

# Pelee Island Bird Observatory

## 2009 Year-end Report



Graeme C. Gibson & Claire Sanders  
Pelee Island Bird Observatory  
585 South Shore Road  
Pelee Island, Ontario  
NOR 1M0

**THE ONTARIO  
TRILLIUM  
FOUNDATION**



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Natural Resources.*



**USFWS NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD  
CONSERVATION ACT PROGRAM**

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## Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO)

Address: 585 South Shore Road, Pelee Island, Ontario, Canada N0R 1M0

Phone: 519-724-2829

Email: [claire.sanders@pibo.ca](mailto:claire.sanders@pibo.ca) – Executive Director

[graeme.gibson@pibo.ca](mailto:graeme.gibson@pibo.ca) – Managing Director

Website: [www.pibo.ca](http://www.pibo.ca)

The Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO) was established in 2003 and incorporated as a non-profit charitable organization in 2006. PIBO's research and education mandate includes a commitment to long-term migration monitoring research on Pelee Island; long-term studies of Pelee's breeding bird communities, including endangered, threatened and species of concern; serving as an educational centre for the public, school groups and the local community; and promoting the importance of Pelee Island's unique natural heritage.

PIBO Board – Graeme Gibson, the Elder (Chair), Ramsay Cook (Treasurer), Elizabeth Agnew, Wayne Grady, Paul Vasey.

Advisory Board – Margaret Atwood, Matthew Mann Gibson, Dr. David Hussell, Penny Kavanagh, Dr. Bridget Stutchbury.



*American Robin*

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It was a productive twelve month period of growth and development at the Pelee Island Bird Observatory in 2009 and much was accomplished in this, our 7<sup>th</sup> year of operations. With strong support from the PIBO Board and the unflagging efforts of an industrious group of interns and volunteers, the observatory forged ahead with a wide range of research and education projects designed to benefit birds and their habitats both locally and internationally.

Twelve research studies were completed in 2009 ranging from constant-effort migration monitoring and intensive breeding bird surveys to amphibian and monarch butterfly counts. In addition to our ongoing long-term projects, a number of new studies were launched this year including a reverse migration pilot-project conducted this spring, and a Swainson's Thrush telemetry study in the fall. Overall, it was the observatory's most active research season to date – from April 1<sup>st</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>, excluding the month of July, fieldwork was conducted on all but three mornings.

PIBO's education and community outreach programs grew substantially this year and a variety of projects were added to our ongoing curriculum. Along with our usual bird banding demonstrations, newsletters and website summaries, new activities in 2009 included daily bird walks in the spring hosted by PIBO staff at the Pelee Island Winery's red cedar savanna property, which attracted a small but enthusiastic group of island visitors. There was a big upswing in our fall public owling nights as well, when more than 75 islanders came to visit the PIBO cottage over four nights of owl banding as part of our Northern Saw-whet Owl migration project. Other initiatives included an attractive PIBO kiosk about birds and bird conservation that was on display at the Winery pavilion from May to October and viewed by tens of thousands of visitors, PIBO's participation in the annual SpringSong 'green' bird race, and our inaugural entry in Pelee Island's Canada Day parade!

Other developments in 2009 included PIBO's small but influential involvement with wind power projects in the province, particularly the proposed Pigeon Bay turbine development, located just north of Pelee Island and west of Point Pelee National Park. Although PIBO supports wind technology, Pigeon Bay – located in a migration corridor of international importance - is clearly unsuitable for large-scale wind power development. PIBO staff met with the provincial minister of natural resources and with senior scientists from Environment Canada and presented seven years worth of PIBO migration data to support this position.

Much of the work accomplished in 2009 was made possible thanks to PIBO's successful 2009 bid for funding from the U.S. Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Program. This critical support, along with ongoing financial assistance from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund, and many other generous supporters both large and small, has provided a solid base for PIBO to pursue a diverse range of programs that will benefit North American neotropical migratory species, Canadian boreal forest birds, national and provincial species at risk, and many Carolinian birds with limited breeding ranges in Canada.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

It was a busy and productive year at the Pelee Island Bird Observatory and many significant goals were achieved thanks to the critical support of numerous organizations and individuals. PIBO initiated a wide range of new research and education projects that, along with our ongoing programs, successfully advanced the observatory's conservation mandate. PIBO's organizational structure grew in leaps-and-bounds in 2009 as well, and the organization continued to develop important new contacts in the conservation community.

This year's report includes a summary of PIBO's research, education, and community outreach programs and an update of some of the positive developments at the observatory in the previous twelve months. Section One presents the results of a wide range of research projects conducted in 2009 including PIBO's ongoing diurnal migration and Northern Saw-whet Owl monitoring work, breeding bird survey studies, and a number of additional projects. While songbird migration monitoring remains PIBO's central focus, the observatory carried out eleven additional research projects in 2009.

Section Two provides an update and description of PIBO's education and community outreach activities in 2009 and briefly describes a number of exciting new developments slated for 2010. The observatory initiated a variety of projects this year and continued to build on our pre-existing programs. In all, PIBO hosted almost one thousand visitors on the island in 2009 with the help of a diverse range of activities including bird banding demonstrations, bird walks, training workshops, owling nights, and powerpoint presentations. The observatory reached tens of thousands of others with its conservation message thanks to an informative PIBO display at the Pelee Island Winery pavilion, and more than 10,000 people visited PIBO's website.

The organization continued to make valuable inroads in the community as well. While not as easy to measure, PIBO staff and volunteers participated in almost every community event on the island this year and the observatory engaged more islanders in its programs than any previous year on record. Highlights included PIBO's involvement in Pelee Island's annual 'green' Bird Race, the Canada Day parade and PeleeFest celebration, our successful mulled wine and owling nights, many potluck dinners, and a host of other activities too numerous to mention.

The final section of the report summarizes a number of important organizational advances at the Pelee Island Bird Observatory in 2009 and provides a status report on PIBO's current institutional structure. Some of the significant developments this year are highlighted along with plans in 2010 that include a three-year strategic plan, establishing an endowment fund, and the launch of an annual fundraising campaign.

## **SECTION ONE - RESEARCH**

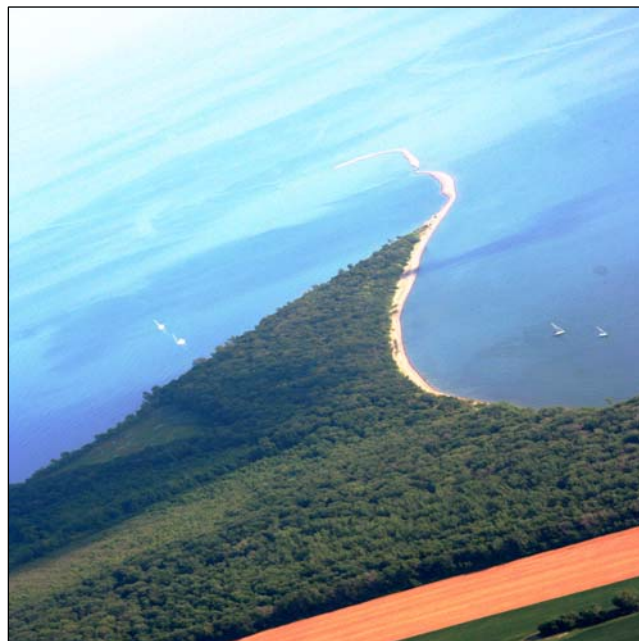
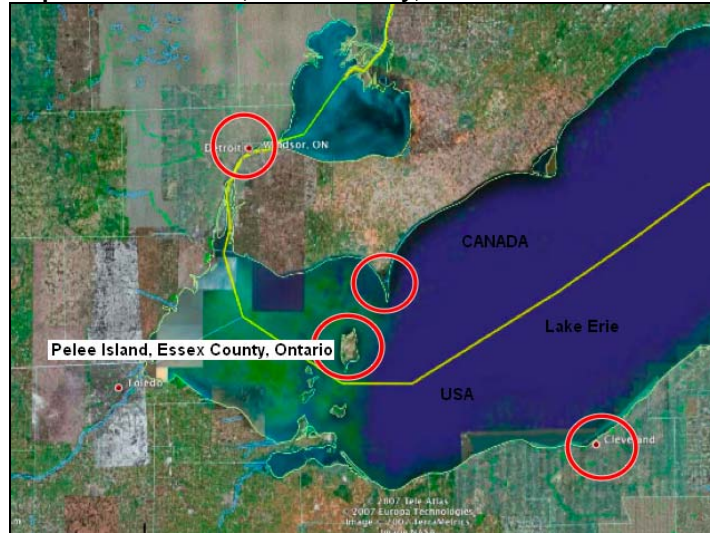
### **Migration Monitoring**

#### **Diurnal Songbird Migration**

Migration monitoring research is an effective method for tracking changes in bird populations through the counting and capture of migrants. The data collected at migration stations is used to detect population trends of small landbirds that migrate to and from their breeding and wintering grounds each year. Many songbirds summer in remote northern regions and winter in equally isolated areas, which makes it difficult to survey these species using other monitoring methods.

The Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) oversees migration studies in Canada. The network is made up of more than twenty-five permanent sites established across the country that, like PIBO, generate daily migration counts for a wide range of species. Monitoring stations are committed to collecting data that contributes to our collective understanding of the changes taking place in populations of migratory birds, as well as to document migration at the station itself, and many other bird-related studies.

**Map 1 – Pelee Island, Essex County, Ontario**



***Fish Point***

Another successful year of spring and fall migration coverage at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve concluded this year on November 15<sup>th</sup>. Standardized counts were conducted every morning from April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 10<sup>th</sup> and from August 1<sup>st</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>, for a total of 178 coverage days (71 spring/107 fall). A total of 198 species was recorded at Fish Point by PIBO staff and volunteers and 3296 birds of eighty-eight species were banded. Two staff and



twelve interns/volunteers contributed 1250 field-hours to the 2009 program. PIBO has submitted all of its 2003 – 2008 migration counts (approximately 1.5 million records) to the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network for species-trend analysis, and the observatory is now a full-member of the network.

PIBO's migration program continues to produce some of the most standardized migration counts in the country and generates increasingly important information for conservation programs concerned with Canadian boreal forest birds.

### Spring Migration

PIBO's 7<sup>th</sup> spring migration monitoring coverage season got underway at Fish Point on April 1<sup>st</sup> and ran until June 10<sup>th</sup>, for a total of seventy-one consecutive days of field coverage. In all, 170 species were recorded in the official count area and 825 birds were banded of sixty-eight species in 2187 net-hours, for an average catch-rate of 0.39 birds/net hour. Seventy-six banded birds of eighteen species were recaptured. Diversity at the field station peaked on May 15<sup>th</sup> when 83 species were recorded during PIBO's official count period, compared to the season-low daily total of 23 on April 27<sup>th</sup>.



*Eastern Towhee*

The majority of recaptures were local nesting **Red-winged Blackbirds** (23) and **Yellow Warblers** (19) – only nine passage migrants (species that don't nest on Pelee Island) were recaptured this spring.

Highlights in April and May included an **Eared Grebe** (April 1<sup>st</sup>), **King Rail** (May 9<sup>th</sup>), **Acadian Flycatcher** (May 27<sup>th</sup>), **Prothonotary Warbler** (April 26<sup>th</sup>), **Kentucky Warbler** (banded May 15<sup>th</sup>), **Louisiana Waterthrush** (banded April 30<sup>th</sup>), and a **Lark Sparrow** recorded on April 30<sup>th</sup>. Three new species were banded at the station this spring – **Mourning Dove**, **Tree Swallow**, and **Rusty Blackbird** – which brings the number of species banded by PIBO at Fish Point to 106.



**Table 1 – Spring coverage totals**

Description	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Coverage Period	Apr 1-Jun10	Apr 3-Jun14	Apr 1–Jun 15	Apr 2–Jun 8	Apr 5–Jun 6	Apr 13–May 31
Coverage	71	73	76	67	61	45
Netting Period	Apr 2-May 24	Apr 5-Jun 10	Apr 2–Jun 1	Apr 15–Jun 7	Apr 6–Jun 5	Apr20–May 28
Netting Days	44	55	48	35	55	30
Birds Banded	825	794	637	1033	1151	602
Net Hours	2187	2569	1831	1796	2223	1078
Birds/Net Hour	0.39	0.31	0.35	0.61	0.52	0.56
Species Banded	68	69	67	62	72	63
Recaptures	77	95	66	68	147	43
Species Recaptured	18	9	10	17	23	16
Species Recorded	170	175	177	181	171	179

### Fall Migration

PIBO's 7<sup>th</sup> Fall migration monitoring season came to a close on November 15<sup>th</sup> after 107 consecutive days of field coverage from August 1<sup>st</sup>. Local nesters were still much in evidence at the Point in early-August but not many passage migrants were documented during the first few weeks of coverage. A few migrant landbirds were observed and banded but, otherwise, activity remained generally light until the 20<sup>th</sup>. Things picked up on August 24<sup>th</sup>, however, when a nice variety of birds appeared in moderate numbers – 47 species were recorded in the official count area, including twelve warbler *spp.*, and 29 birds were banded of thirteen species.

September started off on a busy note when a season-high sixty-seven species was recorded on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 83 birds were banded of nineteen species. **Magnolia Warblers** were abundant, with 32 individuals captured, along with good numbers of a wide range of other species. Although the weather remained very cooperative (no banding days were lost due to rain from August 5<sup>th</sup> to September 27<sup>th</sup>), these conditions also produced a somewhat leisurely pace for migrants in September, and very few significant fall-outs were noted until early-October. Despite this, just over 1000 birds were banded from September 1<sup>st</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> during 1500 net-hours, for an average monthly catch-rate of .67 birds/net-hour.

Conditions changed markedly at the beginning of October when strong northwest winds and rain eventually made their way to southwestern Ontario, and migration picked up considerably as a result. **Blue Jays** appeared in good numbers on the 4<sup>th</sup>, with 238 birds recorded on the census, along with an increase of **Ruby** and **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **Brown Creepers**, among others. A small variety of lingering warblers included PIBO's first Fall record for **Yellow-throated Warbler** on October 5<sup>th</sup>.

A steady stream of migrants moved through the area in the second and third week of October, starting on the 10<sup>th</sup> when 54 species were counted (including a surprising twelve warbler *spp.*) and 124 birds of twenty-two species were banded. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were numerous along with kinglets, **Hermit Thrushes**, and **Nashville Warblers**. Activity this Fall peaked on October 16<sup>th</sup> when a startling number of kinglets arrived en masse – more than 500 **Ruby** and **Golden-crowns** were counted and almost two hundred birds were

captured in just over ninety minutes. An additional 200 birds captured the next day were mostly kinglets, along with sixteen other species.

The final weeks of coverage saw a drop-off in songbird migration, although a number of late birds were noted including **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** (Oct 18<sup>th</sup>), **American Redstart** and **White-eyed Vireo** (Nov 2<sup>nd</sup>), and a **Black-throated Blue Warbler** on November 4<sup>th</sup>. Other interesting late-Fall records included two **Brant** recorded on October 26<sup>th</sup>, (a first-record for PIBO) and a **Greater White-fronted Goose** observed on the 27<sup>th</sup>.



*Black-throated Blue Warbler*

**Table 2 – Fall coverage totals**

Description	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Coverage Period	Aug 1-Nov 15	Aug 1-Nov 15	Aug 1–Nov 15	Aug 7–Nov 15	Aug 4–Nov 14	Aug 6–Nov 9
Days	107	107	107	101	102	94
Netting Period	Aug 5-Nov 11	Aug 3-Nov 11	Aug 1–Nov 13	Aug 8–Nov 15	Aug 9–Nov 11	Aug 18–Nov 1
Netting Days	90	92	n/a	82	89	63
Birds Banded	2471	2711	2035	3426	4325	2849
Net Hours	4003	4199	4488	3246	4182	2191
Birds/Net Hour	0.62	0.65	0.45	1.05	1.03	1.3
Species Banded	72	69	74	74	82	78
Recaptures	59	56	60	77	112	54
Species Recaptured	15	18	18	17	25	15
Species Recorded	172	171	178	174	180	170

**Table 3 – Top ten species banded in 2009 and previous years**

Species	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004	2003	Total
Golden-crowned Kinglet	308	312	168	218	766	312	151	2235
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	306	211	102	423	485	325	134	1986
Magnolia Warbler	297	349	236	617	410	337	335	2581
Swainson's Thrush	273	315	314	389	542	314	312	2459
Hermit Thrush	201	166	154	228	269	143	141	1302
Gray-cheeked Thrush	156	152	110	91	222	100	56	887
Ovenbird	111	95	77	119	107	82	73	664
Yellow-rumped Warbler	126	168	143	154	270	156	131	1148
American Redstart	112	161	84	273	162	141	159	1092
Red-winged Blackbird	103	100	45	35	75	60	34	452

**Table 4 – Birds banded in 2009**

Species & Forms	Total	Spring	Fall	Species & Forms	Total	Spring	Fall
Sharp-shinned Hawk	14		14	Yellow Warbler	31	31	
Northern Saw-whet Owl	28		28	Chestnut-sided Warbler	35	5	30
Eastern Screech-Owl	1		1	Magnolia Warbler	297	49	248
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	8	7	1	Cape May Warbler	2		2
Mourning Dove	1	1		Black-throated Blue Warbler	100	11	89
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	1		Blackburnian Warbler	17		17
Downy Woodpecker	13	4	9	"Myrtle" Warbler	126	5	121
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	3		Black-throated Green Warbler	7	2	5
"Yellow-shafted" Flicker	5	4	1	"Western" Palm Warbler	5	5	
Eastern Wood-Pewee	2	2		Bay-breasted Warbler	7	2	5
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	61	4	57	Blackpoll Warbler	25	3	22
"Traill's" Flycatcher	15	6	9	Black-and-white Warbler	45	2	43
Least Flycatcher	13	7	6	American Redstart	112	39	73
Great Crested Flycatcher	2		2	Ovenbird	111	27	84
Eastern Phoebe	13	9	4	Louisiana Waterthrush	1	1	
White-eyed Vireo	3	3		Northern Waterthrush	41	17	24
Red-eyed Vireo	30		30	Kentucky Warbler	1	1	
Warbling Vireo	1		1	Connecticut Warbler	1		1
Philadelphia Vireo	8		8	Mourning Warbler	15	9	6
Blue-headed Vireo	23	5	18	Common Yellowthroat	34	22	12
Blue Jay	9	4	5	Wilson's Warbler	23	6	17
Tree Swallow	1	1		Canada Warbler	36	15	21
Black-capped Chickadee	10		10	Yellow-breasted Chat	1	1	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3		3	Northern Cardinal	12	8	4
Brown Creeper	46	3	43	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	3	1	2
Carolina Wren	1	1		Indigo Bunting	6	4	2
House Wren	20	6	14	Eastern Towhee	2		2
Winter Wren	50	4	46	American Tree Sparrow	1		1
Marsh Wren	2		2	Field Sparrow	1		1
Golden-crowned Kinglet	308	61	247	White-throated Sparrow	103	40	63
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	306	24	282	E. White-crowned Sparrow	3	1	2
American Robin	21	17	4	Fox Sparrow	3	1	2
Wood Thrush	11	3	8	Song Sparrow	10	4	6
Veery	49	12	37	Lincoln's Sparrow	6	4	2
Swainson's Thrush	273	29	244	Swamp Sparrow	15	10	5
Gray-cheeked Thrush	156	13	143	"Slate-colored" Junco	18	1	17
Hermit Thrush	201	14	187	Brown-headed Cowbird	2	2	
Gray Catbird	32	30	2	Red-winged Blackbird	103	102	1
Brown Thrasher	2	2		Rusty Blackbird	6	6	
Cedar Waxwing	4		4	Common Grackle	12	8	4
Northern Parula	1		1	Baltimore Oriole	20	12	8
Orange-crowned Warbler	8		8	Purple Finch	1		1
Tennessee Warbler	6	2	4	American Goldfinch	4	2	2
Blue-winged Warbler	2	2		<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>3300</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>2600</b>
Nashville Warbler	57	12	45	<b>Species &amp; Forms</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>72</b>

<sup>1</sup> Includes birds captured but not banded

## 2009 Recaptures

There were 136 birds of twenty-eight species recaptured in 2009 at least once after their original banding compared to 151 recaptures of twenty-five species in 2008. The rapid turnover of migrants at Fish Point is an interesting feature of the site. For example, 679 *Catharus* thrushes (Veery, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush) were banded at the station this year and only eighteen were caught again at least one day after their original capture. Similarly, only six of 614 banded kinglets were recaptured and just five of 1002 warblers (excluding local nesting Yellow Warblers).

The majority of recaptures were birds banded by PIBO in 2009, although three local nesting species – Black-capped Chickadee, Yellow Warbler and Red-winged Blackbird – continued to show high return rates from previous years.

**Table 5 – 2009 recaptures**

Species	Total	Spring	Fall
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1		1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	1		1
Eastern Screech Owl	1		1
Downy Woodpecker	4	1	3
White-eyed Vireo	1	1	
Red-eyed Vireo	1		1
Black-capped Chickadee	32	4	28
Brown Creeper	1	1	
Carolina Wren	1	1	
House Wren	1	1	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	3		3
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	3		3
American Robin	12	12	
Wood Thrush	2	1	1
Veery	1	1	
Swainson's Thrush	5		5
Gray-cheeked Thrush	7	3	4
Hermit Thrush	5		5
Yellow Warbler	19	19	
"Myrtle" Warbler	1		1
American Redstart	1		1
Ovenbird	2	1	1
Northern Waterthrush	1	1	
Indigo Bunting	1	1	
Brown-headed Cowbird	1	1	
Red-winged Blackbird	23	23	
Common Grackle	3	3	
Baltimore Oriole	2	2	
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>15</b>

**Table 6 – Combined spring and fall coverage totals**

Description	2009	2008	2007	2006	2005	2004
Coverage Period	Apr 1-Jun 10 Aug 1-Nov 15	Apr 3-Jun 14 Aug 1-Nov 15	Apr 1-Jun 15 Aug 1-Nov 15	Apr 2-Jun 8 Aug 7-Nov 15	Apr 5-Jun 6 Aug 2-Nov 14	Apr13-May 31 Aug 6-Nov 10
Days	178	180	183	168	163	139
Netting Period	Apr 2-May 24 Aug 5-Nov 11	Apr 5-Jun 10 Aug 3-Nov 11	Apr 2-Jun 1 Aug 1-Nov 15	Apr 15-Jun 7 Aug 8-Nov 15	Apr 6-Jun 5 Aug 9-Nov 11	Apr20-May 28 Aug 18-Nov 1
Netting Days	134	147	139	117	144	93
Birds Captured	3296	3505	2672	4459	5490	3451

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Species Captured	88	82	84	81	91	87
Net Hours	6190	6767	6319	5042	6393	3269
Birds/Net Hour	0.53	0.52	0.41	0.88	0.85	1.06
Recaptures	136	151	126	145	259	97
Species Recaptured	28	25	23	24	35	22
Species Documented	198	194	205	201	199	193

**Table 7 – Species recorded by PIBO staff at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve in 2009**

Species	Species	Species	Species
Common Loon	Greater Yellowlegs	Blue-headed Vireo	Black-and-white Warbler
Horned Grebe	Lesser Yellowlegs	Blue Jay	Worm-eating Warbler
<u>Eared Grebe</u>	Solitary Sandpiper	American Crow	American Redstart
Pied-billed Grebe	Spotted Sandpiper	Horned Lark	Prothonotary Warbler
Double-crested Cormorant	Whimbrel	Purple Martin	Yellow-throated Warbler
Great Blue Heron	Ruddy Turnstone	N. Rough-winged Swallow	Kentucky Warbler
Green Heron	Sanderling	Bank Swallow	Ovenbird
Black-crowned Night Heron	Dunlin	Tree Swallow	Northern Waterthrush
Great Egret	Semipalmated Sandpiper	Barn Swallow	Louisiana Waterthrush
Turkey Vulture	Least Sandpiper	Black-capped Chickadee	Mourning Warbler
Tundra Swan	American Woodcock	Red-breasted Nuthatch	Common Yellowthroat
Canada Goose	Common Snipe	White-breasted Nuthatch	Connecticut Warbler
<u>Greater White-fronted Goose</u>	Bonaparte's Gull	Brown Creeper	Wilson's Warbler
<u>Brant</u>	Ring-billed Gull	Carolina Wren	Canada Warbler
Wood Duck	Herring Gull	House Wren	Yellow-breasted Chat
Gadwall	Great Black-backed Gull	Winter Wren	Scarlet Tanager
American Wigeon	Caspian Tern	Marsh Wren	Northern Cardinal
Mallard	Common Tern	Golden-crowned Kinglet	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
American Black Duck	Forster's Tern	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	Indigo Bunting
Blue-winged Teal	Mourning Dove	Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	Eastern Towhee
Northern Shoveler	Rock Dove	Eastern Bluebird	American Tree Sparrow
Green-winged Teal	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	American Robin	Field Sparrow
Greater Scaup	Black-billed Cuckoo	Wood Thrush	Chipping Sparrow
Lesser Scaup	Great Horned Owl	Veery	Savannah Sparrow
Bufflehead	Northern Saw-whet Owl	Swainson's Thrush	<u>Lark Sparrow</u>
Common Goldeneye	Eastern Screech-Owl	Gray-cheeked Thrush	White-th. Sparrow
Red-breasted Merganser	Whip-poor-will	Hermit Thrush	White-c. Sparrow
Ruddy Duck	Chimney Swift	Gray Catbird	Fox Sparrow
Osprey	Ruby-throated Hummingbird	Northern Mockingbird	Song Sparrow
Bald Eagle	Belted Kingfisher	Brown Thrasher	Lincoln's Sparrow
Northern Harrier	Red-headed Woodpecker	European Starling	Swamp Sparrow
Sharp-shinned Hawk	Red-bellied Woodpecker	American Pipit	Dark-eyed Junco
Cooper's Hawk	Downy Woodpecker	Cedar Waxwing	Lapland Longspur
Red-shouldered Hawk	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	Northern Parula	Snow Bunting
Broad-winged Hawk	Northern Flicker	Orange-crowned Warbler	Bobolink
Red-tailed Hawk	Olive-sided Flycatcher	Tennessee Warbler	Brown-headed Cowbird
Northern Goshawk	Eastern Wood-Pewee	Blue-winged Warbler	Red-winged Blackbird
Golden Eagle	Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	Nashville Warbler	Rusty Blackbird
American Kestrel	Acadian Flycatcher	Yellow Warbler	Common Grackle
Merlin	Willow Flycatcher	Chestnut-sided Warbler	Baltimore Oriole
Peregrine Falcon	Alder Flycatcher	Magnolia Warbler	Orchard Oriole
Ring-necked Pheasant	Least Flycatcher	Cape May Warbler	Purple Finch
Wild Turkey	Eastern Phoebe	Black-throated Blue Warbler	House Finch
Virginia Rail	Great Crested Flycatcher	Blackburnian Warbler	Pine Siskin
Sora	Eastern Kingbird	Yellow-rumped Warbler	American Goldfinch
American Coot	Red-eyed Vireo	Black-thr. Green Warbler	House Sparrow
Black-bellied Plover	Warbling Vireo	Palm Warbler	
Semipalmated Plover	Philadelphia Vireo	Pine Warbler	198 species & forms
Killdeer	White-eyed Vireo	Bay-breasted Warbler	
Willet	Yellow-throated Vireo	Blackpoll Warbler	

### Northern Saw-whet Owl Monitoring

Migration was generally light in October and no saw-whets were captured from the 1<sup>st</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> after 174 net-hours of effort (9 nights). Activity picked up later in the month and 25 saw-whets were captured between October 18<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Table 8 – Owl banding in 2009**

Date	Species	Banded	Retrap	Net-Hrs
1-Oct				20
2-Oct				14
3-Oct				20
4-Oct				
5-Oct	EASO	1		20
6-Oct				
7-Oct				20
8-Oct				
9-Oct				
10-Oct	EASO		1	20
11-Oct				20
12-Oct				
13-Oct				20
14-Oct				
15-Oct				
16-Oct				20
17-Oct	NSWO	1		20
18-Oct	NSWO	4		22.5
19-Oct				20
20-Oct	NSWO	4		20
21-Oct				22.5
22-Oct				20
23-Oct				7.5
24-Oct				
25-Oct	NSWO	3	1	20
26-Oct	NSWO	1		20
27-Oct				7.5
28-Oct				20
29-Oct				20
30-Oct				7.5
31-Oct				
1-Nov	NSWO	5		20
2-Nov				20
3-Nov	NSWO	4		24
4-Nov				20
5-Nov	NSWO	3		22.5
6-Nov				20
7-Nov				20
8-Nov				20
9-Nov	NSWO	1		20
10-Nov				20
Totals	NSWO	26	2	608
	EASO	1		

NSWO – Northern Saw-whet Owl  
EASO – Eastern Screech-Owl

A saw-whet was captured on October 25<sup>th</sup> that had been banded previously in Ontario in 2008 (additional details pending). In all, 26 saw-whets and one screech owl were banded during thirty-two nights of mist-netting (608 net-hours) from October 1<sup>st</sup> to November 10<sup>th</sup>. PIBO banded 44 saw-whets in 2008.





**Table 9 – Fieldwork conducted on Pelee Island from May 30<sup>th</sup> – July 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009**

Date	Location	Hours	Description	Date	Location	Hours	Description
30-May	Fish Point	3	BBC survey	16-Jun	Lighthouse	6	BBC survey
31-May	Fish Point	3.25	BBC survey		Brown's Rd N	6	BBC plot set-up
				17-Jun	Brown's Rd S	3	BBC survey
1-Jun	Lighthouse	4	BBC plot set-up		Brown's Rd N	3	BBC plot set-up
2-Jun	Fish Point	1.5	Informal BBC visit		Fish Point	2.75	BBC survey
3-Jun	Lighthouse	5.5	BBC set-up/survey	18-Jun	Lighthouse	4	BBC survey
4-Jun	Ontario Nature	1	SAR transect		Brown's Rd N	5	BBC plot set-up
6-Jun	Brown's Rd S	2	SAR transect		ERCA Alvar	1.5	SAR transect
	Fish Point	4.5	BBC survey	19-Jun	Brown's Rd S	3	BBC survey
7-Jun	Lighthouse	4	BBC survey	21-Jun	Fish Point	3	BBC survey
	Red Cedar N	3	SAR transect	22-Jun	Lighthouse	3	BBC survey
	Wilds of Pelee	2	SAR transect		Fish Point	2.75	BBC survey
	ERCA Alvar	3	Set-up point-counts	23-Jun	ERCA Alvar	3.5	Point-count surveys
8-Jun	Multiple sites	3	SAR transect	24-Jun	Ontario Nature	4	Point-count surveys
	ERCA Alvar	8	Set-up point-counts		Lighthouse	3.5	BBC survey
9-Jun	Fish Point	3.5	BBC survey		ERCA Alvar	3	BBC plot set-up
	Lighthouse	2	BBC survey	25-Jun	ERCA Alvar	3	BBC plot set-up
	Lake Henry	3.75	Marsh bird survey	26-Jun	ERCA Alvar	7	BBC plot set-up
	ERCA Alvar	3.5	Point-count surveys		Brown's Rd S	3	BBC survey
10-Jun	Ontario Nature	8	Set-up point-counts		Fish Point	2	BBC survey
11-Jun	Brown's Rd S	4.5	BBC plot set-up	28-Jun	Lighthouse	2.5	BBC survey
	Lighthouse	3.5	BBC survey		Fish Point	2.5	BBC survey
	Ontario Nature	2.25	Point-count surveys	29-Jun	Brown's Rd S	2.5	BBC survey
12-Jun	Fish Point	3	BBC survey		ERCA Alvar	5	BBC plot set-up
	Lighthouse	5	BBC survey	30-Jun	Red Cedar N	6	BBC plot set-up
13-Jun	Gibwood	1	SAR transect				
14-Jun	Brown's Rd S	5.75	BBC set-up/survey	1-Jul	Red Cedar N	10	BBC plot set-up
	Lighthouse	5	BBC survey	2-Jul	Red Cedar N	4	BBC plot set-up
	Wilds of Pelee	0.5	SAR transect	3-Jul	Lighthouse	2	BBC survey
	Ontario Nature	1	Point-count surveys	4-Jul	Fish Point	2.5	BBC survey
15-Jun	Brown's Rd S	3	BBC survey	7-Jul	Lake Henry	4	Marsh bird survey

### Breeding Bird Census (BBC)

Six new BBC plots were set-up in 2009 on NCC, ERCA, and Ontario Nature conservation properties and two additional plots were identified, which, in addition to two plots established in 2008, brings the total number of BBC survey sites on the island to ten. Vegetation analysis was conducted this year at six sites (two plots were surveyed last year) and 2.5 plots were surveyed for birds. Results will be published in the Journal of Field Ornithology. Bird and habitat surveys at the remaining sites will be carried out in 2010.

The near completion of these survey sites is a significant milestone that will make a lasting contribution to our knowledge of the breeding biology of Ontario's Carolinian birds. Ongoing surveys will generate a blueprint of birdlife on Pelee unmatched by any but a few studies in the province. This long-term project will document the number of species and breeding territories currently found in specific Carolinian vegetation communities, and will also show how breeding bird abundance, diversity and distribution, change over time due to succession and other human/non-human influences. PIBO's BBC surveys will gather valuable data in the

near-term as well including detailed information about species at risk, the response of breeding communities to habitat conservation and restoration projects, and many other key findings.



***Breeding Bird Census plot at Brown's Road – Nature Conservancy of Canada***

### **Point-counts Surveys**

Twenty-two new point count sites were established and surveyed this year, which brings the total number of PIBO point-count locations on the island to 125. The observatory has now set-up and surveyed permanent points on all of Pelee's conservation properties (app. 1000 hectares). These sites complement our more detailed BBC studies, and future monitoring will enable us to track large-scale changes within the island's breeding bird communities.

### **Marsh Bird Monitoring**

The wetland complex at Lighthouse Point – Lake Henry – was surveyed this summer for the third consecutive year. While breeding bird diversity is generally low due to exotic *phragmites* and *carp spp.*, the site provides important nesting habitat for a variety of marsh birds including the 'threatened' **Least Bittern**.

### **Additional Research**

#### **Swainson's Thrush Telemetry Study**

Seven years of constant-effort mist-netting at Fish Point has shown that Pelee Island provides critical stopover habitat for large numbers of *Catharus* thrushes that traverse the Lake Erie islands in the Fall. In 2005, 1116 thrushes were captured and banded from early-August to mid-November in 4400 net-hours, for an average catch-rate of .25 birds/net-hour. Swainson's Thrushes (*Catharus ustulatus*) are particularly abundant at the site, and comprised fifty percent of the 2005 total.

While the netting area at Fish Point is clearly an important stopover location for migratory thrushes, seven years of recapture data indicates a rapid turnover rate of birds from the

time of their original capture. Although more than 2500 Swainson’s Thrushes have been banded at the station from 2003–2009, for example, just 31 birds have been captured again after their initial banding.

To learn more about the behaviour of long-distance passage migrants on Pelee, eight Swainson’s Thrushes were harnessed with radio transmitters and tracked in order to determine how long these individuals remained on the island and their movements prior to departure. The research was conducted from September 2<sup>nd</sup> to October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009.

The study was a success and the data has opened a small window on the migratory behaviour of *Catharus* thrushes at a North American inland, island site. All the thrushes remained within 1.5 kilometres of the location where they were initially captured and radio-tagged (Fish Point), and the birds migrated from the island between 19 and 132 hours after their initial capture. The average stopover duration for all birds from the time of their original capture was 52 hours, or 2 days and 4 hours.

In addition to the data generated from the telemetry project, PIBO staff familiarized themselves with the technical aspects of the fieldwork, which will enable us to develop effective, well-designed studies in the future.



**Table 10 – 2009 Swainson’s Thrush telemetry data**

I.D. Code	SW1	SW2	SW3	SW4	SW5	SW6	SW7 <sup>4</sup>	SW8
Band Number	2261 66072	2261 66123	2261 66237	2261 66342	2261 66343	2261 66435	2261 66449	2261 66610
Age	AHY	HY	AHY	HY	HY	HY	HY	HY
Fat deposit	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	5
Mass (grams)	29.5	29.7	29.2	28.3	29.4	32.3	31.3	37.1
Date banded	5-Sep	10-Sep	16-Sep	24-Sep	24-Sep	30-Sep	1-Oct	17-Oct
Time released	900	930	900	920	940	930	950	1030
Departure date <sup>1</sup>	6-Sep	11/12 Sep	20-Sep	27-Sep	29-Sep	1-Oct	1-Oct	18/19-Oct
Departure time	2230	1230-530	2100-2300	2220	2020	100 - 630	1220?	1930-630
Distance traveled <sup>2</sup>	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1	< 1
Stopover duration <sup>3</sup>	38	42	109	85	132	19	2.5?	38

<sup>1</sup> Date that individual was known to depart from the island

<sup>2</sup> Greatest distance traveled on the island from the location where the bird was banded (Fish Point)

<sup>3</sup> Number of hours the individual remained on the island from the time it was banded

<sup>4</sup> Radio-transmitter on SW7 apparently failed 2.5 hours after bird was harnessed. Data for this bird is not included in totals

## Reverse Migration

PIBO launched a reverse migration research project at Fish Point to study this recognizable spring phenomenon, to collect some standardized data on the subject, and to set the stage for further study in 2010. It has long been known that certain weather conditions in the spring can prompt migrant songbirds to move in a southerly direction during the day, and these events are particularly noticeable at Fish Point, as well as Point Pelee on the mainland. Anecdotal accounts suggest that tens of thousands of songbirds of numerous species have been known to depart south off the tip of Fish Point in a single day.

In order to study reverse migration at Fish Point in more detail and to correlate bird activity and weather patterns that precipitate these events, PIBO staff conducted standardized one-hour counts at the tip of Fish Point at the same time each day on sixteen mornings between May 2<sup>nd</sup> – May 20<sup>th</sup> and documented all southbound bird activity. Data on local and regional weather patterns was also recorded.

Although no large-scale reverse migration events took place, more than 800 individuals of twenty-one species were recorded moving south during the monitoring period. PIBO will correlate these findings with the weather at the time of the data collection, create a database for further studies, and develop a monitoring protocol that will help quantify some of the mechanics of this well-known – but understudied – migration strategy.

**Table 11 – Reverse migration counts at Fish Point**

Date	May	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Total	
<b>Species/Coverage(min)</b>	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	0	0	30	30	60	60	0	60	60	30	30	60	60	<b>14 hrs</b>	
Chimney Swift													1		2	2						5
Ruby-thr. Hummingbird																5			1			6
Northern Flicker	1																					1
Eastern Kingbird						1						1	1		1	2					1	7
Blue Jay			8		8		49			6		9	10		12		5		9			116
American Crow					1							2										3
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1																					1
American Robin							1									2					2	5
European Starling	3	2	3	2	8	13							8		2				17	6		64
Cedar Waxwing		5			3								86			3						97
American Pipit					2	2									1							5
Yellow Warbler	1	1			1	3						1			2				2			11
Yellow-rumped Warbler		1			1	1																3
Palm Warbler		1																				1
Indigo Bunting					4	2							2			1			2			11
Brown-headed Cowbird	3	7			6	6									1							23
Red-winged Blackbird	39	17	1	12	12	40			1		1	22		37	10		8	18	18			236
Common Grackle	10	11	2	3	3	27							6	16	12	3	16	10	16			135
Baltimore Oriole		4				7						7	5	12	2					3		40
Orchard Oriole						1																1
American Goldfinch		21				4						2							6	3		36
(warbler spp.)	4	4	2		13	6										4						33
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>162</b>			<b>7</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>143</b>		<b>84</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>49</b>		<b>840</b>	
<b>Total species</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>13</b>			<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>10</b>		<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>		<b>21</b>	

### Christmas Bird Count (CBC)

PIBO staff participated in this year's Christmas Bird Count on December 20<sup>th</sup> and spent an enjoyable day counting birds on Pelee as part of the Erie Island's annual count. Pelee is associated with the CBC area that includes the Ohio islands to the south and west of the island – Kelley's Island and the Bass Islands. While it was a quiet day for landbirds, there was a nice variety of waterfowl on the lake including 874 **Red-breasted Mergansers**, 625 **scaup spp.**, 260 **Buffleheads** and 40 **Tundra Swans**, among others.

Thanks to Ron & Lynn Tiessen and Jim & Anne Ashman for helping with the Pelee effort.

**Table 12 – Erie Island's Christmas Bird Count totals**

Species	Kelleys	South Bass	Middle B	Pelee	Total
Canada Goose	58	207	155	1	421
Tundra Swan	61	193	8	40	302
Gadwall	92	1			93
American Wigeon	2				2
American Black Duck	298	17	1		316
Mallard	1296	448	130	21	1895
Northern Shoveler	1				1
Northern Pintail	5				5
Canvasback	76	1			77
Redhead	12	4			16
Ring-necked Duck		1			1
Greater Scaup	180				180
Lesser Scaup	542	4	283	10	839
<i>Scaup spp.</i>	112	834		625	1571
White-winged Scoter	1				1
Surf Scoter	1				1
Black Scoter	5				5
Long-tailed Duck	5				5
Bufflehead	2176	381	400	260	3217
Common Goldeneye	1520	1626	3	106	3255
Hooded Merganser	5	3	1		9
Common Merganser	841	18			859
Red-breasted Merganser	5950	268		874	7092
<i>Merganser spp.</i>	770	212			982
Ruddy Duck		1			1
<i>Divers spp.</i>	450			276	726
Ring-necked Pheasant				6	6
Wild Turkey	8			142	150
Common Loon	1				1
Horned Grebe	2	1			3
Double-crested Cormorant	5				5
Great Blue Heron		2			2
Bald Eagle	5		2		7
Sharp-shinned Hawk	2	1			3
Cooper's Hawk	2	1			3
Red-tailed Hawk	2			2	4
American Coot	1				1
Killdeer	4	1		2	7
Dunlin	1				1
Purple Sandpiper		1			1
Bonaparte's Gull	1279	1		337	1617
Ring-billed Gull	1334	404		234	1972
Herring Gull	2100	81		60	2241
Lesser Black-backed Gull	1				1
Great Black-backed Gull	78	8		6	92
<i>Gull spp.</i>		24	153	306	483
Mourning Dove	1	11			12
Eastern Screech-Owl	13				13
Great Horned Owl	7	3			10
Long-eared Owl	1				1
Northern Saw-whet Owl	5				5
Belted Kingfisher	1		2	1	4
Red-bellied Woodpecker	7	25	1	1	34

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Downy Woodpecker	36	56	4	9	105
Northern Flicker	7	4			11
Blue Jay	5	43	2	7	57
American Crow	94	3			97
Horned Lark	9			3	12
Black-capped Chickadee	284	116	22	16	438
Red-breasted Nuthatch		5			5
White-breasted Nuthatch	1	22	2	2	27
Brown Creeper	13	9			22
Carolina Wren	10	3		1	14
Winter Wren	2	2			4
Golden-crowned Kinglet	5	9			14
<i>Kinglet spp.</i>		1			1
Eastern Bluebird	3			3	6
Hermit Thrush	29				29
American Robin	356	29			385
Northern Mockingbird	1				1
European Starling	5807	66		11	5884
Cedar Waxwing	6				6
Yellow-rumped Warbler	8	18			26
American Tree Sparrow	10	7			17
Song Sparrow	4				4
Swamp Sparrow	3				3
White-throated Sparrow	38			2	40
White-crowned Sparrow		5			5
<i>Sparrow spp.</i>		56	22		78
Dark-eyed Junco	24	20	5	1	50
Lapland Longspur	1				1
Northern Cardinal	120	73	2	8	203
Red-winged Blackbird	40			1	41
Common Grackle	5	3			8
Brown-headed Cowbird	49	1			50
Purple Finch	2				2
House Finch	28	63	13	20	124
American Goldfinch	29	19	8		56
House Sparrow	194	374		61	629
<b>Total Individuals</b>	<b>26541</b>	<b>5790</b>	<b>1219</b>	<b>3455</b>	<b>37005</b>
<b>Total Species</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>82</b>



*Monarch Butterfly*

### Monarch Butterfly Counts

Daily monarch butterfly counts were carried out at Fish Point in 2009 from August to early-November during PIBO's 90-minute morning bird census. These surveys have been conducted every day each fall since 2003 and represent the only standardized monarch



counts in the region. PIBO will work with Point Pelee National Park and Cuyahoga State Park in Ohio in the near future to possibly develop a coordinated monarch monitoring program.

### **Amphibians**

Spring surveys were conducted at Lighthouse Point and Fish Point during three visits to the sites in April, May and June. The data from these annual counts contributes valuable information to the nation-wide Amphibian Monitoring Program administered by Bird Studies Canada. While Pelee Island's wetlands have been reduced to a rather fragile state, a variety of amphibians were recorded on the island this spring including Bullfrogs, Green frogs, and American Toads.



*Green Frog*

### **Vegetation Analysis**

Detailed vegetation surveys were conducted this year as part of PIBO's Breeding Bird Census project on six properties under the stewardship of the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Essex Region Conservation Authority, and Ontario Nature. This information enables important correlations to be drawn between specific habitats and the breeding bird communities associated with them. Habitat analysis has now been completed at eight out of ten BBC sites.



*Survey site on East-West Road – Nature Conservancy of Canada*



## 2009 Highlights

- **Red Bat** – PIBO's first record for this migratory species was captured and safely released during one of our owling nights in October. While bats don't migrate across the island chain in significant numbers, PIBO has confirmed records on Pelee for all three migrant species – **Red Bat**, **Silver-haired**, and **Hoary Bat**.
- At least three foreign encounters (birds captured at PIBO that were banded previously at another location) were recorded in 2009 including a male **Sharp-shinned Hawk** originally banded in Pennsylvania in 2006, a **Northern Saw-whet Owl** banded in Ontario in 2008, and a **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** (details unavailable).
- New PIBO sight records for Pelee Island in 2009 included **Eared Grebe**, **King Rail**, **Greater White-fronted Goose**, **Brant**, and **Lark Sparrow**, which brings PIBO's island total to 258 species and forms.
- Other interesting records this year included a **Kentucky Warbler** banded in the spring, our first autumn record for **Yellow-throated Warbler**, a **Willet**, **Golden Eagle**, **Sedge Wren**, and **Summer Tanager**, among others.
- PIBO staff and volunteers documented 32 warbler species at Fish Point in 2009 and banded 1089 warblers of twenty-eight species and forms, compared to 1008 warblers in 2008.
- Approximately 26,000 birds of 106 species have been banded at Fish Point since 2003. Three new species were captured at the station in 2009 – **Mourning Dove**, **Tree Swallow**, and **Rusty Blackbird**.

## Species at Risk

In addition to many other research objectives, the intensive breeding bird studies carried out this summer generated important baseline data on the nesting status of multiple Species at Risk. These inventories will assist in guiding recovery strategies for at least four SAR on Pelee including **Least Bittern** (Threatened), **Bald Eagle** (Special Concern), **Prothonotary Warbler** (Endangered), and **Yellow-breasted Chat** (Special Concern).

PIBO conducted standardized surveys (described in Section Two) on eleven properties under the stewardship of Ontario Parks, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Nature, and the Essex Region Conservation Authority – an area comprising approximately 750 hectares. A variety of monitoring methods were used to detect the presence or absence of SAR including the Breeding Bird Census survey, point-count surveys following the protocol of the Ontario Atlas of Breeding Birds, transect surveys using playback tapes, and Marsh Bird Monitoring Program surveys. Four PIBO staff and volunteers compiled 227 field-hours during the study period on thirty-four of a possible thirty-nine days from May 30<sup>th</sup> to July 7<sup>th</sup>.

Several SAR were documented during the breeding season and possible, probable and confirmed breeding evidence was recorded for **Least Bittern** (probable), **Bald Eagle** (confirmed), **Chimney Swift** (confirmed), **Prothonotary Warbler** (possible), and **Yellow-breasted Chat** (probable). At least nine individuals held territories throughout the breeding season, in addition to one Chimney Swift colony, including two Least Bitterns, two Bald Eagles, one Prothonotary Warbler, and four Yellow-breasted Chats. PIBO documented an additional nine national and provincial SAR on Pelee Island in 2009 (including migrants) for which no breeding evidence was recorded including **King Rail**, **Common Nighthawk**, **Whip-poor-will**, **Red-headed Woodpecker**, **Acadian Flycatcher**, **Louisiana Waterthrush**, **Canada Warbler**, **Hooded Warbler**, and **Rusty Blackbird**.

With the groundwork laid for an effective long-term monitoring scheme, and having identified the current status of most birds at risk on the island, PIBO will work in the coming year with

the Nature Conservancy of Canada, the Township of Pelee Island, and the community, to enact the coordinated ecosystem recovery plan outlined in PIBO's Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act grant application. In addition to our BBC surveys, point-count work, and transect surveys, the observatory will also focus on a number of new SAR-related research initiatives in 2010, including further study of Pelee's breeding chat population, a **Chimney Swift** population monitoring project, etc.



*Prothonotary Warbler*

**Table 13 – Species at Risk documented on Pelee Island in 2009**

<b>Species</b>	<b>SAR<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Breeding Status</b>
Least Bittern	TH	Jun 9, Jul 7	Lighthouse Point	<b>Probable</b>
Bald Eagle	SC	Numerous	Numerous	<b>Confirmed</b>
King Rail	EN	9-May	Stone Road	Spring migrant
Common Nighthawk	SC	May	Stone Road	Spring migrant
Whip-poor-will	SC	May	Fish Point	Spring migrant
Chimney Swift	TH	Numerous	West Dock	<b>Confirmed</b>
Red-headed Woodpecker	TH	May, Sep	Fish Point	Migrants
Acadian Flycatcher	EN	May, Jun	Fish Point	<b>Possible</b>
Prothonotary Warbler	EN	May, Jun	Fish Point	<b>Possible</b>
Louisiana Waterthrush	SC	May	Fish Point	Spring migrant
Hooded Warbler	TH	May	Fish Point	Spring migrants
Canada Warbler	SC	Numerous	Fish Point	Migrants
Yellow-breasted Chat	SC	May, Jun	Brown's Rd, Stone Rd	<b>Probable</b>
Rusty Blackbird	SC	Apr, Oct	Fish Point	Migrants

<sup>1</sup>National and/or provincial Species at Risk status: EN – endangered, TH – threatened, SC – special concern

## SECTION TWO – EDUCATION & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

The observatory's education and outreach programs steadily advanced in 2009 and PIBO staff and volunteers were kept busy with a wide range of in-house educational projects and community outreach activities (Table 14). In addition to our daily banding demonstrations at Fish Point and other ongoing educational pursuits, the observatory reached a much wider audience in 2009 due in part to:

- an informative PIBO display set-up this year and viewed by thousands of visitors at the Pelee Island Winery pavilion. The display presented information about bird migration and the importance of places like Pelee for migratory songbirds
- ongoing classroom presentations designed to teach students about local breeding birds and migratory species, with a focus on species at risk, and the importance of stewardship in conserving and managing habitat
- increased traffic on PIBO's website, with more than 10,000 visitors in 2009
- a series of PIBO-hosted daily bird walks throughout May and early-June at the Pelee Island Winery's Red Cedar Savanna property
- a big increase in October in the number of visitors during PIBO's public owling nights



### PIBO's Community Outreach Mission Statement

- Help protect the health of Pelee Island's unique ecosystems
- Provide community-based environmental learning opportunities for the community, local schools, and tourists
- Promote bird watching as a physical and recreational activity for people of all ages and abilities
- Provide employment opportunities in biological sciences and environmental education for recent university graduates
- Strengthen the economic health of the community through the development of ecotourism opportunities
- Help further Pelee Island's long-term vision and growth through participation in the Township plan
- Create events and experiences to increase community engagement and strengthen volunteerism among people of all ages, abilities, and cultures

**Table 14 – Education & Outreach Projects in 2009**

<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Result Measure</b>
<b>General public outreach</b>	6 Groups (450 people) Orillia Naturalist Club, Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, Provincial Ministers Wind Turbine meeting, Federal branches Wind Turbine meeting, Pelee Island Spring Song, Environmental Commissioners tour.
<b>In-House Education Programs</b>	10 Groups (560 people) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dufferin Hi-Land Bruce Trail Club (24)</li> <li>- Catholic Central High School (23)</li> <li>- Sciensational Snakes (25)</li> <li>- Essex County Field Naturalists (15)</li> <li>- Leamington Summer Kids Programs (67)</li> <li>- May Bird Walks (12)</li> <li>- Owling nights (75)</li> <li>- Walk-in visitors Fall (107)</li> <li>- Walk-in visitors Spring (262)</li> <li>- Windsor Summer School Program (30)</li> </ul>
<b>PIBO Media and Communications Newsletter</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spring newsletter distribution – 104 people hard copy; 70 email</li> <li>- Summer newsletter distribution – 107 people hard copy; 86 email</li> <li>- Fall newsletter distribution – 115 people hard copy; 90 email</li> <li>- Grapevine articles – 4 articles published in local island newsletter. Distribution ranges from 200 people to 500 people</li> </ul>
<b>Website</b>	PIBO website updated & maintained. Close to 10,000 visitors (up from 6,900 in 2008.) Donations can now be made by credit card on Canadahelps.org.
<b>Brochures</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PIBO species at risk colour brochure distributed.</li> <li>- PIBO black and white checklist and 'Where to Watch Birds' brochure designed and distributed.</li> <li>- Lake Erie Island checklist produced by Lake Erie Islands Historical Society, Kelley's Island Audubon Club, Lake Erie Island's Chapter Black Swamp Conservancy, and PIBO.</li> </ul>
<b>Public Display</b>	A stand-alone display was placed in the Pelee Island Winery Pavilion for Spring Song and remained there through the tourism season until October. The Winery has the highest amount of tourism traffic on the Island.

## SECTION THREE – ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTS IN 2009

### Capacity Building and Organizational Development

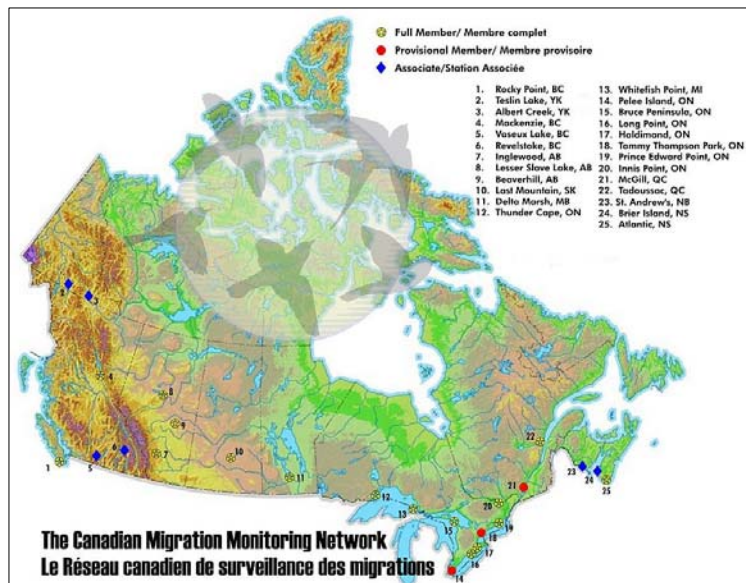
Over the past few years PIBO has demonstrated its ability to respond to ever-changing and increasingly important conservation issues both locally and internationally. The observatory will now focus internally in order to further build our capacity to ensure we continue to effectively fulfil our mandate. In 2009, the groundwork was laid for PIBO to develop a strategic plan that will provide a framework for implementation of the organization's goals including specific deliverables, management training, and acquisition of improved communication technology.

Objectives of the capacity building project include: developing a three-year strategic plan, establishing an endowment fund, establishing an annual fundraising campaign to support the observatory's programs, increasing the visibility and awareness of bird conservation and the work of the observatory, increasing the observatory's scope and reach in program and service delivery, and improving communication efficiency by purchasing new technology and producing updated communication materials.

### Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) meeting

After years of relative inactivity, the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network – a joint venture of the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), Bird Studies Canada (BSC), and more than twenty-five independent stations like PIBO – has found new life under the direction of a dedicated steering committee. More than 40 participants from eight provinces and the Yukon were in attendance at the network's recent national meeting in Tadoussac, Quebec, including a strong contingent from Environment Canada and members of BSC's Science Advisory Committee.

PIBO staff attended the October meeting and presented a PIBO organizational update and a presentation entitled "Expanding Your Organization's Fundraising Capacity Through Partnership Building". Attendees covered a broad range of topics and much was accomplished during the three-day session.



## Partnerships

Since 2003, PIBO has initiated research and education projects with the following organizations:

### 2003

- Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (Research)
- Pelee Island Town Council (Research, Education & Outreach)
- Pelee Island Heritage Centre (Research, Education & Outreach)
- Ontario Parks (Research & Education)

### 2004

- Nature Conservancy of Canada (Research)
- Ontario Nature (Research)
- Wilds of Pelee (Education & Outreach)
- Essex County Field Naturalists (Education)

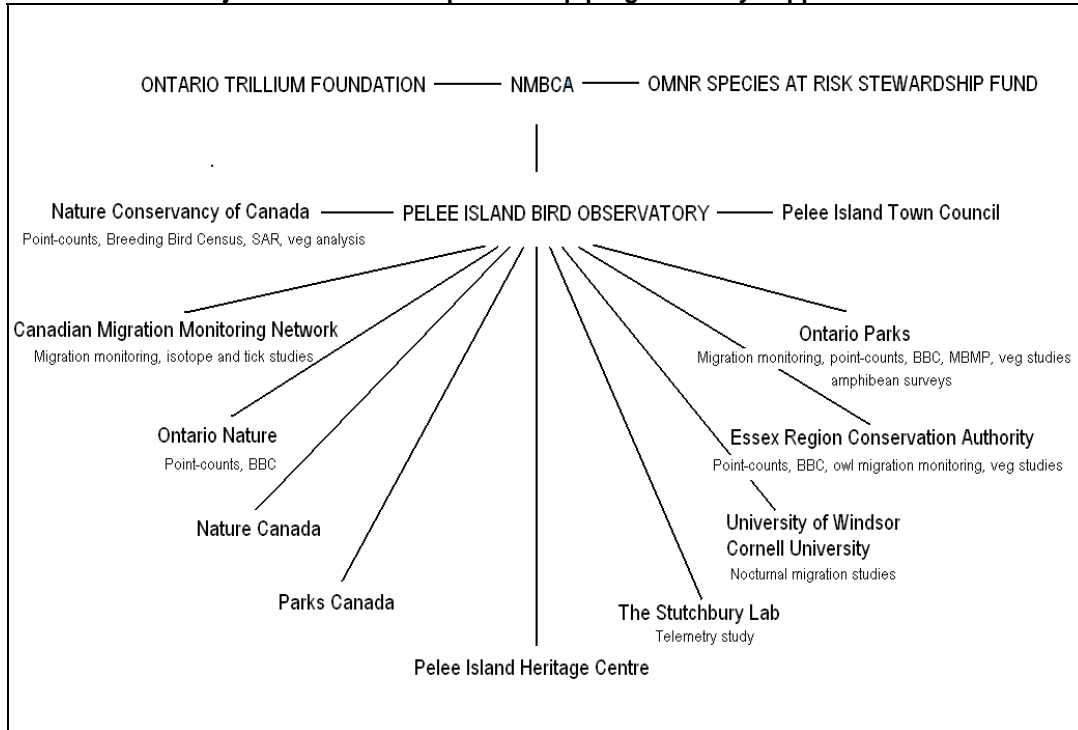
### 2005

- Tourist Operator's of Pelee Island (Outreach)
- Pelee Island Stewardship Council (Outreach)
- Pelee Island Public School (Education & Outreach)

### 2006 to 2009

- Pelee Island Winery (Research & Education)
- Parks Canada (Research & Education)
- University of Windsor (Research)
- Canadian Wildlife Service (Research)
- Cornell University (Research)
- The Stutchbury Lab (Research)
- Cuyahoga National State Park (Research & Education)
- Essex Region Conservation Authority (Research)

**Table 15 - PIBO major funders and the partnership programs they support**



NMBCA – Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Program - USFWS



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

### Funding Partners

The George Cedric Metcalf Charitable Foundation  
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Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act  
OMNR Species at Risk Stewardship Fund  
OMNR Community Fisheries and Wildlife Involvement Program  
Ontario Trillium Foundation  
PIBO Friends and Supporters under \$1000  
Pelee Wings Nature Store  
TD Friends of the Environment Foundation  
University of Toronto  
Margaret Atwood  
Graeme Gibson, the Elder  
Rosamond Ivey  
Suzanne Ivey Cook  
Vortex Canada



### Project Partners

Canadian Migration Monitoring Network  
Essex Region Conservation Authority  
Explore Pelee  
Nature Conservancy of Canada  
Ontario Parks  
Pelee Island Heritage Centre  
Township of Pelee







Canadian Migration  
Monitoring Network

The continued success of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory and the positive new developments at the organization in 2009 were made possible due to the unflagging enthusiasm and generous support of many individuals. The Pelee Island Bird Observatory wishes to thank the following for this critically important help: Elizabeth Agnew, Margaret Atwood, Ramsay and Eleanor Cook, Rhonda Donley, Erica Dunn, Philip Dyke, Janet Fairclough, Graeme Gibson, the Elder, Matthew Mann Gibson, Wayne Grady, Audrey Heagy, Dr. David Hussell, Penny Kavanaugh, Richard Masse, Jon McCracken, Kerry McGuire, Jean-Guy Moya, Sumiko Onishi, Adam Pinch, Kirk Stewart, Dr. Bridget Stutchbury, Dan van Lieshout & the ELP students, Paul Vasey, Stephen Yeates.

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