



## SPRING SONGBIRDS ARE ARRIVING AT MONT O'BRIEN FROM FAR AWAY

Warblers are amazing birds. Migrating slowly north at night, often covering 1000 miles in a month, these tiny 1/3-ounce balls of fluff arrive at Mont O'Brien at dawn after about May 12. The warblers must wait for insects to be plentiful, since insects are their main food source, for fuel for their incredible journey (some species even migrating from South America) and for raising their chicks.

Although they all hunt insects, the warbler species specialize on different forest habitats, even on separate parts of the same trees! Their differing "niches" allow many similar species to share space, increasing biodiversity.



Many songbird species are seriously threatened by habitat loss, along with urban sprawl and highways, industrial logging, outdoor pet cats, buildings lit overnight, and human-caused climate change. Since 2005, the Québec government has been increasing the area of protected forests and wetlands, in order to conserve habitat for many species, and to help mitigate climate change effects.



## THE PURPOSE OF THE MONT O'BRIEN BIODIVERSITY RESERVE

The Mont O'Brien Projected Biodiversity Reserve is a result of this policy, and a result of initiatives from the Mont O'Brien Association and from CPAWS Ottawa Valley. A BAPE hearing will be held in 2020 to determine final delimitation of the Reserve; it presently covers about 30 square km of public land. Ask a Board member to send you a document covering permitted activities on biodiversity reserves and aquatic reserves.

Since its founding in 2000 as a local organisation, the Association has always, in addition to the protection of biodiversity, had the purpose of securing access to the public land for the people of this area who are responsible stewards of the land and its flora and fauna. The Association made this possible in 2003, when our volunteers built our access road across private property, having signed a "perpetual agreement" for shared ownership, use and maintenance of the road.



The Association also cleared and maintains a 5-km loop trail to lookouts near the Mont O'Brien summit, for enjoyment of nature and exercise. It publishes bilingual newsletters and a website, keeps roads open on public land, has built two small tent



pads for family rustic camping at Lake O'Brien, promotes nature & ecology education, and provides occasional activities such as the 2017 spring excursion with Daniel Toussaint of Le Club des Ornithologues de l'Outaouais (COO). We also hold annual educational mushroom forays with Les Mycologues amateurs de l'Outaouais (MAO) and its expert, Yolande Dalpé. We work with Québec regional Ministries of Natural Resources and of Environment, along with the MRC Pontiac, to provide oversight on the Reserve. Member-volunteers also do sophisticated mapping of the Reserve, and surveys of plant, mushrooms, and animal

species.

(The birds, in order from top, are: Black-and white warbler, Yellow-rumped warbler, Chestnut-sided warbler, Blackburnian warbler, and Common yellowthroat warbler. Photos by Odette Savignac, May 21, 2017 at Mont O'Brien.)

-----Paula Armstrong, President  
The Mont O'Brien Association  
[www.montobrienassociation.org](http://www.montobrienassociation.org)