

FALL 2013 PEPtBO – DAILY SIGHTINGS

Summary

This fall, a total of 5,022 birds of 84 species were banded during the morning banding, from August 18 to October 30, while 212 **Northern Saw-whet Owls**, one **Eastern Screech Owl**, and one **Barred Owl** were banded during the owl banding from September 20 to October 30.

As expected, most birds were captured in relatively small numbers: 65 species were captured with less than 50 individuals, including 10 species where only one individual of each was banded. At the other end of the spectrum, the most abundant banded species was the **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, with 1,363 individuals banded (that is, 27% of the total). Not surprisingly, the second most abundant bird was the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, with 760 birds banded. Both kinglets represent about 42% of all the banded birds!

The rest of the "top 10" are, in decreasing order (with banded numbers in brackets): **Slate-coloured Junco** (275), **Brown Creeper** (255), **Hermit Thrush** (224), **Bobolink** (199), **White-throated Sparrow** (156), **Magnolia Warbler** (135), **Black-throated Blue Warbler** (125), **Blue-headed Vireo** (96).

October 31 - Sightings

The night was relatively quiet regarding owls: only 3 new **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were banded and one - banded here on October 8th! - was recaptured.

Then, the storm arrived later during the night. Rain and wind unleashed their fury across the land. We got drenching rain and gale-force winds throughout the day and most of the night. Needless to say, there was no banding in the morning, neither at night, on this last day of fall bird migration monitoring.

October 30 - Sightings

Yesterday night, there was a bigger owl in our nets: we had a **Barred Owl**, much to the terror of the small **Northern Saw-whet Owls**. We all were very happy indeed (see pic). We also caught 4 **Saw-whet Owls** but closed the nets after only 2 hours of owling (instead of the normal 4) when we released the **barred owl**. Barred Owls are potential predators of saw-whet owls, so, according to the bander's code of ethics, nets are closed when a predator is known to be present.

This morning, after lots of rain during the second part of the night and early morning, we opened nets 2 hours later. It was eerily calm, both on the eolian and avian sides. There were the usual recaptures of **Juncos** and **Jays** and **Chickadees**. A few **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, **Black-capped Chickadees**, **Blue Jays** and **Juncos** were banded too, for a grand total of 12 birds banded.

However, on the lake, thousands and thousands of **Ducks** were seen, mostly **Scaups**. Also of note, there were 8 **Pectoral Sandpipers** along the shoreline.

October 29 - Sightings

Another good night of owling: 7 **Saw-whet owls** were banded. It might sound low, but **saw-whet owls** have been scarce this fall, with some stations waiting for 3 weeks before catching their first owls!

In the morning, under a bright, blue sky, quite a few **Slate-coloured Juncos** got banded. With 36 birds, it is more than half of the daily total. We also saw and banded the first **American Tree Sparrows** of the fall. Other **Sparrows**, mainly **White-throated** and **White-crowned**, have mostly disappeared from

the point. However, the surprise and excitement came with the capture of 5 **Rusty Blackbirds!**

October 28 - Sightings

The night was relatively good for **Northern Saw-whet Owls**.

But in the morning, the wind was strong again. Despite a sunny day, most nets were not opened and very few birds were caught. More birds were recaptured (15) than banded (5), with **Juncos** being the most prevalent. Remarkably, a **Red-eyed Vireo** was observed, the latest record ever noted.

October 27 - Sightings

The wind- and rainstorm lasted well into the evening and night yesterday: no owl banding was done. In the morning, conditions were much better and banding resumed. However, not much movement happened, as more previously banded birds were captured than new ones. It is a clear indication that birds stayed put last night. And who could blame them, given the dreadful conditions?

On the lake, there was a gigantic raft of about 4,000 **Scaups**. A few other waterfowl were noted: the first **Bufflehead** of the season, 2 **Long-tailed Ducks**, some **Red-breasted Mergansers**, several **Horned Grebes**.

October 26 - Sightings

Last night, despite an ominous weather forecast, owling turned out to be very good, with 21 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** banded and one recaptured.

However, the bad weather did show up and is still continuing unabashed as of this writing, with strong southwest wind and rain. As a consequence, there was no banding this morning, and very likely, no owl banding tonight.

October 25 - Sightings

Last night, winds were once more blowing furiously, precluding the opening of nets.

At dawn, an eerie calm was on the land. Shortly after sunrise, though, the North wind started to pick up again. It increased steadily throughout the morning, while shifting to the West. It appears that we are now past "peak **Kinglet**": less than 30 birds of both species were captured this morning. There were quite a few **Hermit Thrushes** still this morning, with a total of 12 banded ones and 4 recaptured birds. A few **Slate-colored Juncos** were around, with 7 banded. In general, it felt that bird activity was way down compared to the last week. A nice, banded male **Northern Cardinal** was recaptured.

However, a little flock of about 25 **Snow Buntings** flew overhead the station, as well as one single, calling **Horned Lark**. Definitely a sure sign that winter is coming, confirmed with **Long-tailed Ducks** on the lake and a **Northern Shrike** in the bush! **Turkey Vultures** are still leaving in big numbers, with up to 100 birds today, accompanied with several **Red-tailed Hawks** and one young **Bald Eagle**.

October 24 - Sightings

Last night, after 2 nights of bad weather, the evening started cold, relatively calm, with some clouds. Not surprisingly, many **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were on the move and 22 new ones were captured and banded, with 3 already banded birds recaptured. The highlight of the night, though, was a grey **Eastern Screech Owl!** A big crowd was lucky enough to see it, along with the "regular" saw-whets! Wind picked up considerably and forced us to close the nets an hour earlier.

In the morning, wind was still strong, blowing cold from the North. Nets were open, nonetheless. There

was some bird activity in the bushes but more in the air, with big flocks of **Common Grackles**, smaller ones of **Cedar Waxwings** (!), **Turkey Vultures** in big kettles fighting the wind again. Early morning, there was the first **Rough-legged Hawk** of the fall, a young female riding low against the wind. The wind kept increasing, forcing us to close the nets one by one, except for a handful, sheltered enough from it. As a result, total was quite low today, with only 64 birds banded of 11 species.

October 23 - Sightings

Finally, a calm day! Barely a whisper of wind troubled the morning. It felt odd, this quietness of leaves and lake. But it was nice, for a change, not to have to pick endless leaves out of the nets. The morning turned out very good in terms of banding too: a very good 143 birds of 16 species, especially for this time of year, when migration is slowing winding down.

Many, many **Hermit Thrushes** were captured, with 22 banded. But once more, the crown goes to - of course - the **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, which, with 86 birds banded is the undefeated champion. Two **Eastern Towhees** were captured, as well as a **Fox Sparrow**. The **Gray-cheeked Thrush** was a nice surprise: it is the latest individual captured for this species over the years! The previous latest record is on October 17th of 2011.

October 22 - Sightings

Windstorm! It started yesterday night, with rain fast approaching, then lasting all night. In the morning, the skies were clear but the West wind was still a fury. So, no nets were open because of it. Quite a few **raptors** were pushed towards the shoreline by the strong wind, including up to a hundred **Turkey Vultures**, several **Red-tailed Hawks**, and one young **Bald eagle**. They struggled fighting the wind, even the eagle!

The wind was still very, very strong in the evening, precluding the opening of owl nets.

October 21 - Sightings

The weather was finally good enough to open nets last night. The moon rose up orange over the lake but was quickly swallowed by dark clouds. The overcast conditions didn't hamper the **Northern Saw-whet Owls** from moving, as 21 of them were captured and 2 recaptured. It was a good night, bringing the season total to 144 **Owls** so far, for the standard banding.

In the morning, a strong Southwest wind was blowing, increasing as the day progressed to a point that nets had to be closed before the regular 6 hours. Nonetheless, a clean 100 birds were banded, with - very precisely - 72% of them **Kinglets** (45% **Golden-crowned** and 27% **Ruby-crowned**). **Brown Creepers** came in third, in term of numbers banded, with 11 birds. A **Fox Sparrow** was banded too: it is always a treat to have this rather elegant sparrow in hand. We also recaptured a young female **White-breasted Nuthatch** banded here 10 days before.

No big movements of **raptors** or **blackbirds** today but a flock of 500 **Lesser Scaups** was seen over the lake

October 20 - Sightings

It was another dark and stormy night! More rain yesterday evening meant no owl banding.

In the morning, the skies were clear and bright blue, the wind was blowing strongly from the West, the leaves were falling down to Earth. At this time of year, bird diversity is much reduced and most of the birds seen and captured are the usual suspects, namely **Kinglets**, with **Golden-crowned** being the bulk of the captures, albeit much reduced (only 29 birds today but still about 40% of the total),

Slate-coloured Juncos, Brown Creepers, and Blue Jays.

Eastern Phoebes continued to be seen and captured in small numbers, with 3 banded today. The biggest surprise was an adult female **American Redstart**! It is a very late date for this species since they migrate mostly in late August - early September. There was indeed no **American Redstarts** banded after October 12 but for one on the 24th in 2011. Likewise, yesterday, there was a **Nashville Warbler**, quite late as only a handful of them were ever banded after October 20th.

October 19 - Sightings

Under a full moon, a cloud-free sky, and the wind reduced to a whisper, it was a good night for **Saw-whet Owls**, with 13 newly banded and 3 recaptures, much to the delight of the numerous visitors present.

In the morning, under overcast and mild conditions, birds were quite active, with - again - lots of **Kinglets**, mostly **Golden-crowned** too. There were quite a few of **Brown Creepers** too. Many **Slate-coloured Juncos** were banded as well, and a few **Hermit Thrushes**. A nice surprise, actually, was a young **Wood Thrush**. The adult (second-year) male **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** was quite dashing too!

Not much in terms of **raptors** today, with the light southwest wind blowing. Again today, we saw a **Monarch** butterfly. Every day, I think it might be the last of the season, but then, there's another one the following day.

October 18 - Sightings

It was a dark and rainy night! Actually, it rained mostly in the first part of last night, but it was enough to prevent us from opening the owl nets. Tonight, under a full moon and a clear sky, with much subdued wind, conditions are looking better.

This morning, a blustery Northwest wind was blowing. So strong that it pushed lots of **birds of prey**. **Blue Jays**, and **Common Grackles** to our little corner, where they were confronted by a shimmering expanse of open water. Reluctant to cross it, they hesitated, milled about, and for the most part, turned around, fighting the strong wind. Flocks of several hundreds of **Jays** and **Grackles** were seen.

There was a high diversity of raptors this morning, not least a young **Golden Eagle** and an adult **Bald Eagle**. Lots of **Sharp-shinned Hawks**, one **Cooper'S Hawk**, 2 **American Kestrels** (one male, one female), one **Merlin**. Big kettles of **Turkey Vultures** were struggling against the wind, trying to gain altitude and being pushed back towards the lake. Among them or by themselves, there were also quite a few **Red-tailed Hawks**, as well as 2 adult **Red-shouldered Hawks**. A **Northern Harrier** completes the list of the morning raptors.

In the bush and the nets, it was not as busy as the last few days. But a decent 99 birds were banded, of which a little over half were **Golden-crowned Kinglets**. Interestingly, 3 **Eastern Phoebes** were banded, as well as an adult female **Black-throated Blue Warbler**. Very few **Sparrows** and **Juncos** were around today. But one **Eastern Towhee** was seen.

October 17 - Sightings

It was a dark and stormy night! With strong wind and rain falling down, there was no **owl** banding last night.

In the morning, overcast conditions and North wind prevailed. Nets were opened as usual and a "mere" 104 birds of 13 species were banded. Most of them were **Kinglets** again, with some **Juncos**, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Brown Creepers**. We also banded 3 **Eastern Phoebes** and one **Red-breasted**

Nuthatch this morning.

A few big flocks of **Common Grackles**, up to 300 birds, and **Blue Jays**, up to 100, were seen flying high in the sky.

The sun finally broke through the cover of clouds around noon. It is the afternoon now and the sun is shining brightly in a blue sky. But more clouds and rain are on the way, not a good sign for tonight's owling.

October 16 - Sightings

Despite the warm night, 8 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were banded and one recaptured. South wind only started to pick up at closing time around midnight.

In the morning, the wind has built up into a storm, whipping the lake into a frenzy and bringing rain. It rained for half of the morning, but the wind kept up and prevented us from opening the nets. There were still lots of **Kinglets** in the bush around the point, as well as **Juncos**. **Blue Jays** were calling as they fought the wind.

The current week (October 11 - 17) has been very good at the Point, despite no banding on today. The total (up to October 16 for this season) is of 935 birds banded that were captured in mist nets, well above the average of 540. The highest total for that particular week is 999 birds in 2005. We still have tomorrow to try and beat it!

Compared to past years, up to October 14, this fall season is doing quite well, especially when one compares birds captured in mist nets. There is considerable variation in numbers of birds caught in ground and J- traps between years, with a handful of seasons having extreme rates of captures, while most of the other years are quite modest.

October 15 - Sightings

Under a bright moon getting bigger by the night, we caught 14 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** last night and recaptured 2 (of our own). The night was clear and calm, starting cool, perfect conditions for owls to move (and songbirds too).

In the morning, it was **kinglets** galore once more! With 306 birds banded in total, it was the busiest morning of the season. **Kinglets** were the bulk of the capture, with more than 200 birds, but there were also quite a few **Slate-coloured Juncos** (40 birds banded), **Myrtle Warblers** (12 banded), and **Hermit Thrushes** (11 banded).

Juncos have definitively been increasing in numbers these last few days. Numbers of other **Sparrows** were low today, as in the previous few days. But 2 **Fox Sparrows** were captured today. A **Gray Catbird** was observed.

A big kettle of about 80 **Turkey Vultures**, with one **Red-tailed Hawk** in their midst, was seen at mid-day, boiling and milling around in the heat. The weather has been so unseasonably warm lately!

October 14 - Sightings

The night was warm and windy, with rain slowly approaching. We opened the nets nonetheless and were able to keep them open for 2 hours before the rain arrived. And we were lucky enough to catch one **owl**, very much appreciated by the visitors.

It rained all night and dawn was still overcast. However, it slowly cleared in the course of the morning, and birds started to fill up the nets as the sky became more and more blue. The final tally was a more than respectable 259 birds banded, most of them **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, as

usual. But **Slate-coloured Juncos** have definitively started to move through, with 33 banded today. A good number of **Hermit Thrushes** was captured as well.

Very interestingly, we got 2 **Blackpoll Warblers**, both of them fat! Even very fat, since one had a fat score of 7, the highest possible!

October 13 - Sightings

A clear and cool night brought 8 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** to our nets.

In the morning, though, the weather had changed, with a strong SouthEast wind and rising temperatures. In these conditions, there was not too much bird activity, with only a mere 52 birds of 9 species banded. **Kinglets**, once again, were the most abundant.

October 12 - Sightings

On a warm night, 5 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were captured, including one that was banded only 3 nights before.

The morning was warm, with blue sky and bright sun, under a good Easterly breeze. It was a busy morning with **Kinglets** (again, more **Golden-crowns** than **Ruby-crowns**: 85 birds vs. 51) and **Slate-coloured Juncos**.

We also had a quite late **Red-eyed Vireo** and a **Blackpoll Warbler**. From 2001 to 2012, only 9 **Red-eyed Vireos** were ever captured after October 12, out of a grand total of 2,739 birds banded. Likewise, for **Blackpoll Warbler**, only 7 birds were captured after October 12 for the same period, out of a total of 1,222 birds banded. Quite late indeed!

October 11 - Sightings

The waxing moon is getting brighter and bigger, shining its pale glow on the point. Last night, only 5 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were captured, including 3 recaptures of birds banded here. Some birds seem to be hanging around the point for a little while before moving on.

In the morning, we got our fair share of **Kinglets**, with **Golden-crowns** being the most abundant this time, with 85 birds banded, whereas **Ruby-crowns** only had 24 birds banded. There was a good haul of **Slate-coloured Juncos** as well, with 20 birds banded. More **White-throated Sparrows** than **White-crowned Sparrows** were banded today, although many **White-crowns** were recaptured. We banded our first **Fox Sparrow** of the season, a beautiful, big sparrow of northern latitudes.

A few flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** flew overhead, as well as flocks of **European Starlings**, **Red-winged Blackbirds**, and **Common Grackles**.

October 10 - Sightings

Last night, conditions were similar at first with the previous night. However, temperatures increased (!) as the night went on and humidity was quite high. Nonetheless, a decent 13 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were captured.

In the morning, under a heavy dew, there was a steady flow of birds, both through the area and in the nets. The tally, though not as high as the previous 2 days, was a respectable 107 birds of 15 species, with 26 recaptures of 10 species. Both **Kinglets** were again the most abundant, albeit in much reduced numbers today. There was quite a few **Blue-headed Vireos** (with 9 banded) and **Hermit Thrushes** (13 birds).

Big flocks of **Blue Jays** were milling around, as well as **Red-winged Blackbirds**. **Icterids** (that is, the family of **Blackbirds**) have been moving through these last few days, with **Rusty Blackbirds** and

Common Gracles.

An immense cloud of **ducks** was seen far, far, far offshore. There were maybe 3,000 birds, or shall I say, little, black specks. **Ducks** they were, but their precise identity remained unknown, hidden by distance.

October 9 - Sightings

Last night, skies were clear, wind was non-existent, stars were shining, and a low crescent moon was setting: perfect conditions for owl migration. And they came! We had a total of 35 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** and 3 recaptures in the 4 hours of standard banding.

Dawn came clear and crisp, filled with the twittering chatter of **Kinglets**, harbinger of what to come. As soon as the nets were open, they flew in them with abandon. The day started busy and stayed busy for the whole 6 hours. At the end, the tally was close to 300 birds captured, new and recaptures. As yesterday, **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were the star, with well over 200 birds banded for both species.

There were several **Blue-headed Vireos** captured, as well as **Hermit Thrushes** (8 of each). Very few **warblers**, but a **Common Yellowthroat** was a surprise. Two **Eastern Towhees** were banded, a young female and a young male with brown eyes (which will turn red eventually, as the bird matures). More **Slate-colored Juncos** were captured today than **White-throated** and **White-crowned Sparrows**.

But, undeniably, the most exciting capture today was of a second-year female **Northern Goshawk**! A huge *Accipiter*, it is so much bigger than the usual **Sharp-shinned Hawk**. We actually got 3 **Sharp-shinned Hawks** this morning too, including a small male. The length of the male **Sharpie** was - incredibly enough - the same than the length of the **Goshawk** tail!

October 8 - Sightings

The wind storm continued into the evening. We doggedly opened the owl nets, but the intense wind and rain at 8:30pm made us close them for the night, with no **owls** bagged.

The wind died during the night, the sky cleared, the highway to heaven was finally open for impatient migrants. In a crisp, fall morning, they arrived *en masse*, filling the nets and the 8th graders with delight. A grand total of 236 birds of 18 species were banded, with 16 more recaptured. Both **Kinglets** were beak to beak in the leadership position, with 85 **Golden-crowns** and 78 **Ruby-crowns**. There was also an impressive load of 30 **Hermit Thrush**. We also collected several **White-crowned Sparrows**, including one **Gambell's**, a subspecies ranging from the NorthWest Territories to Alaska and down to British Columbia. (see picture)

Interestingly, we got 2 **Blackpoll Warblers** in the nets, along with 5 **Black-throated Blue Warblers**, and a single **Myrtle Warbler**. A very late **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** was banded too (see picture)! The weather seems to be more cooperative for tonight's owling.

October 7 - Sightings

A fierce wind blew all night long, drowning out the owl call in a maelstrom of waves and bristling and rushing leaves. Needless to say, no **Owls** were caught.

In the morning, the warm front was still moving through, bringing unseasonably warm temperatures in the low 20°C! Heavy rain followed on its heels, for most of the morning. Nets were open for only a short hour, early on. **Kinglets** were around in some numbers, as well as **Yellow-rumped Warblers**.

A **Northern Harrier** was riding the wind, cresting the treetops in an ever-changing shape of wing and

tail. A **Merlin** flew by, unfazed by wind, rain, or warmth, in typical falcon nobility.

Following the warm front are two cold fronts bringing a sharp drop in temperatures! It is forecasted to be rainy tonight and still windy, so chances for owls are slim. But, then, it will clear and calm down, sweet promises for banders and visitors alike.

October 6 - Sightings

Luck was on our side last night! Despite the strong East wind and approaching rain, we had a couple of **Northern Saw-whet Owls**, both already banded. The first one, banded 2 nights before, was captured just in time to be enjoyed by the visiting group from Toronto. The second one was caught an hour later and was banded somewhere else!

This morning, heavy rain marked dawn. A break in the rain allowed for opening the nets for a mere hour and a half. Lots of **Kinglets**, though, were captured in this short time: 33 in total, equally divided among the 2 species, and representing the bulk of the daily total of 44 birds. An **Eastern Towhee** was banded, as well a handful of **Brown Creepers**, one **Nashville**, and one **Black-throated Blue Warblers**.

Then, rain returned in force, closing the operations for the day. It does not look too promising for tonight's owling neither.

October 5 - Sightings

Last night, there was again no **Northern Saw-whet Owls** captured, under a new moon and a thick cover of clouds.

This morning, rain was threatening but held off, allowing full coverage. Once again, lots of **Kinglets** were around (both species), with a total of 67 **Golden-crowned** and 50 **Ruby-crowned**. There were also lots - LOTS - of **Brown Creepers**, with 25 birds banded. But very few **Thrushes** again today. And barely any **Warblers**, but a very beautiful **Northern Parula**, some **Black-throated Blue Warblers**, and a young male **Blackburnian Warbler**.

Dark-eyed Juncos have started to appear in numbers now, with a little flock of about a dozen today, enjoying the fallen seeds of the "weeds" around the lawn.

Turkey Vultures were fighting the strong East wind in a loose flock of 25 birds. A few **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were seen, with one mobbing a much bigger **Cooper's Hawk**.

With the continuing strong East wind and rain threatening, it is not looking good for tonight's owling...

October 4 - Sightings

Following a busy morning, the night was also quite interesting, with a total of 10 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** banded! However, the pattern of capture seemed to have been the opposite of what is usually expected: 6 owls on the first net check, at 8:30pm, then 3 an hour later, then only one at 10:30pm, and finally, none, when we closed the nets at 11:30pm. It was actually warmer at closing time than when we opened!

And indeed, a warm front was coming: it produced heavy rain at dawn and later during the morning, precluding most of the banding. Nets were open just for a short time, but quite a few **Kinglets** (mostly **Golden-crowned**) were captured and around the point. Contrary to the previous day, barely any **Thrushes** were detected.

October 3 - Sightings

There were finally a few **Northern Saw-whet Owls** yesterday night, with 2 banded. The night must

have been good for migration, because, in early morning, there was lots of chatter in the bushes. Our nets got very quickly filled with birds, and stayed that way almost the whole 6 hours of banding. A total of 283 birds of 21 species were banded, with 11 recaptured. So, we almost broke the 300-bird day tally. It is, so far, the highest total of the fall. The most abundant was the **Golden-crowned Kinglet**, with 94 individuals banded, followed by the **Hermit Thrush**, with a hard-to-believe 62 birds. It is, however, not the highest daily total for that species, as 96 **Hermit Thrushes** were banded on October 6, 2009. The third most abundant species was the **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, with 43 birds. Then, **White-throated Sparrows** had 20 birds banded.

Quite a few **Brown Creepers** were also banded, as well as several **Warblers**, most notably **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, and 2 **American Redstarts**.

What a difference a day makes! The weekly total now reaches 542 birds, almost exactly the same than the previous week. It is the 4th lowest total for that specific week since 2001. In 2011, only 375 birds were banded, the lowest ever. Then, the next year, 2012, it was the highest total ever, with 1255 birds banded. In only 3 consecutive years, these totals show the extreme variability in migration, a real boom and bust cycle. The previous week, with a total of 543 banded birds, was the 4th highest total for that specific week.

Brake for snakes!

Snakes are on the move at this time of year, with young dispersing and all of them slowly looking for their winter hibernaculum. They also like to sunbathe on warm roads. So, please, brake for snakes! I always see several roadkilled snakes along Long Point road. While you drive and look up for birds, please, keep an eye on the road for snakes too! (oh, yeah! and for other traffic too) Thanks!

October 2 - Sightings

Are we back in August? Was summer not over a little over than 10 days ago? With **White-crowned Sparrows** and **Kinglets** around the point, we can assume it is not August, but it does feel like it: 25°C, humid, sunny.

The warm weather certainly didn't entice any migration of **Saw-whet Owls** last night: another night with no capture. And the morning was in the same vein than the last few ones, with little bird activity. However, quite a few **warblers** were captured, including 8 **Black-throated Blue Warblers**. At Prince Edward Point, **Black-throated Blue Warbler** migration actually peaks at the end of September and early October. (For example, 14 were banded on October 5, 2006)

With the strong West wind, some raptors were detected - with some effort - high up in the blue sky. A total of 3 **Bald Eagles** (one 4-year-old by itself, and 2 2- or 3-year old together) were detected, with another one, a young one, seen in early afternoon. A very big female adult **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was captured and banded. Its wing chord was less than 10 millimeters less than of a male **Cooper's Hawk**!

October 1 - Sightings

Finally, the dry spell was broken last night, with one **Northern Saw-whet Owl** in the nets. However, it was one that was banded here on September 24. So, it still seems that there is not much movement of owls.

And with the warm temperatures and southwest wind, it is not looking good for tonight. It was also very quiet again in the woods and the nets at the Point. Some **Creepers**, some **Kinglets**, some **Thrushes**, some **Warblers**, some **Sparrows**. In short, the usual birds at this time of year, even though the weather felt more like early September. No big movements of birds have been noted in the last few days. Most interestingly, we captured a very late **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** today.

September 30 - Sightings

And made it 4! Four nights in a row without **owls**.

The morning was also quite quiet, with, as usual now, mostly **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** being present and captured in some numbers, as well as **Brown Creepers**. But today, there was also a sharp increase in **Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warblers**, both in the nets (with 12 banded) and in the trees. This species, along with **Palm Warbler** and **Orange-crowned Warbler**, is a short-distance migrant, which allows a later migration. Unlike most other species of warblers, it winters relatively close by, in the eastern half of the USA. It winters abundantly through the Atlantic Coast states (north to Massachusetts) and the Gulf Coast.

Other highlight of the day was the **Cooper's Hawk** that was Oh! ever so briefly in one net. We saw it fly in and quickly bounce off, with no chance of getting at it at all. It might have had its sight on the squirrel that loudly reacted to this fearsome predator...

The first **Fox Sparrow** of the season was seen.

September 29 - Sightings

Once again, it was an **owl-less** night, the third in a row, under the constant East wind.

In the morning, the wind had shifted to the South and increased its strength, pushing big white caps over lake Ontario. It was, all in all, a very unremarkable day, with very few birds around the point. Only 36 birds of 15 species were banded, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** being the most abundant (with 8 individuals banded!). However, there was one interesting recapture: a second-year **Sharp-shinned Hawk** banded somewhere else. One feather on its rump was brown with a big, white spot, a feather retained from its youth, marking it as a second-year bird (that is, a bird born last year and being in its second calendar year).

September 28 - Sightings

The East wind has been very persistent lately. Once again, it was probably the reason why no **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were caught last night.

And again, bird activity was not very strong this morning, although there was a bigger diversity, most notably among **Warblers**, with 9 species detected (although in very small numbers)! We had the first **Orange-crowned Warbler** of the season. The other species were: **Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, Myrtle, Black-throated Blue, Palm, Blackpoll, Wilson's Warblers**, and **Common Yellowthroat**.

A young male **Scarlet Tanager** was banded. A female **Eastern Towhee** was captured and an adult male was recaptured. That male was banded a little over a year ago, on August 23, 2012, as a hatch-year here at the Point. It seems likely that he returned to his place of birth, after successfully migrating down south and back.

Very few **Kinglets** and **Sparrows** today compared to the previous days. **White-crowned Sparrows** really enjoy the corn used in the ground traps, as they "happily" are being recaptured often: 9 birds today were recaptured in the traps, some even more than once a day.

A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** was captured, the first in quite some time. An adult **Bald Eagle** was seen

flying by in the afternoon.

September 27 - Sightings

And the East wind came! It was strong and furious yesterday night, which might be the main reason why no **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were caught during the night. In the morning, the wind was still blowing in earnest, chopping up the lake into a whitecap cauldron.

Bird activity was less pronounced this morning, with the usual suspects around, albeit in less numbers than the previous days: **Golden-crowned** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**, **White-crowned** and **White-throated Sparrows**. Interestingly, we had 4 species of **Thrush** this morning: **Gray-cheeked**, **Sainson's**, **Hermit Thrushes**, and **Veery**.

Very few **warblers** were seen or banded today, a sharp contrast for the last few days. Only a few **Magnolia**, **Myrtle**, **Blackpoll**, and **Palm Warblers**.

The bird of the day was definitively the **Yellow-billed Cuckoo**, the second only of the fall. In the last 12 years (2001-2012), this species has been captured only in 5 falls, with a single bird except in 2002, when 2 were captured. It is thus quite a rare bird to band here (which is why it deserves two pictures today!)

Small "kettles" of **Turkey Vultures** of up to 15 birds were seen today. The **Vultures** have started their migration south. It is worth checking each one of these big, black birds, as one turned out to be an immature **Bald Eagle**. Another **Bald Eagle**, an adult this time, was seen along the road at the crack of dawn by the incoming Friday volunteers. Two **Common Ravens** were heard, then seen, ending a long, dry spell without this species since August.

At the end of the morning, **Swans** were seen feeding quite a distance offshore. A view through a spotting scope confirmed that they were, rather unsurprisingly but unfortunately, **Mute Swans**, a quite aggressive non-native species.

September 26 - Sightings

It was another good night yesterday, with 6 **Northern Saw-whet Owls**, considering that it is the early onset of migration for them.

This morning, it was again a beautiful day, albeit with a light at first, then increasing, East wind. It was a busy morning, with the nets being filled almost as fast as we could extract the birds! (well, it happened only at one net check, but there's nothing wrong in being slightly dramatic from time to time) In total, we banded 142 birds of 28 species, the highest total so far. Both **Kinglets** were abundant, with **Golden-crowned** more so. Several **Brown Creepers** were also collected and duly banded. **Sparrows** have started to arrive in earnest, especially **White-crowned Sparrows**: there were barely any yesterday and, today, 14 were banded. We also had 2 **Swamp Sparrows** (see picture).

There was no **Vireos** today. There was a little influx of **Eastern Phoebes**, with 4 banded. Also, one **Eastern Wood-pewee** and one late **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** were banded. A bit surprisingly, there was quite a few **Warblers** too this morning, with 8 **Black-throated Blue Warblers** banded, as well as 6 **Nashville Warblers**, 4 **Magnolia Warblers**, and a spattering of others.

September 25 - Sightings

Last night, 7 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were captured, including one banded the previous night. Once again, the sky was almost cloud-less and the wind was just a whisper. The moon rose around 10pm and lit up the darkness.

In the morning, the high pressure system that has been sitting over the Great Lakes produced once again

a brilliant day of deep blue sky, intense sun, and light wind. In many aspects, it felt like a repeat of the previous day, except that **White-throated Sparrows** were dominant over **Golden-crowned Kinglets** this time. A handful of **Slate-coloured Juncos** were banded.

Two **Scarlet Tanagers** were observed.

September 24 - Sightings

Under bright stars and light North wind, 3 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** were captured last night. One was already banded, and not at Prince Edward Point!

This morning, the calls of **Kinglets** were constant and everywhere and many **Golden-crowned** and slightly less **Ruby-crowned kinglets** were captured (accounting for 25% of the 99 birds banded today). Many, many **White-throated Sparrows** were detected and banded, With quite a few **Brown Creepers** banded and many less **Warblers** than in the previous days and weeks, it definitively feels that the season is shifting: most of the long distance migrants have gone, replaced by short-distance migrants which will provide the bulk of the migrants now.

There were still quite a few **Black-throated Blue Warblers** this morning, as well as **Gray-checked** and **Swainson's Thrushes**. A few **Hermit Thrushes** were noted too, indication of the same shift mentioned above.

A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was briefly seen, possibly the last of the season... And the first **Dark-eyed (Slate-coloured) Junco** of the season was banded!

Blue-headed Vireo migration is still in full swing. Since yesterday, there has been a very good passage of **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, It is one of the few migrating species of woodpecker in our area, with **Northern Flicker** and **Red-headed Woodpecker**. The **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** winters in the southern states (of the USA) East of Texas, with some going into Mexico or the West Indies.

September 23 - Sightings

Last night, we banded our first **Northern Saw-whet Owl** of the season, at 11:00pm, under a waxing moon and sparkling stars and sparse clouds. It was the only one of the night but it made for a good start.

This morning, there was still a strong movement of birds, with a total of 83 birds banded of 25 species. There were less **Warblers**, although still quite a few of **Black-throated Blue Warblers**. And more of **Sparrows** and **Vireos**. **White-throated Sparrows** are starting to show up in numbers, with 7 banded and more seen. A couple of young **White-crowned Sparrows** were also captured. Among **Vireos**, there were many, many **Blue-headed Vireos**, a few **Red-eyed Vireos**, and one **Philadelphia Vireo**. Three species of **Thrushes** were detected today, in order of increasing numbers: **Hermit**, **Gray-checked**, and **Swainson's**. A fair number of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers** were seen today, with 5 banded, all of them young.

The most amazing capture today was undoubtedly the **Belted Kingfisher**! It was only the 6th Kingfisher banded in the fall since 1999.

A late **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was seen.

September 22 - Sightings

Today was the fall equinox. Everywhere on Earth, the day was equal in time with the night, whether one is at the North Pole, the South Pole, the Equator, or here, on Prince Edward Point!

Rain finally stopped sometimes during the night, and a steady North wind blew the clouds away. Not surprisingly, birds took advantage of the better conditions to move and they were present in nice

numbers this morning. A total of 129 birds of 28 species were banded this morning, the highest total so far. Amazingly, 15 species of **warblers** were detected, with **Black-throated Blue Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, and **American Redstart** being the most common. Quite a few **Black-and-white Warblers**, **Ovenbirds**, **Tennessee Warblers**, and **Nashville Warblers**.

There was an impressive arrival of **Gray-checked Thrush**, with 13 banded. We also had the first **Hermit Thrush** of the fall. Many **Vireos** too: one **Philadelphia** and several **Blue-headed** and **Red-eyed Vireos**. Some **Flycatchers** too, with 4 **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** banded and one **Eastern Wood-pewee**.

Among **sparrows**, we had the first **Swamp Sparrow** of the season, and the second **White-crowned Sparrow**. A few **White-throated Sparrows** were observed too, but none got into the nets.

September 21 - Sightings

Last night was the grand opening for the owl banding season! However, with a full moon, warm temperatures, strong (to very strong) south wind, and an approaching rain front, hopes were not high. And indeed, no owls were captured.

This morning, strong south wind and rain, heavy at times, precluded any banding. Some observations were made, but birds to be seen are few. One **Bonaparte's Gull** might be the highlight for the day. If the rain lets up tonight, we will open the owl nets again, but the forecast doesn't look good.

September 20 - Sightings

Stalled migration! A warm front is fast approaching, bringing rising temperatures and humidity, with rain in the forecast. As a consequence, birds are most likely staying put. It was definitively the case around the point this morning. There was very little bird activity and only 12 birds banded and 3 recaptured. However, the **Yellow-shafted Flicker** recaptured proved to be quite interesting: it was banded here more than 2 years ago, on April 25, 2011!

An **Eastern Phoebe** was banded this morning, probably the one that had been hanging around in the last few days. Three **Winter Wrens** were also banded, being, interestingly enough, the species with the most individuals banded!

All in all, slim picking!

Owl banding starts tonight and will continue, weather permitting, every night until the end of October. So, stay tuned for updates.

September 19 - Sightings

Last night was certainly perfect conditions for migrating birds: clear sky, full moon, no or light wind. These conditions continued in the morning, minus the moon, of course, replaced by a bright sun.

Temperatures were rising too, unhindered by a light southwest wind. V

Very few birds were seen or banded this morning. Only 23 birds of 16 species were banded, with only one or a few individuals for each species. For example, only one **Blackpoll** and one **Wilson's Warblers** were banded. **Yellow-shafted Flickers** are becoming more common and two were banded this morning. Still some **Flycatchers** around, with one **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** banded and one **Eastern Phoebe** observed.

The "new arrival" for the day was a **Lincoln's Sparrow**.

The deep blue of the sky made it difficult to detect high flying birds like raptors. Nonetheless, an immature **Bald Eagle** was seen, as well as several **Sharp-shinned Hawks** and one **Red-tailed Hawk**.

September 18 - Sightings

The sky was still clear this morning, but the wind had shifted to the Southwest. As a likely consequence, there were less birds around and in the nets today. Only 30 birds of 12 species were banded, with a very cute **Northern Parula**, the first one banded this fall. Still quite a few **Warblers**, mostly **Blackpoll**.

We recaptured a banded **Eastern Towhee** that was banded, as a young, on 6 September, 2012, a little more than a year ago. A few days ago, we recaptured an **Ovenbird** that was banded on 18 August, 2013, the first year of banding this fall. It is an adult in the process of moulting its wing and tail feathers and had managed to escape recapture for almost a month of being around the point.

Both a **Greater** and a **Lesser Yellowlegs** were seen foraging together in the harbour, as well as 2 **Green Herons**. **Painted Turtles** were sunbathing on logs.

Flocks of **Blue Jays** and **American Goldfinches** are getting bigger and louder. On the other hand, there are almost no **Cedar Waxwings** around anymore.

September 17 - Sightings

Clear sky, light Northeast wind, conditions seemed perfect for migration. And they were. There was a very good diversity of birds today, with a good catch of 57 birds of 23 species. We're at this interesting transition time between long-distance migrants and short-distance ones.

We got the first **Golden-crowned Kinglet** of the season, along a single **Ruby-crowned Kinglets**. We banded the first **White-throated Sparrows** of the fall, as well as the first **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker** (a young that was observed a few minutes before it flew into the nets). A couple of **Eastern Towhees** could be heard around the point. Incredibly, 15 species of **warblers** were detected this morning. If you excuse a long list, here it is: **Tennessee**, **Nashville** (the most common), **Northern Parula**, **Magnolia** (most common as well), **Cape May**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Myrtle**, **Black-throated Green**, **Blackburnian**, **Palm**, **Bay-breasted**, **Blackpoll**, **Ovenbird**, **Common Yellowthroat**, and **Wilson's Warbler**.

The most exciting sighting of the morning, though, was of a **Short-eared Owl**, flying high at about 10am, in a southerly direction. It was alternating flapping flight with soaring bouts.

In the afternoon, we added a few species, including 3 species of **Warblers**: **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, and **American Redstart**. A **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** briefly visited the feeder. A **Northern Harrier** was seen flying along the shoreline, heading North.

September 16 - Sightings

A tale of shifting wind! We woke to a windstorm this morning, a cold, unleashed wind from the North, under a thick cover of grayness. Birds must have been hunkering down, because very few were seen and even less were captured. The few interesting sightings were of an **American Kestrel**, a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** fighting the wind over the lake, the first **Winter Wren** banded, and a nice male **Mourning Warbler** banded.

September 15 - Sightings

In mid-afternoon yesterday, the wind completely shifted from North to Southwest. It was still blowing from that direction this morning when we opened the nets and slowly built up strength throughout the morning, with increasing cloudiness as well. Not the best conditions for migrants, to say the least. We nonetheless had a decent haul of 34 birds of 18 species in our nets this morning. A few individuals

of **Brown Creeper**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglet**, and **Thrushes** (**Gray-cheeked**, **Swainson's**, and **Wood**) are harbingers of what to come in the weeks ahead.

There were still a spattering of **Warblers** (**Nashville**, **Magnolia**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Black-throated Green**, **Blackpoll**, **Black-and-white**, **Wilson's**, and **American Redstart**). A quintet of **Blue-headed Vireos** were captured, as well as one young male **Scarlet Tanager**.

One male and one female **Sharp-shinned Hawks** captured were a fine illustration of the "reverse sexual dimorphism" common of birds of prey, that is, the females being much larger than the males.

At dawn, while opening nets, I heard a unique voice: a male **Rusty Blackbird** was singing, up in a tree, with 3 other **Rusty Blackbirds** next to him.

September 14 - Sightings

A clear sky and a sharp North wind brought a sense of fall in the air this morning. It was perfect conditions for traveling birds and there was, indeed, a good diversity today. **Yellow-shafted Flickers** are starting to build up in numbers, with 3 captured. There was one late **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** banded. **Vireos** were represented by **Blue-headed**, **Warbling**, and **Red-eyed** with a few individuals of each.

Another **Brown Creeper** was captured, as well as the first **Veery** of the season, alongside **Gray-cheeked** and **Swainson's Thrushes**. Despite low numbers, there was 13 species of **Warblers** detected today, with the most common being **Magnolia Warbler**. We also got our second **Cape May Warbler** of the season. A short list of the day warblers: **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Black-throated blue Warbler**, **Black-throated Green Warbler**, **Bay-breasted Warbler**, **Blackpoll Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler**, **American Redstart**

An **Eastern Towhee** was "spotted" during census. The first **White-throated Sparrow** of the fall was observed at the end of the morning. We also banded our second **Scarlet Tanager**, a young female, like the first one.

September 13 - Sightings

As forecast, a sharp drop in temperature with its accompanying North wind and overcast sky greeted us this morning. Small flocks of **American Goldfinches** roamed the sky today and took advantage of the feeders. Which is why we banded 13 of them this morning. There was still quite a few **Blackpoll Warblers**, with 6 banded. A few other **Warblers** were around, notably **Black-throated Blue**, **Black-throated Green**, and **Myrtle Warblers**. We had an interesting recapture of a **Gray-cheeked Thrush** that was banded here at the station 6 days prior. Along with the fair number of recaptured birds today, it indicates that not much movement had been occurring in the last few days.

We got the first **Ruby-crowned Kinglet** of the season and the second **Brown Creeper**. An **Eastern Wood-pewee** was the sole representative of the **Flycatcher** tribe. Likewise with the **Philadelphia Vireo** (for the **Vireos**, of course). One **Ruby-throated Hummingbird** was observed.

There is very few **Double-crested Cormorants** left, with around 500 individuals this morning, a far cry from the 10,000 of mid-August. The first **Common Loons** (2) of the season flew by in a northerly (!) direction. A **Bald Eagle** was cruising low along the shoreline early morning, too backlit and too short of an observation to determine its age. It was the same for the **Peregrine Falcon** that was seen at the end of the morning.

Three **Greater Yellowlegs** flew by, going North. A few **Bonaparte's Gulls** were flying over the lake with some **Ring-billed** and **Herring Gulls**.

September 12 - Sightings

Rain started to fall minutes before we got ready to open nets. The fine drizzle turned into a steady flow and precluded the net opening this morning. Sadly, we returned to our beds for an extended sleep. Dejected by the inclement weather, we ate crepes and drank coffee. It was a sad morning where no birds got banded.

September 11 - Sightings

Hot! Hot, hot, hot! And humid! Humid, humid, humid. That is the short summary of the morning, when birds were few and humans were panting. We still managed to band the first **Brown Creeper** of the season, as well as a **Swainson's Thrush**. But all species captured were of single individuals, except for the 4 **American Goldfinches**.

Two **Turkey Vultures**, and shortly afterwards, one immature **Bald Eagle** flapped laboriously their huge wings in desperate search of lift in the over-heated atmosphere. It afforded us great views, especially of the eagle, as it flew by barely over treetops. Early in the morning, a **Peregrine Falcon** was very briefly seen, mostly as a dark silhouette in the hazy dawn.

September 10 - Sightings

Thunderstorms! Low rumbles all around at the end of night and at dawn with dazzling displays of lightning brought rain, even downpours at times. But it cleared up rapidly and we opened nets only a bit later than usual. The damp warmth was wrapping itself around us like a suffocating cocoon. As the cloud ceiling was breaking up, we had one quite successful net round, with many warblers and a few vireos in our nets. In all, we caught 12 **Blackpoll Warblers**, 6 **Magnolia Warblers**, 5 **Black-throated Green Warblers**, and single or 2 or 3 individuals of 8 other species of **Warblers**, including the first **Cape May Warbler** of the season. A **Northern Parula** was observed but not captured.

There were a few **Blue-headed Vireos** around, as well as **Philadelphia Vireos**. An **Eastern Wood-Pewee** was seen, and 2 **Yellow-bellied** and one **Traill's Flycatcher** were captured.

The morning ended up with the sun beating down on the Earth and the air thick with humidity. I probably should not have written that the dog days of summer were behind us, as they came back around to bark and bite once more! We enjoyed a refreshing swim in the lake in the afternoon, despite the heavy load of algae in water turned green.

September 9 - Sightings

From North to South! The wind made an about-face this morning, as it was blowing strongly from the South. With it, it brought rising cloudiness and temperatures, but not many more birds. There was a fistful of **Warblers**, with **Nashville** being the more common, along some **Tennessee**, **Magnolia**, **Blackburnian**, **Bay-breasted**, and **Blackpoll Warblers**.

A lone **Barn Swallow** was briefly spotted as it flew high over the treetops.

We had an interesting recapture this morning: An adult **Warbling Vireo** that was banded this fall on August 28. It is possibly a local bird that bred around the point. **Flycatchers** are getting few and far between: today, there was only one **Eastern Wood-Pewee** and one **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**.

A **Bald Eagle** (probably 2- to 3-year-old) was seen at dawn flying low up and down the coastline. Few other raptors were seen, with the usual **Turkey Vultures** and a few **Sharp-shinned Hawks**. We banded one little male of the latter. As with most species of raptors, male **Sharp-shinned Hawks** are up to a third smaller than females. A male would weigh around 80-90 grams, whereas a female could

top the scale at 170g (but usually are between 150-160g)!

September 8 - Sightings

Clouds were just memories this morning, as a fierce NorthEast wind blew them away and let blue prevail once more. The wind must have blown birds away as well, since only 14 were banded (including a **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**, who decided it was the right time to get in the nets since David Okines was there). A **Sharp-shinned Hawk** got into the nets too. But the highlights of a day with not much to be high were to be found in the thrush family: A **Wood Thrush** was banded and the first **Gray-cheeked Thrush** of the fall was captured.

September 7 - Sightings

A thick blanket of clouds prevented the heat from escaping back to space last night, so a cozy warmth greeted us at dawn as we opened nets. Rain was threatening and already falling to the North and West of the county, which might explain the very low banding total of 14 birds and the very low activity of birds around the point. Rain finally arrived, dispensing sparsely its drops at first, but eventually enough to force us to close nets shortly after 11am.

September 6 - Sightings

We have definitively entered a new era of cool nights and crisp mornings. I was told that it was even down to 4°C at the break of dawn somewhere "inland" this morning. Here, temperatures are slightly warmer, thanks to the "lake effect". There was a nice diversity this morning, making up for the low numbers.

An **Eastern Wood-pewee** was singing its plaintive notes early morning and one was captured, as well as a **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**. There was a **Great Crested Flycatcher** and an **Eastern Phoebe** around the station. The first **Philadelphia Vireos** of the season were detected: one observed, one banded. We also watched a **Blue-headed Vireo** eating a fat caterpillar. Several **Red-eyed Vireos** were banded.

13 species of **warblers** were noted at the station today, with the most abundant being **Magnolia** and **Black-throated Green Warblers**. A **Mourning** and a **Canada Warbler** were banded.

Almost no **raptors** this morning, besides the usual **Turkey Vultures**. So, it was a treat to spot a juvenile **Bald Eagle** soaring high in the deep blue of a cloudless morning.

September 5 - Sightings

Crisp, blue, cool morning, with a light North wind again. There is definitively a change in the weather, bringing migrants on its wind. There was an influx of **Magnolia Warblers** this morning, with 18 individuals banded. A good cohort of other **warblers** were detected as well, with some **Bay-breasted and Blackpoll Warblers, American Redstarts, Ovenbirds, and Wilson's Warblers**.

We also captured our first **Indigo Bunting** of the fall, with not a trace of indigo on it: a very brown young bird. Two **Swainson's Thrushes** were banded. An adult **Great Crested Flycatcher** and two **Blue-headed Vireos** were among the catch of the day too.

Another sign of fall was the small flock of a dozen **Canada Geese** heading south in a neat line. Despite a weather quite similar than yesterday, there was very little activity of **birds of prey**, with one **Osprey**, a couple of **Red-tailed Hawks**, and a few **Sharp-shinned Hawks**.

September 4 - Sightings

Another clear, cool dawn, with a North wind that kept increasing all morning. **Coyotes** led a short chorus of howling and yipping voices very close by. Few birds were seen or banded today, with only one **Bobolink** banded (although a few more were seen around) and a few **Warblers** (including 5 **Black-throated Blue Warblers** and 4 **Blackpoll Warblers**). Interestingly, we captured an adult **White-crowned Sparrow**, possibly the one seen some 10 days earlier.

Quite a few **raptors** like yesterday, but with less diversity. It was mostly **Sharp-shinned Hawks** (one banded and 38 observed) and **Red-tailed Hawks** (13 observed). They were fighting the strong Northwest wind that wanted to push them over the lake. When it was possible to age them, all the birds were immatures. It was the case too for the **Peregrine Falcon** that flew fast in a south straight line! It was unperturbed by the wind, unlike the "soaring" raptors. Another interesting observation was of a **Merlin** chasing a small bird over the lake, doing multiple dives, still unsuccessful when they disappeared from view.

September 3 - Sightings

We awoke to a chill in the air and a fresh breeze from the North. It is a welcome change and a promise of birds to come. Indeed, they came. Even if the overall total for the day is still a modest 54 birds banded, there was again a nice variety of warblers, with **Black-throated Blue Warbler** and **American Redstarts** being the most numerous among the 9 species detected today. Numbers of **Bobolinks** were quite down today, with only 10 captured, but it is possible that the strong North wind made the broadcast harder to hear. A young female **Scarlet Tanager** was banded, the first of the fall. Among the other highlights of the day, there was a single **Chimney Swift** flying high and fast, as they do. Three **Common Ravens** were in a noisy discussion, as they flew by along the shoreline. A spattering of raptors, many of them very early, as if taking off from their roost: **Turkey Vultures** heavily flapping their huge wings at dawn; a **Northern Harrier** gaining altitude with languid grace; an adult **Bald Eagle** intent on its Easterly direction across the lake. Only when it flew near the speck of land, roost of thousands of **Double-crested Cormorants** did he alter course for a single loop before resuming his direct flight. Several hundreds of cormorants took fright and flight at the view of their potential predator; a **Red-tailed Hawk** taking off from a big oak, as I approached it...

At sunset, four **Common Nighthawks** were dancing in the gathering dusk.

Of note: a **stick insect** was found today when it landed on Lizzie's hair! There were also dozens and dozens of **Green Darners**.

September 2 - Sightings

The overnight rain didn't extend into dawn, so we opened nets, of course, and ran the whole 6 hours of monitoring, despite rumbling thunders over the horizon. It was - once again - very hot and damp, but the **bobolinks** were happy to entertain us with many hours of banding: we caught 70 today, the highest total of the fall, which helped break the 100-banded bird barrier for the first time this season! We had a wide variety this morning, with 4 different types of flycatchers (on individual each): **Eastern Wood-Pewee**, **Yellow-bellied**, **Traill's**, and **Least Flycatchers**. It has been a few days now with no sightings of the usually noisy and showy **Eastern Kingbirds**.

Fifteen (15!) species of **warblers** were detected today. Here you go for a long list: **Nashville**, **Yellow**, **Magnolia**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Black-throated Green**, **Blackburnian**, **(Western) Palm**, **Bay-breasted**, **Blackpoll**, **Black-and-white Warblers**, **American Redstart**, **Ovenbird**, **Northern Waterthrush**, **Common Yellowthroat**, and **Canada Warbler**. Not bad at all!

Towards the end of the morning, 2 **Bald Eagles** (one adult and one young) were seen, separately but in

less than 2 minutes apart, both flying in an easterly direction. A few **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were also seen, one being copiously harassed by a little flock of **Barn Swallows**.

September 1 - Sightings

A clear dawn started with a welcome sound: the bobolink calls being broadcast again at the station! And if you call them, they will come. Indeed, we attracted quite a number of **Bobolinks**, with 46 birds banded. The calls also seem to attract other species, as about half of the other 43 birds captured were in the "bobolink" nets. There was a good variety of warblers, with many **Blackpoll**, some **Common Yellowthroats**, **American Redstarts**, **Ovenbirds**, and **Northern Waterthrushes**. The most exciting and surprising capture of the day was a **Connecticut Warbler**!

August 31 - Sightings

The overnight rain didn't last into the morning, so we opened nets under an overcast gray sky. It became rapidly evident that the day - at least banding-wise - would be slow. And it was. The banding highlight was a young **Downy Woodpecker**. In the sky, we watched 2 **Bald Eagles**, separately, a young and an almost adult one (4-year old, with a white head and tail, except for a narrow black band on the tail tip). An **Osprey** was also seen, as well as 2 **Turkey Vultures**. But it was not much of a raptor day, unlike the previous one.

A few **Swallows** were seen, including 3 **Purple Martins**. The flight call of **Eastern Bluebirds** was heard, but the birds themselves remained unseen. The **Greater Yellowlegs** call was heard too, with the bird itself spotted high in the sky, flying away at high speed. It was the first of the season for the point.

August 30 - Sightings

Hot and humid once more, it was somewhat a relief that a fresh breeze from the Southwest built up during the morning. There was a jump in captures of **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, with 4 today, all young females. Amazingly, it was the species the most banded today! The strong wind brought a good variety of raptors, all throughout the morning, and some small "kettles" boiling. There was a total of 44 **Sharp-shinned Hawks** counted, alongside 14 **Broad-winged Hawks**, 7 **Red-tailed Hawks**. Less abundant but as much interested, we observed an **Osprey**, one adult **Bald Eagle**, 2 **Northern Harriers**, and 3 **Merlins**. It definitely felt like the first tremors of migration for birds of prey! Less **Cedar Waxwings** were seen today than in the last few days. Like yesterday, no **Vireos** were seen or heard, and just a few **Yellow-bellied** and **Least Flycatchers** were detected. A few **Barn Swallows** were seen flying.

The most surprising observation of the morning, though, was of a **Common Nighthawk**, flying at 11:30am! Who put the night into **Nighthawk**?

August 29 - Sightings

A clear, windless dawn gradually morphed into an overcast morning, with a light Easterly wind. The resonating *croaks* of 2 **Common Ravens** filled the still air, announcing their black presence. Indeed, they crossed the sky, investigating the point in their corvid way. A new batch of birds arrived today, from the vastness of the boreal forest: we captured one **Black-throated Green Warbler**, 2 **Blackpoll Warblers**, and one **Palm Warbler**. The last 2 species don't breed in the County, reaching their maximum abundance in the province in far northern Ontario.

Like yesterday, flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** continue to build up, with a total of about 150 birds seen. We captured another **Sharp-shinned Hawk** early in the morning, continuing the series! Later in the

day, an **Osprey** was perched on a telephone pole with a sizable fish in its talons.

Barely any **Flycatchers** and no **Vireos** were detected today. In all, it was still a quiet morning, with only 22 birds banded and one recaptured

Yesterday evening, while sitting at the dock of the bay, we observed again the **Green Herons** fishing, while overhead whirled an assembly of **Gulls**, including a dozen of **Bonaparte's Gulls**, the first seen at the station for the fall.

August 28 - Sightings

A warm, shapeless dawn greeted us today. No sunrise to speak of, only a gradual lighting of the world. Under this grey cover of clouds, we proceeded to band 13 birds and recaptured 3! Slow day indeed!

However, we were lucky enough to get another young female **Sharp-shinned Hawk** and a

Great-crested Flycatcher!

Flocks of **Cedar Waxwings** are getting bigger, with a total of 60 birds detected today. There are still a few **Cliff** and **Barn Swallows** around, but in very small numbers now. A **Common Raven** was heard and seen, not a very frequent bird in summer around the point. A **Northern Cardinal** was singing this morning, after a long period of quiet.

August 27 - Sightings

A thick blanket of fog covered the Earth this morning. Not a whisper of wind, barely a call in the woods. The sun, lazily climbing up into the sky, finally burnt off some of the moisture and the birds started to be slightly more active. However, a **Ruffed Grouse** and a **Sharp-shinned Hawk** got captured first thing in the morning in hawk nets, to the delight of our long-term volunteer, Lizzie. The **Hawk** was a young female, the first to be captured for the fall.

Not much else happened this morning, with very few **warblers** or **flycatchers**. A **Black-billed Cuckoo** was briefly seen, with a big caterpillar in its mouth, and later, heard calling once. Unfortunately, the broadcast system for **Bobolinks** is still out of order, which means, no **Bobolinks** got caught.

In the evening, we went for a stroll to the harbor to enjoy the cool air of gathering dusk. We were entertained by 2 **Green Herons** patrolling the shore for their evening meals. At times, they were crouching and stalking in the excruciatingly slow manner of herons. At other times, they would take long strides on their yellow legs, scurrying behind a jumping frog. A few **Beavers** were swimming in the harbor as well, cruising back and forth. An out-of-place yellow patch inside a floating dock attracted our attention. It turned out to be the throat and lower jaw of a **Blanding's Turtle!** We wondered how it got into the dock while admiring its reptilian calm. After a long time (for humans), it finally decided to move and gently eased itself into the water. If you allow me to keep the digression on reptiles, we also enjoyed watching a convulsed, roiling mass of approximately 20 very big **Water Snakes**. It must be mating time for them again!

August 26 - Sightings

Thunder rumbled most of the morning, but, as usual for Prince Edward Point, nary a drop of rain fell! So, we opened the nets and got the amazing haul of 9 birds (including 4 recaptures) for the whole morning! Needless to add, there wasn't much bird activity in the air, in the trees, or on the ground. The most notable birds were a **Wilson's Warbler** and a **Myrtle Warbler**. Rain eventually came to our little point, naturally, in the afternoon.

August 25 - Sightings

Today, bird activity was better than yesterday, with, notably, a good "crop" of warblers, including the first Pine Warblers of the season. In total, 10 species of warblers were detected this morning: (in systematic order) **Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, Magnolia, Black-throated Blue, Myrtle, Blackburnian, Pine, Black-and-white Warblers, American Redstart, Northern Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroat**. A **Veery** and a **Wood Thrush** were captured as well, the first individuals of the fall for both species.

Due to technical problems, we haven't been able to broadcast bobolink songs for the last 2 days. As a result, no **Bobolink** got lured into the nets. However, this morning, a nice flock of 7 (seven!) **Baltimore Orioles** got trapped all at once.

The most interesting observation of the day, though, is, undoubtedly, an adult **White-crowned Sparrow**. It is a very early date for this species, which usually arrives in late September.

August 24 - Sightings

What a quiet day! There was really barely any birds this morning, as attested by the meager catch of 9 birds and 5 recaptures. The highlights of the day were the first **Wilson's Warbler** of the fall, a young male, and a juvenile **Bald Eagle**, flying low over Lake Ontario and passing by at eye level. Let's hope for a little more action in the following days!

August 23 - Sightings

Despite (or maybe because of) the cold front and the strong North wind, it was a very quiet morning today. We had the lowest banding total so far for the season, with only 21 birds captured. However, we had our first **Tennessee Warbler, Nashville Warbler, and Myrtle (Yellow-rumped) Warbler**. We also got the first **Hermit Thrush** of the season. Only one **Least Flycatcher** was banded, and no other **Flycatchers** were detected, quite a drop from the previous days. Likewise, no **Bobolinks** were captured or, even, observed today!

The North wind did blow away the humidity in the air, bringing a satisfying sigh of relief from the humans at the station.

August 22 - Sightings

It was a quiet morning today, with very little activity. We caught a fair number of **Bobolinks** (17 birds), which represents almost half the daily total. The most notable observations were of an **Osprey, a Mourning Warbler** (captured), and a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** (also caught and duly banded!).

August 21 - Sightings

With another hot morning and a strong southerly breeze, there was not much change from yesterday in terms of diversity. More birds were banded in total, though, with 81 individuals of 21 species, the highest total so far. Once again, **Bobolinks** provided the bulk of it, with 30 birds banded. A new species of warbler was banded for this fall, a young male **Blackburnian Warbler**. Still quite a few **Flycatchers**, but today, **Trail's** dominated over the **Yellow-bellied** and **Least Flycatchers**. We also had 2 **Warbling** and one **Red-eyed Vireos** in our nets.

August 20 - Sightings

Today was a hot day and, if it weren't for a few flocks of **bobolinks**, it would have been very quiet indeed. But we lured in quite a few *Dolichonix orizivorus*, with a total of 20 banded. Even if they don't wear the striking black-and-white plumage of the spring adult males, they are quite handsome in their

yellow jackets with black stripes. And holding a bobolink in one's hand with the thought of its travel all the way to the pampas of Argentina is a moving experience!

Still the same cohort of **flycatchers** around. The addition today was **Red-eyed** and **Warbling Vireos**, one **Swainson's Thrush**, and one female **Black-throated Blue Warbler**.

While opening the nets at sunrise, I was treated by the incongruous spectacle of 5 **Wild Turkeys** exploding very loudly from their tree roost! We often forget that these big birds like to perch high to spend the night, safely away from any marauding predator...

August 19 - Sightings

The small island/sandbar next to Sweetman Island off in the distance from the station is again covered with **Double-crested Cormorants**, maybe 10,000 strong! A few birds of prey were seen today: one **Northern Harrier**, one **Broad-winged Hawk**, and one **Merlin** who flew fast just above the "bobolink" nets!

A **Black-billed Cuckoo** got caught in a net but, unfortunately for us, managed to escape before we could put our banding hands on it. We got the same species of **Flycatchers** than yesterday, with, in addition, an **Eastern Wood-pewee** (and, of course, **Eastern Kingbirds**, quite noisy and common around the station). A few **Blue Jays** were heard, as well as one **Common Raven**. A small numbers of **swallows** are around, including a couple of **Purple Martins**, some **Cliff Ss** and **Barn Swallows**. Interestingly, a **Red-breasted Nuthatch** was heard, as well as a **White-breasted Nuthatch**. The first **Black-and-white Warbler** of the fall was captured today. But there was less warblers around.

At dusk, a small group of five **Common Nighthawks** were seen flying low and close before disappearing into the ether, while a full (?) moon hung yellow in the sky.

August 18, 2013 sightings

Migration monitoring started today. As expected for a mid-August day, it was relatively quiet. Nonetheless, quite a few species of warblers were detected, as well as flycatchers: **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** (definitively migrants, as none breeds in the county), **Traill's Flycatcher** (either Alder or Willow), **Least Flycatcher**; **Yellow Warbler**, **Chestnut-sided Warbler**, **Magnolia Warbler**, **American Redstart**, **Ovenbird**, **Northern Waterthrush**, **Common Yellowthroat**, **Canada Warbler**. Despite the diversity, numbers were small, though. A few **bobolinks** were detected, with 2 banded.