

2016

## Inland Flyway Review: Spring 2016- World Bird Sanctuary

Linda C. Tossing

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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

Coordinator: **Linda C. Tossing**

Chief assistants: Valerie Geile, Jean Favara, Colleen Crank, Pat Lueders

Address: 125 Bald Eagle Ridge Road,  
Valley Park, MO 63088

Email address: [birdbanding@worldbirdsanctuary.org](mailto:birdbanding@worldbirdsanctuary.org)

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.

**Bruns Tract Conservation Area 383-0932**

Green Ridge, Pettis County, MO

Coordinator: **Veronica Mecko**

Chief assistants: Araks Ohanyan and Katie Leonard

Address: Missouri River Bird Observatory,

P. O. Box 16,

Arrow Rock, MO 65320

Email address: veronica.mecko@mrbo.org

This was the third year (2016) for spring migration banding at Bruns Tract Conservation Area. The station is in the center of a 40-acre prairie reconstruction with vegetation that is predominantly native grasses and forbs except for the woody shrubs and a few small trees that grow along the draw that bisects the property from northeast to southwest.

Some of the station's more interesting bandings for the season included an ASY male Sora and first-time captures of a Myrtle Warbler, Traill's Flycatcher, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Yellow-shafted Flicker, Northern Waterthrush (4) and Wilson's Snipe (2). Some of the more noteworthy returns from previous spring bandings were two Eastern Meadowlarks (a male and female from 2014 and 2015, respectively); two male Common Yellowthroats from 2015; two male Dickcissels from 2014; a Savannah Sparrow from 2015 and two Swamp Sparrows from 2015. A SY male Red-winged Blackbird with a deformed foot (from a previous injury that had healed) was also captured.

**Acknowledgments:** Thanks to Ryan Steffens and other members of the Hi-Lonesome chapter of Master Naturalists who have volunteered at the banding station.

**Mora Conservation Area 383-0931**

Cole Camp, Benton County, MO

Coordinator: **Veronica Mecko**

Chief assistants: Araks Ohanyan, Katie Leonard

Address: Missouri River Bird Observatory

P. O. Box 16, Arrow Rock, MO 65320

Email address: veronica.mecko@mrbo.org

This was the fourth season (2016) for spring migration banding at Mora Conservation Area. The southern half of the banding station is prairie restoration that has eastern red cedar and sericea lespedeza encroaching on the native vegetation. The northern half is shrubby and has small deciduous trees scattered throughout. A

shallow draw runs between the southern and northern areas and creates standing water in the northern area when there is a lot of rain. A gravel road crosses the northern area.

Some of the station's more interesting bandings for the season included ten Northern Waterthrushes (compared to only one for all of the first three years), and first-time captures of a Downy Woodpecker, Gray-cheeked Thrush and Nashville Warbler. Some of the more noteworthy returns from previous spring bandings were a Bell's Vireo (banded in 2013 and captured every year since), two male Common Yellowthroats (banded in 2013 and 2015), two Field Sparrows (both males, one that had been banded in 2013 and captured every year at least once) and a female Northern Cardinal (banded in 2015).

For the third year in a row the biology class from Calhoun High School visited the site for a banding demonstration.

**Acknowledgments:** Thanks to Ryan Steffens and other members of the Hi-Lonesome chapter of Master Naturalists who have volunteered at the banding station.

**Warner Park Nature Center 363-0865**

Nashville, Davidson County, TN

Coordinators: **Sandy Bivens and Kathy Shaw**

Chief assistants: Diana McLusky, Ethel Kawamura, Susan Bradfield, John Kell, Lauren Hoffman, Kim Bailey

Address: 7311 Hwy 100, Nashville, TN

Email address: sandy.bivens@nashville.gov

The Warner Park Nature Center Banding Station was established in 1982 with support from Dr. Katherine Goodpasture, Michael Bierly, Dr. Charles Farrell, Dr. Ann Tarbell, the Warner Park Nature Center staff and the Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation Department. The banding station is on the nature center grounds and available to the public for observation and education. This past April, 596 visitors attended banding programs and/or learned about birds and bird research at the station.

Some of the more noteworthy returns from previous spring bandings were a Red-bellied Woodpecker (banded in 2012), a Kentucky Warbler (banded as an ASY M in 2015) and two White-throated Sparrows (banded in April 2010).