



# *Inland Regional News*

## *Inland Bird Banding Association*

### **Highlights of the 1998 Fall Banding Season at Last Mountain**

Although banding in the spring of 1998 was less than spectacular, the fall more than compensated—it was a season of superlatives. The fall catch rate of 638 birds per 100 mist net hours was the best since 1990, while the 74 species captured was bested only by the 79 captured last year.

The banding season began auspiciously on 1 August with the capture of a record-setting Ovenbird. The bird, which was undergoing heavy moult, remained in the area for 33 days—the longest stay ever for any of our migratory species. The migration was in full swing by 7 August when we caught 136 new birds. After that, migrants arrived in waves that often coincided with weekends. Many days in August and early September had catches exceeding 100 birds with the all-time record of 271 new captures set on 5 September. The migration stalled after that date, as we had no further 100-bird days.

The bird of the season was a Black-throated Blue Warbler. First came a sighting of a female at the bird blind on 9 September. Incredibly, the bird was sporting a band, but not one of ours! A male was then seen near the lake on 18 September, and captured and banded the next day. This was the first of its kind banded at LMBO and indeed in Saskatchewan. Other noteworthy captures included our third fall Veery on 15 August, and a Vesper Sparrow (only our sixth) on 7 August. On 23 September we reached a milestone when we mist netted and banded the 30,000<sup>th</sup> bird in our ten-year his-

tory. The bird, was, appropriately, a Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Not surprisingly, a number of species were caught in record numbers, these included: the Least Flycatcher; Brown Creeper; three of our four vireos, Gray Catbird; Magnolia, Cape May, Bay-breasted and Canada warblers, American Redstart and Ovenbird. The news wasn't all good though, for we had record low captures of several species, notably the Northern Waterthrush, Mourning Warbler, Swamp Sparrow (only one capture) and Baltimore Oriole (none!). Several rarely seen birds were observed during the fall migration: a Broad-winged Hawk was seen by P. Bullman on 29 August for our sixth record, our third Great Crested Flycatcher appeared on 6 September, our fourth Townsend's Solitaire at the picnic hall on 3 October, and our third MacGillivray's Warbler at the artesian well on 13 August. A impressive mixed flock of 2000 swallows was seen near the observatory on 9 August, about 75% of them were Tree Swallows, the remainder were Bank Swallows along with a few Cliff Swallows.

As in the spring, El Niño was the presumed cause of an early migration which saw early arrival dates set for 22 of 48 of our regular fall migrants!

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**Robert Wapple**  
#6-1002 Dufferin Ave.  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7H 2C1

**Alan R. Smith**  
115 Perimeter Road  
Saskatoon, SK  
S7N 0X4

## The 1998 Long Point Banding Summary

LPBO completed its 39th year of migration monitoring in 1998. The total of 22,374 birds (involving 132 species and forms) banded was the fourth highest total ever, and substantially above the 10-year average (19,300 birds). An additional 3169 birds were banded under LPBO's banding permit at Thunder Cape. The most productive banding station was Old Cut with 8753 birds, followed by the Tip (8262) and Breakwater (4413). LPBO has now banded over 600,000 birds of 266 species since 1960. No new species were added to the list in 1998, but new banding records were set for several species, including Blackpoll Warbler, Tundra Swan and Northern Saw-whet Owl. The latter two species were targeted specifically by special projects at Long Point, while Blackpolls just had an exceptional passage, especially at the Tip station in the fall.

There were 17 recoveries and four foreign retraps reported to LPBO in 1998. The long-distance winner was a cowbird, recovered in Missouri a year and a half after banding. Both a Sharp-shinned Hawk and a Northern Saw-whet Owl traveled an average of 37 km/day to cover the straight-line distances between banding and recovery. The saw-whet had the longer trek, however, coming from northern Michigan to southern Ontario in 18 nights. Perhaps even more impressive was the springing Golden-crowned Kinglet that was recaptured 45 km away by John Miles at Selkirk Provincial Park, just a couple of hours after its release from the Old Cut station!

As always, a huge debt of gratitude is owed to the many participants who contributed to the 1998 migration monitoring program at Long Point. Thanks also to the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Canadian Wildlife Service, Canada Trust Friends of the Environment Canada Fund, LPBO supporters, and the Baillie Birdathon for financial support.

***Jul Wojnowski***

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Other items of interest from this same issue of Long Point's Newsletter:

5 Tundra Swans have been fitted with satellite transmitters; check <http://www.bsc-eoc.org/swans/swans.html> to follow their movements.

Details of LPBO's 1998 banding totals with listing of recoveries and foreign recaptures.

Reports of LPBO's surveys of Red-shouldered Hawks, woodpeckers, Hooded Warblers (including a 10-year-old bird), and Acadian Flycatchers.

### ***Bird Studies Canada***

P.O. Box 160  
Port Rowan, ON  
N0E 1M0

[generalinfo@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:generalinfo@bsc-eoc.org)  
or  
[lpbo@bsc-eoc.org](mailto:lpbo@bsc-eoc.org)

