

This was the 35th year of fall banding at the marsh. Contact the Bander/Coordinator for a full report of the 2018 banding results. Highlights of the season were a Grasshopper Sparrow on 14 Oct (a first for the station) and an Orange-crowned Warbler on 7 Oct (which was our 41,000th individual banded).

**PALATIAL WOODLAND 391-0821
ESTATE (PWE)**

Albany, Vinton County, OH

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This was the fourth Fall season of banding at the PWE station in eastern Vinton County, one of the most heavily forested and least populated counties of Ohio, in the Appalachian foothills. As described in previous seasonal reports, the banding area is maintained along a ¼ mile driveway with a stable shrubland and encouragement to grow shrubs and small tree species such as Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*), sumacs (*Rhus* spp.), and dogwoods (*Cornus* spp.) that bear fruit attractive to migrants such as thrushes, in the fall.

Weather was somewhat detrimental for banding this season. September had much more rain than usual. It was one of the wettest years on record for southern Ohio. That was followed by unseasonable hot weather during the first half of October, with high temperatures reaching the (80° F/26.6C) level or above, on many days, and only falling to (70° F/21.1C) by time to open nets each morning. Mosquitoes were abundant and voracious. Despite that, or perhaps because of it, the season was better than that of 2017.

A number of migrant species set new highs for the season, especially warblers. Notable were Magnolia Warbler at 70 with previous high 39; Hooded Warbler 47, previously 31; Bay-breasted Warbler 31, previously only 5; and Red-eyed Vireo at 24, previously 10. On the other hand, despite what appeared to be a decent soft mast season, especially of spicebush berries, thrush numbers fell for the second consecutive year. The percentage of hatching year Swainson's Thrushes (36%) was notably low.

Several species were new for the fall season, including the first three Western Palm Warblers ever, an American Woodcock (second for the station), and a Yellow-shafted Flicker. I have banded far more Pileated Woodpeckers than flickers here over the years. Also, the first season with multiple (2) Yellow-billed Cuckoos.

Many thanks to my assistants for the season, including Jake Goldman, a graduate student at nearby Ohio University, and Mike Wren, for their assistance. The operation was also visited by several families with children, always welcome.

**SAND BLUFF 422-0891
BIRD OBSERVATORY**

Shirland, Winnebago County, IL

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The 2018's fall report is the second since starting operation under a station permit. Sand Bluff Bird Observatory, located in northern Winnebago County just a mile south of the Illinois-Wisconsin state line, has been in operation since 1967. The site is located on Colored Sands Forest Preserves, a part of the forest preserves of Winnebago County. The unique feature of this area is its dry sand prairie, sand forest, and wet flood plain forest. The Sugar River flows gently through the preserve and offers a diverse habitat for all types of flora and fauna. It is especially attractive to migratory birds as a stop-over for food and shelter.

This fall was different than 2017 in that we had fewer rain outs on banding days and weekends. However, we did lose the use of six nets located in the flood plain for several weeks. The number of birds banded in 2018 increased to 4011, up from the 3295 birds in 2017. However, the number of species banded, 104, was down from last year. Swainson's Thrush continued to be the most common species banded with 481 and the Gray Catbird was second with 321 banded. This year there was a notable increase in Tennessee Warblers after a low for several years.