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12 September 2008

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## INTERNATIONAL

### Project FeederWatch Data Identify Evening Grosbeak Population Declines

**10 September 2008** – In an article in the May 2008 issue of *The Condor*, biologists David Bonter and Michael Harvey at Cornell University used Project FeederWatch data from across Canada and the U.S. to assess the status of Evening Grosbeak populations – a species that predominantly breeds in the Canadian boreal forest. The research showed significant rangewide declines since 1986, with a 50% reduction in the number of sites reporting the species, and a 27% decline in the average number of birds visiting feeders. Mechanisms driving the steep declines are not presently known, but investigations are urgently needed.

Visit our website for more information about [Project FeederWatch](#).

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## NATIONAL

### Five Members Re-elected to BSC Board

**12 September 2008** – At Bird Studies Canada's Annual Members Meeting on September 6, five members were re-elected to the Board of Directors. These directors are: Dr. Arnold Boer (NB), George Clulow (BC), David P. Smith (ON), Dr. Louis Visentin (MB), and Chief Justice Warren Winkler (ON).

The other returning Board members are Karen Brown (ON), Sandy Burnett (NB), Thor Eaton (ON), Rita Kalmbach (ON), Kate MacQuarrie (PE), Hugh McArthur (ON), Betsy McFarlane (QC), Dr. Art Martell (BC), Donald Rogers (ON), and Dr. Mark Whitmore (MB). Dr. Martell has completed his term as Chair, and Dr. Visentin has been appointed as the new Chair.

We look forward to our continuing collaboration with all of our Board members, and we thank them for their support.

### 2008 Birdathon Prize Winners Announced

**12 September 2008** – Congratulations to the 2008 Baillie Birdathon prize winners, announced at last weekend's Annual Members Meeting. Grand prize winner Margaret Shepherd of Victoria, BC will be taking a tour of either New Brunswick & Grand Manan, Guyana, or West Mexico, courtesy of [Eagle-Eye Tours](#). Adam C. Smith of Gatineau, QC was the lucky winner of an [Eagle Optics](#) Vortex Skyline Angled Spotting Scope and a Vortex STX Tripod. Also from [Eagle Optics](#), prizes have been awarded to West Humber Naturalists' Kevin Shackleton of Newmarket, ON who will receive a pair of SRT 8x42 binoculars, and to James Pearson of Zephyr, ON who won the Young Birdathoner prize, a pair of Vortex Fury 8x32 binoculars. Nancy Fox has won a Limited Edition Framed Print of *Lucidity* courtesy of artist [Chris Bacon](#).

To date the 2008 Birdathon has brought in \$209,000! Canadian Migration Monitoring Network stations have raised over \$53,000, and other naturalists' clubs have raised more than \$28,000. We are extremely grateful to all of the participants, sponsors, and prize donors who make the Baillie Birdathon such a success. Visit the [BSC website](#) for a full list of this year's Birdathon results and prize winners.

### Wind Energy Bird and Bat Monitoring Database is Now Online

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**5 September 2008** – The Wind Energy Bird and Bat Monitoring Database is now online and available for use by environmental consultants in cooperation with the wind industry. This resource was developed as a central repository for data collected through the environmental assessment process, with the objective of contributing to a better understanding of the impacts of wind turbines on birds and bats. Using data from both pre- and post-construction monitoring, the database will enable evaluation of actual impacts, as well as analyses of the effectiveness of pre-construction data in helping to predict impacts. Ultimately it is hoped the database will lead to further refinements of environmental assessments, and provide a valuable tool to guide the future development of the wind industry in Canada.

Over the past two years, BSC has been working with the Canadian Wind Energy Association, the Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS), and the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources on the development of this important resource. [Select this link](#) for instructions on how to register as a database user, and how to enter or import data.

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## REGIONAL

### New Stopover Ecology Study Launched at Long Point



Photo: Ethan Meleg

**11 September 2008** – In August, Dr. Alex Mills joined BSC as a postdoctoral fellow from Acadia University. Dr. Mills has launched a new radio telemetry study to investigate the stopover ecology of the Long Point area, in collaboration with Dr. Phil Taylor, BSC Chief Scientist, and Master's students Stu Mackenzie and Beth Thurber of the University of Western Ontario. In partnership with [Lotek](#), which has generously lent three receivers for the study, multiple antennae are to be mounted on towers at four sites: the Tip of Long Point; 10 km west of the Tip in the National Wildlife Area; in the provincial park at the base of Long Point; and at BSC's Port Rowan headquarters. One hundred transmitters will be placed on migrant species such as Hermit Thrushes and Northern Saw-whet Owls as they pass through the area, to determine how long they stay around Long Point, and what they do after being banded at the Old Cut or Tip migration monitoring stations of the [Long Point Bird Observatory](#).

BSC is pleased to welcome the research team of Dr. Alex Mills, Stu Mackenzie, and Beth Thurber, and we will look forward to learning about the results of this pilot study.

### British Columbia Coastal Surveys Update



**10 September 2008** – With autumn migration in full swing, and wintering populations of some species already starting to build, the Coastal Waterbird Survey embarks on its tenth winter season this weekend. This effort sees a team of well over 200 birders conduct monthly surveys at about 180 sites each year (most concentrated between September and April, with some continuing through the summer months). There are always a few gaps to fill in this network, so if you're interested in taking part, email [bcprograms@birdscanada.org](mailto:bcprograms@birdscanada.org), or call 1-877-349-2473. For a taste of what's involved, over the course of the winter, Pete Davidson will conduct informal sessions on identifying

and counting waterbirds as part of the **Birds on the Bay program**.

We have just produced the first issue of a new-look newsletter focusing on our coastal projects, the **Coastal Waterbird** and **Beached Bird Surveys**. Among other things, the newsletter takes a look back over the last five years of beached bird surveys in British Columbia. We are in the process of expanding beached bird surveys throughout the province, particularly into more remote regions, so do get in touch (same contact as above) to get involved.

One more thing to look out for early next year is another trends analysis on the nine-year Coastal Waterbird Survey dataset, which we are embarking on now, with funding from the **Habitat Conservation Trust Fund**. This is the second major trends analysis on the Coastal Waterbird Survey dataset; a summary of the first was recently published in a special edition of the journal **British Columbia Birds**.

## **BSC Seeks British Columbia Projects Officer**

**10 September 2008** – Bird Studies Canada is seeking a part-time (3 days per week) Projects Officer for its British Columbia program based at the Pacific Wildlife Research Centre in Delta. This person will assume responsibility for volunteer coordination and assist with the delivery of a variety of BSC's national and regional citizen science programs in British Columbia, in particular the Coastal Waterbird and Beached Bird Surveys. The competition closes on September 24, 2008; we are looking for someone to start in October. For more details, visit the **Job Opportunities** section of our website.

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For questions about the news items or for media inquiries, please email [esecord@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:esecord@bsc-eoc.org).

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