

2016

## Inland Flyway Review: Spring 2016- Lincoln Land Community College Bird Banding Station

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During 2015 (mostly in fall), preliminary banding efforts were undertaken at a new location within the park boundaries (LSCMP). Although the Lat-Long coordinates are the same for this new site as the old site (MBMP), it is about 0.64 km NE of MBMP. The habitat is mainly old field and meadow (some seasonally wet), with dogwood and sumac thickets, cottonwood rows, and a row of planted (in the 1990s) pines, adjacent to the "Meadow Loop" trail in the nature area. A large cattail marsh is approximately 100 m to the north and west, and a channel about 10 m wide is along the southern boundary of the area. Locations for a total of 17.5 nets were established, within an area of approximately three acres.

The GPS coordinates of the "centroid" are: 42° 34' 45.0" N, 82° 48' 9.2" W. Results of this preliminary effort in 2015 included 73 birds of 23 species banded on a single spring day (9 May), and 632 birds of 54 species banded on 14 fall days (6 Sep - 25 Oct); 1006 net hours, and a capture rate of 66.9 b/100nh. Four birds were recaptured that had originally been banded at MBMP in previous years: Yellow Warbler, Song Sparrow, Brown-headed Cowbird, and American Goldfinch.

As with previous banding at this park, an effort was made to band two days each week during Apr, May, and the first week of Jun in 2016. Out of a possible 18 days during that period, only 12 days were operated due partly to not getting enough volunteers out to set up the site (which must be taken down completely each day), but mostly due to uncooperative weather. Wintry conditions returned for the first half of Apr, and wetter and cooler than normal conditions forced an 11-day gap in coverage in early May. The average number of days the MBMP station was operated over 10 spring seasons was 15.

With this being the first full season of effort at this new site, it makes no sense to compare numbers to the old site which, although very close by, has different habitat. Some differences were noted, however, that may or may not prove to be consistent over time, perhaps based on habitat. The 68 (5.24/100nh) Yellow Warblers was well above the 10-year average at MBMP of 37.4, and even exceeded the record of 59 (4.75/100nh) there. This seems even more remarkable given that this area is half the size of the MBMP site. The

number of Golden-crowned Kinglets (41) also exceeded all previous spring (but not fall) records at MBMP. A third species in this category is Baltimore Oriole, with the 24 banded at LSCMP exceeding the MBMP 10-yr average of 10.3, and also breaking the record of 15. Captures that were considered unusual included a Black-billed Cuckoo, 2 Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers, an Eastern Kingbird, 5 Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and a female Blackpoll Warbler. Both the total banded in spring 2016, and the number of species captured, was above the 10-yr average for MBMP.

Interesting recaptures involved a number of birds originally banded 0.4 mi away at MBMP, including: a Downy Woodpecker banded in 2010, a Warbling Vireo banded in 2014, a Black-capped Chickadee banded in 2014, a House Wren banded in 2014, an American Robin banded in 2013, three Gray Catbirds banded in 2014, a Yellow Warbler banded in 2012 and another banded in 2014, a Northern Cardinal banded in 2012 and another banded in 2014, two Song Sparrows banded in 2014, six Red-winged Blackbirds (one in 2010, three in 2012, one in 2013, and one in 2014), a Baltimore Oriole banded in 2014, and 8 American Goldfinches (two in 2010, one in 2011, one in 2012, two in 2013, and two in 2014).

**Lincoln Land Community College 394-0893  
Bird Banding Station (LLCC BBS)**

Springfield, Sangamon County, IL

Coordinator: **Vernon Kleen**

Banders: **Vernon Kleen and Anthony Rothering**

Assistants: Tyler Beckerman, Paul Biggers, Mel Breyer, Stevie Emmons, Libby Errickson, Joe Gardner, Mike Kennedy, Jim Mordacq, Ron Moorman, Nancy Redman, Lizzie Roehrs, Susan Shaw and Kelsey Thornton.

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The Lincoln Land Community College Bird Banding Station (LLCC BBS) was initiated in the fall of 2012 and has been in operation each spring and fall ever since; 2016 marked the fourth full spring season. The station's habitats and general description were described in the

2015 IFR fall report. The 2016 season was cool, damp and windy and, like 2015, migrant birds were slow to arrive and quick to depart. Several expected species were neither caught nor seen this spring. The capture of birds this year was less than it could have been because of 1) fairly strong to extremely strong winds on 12 days and moderate winds on another 29 days, 2) drizzles, rain or thunderstorms on nine more days, forcing the cancellation or early shut down of station operations; and 3) the annual spring burn of at least half of the prairie (which is usually the best habitat for several species, especially goldfinches and the less common sparrow). Only five (of 11) nets in the woodlands could be considered consistently productive.

Despite the negative aspects of the 2016 spring, more birds were caught (1858) this year than any previous spring; however, 494 of them were juncos. The 79 species banded was the station's second best season (and four additional species were known to have been in the nets but escaped prior to extraction). In addition to the birds banded, another 198 were captured as returns (four from the fall of 2012) and another 788 as repeats. This spring was a good season for several groupings of birds, especially kinglets, thrushes, mimids, common warblers, blackbirds and some sparrows, but a very poor season for flycatchers, vireos, most warblers and the sparrows. New species banded at the station were Prairie Warbler (not caught in the prairie) and Dickcissel, bringing the station total to 115. Of the three known casualties, one was killed by a deer attempting to eat it (personal observation); another was the victim of a Cooper's Hawk (one of the four species above in the net that escaped prior to extraction). There was only one day this spring with 100 or more birds banded: 4 Apr (127 - 100 of which were juncos). Of course, there were several days in which five or fewer birds were banded. The American Goldfinch is often the most common bird banded; however, because of this year's change in the prairie habitat, its numbers were way down and it only ranked as the 12<sup>th</sup> most common species this spring.

The four issues that traditionally affect the banding operations each spring (and in some cases the number of nets used each day) were wind, rain, people and deer. On the positive side, the station now operates out of a student-constructed and fully functional banding

facility which is especially useful on damp, windy and/or cold days and serves as a "garage" for the station's bird-mobile (ATV).

**Acknowledgments.** Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered time at and visited the LLCC BBS. Special thanks to 1) the Lincoln Land Community College for permitting the station on its campus; 2) Anthony Rothering of the LLCC biology staff for near-daily assistance; 3) the many regular volunteer assistants (listed in the heading of this report); 4) the students and staff at the LLCC Work Force Careers Center for completing the construction of the "banding facility"; 5) everyone who donated "wish list" items for the facility; 6) everyone else who helped and/or visited the station (including many LLCC classes and independent students and faculty; and 7) the Rotary Club of Springfield South and the Phillip's 66 Company for providing grants.

**World Bird Sanctuary (Migration Blitz) 383-0903**

Valley Park, St. Louis County, MO

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The "Migration Blitz" banding site at the World Bird Sanctuary is approximately 27 acres in an undeveloped area of the sanctuary's 310 acres. The site consists of an oak-hickory, forested, dry creek on a north-east facing ravine in the Meramec River Valley. The 2016 spring results are part of a 10-yr study initiated in 2009 that focuses on the use of the study area by passing migrants. This year 39 migrant species were captured; some of the special interest species were: Canada Warbler, Connecticut Warbler, Mourning Warbler and Western Palm Warbler. We also had 10 Wood Thrush (one of our target species). In years past, we have had significant numbers of Tennessee and Nashville warblers. This year, the capture rate of Tennessee Warblers was double that of the Nashville Warbler. The 2016 migration season appeared to be more "spread out" compared to years past and, during the blitz, there were two rained-out dates and another with a significant thunderstorm.