

# Nature Expert Newsletter

Spring 2019



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Hello,

"Spring" is finally here after such a harsh winter. We are happy about the warmer weather and that migrating birds are coming back to our northern regions. In this newsletter, you will find an article on the timing of bird migration, our new products and suggestions as well as the recap on a record breaking Grand Défi Québécoiseaux by the ornitrotteurs team.

Happy birding.

*Alain Goulet and Dara Thompson Goulet, owners and bird enthusiasts.*



***Come visit us!***

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Montréal QC  
H1T 2A4

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9:30am to 5:00pm

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**Do you enjoy traveling to look  
for birds?**

# Can birds arrive too early in the spring?

By Serge Beaudette



A week of unusual warm weather in the spring, a greenish hue showing buds ready to open, birds arriving abnormally early ... and then a return to normal temperatures for the season. What will happen? Many migratory species are now arriving in southern Quebec earlier than their average arrival date of the past 20 years!

Some species like the Tree Swallow can arrive one month in advance while others like the Eastern Bluebird, two months ahead of schedule! Even hummingbirds sometimes arrive in early April rather than early May. However the apple and cherry trees are not about to blossom during that time. For many, this summer-like weather will bring joy, but for others the worries about the pace of global warming and its obvious impact on a completely disoriented nature will cause concern.

Join Serge Beaudette. His trips are breathtaking. I, Alain Goulet, went on one of his trips and simply loved it.

Serge leads trips to destinations such as: Point Pelee, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Brazil, Spain, Peru, Columbia and the Galapagos islands.

You will find all his travel destinations on his website: [PITPITPIT.COM](http://PITPITPIT.COM)

Have a nice trip! You will be in good hands.



## **Binocular Exchange** **Canada**



Tree Swallow Photo: Michel Bordeleau

Two main groups of migrants will be affected, but each in a different way. These 2 types of migrants are the "short-distance migrants" and the "long-distance migrants". Short-distance migrants do not migrate very far. Their wintering areas are a little milder and food is a bit easier to find. These species tend to have a more diversified diet. They begin their flight north when spring temperatures warm up, often accompanied by a southerly wind that pushes them from behind. These conditions can occur over a relatively long period of time and can begin much earlier than usual. They will then believe that the spring is well on its way.



Eastern Bluebird Photo: Michel Bordeleau

However, this "promised" spring is not yet able to fulfill its promise of abundant food sources.

For other migrants, who are called "long-distance migrants," the effects

### **Binocular Exchange Canada**

is a project that aims to engage more people in outdoor activities and to find a use for older, but working birding equipment.

At Nature Expert, we will accept any equipment that would help a birder in an outdoor observation situation: binoculars; spotting scopes; backpacks; field guides (from anywhere in the world); cameras; tripods; ornithology textbooks; etc.

Upon reception of the donation we will estimate the value of the equipment and Earthvalues will issue a charitable tax receipt, if desired.

Earthvalues Institute is the organization under which the project is run.

<http://www.earthvalues.org/en>

Earthvalues



are even greater. The effects of global warming are more pronounced towards the poles and are barely felt around the equator where birds spend the winter. These birds learn every year, but only when they arrive, that spring has arrived early once again, even earlier than the previous year. They have missed the period of great abundance associated with the opening of buds and the hatching of insects. Every year, they correct their arrival date as best as they can, but global warming is faster than them.



Yellow Warbler Photo: Michel Bordeleau

In summary, one group is caught by abnormally hot temperatures that only last a short time. They arrive too early. And the other group is coming too late as the spring boom has passed. Two effects of the same phenomenon for which we are all responsible by our production of carbon dioxide, related in large part to our dependency on cars. As nature and bird lovers, we should be aware of our impact, even at the individual level, and review our consumption habits: take your bicycle or walk, grow your own garden or buy organic products from local producers, buy local, open windows instead of using air conditioning ... These are simple gestures that contribute concretely to the well-being of birds and reduce the negative impact human have on them. These same gestures are also involved in improving our well-being and health!



Snow Geese Photo: Michel Bordeleau

Think of the joy of eating a good salad with organic vegetables from your garden or freshly picked from a producer near you and ripened in the sun rather than in a truck, after returning from work lungs full of fresh air thanks to your commute by bike or on foot.... and listening through your open window to the birds that sing their thanks!



Ruby-crowned Kinglet Photo: Michel Bordeleau

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## Grand Défi QuébecOiseaux 2019

### A record 24-hour for the Ornitrotteurs team

By Serge Beaudette



From left to right: Emile Brisson-Curadeau, Jean-Philippe Gagnon, Alain Goulet and Serge Beaudette

#### WHAT A DAY!!!

My team and I, the Ornitrotteurs, have completed our Grand Défi QuébecOiseaux on the 27<sup>th</sup> of May at 5:00 PM ... with ... 161 species!

This is half of the regular Quebec breeding birds observed in 24 hours! For a birder, to see so many species in such a short time, it's euphoric! The effects of not sleeping for so long probably contributed to our birding fun!



Indigo Bunting

We had very strong moments! Among others, we finished at the botanical garden, and a very big surprise awaited us ...

... We went in with 150 species. (With so many species already seen, it becomes difficult to add more birds) Well, in just 1 hour, we added 11 (!) Which carried the number to 161 species ... and we still had 2 big hours left!

With all this time in front of us (and since the chances of adding species to the garden were almost zero), it would have been strategic to leave the garden to go to one or two other sites, where we could have easily added 4 species that we knew where to find (Rough-winged Swallow, Cliff Swallow, Brown Creeper and Green Heron) but at the First Nations Garden, we were treated to an extraordinary phenomenon! Very worthy of a "very good" day at Point Pelee! Warblers were everywhere, in the middle of the afternoon, close to us and feeding low!

So, instead of facing the Montreal traffic at 3pm for the 2 sites that remained, we decided to stay at the Botanical Garden to enjoy the phenomenon thoroughly. And it was magic!

We did not add any species, which was not surprising, but what a finale !!!

I announced on my Facebook "160 species", but we finally had confirmation of our identification of a Long-billed Dowitcher in Baie-du-Fèbvre thanks to good pictures taken that day!



Long-billed Dowitcher (back) Short-billed Dowitcher (front)

We started at 5:00 pm on May the 26th in Baie-du-Fèbvre and birded until dark. We ended up with 69 species for this site only! The last species added was the Least Bittern who sang at the very end when it was almost complete darkness and we were preparing to give up. It was very windy and our hopes were dwindling! In extremis as they say!

During the night, we found 9 species (!):

-4 species of owls: Northern Saw-whet Owl, Barred Owl, Eastern

Screech Owl and Great-Horned Owl;  
- the American Woodcock and Wilson's Snipe;  
- Both nighthawks: the Common Nighthawk and the Whip-poor-Will.  
-... A weird catbird sang continuously while we were trying to find the  
Barred Owl at 1am!

We ended the night with 78 species.

We reached 100 species at 5:45 in the morning!

Our 135th species was the Golden-winged Warbler at 9:00 am! (As it is possible to confuse singing with a hybrid, we made sure to see it!).

... and we also saw the Brewster's Warbler (the hybrid between the Golden-wing and Blue-winged Warblers) that does not count for one species. It was an individual singing exactly like a typical Golden-winged Warbler. It's always great to come across an observation of this level of rarity, even if it does not add anything to our count!



Brewster's Warbler

We reached 145 species with some Sandhill Cranes, In extremis again,  
as we were getting into the car. It was 11:11am!

We reached our team record of 148, which was last year's record for all  
provincial Grand Défi at 12:20. We had 5hrs left!

And our final number reached 161 at 3pm.

Between 3pm and 5pm, a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher was heard by a  
member of our team ... 2 members then briefly glimpsed a flycatcher,  
unable to be 100% sure of his identity ... As each bird must to be seen or  
heard by at least 2 members of the team, it will be part of the 3 species  
that we did not count!

Among our vast list, several species of interest appear:

-Red-necked Phalarope



- Long-billed Dowitcher
- Ruddy Turnstone
- Sandhill Crane
- Least Bittern
- Bald Eagle
- Black-billed Cuckoo
- Whip-poor-will
- Common Nighthawk
- Saw-whet Owl
- Eastern Screech Owl
- Great Horned Owl
- Barred Owl
- Peregrine Falcon
- Clay-coloured Sparrow
- Vesper Sparrow



Vesper Sparrow

And among the 23 SPECIES of warblers observed:

- Golden-winged warbler
- Brewster's brewer (not included in our count)
- Canada Warbler
- Mourning Warbler
- Cape May Warbler
- Bay-breasted Warbler



Bay-breasted Warbler

Despite our efforts, the rare Sedge Wren and the Upland Sandpiper have escaped us.

It was an extremely rich and stimulating experience! Thank you Alain Goulet (who literally avoided our certain death with a head on collision when a huge truck left his lane and headed toward us at 90KM/HR). Thank you for making available your hybrid that reached the milestone of 450,000 km during this 24 hr trip! And thanks for driving us during the whole trip.

Thanks to Émile Brisson-Curadeau, our "rookie" ;-), for the judicious "fine tuning" of our basic itinerary, and to have filled his eBird list, to Jean-Philippe for snacks and invitations to calm down when we were too intense! ;-)

And as you probably know, beyond the friendly challenge, and the number of species, the priority and meaning of this activity is the important fundraising for the safeguarding of birds and their habitats. That's what motivates our commitment and the seriousness we put into the experience!

So, in this sense, I invite you again (if you have not done so already) to DONATE for the birds that need it (unfortunately) through one of the Grand Défi teams.

To do this through our team: ORNITROTTEURS, you can click on this link:

<https://quebecoiseaux.org/index.php/fr/gdgo-equipes/gdgo-mon-equipe?view=teamcontributions&id=444>

If you donate \$ 0.10 per species that we found, it makes a donation of \$

16

\$ 0.25 per species found, that gives \$ 40 (which also gives you 2

chances (1 chance for every \$ 20) of winning 2 nights for 4 people in a SEPAQ park (value of nearly \$ 500)

\$ 0.50, that's \$ 80 (and 4 chances to win!)

Any amount will be appreciated! IT IS THE BIRDS THAT WILL THANK YOU!

I also published in real time throughout the 24 hrs, anecdotes and highlights in real time on FB, at this address:

<https://www.facebook.com/pitpitpitoiseaux/>

I prepare a blog in pictures, with videos, really funny anecdotes, ... To receive them, simply subscribe by giving your email address on the page: [www.pitpitpit.com](http://www.pitpitpit.com)

Thank you for all the people who have already contributed, who have followed and encouraged us!

Serge Beaudette

If you wish, you can donate to the Ornitrotteurs by clicking on the following link: [https://quebecoiseaux.org/index.php/en/gdgo-teams/contribution?view=contribution&layout=edit&participant\\_id=2245](https://quebecoiseaux.org/index.php/en/gdgo-teams/contribution?view=contribution&layout=edit&participant_id=2245)



Field Sparrow

If you wish, you can donate to the Ornitrotteurs team by clicking on the following link: [https://quebecoiseaux.org/index.php/fr/gdgo-equipements/contribution?view=contribution&layout=edit&participant\\_id=2245](https://quebecoiseaux.org/index.php/fr/gdgo-equipements/contribution?view=contribution&layout=edit&participant_id=2245)

Thank you very much for contributing to bird conservation.



Ruddy Duck

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## Bird Fest 2019



Please note that we will unfortunately not hold a Bird Fest this summer.

Please join us next year for Bird Fest 2020.

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# New products and suggestions

## [Second Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Southern Québec](#)

SECOND ATLAS OF THE  
BREEDING BIRDS  
OF SOUTHERN QUÉBEC

EDITED BY  
MICHEL ROBERT, MARIE-HELENE RACHÉY,  
DENIS LÉPAGE AND ANDREW B. COUTURIER



The *Second Atlas of Breeding Birds of Southern Quebec* is the culmination of the largest ornithological project undertaken in Quebec for a quarter of a century. From 2010 to 2014, hundreds of birders spent more than 100,000 hours surveying the various habitats of southern Quebec. There they collected half a million nesting records.

The book presents the most up-to-date information on the distribution and abundance of the 253 bird species that breed in Quebec below 50.5 ° N latitude. Beautifully illustrated with nearly 500 photographs and more than 1000 color maps, this book incorporates the results of the first atlas (1984-1989), showing the changes that have occurred in bird populations over the past quarter of a century.

The *Second Atlas of Breeding Birds of Southern Quebec* is intended for a wide audience. You will find it contains a vast amount of information. It is a well-documented work (more than 1000 references), essential for birders, students, researchers, conservation organizations, municipalities, consulting firms, promoters, etc. It is a valuable tool that will guide many of Quebec's bird conservation projects over the next few decades.

## Robert Bateman Cardinal & Sumac Tea For One Set



This fine bone china set includes a cup, a teapot and lid, a porcelain saucer and a beautiful gift box. The porcelain set is elegant and chip resistant. This makes an excellent gift for lovers of tea and quality china.

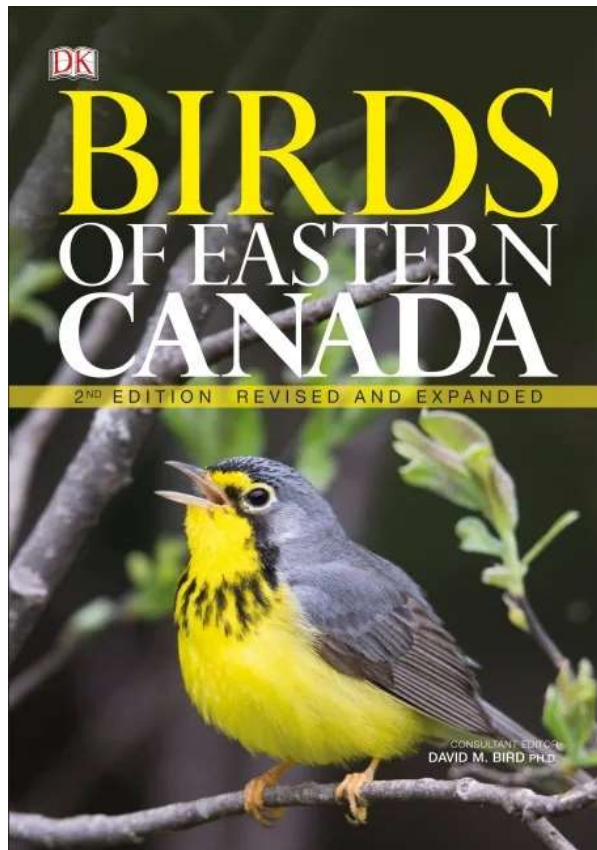
The teapot and cup feature Robert Bateman's "Cardinal & Sumac" painting.

## Audubon singing bird clock 13" Limited Edition



This large clock has a bird song every hour on the hour. It was created as a 20th Anniversary Edition of this very popular clock. All species featured in this special edition clock are found in Quebec.

## Birds of Eastern Canada 2nd Edition



The ultimate photographic guide to over 350 bird species found in eastern Canada, ideal for bird watchers of all ages.

Updated in this 2nd edition to reflect the latest taxonomic data, *Birds of Eastern Canada* is the complete guide to 354 species of birds found east of the 100th Meridian in Canada, including the most common species as well as rare birds.

Perfect for both dedicated and casual bird watchers, this regional guide includes stunning full-color photographs revealing individual species with unrivaled clarity. The 330 most commonly seen birds are given full-page profiles with readable accounts detailing notable characteristics and information on everything from behavior and habitat to nest construction and conservation status. Each profile also features diagrams of flight patterns and statistics of size, wingspan and lifespan. Information on

similar birds is provided to make differentiation easy, from game birds and waterfowl to shorebirds and swifts, to owls, wood warblers, finches, and more.

Produced in association with David M. Bird, Emeritus Professor of Wildlife Biology at McGill University.

### [Humm-Yumm Hummingbird Feeder](#)



This new feeder allows you to simultaneously offer nectar and fruit flies to hummingbirds. Hummingbirds can not survive by eating only nectar. They also feed on small flies, spiders and insects. Using only bananas and nectar, the Humm-Yumm is totally safe and natural!

### [Lynx HD 8x30](#)





## \$200 off while supplies last

This new addition to our wide selection of binoculars is already a hit. These binoculars from **Kite Optics** are light and give you bright and crisp images. They also boast a very wide field of view (495 feet at 1000 yards - most 8x binoculars have a field of view around 380 feet at 1000 yards). Come and try them! You will be impressed too.

[www.nature-expert.ca](http://www.nature-expert.ca)

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