



The Pelee Island Bird Observatory The Auspice

Spring 2009

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And a sincere thank-you to our many individual donors, to our friends and supporters, to our partners and PIBO's hard-working volunteers!! We couldn't do it without you.

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The 2009 Season: A Look Forward



The 2009 field season will be PIBO's seventh year of migration monitoring research at Fish point. While studying migrants and stopover island ecology remains the primary focus of the station, we have an exciting schedule of additional projects lined up for the season.

PIBO will continue the comprehensive long-term nesting bird study that began in 2008 – the Breeding Birds of Pelee Island Project – following the study protocol of the

Breeding Bird Census (BBC). In addition to surveying two plots already established, PIBO will prepare and survey another two plots in 2009.

The Marsh Bird Monitoring route at Lake Henry will be surveyed for the third year and the Amphibian survey section of the project will begin in April. October will continue to be our 'owling' month; we'll be running our Northern Saw-whet Owl nets nightly.

Other planned activities include initiating an acoustic monitoring program, a radio telemetry study, and a reverse migration study. We will also attend the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network bi-annual meeting in Quebec in October.

Several school groups have already booked for education programs and PIBO will also be running daily bird walks throughout May. Whether you are new to birding or would like help finding the best spots for birds on the island, contact PIBO or the Pelee Island Heritage Centre to join one of our walks.

Hope to see you on the Island in 2009!

Celebrate Bird Migration at Spring Song 2009

On May 8-9, Pelee Island will celebrate its seventh Spring Song weekend. The celebration takes place at the height of spring migration, when a large number of migratory birds descend to feed and rest on this unique island.

Events kick off at noon on Friday, May 8, with the start of the Botham Cup Bird Race. Once again it will be a Green Race, with contestants scouring the Island on foot or by bicycle.

The competition ends at noon on Saturday, May 9. After an afternoon of relaxing, we all gather at the Winery at 6.00pm for the Festival's Spring Song Banquet.

Each year there is a reading by a guest author. Previous writers have been Farley Mowat, Alice Munro, Alistair MacLeod, Jane Urquhart, David Suzuki, and Vincent Lam. This year we have the acclaimed Joseph Boyden, Giller-winning author of *Through Black Spruce*. Margaret Atwood will introduce Joseph Boyden at the banquet.

This special event is much in demand among readers and bird enthusiasts. Space is limited, so book now to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are \$65 each. For information and banquet reservations: 519-724-2291 or curator@peleeislandmuseum.ca



How Birds Migrate

- A streamlined body shape and a lightweight skeleton composed of hollow bones minimize air resistance and reduce the amount of energy necessary to become and remain airborne. Well-developed pectoral muscles, which are attached to a uniquely avian structure called the furculum, power the flapping motion of the wings. The long feathers of the wings act as airfoils, which help generate the lift necessary for flight.

- Birds have a large, four-chambered heart, which proportionately weighs 6 times more than a human heart. This, combined with a rapid heartbeat (the resting heart rate of a small songbird is about 500 beats per minute; that of a hummingbird is about 1,000 beats per minute) satisfies the rigorous metabolic demands of flight. Unlike mammalian or reptilian lungs, the lungs of birds remain inflated at all times, with the air sacs acting as bellows to provide the lungs with a constant supply of fresh air.

- Most songbirds migrate at 500 to 2,000 meters, but some fly as high as 6,800 meters; swans have been recorded at 8,000 meters.

Pelee Island Bird Observatory

Box E2,
General Delivery,
Pelee Island ON,
NOR 1M0

(519) 724-2829
info@pibo.ca
www.PIBO.ca

Get Back to Island Time



Southwestern Ontario is scattered with quaint, small communities full of culture, history and peaceful country landscapes. Often overlooked, yet not to be missed, Pelee Island has a magical charm and has been called the Canadian Keys. Some travel thousands of kilometres south to get to the Islands, but Canada's most southern community, Pelee Island, is right in your backyard.

Come explore Canada's best-kept secret! Pelee Island, a beautiful island paradise in the Lake Erie archipelago, known for its friendly locals, acres of vineyards, kilometers of nature trails, secluded quiet beaches, quaint shops, talented local artisans, a historic lighthouse, and Provincial Nature Reserves. Pelee Island is a great place for a weekend getaway or a family day trip. There is something here for everyone. While visiting make sure you check out the Heritage Museum, Art Works, Meadowlark Organic Farm, local

restaurants, and Conorlee's scrumptious bakery. Come relax on the beach, hike or bike around our nature reserves, watch the bird migration and visit the Bird Observatory, fall asleep to the soothing sounds of the waves, and watch the stars at night from a local beach.

Step back in time to a place where stoplights do not exist and dirt roads carry you past kilometers of farm fields, vineyards bursting with grapes, and a landscape that stretches blue and endless.

The Island, which is part of the Western Lake Erie Islands archipelago, is a biodiversity hotspot for a myriad of bird, plant, and reptile species. Truly, there is nowhere like Pelee Island.

Pelee's newest business, eco-tourism company *Explore Pelee*, can help you do just that.... explore Pelee. Local tour guides will show you all the secret magical spots of the island and give historical accounts of life in Canada's most southern community. Some of the services available through 'Explore Pelee' include biking, hiking and auto touring trips

To book your custom created tour packages for daytripping or weekend getaways contact Anne Marie Fortner at Explore Pelee at:

519-325-TOUR (8687)
www.explorepelee.com

Become a Friend of PIBO...

Please enroll me as a Supporter of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO), in the category indicated below. (You will receive a charitable receipt for the full amount of your donation. Cheques should be made out to the Pelee Island Bird Observatory.)

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