



Annual Report 2020

River Point Bird Observatory



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In 2011, Biodiversity Research Institute began a wildlife monitoring effort at River Point Conservation Area with the primary goal of establishing a migratory bird monitoring station. Since its inception, researchers have banded thousands of songbirds, trained dozens of interns, developed strong collaborations with research and conservation organizations, and shared our work with over a thousand students and community members.

Biodiversity Research Institute

The mission of Biodiversity Research Institute is to assess emerging threats to wildlife and ecosystems through collaborative research, and to use scientific findings to advance environmental awareness and inform decision makers.



Migration Monitoring Program

COVID-19 Pandemic

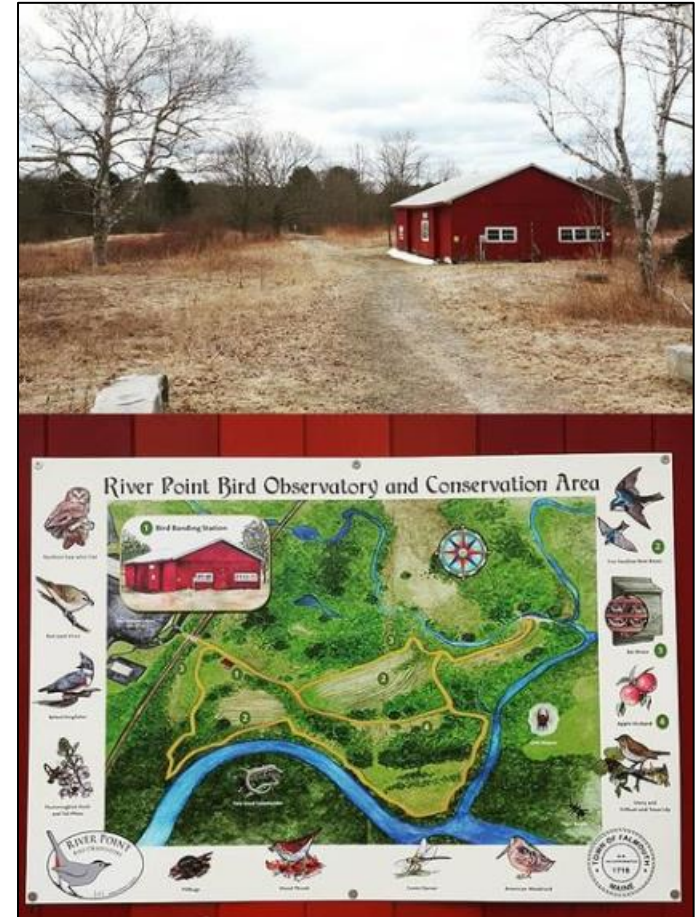
The pandemic led to a delayed start to the spring banding season as the standard protocol was modified to ensure the safety of staff and interns. Changes included minimizing the number of people on site, reducing the number of active mist nets to 12, the use of two independent banding stations, and careful sanitization and social distancing.

BRI Staff

Evan Adams, Julia Gulka, Edward Jenkins, Patrick Keenan, Kevin Regan and Kate Williams.

BRI Interns

Garrett Erickson-Harris, RoseErin Moylan and Reed Robinson.



2020 Summary

Migration monitoring took place on 51 days in 2020 between May and October, with a total of 2189 birds banded, of 80 species.

The five most banded species were **Gray Catbird** (332), **American Goldfinch** (210), **White-throated Sparrow** (153), **Swainson's Thrush** (138), and **American Redstart** (120).

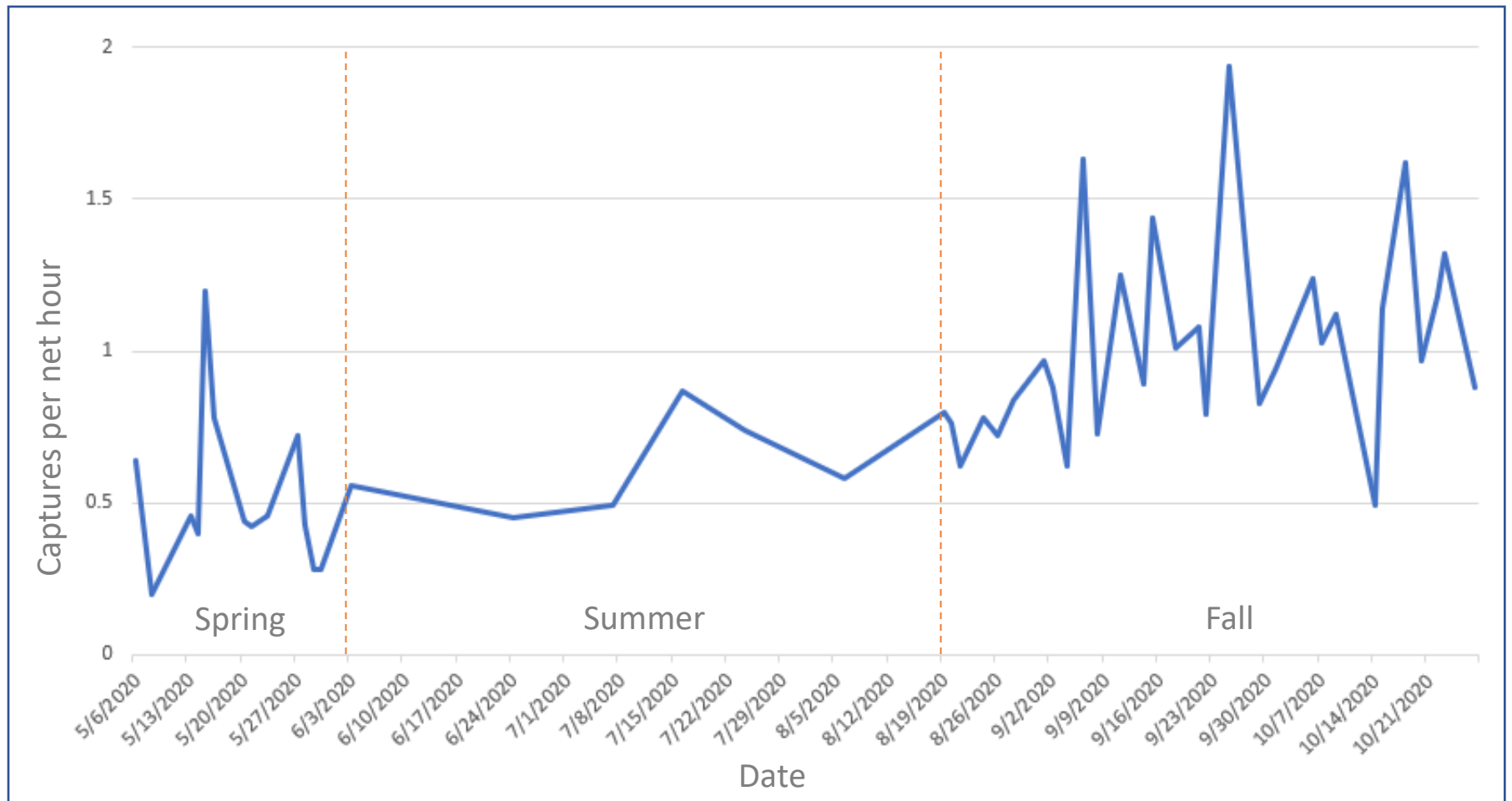
September 25th was the busiest day with 134 captures.



Season	Days Banding	Net Hours	Birds Banded	Birds Recaptured	Captures per net hour	Species Banded
Spring	14	687	318	118	0.63	52
Summer	6	403	166	72	0.59	34
Fall	31	2020	1705	336	1.01	65
Total	51	3110	2189	526	0.87	80

2020 Summary

Captures per net hour throughout the banding season



Spring Migration Monitoring

Banding Highlights

Unusual captures included:

- **American Woodcock** on May 23rd
- **Black-billed Cuckoo** on May 29th
- **Northern Mockingbird** on May 30th

American Woodcock



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Northern Mockingbird



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Black-billed Cuckoo



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Spring Noteworthy Records

Bird Highlights from Spring 2020

Observation of note :

- **Solitary Sandpiper** on May 13th
- **Blue-winged Teal** on May 15th
- **2 Black-crowned Night Heron** on May 23rd
- A singing **Blue-winged Warbler** May 27th

High counts of note include:

- **72 Broad-winged Hawks** on May 3rd
- **3 Common Loons** on May 6th
- **6 Glossy Ibis** on May 30th



▲ This large Common Snapping Turtle was observed crossing the trail in May.

Summer MAPS Monitoring Banding Highlights

Unusual captures included:

- An adult female **Orchard Oriole** with two freshly fledged chicks on July 7th. These are the first banded at RPBO and evidence of breeding at/near to the site.
- **Pileated Woodpecker** on July 16th



Pileated Woodpecker

Juvenile Orchard Oriole



© Ed Jenkins

Adult Orchard Oriole



© Ed Jenkins

Fall Migration Monitoring Banding Highlights

Unusual captures included:

- **Green Heron** on August 26th
- **Prairie Warbler** on September 22nd
- **Connecticut Warbler** and **Gray-cheeked Thrush** on September 29th
- **Orange-crowned Warbler** on October 1st
- **Sharp-shinned Hawk** on October 22nd

Grey-cheeked Thrush



Prairie Warbler



Green Heron



Fall Noteworthy Records

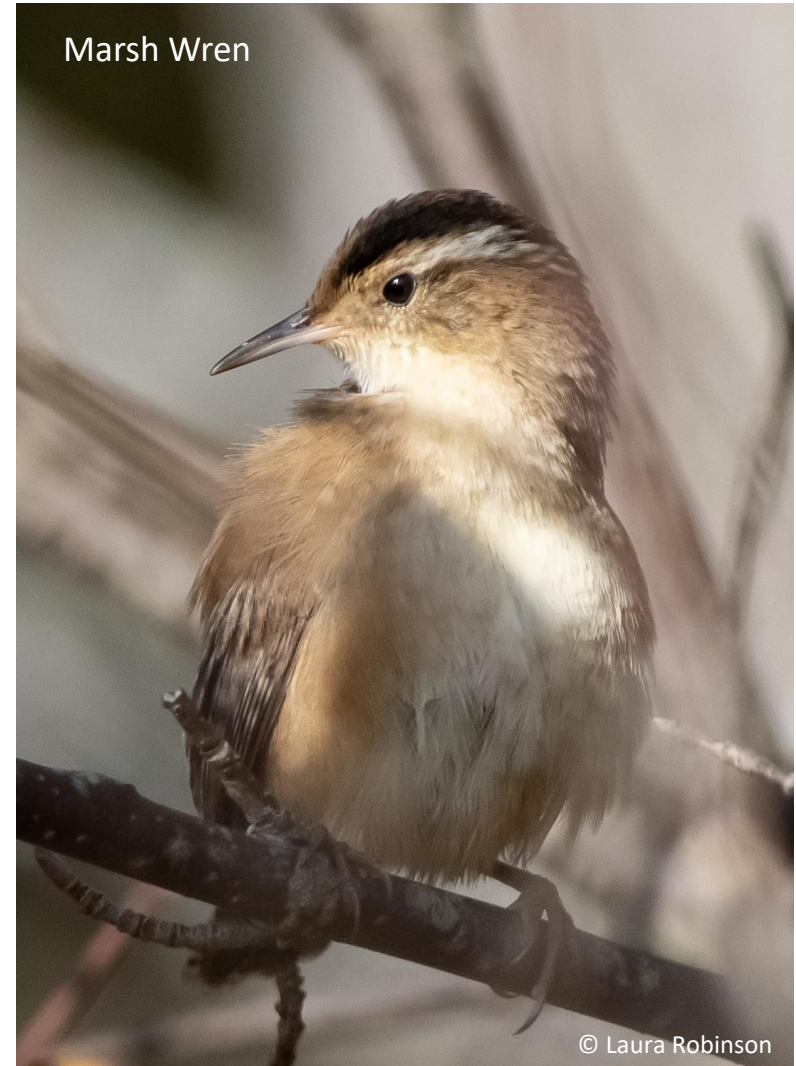
Bird Highlights from Fall 2020

Observations of note include:

- **Yellow-billed Cuckoo** on September 22nd
- **Marsh Wren** on September 25th
- **Lapland Longspur** and **Red Crossbill** on October 6th
- **Rough-legged Hawk** and 7 **Bohemian Waxwings** on October 27th

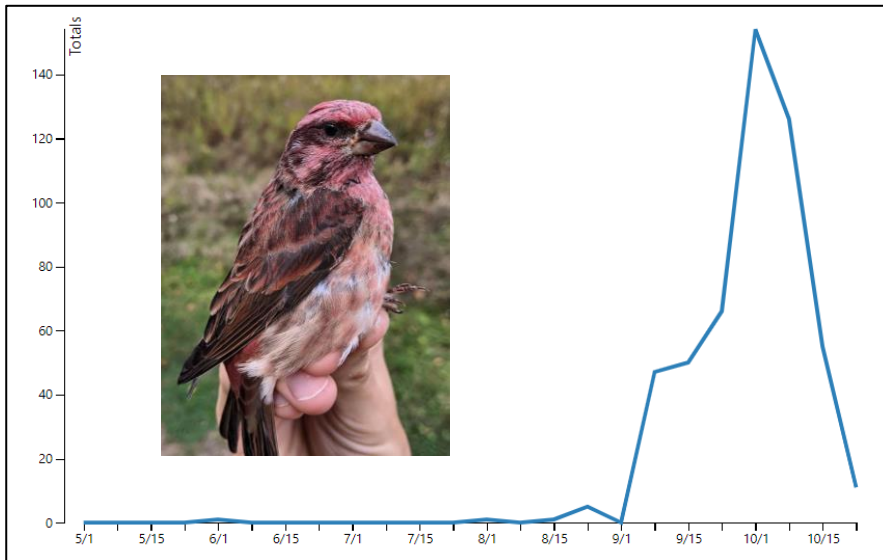
High counts of note include:

- 212 **Broad-winged Hawks** on September 18th
- 194 **Blue Jay** on October 1st
- 4 **Northern Pintail**, 101 **Purple Finch**, and 22 **Rusty Blackbird** on October 9th
- 56 **Evening Grosbeaks** and 8 **American Pipit** on October 15th
- 3,208 **American Robins** and 376 **Pine Siskins** on October 20th



Irruptive Boreal Birds

2020 was an extraordinary year for irruptive boreal birds, with unusually high numbers moving south in the Fall. Observations at RPBO of **Red-breasted Nuthatch**, **Purple Finch**, **Evening Grosbeak**, **Pine Grosbeak**, **Pine Siskin**, **Common Redpoll**, **Red Crossbill** and **White-winged Crossbill** were all higher than average.



Purple Finch observations from May-October 2020



▲ A record 101 **Purple Finch** and 16 **Pine Siskin** were banded at RPBO in September and October.

Appendix 1: Banding Summary

RPBO 2020 banding totals



Species	Spring		Summer		Fall	
	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
American Goldfinch	37	4	10	4	163	4
American Redstart	9	0	11	2	100	7
American Robin	3	0	8	1	34	0
American Woodcock	1	0	0	0	0	0
American Tree Sparrow	0	0	0	0	1	0
Baltimore Oriole	4	0	0	1	0	0
Black-and-White Warbler	14	2	4	2	11	0
Black-billed Cuckoo	1	0	0	0	0	0
Bay-breasted Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0
Black-capped Chickadee	6	29	6	1	71	83
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	1	1	0	0	0	0
Brown-headed Cowbird	0	0	1	0	0	0
Blue-headed Vireo	3	0	0	0	7	0
Blue Jay	0	1	0	0	13	0
Blackpoll Warbler	0	0	0	0	5	0

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	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
Brown Creeper	0	0	0	0	5	0
Black-throated Blue Warbler	2	0	0	0	4	0
Black-throated Green Warbler	1	0	0	0	0	0
Canada Warbler	0	0	0	0	2	0
Cedar Waxwing	0	0	3	0	14	0
Chipping Sparrow	0	0	0	0	1	0
Common Grackle	1	0	0	1	0	0
Connecticut Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0
Common Yellowthroat	36	9	9	3	36	3
Chestnut-sided Warbler	4	4	3	0	3	1
Downy Woodpecker	5	4	5	4	2	9
Eastern Bluebird	1	0	0	0	4	0
Eastern Phoebe	2	0	1	0	8	0
Gray-cheeked Thrush	0	0	0	0	1	0
Gray Catbird	24	7	54	21	254	114

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Species	Spring		Summer		Fall	
	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
Green Heron	0	0	0	0	1	0
Hairy Woodpecker	0	1	0	1	0	1
Hermit Thrush	2	0	0	0	12	8
House Finch	1	0	0	0	16	0
House Sparrow	1	0	0	0	0	0
House Wren	3	0	3	1	1	0
Least Flycatcher	5	0	0	0	15	0
Lincoln's Sparrow	3	0	1	0	24	0
Magnolia Warbler	3	0	0	0	5	0
Mourning Dove	0	0	1	0	0	0
Mourning Warbler	1	0	0	0	1	0
Myrtle Warbler	0	0	0	0	39	2
Nashville Warbler	2	0	0	0	2	0
Northern Cardinal	5	2	1	3	15	5
Northern Flicker	1	0	0	0	0	0

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	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
Northern Mockingbird	1	0	0	0	0	0
Northern Parula	0	0	0	0	3	0
Northern Waterthrush	23	0	4	0	45	4
Orange-crowned Warbler	0	0	0	0	2	0
Orchard Oriole	0	0	3	0	0	0
Ovenbird	6	0	4	1	15	3
Palm Warbler	0	0	0	0	4	0
Philadelphia Vireo	0	0	0	0	6	0
Pine Siskin	0	0	0	0	16	0
Pileated Woodpecker	0	0	1	0	0	0
Prairie Warbler	0	0	1	0	0	0
Purple Finch	1	0	0	0	100	7
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	11	11	2	4	2	1
Red-breasted Nuthatch	0	0	0	0	7	4
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	0	0	0	47	4

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	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
Red-eyed Vireo	1	0	3	0	16	0
Red-winged Blackbird	8	1	0	1	1	0
Savannah Sparrow	0	0	0	0	2	0
Slate-colored Junco	0	0	0	0	5	0
Song Sparrow	9	11	9	5	67	10
Sharp-shinned Hawk	0	0	0	0	1	0
Swamp Sparrow	12	6	3	2	84	16
Swainson's Thrush	2	0	0	0	136	16
Tennessee Warbler	0	0	0	0	1	0
Tree Swallow	3	0	0	1	0	0
Traill's Flycatcher	14	0	1	0	60	1
Tufted Titmouse	0	3	0	0	9	14
Veery	7	11	7	7	28	7
White-breasted Nuthatch	0	0	0	0	7	1
White-crowned Sparrow	3	0	0	0	9	3

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Species	Spring		Summer		Fall	
	New	Recap	New	Recap	New	Recap
Wilson's Warbler	8	1	0	0	2	0
Wood Thrush	3	9	6	6	3	3
White-throated Sparrow	13	0	0	0	140	5
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	8	0	0	0	0	0
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	0	0	0	0	12	0
Yellow Warbler	3	1	1	0	3	0