

## Migration Monitoring Summary for the Period April 1<sup>st</sup>- 14<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### Pelee Island Bird Observatory



PIBO's 7<sup>th</sup> spring season of migration monitoring coverage got underway at Fish Point Provincial Nature Reserve on April 1<sup>st</sup>. It was a clear and mild morning with a moderate breeze from the southwest. Migrants were active on the lake, with 63 **Buffleheads** recorded on census along with **Red-breasted Mergansers**, **Common Goldeneyes**, and a variety of other waterfowl species. An **Eared Grebe** observed on the west beach was a PIBO first. Landbirds were also active – **Golden-crowned Kinglets** (34 DT) and **Song Sparrows** (24) were observed in good numbers on the census as well as smaller counts of **Tree Swallows**, **Winter Wrens**, **Brown Creepers**, and **Fox Sparrows**.

The warm weather continued for a few more days but the wind shifted to the northwest and steady rain set-in on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Birds continued to move through the area but in smaller numbers than earlier in the week, including 4 captured **Rusty Blackbirds**, which was a first for the station. Although a common bird on migration, they're not banded very often – just 21 Rusties were captured in Ontario in 2007, for example, out of a total of almost 120,000 banded birds.

The rain let-up on the 4<sup>th</sup> but strong north winds and cool temperatures made for a quiet few days, with just 29 species recorded in the count area on the 4<sup>th</sup> and not much in the way of new arrivals on the 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup>. Light snow flurries on the morning of the 6<sup>th</sup> didn't help matters and very few birds were recorded on the day.

The second week of coverage started off on a busier note when 42 species were tallied on the 8<sup>th</sup> and a nice variety of birds were banded including 8 **Eastern Phoebes**. **Golden-crowned Kinglets** were dominant along with small numbers of **Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers**, **Brown Creepers**, and a variety of sparrow species. A **Virginia Rail** was heard calling from Fox Pond. After a brief lull on the 9<sup>th</sup>, activity picked up again the next day when 27 birds were banded and 48 species were recorded during the official count period. A **Red-shouldered Hawk** observed in the netting area was new for 2009.

After another fairly active morning on April 11<sup>th</sup>, PIBO staff were greeted by sub-zero temperatures and more north winds the following day and these wintry conditions persisted right through to the end of the coverage period. A few migrants continued to filter through the area despite the inclement weather including spring 'firsts' for **Purple Martin**, **Barn** and **Bank Swallow**.

Hermit Thrush photo – Claire Sanders

PIBO's next summary will be posted on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Hi Sumiko, from everyone on Pelee Island!