

## **Banding of migratory birds at Parc national de la Pointe-Taillon**

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Parc national de la Pointe-Taillon is a long peninsula that extends into the waters of Lac Saint-Jean. Just above the surface of the water, this sandy point is home to numerous wetlands frequented by ducks that raise their broods here or make a stopover during their migrations. The quality of the natural environment and the tranquility of the premises offer ideal conditions for the establishment of a permanent migratory bird banding station.

Set up in 2001, the Pointe-Taillon bird banding station has been operated by the Association des sauvaginaires du Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean from the very outset. The aim of this research station is basically to monitor and document the migratory movements of waterfowl in the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean region and to estimate their annual productivity.

Each summer, capture cages are installed in marshes and ponds located at the western tip of Pointe-Taillon. Corn grains are placed on the floor of the cages to attract ducks. During the three weeks when banding takes place, the cages are visited on a daily basis to release the birds once an identification band has been attached to their leg.

Since the start of the project, 3,634 birds have been captured at the park's banding station. Of that number, 173 ducks having been banded at Pointe-Taillon were recaptured at the same location in the following years. The banded birds can be broken down into 16 species: American black duck, mallard, green-winged teal, blue-winged teal duck, wood duck, northern pintail, gadwall, American wigeon, lesser scaup, ring-necked duck, redhead, common goldeneye, spirit duck, goosander, hooded merganser, Canada goose. Hybrid American black ducks-mallards have also been banded. The American black duck is the most represented species. Indeed, it accounted for close to 64% of the banded birds during the summer of 2006.

A collection of biological data, like that being carried out at the Pointe-Taillon migratory bird banding station, requires long-term monitoring. The results of this work will undoubtedly become an invaluable reference for monitoring waterfowl populations of the Saguenay–Lac-Saint-Jean region and for acquiring knowledge on aquatic bird groups that seek refuge at Parc national de la Pointe-Taillon.