

2018

Inland Flyway Review- Fall 2017 Report- Sand Bluff Bird Observatory

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ed on 15 Aug 2011 was recaptured on 3 Sep and five others recaptured had been banded in 2013 (1) and 2014 (4).

I want to thank the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority for purchasing 15 nets at the beginning of 2017 for the operation of the station. Although 8 of these nets have already been destroyed (mostly by White-tailed Deer), this was a significant financial help for continuing research in the Metropark. Thank you also to the park management for giving permission to band in the park, and opening the park consistently for us at 6:00 am (EDT). And also thank you to the staff at the park nature center, especially Julie Champion, for supporting us for many years.

Palatial Woodland Estate (PWE) 391-0821

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This was the third full season of fall migration banding at the Palatial Woodland Estate (PWE). The fall of 2016 was an exceptionally good year, apparently, when compared to the previous fall and this past year. 2016 saw a very strong thrush migration, and large numbers of locally produced hatch-year birds, likely a result of the Brood V emergence of periodic (17-yr) Cicadas. As noted in last fall's report, I manage the power line corridor adjacent to my 1,000 ft. lane as a stable shrubland and especially encourage the abundance of spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*) and other native fruiting species attractive to thrushes during their fall migration.

It appeared there would be another good spicebush crop this year. But then September turned unseasonably hot and dry, with winds coming mostly from the south. Much of the spicebush fruit shriveled and lost color during this period, perhaps the reason why the numbers of all migrant thrush species fell substantially from the previous year, and somewhat lower than in fall 2015.

But most species of migrant birds fell off substantially, not just the thrushes. Numbers of Tennessee, and Magnolia warblers and Ovenbirds, were no-

tably lower. White-throated Sparrows went from 39 in fall 2016 to only 6 in fall 2017. Increasing species were uncommon. Most surprising was the banding of 15 Eastern Phoebe, after only 3 had been captured over the previous two fall seasons. The best bird of the season was a hatch year Black-billed Cuckoo, the first ever banded at the PWE.

There were a number of visitors during the season, including families with young children, always welcome. Thanks to Rebecca Wood for her assistance.

Sand Bluff Bird Observatory (SBBO) 422-0891

Shirland, Winnebago County, IL

Coordinator/Bander: Mike Eickman

Assistants: Lee Johnson, Lynda Johnson, John Longhenry, Steve Gent, Steve Torre, Steve Reichel, Ivy Otto, Megan Pease, Dave Seal, Justin Keller, Nora Loncar, Sharon McCoy and especially Deb Eickman.

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As noted last spring, the Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, located in northern Illinois on the Colored Sands Forest Preserve (a Forest Preserves in Winnebago County), is now managed by Mike Eickman through a Station Permit. The spring report provided habitat descriptions and other details.

This fall's banding season was a rather frustrating season; a wide range of weather influenced the total number of birds captured. Nine days were shortened by either excessive heat or rain. The station's best day was 192 birds; 50 Swainson's Thrushes accounted for 26% of the total catch that day. The season total was 472 birds fewer than that of last year and may be attributed to the lack of Chipping Sparrows: 341 in 2016 compared to only 29 in this year.

There were two encounters of special note: a Northern Saw-Whet Owl banded 28 Sep 2017 near Duluth, MN, was caught on 19 Oct 2017; another Saw-whet returned to SBBO where it was originally banded on the same date back in 2015 under Lee G. Johnson's permit. As usual, the assistance of many dedicated volunteers, in addition to those listed above, was very much appreciated.