



¡Hola México!

At the moment, the city of Veracruz (Mexico) is host to over 1,500 scientists and ornithologists who are taking part in the 4th North American Ornithological Conference (NAOC 2006; www.naac2006.org). This is the largest North American conference dedicated to ornithological research. The *Observatoire d'oiseaux de Tadoussac* (OOT) is being represented by three members of its team: Émilie Berthiaume (associate student, *Université de Sherbrooke*, Québec), Bruno Drolet and Jean-Pierre L. Savard (the latter two work for Environment Canada and are members of

the OOT's Scientific Committee). During a symposium entitled Raptor Migration: Ecology and Conservation in the New World, Émilie Berthiaume will present the results of her master's degree, which focused on methods for optimizing the analysis of visual count data obtained for migrating raptors. Other participants of this symposium include members of HawkWatch International and the Raptor Population Index. Bruno Drolet and Jean-Pierre L. Savard are co-authors, together with Jacques Ibarzabal, Andrew P. Coughlan and Mélanie Cousineau, of a poster that highlights the potential value of visual counts for monitoring migratory, boreal-nesting, birds. The OOT's participation at NAOC 2006 underlines the scientific community's interest in our work.



The timing and location of NAOC 2006 was scheduled to coincide with that of a peak in the number of migrating raptors passing above Veracruz. This part of Mexico boasts the world's largest raptor migration bottleneck: on certain days, it is possible to observe over one million birds.
Source : www.naac2006.org

BANDING STATION: Woodpecker banding started on the 15 September, which means that now all the OOT's banding programs are up and running. Despite the fact that rain forced the closure of the mist nets on several days, eight Black-backed and 19 American Three-toed Woodpeckers were banded. With regards to passerines, the team of volunteers was kept extremely busy and extracted a total of 662 birds from the nets, including 187 Yellow-rumped Warblers and 87 Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Twenty-seven Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded over the last two

weeks. This is a particularly good start to the season, especially when one considers that only 28 individuals were banded last year. Sixteen of the 27 birds recently banded were juveniles. This seems to indicate a higher productivity of the population this year than in 2005. So far, no Boreal Owls have been caught. This is not surprising as our records suggest that this species is likely to undergo only limited dispersion this year. We would like to take this opportunity to remind you that for \$50, you can adopt one of the owls banded at the OOT. As an adopter, you get to name your owl and you will be informed if it is recaptured. Furthermore, you will be giving valuable support to our activities. If you require further details, please consult our Internet site (www.explos-nature.qc.ca/oort).

Number of owls and woodpeckers banded		
Species	Weeks 4 and 5	Total 2006
Northern Saw-whet Owl	27	28
Boreal Owl	0	0
American Three-toed Woodpecker	19	19
Black-backed Woodpecker	8	8

Top-five banded passerine species	
Weeks 4 et 5	Total 2006
Yellow-rumped Warbler (187)	Yellow-rumped Warbler (332)
Ruby-crowned Kinglet (87)	Ruby-crowned Kinglet (96)
White-throated Sparrow (52)	White-throated Sparrow (66)
Golden-crowned Kinglet (45)	Golden-crowned Kinglet (53)
Magnolia Warbler (23)	Magnolia Warbler (46)

Banders : Christophe Buidin and Yann Rochepault



This individual is the third Lark Sparrow recorded at the OOT © Samuel Denault

A COMMON RARITY? A Lark Sparrow was observed at the OOT on the 16 September. This is the third record for this species in four years: 2003, 2005 and 2006. This is quite remarkable as this species nests in the west of the continent and there are fewer than 50 mentions for the province. Samuel Belleau and Samuel Denault apart, few birdwatchers can boast three mentions of this species in Québec!

VISUAL COUNTS: The first large passage of Ospreys was observed last week, with 136 individuals being counted on the 26 September. This was a fairly misty day, and suggests that the migration of this species, like that of the Peregrine Falcon, is less negatively affected by sub-optimal weather conditions than that of other diurnal raptors, such as hawks. Nevertheless, we are a long way from the record obtained on the 2 October 1998, when 252 Ospreys were observed. However, things are a little different on the passerine front: a new record was set for the number of Cedar Waxwings recorded during a single season. The 2006 total for this species climbed to 8,764, breaking the ten-year-old record of 8,210 individuals recorded in 1996. Finally, three Sandhill Cranes were observed on the 25 September. This is only the fourth year that this species has been recorded at the OOT.



A new record for the number of Cedar Waxwings seen during a single season was set this week. © Samuel Belleau

Raptor counts		
Species	Weeks 4 and 5 14 to 27 sept.	Total 2006
Osprey	492	537
Bald Eagle	18	41
Northern Harrier	89	157
Sharp-shinned Hawk	570	1568
Goshawk	14	32
Broad-winged Hawk	62	439
Red-tailed Hawk	155	340
Rough-legged Hawk	6	6
Golden Eagle	3	3
American Kestrel	190	451
Merlin	48	84
Peregrine Falcon	35	41
Gyr Falcon	0	0
Turkey Vulture	14	33
Unidentified raptor	5	18
TOTAL	1699	3748

Top-five migrating passerines	
Weeks 4 and 5	Total 2006
Cedar Waxwing (3064)	Cedar Waxwing (8764)
American Pipit (2162)	American Pipit (2678)
Pine Siskin (1515)	Yellow-rumped Warbler (2265)
Yellow-rumped Warbler (1252)	Pine Siskin (1659)
Horned Lark (1179)	Horned Lark (1257)

Official counters : Samuel Belleau and Samuel Denault

Keep your eyes open and enjoy the migration!

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

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