

# **Migration Monitoring on Pelee Island in 2008**

**A Summary of the Spring and Fall Migrations at Fish Point  
Provincial Nature Reserve & Other Developments  
at the Pelee Island Bird Observatory in 2008**



Graeme C. Gibson & Claire Sanders  
PELEE ISLAND BIRD OBSERVATORY  
Pelee Island – Ontario - Canada



for

**Ontario Parks/Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources**

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## Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO)

Address: 585 South Shore Road, Pelee Island, Ontario, Canada N0R 1M0

Phone: 519-724-2829

Email: [claire.sanders@pibo.ca](mailto:claire.sanders@pibo.ca) – Executive Director

[graeme.gibson@pibo.ca](mailto:graeme.gibson@pibo.ca) – Managing Director

Website: [www.pibo.ca](http://www.pibo.ca)

The Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO) was established in 2003 and incorporated as a non-profit charitable organisation in 2006. PIBO's research and education mandate includes a commitment to long-term migration monitoring research on Pelee Island; long-term studies of Pelee's breeding bird communities, including endangered, threatened and species of concern; serving as an educational centre for the public, school groups and the local community; and promoting the importance of Pelee Island's unique natural heritage.

PIBO Board – Graeme Gibson, the Elder (Chair), Ramsay Cook (Treasurer), Elizabeth Agnew, Wayne Grady, David Kraus, Robert Tymstra.

Advisory Board – Margaret Atwood, Matthew Mann Gibson, Dr. David Hussell, Penny Kavanagh, Dr. Bridget Stutchbury.



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO) enjoyed an exciting and productive year of growth in 2008 and successfully advanced its research and education mandate. Thanks to the generosity of many friends and supporters, PIBO was able to carry out a wide range of activities and further its conservation mission both locally and internationally. The organisation continued to build a strong foundation in this, our sixth year of operation. This progress was bolstered considerably in 2008 when PIBO received a two-year grant from The Ontario Trillium Foundation, as well as important financial support from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Species at Risk Stewardship Fund.

During an intensive eight-month field season, staff and volunteers kept busy with the observatory's core programs – long-term migration monitoring and breeding bird studies – along with a host of new educational projects, conservation initiatives, and research studies. Whether planting trees and putting up nest boxes in May, conducting transect surveys for Species at Risk during the summer months, or tracking the migration movements of Northern Saw-whet Owls in the autumn, a group of eleven staff, interns and volunteers contributed more than 3200 field-hours to PIBO's research studies in 2008.

The spring migration program operated from April 3<sup>rd</sup> to June 14<sup>th</sup> and the fall season ran from August 1<sup>st</sup> to November 15<sup>th</sup>, for a total of 180 consecutive coverage days, excluding the summer break. In all, 194 species were documented in the official count area at Fish Point by PIBO staff and volunteers and 3505 birds of eighty-two species were banded in 6767 net-hours. Although migration activity this Fall was up noticeably from last year, it was generally quiet this Spring and considerably fewer migrants were recorded in 2008 compared to the six-year station average.

Comprehensive breeding bird studies were carried out on Pelee during the summer in partnership with the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Township of Pelee Island. PIBO staff and volunteers conducted more than 200 point-count surveys at one-hundred-and-six sites on the island in 2008 and documented evidence for eighty 'possible' nesting species. A final report on this summer's activities entitled "Breeding Bird Surveys on Pelee Island – Results from 2008 point count surveys, a status report on Species at Risk, and recommendations for future conservation efforts" was completed in December 2008.

The observatory's education and outreach programs developed in leaps-and-bounds this year. PIBO staff worked on a variety of projects highlighting the importance of habitat conservation for both migrating and nesting birds while, at the same time, encouraging the preservation of natural spaces for all wildlife. Activities included school visits to PIBO's migration station at Fish Point, classroom presentations at local secondary schools and naturalist clubs, the design and distribution of an educational brochure about Species at Risk, involvement with local municipal agencies and non-profit organisations in promoting eco-tourism in the region, PIBO's quarterly newsletter and bi-monthly column in the community Grape Vine, and many other projects both large and small.

With these positive developments, and with the support of organisations like the Nature Conservancy of Canada, Ontario Parks, the Township of Pelee Island, and our friends and patrons, PIBO was able to fulfill almost all of its objectives in 2008, and the observatory looks in good shape for the coming year.

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## **SECTION ONE - RESEARCH**

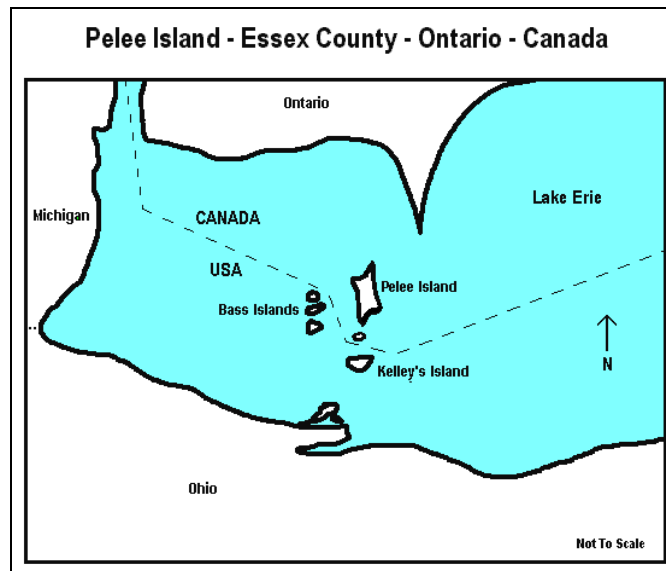
### **Migration Monitoring**

#### **Objectives**

Migration monitoring research is an effective method for tracking changes in bird populations through the counting and capture of migrants. The data collected at migration stations is used to detect population trends of small landbirds that migrate to and from their breeding and wintering grounds each year. Many songbirds summer in remote northern regions and winter in equally isolated areas, which makes it difficult to survey these species using other monitoring methods.

The Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) is the national body that oversees migration studies in Canada. The network is made up of more than twenty permanent sites established across the country that generate daily migration counts for a wide range of species. Monitoring stations are committed to collecting data that contributes to our collective understanding of the changes taking place in populations of migratory birds, as well as to document migration at the station itself, and many other bird-related studies.

PIBO completed its 6<sup>th</sup> year of Spring and Fall field operations at Fish Point in 2008. Work was conducted on seventy-three days in the Spring (April 3<sup>rd</sup> – June 14<sup>th</sup>) and one-hundred-and-seven consecutive days in the Fall (August 1<sup>st</sup> - November 15<sup>th</sup>). During this time, eleven staff and volunteers counted and recorded the number of migrants seen, heard and captured at Fish Point (within a specified 'count' area) on a daily basis. Data was collected through a combination of visual observations and standardized mist netting and bird banding.



#### **Location**

Pelee Island, Essex County, Ontario is the most southerly-inhabited land mass in Canada. Situated in the western third of Lake Erie (Lat - Long: 41° 45'00" N – 82° 41'00" W), the

island is approximately fifteen kilometres long, five kilometers wide, and lies between Leamington, Ontario on Erie's north shore and Sandusky, Ohio to the south. The island is designated as a globally Important Bird Area (IBA) by the Canadian partners of Birdlife International – the Canadian Nature Federation (CNF) and Bird Studies Canada (BSC). IBA's are described as “truly outstanding sites of significance nationally or internationally” and “sites that are exceptionally important for birds.”

PIBO's migration monitoring study is conducted at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve – Ontario Parks/Ministry of Natural Resources (115 hectares). The point forms the distinctive southern tip of Pelee Island. The main part of Fish Point is a sand spit made up of low stabilized dune ridges covered in woodland. Common Hackberry is dominant in most vegetation associations (Kamstra, Oldham & Woodliffe 1995). The official count area and census route for the study extends from the tip of the point to approximately two hundred metres north of the nature reserve parking lot (approximately 1.2 kilometres). The area is surveyed each morning during the daily walking census along a route approximately two kilometres in length. The route covers a broad range of distinct habitats including deciduous woodlands, wetlands, dunes and open beach.

The mist-netting operation is conducted north of the parking lot in an area dominated by mature hackberry/oak forest to the west and an area of abandoned pasture to the east. Ten mist nets are established along the edge of the former field, which now consists of dense rough-leaved dogwood with an average height of 4-5 metres. Other tree species in the area include black and sugar maple, american basswood, white mulberry and red ash (Kamstra, Oldham & Woodliffe 1995). The netting area is bordered by a paved road and the lakeshore on the west side, a wet forest association of red ash-silver maple to the north, similar hackberry forest to the south, and the dogwoods to the east.

### **Spring Migration Summary**

PIBO's 6<sup>th</sup> year of Spring migration monitoring coverage got underway at Fish Point on April 3<sup>rd</sup> under sunny skies and with light east winds. After waiting a few days for the island ferry to start operating, the station 'crew' from last year returned on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The field site at Fish Point and the PIBO cottage were in good shape despite the usual April flooding in the netting area.

PIBO completed seventy-three consecutive days of coverage this Spring from April 3<sup>rd</sup> to June 13<sup>th</sup>. A total of 175 species was recorded by staff in the 'count' area at Fish Point and 794 birds of sixty-nine species were banded, along with 95 recaptures, during 2569 net-hours. The average catch-rate of .31 birds/net-hour was down considerably from the station's Spring average (.58 birds/net hour).

The following summaries describe migration activity documented at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve – Ontario Parks – by PIBO staff during our official six-hour morning count period. Interesting and unusual species recorded in 2008 by staff elsewhere on Pelee Island are also mentioned.

#### **APRIL 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>**

**April 3<sup>rd</sup>** A cool but pleasant morning with just the 90-minute census completed. A variety of Spring migrants were recorded including ten waterfowl species and small numbers of **Eastern Phoebe**, **Tree Swallow**, **Golden-crowned**

**Kinglet** and **Song Sparrow**. Lots of blackbirds in the area including a few **Rusty Blackbirds**.

**April 4<sup>th</sup>** Lots of rain and just the census completed this-morning. Similar activity to the preceding day, though fewer species were recorded due to the poor weather conditions. A single **Field Sparrow** on the west beach was a treat.

**April 5<sup>th</sup>** Very foggy and not as active as yesterday, but a nice variety of species observed in small numbers including more phoebes, **American Robin**, **American Tree** and **Fox Sparrow**.



*Black-capped Chickadee*

**April 6<sup>th</sup>** Quite a lot of activity, with 46 species recorded, but generally quiet in the netting area. Eleven waterfowl species on the lake and pond along with some **Brown Creepers**, **Golden-crowned Kinglets** and **Winter Wrens** in the woods.

**April 7<sup>th</sup>** More songbirds in the area this-morning including the first **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** of the Spring.

**April 8<sup>th</sup>** Another Spring-like day with light south winds and lots of activity for early-April. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** (93 DT) were numerous along with small numbers of **Brown Creepers**, **Winter Wrens** and **Hermit Thrushes**. An early **Purple Martin** was observed at the PIBO cottage in the afternoon.

**April 9<sup>th</sup>** PIBO's first week of Spring coverage came to a close on the 9<sup>th</sup> with 41 species tallied during the morning count period along with 10 birds banded and one retrap. Light rain and brisk west winds made for a generally quiet morning. The first **Common Loon** of 2008 was recorded on census.

**APRIL 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>**

**April 10<sup>th</sup>** A cool clear morning with quite a few birds about including moderate numbers of **kinglets** and **creepers** along with ones-and-twos of **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, **Fox**, **Song** and **Swamp Sparrow**. Ten **Brown Creepers**

banded (22 DT) as well as 3 **Hermit Thrushes** (8 DT) and a **Winter Wren** (8 DT). Three **Sandhill Cranes** were observed flying over the netting area.

- April 11<sup>th</sup>** Lots of rain last night and this-morning and not much activity on census or in the netting area. A few **Yellow-rumps** and **sparrow spp** along with ten **waterfowl** species.
- April 12<sup>th</sup>** Two **American Coots** at Fox Pond and 3 **Barn Swallows** on census were both new for 2008.
- April 13<sup>th</sup>** Another rainy morning with just the census and some additional observations but no mist-netting. Forty-two species recorded on the day.
- April 14<sup>th</sup>** It was 0° C at dawn but the weather warmed up throughout the day. Still generally quiet with the exception of **Brown Creepers** (30 DT) and small numbers of **kinglets**.
- April 15<sup>th</sup>** A similar morning compared to the last few days with not much activity in the netting area or on census. A single **Tundra Swan** was one of four Spring-firsts on the day.
- April 16<sup>th</sup>** The wind was from the southwest this-morning and it was a warmer start to the day, but migrants remained fairly scarce, with just small numbers of **creepers**, **kinglets**, **Yellow-rumps** and **sparrows** observed in the count area.
- APRIL 17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**
- April 17<sup>th</sup>** It was nice and warm at dawn but there was not much activity at the Point compared to the previous few days. A **Blue-gray Gnatcatcher** and a banded **House Wren** were new for 2008, but just one **kinglet**, **Yellow-rumped Warbler** and **White-throated Sparrow** were observed.
- April 18<sup>th</sup>** A similar day to the 17<sup>th</sup> with just a few migrants in the area including one **warbler** and four **sparrow** spp. Eight birds were banded and 44 species were observed during the morning coverage period.
- April 19<sup>th</sup>** A small influx of birds this morning with six Spring-firsts including **Northern Mockingbird**, **Nashville**, **Palm** and **Pine Warbler**. **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** were slightly more active along with increased numbers of **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **Chipping Sparrows**.
- April 20<sup>th</sup>** A rainy day with not too much to report from the morning coverage. The skies cleared later in the day and a few Spring-firsts were observed outside the count area including **Red-shouldered Hawk**, **Black-throated Green Warbler** and **Common Yellowthroat**.
- April 21<sup>st</sup>** East winds and a balmy 10° C at dawn but very quiet in the netting area and on census. A singing **Yellow Warbler** was new for 2008.
- April 22<sup>nd</sup>** Not much of a change from the last few days with 40 species tallied in the morning and seven birds banded including a **Northern Flicker** and **Brown Thrasher**.

**April 23<sup>rd</sup>** A small group of **Sandhill Cranes** and the first **Red-headed Woodpeckers** of the Spring were noteworthy sightings on an otherwise quiet morning at the Point.

**APRIL 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>**

(not available)



*Blue-headed Vireo*

**MAY 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>**

**May 1<sup>st</sup>** The netting area was inactive this-morning and there was not much to report on census apart from a few new arrivals including **Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Lincoln's Sparrow** and **Baltimore Oriole**.

**May 2<sup>nd</sup>** Light south winds and warm dawn temperatures (17° C) made for an enjoyable morning of coverage with 63 species tallied in the count area. **Palm** and **Yellow-rumped Warblers** were active along with small numbers of seven other **warbler** species. Not many sparrows recorded but there were ones-and-twos of **Eastern Kingbird, White-eyed Vireo, Wood Thrush, Scarlet Tanager**, and a few lingering **Rusty Blackbirds**.

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>** Lots of rain and only a few migrants observed on census or in the netting area. Two **Solitary Sandpipers** at Peregrine Pond were the only notable sightings on the day. Despite the poor weather, an inquisitive group of Canadian and American members of the Institute of Journalists and Natural Resources spent part of the morning at the field station along with Point Pelee National Park Superintendent, Marian Stranak, and an associate from the Ohio State Park system.

**May 4<sup>th</sup>** It was fairly active at the Point this-morning even though the majority of migrants in the netting area remained in the canopy, which made for a quiet morning of banding. New Spring arrivals included an early **Black-billed Cuckoo, Northern Parula** and **Black-throated Blue Warbler**. Fifty-eight species were noted including nine warbler spp.

- May 5<sup>th</sup>** A similar day to the 4<sup>th</sup> with fifty-six species tallied along with five new arrivals including a banded **Yellow-breasted Chat**.
- May 6<sup>th</sup>** An enjoyable morning of activity with lots of variety on the day (67 species). Spring-firsts included **Blue-winged**, **Magnolia** and **Hooded Warbler**. A group of secondary school students from London, Ontario, visited the mist-net area mid-morning and then set-up nest boxes and worked in the vegetable garden at the PIBO cottage in the afternoon. Thanks for all your hard work!
- May 7<sup>th</sup>** **Nashville and Yellow Warblers** were quite active this-morning along with eleven other **warbler** spp. **Tennessee** and **Blackburnian Warbler** were new for 2008. Other notable migrants included small numbers of **Eastern Kingbird**, four **swallow** species, **Lincoln's Sparrow** and **Orchard Oriole**.
- MAY 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>**
- May 8<sup>th</sup>** There were a few birds in the netting area this-morning with 25 individuals captured during 60 net-hours. Mostly **White-throated Sparrows** banded along with ones-and-twos of 4 **thrush** species, 2 **Least Flycatchers** and a **Blue-winged Warbler**. There were a few **hummingbirds** noted today and a **Northern Mockingbird** was recorded on census.
- May 9<sup>th</sup>** Not many birds but lots of birders and visitors at the station today. North winds made for a generally quiet morning and few migrants were recorded on census or in the netting area. The all 'green' bird race got underway at noon and it was a tough slog for seven enthusiastic teams – including the "Finch and Chips"! A **Sedge Wren** heard singing near the PIBO cottage the previous day was still about today.
- May 10<sup>th</sup>** A similar morning to the 9<sup>th</sup> with just eight **warbler** species tallied and fifty species recorded during the count period.
- May 11<sup>th</sup>** An **Orange-crowned Warbler** was one of eight warbler spp. observed on the day along with the first **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** and **American Redstarts** of the Spring.
- May 12<sup>th</sup>** Lots of rain last night and into the morning and not much to report apart from a few **thrushes**, **swallows** and **warblers** recorded on census.
- May 13<sup>th</sup>** A nice variety of birds noted in small numbers today including the first **Yellow-throated Vireo** and **Bay-breasted Warblers** of 2008. Sixty-five species were recorded during the morning count period.
- May 14<sup>th</sup>** The winds returned to the south but steady rain set-in mid-morning and carried on throughout the day. Small numbers of **vireos**, **Wood Thrushes**, **Common Yellowthroats**, and **Indigo Buntings** were recorded on census along with an influx of **Yellow Warblers**, with 17 individuals counted on the day. A **Canada Warbler** was new for the Spring.
- MAY 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**

- May 15<sup>th</sup>** A busy morning with lots of birds recorded on census and in the netting area. Seventy species on the day including Spring-firsts for **Great Crested Flycatcher** and **Wilson's Warbler**.
- May 16<sup>th</sup>** Small numbers of **flycatchers** and **vireos** in the area along with 5 **Wood Thrushes** and 11 **warbler** species, but not as much activity as the previous day. A **Northern Mockingbird** continues to be seen at the Tip.
- May 17<sup>th</sup>** Strong west winds this-morning made for a fairly quiet day but there was some activity in the netting area. Species captured included **Ruby-throated Hummingbird**, **Eastern Wood-Pewee**, **Gray-cheeked Thrush** and **Indigo Bunting**, among others.
- May 18<sup>th</sup>** Steady rain last night and into the morning and not much to report on census or in the netting area. Just forty-two species recorded on the day.
- May 19<sup>th</sup>** Lots of activity today including Spring-firsts for **Ruddy Turnstone** and **Whimbrel** along with moderate numbers of **flycatchers**, **vireos**, and 18 **warbler** species.
- May 20<sup>th</sup>** Another busy morning with 64 species recorded during the count period along with 41 birds banded of sixteen species. A **Sora** was new for 2008. Other sightings on the day included 120 **Black-bellied Plovers**, 3 **American Golden Plovers**, a **Peregrine Falcon** and 2 **White-eyed Vireos**.
- May 21<sup>st</sup>** Despite three days of northwest winds and cool temperatures, migrants continued to filter through the area this-morning in good numbers. Sixty-three species were tallied during the morning coverage period including the first **Mourning Warblers** of the Spring.



*American Redstart*

**MAY 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**

- May 22<sup>nd</sup>** An active morning on census and in the netting area with 66 birds recorded during the morning count period and 63 birds banded of twenty-one species. **Magnolia Warblers** were numerous, with 23 banded, along with 2 **Black-billed Cuckoos**, 2 **Northern Parulas**, and eleven other **warbler spp.** A **Semipalmated Plover** on census was new for the Spring.

- May 23<sup>rd</sup>** Another busy day with 75 species tallied along with 72 birds captured of twenty-four species. A good variety of migrants including 6 **flycatcher**, 5 **thrush** and 17 **warbler spp.** A **Short-billed Dowitcher** was observed by PIBO staff in the afternoon.
- May 24<sup>th</sup>** A quieter morning in the netting area but still lots of diversity, with 68 species recorded, including a **Hooded Warbler** on census.
- May 25<sup>th</sup>** Small numbers of **American Redstarts**, **Magnolia**, **Canada** and **Wilson's Warblers** about, but not too much else to report.
- May 26<sup>th</sup>** Lots of rain and heavy thunderstorms in the morning and just the census completed along with some additional observations.
- May 27<sup>th</sup>** Cloudy again but a little busier with 61 species tallied on the day and 31 bird banded of fourteen species. An **Alder Flycatcher** and **Philadelphia Vireo** were both new for 2008.
- May 28<sup>th</sup>** It was active again today with good numbers of **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** recorded (11 banded) along with a nice variety of other late-Spring migrants. Highlights on the day included a captured **Acadian Flycatcher** and a **Western Kingbird** (a first for Pelee Island) observed a number of times on the west beach during census. A male **Summer Tanager** was also new for the Spring.

**MAY 29<sup>th</sup> – JUNE 5<sup>th</sup>**

(not available)

**JUNE 6<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>**

(not available)

**Table 1 – Spring Coverage Totals**

| Description        | 2008         | 2007         | 2006         | 2005        | 2004          | 2003         |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|--------------|
| Coverage Period    | Apr 3-Jun 14 | Apr 1–Jun 15 | Apr 2–Jun 8  | Apr 5–Jun 6 | Apr 13–May 31 | Apr 7–Jun 4  |
| Days               | 73           | 76           | 67           | 61          | 45            | 59           |
| Netting Period     | Apr 5-Jun 10 | Apr 2–Jun 1  | Apr 15–Jun 7 | Apr 6–Jun 5 | Apr 20–May 28 | Apr 24–Jun 4 |
| Netting Days       | 55           | n/a          | 35           | 55          | 30            | 33           |
| Birds Banded       | 794          | 637          | 1033         | 1151        | 602           | 1116         |
| Net Hours          | 2569         | 1831         | 1796         | 2223        | 1078          | 1305         |
| Birds/Net Hour     | 0.31         | 0.35         | 0.61         | 0.52        | 0.56          | 0.86         |
| Species Banded     | 69           | 67           | 62           | 72          | 63            | 67           |
| Recaptures         | 95           | 66           | 68           | 147         | 43            | 76           |
| Species Recaptured | 9            | 10           | 17           | 23          | 16            | 16           |
| Species Recorded   | 175          | 177          | 181          | 171         | 179           | 180          |

## Fall Migration Summary

After a busy and productive summer and a bit of a break in July, the PIBO team started-up the Fall coverage season on August 1<sup>st</sup>. In all, 107 consecutive days of monitoring were completed to November 15<sup>th</sup>. During this time staff recorded 171 species in the 'count' area at Fish Point and banded 2711 birds of sixty-nine species in 4199 net-hours, for an average catch-rate of .65 birds/net-hour. While activity in the netting area was up considerably from Fall 2007, the catch-rate this year was still low compared to the station's five-year Fall average (.90 birds/net-hour).

### AUGUST 1<sup>st</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup>

In keeping with the time of year, most of the birds recorded at the Point this week were locally-fledged young and moulting adults, including small numbers of **Yellow-billed Cuckoos**, **Eastern Wood Pewees**, **House Wrens**, **Yellow Warblers** and **Indigo Buntings**, among others. It was warm and somewhat humid, with dawn temperatures reaching 24° C on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>, winds were variable, and there was little precipitation. An average daily total of thirty-six species was recorded at the station from the 1<sup>st</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup> and 55 species were tallied during the week.

In addition to the local activity, a small number of early migrants were observed on a daily basis. Nine shorebird species were recorded during the summary period ranging from a few dozen **Sanderlings** to ones-and-twos of **Semipalmated Plover**, **Least** and **Semipalmated Sandpipers**. Three **American Avocets** on census on the 5<sup>th</sup> were a treat, and a first for the station. While migrant songbird activity was limited, a few individuals were noted moving south, including small numbers of a variety of swallow species.



*Blue Jay*

### AUGUST 8<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>

Although it was generally quiet at the Point this week, a small but steady number of migrants were recorded at the station on a daily basis including nine warbler species and a variety of flycatchers and shorebirds. **Double-crested Cormorants** were active, with 4500 birds recorded on census on August 12<sup>th</sup>, along with **Ring-billed Gulls** and **Common Terns**, with 560 and 400 individuals counted on the 9<sup>th</sup>, respectively.

Slightly cooler temperatures and light northwest winds from the 8<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup> produced a variety of firsts for the autumn including **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher**, **Swainson's Thrush**, **Blackburnian Warbler**, **Black-and-white Warbler** and **Northern Waterthrush**.

Other early-Fall migrants included 5 **Blue-grey Gnatcatchers** on August 12<sup>th</sup>, **Trail's** and **Least Flycatchers**, a small but steady stream of **Barn Swallows**, and the following additional warbler species: **Tennessee**, **Magnolia**, **American Redstart**, **Ovenbird** and **Canada Warbler**.

#### **AUGUST 15<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>**

Migration activity continued to increase at the Point this week, with ones-and-twos of fourteen warbler species recorded during the summary period along with seven Fall 'firsts'. The weather remained warm - dawn temperatures ranged from 16-21 ° C - winds were variable, and precipitation was recorded on one morning.

Although shorebird numbers were down, cormorants, gulls and terns were abundant this week, with 8000 cormorants recorded on the 15<sup>th</sup> along with almost 1000 **Ring-billed Gulls** (Aug. 18) and 600 **Common Terns** (Aug. 20 & 21).

A mild cold front and northwest winds at the beginning of the week prompted some migrant songbird activity including the first **Mourning** and **Cape May Warblers** of the Fall on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup>, respectively. Forty-six species were tallied on August 17<sup>th</sup> during the official count period, including ten warbler spp., and fourteen warblers of nine species were banded.

The wind returned to the south on the 18<sup>th</sup> and it was generally quiet for a couple of days, but birds were active again on the final two days of the summary period. A nice variety of flycatchers and warblers were observed on August 20<sup>th</sup> including nine banded **Yellow-bellied Flycatchers** and the first **Wilson's Warblers** and **Bobolinks** of the Fall. Forty-nine species were tallied on the morning of the 21<sup>st</sup>, including 'firsts' for **Chestnut-sided** and **Black-throated Blue Warblers**, along with small numbers of flycatchers and eight other warbler spp.

#### **AUGUST 22<sup>nd</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup>**

Migration activity picked up considerably at the Point this week with the arrival of the first significant waves of warblers along with a nice variety of other songbirds. Seventeen warbler species were tallied from the 22<sup>nd</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>. Flycatchers continued to move through in moderate numbers and thrushes and vireos were active as well. Bird numbers peaked on August 25<sup>th</sup> when 55 species (including twelve warbler spp.) were recorded during the morning count period and 63 birds were banded of seventeen species.

Eight shorebird species were observed during the summary period and gulls and terns were numerous, with 800 **Common Terns** noted on the 26<sup>th</sup>. An **Osprey** on the 25<sup>th</sup> was the first this Fall, a small influx of **Veerys** was evident on the 26<sup>th</sup>, with seven birds tallied, and a whopping 9000 **Double-crested Cormorants** were counted on August 27<sup>th</sup>.

Hot and humid conditions and southwest winds from August 22<sup>nd</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> made for a quiet time at the beginning of the week, but cool temperatures on the 25<sup>th</sup> produced lots of activity on the day including a season 'first' for **Nashville Warbler**.

Warblers dominated this week in the netting area, with 177 banded of fifteen species (75% of all banded birds) – including a young male **Brewster's Warbler** (Aug. 27<sup>th</sup>). **Redstarts** and **Magnolias** led the way, with 39 and 37 banded respectively, but a variety of additional species appeared in fair numbers as well including 9 **Black-throated Blue Warblers**

captured on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The second **Eastern Screech-Owl** of the Fall and a **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** were also banded along with small numbers of flycatchers, vireos and others.

#### **AUGUST 29<sup>th</sup> – SEPTEMBER 4<sup>th</sup>**

Migrants were active at the Point during most of the summary period and a moderate but steady stream of birds was recorded moving through the count area on a daily basis. The wind went south on September 1<sup>st</sup> and activity eventually tapered off towards the end of the week, but 91 species were tallied over seven days – a season-high to date – including nineteen warbler species.

PIBO staff were kept busy in the final days of August with 124 birds banded from the 29<sup>th</sup> – 31<sup>st</sup> including 92 warblers of twelve species. **Magnolias** and **American Redstarts** were active along with good numbers of **Chestnut-sided** and **Black-throated Blue Warblers**. Other species appearing in increasing numbers included **Least Flycatcher**, **Red-eyed Vireo**, **Veery**, **Swainson's Thrush** and **Bobolink**, with 33 of the latter species recorded on August 31<sup>st</sup>. An **Olive-sided Flycatcher** observed on census on the 30<sup>th</sup> was new for the Fall. The first **Merlin** of the season and 'firsts' for **Bay-breasted** and **Palm Warbler** were also noted during this time.

A similar mix of species arrived on September 1<sup>st</sup> when 51 birds were banded and 47 species were recorded during the count period. Warm temperatures and south winds on the 2<sup>nd</sup> produced a quieter morning although thirteen warbler species were noted on the day and **Red-eyed Vireos** were active, with ten recorded. The final two days of the summary period saw a further drop in numbers and there were no new arrivals with the exception of a **Baird's Sandpiper** on the 4<sup>th</sup>. Just seven birds were captured on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 42 species were tallied the next day compared to 61 a few days earlier on August 30<sup>th</sup>.



*Wood Thrush*

#### **SEPTEMBER 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup>**

There were no large 'fall-outs' at the Point this week and rainy weather affected coverage at the start of the summary period, but there were still lots of migrants recorded at the station from the 5<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> and the PIBO crew kept busy both on the census and in the netting area.

Shorebirds continued to move through the area in small numbers, with eleven species noted including the first **Black-bellied Plovers** and **Baird's Sandpipers** of the Fall. Hawks and waterfowl were scarce, however, with the exception of ones-and-twos of **Osprey**, **American Kestrel**, **Northern Shoveler** and a **Redhead**.

The first significant waves of autumn thrushes arrived this week when hundreds of birds were heard migrating overhead on the evening of the 5<sup>th</sup> followed by lots of activity at the Point on the morning of September 6<sup>th</sup>. Forty-five thrushes were banded on the day and **Swainson's Thrushes**, especially, continued to arrive on-and-off throughout the week. In all, 122 *Catharus* thrushes were banded from the 6<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> (89 **Swainson's**, 20 **Gray-cheeked** and 13 **Veerys**). In keeping with the rapid turnover of songbirds at the Fish Point study site, just one on these birds was recaptured at the station in the days after its initial capture.

**Magnolia Warblers** and **American Redstarts** were the most common of twenty warbler species tallied during the week along with good numbers of **Black-throated Blues** and **Northern Waterthrushes**. Two banded **Northern Parulas** and a young, male, **Hooded Warbler** were both 'firsts' for the Fall. In addition to the warblers, a nice variety of other songbirds were recorded including **Olive-sided Flycatcher** and the first **Philadelphia Vireo** and **Ruby-crowned Kinglets** of the season. A **Rock Dove** recorded on September 10<sup>th</sup> was new for 2008!

### SEPTEMBER 12<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup>

Two days of steady rain and strong south winds associated with hurricane Ike produced little migration activity at the beginning of the week, but conditions changed dramatically on September 16<sup>th</sup> and a wonderful variety of birds appeared in significant numbers during the final three days of the summary period. Season-high daily counts were established for many species including 54 **Swainson's Thrushes** (September 16<sup>th</sup>), 28 **Gray-cheeked Thrushes** (16<sup>th</sup>), 52 **Magnolia Warblers** (18<sup>th</sup>), 22 **Ovenbirds** (16<sup>th</sup>) and 15 **Black-throated Blue Warblers** (16<sup>th</sup>), among others.

There were lots of birds recorded on both the census and in the netting area on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>, with 54 species tallied on census on the latter day along with 129 birds banded of twenty-five species. In all, 68 species were recorded in the official count area on September 18<sup>th</sup> including 19 warbler species and forms. The 16<sup>th</sup> was even more active in the netting area when 153 birds were captured including 43 **Swainson's** and 29 **Gray-cheeked Thrushes**.

Shorebirds, flycatchers and swallows continued to taper off this week and raptors were few and far between, with just four species observed from the 12<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup>. At the same time, warblers and thrushes showed a dramatic increase (all but thirty-four of the 357 birds banded this week were from these two families) along with a host of typical September migrants that made their first appearance of the fall on the final morning of the summary period including **Yellow-bellied Sapsucker**, **Blue-headed Vireo**, **Winter Wren**, **Pine Warbler** and **White-throated Sparrow**.

### SEPTEMBER 19<sup>th</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>

The week started off on a busy note and there was lots of activity at the station on September 19<sup>th</sup>, but south winds and warm temperatures set-in and migrants tapered off towards the end of the summary period. There was still a nice variety of birds recorded at the Point from September 19<sup>th</sup> - 25<sup>th</sup> including seventeen warbler species and increased numbers of late-Fall migrants such as **Golden-crowned Kinglet** and **Winter Wren**. **Sharp-shinned Hawks** were active along with ones-and-twos of **Merlin** and **American Kestrel**. A **Peregrine Falcon** observed on census on the 22<sup>nd</sup> was new for the Fall.

Thirteen warbler species were recorded on the 19<sup>th</sup> and thrushes remained active, with 18 **Gray-cheeked** and 15 **Swainson's Thrushes** banded on the day. In all, 66 birds of twenty

species were captured and 56 species were noted during the 'count' period. Totals dropped off the next morning when just 37 species were recorded and 32 birds were banded of eight species.

The wind shifted to the northeast on the 21<sup>st</sup> but it remained warm, with a dawn temperature of 18 C. Migrants were few-and-far between with the exception of 12 **Sharp-shins** tallied on the census and small numbers of warblers and thrushes captured in the netting area. Activity picked up on the 22<sup>nd</sup> when 51 species were noted including good numbers of **Winter Wrens** (12 DT) and **Magnolia Warblers** (15 banded), among others.

Warm winds continued from the south and migration was generally light during the final three days of the summary period, although small numbers of warblers and thrushes were observed and banded each day. The first **Red-headed Woodpecker** of the Fall was noted on census on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Kinglets and **White-throated Sparrows** were observed in increasing numbers as well.



*Blue-winged Warbler*

#### **SEPTEMBER 26<sup>th</sup> – OCTOBER 2<sup>nd</sup>**

Migration activity was fairly low-key at the Point during the final days of September and early October, yet cool weather and steady north winds made for a reasonably busy time and a nice variety of birds (82 species) were recorded during the official count period. Typical late-Fall migrants were counted in moderate numbers including both kinglet species, **Yellow-rumped Warbler**, and **White-throated Sparrow**, along with ones-and-twos of **Brown Creeper**, **Red-breasted Nuthatch** and **Winter Wren**.

Fourteen warbler species were noted during the week and thrushes continued to filter through the area, with **Hermit Thrushes** starting to outnumber the **Swainson's** and **Gray-cheeked**. The first significant wave of **Blue Jays** arrived on the 26<sup>th</sup>, with 418 birds tallied on the morning census.

Shorebird activity tapered off - four species were observed this week - and many early-Fall migrants such as orioles and most of the flycatchers and swallows were entirely absent. At the same time, a number of species made their first Fall appearance including **Slate-colored Junco** (27<sup>th</sup>), **Scarlet Tanager** (29<sup>th</sup>) and **Dunlin** (30<sup>th</sup>).

PIBO's **Northern Saw-whet Owl** monitoring project got underway on the evening of October 2nd at a new survey site near the PIBO staff house. While no saw-whets were detected, we're confident the new location will prove to be a suitable (and practical) setting for future monitoring efforts.

### OCTOBER 3<sup>rd</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup>

Cool weather on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> made for a busy time at the Point until the 6<sup>th</sup>, but then south winds, rain and balmy conditions produced a decline in activity towards the end of the summary period. Kinglets, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **White-throated Sparrows** were the most common birds encountered this week along with a nice assortment of other species.

While warbler diversity dropped off - thirteen species were recorded during the summary period - new arrivals for the Fall continued to appear including 'firsts' for **Northern Saw-whet Owl** (Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>), **Orange-crowned Warbler** (5<sup>th</sup>), **Swamp Sparrow** (5<sup>th</sup>), **Common Loon** (7<sup>th</sup>) and **Rusty Blackbird** (7<sup>th</sup>). More species were documented at the station this week (83) than in the last week of September and early-October (82), which is unusual.

**Ruby** and **Golden Crowned Kinglets** were quite active on the 5<sup>th</sup>, with 45 and 31 individuals tallied on the day, respectively, included thirty-two banded. In all, 81 birds of seventeen species were captured on October 5<sup>th</sup> followed by 54 banded birds of twenty-two species on the 6<sup>th</sup>. Other species of note this week included the first **Lesser Scaup** (October 6<sup>th</sup>) and **Green-winged Teals** (7<sup>th</sup>) of the Fall, a **Peregrine Falcon** (6<sup>th</sup>), **Pine Warbler** (6<sup>th</sup>), and a somewhat tardy **Indigo Bunting** (6<sup>th</sup>).

It remained fairly active on the 7<sup>th</sup>, with 41 birds banded including a young male and female **Sharp-shinned Hawk**, but steady showers and warm southerly winds on October 8<sup>th</sup> made for a very quiet morning, with just the 90-minute census conducted in a heavy downpour. There was not much to report on the 9<sup>th</sup> with the exception of an exciting find - a **Short-eared Owl** - near the PIBO cottage in the early afternoon.

### OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup>

After a busy morning at the start of the week, southerly winds and warm temperatures from the 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> produced a lull in bird numbers, but migration activity picked up again towards the end of the summary period. Light northwest winds and a dawn temperature of 10° C on October 10<sup>th</sup> made for an active morning - 48 species were recorded on the day and 82 birds were banded of fourteen species. **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **Hermit Thrushes** were numerous along with a nice variety of other migrants including **Blue-headed Vireo**, five thrush species, **Nashville**, **Black-throated Blue** and **Palm Warblers**, and the first **Fox Sparrow** of the Fall.

Warm conditions returned to the Point on the 11<sup>th</sup> and south winds persisted for three days. Despite the weather, both kinglet species were noted in moderate numbers and sparrows remained active along with diurnal migrants such as **Red-winged Blackbirds**, **Common Grackles**, **American Pipits** and **American Robins**. The warm weather didn't discourage migrating **Saw-whets Owls** either - sixteen birds were captured on the evening of October 14<sup>th</sup>, including one foreign encounter.

Songbird activity picked up again on the 15<sup>th</sup> when 45 species were observed and 67 individuals of fifteen species were banded. Sightings included 4 **Northern Harriers**, ones-and-twos of five warbler species (**Magnolia**, **Black-throated Blue**, **Yellow-rumped**, **Palm** and **Blackpoll**), seven sparrow species, and the first **Eastern Meadowlarks** of the Fall. Kinglets and **White-throated Sparrows** remained active on the final day of the summary period and **Winter Wrens** were tallied in good numbers, with 26 birds counted on census and in the netting area.

### OCTOBER 17<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>

Cool temperatures and brisk north winds made for an active time at the Point this week and PIBO staff and volunteers kept busy throughout most of the summary period. While overall species diversity continued to decline compared to the first half of October, there were lots of **Kinglets**, **Hermit Thrushes**, **Yellow-rumped Warblers** and **White-throated Sparrows** recorded at the station along with a good variety of other late-Fall migrants.

Both kinglet species were active, with 70 **Ruby-crowns** noted on October 18<sup>th</sup> and 80 **Golden-crowns** tallied on the 19<sup>th</sup> (233 kinglets were banded this week). **Winter Wrens** were numerous as well, with 31 birds recorded on the 18<sup>th</sup>, along with smaller numbers of **Eastern Phoebes** (5 on the 17<sup>th</sup>), **Blue-headed Vireos** (5/17<sup>th</sup>) and **Tree Swallows** (22/18<sup>th</sup>). A **Yellow-bellied Flycatcher** banded on October 19<sup>th</sup> was a PIBO record-late date for this species.

Waterfowl activity on the lake remained light despite the cool temperatures, with only small numbers of **Red-breasted Mergansers** recorded on census along with the first **Buffleheads** of the Fall. Raptors were few-and-far between, with ones-and-tuos of five species counted from the 17<sup>th</sup>-23<sup>rd</sup>. Other 'firsts' for the Fall this week included **Chipping Sparrow**, **Purple Finch** and **Pine Siskin**.



*Sharp-shinned Hawk*

### OCTOBER 24<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup>

It was a wet and very windy week at the Point and migration activity was generally light due to strong southwest winds at the start of the summary period followed by northerly gales and lots of rain from the 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup>. Field coverage was reduced to the morning census and some intermittent banding.

Songbirds were few-and-far between apart from diurnal migrants flying over the count area, including 155 **Rusty Blackbirds** on October 30<sup>th</sup>, and there were small numbers of **Golden-crowned Kinglets**, **Hermit Thrushes** and a variety of sparrows in the netting area. Activity on the lake was light with the exception of 410 **Red-breasted Mergansers** (Oct. 25<sup>th</sup>) and 40 **Buffleheads** (30<sup>th</sup>). A few raptors were noted this week including a **Red-shouldered Hawk** recorded on census (Oct. 30<sup>th</sup>).

The mild weather came to an end when a cold front moved through the area on October 27<sup>th</sup>, bring with it the first **Eastern Bluebirds**, **American Tree Sparrows** and **Snow Buntings** of

the Fall. Cool temperatures on the 29<sup>th</sup> (2° C) made for an active night of owling, with 9 **Northern Saw-whets** and 1 **Eastern Screech Owl** captured during six hours of operation.

**OCTOBER 31<sup>st</sup> – NOVEMBER 6<sup>th</sup>**

Although mild weather and southerly winds made for a fairly quiet time at the Point, a nice variety of migrants continued to filter through the area, with 67 species tallied during the summary period. Highlights this week included the first **Tundra Swans** of the Fall on November 1<sup>st</sup>, a late **Tennessee Warbler** banded on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 5 **Northern Saw-whet Owls** banded on the 4<sup>th</sup>, and a station-high 190 **Horned Grebes** recorded on census on November 5<sup>th</sup>.

Blackbirds and other diurnal migrants were active, with more than 2000 **Red-winged Blackbirds** and **Common Grackles** noted on November 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>, along with smaller groups of **Eastern Bluebird**, **American Pipit**, **Cedar Waxwing** and **Pine Siskin**, among others. Nine sparrow species were counted this week, **American Crows** were active, with 180 birds noted on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and a small influx of **Purple Finches** included 5 banded birds on the 1<sup>st</sup>.

**Table 2 – Fall Coverage Totals**

| Description        | 2008         | 2007         | 2006         | 2005         | 2004         | 2003        |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|
| Coverage Period    | Aug 1-Nov 15 | Aug 1–Nov 15 | Aug 7–Nov 15 | Aug 4–Nov 14 | Aug 6–Nov 9  | Aug 5–Nov 4 |
| Days               | 107          | 107          | 101          | 102          | 94           | 92          |
| Netting Period     | Aug 3-Nov 11 | Aug 1–Nov 13 | Aug 8–Nov 15 | Aug 9–Nov 11 | Aug 18–Nov 1 | Aug 5–Nov 4 |
| Netting Days       | 92           | n/a          | 82           | 89           | 63           | 72          |
| Birds Banded       | 2711         | 2035         | 3426         | 4325         | 2849         | 2175        |
| Net Hours          | 4199         | 4488         | 3246         | 4182         | 2191         | 3225        |
| Birds/Net Hour     | .65          | 0.45         | 1.05         | 1.03         | 1.3          | 0.67        |
| Species Banded     | 69           | 74           | 74           | 82           | 78           | 77          |
| Recaptures         | 56           | 60           | 77           | 112          | 54           | 83          |
| Species Recaptured | 18           | 18           | 17           | 25           | 15           | 16          |
| Species Recorded   | 171          | 178          | 174          | 180          | 170          | 150         |

**NOVEMBER 7<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>**

**PIBO's** 2008 monitoring season wrapped-up on November 15<sup>th</sup> after 107 consecutive days of Fall field coverage at the Point. It was blustery and cold during most of the summary period, with strong winds from the west and northwest, along with sub-zero temperatures, showers and snow squalls towards the end of the week.

Migration activity was up-and-down with the weather and daily coverage was reduced to the morning census and some additional observations on a number of days due to rain and snow. At the same time, a nice variety of species was recorded including season-high counts of 14 **Tundra Swans** (Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>), 863 **Red-breasted Mergansers** (9<sup>th</sup>), 102 **Buffleheads** (14<sup>th</sup>), 51 **American Pipits** (12<sup>th</sup>) and 25 **American Tree Sparrows** (15<sup>th</sup>).

Nine waterfowl species were noted including the first **Hooded Mergansers** of the Fall along with small numbers of **scaup**, **Mallard** and **Common Goldeneye**. Although migrant

songbirds were generally scarce, some kinglets, creepers, **Winter Wrens** and **Hermit Thrushes** were recorded on a daily basis and seven sparrow species were tallied from the 7<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup>. Diurnal migrants were active - 2600 **Common Grackles**, **Rusty**, and **Red-winged Blackbirds** were counted heading south on the 11<sup>th</sup> as well as smaller groups of **Cedar Waxwings**, **Pine Siskins** and **American Goldfinches**.

**Table 3 – Combined Spring & Fall Coverage Totals**

| Description        | 2008         | 2007         | 2006         | 2005        | 2004          |
|--------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| Coverage Period    | Apr 3-Jun 14 | Apr 1–Jun 15 | Apr 2–Jun 8  | Apr 5–Jun 6 | Apr 13-May 31 |
| Days               | 180          | 183          | 168          | 163         | 139           |
| Netting Period     | Apr 5-Jun 10 | Apr 2–Jun 1  | Apr 15–Jun 7 | Apr 6–Jun 5 | Apr 20-May 28 |
| Netting Days       | 147          | n/a          | 117          | 144         | 93            |
| Birds Captured     | 3505         | 2672         | 4459         | 5490        | 3451          |
| Species Captured   | 82           | 84           | 81           | 91          | 87            |
| Net Hours          | 6767         | 6319         | 5042         | 6393        | 3269          |
| Birds/Net Hour     | 0.52         | 0.41         | 0.88         | 0.85        | 1.06          |
| Recaptures         | 151          | 126          | 145          | 259         | 97            |
| Species Recaptured | 25           | 23           | 24           | 35          | 22            |
| Species Documented | 194          | 205          | 201          | 199         | 193           |



*Yellow-rumped Warbler*

**Table 4 – Top Ten Species Banded in 2008 and Previous Years**

| Species                     | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 | 2003 | Total |
|-----------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| Magnolia Warbler            | 349  | 236  | 617  | 410  | 337  | 335  | 2284  |
| Swainson's Thrush           | 315  | 314  | 389  | 542  | 314  | 312  | 2186  |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet      | 312  | 168  | 218  | 766  | 312  | 151  | 1927  |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet        | 211  | 102  | 423  | 485  | 325  | 134  | 1680  |
| "Myrtle" Warbler            | 168  | 143  | 154  | 270  | 156  | 131  | 1022  |
| Hermit Thrush               | 166  | 154  | 228  | 269  | 143  | 141  | 1101  |
| American Redstart           | 161  | 84   | 273  | 162  | 141  | 159  | 980   |
| Gray-cheeked Thrush         | 152  | 110  | 91   | 222  | 100  | 56   | 731   |
| White-throated Sparrow      | 112  | 72   | 105  | 146  | 137  | 118  | 690   |
| Black-throated Blue Warbler | 100  | 38   | 84   | 67   | 104  | 60   | 453   |

Migration Monitoring on Pelee Island in 2008  
Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO)

**Table 5 – Birds Captured at Fish Point in 2008 and Previous Years**

| <b>Species</b>            | <b>2008</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2006</b> | <b>2005</b> | <b>2004</b> | <b>2003</b> | <b>Total</b> |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Sharp-shinned Hawk        | 14          | 16          | 7           | 11          | 8           | 12          | <b>68</b>    |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo      | 1           |             | 3           |             | 1           | 3           | <b>8</b>     |
| Black-billed Cuckoo       | 2           |             |             | 1           | 2           | 2           | <b>7</b>     |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl     | 45          | 44          | 7           | 12          | 1           |             | <b>112</b>   |
| Eastern Screech-Owl       | 4           | 2           |             | 1           |             | 1           | <b>5</b>     |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird | 7           | 7           | 11          | 15          | 4           | 1           | <b>75</b>    |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker    |             | 1           |             |             |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| Downy Woodpecker          | 14          | 13          | 12          | 9           | 12          | 14          | <b>74</b>    |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker  | 1           |             | 2           | 2           | 1           |             | <b>6</b>     |
| "Yellow-shafted" Flicker  | 3           | 3           | 1           | 2           | 1           | 2           | <b>12</b>    |
| Eastern Wood-Pewee        | 6           | 1           | 4           | 3           | 3           | 7           | <b>24</b>    |
| Yellow-bellied Flycatcher | 76          | 32          | 79          | 134         | 58          | 39          | <b>418</b>   |
| Acadian Flycatcher        | 1           |             |             | 1           |             |             | <b>2</b>     |
| "Traill's" Flycatcher     | 17          | 12          | 20          | 57          | 23          | 38          | <b>167</b>   |
| Least Flycatcher          | 12          | 30          | 36          | 73          | 18          | 51          | <b>220</b>   |
| Eastern Phoebe            | 6           | 2           | 4           | 5           | 3           |             | <b>19</b>    |
| Great Crested Flycatcher  |             |             | 1           | 4           |             | 1           | <b>6</b>     |
| Eastern Kingbird          |             |             |             |             | 2           |             | <b>2</b>     |
| Red-eyed Vireo            | 53          | 40          | 141         | 113         | 71          | 48          | <b>466</b>   |
| Warbling Vireo            | 1           |             | 11          | 6           | 3           | 4           | <b>25</b>    |
| Philadelphia Vireo        | 3           | 8           | 27          | 35          | 31          | 15          | <b>119</b>   |
| White-eyed Vireo          |             |             | 4           | 1           | 1           | 1           | <b>7</b>     |
| Blue-headed Vireo         | 16          | 14          | 26          | 36          | 28          | 17          | <b>137</b>   |
| Blue Jay                  | 14          | 17          | 3           | 50          | 8           | 13          | <b>105</b>   |
| Black-capped Chickadee    | 14          | 15          | 8           | 29          | 16          | 21          | <b>103</b>   |
| Red-breasted Nuthatch     | 1           | 8           |             | 5           | 2           | 1           | <b>17</b>    |
| White-breasted Nuthatch   |             |             |             |             |             | 1           | <b>1</b>     |
| Brown Creeper             | 74          | 21          | 25          | 29          | 30          | 13          | <b>192</b>   |
| Carolina Wren             | 3           | 5           | 9           | 7           | 5           | 13          | <b>42</b>    |
| House Wren                | 24          | 17          | 28          | 46          | 16          | 22          | <b>153</b>   |
| Winter Wren               | 48          | 26          | 21          | 80          | 48          | 14          | <b>237</b>   |
| Marsh Wren                |             |             |             |             | 1           | 1           | <b>2</b>     |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet    | 312         | 168         | 218         | 766         | 312         | 151         | <b>1927</b>  |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet      | 211         | 102         | 423         | 485         | 325         | 134         | <b>1680</b>  |
| Blue-gray Gnatcatcher     |             |             |             |             | 3           | 1           | <b>4</b>     |
| American Robin            | 34          | 6           | 9           | 6           | 11          | 6           | <b>72</b>    |
| Wood Thrush               | 21          | 27          | 24          | 18          | 18          | 12          | <b>120</b>   |
| Veery                     | 66          | 74          | 128         | 83          | 67          | 79          | <b>497</b>   |
| Swainson's Thrush         | 315         | 314         | 389         | 542         | 314         | 312         | <b>2186</b>  |
| Gray-cheeked Thrush       | 152         | 110         | 91          | 222         | 100         | 56          | <b>731</b>   |
| Hermit Thrush             | 166         | 154         | 228         | 269         | 143         | 141         | <b>1101</b>  |
| Gray Catbird              | 39          | 44          | 51          | 48          | 43          | 64          | <b>289</b>   |
| Brown Thrasher            | 1           | 1           | 1           | 3           | 2           | 2           | <b>10</b>    |
| Cedar Waxwing             | 5           | 2           |             | 1           | 2           | 2           | <b>12</b>    |
| European Starling         | 1           |             |             |             |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| Northern Parula           | 7           | 2           | 6           | 1           | 2           | 2           | <b>20</b>    |
| Orange-crowned Warbler    | 1           | 5           | 7           | 4           | 17          | 10          | <b>44</b>    |
| Tennessee Warbler         | 24          | 14          | 39          | 23          | 16          | 85          | <b>201</b>   |
| Blue-winged Warbler       | 3           | 1           | 5           | 3           | 9           | 4           | <b>25</b>    |
| Golden-winged Warbler     |             | 1           | 3           | 1           | 1           | 1           | <b>7</b>     |
| "Brewster's" Warbler      | 2           |             |             | 1           |             |             | <b>3</b>     |
| Nashville Warbler         | 53          | 64          | 67          | 127         | 57          | 90          | <b>458</b>   |
| Yellow Warbler            | 59          | 50          | 41          | 88          | 45          | 70          | <b>353</b>   |
| Chestnut-sided Warbler    | 39          | 40          | 117         | 75          | 45          | 45          | <b>361</b>   |
| Magnolia Warbler          | 349         | 236         | 617         | 410         | 337         | 335         | <b>2284</b>  |

Migration Monitoring on Pelee Island in 2008  
Pelee Island Bird Observatory (PIBO)

|                              |             |             |             |             |             |             |              |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Cape May Warbler             | 3           | 3           | 6           | 6           | 5           | 6           | <b>29</b>    |
| Black-throated Blue Warbler  | 100         | 38          | 84          | 67          | 104         | 60          | <b>453</b>   |
| Blackburnian Warbler         | 6           | 10          | 33          | 31          | 5           | 9           | <b>94</b>    |
| "Myrtle" Warbler             | 168         | 143         | 154         | 270         | 156         | 131         | <b>1022</b>  |
| Black-throated Green Warbler | 10          | 10          | 21          | 7           | 14          | 10          | <b>72</b>    |
| "Western" Palm Warbler       | 6           | 4           | 1           | 5           | 14          | 2           | <b>32</b>    |
| Bay-breasted Warbler         | 4           | 6           | 25          | 19          | 10          | 6           | <b>70</b>    |
| Blackpoll Warbler            | 28          | 19          | 17          | 41          | 55          | 22          | <b>182</b>   |
| Worm-eating Warbler          |             |             |             | 1           | 1           |             | <b>2</b>     |
| Prothonotary Warbler         |             |             |             | 1           |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| Black-and-white Warbler      | 57          | 49          | 146         | 71          | 38          | 39          | <b>400</b>   |
| American Redstart            | 161         | 84          | 273         | 162         | 141         | 159         | <b>980</b>   |
| Ovenbird                     | 95          | 77          | 119         | 107         | 82          | 73          | <b>554</b>   |
| Louisiana Waterthrush        |             | 1           |             |             |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| Northern Waterthrush         | 38          | 26          | 27          | 38          | 35          | 43          | <b>207</b>   |
| Kentucky Warbler             |             | 1           | 2           |             |             |             | <b>3</b>     |
| Connecticut Warbler          |             | 2           | 4           | 3           | 2           | 3           | <b>14</b>    |
| Mourning Warbler             | 11          | 12          | 18          | 22          | 8           | 16          | <b>87</b>    |
| Common Yellowthroat          | 38          | 42          | 41          | 57          | 35          | 43          | <b>256</b>   |
| Hooded Warbler               | 2           | 2           | 1           |             |             |             | <b>5</b>     |
| Wilson's Warbler             | 19          | 30          | 46          | 32          | 33          | 28          | <b>189</b>   |
| Canada Warbler               | 50          | 38          | 54          | 60          | 24          | 44          | <b>270</b>   |
| Yellow-breasted Chat         | 1           | 1           | 1           | 1           | 3           | 1           | <b>8</b>     |
| Summer Tanager               |             |             |             | 1           |             | 1           | <b>2</b>     |
| Scarlet Tanager              |             | 2           | 2           | 3           |             | 3           | <b>10</b>    |
| Northern Cardinal            | 13          | 9           | 6           | 10          | 9           | 22          | <b>69</b>    |
| Rose-breasted Grosbeak       |             | 3           | 3           | 12          | 13          | 5           | <b>36</b>    |
| Indigo Bunting               | 6           | 9           | 8           | 19          | 4           | 20          | <b>66</b>    |
| Eastern Towhee               |             | 2           | 1           | 3           | 1           | 1           | <b>8</b>     |
| American Tree Sparrow        | 7           | 1           | 13          | 3           |             |             | <b>24</b>    |
| Field Sparrow                | 1           | 2           |             | 3           | 3           |             | <b>9</b>     |
| Chipping Sparrow             |             | 1           |             | 2           | 1           | 3           | <b>7</b>     |
| Grasshopper Sparrow          |             | 1           |             |             |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| White-throated Sparrow       | 112         | 72          | 105         | 146         | 137         | 118         | <b>690</b>   |
| E. White-crowned Sparrow     | 5           | 8           | 9           | 7           | 6           | 6           | <b>41</b>    |
| Fox Sparrow                  | 6           | 3           | 9           | 14          | 3           | 2           | <b>37</b>    |
| Song Sparrow                 | 19          | 10          | 14          | 10          | 5           | 12          | <b>70</b>    |
| Lincoln's Sparrow            | 7           | 10          | 11          | 20          | 10          | 18          | <b>76</b>    |
| Swamp Sparrow                | 20          | 15          | 2           | 27          | 31          | 17          | <b>139</b>   |
| "Slate-colored" Junco        | 29          | 25          | 16          | 91          | 34          | 24          | <b>219</b>   |
| Brown-headed Cowbird         | 2           |             | 4           | 9           | 1           | 5           | <b>21</b>    |
| Red-winged Blackbird         | 100         | 45          | 35          | 75          | 60          | 34          | <b>349</b>   |
| Common Grackle               | 33          | 15          | 6           | 23          | 18          | 24          | <b>119</b>   |
| Baltimore Oriole             | 6           | 6           | 12          | 23          | 9           | 15          | <b>71</b>    |
| Orchard Oriole               |             |             |             | 1           | 1           | 5           | <b>7</b>     |
| Purple Finch                 | 5           | 2           |             | 1           | 1           | 1           | <b>10</b>    |
| Pine Siskin                  |             |             | 1           |             |             |             | <b>1</b>     |
| American Goldfinch           | 46          | 6           | 4           | 41          | 10          | 14          | <b>121</b>   |
| <b>Total Captured</b>        | <b>3505</b> | <b>2672</b> | <b>4459</b> | <b>5490</b> | <b>3451</b> | <b>3291</b> | <b>22868</b> |
| <b>Species &amp; Forms</b>   | <b>82</b>   | <b>84</b>   | <b>81</b>   | <b>91</b>   | <b>87</b>   | <b>86</b>   | <b>103</b>   |
| <b>Net Hours</b>             | <b>6767</b> | <b>6319</b> | <b>5042</b> | <b>6393</b> | <b>3269</b> | <b>4530</b> | <b>32320</b> |
| <b>Birds/Net Hour</b>        | <b>0.52</b> | <b>0.41</b> | <b>0.88</b> | <b>0.85</b> | <b>1.06</b> | <b>0.73</b> | <b>0.71</b>  |

<sup>1</sup> includes birds captured but not banded

## 2008 Recaptures

There were 151 birds of twenty-five species recaptured in 2008 at least once after their original banding compared to 126 recaptures of twenty-three species in 2007. The rapid turnover of migrants at Fish Point is an interesting feature of the site. For example, 700 *Catharus* thrushes (Veery, Gray-cheeked, Swainson's and Hermit Thrush) were banded at the station this year and only eight were caught at least one day after their original capture. Similarly, only four of 523 banded kinglets were recaptured and just one of 349 banded Magnolia Warblers.

The majority of recaptures were birds banded by PIBO in 2008, although three local nesting species – Black-capped Chickadee, Yellow Warbler and Red-winged Blackbird – continued to show high return rates from previous years.

**Table 6 – 2008 Recaptures**

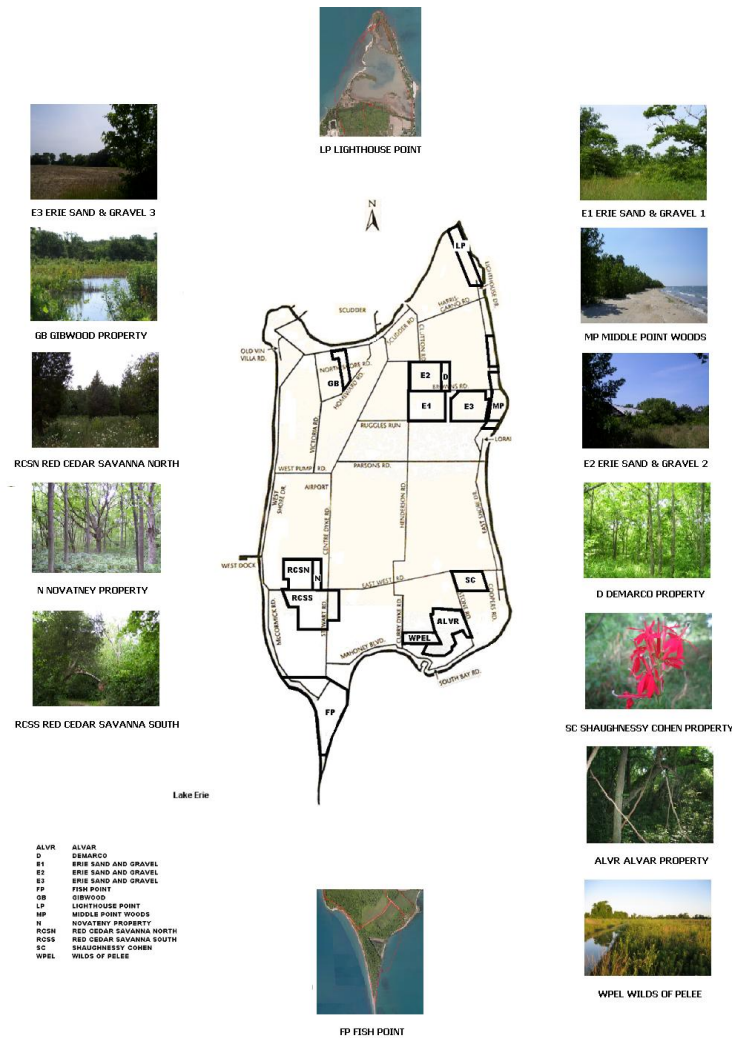
| Species                 | Spring    | Fall      | Total      |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo    |           | 1         | 1          |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl   |           | 2         | 2          |
| Downy Woodpecker        |           | 5         | 5          |
| Black-capped Chickadee  | 4         | 25        | 29         |
| Brown Creeper           | 2         |           | 2          |
| House Wren              |           | 2         | 2          |
| Golden-crowned Kinglet  |           | 3         | 3          |
| Ruby-crowned Kinglet    |           | 1         | 1          |
| Veery                   |           | 2         | 2          |
| Gray-cheeked Thrush     |           | 2         | 2          |
| Swainson's Thrush       |           | 1         | 1          |
| Hermit Thrush           |           | 3         | 3          |
| Wood Thrush             |           | 1         | 1          |
| American Robin          | 3         |           | 3          |
| Yellow Warbler          | 52        |           | 52         |
| Magnolia Warbler        |           | 1         | 1          |
| "Myrtle" Warbler        |           | 1         | 1          |
| Black-and-white Warbler |           | 1         | 1          |
| American Redstart       | 2         |           | 2          |
| Ovenbird                |           | 1         | 1          |
| Northern Waterthrush    | 1         | 3         | 4          |
| Canada Warbler          | 3         |           | 3          |
| White-throated Sparrow  |           | 1         | 1          |
| Red-winged Blackbird    | 23        |           | 23         |
| Baltimore Oriole        | 5         |           | 5          |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>95</b> | <b>56</b> | <b>151</b> |

## Breeding Bird Surveys

In recognition of the island's unique nesting bird communities, PIBO initiated a wide range of long-term field studies on the island beginning in 2006. In keeping with our mandate, the goal of the research is to generate data on the current status of the breeding bird communities on Pelee, with an emphasis on Species at Risk (SAR), and to establish permanent survey points for ongoing research.

Comprehensive field surveys were conducted on Pelee again in 2008 following the study protocol of the Atlas of the Breeding Birds of Ontario (Cadman *et al.* 2007). The fieldwork this summer was coordinated in partnership with NCC and the Township of Pelee Island as part of an ongoing cooperative stewardship project made possible with financial support from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resource's Species At Risk Fund.

Figure 1 – Properties Surveyed in 2008



Numerous monitoring activities were carried out in 2008 including 1) 212 surveys were conducted at 106 point count sites situated throughout a broad range of habitats 2) data was

compiled during unofficial visits to the sites 3) results were recorded from field surveys designed to detect the presence or absence of Species At Risk 4) a marsh bird monitoring survey was completed 5) additional data on breeding birds and Species At Risk was collected during PIBO's migration monitoring study. In all, four full-time staff and volunteers contributed more than 225 person-hours to the 2008 effort and surveyed approximately 700 hectares.

During this time, PIBO staff documented eighty species on Pelee, sixty-eight of which are designated in the study report as *at least* possible breeders. Four Species at Risk were recorded: Least Bittern (threatened), Bald Eagle (concern), Acadian Flycatcher (endangered) and 'eastern' Yellow-breasted Chat (concern), as well as three provincial priority species. Fifteen priority species for Essex County were also noted along with two species listed by Partners in Flight as "highly vulnerable throughout the species range irrespective of regional status".

The following table presents some of the results of the 2008 study. A full account of PIBO's activities this summer is available on our website in the report entitled: The Breeding Birds of Pelee Island – Results from 2008 Point Count Surveys, a Status Report on Species at Risk, and Recommendations for Future Conservation Efforts.

**Table 7 – Percentage of Point Count Sites on Pelee Island Where Species Was Recorded *at Least* Once During Two 5-minute Point Counts**

| <b>Species</b>         | <b>%</b> | <b>Species</b>            | <b>%</b>  |
|------------------------|----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Common Grackle         | 85       | Field Sparrow             | 9         |
| Red-winged Blackbird   | 83       | Wild Turkey               | 8         |
| American Robin         | 66       | Killdeer                  | 8         |
| Brown-headed Cowbird   | 56       | Great Crested Flycatcher  | 8         |
| Northern Cardinal      | 55       | Gray Catbird              | 8         |
| Yellow Warbler         | 52       | Northern Flicker          | 7         |
| Indigo Bunting         | 52       | American Crow             | 7         |
| Baltimore Oriole       | 50       | Orchard Oriole            | 7         |
| Cedar Waxwing          | 44       | Warbling Vireo            | 5         |
| Tree Swallow           | 36       | Brown Thrasher            | 5         |
| Mourning Dove          | 34       | Eastern Towhee            | 4         |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo   | 31       | Chimney Swift             | 3         |
| Downy Woodpecker       | 29       | Chipping Sparrow          | 3         |
| Purple Martin          | 27       | Song Sparrow              | 3         |
| Red-eyed Vireo         | 26       | Mallard                   | 2         |
| House Wren             | 26       | Red-tailed Hawk           | 2         |
| European Starling      | 25       | Spotted Sandpiper         | 2         |
| American Goldfinch     | 21       | Ruby-throated Hummingbird | 2         |
| Blue Jay               | 19       | Acadian Flycatcher        | 2         |
| Eastern Wood-Pewee     | 18       | Eastern Phoebe            | 2         |
| Black-capped Chickadee | 16       | Wood Thrush               | 2         |
| Black-billed Cuckoo    | 14       | Common Yellowthroat       | 2         |
| Ring-necked Pheasant   | 13       | Yellow-breasted Chat      | 2         |
| Eastern Kingbird       | 13       | Wood Duck                 | 1         |
| Carolina Wren          | 13       | Cooper's Hawk             | 1         |
| Barn Swallow           | 11       | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher     | 1         |
| Horned Lark            | 10       | House Finch               | 1         |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker | 9        | <b>Total species</b>      | <b>55</b> |

## Northern Saw-whet Owl Monitoring

Staff and volunteers were kept busy in October and early-November with the observatory's saw-whet owl monitoring program. Standardized mist-netting was conducted on thirty-four evenings from October 3<sup>rd</sup> to Nov 10<sup>th</sup> for a total of 494 net-hours. In all, 45 Northern Saw-whets and three Eastern Screech-Owls were banded, and two saw-whets were recaptured, for a capture rate of 0.1 birds/net-hour. Similar to other reports in southern Ontario this Fall, a very large number of birds (68%) captured on Pelee were adults. The most active night for owls was on October 14<sup>th</sup> when 15 saw-whets were banded in 23 net-hours for a catch-rate of .65 birds/net-hour.



After three seasons of monitoring at Fish Point from 2005-2007, this Fall the mist-netting operation for PIBO's owl project was relocated to a new site at the Stone Road alvar complex. This locale is directly across from the PIBO cottage on conservation land under the stewardship of the Essex Region Conservation Authority. Four 9-m owl nets were erected in a rectangular shape with a playback tape centered in the middle of the array.

While perhaps not as productive for owls as Fish Point, the new location is much more practical for intensive, 'constant-effort' monitoring, and a suitable number of owls were banded in 2008 to justify the time commitment. As a result, the program will continue at this site in 2009.

**Table 8 – Owl Monitoring Activities at Stone Road in 2008**

| Date         | Banded                | Recaptured | Net-hours |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------|-----------|
| 3-Oct        |                       |            | 12        |
| 4-Oct        | 2 NSWO                |            | 20        |
| 5-Oct        |                       |            | 16        |
| 6-Oct        |                       |            | 16        |
| 7-Oct        |                       |            | 17        |
| 8-Oct        | 2 EASO                |            | 16        |
| 9-Oct        | 1 NSWO                |            | 17        |
| 10-Oct       | 1 NSWO                |            | 14        |
| 11-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 12-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 13-Oct       |                       |            | 16        |
| 14-Oct       | 15 NSWO               | 1 NSWO     | 23        |
| 15-Oct       |                       |            | 0         |
| 16-Oct       | 1 NSWO                | 1 NSWO     | 9         |
| 17-Oct       |                       |            | 11        |
| 18-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 19-Oct       | 2 NSWO                |            | 14        |
| 20-Oct       |                       |            | 6         |
| 21-Oct       | 5 NSWO                |            | 22        |
| 22-Oct       | 1 NSWO                |            | 14        |
| 23-Oct       |                       |            | 14        |
| 24-Oct       |                       |            | 0         |
| 25-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 26-Oct       |                       |            | 5         |
| 27-Oct       | 1 NSWO                |            | 16        |
| 28-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 29-Oct       | 9 NSWO<br>1 EASO      |            | 26        |
| 30-Oct       |                       |            | 12        |
| 31-Oct       |                       |            | 0         |
| 1-Nov        | 2 NSWO                |            | 15        |
| 2-Nov        |                       |            | 15        |
| 3-Nov        |                       |            | 15        |
| 4-Nov        | 5 NSWO                |            | 21        |
| 5-Nov        |                       |            | 12        |
| 6-Nov        |                       |            | 18        |
| 7-Nov        |                       |            | 0         |
| 8-Nov        |                       |            | 6         |
| 9-Nov        |                       |            | 0         |
| 10-Nov       |                       |            | 16        |
| 34<br>nights | 45 NSWO<br>3 EASO     | 2 NSWO     | 494       |
| NSWO         | Northern Saw-whet Owl |            |           |
| EASO         | Eastern Screech-Owl   |            |           |

## SECTION TWO – EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

### Education & Outreach Programs in 2008

PIBO had a great deal of success with both outreach and in-house education programs in 2008. *Endangered Species, Endangered Spaces* is the Pelee Island Bird Observatory's newly designed, comprehensive education outreach program. The Program sends a trained interpreter to elementary and high schools, community and youth groups, around the county and province to teach conservation and stewardship information. This year, our pilot year, we were able to deliver our program to 17 groups, or 745 people, in the province. The project was designed to be an interactive program that teaches students about Carolinian forest, breeding birds and migration, with a focus on species at risk, and the importance of stewardship in conserving and managing habitat.

Topics discussed in the classroom presentation included: COSEWIC, the Species at Risk Act, bird population studies, banding and migration studies, how government and industry make decisions about protecting Species at Risk, what can be done locally to help SAR species and migratory songbirds. Other hands-on activities were directed at understanding problems associated with habitat loss and fragmentation and discussions about bio-accumulation and bio-magnification. Information was presented on number of Species at Risk in Essex County.



Feedback from staff and students was extremely positive with very high levels of satisfaction reported by all teachers. We continue to work on our programs and in future years plan to develop and implement a formal participant evaluation program to incorporate suggestions

for improvement whenever possible. We are certain that by targeting student audiences, we have a secondary audience in their parents, many of whom could be local landowners. Giving students the knowledge and awareness, as well as take home materials such as Environment Canada's *Species at Risk in Ontario* posters and fact sheets and the Canadian Wildlife Federation's *Wild About* poster series, encourages discussion in the classroom and around the dinner table.

PIBO hosted a number of organised visits to the field station in 2008 including school groups from Ontario, Ohio and Michigan. Other visitors included members of the Nature Conservancy of Canada and the Essex County Field Naturalists Club. In all, more than 330 people stopped by the banding lab and had the opportunity to see a variety of songbirds in the hand and to learn about birds and bird migration. PIBO staff stress the importance of stopover sites like Pelee Island for migratory birds during their lengthy journeys, along with other topics concerning the conservation of birds and their habitats. At the same time, we took the opportunity to engage these individuals in conversation about the island's Species at Risk and about stewardship activities designed to help vulnerable species and their habitats.



**Table 9 - Program Delivery Results**

| Activity   | Results   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Outreach to Youth</b></p> <p>- deliver SAR education/ awareness to youth</p> | <p>13 Classrooms (435 students)</p> <p>Essex High School, Pelee Island School, Catholic Central High School, Kingsville High School</p>   |
| <p><b>Public Outreach</b></p> <p>- deliver SAR education/ awareness to public</p>  | <p>5 Groups (350 people)</p> <p>Friends of the Second Marsh, Ontario Bird Banding Association, Essex County Field Naturalists, Pelee Island Spring Song, Durham Field Naturalists</p> |

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <b>In-House Education</b>            | 16 Groups (331 people)   |
|                                      | <p>SPRING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- University of Waterloo Field Course (17)</li> <li>- Windsor Lutheran School (40)</li> <li>- Leamington District High School (16)</li> <li>- Grosse Point School, Michigan (15)</li> <li>- Catholic Central High School, London (23)</li> <li>- Sciensational Snakes (25)</li> <li>- Essex County Field Naturalists (15)</li> <li>- Great Waters Institute for Journalism and Natural Resources (18)</li> <li>- Walk-in visitors (39)</li> <li>- May Bird Walks (24)</li> </ul> <p>FALL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ontario Nature (15)</li> <li>- Ohio State Uni field course (10)</li> <li>- Organic Growers (15)</li> <li>- Walk-in visitors (47)</li> <li>- Owling nights (12)</li> </ul> |
| <b>PIBO Media and Communications</b> |  |
| <b>PIBO Newsletter</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Spring Newsletter distribution – 60 people on mailing list; 35 email</li> <li>- Summer Newsletter distribution – 90 people on mailing list; 40 email</li> <li>- Fall Newsletter distribution – 100 people on mailing list; 43 email</li> <li>- Grapevine articles – 6 short articles published in local community newsletter. Distribution ranges from 200 people to 500 people</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Website</b>                       | PIBO website updated & maintained. Weekly summaries posted. Section added on education and species at risk.  |
| <b>Brochures</b>                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PIBO Species at Risk colour brochure designed, printed and distributed</li> <li>- Pelee Island checklist and 'Where to Watch Birds' brochure designed and distributed</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Weekly Summary</b>                | During spring & fall migration weekly summary email distribution to 40 people and also posted on website   |
| <b>Articles About PIBO</b>           | The Toledo Blade (July 6, 2008)<br>Carolinian Canada Newsletter Species at Risk Edition  |

## **SECTION THREE – ADDITIONAL DEVELOPMENTS**

### **Ontario Trillium Foundation Funding**



In 2008, PIBO received funding from the Ontario Trillium Foundation. OTF will be supporting our work over the next two years. In addition to helping cover some of the more onerous operating costs, including staff wages, the funding will go towards increasing the operational capacity of the organisation. Additionally, funds were given to purchase tents and camping equipment to facilitate bringing more school groups to the island in the spring and fall.

### **Species at Risk Partnership**

PIBO, in partnership with the Township of Pelee Island and the Nature Conservancy of Canada, received funding from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources Species At Risk Stewardship Fund. These funds will enable a coordinated stewardship approach to provide for the long-term conservation and restoration of Pelee Island's Species at Risk (SAR). Pelee Island hosts some of the most biologically diverse natural heritage in Canada and has one of the highest densities of SAR species. This funding will support a wide range of projects on the island including species inventories, control of invasive species, and development of nature trails, along with many other research and education initiatives.



*Prothonotary Warbler*

### **Data Management**

PIBO reached a milestone this year when the observatory submitted all of its migration monitoring counts (our "Daily Totals") from 2003 – 2007 to the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network (CMMN) and Bird Studies Canada (BSC). This data contains the daily

standardized migration counts conducted by PIBO at Fish Point and represents more than 800 days and approximately 15,000 person-hours of fieldwork.

Senior scientists at BSC will analyze PIBO's raw data and produce population indices for upwards of sixty neotropical (long-distance) migrant species. This information will become part of the CMMN national database that tracks and monitors population trends at more than twenty stations situated across the country from British Columbia to the Maritimes. Trends from the 5-year period, once adjusted for a number of variables including daily field-effort, weather conditions and other factors, will be generated for each target species. These reports will provide information about the relative increase/decline in the number of individuals migrating through the Fish Point study site.

In addition to PIBO's Daily Total's, staff and volunteers have also entered all of the observatory's bird banding records for the period 2003-2008. This data is submitted to the Bird Banding Office, Environment Canada, in Ottawa, and contains details for almost 23000 banded birds of one-hundred-and-three species. PIBO has also computerized it's historic breeding bird data that includes information about the nesting status on Pelee of more than eighty-five species.

### **Staff & Volunteers**

Eleven staff, interns and volunteers contributed approximately 3200 field-hours to PIBO's research projects this year compared to ten participants and 3000 field hours in 2007. The migration program benefited immensely from the hard work of PIBO's 2008 field crew: Erica Dunn, Émilie Germain, David Hussell, Kerry McGuire, Sumiko Onishi, Adam Pinch, Kirk Stewart and Jim & Pat Woodford.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1 – Species documented by PIBO on Pelee Island from 2003 – 2008

|  |    |  |    |
|--|----|--|----|
| <b>Loons &amp; Grebes</b>                  |    | Rough-legged Hawk                      | FP |
| Common Loon                                | FP | Golden Eagle                           | FP |
| Pied-billed Grebe                          | FP |  |    |
| Horned Grebe                               | FP | <b>Falcons</b>                         |    |
| Red-necked Grebe                           | FP | American Kestrel                       | FP |
|  |    | Merlin                                 | FP |
| <b>Cormorants</b>                          |    | Peregrine Falcon                       | FP |
| Double-crested Cormorant                   | FP |  |    |
|  |    | <b>Grouse, Pheasants &amp; Turkeys</b> |    |
| <b>Hérons &amp; Bitterns</b>               |    | Ring-necked Pheasant                   | FP |
| American Bittern                           | FP | Wild Turkey                            | FP |
| Least Bittern                              | FP |  |    |
| Great Blue Heron                           | FP | <b>Rails, Galinules &amp; Coots</b>    |    |
| Great Egret                                | FP | Virginia Rail                          | FP |
| Cattle Egret                               | P  | Sora                                   | FP |
| Green Heron                                | FP | American Coot                          | FP |
| Black-crowned Night Heron                  | FP |  |    |
|  |    | <b>Cranes</b>                          |    |
| <b>Ducks, Geese &amp; Swans</b>            |    | Sandhill Crane                         | FP |
| Tundra Swan                                | FP |  |    |
| Mute Swan                                  | P  | <b>Plovers</b>                         |    |
| Canada Goose                               | FP | Black-bellied Plover                   | FP |
| Cackling Goose                             | FP | American Golden Plover                 | FP |
| Wood Duck                                  | FP | Semipalmated Plover                    | FP |
| Green-winged Teal                          | FP | <i>Snowy Plover</i>                    | FP |
| American Black Duck                        | FP | <i>Piping Plover</i>                   | FP |
| Mallard                                    | FP | Killdeer                               | FP |
| Northern Pintail                           | FP |  |    |
| Blue-winged Teal                           | FP | <b>Stilts &amp; Avocets</b>            |    |
| Northern Shoveler                          | FP | American Avocet                        | FP |
| Gadwall                                    | FP | <i>Black-necked Stilt</i>              | FP |
| American Wigeon                            | FP |  |    |
| Canvasback                                 | FP | <b>Sandpipers &amp; Phalaropes</b>     |    |
| Redhead                                    | FP | Greater Yellowlegs                     | FP |
| Ring-necked Duck                           | FP | Lesser Yellowlegs                      | FP |
| Greater Scaup                              | FP | Solitary Sandpiper                     | FP |
| Lesser Scaup                               | FP | Willet                                 | FP |
| Long-tailed Duck                           | FP | Spotted Sandpiper                      | FP |
| Black Scoter                               | FP | Upland Sandpiper                       | P  |
| Surf Scoter                                | FP | Whimbrel                               | FP |
| Common Goldeneye                           | FP | Ruddy Turnstone                        | FP |
| Bufflehead                                 | FP | Red Knot                               | FP |
| Hooded Merganser                           | FP | Sanderling                             | FP |
| Common Merganser                           | FP | Semipalmated Sandpiper                 | FP |
| Red-breasted Merganser                     | FP | Least Sandpiper                        | FP |
| Ruddy Duck                                 | FP | Baird's Sandpiper                      | FP |
|  |    | Pectoral Sandpiper                     | FP |
| <b>Vultures, Kites, Hawks &amp; Eagles</b> |    | Dunlin                                 | FP |
| Turkey Vulture                             | FP | Buff-breasted Sandpiper                | FP |
| Osprey                                     | FP | Short-billed Dowitcher                 | FP |
| Bald Eagle                                 | FP | Common Snipe                           | FP |
| Northern Harrier                           | FP | American Woodcock                      | FP |
| Sharp-shinned Hawk                         | FP |  |    |
| Cooper's Hawk                              | FP | <b>Gulls &amp; Terns</b>               |    |
| Northern Goshawk                           | FP | Laughing Gull                          | FP |
| Red-shouldered Hawk                        | FP | Franklin's Gull                        | FP |
| Broad-winged Hawk                          | FP | <i>Black-headed Gull</i>               | FP |
| Red-tailed Hawk                            | FP | Little Gull                            | FP |

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|                                 |    |                                     |    |
|---------------------------------|----|-------------------------------------|----|
| Bonaparte's Gull                | FP | Red-eyed Vireo                      | FP |
| Ring-billed Gull                | FP | Yellow-throated Vireo               | FP |
| Herring Gull                    | FP | Blue-headed Vireo                   | FP |
| Iceland Gull                    | P  |                                     |    |
| Lesser Black-backed Gull        | FP | <b>Crows &amp; Jays</b>             |    |
| Glaucous Gull                   | FP | Blue Jay                            | FP |
| Thayer's Gull                   | FP | American Crow                       | FP |
| Great Black-backed Gull         | FP |                                     |    |
| Caspian Tern                    | FP | <b>Larks</b>                        |    |
| Common Tern                     | FP | Horned Lark                         | FP |
| Forster's Tern                  | FP |                                     |    |
| Black Tern                      | FP | <b>Swallows</b>                     |    |
|                                 |    | Purple Martin                       | FP |
| <b>Pigeons &amp; Doves</b>      |    | Tree Swallow                        | FP |
| Rock Dove                       | FP | N. Rough-winged Swallow             | FP |
| Mourning Dove                   | FP | Bank Swallow                        | FP |
|                                 |    | Cliff Swallow                       | FP |
| <b>Cuckoos</b>                  |    | <i>Cave Swallow</i>                 | P  |
| Black-billed Cuckoo             | FP | Barn Swallow                        | FP |
| Yellow-billed Cuckoo            | FP |                                     |    |
|                                 |    | <b>Chickadees &amp; Titmice</b>     |    |
| <b>Owls</b>                     |    | Black-capped Chickadee              | FP |
| Long-eared Owl                  | FP |                                     |    |
| Short-eared Owl                 | FP | <b>Nuthatches &amp; Creepers</b>    |    |
| Eastern Screech-Owl             | FP | Red-breasted Nuthatch               | FP |
| Great Horned Owl                | FP | White-breasted Nuthatch             | FP |
| Northern Saw-whet Owl           | FP | Brown Creeper                       | FP |
| <i>Burrowing Owl</i>            | P  |                                     |    |
|                                 |    | <b>Wrens</b>                        |    |
| <b>Goatsuckers &amp; Swifts</b> |    | Carolina Wren                       | FP |
| Common Nighthawk                | FP | House Wren                          | FP |
| Whip-poor-will                  | FP | Winter Wren                         | FP |
| Chimney Swift                   | FP | Sedge Wren                          | P  |
|                                 |    | Marsh Wren                          | FP |
| <b>Hummingbirds</b>             |    |                                     |    |
| Ruby-throated Hummingbird       | FP | <b>Kinglets &amp; Gnatcatchers</b>  |    |
|                                 |    | Golden-crowned Kinglet              | FP |
| <b>Kingfishers</b>              |    | Ruby-crowned Kinglet                | FP |
| Belted Kingfisher               | FP | Blue-gray Gnatcatcher               | FP |
|                                 |    |                                     |    |
| <b>Woodpeckers</b>              |    | <b>Thrushes</b>                     |    |
| Red-headed Woodpecker           | FP | Eastern Bluebird                    | FP |
| Red-bellied Woodpecker          | FP | American Robin                      | FP |
| Yellow-bellied Sapsucker        | FP | <i>Townsend's Solitaire</i>         | P  |
| Downy Woodpecker                | FP | Wood Thrush                         | FP |
| Hairy Woodpecker                | FP | Veery                               | FP |
| Northern Flicker                | FP | Swainson's Thrush                   | FP |
|                                 |    | Gray-cheeked Thrush                 | FP |
|                                 |    | Hermit Thrush                       | FP |
| <b>Flycatchers</b>              |    |                                     |    |
| Olive-sided Flycatcher          | FP | <b>Mockingbirds &amp; Thrashers</b> |    |
| Eastern Wood-Pewee              | FP | Gray Catbird                        | FP |
| Yellow-bellied Flycatcher       | FP | Northern Mockingbird                | FP |
| Acadian Flycatcher              | FP | Brown Thrasher                      | FP |
| Alder Flycatcher                | FP |                                     |    |
| Willow Flycatcher               | FP | <b>Starlings</b>                    |    |
| Least Flycatcher                | FP | European Starling                   | FP |
| Eastern Phoebe                  | FP |                                     |    |
| Great Crested Flycatcher        | FP | <b>Pipits &amp; Waxwings</b>        |    |
| Western Kingbird                | FP | American Pipit                      | FP |
| Eastern Kingbird                | FP | Cedar Waxwing                       | FP |
|                                 |    |                                     |    |
| <b>Vireos</b>                   |    | <b>Warblers</b>                     |    |
| Warbling Vireo                  | FP | Northern Parula                     | FP |
| Philadelphia Vireo              | FP | Orange-crowned Warbler              | FP |
| White-eyed Vireo                | FP |                                     |    |

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|                               |    |                                 |     |
|-------------------------------|----|---------------------------------|-----|
| Tennessee Warbler             | FP | Eastern Towhee                  | FP  |
| Blue-winged Warbler           | FP | Chipping Sparrow                | FP  |
| Golden-winged Warbler         | FP | Clay-colored Sparrow            | FP  |
| "Brewster's" Warbler          | FP | Field Sparrow                   | FP  |
| Nashville Warbler             | FP | American Tree Sparrow           | FP  |
| Yellow Warbler                | FP | Vesper Sparrow                  | FP  |
| Chestnut-sided Warbler        | FP | Grasshopper Sparrow             | FP  |
| Magnolia Warbler              | FP | Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow   | FP  |
| Cape May Warbler              | FP | Savannah Sparrow                | FP  |
| Black-throated Blue Warbler   | FP | Song Sparrow                    | FP  |
| Blackburnian Warbler          | FP | Lincoln's Sparrow               | FP  |
| Cerulean Warbler              | FP | Swamp Sparrow                   | FP  |
| Black-throated Green Warbler  | FP | Fox Sparrow                     | FP  |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler         | FP | Harris's Sparrow                | P   |
| Palm Warbler                  | FP | White-crowned Sparrow           | FP  |
| Pine Warbler                  | FP | White-throated Sparrow          | FP  |
| Prairie Warbler               | FP | Dark-eyed Junco                 | FP  |
| Blackpoll Warbler             | FP |                                 |     |
| Bay-breasted Warbler          | FP | <b>Longspurs &amp; Buntings</b> |     |
| Yellow-throated Warbler       | FP | Lapland Longspur                | P   |
| Black-and-white Warbler       | FP | Snow Bunting                    | FP  |
| American Redstart             | FP |                                 |     |
| Prothonotary Warbler          | FP | <b>Blackbirds</b>               |     |
| Worm-eating Warbler           | FP | Baltimore Oriole                | FP  |
| Common Yellowthroat           | FP | Orchard Oriole                  | FP  |
| Mourning Warbler              | FP | Eastern Meadowlark              | FP  |
| Connecticut Warbler           | FP | Western Meadowlark              | P   |
| Kentucky Warbler              | FP | Bobolink                        | FP  |
| Northern Waterthrush          | FP | Red-winged Blackbird            | FP  |
| Louisiana Waterthrush         | FP | Rusty Blackbird                 | FP  |
| Ovenbird                      | FP | Common Grackle                  | FP  |
| Canada Warbler                | FP | Brown-headed Cowbird            | FP  |
| Hooded Warbler                | FP |                                 |     |
| Wilson's Warbler              | FP | <b>Finches</b>                  |     |
| Yellow-breasted Chat          | FP | Purple Finch                    | FP  |
|                               |    | House Finch                     | FP  |
| <b>Tanagers</b>               |    | Common Redpoll                  | P   |
| Scarlet Tanager               | FP | Pine Siskin                     | FP  |
| Summer Tanager                | FP | American Goldfinch              | FP  |
|                               |    |                                 |     |
| <b>Cardinals &amp; Allies</b> |    | <b>Old World Sparrows</b>       |     |
| Northern Cardinal             | FP | House Sparrow                   | FP  |
| Rose-breasted Grosbeak        | FP |                                 |     |
| Indigo Bunting                | FP | FP - documented at Fish Point   | 241 |
|                               |    | P - documented on Pelee Island  | 253 |
| <b>Sparrows</b>               |    |                                 |     |