

Biweekly Migration Summary

August 1 to 14 2024

By Sumiko Onishi



After a six-week hiatus, our daily census resumed on August 1. The summer has been very dry. The normally flooded Silver-maple swamp, where the Prothonotary warbler's nest boxes are located, was covered by grasses. Cicadas were singing all day and there were fewer mosquitoes in the forest. Local breeding birds were still feeding their young. We saw Cedar waxwings still laying eggs, and a clutch of Carolina wren's eggs hatched on the 15th. Meanwhile, numerous swallows started lining up on the hydro lines in preparation for their fall migration, and a group of Lesser yellowlegs and peeps foraged on the mud at the big marsh on Henderson Road, also on their way south.

On August 1, we saw 118 American White pelicans on the tip of Fish Point. This was the highest count for August 1st since pelicans were first seen at the tip in 2014. Also on our first day we recorded the season's first Semipalmated sandpiper. Some migratory warblers started showing up on August 4: Blackburnian and Black-and-white, and a Northern waterthrush. The census was quieter on the 5th, but 15 Sanderlings and a Ruddy turnstone were observed along the west beach.

From the 4th to 6th, numerous Baltimore orioles and Yellow warblers started moving through the area, as well as 230 American White pelicans flying off-shore. The weather changed quite a bit after August 6th. With a strong north wind coming down in the morning of the 7th, the temperature dropped sharply, and there was heavy rainfall. We saw a season first Magnolia warbler, and several Least flycatchers along the trail, and Least sandpipers at the tip. These were new for the season as well.

On August 10, the temperature dropped to 18 degrees C. Due to a strong west wind, many birds took shelter on the east side of the island. As we walked to the pond, we recognized the calls of several Prothonotary warblers, and soon five of them showed up. A Cape May warbler was also recorded as new for the season, and numerous Eastern

kingbirds and Eastern Wood pewees were observed along the east shore for the next couple of days. On August 12, a large group of Warbling vireos and Indigo buntings came through, and a season-first Yellow-bellied flycatcher. The vegetation at the south end of the tip was busy with lots of birds for the period.

On August 13th the wind shifted to the south and brought even warmer temperatures.

Only a small flock of birds were seen at the tip, but we started seeing more

Blackburnian warblers over the next couple of days. We counted 23 Blackburnians,

along with some Tennessee and a season-first Golden-winged warbler at the south end of the forest.

Dragonflies and Monarch butterflies also started their migrations. We observed quite a

few dragonflies on August 9, and began seeing a few Monarch butterflies coming

through the area during the last couple of days of the census.