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Inland Flyway Review Fall 2016 Report- Palatial Woodland Estate

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new site in fall 2015 (6 Sep – 25 Oct). Although number of net hours was 125% higher than in 2015, the total number of birds was only 63% higher, and the overall capture rate was actually lower (see Table 1).

This fall's 142 (6.34b/100nh) Swainson's Thrush was well above the 10-yr average at MBMP of 34.7 (2.73b/100nh), and last fall's total of 32 (3.18 b/100nh) here, and even exceeded the annual record of 53 (3.00b/100nh) at MBMP from 2009. This seems even more remarkable given that this new site covers half the area of the MBMP site. Equally amazing was the record number of Gray-cheeked Thrush: 48 (2.14 b/100nh) this fall, compared with 16 (1.59 b/100nh) last fall, and the MBMP record of 32 (3.00 b/100nh) from 2005. The number of Golden-crowned Kinglet (75; 3.35b/100nh) and Ruby-crowned Kinglet (91; 4.06b/100nh) were both above the 10-yr average at MBMP (66: 5.19 b/100nh and 48; 3.80 b/100nh, respectively). Warbler numbers were considered low, with 178 individuals of 18 species (143 individuals of 18 species in 2015 with only partial effort). Most notable was only 29 (1.29b/100nh) Nashville Warblers this fall, after a total of 46 (4.56 b/100nh) last fall. By any measure, sparrow numbers were abysmal. The 10-yr average for White-throated Sparrow at MBMP is 217 (17.1 b/100nh), and in the partial season last year, 61 (6.07 b/100nh) were banded; only 29 (1.29 b/100nh) were banded this fall. Song and Swamp sparrows were much less numerous than at MBMP, but this is expected due to the drier habitats at LSCMP. The total number banded at LSCMP in fall 2016 (1065) was far below the 10-yr average for MBMP (1714), but the number of species captured (72), was above the 10-yr average (70.3).

Captures that were considered unusual included Sharp-shinned Hawk, Black-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Screech-Owl, 2 Northern Saw-whet Owl (a first for either site!), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Brown Thrasher and Purple Finch. Given that this site is fairly new, there were no interesting recaptures this fall.

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The Palatial Woodland Estate (PWE) is located in the unglaciated hill region of southeastern Ohio. Over 70% of the county is forested, much of the land being in state forests and wildlife areas, as well as paper industry holdings. There are no large towns, only one traffic light in the county, and it is the last county in Ohio to have a McDonald's opening a couple of years back.

Fall 2016 was only the second season in operation for the PWE station, following my retirement from teaching in May 2015. Nets are located along the lane leading to the house, approximately 1000 ft in length, which is also the right-of-way for the power line to the home. The property is at the end of the township road, so there is no traffic. I maintain the habitat as a stable shrubland under the powerlines, with the gravel lane on one side and a bush-hogged net lane between the shrubs and forest. Fifteen nets are used, three sets with three nets each and three of two nets. This was two more nets than used in 2015. The shrub layer under the powerline and the forest edge is dominated by spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), which makes it a very productive habitat for banding thrushes in the fall, with bright red fruit maturing by September. And thrushes, predictably, were the most numerous species by far banded in 2016, as they were the previous year. Hermit Thrush are always the least numerous, perhaps since by the time they arrive the fruit is gone. Wood Thrush numbers are high due to them being both an abundant local breeding species and a common migrant. I manage the shrub layer to increase the spicebush, dogwoods (*Cornus spp.*) and sumacs (*Rhus spp.*), while eradicating invasives.

Vinton County was also within the region for the Brood V emergence of periodic (17-yr) cicadas. They were gone by the time of fall migration, but the number of resident species individuals banded was also up dramatically from the previous year.

The cicada abundance seems to have benefitted both year-round residents such as Tufted Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch and Downy Woodpecker, but also Neotropical breeders such as Hooded Warbler and Ovenbird. An Ohio University ornithologist researching Hooded Warblers in a nearby state forest told me the species had zero nest failures for their first attempts, astonishing in comparison to her previous multiple years of studying there.

Uncommon species banded this season were a Connecticut Warbler, only my third ever and first in fall, and a Philadelphia Vireo. Thanks to a number of visitors I had through the season, and to the assistance of my friend Rebecca Wood, who came often to help out despite her broken foot.

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Bird Banding Station (LLCC BBS)
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Assistants: Paul & Ruth Biggers, Stevie Emmons, Wayne Huckabee, Logan McHenry, Mike Kennedy, Ron Moorman, Angie Muhs, Jim Mordacq, Bruce & Nancy Redman, Andrew & Bob Sharp and Susan Shaw.

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 fall season. The station's habitats and general description were described in the 2015 IFR Fall Report (*NABB* 41:No.1). The 2016 season was warm, wet and windy, and, like 2015, migrant birds were slow to arrive and quick to depart. During the season there were four days in which 100 or more birds were captured and the highest number (241) was set on 19 Oct. In contrast, there were six days in which five or fewer birds were captured. The 78 species banded this year was typical for a fall season but could easily have been much higher with several expected species avoiding the nets this fall.

The average of 31.8 birds per day was typical to past fall seasons but well below the 41.7 of 2014

and could have been higher had it not been for "shortened" days because of strong winds and rain. Although the station is still rather "young", it is difficult to add new species – but three new species were captured (Belted Kingfisher, Grasshopper Sparrow and Eurasian Tree Sparrow) this fall. In terms of species caught, there were 32 woodpeckers (of four species), 28 flycatchers (of four species), nine vireos (of four species), 72 wrens (of four species), 131 thrushes (of seven species), 347 warblers (of 19 species), and 775 sparrows (of 13 species). Several hummingbirds caught in special traps were also banded at the station but not included in the station report.

The five issues that continued to affect results were wind, rain, leaves in the nets, people and deer. Very little could be done about the wind and rain (which either cancelled operations on some days or forced early shut-downs on other days); leaves caused two problems: the birds avoided nets full of leaves and nets where people ("leaf-extractors") had a prolonged presence. As for people, there were five types: full classrooms (that were welcome), interested students (who were also welcome), periodic wanderers, leaf extractors (a must have) and those walking dogs. The periodic wanderers usually just passed through and had little impact on moving birds; however, those with dogs that were permitted to run free were responsible for some damaged nets (but not as bad as the deer). At the LLCC BBS station, deer are so tame they are almost petable.

Two wonderful assets the station has been blessed with are the availability of a lighted, "student-built" banding facility with indoor and outdoor banding arrangements, and a "bird-mobile" (Polaris) for use in operating and checking nets in a more distant habitat.

Acknowledgments: 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) and the students and classes that visited the station; 4) everyone who donated "wish list" items for the facility; and 5) those who provided grants and special donations.