



## The fourteenth migration-monitoring season is ready to take to the wing



For many bird species it is already autumn and as they prepare for their migration south, the Observatoire d'oiseaux de Tadoussac (OOT) is preparing to re-launch its activities and The Migration Chronicle. As has been the case every year since 1993, August marks the start of the OOT's monitoring program. During the next four months or so, the OOT's ornithologists will be present every day (and every night!) in the *Baie-du-Moulin-à-Baude* area of the *Parc national du Saguenay*. Their mission is to determine the demographic trends and the annual breeding success of more than 35 key bird species that either nest in the boreal forest or along the Saint Lawrence Estuary, or which concentrate in the

Estuary during the autumn. However, this is just part of our work, as each year the OOT's ornithologists usually count over 100 000 birds of about 135 species. The information that we gather serves not only for bird conservation, it also provides an indicator as to the state of the health of boreal ecosystems. The Migration Chronicle aims to allow you to keep your finger on the pulse of the migration by regularly providing information concerning the total counts-to-date, together with any interesting observations made during the 2006 season. As in previous years, The Migration Chronicle will be distributed electronically; however, this year The Migration Chronicle will be published bi-monthly instead of weekly and it will be available in both English and French. If you wish to receive The Migration Chronicle by email, or if you have any comments that you would like to make, please contact us at [oot@explos-nature.qc.ca](mailto:oot@explos-nature.qc.ca).

**VISUAL COUNTS:** Regular reader of The Migration Chronicle will notice that this year our monitoring activities will be starting later than in previous years. From now on, the counts will start on the 24 August each year (rather than on the 14 August), for a standard observation period of 95 consecutive days. This change aims to optimise the observation effort and the quality of the data collected. After more than 10 years of monitoring, we now know that the raptors counted at the beginning of August comprise principally two species, the Broad-winged Hawk and the Northern Harrier. While the information gathered is interesting, Tadoussac is probably not the best place for carrying out a long-term survey for these two species, which are not particularly abundant in the boreal forest. Bearing this in mind, we have decided to maximise our hours of observation in order to give a better coverage of the migration of more typically boreal species. For example, visual counts will be continued up until December, which will give a better coverage of the



migration of adult Golden Eagles. The final modification to the protocol this year is that the two ornithologists responsible for the visual counts, Samuel Belleau and Samuel Denault, will have to adjust their alarm clocks! This is because monitoring will start one hour earlier (at 07:00), which will allow us to test the influence of the sunrise on the migration of certain passerine species.

**BANDING STATION:** The OOT's banding station will be in operation as of the 12 September and, as in previous years, its work will focus on the capture of passerines (up until the 12 October), woodpeckers (up until the 22 October), and Boreal and Northern Saw-whet Owls (up until the 31 October). The banders in charge, Christophe Buidin (diurnal activities) and Yann Rochepault (nocturnal activities), will oversee the daily running of the station. At the moment, we are looking for volunteers to complete the team that helps with the extraction of birds from our mist nets. The volunteers will be able to stay on the Explos-Nature campus in nearby Bergeronnes. Depending on the length of stay, certain living costs will be met. This is an occasion to observe our feathered friends from a completely different angle. If you are interested in helping out, please contact Émilie Berthiaume at the following address: [emilieberthiaume@explos-nature.qc.ca](mailto:emilieberthiaume@explos-nature.qc.ca).



**INTERPRETATION ACTIVITIES:** Together, the *Parc national du Saguenay* and the OOT invite you to come and visit us in Tadoussac. As of the 12 September, you will be able to participate in one or more of our three interpretation activities. The first, '*Les rapaces en cavale*', aims to demystify the phenomenon of bird migration and to provide you with a crash course on the identification of raptors on the wing. The second, '*Laissez-vous envoûter par le charme des nyctales*', aims to introduce you to the research carried out by the OOT and to the biology of Boreal and Northern Saw-whet Owls. The third activity concentrates on the passerines and woodpeckers of the boreal region. By taking part in one of these activities, you will be able to observe, at first-hand, birds being extracted from mist nets prior to being rapidly banded and released. You will also be introduced to the *Vallée de la biodiversité*, a route established by the *Fondation de la faune du Québec* with the aid of a number of collaborators. If you would like to participate in any one of our activities, you can reserve a place by contacting one of the *Parc national du Saguenay's* wardens on (418) 235-4238.

**INTERNET SITE:** For further information concerning the OOT, you can visit our bilingual internet site at the following address: [www.explos-nature.qc.ca/oot](http://www.explos-nature.qc.ca/oot). The site will be regularly updated throughout the autumn.

Finally, the OOT team wish you an enjoyable end to your summer and we hope to have the pleasure of seeing you in Tadoussac this autumn.

**Editorial team:** Émilie Berthiaume (author, [emilieberthiaume@explos-nature.qc.ca](mailto:emilieberthiaume@explos-nature.qc.ca)), Bruno Drolet (editor, French version) and Andrew P. Coughlan (editor and translator, English version).

Our operations for the 2006 season are assured through the support provided by Environment Canada's Canadian Wildlife Service and Science Horizons Youth Internship Program, *Faune Québec – ministère des Ressources naturelles et de la Faune*, the *Parc national du Saguenay*, the Saguenay - St. Lawrence Marine Park, the *Université du Québec à Chicoutimi's Consortium de recherche sur la forêt boréale commerciale*, the *Fondation de la faune du Québec*, Bird Study Canada's Baillie Birdathon, *Explos-Nature's Fonds de développement OOT* and the Friends of the OOT Fund.