



# The Pelee Island Bird Observatory Auspice

Spring 2008

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And a sincere thank-you to our many individual donors, to our friends and supporters, to our partners and PIBO's hard-working volunteers!! We couldn't do it without you.

## PIBO BIRDATHON

On May 9 and 10, PIBO will be raising money through the Baillie Birdathon and will be competing for the Spring Song Botham Cup. Sponsor our team with a flat amount or on a per species basis. Money goes to Bird Studies Canada and the Pelee Island Bird Observatory. A tax receipt will be issued for all donations.

Want to raise money for PIBO through your own Birdathon? Visit the Bird Studies Canada website to learn more: <http://www.bsc-eoc.org>

## Breeding Birds of Pelee Island Project 2008



The 2008 field season will be PIBO's sixth year of migration monitoring research on the island. While it is still the primary focus of the station to continue to study migrants and stopover island ecology, PIBO will also be undertaking several other exciting research projects in 2008.

In recognition of the island's unique breeding bird communities, the Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO) will launch a comprehensive long-term nesting bird study in 2008 – the Breeding Birds of Pelee Island

## Other Projects at PIBO

### Studying Reverse Migration

Reverse migration is a phenomenon in which migrating individuals orient in the direction opposite the normal one for the species at that season. The southerly movement of large numbers of birds during the Spring at Fish Point was written about as early as 1937 and clearly occurs now.

Some research indicates that individuals with low fat reserves are more likely to show reverse migration, and radar suggests reverse migrants fly at lower altitudes and therefore are more at risk of collisions with man-made structures.

In an effort to learn more about this unique phenomenon, PIBO will monitor Fish Point in May to determine the frequency and scale of reverse migration.

Project – following the study protocol of the Breeding Bird Census (BBC).

The BBC – unlike the popular Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) – is a habitat-based monitoring scheme that provides detailed information about the distribution, abundance and diversity of breeding birds in relation to specific vegetation communities. PIBO will establish and survey five permanent BBC study plots in 2008 and establish an additional five plots in 2009. Each site will be re-surveyed – including follow-up vegetation monitoring – on a bi-annual basis.

Yearly results will be published in the Journal of Field Ornithology and PIBO will complete a final report at the conclusion of each field season. A major publication – the Breeding Birds of Pelee Island – will be produced when a minimum of five years of data has been collected.

### PIBO Takes It Into Schools

With funding through the Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Program, PIBO visited classrooms around SW Ontario this winter.

A PowerPoint program was delivered to over 500 students in the province. The project was designed to be an interactive program that teaches students about Carolinian forest, breeding birds and migration, with a focus on species at risk, and the importance of stewardship in conserving and managing habitat.

We hope that several of these classes will make it to the Island this spring to see firsthand what an astonishing place Pelee is for birds and conservation.

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## Meet the PIBO Staff...

**Claire Sanders** – Executive Director. Claire spent three years as Director of the Saskatchewan Burrowing Owl Interpretive Centre in Moose Jaw before coming to PIBO in April 2007. This will be Claire's second season on the island.

**Graeme Gibson**, the younger – PIBO Founder/Managing Director. Graeme has been studying birds since 1993 including migration monitoring research studies at Long Point, Thunder Bay and Pelee Island, Ont, Victoria, BC, and Campeche, Mexico. Graeme has been conducting migration research on Pelee Island since 2002.

**Sumiko Onishi** – Field Assistant. Sumiko, from Japan, has a degree in biology from the University of Nevada and is also a trained nutritionist. This is her third field season at PIBO.

**Adam Pinch** – Field Assistant. Adam is from Leamington Ont, and honed his extensive birding skills in Point Pelee National Park. This will be Adam's second field season at PIBO.

We also welcome inquiries from anyone with birding experience who would like to volunteer at the station. PIBO will cover accommodation costs for those able to commit one month or more to the study. Experienced bird banders who would like to visit the station should contact PIBO by phone or email.

## Pelee Island Bird Observatory

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## Spring Song is 7 Years Old!



On May 9-10, Pelee Island will celebrate its seventh Spring Song Weekend. The weekend takes place at the height of spring migration, and this unique island is a favourite stopover for a large number of birds.

Events kick off at noon on Friday, May 9, with the start of the Botham Cup Bird Race. It will be a Green Race! Contestants will scour the Island on foot or by bicycle.

Some birders raise money for the Baillie Birdathon. PIBO staff will be competing for the Botham Cup while raising money for the Observatory and Bird Studies Canada.

The race ends at noon on Saturday, May 10. After an afternoon of relaxing, all gather at the Winery at 6.00pm for the annual Spring Song Banquet.

Each year there has been an invited author, who gives a reading. Past authors include, Farley Mowat, Alice Munro and David Suzuki. This year the guest author is internationally acclaimed writer Vincent Lam, Giller-winning author of *Bloodletting* and *Miraculous Cures*. Margaret Atwood will introduce Vincent Lam at the banquet.

Each year there has also been a Celebrity Birder. We are very fortunate indeed this year to have Bridget Stutchbury, author of *The Silence of the Songbirds*.

This very special occasion will be much in demand among readers and bird enthusiasts. Space is limited, so book now to avoid disappointment.

Tickets are \$60 each. For information and banquet reservations: 519-724-2291.

[curator@peleeislandmuseum.ca](mailto:curator@peleeislandmuseum.ca)

## Join a Bird Walk and Visit the Station

PIBO and the Pelee Island Heritage Centre will be running daily bird walks throughout May. Whether you're new to birding or would like help finding the best birding spots on the island, contact PIBO or PIHC to book a spot on a bird walk.

The PIBO field house is located on the corner of Stone Road and South Shore Road. Our field station, north of the parking lot at Fish Point, is trickier to find. Call us and we'd be happy to give you directions to find our nets if you would like to visit.

## Become a Friend of PIBO...

Please enroll me as a Supporter of the Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO), in the category indicated below. (You will receive a charitable receipt for the full amount of your donation. Cheques should be made out to the Pelee Island Bird Observatory.)

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