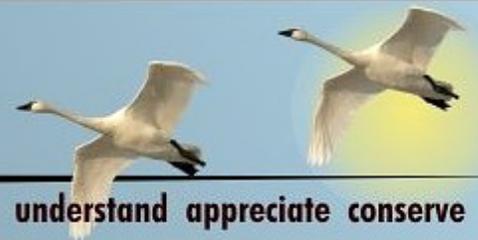




BIRD STUDIES  
ÉTUDES D'OISEAUX CANADA

# Latest News



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## Join Us at the BSC Annual Meeting

24 September 2006, 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
BSC Headquarters, Port Rowan, ON

18 August 2006

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## INTERNATIONAL

### BSC Takes Part in U.S. Distance Learning

**18 August 2006** – Bird Studies Canada took part in a U.S.-based distance learning initiative recently aimed at school Grades 5 to 8.

British Columbia Programs Coordinator Peter Davidson was interviewed for the educational program by the Prince William Network, a Virginia-based media organization. Peter spoke on BSC's Citizen Science work and our plans to track migration of Western Sandpipers up the west coast of the continent next spring. Peter explained how people can get involved in the British Columbia Coastal Waterbird Survey (BCCWS).

The television program is part of a distance learning initiative on the Science and Mystery of Migration that will be available free to all schools via satellite, cable, and webcast. The venture will provide classrooms with such teaching aids as instructional videos, lesson plans, web cams, and live chats with scientists and other experts from seven stopover sites on the western seaboard shorebird migration route from Panama to Alaska in spring 2007.

### Getting Asia's Vultures Off Drugs

**2 August 2006, BirdLife International** – Hopes of saving Asia's globally threatened vultures have been given a second boost by a drug company in Nepal.

In May, the Indian government said the livestock treatment diclofenac, which is responsible for the massive decline of three vulture species in most of Asia, would be banned as a veterinary drug within three months. The vultures die as a result of kidney failure.

Now Nepal's largest veterinary pharmaceutical firm is selling a replacement drug at the same price, prompting the Nepalese authorities to halt the domestic manufacture and import of diclofenac with immediate effect. Until now, diclofenac has been significantly cheaper than the new, safe treatment, meloxicam.

Numbers of the White-rumped Vulture (*Gyps bengalensis*) and the Slender-billed Vulture (*G. tenuirostris*) have plunged by 90% in Nepal in 10 years, and by 97% in India and Pakistan. Indian Vulture (*G. indicus*) has also suffered a similar decline, and half of all the remaining vultures are dying every year.

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## NATIONAL

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## Six Students Complete YOW Workshop



Photo: Stuart Mackenzie

**6 August 2006** – Six talented students from across Canada have just completed their 10-day experience at Bird Studies Canada’s (BSC’s) Young Ornithologists Workshop YOW.

The workshop, held at the Long Point Bird Observatory, gives pre-university-level students an opportunity to experience nature and ornithology hands-on in a research-oriented setting. Many YOW students have gone on to perform leading roles in national wildlife protection.

“We have fierce competition for these six workshop positions every year and those students selected clearly have exceptional qualifications and great potential futures in biology or related professions,” explains BSC Land Birds Program Coordinator Stu Mackenzie, who also coordinates the workshop.

This year’s proud participants were Alexander Stone, 16, Ottawa, Ontario; Eric Boodman, 14, Montreal, Quebec; Halli Macdonald, 14, Fredericton, New Brunswick; Jamie Pakkala, 13, St. Thomas, Ontario; Malkolm Boothroyd, 14, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory; and Peter Mills, 15, Barrie, Ontario.

The workshop focuses on bird banding and migration monitoring, but numerous other activities are also undertaken to expose the group to a wide range of ornithological, biological, conservation, and other scientific experiences.

The students expressed great satisfaction in the workshop. All plan to make a career in biology or a related field, with most indicating a preference for ornithology.

Alex summed up the experience well: “Long Point Bird Observatory is a great facility to learn about birds and birding.”

Eric concurred: “Banding offers a wonderful opportunity to study birds up close and to appreciate the minute details of their beautiful plumage.”

Halli added that the YOW program “offers many opportunities and opens quite a few doors in your future. The facilities are great.”

Malkolm said he had “many memorable experiences” thanks to the YOW workshop and Peter agreed that “there is nothing better than being outside, observing.”

Jamie said: “The program offers so much fun and knowledge; it’s a blast.”

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## REGIONAL

### Endangered Kirtland’s Warbler Spotted



Photo: Ethan Meleg

**18 August 2006** – Military officials at the armed forces base in Petawawa, Ontario, have revealed that at least two Kirtland's Warblers spent the summer in the extensive jack pine forests found on the base. This is the first record for the Ottawa area since 1985 and the first territorial birds for the Petawawa base since a singing male spent the summer there in 1977.

This endangered species is one of the world's rarest birds; as recently as the late 1980s, it numbered less than 400 individuals. Through careful management of its very specific habitat and control of the Brown-headed Cowbird (a nest parasite), the population has increased to more than 3000 birds in recent years. While the bulk of the population breeds in Michigan, there are historical breeding records in Wisconsin and Ontario. Indeed, ornithologists considered the species to be "not uncommon" in the Petawawa area until the early 1900s. The return of the Kirtland's Warbler to Ontario would be welcome news as a breeding population outside of Michigan would further ensure the species' continued recovery.

### **And the Winners Are...Phoenix and Gwayah**

**18 August 2006** – Bird Studies Canada (BSC) in conjunction with Essex County Field Naturalists and Detroit River Canadian Cleanup, is pleased to announce that two winners have been selected in our Name-the-Bald-Eagles Contest. The contest was held recently as part of Peche Island Day, an environmental awareness day that took place on the Detroit River island.

Participants were asked to name two young eaglets hatched from nests in the Detroit River watershed. The eaglets were fitted with satellite transmitters, allowing their movements to be tracked over the next few years. After reviewing a large number of excellent entries, the judges selected the names Phoenix and Gwayah, which were submitted by E. Coventry and S. Edney.

Judges felt Phoenix – the name of a beautiful, immortal mythological bird that rose from its ashes every 500 years – symbolized the comeback of the Bald Eagle population in this area after significant population declines in the last 50 years.

The second name, Gwayah, is short for Gwayahkooshkawin, which means "balance" in the Ojibway language. Unfortunately, Gwayah, died recently despite extensive efforts made by experienced wildlife rehabilitators to save his life. Cause of death is unknown. The judges felt the name symbolizes the fragile balance between life and death faced by all wild animals, and is a fitting tribute to the memory of this young bird.

### **Crown Marsh Rehabilitation Day Held at BSC**

**16 August 2006** – The Long Point Waterfowlers' Association (LPWA) invited more than 35 biologists and marsh managers to gather at Bird Studies Canada (BSC) headquarters in Port Rowan, Ontario, for a meeting to discuss the current state of habitat conditions and wildlife use in the Crown Marsh, as well as future potential management options.

The Crown Marsh – Long Point Waterfowl Management Unit has been owned by the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) since 1961. At 1650 acres, this marsh is the largest emergent marsh complex at Long Point, ON, that is open for public use during the entire year. The marsh is a popular destination for bird-watchers during the spring. During summer months, countless people enjoy hiking, canoeing, and fishing. From late-September through mid-December each year, the OMNR (in cooperation with the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters) provides controlled waterfowl hunting opportunities at the site. In recent years, waterfowl hunters, bird-watchers, and other user groups have noticed substantial changes in the plant and animal communities, and have become concerned about the state of conditions within the marsh.

Dr. Shannon Badzinski, Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Fund (LPWWRF) Scientist, was invited to present research to the gathering at BSC showing long-term declines in duck-use and habitat quality in the Crown Marsh. Steve Timmermans, BSC Aquatic Surveys Scientist, also presented data from BSC's Great Lakes Marsh Monitoring Program, and discussed observations regarding habitat management activities in other Great Lakes coastal wetlands in Canada and USA.

LPWA members took biologists on both land-based and boat tours of the marsh to see first hand the current habitat conditions. Round-table discussions at the end of the day resulted in consensus that habitat conditions within the Crown Marsh are sub-optimal and that some kind of habitat management will be necessary to increase the ecological value to some areas of the marsh. Smaller meetings will be held in the future to develop a formal proposal about what specific management activities will be most beneficial for the marsh.

### **Fall Migration Season Starts at Long Point**



Photo: Stuart Mackenzie

**5 August 2006** – The Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO) began the fall 2006 season officially on 15 August at the Old Cut field station. The adjacent woods are already filling up with migrants and more than 500 birds have been banded on the point so far including a father and daughter pair of Belted Kingfishers! The observatory's two remote stations, Breakwater and the Tip, have been up and running since August 13. Starting Friday 25 August, weekly updates of banding totals, bird movements, and highlights from Long Point and the surrounding areas will be made to the LPBO Sightings Board which can be checked by [clicking here](#). If you're in the area, be sure to plan a visit to Long Point and the Old Cut banding station. The friendly LPBO staff, volunteers, and Friends of LPBO are happy to answer those burning questions about Long Point and its birds. While you're there, check out the "LPBO Shoppe" for bird-friendly gifts and apparel.

### Scaup Study in Wildlife Society Bulletin

**28 July 2006** – Two members of the Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Fund (LPWWRF), administered by Bird Studies Canada (BSC), have published a study on scaup in the summer 2006 edition of *Wildlife Society Bulletin*.

The article, by LPWWRF Scientist Dr. Shannon Badzinski and LPWWRF Research Director Dr. Scott Petrie, appears in Vol. 34, No. 2: 395-407 and is titled, "Lesser Scaup spring nutrient reserve dynamics on the Lower Great Lakes." To read the abstract, [check here](#).

Shannon and Scott also have another upcoming article titled, "Diets of Lesser and Greater Scaup during autumn and spring on the Lower Great Lakes," slated for publication in the 2006 autumn edition (Vol. 34, No. 3) of *Wildlife Society Bulletin*. Scott, Shannon, and Ken Drouillard (Great Lakes Institute for Environmental Research, University of Windsor) currently are revising a manuscript they submitted to Archives of Environmental Contamination and Toxicology for peer review titled, "Contaminants in Lesser Scaup and Greater Scaup staging on the Lower Great Lakes."

To learn more about LPWWRF's Scaup research programs, [check here](#).

### Loon and Tundra Swan Research Published

**28 July 2006** – Staff associated with Bird Studies Canada (BSC) recently published two papers in a special edition of the journal *Hydrobiologia*. The papers, which appear in Vol. 567, No. 1 of the journal, are specifically devoted to research related to limnology and effects on aquatic birds.

Long Point Waterfowl and Wetlands Research Fund (LPWWRF) Scientist Shannon Badzinski and Aquatic Surveys Scientist Steve Timmermans have co-authored a paper titled, "Factors influencing productivity of Common Loons (*Gavia immer*) breeding on circumneutral lakes in Nova Scotia, Canada." [Check here](#) for the abstract.

Shannon, LPWWRF Research Director Scott Petrie, and Dave Ankney (University of Western Ontario) have co-authored a paper titled, "Influence of migrant Tundra Swans (*Cygnus columbianus*) and Canada Geese (*Branta canadensis*) on aquatic vegetation at Long Point, Lake Erie, Ontario." The abstract can be read by [checking here](#).

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