

PIBO Migration Summary

April 1st – 10th, 2013



Fox Sparrow

Happy Spring!

PIBO's 11th spring migration monitoring coverage season got underway at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve/Ontario Parks on April 1st. Staff were greeted with cloudy skies, strong northwest winds, and a chilly 0° C. But a nice variety of birds were recorded in small numbers on the 90-minute census including ones and twos of the following species: killdeer, flicker, phoebe, creeper, and Golden-crowned Kinglet, among others, and four sparrow species. Two hundred-and-fifty scaup were loafing on the east side of the point along with some Buffleheads and Red-breasted Mergansers.

Similar conditions prevailed for the next three days – including light snow on the 3rd – and there wasn't much new to report apart from some Common Mergansers on the 2nd, and the first Tree Swallows of the spring on April 4th. An afternoon visit to Lake Henry, at the north end of the island, on the 5th produced 40 Turkey Vultures, 2 Tundra Swans, 70 scaup, 15 Redheads, 10 Gadwalls, and a few Mallards.

The wind shifted to the south on the 6th and there was a noticeable increase in activity the next morning. Thirty-six species were recorded on the 7th including spring 'firsts' for Solitary Sandpiper, Hermit Thrush, and Yellow-rumped Warbler. Seven sparrow species

were recorded. There were still lots of birds at the point in the late-afternoon – 20 Song Sparrows and 16 phoebes were observed along the east beach. Thirty-nine species were tallied on the 8th including the first Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Chipping Sparrows of the spring, along with 35 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 25 robins, and 15 Tree Swallows.

The final two days of the summary period remained active and migrants continued to appear in good numbers. Hundreds of sparrows in mixed flocks were observed along Mahoney Drive (en route to Fish Point) on the 9th including Chipping, American Tree, Song, and Dark-eyed Junco. The morning census was busy as well – 38 species were noted including 42 Golden-crowns and the first Ruby-crowned Kinglets of the year. Forty-two species were recorded on the 10th including 15 Blue-winged Teal, 4 Green-winged, American Woodcock, 140 swallow *spp.* (mostly Tree Swallows along with a few Barns), 3 Hermit Thrushes, 7 sparrow species, and an Eastern Meadowlark.

PIBO staff recorded 74 species on the island from April 1st – 10th including 62 species during our standardized daily 'count' at Fish Point. Thirteen waterfowl and ten sparrow species were documented along with five raptor *spp.* – Northern Harrier, Bald Eagle, Red-tailed Hawk, Sharp-shinned Hawk, and American Kestrel. PIBO's bird banding operation will get underway on April 15th.

The next summary will be posted on April 22nd.

Photo: Sumiko Onishi