

Migration Summary for October 1st to 15th, 2019

The first half of October felt more like summer than autumn. The weather has been warm and the leaves on the trees are still green, with just a touch of colour in the woods from the crimson Virginia Creepers.

It has been quiet but steady at the banding station with the influx of the birds of fall: **Winter Wrens, White-throated Sparrows, Golden and Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Hermit Thrushes.** We banded an average of 14 birds per day (as few as 3 and as many as 26) during this period. On the night of October 15th the winds changed and came from the north and that day we were kept busy banding 53 birds of 8 species!

The first **Philadelphia Vireo** of the season showed up on October 1st, as well as a **Blue-headed Vireo.** We have banded some late migrating warblers – **Yellow-rumped** (also known as Myrtle), **Magnolia, Nashville, Tennessee, Black-throated Blue** and **American Redstarts.** There is an enormous group of mostly **Common Grackles,** along with **European Starlings, Brown-headed Cowbirds, Rusty Blackbirds** and **Red-winged Blackbirds** that often visit the Fish Point area. More than 500 birds have been counted in this impressive flock. The **Rusty Blackbirds** sound like squeaky gate hinges in the wet area near Fox Pond.

On Lake Erie, the first of the season **Red-necked Grebe** was seen on October 10th and 2 **Horned Grebes** were floating on the lake on October 15th. **American White Pelicans** are still occasionally seen on the morning census.

The owl nets are set up ready for our owl banding nights at the PIBO cottage on October 19th, 26th and November 2nd from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. We made a test run and banded a grey-phase **Eastern Screech Owl.**

The Fox Squirrels are busy gathering Black Walnuts in preparation for winter.

Butterflies have been seen daily during the first half of the month. Monarchs are still drifting south. Southern species - Fiery Skippers and Buckeyes, as well as Black Swallowtails, Painted Ladies, and Eastern Tailed Blues were seen nectaring on colourful flowers. On the roadsides there are Cabbage White Butterflies and yellow Clouded Sulphurs.

A large day flying White-lined Sphinx Moth was seen on October 3rd flitting among the flowers on the south end of the island.

Come and visit us at the banding station. We are open every morning at dawn until about 12:45 unless it is raining. The trails are currently dry and easy to walk, but be careful of the Poison Ivy on the sides of the trail.

Kathy Parker