

2020

Inland Flyway Review- Spring 2019 Report- Lincoln Land Community College Bird Banding Station (LLCC BBS)

North American Bird Bander

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changes from the previous year's numbers, with Wood Thrush nearly doubled – 35 in 2019, 18 in 2018 – and White-throated Sparrow nearly halved – 15 in 2019, 29 in 2018. The Best bird of the season was an Orange-crowned Warbler. Thanks to my assistants, Aubrey Bartman and Rachel Brooks, wildlife students at Hocking College, and to my regular visitors, Mike Wren and Rebecca Wood, who provided company in what was a pretty slow season.

**IL–SAND BLUFF 422-0891
BIRD OBSERVATORY**

Shirland, Winnebago County, IL

Coordinator/Bander: Mike Eickman*

Chief Assistants: Dave Seal, Lee Johnson, Lynda Johnson, John Longhenry, Steve Gent, Steve Torre, Justin Keller, Nora Longcar, Steve Reichel, Ivy Otto, Sharon McCoy and Deb Eickman. Much thanks for all of their support.

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Sand Bluff Bird Observatory is located on Colored Sands Forest Preserve in cooperation with the Forest Preserves of Winnebago County in northern Illinois. This area is in the Sugar River bottoms and consists of a sand prairie and hardwood forests. Banding has been conducted here since 1967.

Much like last year spring weather at Sand Bluff Bird Observatory was extremely frustrating and compared to 2018 this year's spring numbers were dismal.

Stationary fronts and storms in the southern US seemed to hold back birds and capture numbers were down for most of March and April. Our area weather for March and April consisted of chilly, cold, rainy, icy and windy days. A couple days were completely lost to freezing rain and snow. Overall, we lost 21 days to weather.

Once weather patterns improved daily catches increased at the end of April and first of May. Our total of 1,354 birds representing 88 species was down 648 birds from 2018's total of 2002 birds representing 99 species. Our big days for the spring were 9 May with 152 birds captured, 11 May with 131 birds and 15 May with 136 birds.

Again, this spring Gray Catbirds topped the list followed by Slate-colored Juncos. Missing in any quantity for 2019 were thrushes with Swanson's, Veery's, Hermit's and Gray-cheek's totaling only 66 birds combined. The same four species in 2018 totaled 275 birds.

IL–SAGAWAU NATURE CENTER 414-0875

Lemont, Cook County, IL

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IL–LINCOLN LAND 394-0893

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

BIRD BANDING STATION (LLCC BBS)

Springfield, Sangamon County, IL

Coordinators/Banders: Vernon Kleen* and Anthony Rothering

Chief Assistants: Paul Biggers, Joe Gardner, Wayne Huckabee, Betty Kleen, Jim Mordacq, Nancy Redman, Susan Shaw, Trevor Slovick and Holly Thompson.

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The Lincoln Land Community College bird banding station (LLCC BBS), initiated in Sep 2012, began its fourteenth season of operations and seventh spring season on Thursday, 21 Mar 2019. The site was the same as in seasons past and mist nets were used to capture birds from near sunrise to about 11:00 hrs. on days without rain, strong winds or very cold temperatures. This spring an average of 22.7 nets were used on 49 mornings (practically all weekdays and most Saturdays) from 21 Mar through 24 May and, in most cases, in the same locations as previous seasons for 3635 nh of operation.

For the 2019 season there were no days in which 100 or more birds were banded; in contrast to past years, there were no days in which five or fewer birds were banded. The 83 species banded was second best for a spring season and could easily

have been higher. The total of 1421 birds banded was the third-best spring season. Two species, Barn Swallow and Connecticut Warbler, were new for the station bringing the cumulative total to 125 species banded.

This year's average of 29.0 birds per day ranked fourth (for the six years of records since 2014). Seasonal highlights included returns of several species banded as early as the fall of 2012 and above average numbers (compared to past years) for the Eastern Phoebe, Veery, Lincoln's and Swamp sparrows, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Cardinal and Indigo Bunting. Overall, there were new all-time highs set for nine species and ties for another seven.

An important aspect of the banding program is the capture of birds banded in seasons past. This spring, 138 were captured as "returns"; one (a Black-capped Chickadee) had been banded in the fall of 2012. Another 525 birds were captured as "repeats". Several birds were caught multiple times (some as many as eight times). Some of the most interesting returns were an Eastern Kingbird (from 2014), a Sharp-shinned Hawk (from last spring), the Black-capped Chickadee (from the fall of 2012), a Blue Jay, Northern Cardinal and House Sparrow (from 2013), Gray Catbirds (from 2015 and 2016), the Common Yellowthroat (from last fall), 8 Chipping Sparrows (from 2016 through 2018) and a Winter Wren and Red-breasted Nuthatch (from last fall).

Four issues that affected banding operations (and, in some cases, the potential number of nets used each day) were wind, rain, people and deer. Very little could be done about the wind and rain except to furl nets that had already been opened (before the late morning showers began), or, call off operations before dawn; there was an over-abundance of rain this spring. As for visiting people, there were four types: full classrooms, interested students (some earning extra classroom credits), periodic wanderers, and those with dogs. The classroom groups, students and periodic wanderers did not affect banding operations except for isolated occasions when they lingered for extended periods or staged as a group in close proximity to active

nets, especially nets close to the campus lake. Then there were two categories of people with dogs: 1) those whose dogs were either on leashes or trained not to stray and 2) those who permitted their dogs to run freely. Fortunately none of the nets were known to be damaged by running dogs this spring. And finally, there were the deer (and more deer). The only hope remained that the deer learned where the nets were when furled (and readily visible) and avoided them when unfurled (not visible). Deer were definitely responsible for the complete destruction/loss of nets (more than usual) and for large, gaping holes in others. When the deer were caught off-guard (which they sometimes were), or were in pursuit of other deer, they dispersed quickly, and a net in their dispersal path did not stop them. The deer at the banding station are so tame, they do not even flinch when someone actively tried to chase them away. On occasion deer were observed using their noses to lift up the bottom trammel of the net and slither underneath before scampering away; however, on "too many" occasions they were observed running through the nets. In addition, a hand-full of birds were also lost by deer eating them in the nets.

Finally, many thanks to everyone who volunteered time at and visited the LLCC banding station. Special thanks to a) Lincoln Land Community College for permitting the project to continue; b) Anthony Rothering (LLCC Biology Faculty) for near-daily assistance in all aspects of the project from beginning to end, for the meaningful lectures to visiting classrooms, for the presentation to the LLCC Board on the status of the station, for maintaining the feeding station and for keeping the bird feeders full; c) many regular assistants, notably Paul Biggers – including arrangements to get the "bird-mobile" to and from the shop, Joe Gardner, Wayne Huckabee along with Jim Mordacq who regularly arrived early on Wednesdays to set up the nets and for helpful improvements for station operations and safety, Carla Potts, Nancy Redman, Andrew Sharp, Susan Shaw, Trevor Slovick and Holly Thompson; d) all who donated wish-list items and necessities for the facility and station; and e) everyone else who helped and/or visited the station (including dozens of LLCC classroom

students and at least eight LLCC classes) any time during the season. Thanks, too, to everyone who provided financial support, especially to The Rotary Club of Springfield South for another grant, the Redmans for unique grants and several anonymous donors.

MO--WORLD BIRD SANCTUARY 382-0903

Valley Park, St. Louis County, MO

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The study area for the Migration Blitz is approximately 16.1ha of the 125.4ha World Bird Sanctuary. This is an oak hickory forested dry creek north-east facing ravine in an undeveloped area of the sanctuary in the Meramec River Valley (part of the Meramec Valley Important Bird Area). The results are a 5 year extension of the 10 year study started in 2009, focusing on the use of migrants of the ravine. For 2019, we had 58 different species. We continue to have a volume of Tennessee and Nashville warblers and Swainson's and Gray-cheeked thrushes. This year we also had two Wood Thrush returns. The cooler weather in April seemed to impact the migration thru St. Louis and we did not experience the volume of birds until the beginning of May.

**TN--WARNER PARK 363-0865
NATURE CENTER (WPNC)**

Nashville, Davidson County, TN

Coordinators/Banders: Sandy Bivens*, Kathy Shaw and Laura Cook

Chief assistants: Ethel Kawamura, John Kell, Diana McLusky, Susan Bradfield, Leah LaRocco and Patti Ghertner.

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Warner Park Banding Station is in its 38th year of operation. The weather cooperated nicely, and we were able to hold all six of our scheduled sessions. While our first banding session of the year netted

the most birds, a quarter of the birds caught were White-throated Sparrows, a winter resident in our area. By our last session at the end of April, we had fewer captures but our highest diversity of species. On that day, 30 Apr, we recaptured an ASY male Kentucky Warbler that we had previously caught, on the same day, in 2016. Since then, we have captured him every spring between March and June. Warner Park Banding Station is open for observation to the public and during this spring banding season, we engaged 1,276 park visitors in bird related research and programs.

In addition to our historical spring migration banding, the WPNC Banding Station engaged in several other research programs including the first Mobile Spring Migration Banding. This new spring migration project will compare species numbers and composition at a less public, more interior park location with our traditional banding station at Warner Park. During five banding sessions 39 birds of 16 species were captured along with three recaptures. A highlight included the capture of three thrush species: Wood, Swainson's, and Gray-cheeked.

Warner Park Banding Station is grateful to the dedicated team of volunteers and staff who contribute hundreds of hours at the station, bird counts, and educational programs. A special thank you to Friends of Warner Parks and the staff of Warner Park Nature Center and Metro Nashville Parks and Recreation for their continued support.

**TN--GREENWAY FARMS 375-0851
BANDING STATION**

Hixson, Hamilton County, TN

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Greenway Farms is a 220ha city park in Hixson, TN. Most of the habitat is oak-hickory forest (~40-50 years old), but there is also a 12ha overgrown field, and 11ha of mowed turf grass. The park is bounded by the North Chickamauga