

POINT LEPREAU BIRD OBSERVATORY
Annual Report to the Saint John Naturalists' Club
For Annual Meeting - June 18, 2016

The Point Lepreau Bird Observatory (PLBO) has been a project of the Saint John Naturalists' Club since 1996 and completed its 21st spring migration monitoring season this year.

- Thanks to Ducks Unlimited Canada (DU) we were able to once again obtain a grant for \$6,000 to fund a contract with Dedicated Observer Todd Watts. DU's ongoing financial support is greatly appreciated!
- After serving as Dedicated Observer for 15 seasons, Richard Blacquiere decided to retire from the position. The Club formally acknowledged and thanked Richard for his excellent service at its April meeting.
- Todd Watts was contracted as Dedicated Observer to visually monitor seabird migration, record all data and act as a mentor to volunteers this spring, for a period of six weeks, March 27 to May 7.
- UNBSJ graduate student James Kelley (formerly Button) began a two-year Master's project in the spring of 2016 during which he will assist with data collection during morning counts and then conduct four-hour afternoon counts to fill in some gaps in the PLBO database. He will use current and historical PLBO data to attempt to correlate weather conditions to seabird migration as well as develop a more accurate method of estimating East Coast populations of the three scoters and Red-throated Loons.
- Club member Pattie McKerral updated and improved the custom software used to enter and extract PLBO data. She spent many hours on this important effort, which has made the entry of observations much more efficient and sorting and retrieval of data quicker and easier. This work is a major step forward!
- Vital to this project are the hundreds of volunteer hours contributed each year by SJNC members and other New Brunswick naturalists. This involves more than 30 people and more than 800 hours in total. We wouldn't be able to continue the project without them. Thanks once again one and all, for your interest and effort again this past year.
- Included in that volunteer effort are the contributions of the PLBO Committee, which is responsible to the Club for managing the PLBO activities. Current members include Eileen Pike, Bill Gentleman, Suzanne Bonnell, Hank Scarth and President Jan Riddell. Eileen also acts as Committee Secretary and she and Cheryl Gass have volunteered as contact persons for volunteers.
- NB Power employee Jim Elgee continued as our liaison with security officials at Point Lepreau to arrange for visitor access. Bill Gentleman oversees maintenance of the observatory building, with help from other club members. Collectively, their time, care and insight are invaluable to the project.
- We also thank Todd Watts for a job well done as the contracted Dedicated Observer during the peak weeks of migration this spring. Not only is he the principal observer and mentor to volunteers, but he also inputs all migration data into our computerized system.

Respectively submitted,



Jim Wilson
On Behalf of the Steering Committee