dale Smith, Ian Barker, Peter Fuller, Marie-Josée Remillard, Cheryl Anderson, Amy Bodman, Abby Leavens, Cecile Yarrow, Morris Yarrow, Pat Peterson, Nick Bartok, and Jenny Newton observed when they fanned out across the South Shore IBA for PEPtBO's annual fall waterfowl count.

Observations made at thirteen viewing points from Point Petre to Prince Edward Point to South Bay revealed large flocks of Bufflehead and Common Goldeneye around Little Bluff and Charwell Point, as well as smaller groups of Red-breasted and Common Merganser, White-winged Scoter and Horned Grebe. A variety of other species were represented by a few individuals: Common Loon, Hooded Merganser, Black Scoter and Tundra Swan. Ring-billed and Herring Gull, Double-crested Cormorant, Canada Geese and Mute Swan were also counted.

Observers had good views of 2 Bald Eagles, 2 Golden Eagles, Merlin, Northern Harrier, Sharp-shinned Hawk, Turkey Vulture and Red-tailed Hawk. All groups saw Common Ravens throughout the IBA. Along roads and trails, northern species represented included: Dark-eyed Junco, Common Redpoll, Evening Grosbeak, American Tree Sparrow and a single Rusty Blackbird, and Northern Shrike and Pine Grosbeak. Some late migrants—Belted Kingfisher, Song Sparrow, White-throated Sparrow and a Phoebe—also appeared. Greater Yellowlegs were found in two locations, and a flock of Snow Buntings combed the gravel flats at Charwell Point. Flocks of American Goldfinch and Black-capped Chickadee actively fed in many spots. Thanks to everyone for the extra driving required by distancing and thanks to Ian Barker for taking photos.



Greater Yellowlegs

PREVIEWS

A NEW WEBSITE LAUNCHES IN JANUARY, 2021

PEPtBO's new website will have a new look and feel come January. A grant from the Municipality of Prince Edward supported PEPtBO's work to make the new site easy to use on all platforms. Stay tuned.

GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT, FEB 12-15

Mark your calendar and participate in the [Great Backyard Bird Count](#), a joint program of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Audubon with Canadian partner Birds Canada. Visit [Great Backyard Bird Count](#) to sign up. For more information contact: **Kerrie Wilcox**, Great Backyard Bird Count Coordinator kwilcox@birdscanada.org

GET OUT KIDS CLUB BREAKFAST BIRDING

Join NatureHood educator Cheryl Chapman for a virtual breakfast. Easy recipes to make together will be posted. Enjoy your home-made meal while viewing the Chickadees, Blue Jays and maybe Wild Turkeys at Cheryl's busy feeder. Watch for the early January Get Out Kids Club Bulletin for all the information about this unique new program.

UNIQUE AND THEMED ONLINE AUCTION IN FEBRUARY

PEPtBO will offer you the chance to bid on a carefully chosen and wide variety of bird and nature-themed and custom items in this unique, online auction in February. We are grateful for the donation of nine, beautiful framed prints. (Works by artists Robert Bateman and A. J. Casson are among them.) For antique book enthusiasts, the auction will include bird and butterfly volumes with gorgeous colour plates. A selection not to be missed.