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16 June 2006

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INTERNATIONAL

Beck's is Back!



Photo: Richard Baxter

13 June 2006, BirdLife International - Unrecorded since 1929, a Beck's Petrel has apparently been seen and photographed in the Coral Sea, east of Australia's Great Barrier Reef. The bird was spotted by birding tour guide Richard Baxter, who was able to compare it directly to a Tahiti Petrel, the bird with which it is most likely to be confused. The Tahiti Petrel is categorized by BirdLife International as Critically Endangered. "It probably remains extant, because there have been a number of recent records of up to 250 individuals of the very similar Tahiti Petrel in the Bismarck Archipelago and Solomon Islands which may refer to this species," states BirdLife's species account. "Furthermore, petrels that are nocturnal at the nesting grounds are notoriously difficult to detect, and there are numerous possible breeding sites on isolated atolls and islands that require surveying." However, it adds: "Any remaining population may be tiny." To learn more about this exciting news, [click here](#).

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NATIONAL

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2006 Baillie Fund Research Grants

16 June 2006 - BSC is pleased to announce this year's Baillie Fund grant recipients. The James L. Baillie Memorial Fund for Bird Research and Preservation (the Baillie Fund) was established in 1976. Each year, a portion of funds raised through BSC's Baillie Birdathon is allocated to the Baillie Fund to provide grants to individuals or groups for research and conservation projects. For more information about the Baillie Fund, [click here](#).

Student Award (awarded by the Society of Canadian Ornithologists)

Neil Goodenough, University of Western Ontario - Does raising a cowbird nestling exhaust a Song Sparrow parent?

Regular Grants

Manitoba Naturalists - Fall Raptor Migration

Georgia Basin Ecological Assessment and Restoration Society - Purple Martin Stewardship and Recovery Program, British Columbia

Migration Research Foundation - The McGill Bird Observatory, Quebec

Maritimes Breeding Bird Atlas - Participation in Remote and Priority Areas

Grand Manan Whale and Seabird Research Station - Greater Shearwater and Sooty Shearwater foraging habitat in the Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick.

Hawk Migration Association of North America - The Raptor Population Index (RPI)

Marine Heritage - Monitoring Breeding Birds on Chantry Island, Southampton, Ontario

La Mucuy Bird Observatory - Demography and Conservation of Cerulean Warbler in Venezuelan Andes

Ron Reid - Grazing and Grassland Birds on the Carden Alvar, Ontario

Small Grants

Randy Lauff - Comparative ecologies of the Northern Saw-whet and Boreal Owl, Nova Scotia.

Nature Saskatchewan - The 2006 International Piping Plover Census

David Brewer - Migration Monitoring at the Pinery Provincial Park, Ontario

Michael Lushington - Black Scoters and Surf Scoters in the Restigouche Estuary

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Grassland Birds to be Profiled on CBC Radio

16 June 2006 - Regina naturalist, Trevor Harriet, will examine the rapid decline of grassland birds during a two-part series entitled "Pastures Unsung". The program is set to air on CBC Radio One at 9:00 p.m. over two nights, 21 and 22 June. From the Burrowing Owl to the Sprague's Pipit, grassland birds are declining faster than any other group of birds on the continent. Over the course of this documentary, Trevor traveled with ornithologist and historian Dr. Stuart Houston, following the 1880 trail of explorer and naturalist John Macoun across the southernmost portion of the Canadian Plains. Pastures Unsung will also feature interviews with landowners and researchers who share concern for the plight of grassland birds. Following the airing of this program, a [dedicated web page](#) and photo gallery will be available.

Updates to the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network

13 June 2006 - The Canadian Migration Monitoring Network - Réseau canadien de surveillance des migrations (CMMN-RCSM) has recently formed a Steering Committee that is helping direct and advance the goals of the network in Canada. The Steering Committee presently consists of 10 representatives from across the member stations, the Canadian Wildlife Service, and Bird Studies Canada.

The Steering Committee is very pleased to welcome three new member stations that recently applied to join the network: [McGill Bird Observatory](#) in Montréal; [Tommy Thompson Park Bird Research Station](#) in Metro Toronto; and [Peelee Island Bird Observatory](#) on one of Canada's southernmost points of land in Ontario. The addition of these three stations brings the total number of designated CMMN-RCSM members across Canada to 19. Several other valued stations around the country are contributing to the goals of the network. The latest is the [Pinery Bird Banding Station](#), which has just successfully completed its first full spring season, monitoring bird migration at Pinery Provincial Park on Lake Huron.

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Piping Plover Survey Makes Headlines

13 June 2006 - Work being done by Bird Studies Canada to protect Endangered Piping Plovers in Nova Scotia was profiled this week by Halifax newspaper the Chronicle Herald. For this program, Bird Studies Canada is working closely with the Canadian Wildlife Service and Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources to find plover nests along Nova Scotia beaches and to reduce nest predation and human disturbance at these sites. Sue Abbott, coordinator for the conservation program, explains the importance of public involvement and offers tips on keeping the birds' habitat safe and encouraging population growth. To read the full article, [click here](#) .

Lesser Nighthawk Seen off the BC Coast -- a New Bird for the Province



Photo: Mike Yip

12 June 2006 - Mike Yip, a noted British Columbia bird photographer, recently spent two weeks on a fishing boat out of Tofino on the west coast of Vancouver Island, taking photos of pelagic birds such as albatrosses, shearwaters and storm-petrels. His most exciting find was a Lesser Nighthawk that flew up to the boat on 5 June, a species never seen before in British Columbia. This southwestern species has been seen once at Point Pelee, Ontario, so Mike's find was very close to being a first sighting for Canada. You can see more of Mike's bird images from this recent boat trip on his web page by [clicking here](#), or go directly to his [home page](#) where you can read about his book of photographs of the birds of Vancouver Island.

LPBO Going Batty

9 June 2006 - Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO) will be welcoming students from the University of Western Ontario during the summer to initiate studies of the bats of Long Point. They will be under the supervision of Dr. Brock Fenton, Chair of the Biology Department at Western and Stuart Mackenzie, LPBO's Coordinator. Banders at LPBO have incidentally captured bats during the regular bird banding programs, but to date they have been considered more of a nuisance than as study subjects. This year's program will first try to establish the resident species of bats by using arrays of microphones and recording computers, which will be tuned to detect the ultra high frequency calls of bats. During August, we expect to welcome two students who will attempt to capture bats by banding throughout the night. It is expected that the work this year will lay the groundwork for continued and more intensive studies in the years to come.

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