

BIRD WING OUTING SUMMARY

August 26, 2014

1. **Bird Wing Outing:** The Bird Wing outing this month spread its wings and headed west to the Sturgeon House River Museum Trail, then on to Cache Bay. We did not see many birds, but when you join up with the Sturgeon women, you are bound to have a lot of fun and many laughs.

We did not go far on the trails. No birds were seen and only one was heard by Marc Buchanan and that one remained unidentified. Quite a surprise to see how the trails have deteriorated. Much maintenance and money will be required to restore them.

On the way to Cache Bay, a murder of about 100 crows was observed eating gravel on a side road off Lalande Road. Birds need sand in their diet to break down food particles that have not been broken down in their food tract. Two Northern Harriers were also seen on Lalande Road, flying in a nearby field.



Cache Bay rewarded us with a beautiful viewing, seen below, of the Osprey sitting in a tree in the setting sun not too far away from its abandoned nest, its chick having been fledged. Then seen was a Green Heron in flight, and later another one, or perhaps the same one. And in the waters of Cache Bay, three Wood Ducks, 18 Mallards and a Caspian Tern diving for its bedtime snack.



Passerines were mainly absent at Cache Bay, although the Brown Thrasher, present in the area since spring, was heard, and two American Robins were spotted – no mean feat when there are not many American Robins around these days!

Not many birds, but a beautiful sunset over Lake Nipissing and a fun get-together at Tim Horton's in Sturgeon Falls, thanks to Marc Buchanan's generosity and the Tim Horton's server who warmed Dick Tafel's donut for 10 seconds – no more, no less.

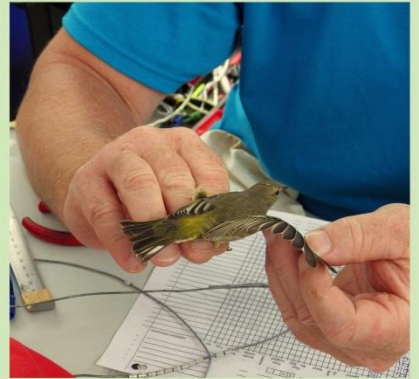
2. **Bird Banding:** If not many passerines were seen during the bird outing, they were certainly seen at the Bird Banding demonstration at Laurier Woods on August 23. As part of the first annual Nature Festival, Bruce Murphy and Joanne Goddard, from Hilliardton Marsh near New Liskeard, banded many birds, most of them warblers. In fact, Bruce called Laurier Woods *The Home of the Warblers* and said it would make an ideal location for a permanent bird banding station. Species banded the most were the Tennessee and the Nashville Warblers and the Red-eyed Vireo. Other birds banded included a Gray Catbird, an American Goldfinch, a Song Sparrow, a Chipping Sparrow, two Yellow Warblers, a Wilson's Warbler, a couple of American Redstarts, a Pine Warbler, and a Canada Warbler, a species of concern and, therefore, banded quickly and let go. Check out the next page for a photographic sampling of the birds banded. (Thanks to Bird Wings, Gary and Connie Sturge, for obtaining and setting up the tent and tables supplied by Home Depot.)



Bird banding data provides useful information for research and management projects. The data is used to determine dispersal and migration, behavior and social structure, life-span and survival rate, and reproductive success and population growth. In short, bird banding is essential to bird conservation and leads to a greater understanding of the needs of birds.

With respect to dispersal and migration, tracking banded birds helps us determine migratory flyways; when birds migrate; and where they stop along their migratory routes. This knowledge enables us to protect necessary habitats for both breeding and wintering birds. The shores of the Delaware River Estuary in Delaware and New Jersey, for example, provide spawning grounds for horseshoe crabs and are one of the most critical stopover points in the western hemisphere for migrating shorebirds. These birds, which migrate 2,000 miles from South and Central America to the Arctic, time their arrival to that of the breeding crabs. By the time they get to the Delaware River Estuary, they are tired and starving and depend on crab eggs to regain bulk and provide energy to continue on the last leg of their journey to the Arctic.

Bird banding provides us with a close-up look at birds and, in particular, delights children. But more importantly, banding birds provides us with much data to ensure their survival.





3. **Project FeederWatch:** The 28th season of Project FeederWatch through Bird Studies Canada begins on **November 8, 2014, and continues through to April 3, 2015.** Please check out the following link for more information on this worthwhile citizen scientist project:

<http://www.bsc-eoc.org/volunteer/pfw/index.jsp?lang=EN&targetpg=index>

By clicking on the above link, you can also view the results of Project FeederWatch for the 2012-13 season. Some of these results include Red-breasted Nuthatches visiting a record-breaking 74% of feeders in Ontario, and White-breasted Nuthatches appearing at 80% of feeders. Common Redpolls also made a strong showing at Ontario feeders, appearing at 77% of feeders. Ontario's winter rarity highlights included a Rose-breasted Grosbeak in London and an Indigo Bunting in Tiny Township in Simcoe County.



The top ten species in Ontario for 2012-2013 season based on the percentage of FeederWatch locations are Black-capped Chickadee; Downy Woodpecker; Blue Jay; American Goldfinch; Mourning Dove; Dark-eyed

Junco; White-breasted Nuthatch; Northern Cardinal; Common Redpoll; and Red-breasted Nuthatch.



4. **Bird Bash:** The next Bird Bash will take place the weekend of **September 13 and 14.**

5. **Bird Wing Meeting:** With September comes the end of the spring and summer bird outings. The next Bird Wing meeting takes place in the **Board Room of the North Bay Public Library on the 4th Tuesday of the month, Tuesday, September 23, 2014, at 6:30 pm.** Be prepared to come with a list of at least three species seen during the summer and your most exciting summer sighting.

Text: Renee Levesque, Bird Wing Scribe

Photos: Renee Levesque, Therez Violette (photo of Renee Levesque) and the North Bay Nugget (photo of Dick Tafel).

