



7 April 2008

LPBO Bands Its 750,000th Bird!

Local observatory is North America's first to hit ¾ million mark

Long Point, Ontario... The Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO) reached a major milestone on April 7, becoming the first North American migration monitoring station to band 750,000 birds.

The bird was banded at LPBO's Old Cut Field Station by Hugh McArthur, a long-time volunteer, Bird Studies Canada board member, and coordinator of the Friends of LPBO. At 1:00 p.m., Hugh placed a special gold-coloured band on the right leg of a Brown Creeper (*Certhia americana*). This small songbird is a resident throughout much of Canada and the northern United States, with many of the birds migrating south to the U.S. each winter.

To effectively conserve and manage bird populations, it is necessary to monitor the population status of all bird species. Many migrants are difficult to study during their breeding season, because they nest in remote Boreal Forest locations. Since most North American landbirds migrate through southern Canada, surveying birds on migration is a logical focus for monitoring populations of northern landbirds.

Scientists have been banding birds at LPBO every year since 1960 using standard protocols. Banding involves placing a uniquely numbered band around the bird's leg. At the same time, the bander records information such as the bird's wing length, species, age, fat content, sex, and weight. After 48 years of research, LPBO houses a vast and diverse data set on North America's migratory birds. Together with the efforts of other stations in Canada, the U.S., and Central and South America, the information collected has helped establish global ranges and population trends for hundreds of species.

LPBO is North America's oldest and most productive bird observatory, and will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2010. More information can be found at www.birdscanada.org/longpoint. LPBO is a program of Bird Studies Canada (BSC), which administers national, regional, and international research and monitoring programs that advance the understanding, appreciation, and conservation of wild birds and their habitats. BSC is Canada's national body for bird conservation, and is a non-governmental charitable organization.

- 30 -

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