



# THE PELEE ISLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY

Making Pelee Island a unique and vital part of the international effort to preserve wild and migratory birds



Hello smartname,

While it may seem strange to remark on the fast-approaching fall season when it is 35 degrees outside in Essex County, the fact is that our fall season officially starts on August 1. Usually, there is a relaxing lull in the monitoring programs on Pelee Island during July. With the spring banding and census completed and marsh monitoring and Species at Risk monitoring finished, PIBO staff look forward to a three-week break before the busy fall season begins. However, this year was a little different. 2025 is the last year of the Ontario Breeding Bird Atlas 3 project, and birders and those working at bird observatories across Ontario are furiously trying to log as many breeding birds as possible to be included in the data sets. PIBO's field supervisor, Sumiko Onishi, is included among them. Breeding evidence was confirmed for Common Gallinule, Northern Mockingbird, and Yellow-breasted Chat, and we updated the breeding evidence of King Rail as 'probable'.

**You are receiving this latest PIBO newsletter as a gift from PIBO's chair, Deborah Egan. If you wish to continue receiving PIBO's Auspice, please sign up on our website [here](#). No pressure!**

Yours, for the birds,

Suzanne Friemann

Executive Director



### **Construction of the New Bird Centre has finally begun!**

After much anticipation and some inevitable delays, the Pelee Island Bird Observatory has officially begun the construction of the new PIBO Bird Centre on Pelee Island. A local contractor broke ground on June 9, and work has been progressing steadily. With the



favourable summer weather, we are anticipating that much of the work will be completed by the time the ferry stops for the winter. Spring and early summer of 2026 will see the completion of the remaining interior work. We can't promise a finish date just yet, but we are excited to throw open the doors to the new bird centre for all our friends and supporters! Stay tuned for further developments.



**New faces and opportunities that connect PIBO's work along the flyways**



This year's International Intern will be joining the PIBO team from Bogotá, Colombia. Dennys Johana Plazas Cardona has a Master of Science from the National University of Colombia, has worked with biodiversity projects in coffee plantations, has served as the Biologist-Ornithologist on a host of consulting organizations, and currently works to ensure wildlife protection at construction sites in Bogotá. She has taken courses in Advanced Bird Banding and attended workshops in the analysis and interpretation of biological data. She also has publications pending from her studies of various species of Antpittas. All in all, we look forward to welcoming Dennys to share the pleasures and rigours of a season on Pelee Island.

[Support our work](#)



### **A momentous year captured in film**

Pelee Island Bird Observatory has passed a milestone in 2025 celebrating 21 years of monitoring the migratory birds on Pelee Island. A successful Canada Summer Jobs application gave us the perfect opportunity to hire a local videographer and create a short retrospective on our work. With so much history, stories, birds and people involved in the observatory's work over the years, we couldn't include it all, sadly. But we tried to capture the essence of PIBO in moments we hope you will enjoy watching.



### **A masquerade fit for birds**

On June 7, a PIBO contingent of Directors, staff, major supporters, and new friends made their way to the estate of Bruce Bailey in Port Hope for his third Fête Champêtre: Un Ballo in Maschera. The event is a major fundraiser for many vital arts organizations, and PIBO was very grateful to be included as one of the recipients. Hundreds of guests in elaborate costumes wandered the estate, where they were treated to arias from the Canadian Opera Company, ballet dances, incredible food, and an art tour of Bruce's collection. It was an unforgettable day, and PIBO raised much-needed funds for our new bird centre, while also making many new friends and supporters.

From left to right: Diana Rivera, Lydia Luckevich, Suzanne Friemann, Deborah Egan, Margaret Atwood, Ella Street and David Young



## Support our fellow conservation and sustainability advocates

Our friends at the historic Castle Potentino in Tuscany are having their annual fundraising auction. Head over to this [link](#) to bid on some incredible trips and experiences that help to keep this amazing place open for visitors from around the world. Proprietors Charlotte and Alexander have generously donated stays in their castle for many of PIBO's auctions. Let's show them some support! Auction ends July 31. To find out more about the critical environmental work the folks at Potentino do, watch this short film [here](#).

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Yellow breasted chat and Red winged blackbird by Sumiko Onishi

Fête Champêtre photo by George Pimentel

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