

Migration Summary – August 5th to 16th, 2019

By Sachi Schott



Ring-billed Gulls on Fish Point. Photo by Sachi Schott.

PIBO's fall season had a late start this year, beginning on August 5th. The census turned up a number of young birds, from a family of **Wood Ducks** scrambling for cover in Fox Pond to a young, dark-headed **Turkey Vulture** out on the west beach, plus juvenile **Northern Cardinals**, **House Wrens**, and **Baltimore Orioles** all following their hard-working parents from branch to branch. One particularly loud young bird turned out to be a **Brown-headed Cowbird**, demanding attention from its **Red-eyed Vireo** foster parent!

After an overnight thunderstorm the wind shifted around to the north, bringing in the first **Northern Waterthrush** of the fall on August 7th. **Yellow Warblers**, a local breeding species, were present from the start, and over the next few days were joined by the occasional **Black-and-white Warbler** and the season's first **American Redstart** on August 9th. The first **Warbling Vireo** was seen on August 8th, and more appeared each day alongside the Red-eyed Vireos, all gathering together as they prepared to tackle their long flight south. Several flycatcher species were also added to PIBO's fall list, as '**Trail's**' **Flycatchers**, **Least Flycatchers** and **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** joined the locally-breeding **Eastern Woodpeewees** and **Eastern Phoebes**.

The water levels in Lake Erie appear to be very slightly lower than they were this spring, enough so that the sandbar past the tip of Fish Point has risen to the surface once again. It has been crowded with **Double-crested Cormorants** and various gulls, plus the occasional **American White Pelican**. More **Bonaparte's Gulls**, **Ring-billed Gulls**, **Herring Gulls**, and **Great Black-backed Gulls** are often seen standing on the beach at the end of the point, along with a few **Common Terns** looking comically miniscule next to their larger near-relatives! In this case, birds of a feather do flock together, and in spite of their very similar plumages each gull and tern species is usually found standing with others of the same kind. A few **Killdeer** and **Spotted Sandpiper** have been seen running ahead of the waves on the west beach, as well as a single **Solitary Sandpiper**.

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The banding station was opened for the first time this fall on August 16th. For a long time, it looked like the morning would pass without a single bird being banded – but then one lucky net run scooped up a **House Wren**, an **Eastern Wood-pewee**, and a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**! A nice, diverse start to the season!

For the time being, PIBO's banding station will be open from approximately 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. After a very wet spring, the trails are dry and rain boots are no longer needed, though close-toed shoes and long pants are still recommended (the poison ivy is thriving!). The station will not be open on rainy mornings. If in doubt, look for the PIBO van across the road from the trail to the banding station – if it's there, so are we!

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