

Pelee Island Bird Observatory Migration Summary May 31 – June 10



Assorted water birds at Fish Point

Photo: Garth Casbourn

The days are getting longer, and the mornings ever earlier, while all the woods expand. Though we are still a week and a half from the solstice, we've been experiencing some very warm and muggy weather, and occasional thunder showers, small harbingers of the electrical perturbations of our local atmosphere that are to come during the peak of summer.

Our final full morning of mist-netting on May 31st was a quiet one. I say mist-netting because very little banding was involved. Just six individuals received their hardware. We did get one of our more exciting birds on the census that morning though, an adult male Summer Tanager. He appeared in a treetop along the edge of Fox Pond, then was promptly chased away by one of those pesky Red-winged Blackbirds. Following a few extra net hours on June 2nd, when the last two migrants, two Yellow-bellied Flycatchers, were caught, the nets themselves have now been packed away until banding resumes in mid-August for the start of the autumn migration.

We rounded out the spring monitoring with the daily census at Fish Point continuing through the first ten days of June. Species totals varied between 25 & 35 most days, depending on the weather and who was singing, with nearly all the birds recorded being local breeders. We did encounter a few late migrants such as an Ovenbird on June 1st and 2nd, and an Acadian Flycatcher, also on the 2nd. Now, there is every possibility the Acadian *was* a migrant, though we have since detected a male Acadian on the island that appears to be on territory, at the northern end of Fish Point Park. It has been seen and heard on three consecutive days in the same general area, so if any females are present we may have a nesting attempt.

Pelicans are becoming a daily occurrence at the tip, with as many as 13 being seen at a time. The only two days in this summary period when none were observed were June 1st and

June 4th. We've also received information that over the last few years, American White Pelicans have been recorded on all the Erie islands. As was mentioned in an earlier summary, we are a long way south and east of Lake Nipigon, where the easternmost colonies are currently known to exist, but more than a few people are speculating that a colony could be established in the Erie archipelago.

Families of Wood Ducks were seen on Fox Pond on June 6th and 7th, adding to the growing list of confirmed breeders. There were 8 ducklings the first day and 11 the second.

And that concludes another season. The complete season summary is still forthcoming, but otherwise the next report of this kind will be available round about the 10th of August.