

Migration Summary August 15 to August 31, 2019

By Kathy Parker

We opened the nets for the first time this season on August 16th. A very vocal pair of **Yellow-billed Cuckoos** were the perfect birds to take up residence at the banding station.

The migration started slowly with only 12 birds banded in the first week. **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** were the most common bird banded in the early days of the season. On the 25th a **Blue-winged Warbler**, an uncommonly banded bird at PIBO in the fall was found in one of the nets. On August 27th we were surprised to find 2 **Screech Owls** in net # 1 on our earliest net check. The warblers, thrushes and flycatchers have started to show up in the nets in the past few days. **Swainson's Thrushes** and colourful warblers are being banded daily. **Canada, Chestnut-sided, Black-throated Blue, Black and White** and **Blackburnian Warblers, Northern Waterthrushes, and American Redstarts** have kept the banders busy at the banding lab.

During the daily 90-minute census we have counted 44 **American White Pelicans** flying in small numbers in the up to 6275 **Great Crested Cormorants** recorded. We have seen up to 46 **Great Black-backed Gulls** which take over the very tip of Fish Point. A resident **Green Heron** has been seen daily at Fox Lagoon.

Up to 4 **Bald Eagles** have been seen daily and most were immature. Other raptors include **Red-tailed Hawks, Coopers Hawks,** and a **Great Horned Owl**.

Purple Martins and **Barn Swallows** gathered in large numbers on August 26th and after that date only a few stragglers were left on the island.

A large flock {575} of pre-migratory restless **Common Grackles** swarmed the woods at the banding lab on August 28th. 20 were captured and banded.

The "living dead" forest has come to life. Ash trees killed by the Emerald Ash Borers are now covered in vines – Virginia Creeper, Poison Ivy, Catbrier, Greenbrier, Riverbank Grape and Fox Grape, and now appear to be green with leaves.

Green Darner Dragonflies are accumulating at the south shore in preparation for their migration south. There have been more than a dozen Monarchs seen daily, but the migration is still to come.

Giant Swallowtail Butterflies have laid their eggs on Hop Trees and if you are lucky you can find their caterpillars which look like bird droppings. They are also known as Orange Dogs.

Other interesting butterflies that congregate at a large patch of One-seeded Bur Cucumber on the south shore of Fish Point include the southern Snout with its huge proboscis, Tawny and Hackberry Emperors, Question Marks, Eastern Commas and Red-spotted Purples.

The banding station is now open to visitors from 8 a.m. until noon daily, unless it is raining. The trails are currently dry but if it rains you will need hiking or rubber boots because it will be very muddy. Beware of the Poison Ivy on the sides of the trails. Please keep an eye on PIBOs Facebook page for more updates!