

Volume 17 No. 2

Summer 2008

IPBO Newsletter

Innis Point Bird Observatory

News and Announcements

Fall Training Sessions

Training sessions for all interested volunteers will be held this fall. Training will focus on extraction and identification of fall migrants, and scribing. Two sessions will be held in September: Saturday September 13th, and Saturday September 20th. Please note that training sessions will have an 8AM gate time. To sign up please contact Celia Bodnar at bodnarm@magma.ca.

Volunteer Appreciation BBQ

Since the previously planned date for this event was a rainout, we will be holding our annual volunteer appreciation and member BBQ on Saturday September 27th. Everyone who has participated in any one of the Innis Point monitoring programs is welcome to attend. It will be a great way to end off summer programs and training, and to kick start the Saw-whet Owl program, which begins that night. Gate time for the BBQ is 4PM. Please contact Celia Bodnar at bodnarm@magma.ca if you

plan to attend, and indicate whether you prefer veggie or meat burger.

Congratulations Yvonne!

We send a word of thanks again to Yvonne Benting, our SMMP 2008 BIC, and a congratulations as well, as

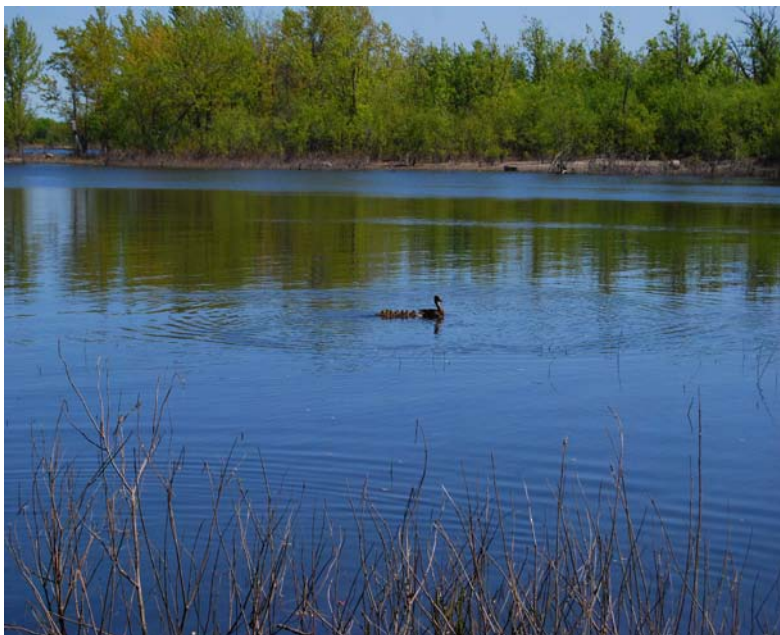


Photo: Yvonne Benting



Photo: Yvonne Benting

Yvonne has just received her UK Master Bander's (Ringer's?) Permit. The criteria and testing there are far more stringent than here in North America, so that's certainly a notable accomplishment. All the best in future banding endeavours.

2008 SMMP: A weekly summary

by Yvonne Benting

Week 1

The 2008 season started on the 24th April and was a warm and sunny day. Water levels were still high and rubber boots were necessary to access the nets at swamp. In fact the water level was so high that one of the nets at Oak Ridge had to remain closed for the first few days as there was six inches of water underneath it. The census route was also impassable in places even when wearing rubber boots. We banded 45 birds on the first day, 20 of which were Black-capped Chickadees. Was it going to be a Chickadee year we were asking ourselves. Bird of the day that first day was a Rusty Blackbird which was caught and banded.



During the week we banded another 59 Chickadees. Weather was very variable from hot, sunny days to cold and windy. There were still quite a variety of ducks and grebes out on the river. A group of 20 Horned Grebes with 3 Red-necked Grebes on Saturday 26th April were nice to see. The first

Black-and White Warbler was spotted on the 27th.

Total banded so far: 148 birds of 19 species

Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): 69

Week 2

The site was closed for three days from 30th April to 2nd May due to military activity and so we were unable to band during that period. The first day back it was disappointing to only be able to open the nets for half an hour before the rain started. Throughout the week a good variety of species were banded with more warbler species being both observed and banded – Palm, Myrtle, Black-and-white, Black-throated Green, Yellow

and Nashville Warblers, plus Northern Waterthrush and bird of the week Pine Warbler, only the sixth to be banded at IPBO. Returning birds were also interesting, a Yellow-shafted Flicker was captured that was banded here last year and also a returning Black-and-White Warbler which was also banded here last year.

Total banded so far: 245 birds of 31 species

Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): 89

Week 3

On Sunday 11th May, as the sun rose over the river, we enjoyed the fabulous sight and sound of 6,000 Canada Geese migrating



Photo: Yvonne Benting

overhead. As that day was Mother's Day, two of the volunteers bought homemade treats with them – Blueberry Muffins from Louise and cookies from Soo – much appreciated by the rest of us. American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat and Chestnut-sided Warbler and Least Flycatcher all arrived this week. A further day was lost due to site closure. Most interesting bird of the week was the capture of a Tree Swallow that had first been banded in a nestbox here back in June 2004 making it almost four years old. A female Northern Parula was captured and banded on the 14th May and good numbers of Yellow Warbler were present.

Total banded so far: 353 birds of 39 species

Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): 106

Week 4

Flocks of Blue Jays were seen frequently overhead and on the 15th May we caught and banded 5 in the nets at swamp. All were second year birds. We reached the halfway point of SMMP on the 16th May and were asking ourselves where are all the birds? Is migration slow everywhere this year? Wood Thrush arrived this week. The 17th May saw an influx of Baltimore Orioles, we caught 10, two of which had been banded here in 2007. They were a nice mix of ages and sexes thus enabling the volunteers to make direct comparisons

between males and females and second year and after second year birds.



Photo: Yvonne Benting

The highlight of this year's SMMP for the people present on the 18th May was excellent views of a Red-headed Woodpecker, followed shortly after by close views of a Scarlet Tanager. We had a total of 59 birds on EDT that day but only captured 15 birds. We were completely rained out on the 19th May and were unable to open any nets. Wilson's Warbler and Red-eyed Vireo arrived this week.

Total banded so far: 453 birds of 46 species

Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): 115



Photo: Yvonne Benting

Week 5

Wind and rain meant net closures and another 3 days site closure due to military activity, making for a disappointing weekly banding total of 74 birds. A Purple Martin was sighted here for the first time this spring on the 24th May. It was, unfortunately, chased away by the Tree Swallows but we live in hope that they will re-colonise our very desirable martin houses one day. Blackpoll Warblers, Traill's Flycatchers and Chimney Swifts arrived. 80 Brant were seen and heard heading North. Students from Nepean High School visited on the 28th May, and they saw a few birds in hand and enjoyed a tour of the site. 3 Eastern Kingbirds were captured and banded. Bill and I banded the Eastern Bluebird nestlings from the boxes near

the gate.

Total banded so far: 527 birds of 52 species

Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): 119

Week 6 and last few days

Well, we ended Spring banding as we began – wearing rubber boots! On the 29th May as I arrived back at the banding shed after letting the volunteers back out, an Osprey was sitting on the platform outside with another flying round calling. A really interesting bird captured during the last few days of the Program was an American Pipit, only the 8th ever banded at IPBO and the first ever during spring. Captures were variable during the last week and despite having all the nets open some

days we only caught a handful of birds. Cedar Waxwings became regulars in the net during the last week but not in large numbers as in some years. My last day as BIC ended, quite literally, with a splash when I managed to slip off the boardwalk and into the swamp! Oops!

*Total banded so far: ** birds of ** species*

*Total species seen (general observations, census and banding): ***

Even though the numbers of birds were well down on previous years I must say that I enjoyed my stay at IBPO immensely. What a fabulous site to have the privilege to stay at. Thanks must go to all the volunteers for their hard work: both to old hands who have been coming along for years and to people who came along for the first time this year – without you all it would be impossible to run the SMMP. Many thanks also to the IPBO directors for all their valuable help and advice, taking me grocery shopping and for my weekly shower!



Photo: Yvonne Benting

Become a Member of Innis Point Bird Observatory!
Support volunteers working to better understand what's happening to bird populations

Please remember to send in your 2008 membership

Innis Point Bird Observatory

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Kanata, Ontario

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Membership Categories: Annual Membership: \$20, Contributing: \$25, Sustaining: \$50, Life: \$300.

IPBO Hats for Sale!

Have you got a hat ready to keep the sun off this summer? If not, consider buying an IPBO cap and helping to support the station programs. Hats are available at the station and cost only \$20. Ask for one today!



Photo: Suzanne Deschenes