Semipalmated Plovers nested on dry gravel ridges close to the coast. 2 July 2012. *Left top:* **Aerial view of Burntpoint Camp on 22 June 2012.** *Centre:* **Hudsonian Godwits perch in trees on the breeding grounds. 10 July 2012.** *Left below:* **Whimbrel on watch on 28 June 2012.** *Photos: Jean Iron*

established to protect the denning area of Polar Bears. As we approached, our plane circled the camp situated on a long ridge covered with lichens and arctic wildflowers, 3.5 km from Hudson Bay, which was still covered with pack ice at the end of June. The camp, surrounded by a solar-powered electric fence to keep out Polar Bears, overlooks a small lake to the west and wide-open tundra wetlands to the east, both perfect breeding habitats for shorebirds and other northern birds. After unloading supplies for one month and bidding farewell to the departing crew that had been there since 5 June, we watched the plane take off south, leaving our small crew of four alone for the next four weeks. There was nothing but us, the wind, wildflowers, birds and other wildlife. As things settled, the air was filled with the songs of territorial Whimbrels, Hudsonian Godwits, and Dunlins. Red-throated Loons nesting on nearby lakes called overhead as they flew towards Hudson Bay looking for open water to catch fish. This was the beginning of our quest to document more about shorebirds and the breeding birds of Ontario's Hudson Bay coast. Years of future data will document the changing climate, allowing comparisons to base line information. It is expected that changes in abundance, breeding range, dates of occurrence, habitat use, and more will occur.

Julie Belliveau was our crew leader in charge of the camp during this period. She was studying at Trent University and her thesis fit one of the project's objectives: to discover what shorebirds and other birds are eating in the tundra ponds and wetlands. Matt Birarda assisted Julie with her invertebrate research. For biodiversity studies, he also maintained other invertebrate traps and small mammal live traps. He regularly measured the depth from the surface to the permafrost.. Jim Sauer of Ottawa was a birder, volunteer and retired RCMP officer. He and I teamed up to complete three survey routes each about 12 to 15 km long over difficult marshy terrain and easier-walking tundra ridges. In one day we usually completed one of the routes, or at least much of it, the next day another route, and so on. Our job was to extend the work of the first crew by looking for nesting shorebirds and other nests they had found. We determined whether a nest was successful or had been depredated, found new breeding birds, and documented all the birds using the 50 or so tundra ponds on the three routes. Recording the temperature and pH levels of the study ponds will be used for comparison in future years.

eBird Update

By Mike Burrell

THE USE OF eBIRD IN ONTARIO continues to be phenomenal. Ontario is now regularly one of the top three contributing states/provinces of data, usually only behind California and New York. Ontario eBirders should be proud of the comprehensive dataset of bird observations they are contributing to this worldwide archive. The data are already being used for research projects and publications and by many different organizations for a myriad of purposes.

Not only is the amount of data coming in impressive, the growth continues to be staggering. 2012 was by far the biggest year yet for Ontario (averaging several hundred checklists submitted each day). A very impressive 10 eBirders reported 300 or more species in 2012, while nine eBirders cracked the 1000 checklist mark. With the volume of real-time data now coming in we can watch fine-detailed avian events unfold live. Last summer's Dickcissel invasion and the fall 2012 finch irruption were both marvellously documented with eBird, as has been the irruption of Barred Owls south of their normal winter range. But don't take my word for it — check it out yourself. If you want to know what's happening with birds in Ontario you can almost certainly find the answer with eBird.

2013 is already on a pace for another great year of birding and eBirding. At the end of January 173 species have been reported, up from last year's 167 at the same time. Also impressive is a whopping 12 eBirders already over the 100-species mark and an even more impressive 100 birders with over 50 species. Not to be outdone, 12 eBirders are over 100 checklists for the year and 40 have submitted over 50 checklists — well done by everyone.

There have been a couple new eBird features since the last update in *OFO News*. Most notably, you can now embed photos, video, and audio links within your checklists. This is great for documenting rare species or just linking up your photos from a trip to your bird checklist. Be sure to check it out. Another big addition is "Did you Know?" Records submitted to eBird are permanently archived for the future and are already helping scientists and conservationists better manage the world's birds. **www.ebird.ca**