

# POINT LEPREAU BIRD OBSERVATORY

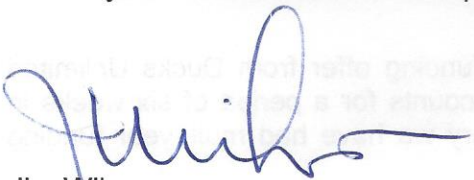
## Annual Report to the Saint John Naturalists' Club - June 16, 2018

The Point Lepreau Bird Observatory (PLBO) has been a project of the Saint John Naturalists' Club since 1996 and completed its 23rd spring migration monitoring season this year.

The following are some highlights since our last Annual Meeting:

- During the summer of 2017 our observatory was expanded to double its original size and completely modernized with the help of NB Power. Larger and better quality front windows were installed, improved insulation was applied and the interior of the building finished in natural wood. Several club volunteers applied finish to the wood interior and the result is a beautiful new building we can all be proud of. A letter of appreciation was sent to NB Power by Club President, Chuck Perry.
- In early September of 2017 we were honored to receive a visit by New Brunswick's Lieutenant-Governor, the Hon. Jocelyn Roy-Vienneau. Mme. Vienneau and her husband Ron made the trip from Fredericton in order to see and learn how to tag Monarch butterflies. The event, arranged by NB Power, included local guests from the aboriginal and fishing communities as well as parents and children from the local school. Thirty-eight Monarchs were fitted with numbered tags and released and everyone who wanted to was able to affix a tag to a butterfly.
- Early in the spring of 2018 the SJNC received a three-year funding offer from Ducks Unlimited Canada to cover the cost of an Official Observer for morning counts for a period of six weeks in years 2018, 2019 and 2020. This is the first time in our history we have had multi-year funding available for morning migration sessions.
- Todd Watts was contracted as Official Observer for spring observations in 2018 (March 27-May 7) and Richard Blacquiere acted as volunteer coordinator for visitation. The PLBO Committee made the decision to limit the number of observers, including the Official Observer, to four at any one time.
- Using funding from the federal Environmental Damages Fund (EDF) grant received in 2017 we were able to have Todd do afternoon counts in addition to morning sessions in spring 2018, doubling the number of hours the Official Observer could be present for the second consecutive year. There is one more year (2019) remaining in the three-year EDF grant.
- The PLBO has a new face book page! Following discussion at the November meeting of the PLBO Committee Todd volunteered to set one up. Suggestions from Club members are encouraged. Thanks Todd for following up on this important step to making ourselves more visible. Go to: <https://www.facebook.com/pg/pointlepreaubirdobservatory/posts/>
- Kathleen Duguay at NB Power sponsored Todd and me so we could each obtain a site access card, the same card as issued to plant employees. The process involved an updated criminal record check, paperwork and attending a one-day on-site course on orientation and safety at the nuclear plant. This clearance allows us to come and go to the observatory 24/7, with no need to make advance arrangements for visits. This is a tremendous benefit for obvious reasons; it's apparently quite unusual for access cards to be issued to non-employees.
- Club member Pattie McKerral continued work to improve the custom software used to enter and extract PLBO data. She has made the entry of observations much more efficient and the sorting and retrieval of data quicker and easier. Thank you Pattie!
- UNB Master's candidate James Kelley encountered health issues that prevented him from completing his thesis before the expiry of the joint agreement between our Club and the University at the end of August, 2017. A one-year extension to that agreement was executed and will expire on August 31, 2018.

- 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.
- Included in that volunteer effort are the contributions of the PLBO Committee, which is responsible to the Club for managing PLBO activities. Current members include Eileen Pike, Bill Gentleman, Suzanne Bonnell, Hank Scarth, Richard Blacquiére, Todd Watts and President Chuck Perry. Eileen also acts as Committee Secretary.
- We also thank Todd Watts for a job well done as the contracted Official 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 and voluntarily prepared a detailed report on spring activity and migration at the conclusion of the season.
- Vital to the PLBO are the hundreds of volunteer hours contributed each year by SJNC members and other New Brunswick naturalists. This involves more than 30 people and hundreds of people-hours in total. We wouldn't be able to continue the project without you. Thanks once again one and all, for your interest and effort this past year!



Jim Wilson  
On Behalf of the Steering Committee