



Migration Summary August 15-31st, 2021

Dear friends and supporters of [PIBO](#),

After a month of summer break, we started our routine banding operations on August 15th. However, after frequent downpours and many additional fallen trees, the verdant vegetation and numerous muddy puddles meant extra work to set up the nets. The forest was primarily quiet for the first morning at our banding station, and some post-breeding species like Red-eyed Vireos and House Wrens were singing. However, we did hear some modest calls from warblers coming and going above our heads. We opened half the nets for three hours while trimmed the vegetation near the remaining nets. A Northern Waterthrush was banded as the first bird of the season, and then we captured groups of warblers in the late morning. A total of 22 warblers were banded - Blackburnian (10), Black-and-white (7), and other warblers.

The weather forecast showed continuous rain clouds on the radar for all day on August 16th. About one hundred and eighty Purple Martins was observed at the pond on the census. We managed to open some nets between the rain, but it became quieter later in the morning, and the steady rain combined with the mild temperature in the afternoon livened up more mosquitoes.

On August 17th, a flock of warblers - many Blackburnian and Black-and-white Warblers - were hopping around in the trees along the census route, and two Solitary Sandpipers chasing each other was seen at the pond. On August 18th, after recording 36 species on the census, we opened the nets for a couple of hours. In the late morning, I started seeing warblers hopping in the trees around the nets, so I started checking the nets every 15 minutes to avoid catching too many birds*. We captured more than twenty warblers in the two nets. A total of 26 birds of 9 species, including 22 warblers and two flycatchers, were banded. August 19th was quieter for the banding, and we banded 26 birds, including 23 warblers.

*After fifteen years of banding experience at PIBO, 'too many birds' means that the number of birds captured in the nets exceeds the capacity of the staff to extract and safely band at that time.

From August 20th, I decided to start the census half an hour early to have more net hours. Soon after we opened, many birds started flying into some of the nets, and the other empty nets had to be closed to avoid catching too many birds at once. A total of 35 birds, including 34 warblers, were banded (19.5 net-hours). On the census, we recorded 56 species, including season first Canada and Tennessee Warblers and numerous House Wrens along the trail and in the netting area.

On August 21st, a flock of warblers were hanging around the vegetation along the west beach, which was quite a collection of different species, but the netting was quieter than the previous morning. North winds overnight brought many warblers on August 23rd. Numerous Black-and-white, season first Blue-winged, Black-throated Blue, and Black-throated Green Warblers were observed in the trees near the tip. Netting was busy banding 34 warblers (24.4 net-hours) – 14 Magnolia, 6 Chestnut-sided, 5 Bay-breasted and others.

The forest was full of hundreds of warblers on the census of August 24th. In addition to the large number of Bay-breasted since last week, Blackburnians, Black-and-white, Chestnut-sided were numerous, and a Mourning Warbler was observed as new for the season. We only banded 15 birds (25.3

net-hours) for the morning, but season first, Swainson's Thrush and Veery were banded, and a total of 58 species was recorded during the standard count period.

On August 25th, an intense thunderstorm passed through in the early morning before the census, and the light rain was intermittent during the day. Many warblers flew around in the drizzle, and a Wilson's Warbler was recorded as new for the season. August 26th was another rainy morning. Quite a few Ovenbirds and Red-eyed Vireos were observed, but there were not many warblers along the census route and in the netting area compared to the previous day.

The wind shifted briefly to the northeast during the early morning of August 27th. Numerous warblers and Red-eyed Vireos, and some thrushes and flycatchers were observed during the census. Black-throated Blue Warblers were everywhere along the trail, and quite a few Black-throated Green, Cape May and Nashville Warblers were seen. Banding was busy, and 73 birds were banded (20.44 net-hours) – 14 Red-eyed Vireos, seven thrushes, and 52 warblers of 12 species, including 12 Black-throated Blue.

On August 28th, we recorded numerous Red-eyed Vireos for both the census and the banding – 18 of them were banded for the morning for a total of 32 for the last two days. Banding had not slowed down with catching warblers - 34 warblers banded. A total of 58 birds (23.4 net-hours) were banded, and 15 warblers were observed for the standard count period, including a Northern Parula as new for the season. Unfortunately, my netting area observation didn't help increase the daily totals since the banding was busy every morning.

The heatwave with high humidity that lasted for almost a week gave us harsh working conditions since we needed to wear extra layers to keep the mosquitoes from biting our face and hands and rubber boots for muddy puddles!! Many birds looked active in the morning. Several Great Blue Herons, Great Egrets, some Green Herons and Belted Kingfishers feeding at the pond were flying around chasing each other. Warblers and flycatchers busy catching flying insects flew back and forth in front of me in the forest. A few Blackpoll Warblers were seen as new for the season, along with lots of Bay-breasted. We only banded 28 birds of 12 species (24.4 net-hours), including 8 Red-eyed Vireos.

On August 30th, numerous Magnolia Warblers and American Redstarts were observed in a flock of warblers, and quite a few Cedar Waxwings flying over and feeding in trees were also seen. Banding wasn't busy, but 24 birds of 15 species were banded, including three species of vireos – Red-eyed, Warbling, and Philadelphia. The weather became more autumn-like on August 31st, and some migrants arrived overnight. We opened the nets before sunrise and started catching some thrushes. In the late morning, some warblers began to show up. A total of 81 birds (27 net-hours) of 18 species was banded, including 18 Magnolias, 11 Cape Mays, 7 Black-throated Blue, 5 Bay-breasted, and a few Blackpoll.

The morning weather had been a similar pattern during the heatwave – thunder with rain during the night dropped the temperature at dawn and became very still with high humidity for the morning. Every morning I was drenched in sweat after doing the census, then rushed into the netting area to open the nets for a couple of hours. Despite the short net hours, we have already banded about 400 birds since August 15th. Compared to the spring, the birds often visited the nets quietly, which reminded me of

how birds change their behaviour during the fall migration. Many thanks to Suzanne and Hannah, who came to help me at the busy station!!

The summary was written by Sumiko Onishi.

Northern Parula by Sumiko Onishi