

PIBO Migration Summary: April 16- 30 2023

By Danielle Lacasse

The nets were opened for the first time this year on April 15. It was a slow day, with only five new birds banded and two recaptured. The slower pace allowed us to finish setting up nets, as well as to complete some general maintenance around the banding shelter, such as clearing brush, ensuring all nets previously set up were in good condition, and putting the door back on the shelter. A recaptured American robin was found to have been banded at PIBO four years ago as an adult bird. The following day, the staff banded two Northern cardinals, marking the first time these birds have been banded at the PIBO station in the last five years. Cardinals are able to remove the standard aluminum band used by banders. To combat this, the station has received new stainless steel bands that are harder to open. This means that strong-billed Northern cardinals cannot remove their new jewellery.



The island has experienced strong winds, rain, and snow flurries throughout April. Let me tell you that wind, sand, and hail are not a good mix! When combined, they definitely do not help with bird observations. Due to the colder temperatures and strong winds, the PIBO staff decided not to open the nets. In fact, on one particularly chilly morning, the nets were frozen shut and took some elbow grease to get open. Despite these challenging conditions, the bird census continued. New species for the year included Northern rough-winged and Barn swallows. A large number of Yellow-rumped warblers were observed hawking along the pond shoreline. Later in the day, on April 17, I observed a Palm warbler at the staff accommodation; this marked the first sighting of the year.



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Spotting little yellow balls of fluff following their parents is an exciting experience for any bird enthusiast. The Canada geese have been busy and more than one pair around the Fox Pond have hatchlings following after them. During the mid-month census, an interesting species was observed: a Hooded warbler. It is unusual to see this species so early, so it was a very exciting observation. On April 27, a Willet was spotted along the west shoreline at Fish Point. It likely

stopped for a brief layover before continuing on its migration. Meanwhile, just down the road, at the banding station, a Blue-headed vireo was heard, and a Black-and-white warbler was spotted in the netting area and later banded.



April ended in a flourish. The morning started off with moody skies and lower temperatures. Nets were open for an hour and a half before a torrential downpour forced us to close early. Despite the harsh conditions, Yellow warblers were seen and heard during census, and a Wood thrush was heard singing cheerfully in the netting area, despite the damp conditions. Just as the banders arrived home to warm up and dry off, the skies cleared and the sun came out. Throughout the month, 99 birds were banded from 20 different species. If April showers bring May flowers, hopefully they will also bring lots of feathered friends.