

ONTARIO BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

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POINT PELEE BANDING SPRING 1958

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by Douglas D. Dow

The spring of 1958 proved to be the poorest in the history of the Point Pelee Banding Station. Although the number of species was fairly high - 89 - the number of individual birds was low totalling only 1,246. This represented a total of 46 banding days and the combined efforts of several banders and assistants.

The spring activity started on April 4th when two banders arrived at the point and started repair work on the Heligoland trap. The trap was in fairly good condition as the snow of the past winter had only slightly collapsed the roof. The design of the trap was changed somewhat. An extension was added to the east wall, a new pair of baffles, four feet wide, were added to the walls just inside the entrance. The catching end was widened and a larger collecting box was added. A new, large drop-door was added and another door built in one side for the trapper. This new construction was very promising, but it was not adequately tested as few species ever came far enough south in sufficient numbers to really make trapping worthwhile. Therefore mist-nets accounted for most of the birds caught.

Banding at Point Pelee is now restricted to two areas in the park. The first area is at the end of the point where the Heligoland trap now stands and the other is along the east beach, north of East Beach Drive. Banders are no longer allowed to use their own bands in the park and are now using a "Master set" for all work done at the point. Banding permits for the park have been limited to five and all other banders willing to assist in the banding operations at the point are classed as associate banders.

Although there were no large waves of migrants this spring, several interesting species were banded. An American Woodcock, the first to banded at Pelee, was netted behind Aviation Inn on April 29th. A female Evening Grosbeak was banded on the same date. A White-eyed Vireo was netted at the end of the point on May 3rd, and a Prairie Warbler was caught on the east beach on the 10th of May. Two Connecticut Warblers were netted in the east beach area; one on May 18th and the other on the 26th.

When the banders first arrived on April 4th, large numbers of Song Sparrows and Slate-colored Juncos were noted. However work was started on the Heligoland trap and by the time this was completed these birds had moved on. The weather was generally cold with snow-flurries late into April. A low-pressure area which moved into our region on the night of April 23rd brought with it warm weather and a wave of early migrants. Flickers, Hermit thrushes, towhees and White-throated sparrows arrived in large numbers. One Northern Waterthrush was trapped and banded.

The only large warbler wave was on May 3rd, when many species of warblers were observed, as well as numbers of Indigo Buntings. The heaviest shorebird migration was on May 22nd when hundreds of Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstones, Dunlin and Whimbrels were observed just outside the park on the fields.

Night banding proved fairly successful. Mist-nets were used on the end of the point after dark and Black-bellied Plover, Ruddy Turnstones and Dunlin were taken in good numbers. A Knot was banded on May 23rd.

The area along the east beach was used for banding for the first time this year. Only one spot seemed productive at all times. This was a small grove of large willows about two miles along the road. The other strips of trees; one between the marsh and the road on the west and the other on the east between the road and the beach proved good only at certain times. A Heligoland trap might prove quite profitable in this area, but it will be interesting to see how the birds travel through this area in the fall.

Complete sets of weights and measurements were taken on many birds and a number of parasites were collected. A careful check was kept on all repeats, and the area and time of recapture was noted. When possible the birds were weighed again. A total of 75 birds repeated during the spring operations.

The spring activity of 1958 definitely convinced us of the poor location of the Heligoland trap. After careful observation we feel that an ideal spot would be on the west side of the road opposite the traffic circle. The trees in this area are low and with more extension of the wings of the trap it could funnel birds from a larger area. Most of the bird movement in this area is at a height of not more than six feet from the ground. The area can sometimes be covered with mist-nets, but the strong west winds usually make netting impossible.

Banders

D. Dow	London
L. Gray	Hamilton
N. Kelly	Detroit
W. Wasserfall	Toronto

Assistants

D. Hussel	Toronto
D. Larkins	Detroit
P. Mackenzie	London

Associate Banders

L. Lenz	Detroit
M. Schoenfeld	London
R. Taylor	Toronto

POINT PELEE APRIL 1958

Species	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
American Woodcock										
Yellow-shafted Flicker		1								
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2								
Eastern Phoebe		5	1							
Bank Swallow										
Black-capped Chickadee	1									
White-breasted Nuthatch		1							1	
Brown Creeper	1	2							2	2
Carolina Wren										
Brown Thrasher										
Robin		4	2	2						
Hermit Thrush										
Starling								5		
Myrtle Warbler										
Northern Waterthrush										
House Sparrow										
Eastern Meadowlark	1									
Redwinged Blackbird		1	1	1			1			
Common Grackle			2	1			7	7	1	2
Brown-headed Cowbird				3						
Cardinal										
Evening Grosbeak										
Rufous-sided Towhee										
Savannah Sparrow		4								2
Vesper Sparrow										
Slate-colored Junco	11	17		7	30	8				
Oregon Junco						1				
Tree Sparrow	1	10		3	5	3				
Chipping Sparrow										
Field Sparrow									3	
White-throated Sparrow										
Fox Sparrow										
Swamp Sparrow	1									
Song Sparrow	12	48			6			1	6	
Daily totals	28	95	6	17	41	12	8	13	13	6

Total for April - 34 species - 473 individuals

APRIL 1958 (cont)

15	16	17	18	19	20	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	Total
												1		1
														1
														2
														6
									1					1
				1										1
					1		1							3
											1			10
											1			1
				1			11		3					15
				2		2								14
			1	1			3		1	1				7
1				1										7
								3						3
							1							1
					1									1
														1
														6
2														31
7													4	9
				2	4									1
									1					1
									2					3
			1	2					5					18
												4		12
									3			9		12
				12	30		4	17	2	4				142
														1
														22
				1				1	4	4		2		12
				2	4			1	1	4		2		19
								10	1	5	7	3		26
				1										1
					2			1	2	1	1			8
			1	4	5			1	2					86
10			3	31	47	2	44	25	23	21	22	2	4	473

POINT PELEE MAY 1958

<u>Species</u>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Bay-breasted Warbler												
Blackpoll Warbler												
Prairie Warbler										1		
Palm Warbler			2	1						1		
Ovenbird				2	1				1		1	
Northern Waterthrush												
Connecticut Warbler												
Mourning Warbler												
Yellowthroat			1						1			
Yellow-breasted Chat					1							
Wilson's Warbler												
Canada Warbler									1		1	
American Redstart											1	
Red-winged Blackbird	1		1								2	
Baltimore Oriole			1								1	
Common Grackle						1						
Brown-headed Cowbird											5	
Scarlet Tanager												
Cardinal								1				
Indigo Bunting			3								6	2
American Goldfinch											14	2
Rufous-sided Towhee					1							
Savannah Sparrow								2			1	
Grasshopper Sparrow											1	
Slate-colored Junco			1				2	1				
Chipping Sparrow										1	6	2
Field Sparrow								1			4	
White-crowned Sparrow											8	1
White-throated Sparrow	3		10	1	8	4	12	18	1	11	10	
Lincoln's Sparrow												
Swamp Sparrow							1	5				
Song Sparrow	1		1						1			
Empidonax spp.									1	1		
Orchard Oriole												
Daily totals	7		32	7	15	6	21	32	11	19	76	13

MAY 1958 (cont)

13	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	26	27	28	<u>Species totals</u>
				8		3	2						13
		1	2	1	1				1				6
													1
	1	1											6
				3		1		1	1			1	12
			1										1
				1						1			2
				1								1	2
	2		6	2	3	3	1		3				22
			2	1									4
		1	1	3	1	1			1	1		2	11
				2	2	2						4	12
			1	2			1	1					6
			12	8	10	16	20	14	13	36	9	11	153
		1	1	2	1								7
													5
		1			1	3		1					11
				2		2							4
		1	1	1	1								5
													11
		27				3							46
					1		1						3
	1												4
													1
													4
1													10
		1											6
	2			1									12
1	1		2		1	1	1	1					86
									2				2
													6
			2						1				6
		1		7			3	3				1	17
									1				1
2	17	39	48	104	33	68	41	50	48	44	11	29	773

Total for May - 75 species - 773 individuals

Total for spring - 89 species - 1246 individuals

NOTES AND NEWS

The January 1959 issue of BIRD-BANDING contained a paper entitled "The Use of Mist-Nets and a Heligoland Trap at Point Pelee", written by Jim Woodford. It summarizes data on the mist-net versus Heligoland trap question. Any OBBA member wishing a copy may obtain one by writing to the writer at 10 Edgar Ave., Toronto 5, Ontario.

LES GRAY, Hamilton, reports that the Royal Botanical Gardens have agreed to build a duck trap in the Cootes Paradise Marsh. Les and B. McLaren will operate the trap.

RUTH BROWN, Toronto, recently banded several Bohemian Waxwings near Barrie, Ontario.

FRANK LOVESY, Toronto, has had some success catching Sparrow Hawks with a Bal-Chatrri trap. (BIRD-BANDING, January 1959 contains an excellent article on Bal-Chatrri traps - which would be of interest to all banders. BIRD-BANDING costs \$5.00 per year and may be obtained from Mr. Hugh E. Harlow, 47 Scotland Road, Reading, Mass., U.S.A.

BILL WASSERFALL, Willowdale, has large flocks of Purple Finches and Evening Grosbeaks coming to his feeders and has banded some of them.

Articles, notes and items for members news are badly needed. If everyone would just drop a postcard to the editor the members news section would be more complete and much more interesting.

The April issue of OBBA Newsletter will contain a report on the annual meeting and the summary of the fall banding at Point Pelee. July will have a report on the banding station operated at Pres Qu'ile by Ruth Brown and others and the work done at Pelee Island.

RECOVERY

LES GRAY, Hamilton reports that a Spotted Sandpiper banded on July 18, 1958 at the Dundas Marsh, Hamilton, Wentworth Co., was found on November 27, 1958 at Paramaribo, Surinam (Dutch Guiana).