

**Lincoln Land Community College 394-0893
Bird Banding Station (LLCC BBS)**

Springfield, Sangamon County, IL

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The Lincoln Land Community College Bird Banding Station was initiated in the fall of 2012 and has been in operation each spring and fall ever since; 2017 marked the fifth full fall season. The station's habitats and general description were described in the 2015 IFR fall report. The 2017 season was typically windy, cool (even cold on some occasions) and damp. As in 2015 and 2016, migrant birds were slow to arrive and quick to depart. Several expected species were neither caught nor seen this fall. The capture of birds this year was definitely lower than previously experienced because of fairly strong to extremely strong winds, drizzles, rain or thunderstorms, deer-caused holes in the nets and the matted down prairie which normally would have captured an excellent number of prairie-type species – especially goldfinches and the less common, sparrows). However, the number of birds captured during the last week of operation (early November) enhanced the season results considerably.

The total number of birds banded in 2017 (2,236) was the third best in the five full years of operation. The number of species (79) was typical of the past four years and could have exceeded the record (80) if only a few of the “missed” species had been captured. In addition to the birds banded, another 66 were captured as returns and 425 as repeats.

This fall the station was in operation for 65 days; there were four days in which >100 birds were banded – the largest number was 147. In contrast, there were 3 days in which 5 or fewer birds were banded.

The station's only new species was a Broad-winged Hawk (the 119th station species). Record highs (even though the station has only been in operation for five years) were set for the Eastern Phoebe, both Kyinglets, Orange-crowned Warbler, Northern Parula, Fox Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Purple Finch, House Finch and Pine Siskin. Well-below typical numbers were noted for the Chipping, White-throated and White-crowned sparrows.

The oldest returns were of 8 birds banded in 2013 (two Downy Woodpeckers, a Slate-colored Junco, a Song Sparrow, a House Finch, an American Goldfinch and two House Sparrows) and 4 birds banded in 2014 (a Northern Cardinal and three House Finches).

The five issues that traditionally affect the banding operations each fall (and in some cases the number of nets used each day) were the wind, rain, leaves, people and deer. (The deer in the banding area are so tame, they do not even flee when you actively try to chase them away – even at close range). On the positive side, the banding station operates out of a student-constructed and fully functional building which is especially useful on damp, windy and/or cold days and serves as a “garage” for the station's bird-mobile (ATV).

Without the dedicated support of many volunteers, the station could not operate. Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered time at and visited the LLCC BBS. Special thanks 1) to the Lincoln Land Community College for permitting the station on its campus; 2) to Anthony Rothering of the LLCC biology staff for near-daily assistance; 3) to the many regular volunteer assistants (listed in the heading of this report); 4) to everyone who donated “wish list” items for the station; 5) to all of the station visitors (including many LLCC classes and independent students and faculty); 6) to the Rotary Club of Springfield South, and the Phillip's 66 Company for providing grants, and 7) to several individuals who made generous donations. A copy of the station's full report is available on request from vkleen@comcast.net.