

1979

Atlantic Flyway Review:

North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review:

Valerie M. Freer, Coordinator

RD #1, Box 21G, Ellenville, NY 12428

The same six stations reported in 1978 as had in 1977. Most experienced a generally mild fall without strong frontal systems. Fall banding is best when weather conditions force migrants to the ground and "dam up" large numbers of birds; lacking such conditions, the migration may be prolonged and unexciting to banders as the birds trickle through. The station totals reflect these conditions. Numbers of birds per net hour were average or low, and the peak days for each station produced small numbers of birds and were scattered through the three months. The top five species for the combined stations made up only 22% of the total (compared with 34% in 1977 and 38% in 1975); this also reflects the lack of waves of migrants this year. A remarkable number of birds were banded by Marion Metcalf at her Vermont station, but as her net hours show, it was related to increased effort rather than to an abundance of birds.

Ruby-crowned Kinglets were missing from the lists of most common species for the second year. Three stations noted increases in Dark-eyed Juncos, but otherwise there was little agreement regarding population trends.

All stations supplied data on the numbers of adult and HY birds (see Table III). The percentage of HY birds remains remarkably consistent in some species. For example, over a three year period, a range of 89 to 93% of the Gray Catbirds caught were HY; 72 to 77% of the Swainson's Thrushes were HY; and 71 to 75% of the Magnolia Warblers were HY. An increase in the percentage of HY birds was noted in the Ovenbird, where about 76% were HY in 1977 and 91% in 1978. The Dark-eyed Junco also showed an increase from about 48% in 1977 to 61% in 1978. These figures may reflect an improvement in breeding success in both species.

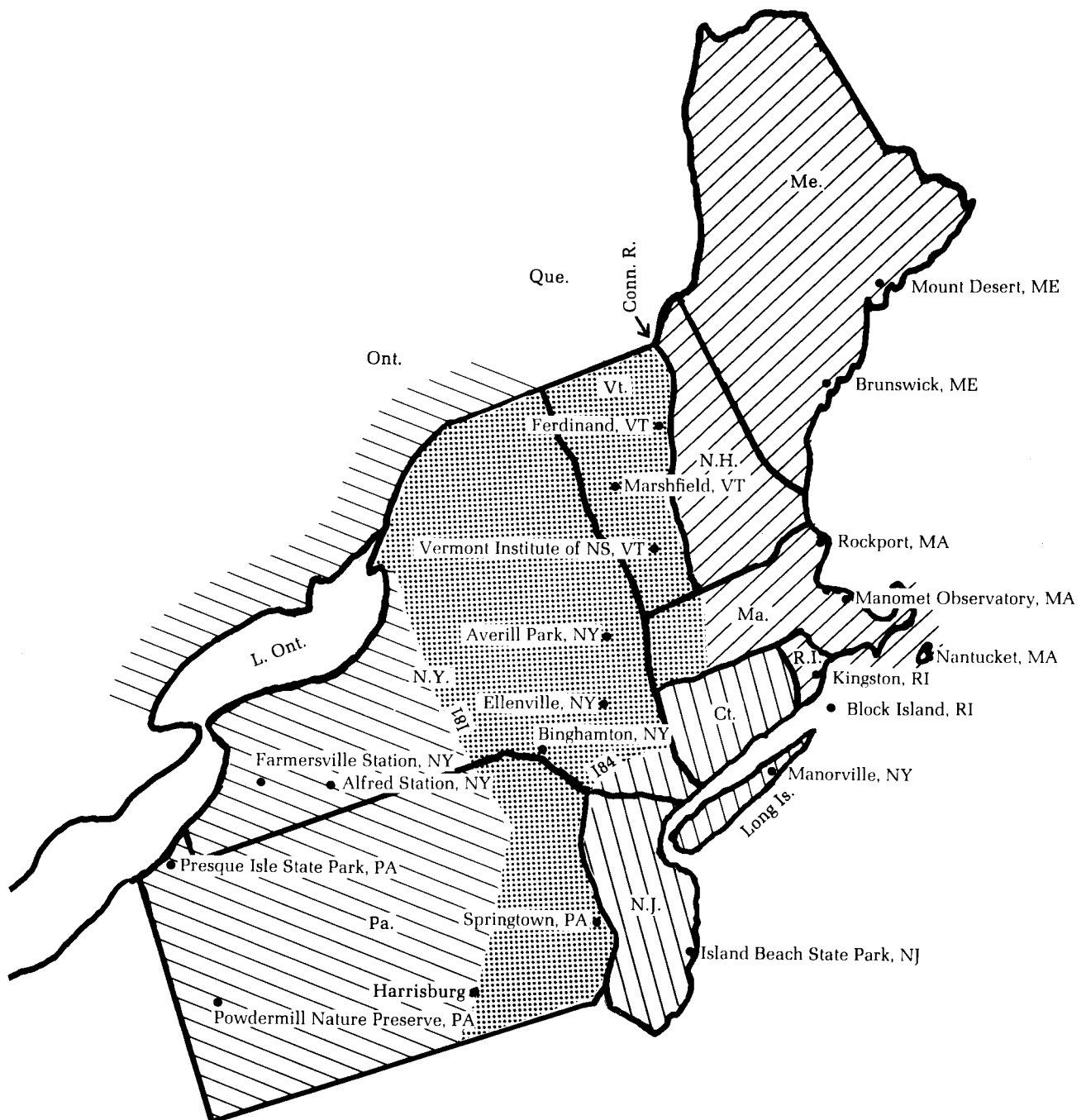
Table 1. Region II summary

| | Ellenville NY | Bingham. NY | Av. Park NY | V.I.N.S. VT | Marshfield VT | Hellertown PA |
|------------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|------------------|------------------|
| Days of operation | 55 | 42 | 17 | 45 | 37 | 61 |
| Number of nets used | 5-13 | 9-11 | 13-15 | | | 4-12 |
| Total net hours | 1284 | 1565 | 565 | 3798 | 5382 | 2045 |
| Largest daily catch | 42 | 41 | 98 | 66 | 102 | 72 |
| Birds banded 1978 | 558 | 455 | 408 | 773 | 2470 | 784 |
| Birds banded 1977 | 607 | 940 | 327 | 1191 | 1679 | 1216 |
| Different species 1978 | 57 | 50 | 44 | 62 | 58 | 66 |
| Different species 1977 | 64 | 59 | 47 | 68 | 63 | 59 |
| Birds/100 n.h. 1978 | 43 | 29 | 72 | 20 | 46 | 38 |
| Birds/100 n.h. 1977 | 33 | 62 | 66 | 18 | 69 | 34 |

Table 2. Most common species in 1978

| Ellenville NY | Binghamton NY | Averill Park NY | Vermont Institute | Marshfield VT | Hellertown PA |
|------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| 66 Catbird | 54 W-t Spar | 58 Blue Jay | 96 Sw Thr | 99 Sw Thr | 123 W-t Spar |
| 39 Sw Thr | 38 R-e Vireo | 52 Catbird | 94 W-t Spar | 99 P Finch | 86 Song Spar |
| 36 Yllthr | 35 Catbird | 48 D-e Junco | 74 D-e Junco | 96 W-t Spar | 82 Robin |
| 32 R-b Gro | 34 B-c Chick | 43 Ced Wax | 37 Her Thr | 76 Yllthr | 42 D-e Junco |
| 30 Ovenb | 28 D-e Junco | 37 W-t Spar | 35 Yel-r Wa | 74 Yel-r Wa | 25 Yel-r Wa |
| | | | | 52 Mag Warb | |

Region II



Ferdinand, VT 444-0714**Mrs. Marion Metcalf**

We returned to the Spruce Forest in Ferdinand for 3 days of banding on September 7 September 1978. Our interest in this small operation is Gray Jays and Boreal Chickadees. We were favored with excellent weather, no rain. Nets were open from 8 A.M. until 6 P.M. We use one aerial net which works out very well. Swainson's Thrushes had the largest increase in 7 seasons — 15. New species netted for this station were: Common (Yellow-shafted) Flicker (1); Purple Finch (1); Gray-cheeked Thrush (1). Also worthy of note were Saw-whet Owls (2) and Gray Jays (3).

There were no repeats. There were 2 returns: Gray Jay (1) and Common Yellowthroat (1).

Marshfield, VT 441-0722**Mrs. Marion Metcalf**

For the 37 days of banding, 50% was all-day and 50% in the mornings. There were notable increases in Swainson's Thrushes, Baltimore Orioles, Black-billed Cuckoos, and Scarlet Tanagers compared with past years. There were 5 days of rain. The biggest day was 17 August 1978 and the second biggest day was 21 September.

We had a House Wren, first for the station in 25 years of banding. Birds worthy of note were 1 Orange-crowned Warbler, 12 Baltimore Orioles, 10 Scarlet Tanagers, and 1 Fox Sparrow. There were no foreign recoveries and 60 repeats.

Returns were 2 White-throated Sparrows, 2 Black-capped Chickadees, 6 Purple Finches, 1 Northern Waterthrush, 1 Red-eyed Vireo, 1 Swamp Sparrow, 3 Song Sparrows, 1 American Redstart, and 1 Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler, for a total of 18.

**Vermont Institute of Natural Science
Woodstock, VT 433-0723****Sarah B. Laughlin**

The Vermont Institute of Natural Science Station operated throughout the fall, but only two to three week-day mornings (from sunrise to about 11:00 A.M.) per week as opposed to our usual five days; hence, net hours were only about half that of previous years. The total number of birds banded was the lowest ever in our ten years of operation, although species numbers remained relatively high.

Our biggest day was 13 October with 66 birds, the only day we banded in a week of overcast weather.

An analysis of our retraps was done by VINS intern, Kris Fister, with interesting results. 71% were, of course, banded this year; 15% in 1977; 9% in 1976; 4% in 1975. Our oldest retraps were a Black-capped Chickadee, banded as an HY in 1972; a Swainson's Thrush, banded in 1973 as an AHY, and a Black-and-white Warbler, banded in 1974 as an AHY.

**Table 3. Percentages of HY birds at Region II
Stations, 1978**

| Species | Number | % HY |
|------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| Gray Catbird | 173 | 92 |
| Hermit Thrush | 79 | 96 |
| Swainson's Thrush | 272 | 74-77 ¹ |
| Red-eyed Vireo | 127 | 74 |
| Magnolia Warbler | 90 | 71-73 |
| Black-throated Blue | 75 | 95 |
| Yellow-rumped Warbler | 113 | 92-96 |
| Ovenbird | 86 | 90-92 |
| Yellowthroat | 142 | 79-83 |
| Canada Warbler | 78 | 88 |
| Dark-eyed Junco | 209 | 59-62 |
| White-throated Sparrow | 250 | 72-75 |

¹Where a range of percentages are given, the number of birds of unknown age was greater than one.

Averill Park, NY 423-0733**James Covert**

Banding at the Averill Park, NY station this year began in late August as usual, restricted to weekends only. The operations were curtailed several weekends earlier than usual, ending on the third weekend in October, 17 days vs. 19 days in 1977. However, total net hours were increased by adding two more nets, 15 vs. 13, thus giving 565 net hours vs. 494 in 1977.

The most active weekend occurred over the Labor Day weekend — 4 September (Labor Day) being the best single day all fall with 98 birds and 26 species captured that day. The weather as usual caused restricted operations in October, but the last weekend (21 and 22 October), although restricted, proved to be the most active that month. Because of the first good Dark-eyed Junco flight, we netted 43 birds (3 nets were in use).

Increases from 1977 included 48 juncos, up from 24; White-throated Sparrows, 37 vs. 19; Ovenbirds, 8 vs. 4; Blue Jays, 52 vs. 35; and 43 Cedar Waxwings banded on one day vs. a few or none in previous years. Decreases included the thrush family in general and specifically Swainson's with 33, down from 52, and Wood Thrush, 11 vs. 19. No Evening Grosbeaks were banded (down this year from 20 last year) and, although operations were shut down two weekends earlier in 1978, Evening Grosbeaks were noted at the station in mid-September 1977 and banding began before mid-October last year. Rose-breasted Grosbeaks were down from 9 in 1977 to 1 in 1978.

There were no unusual birds captured this fall. However, we did band four (4) American Woodcock — three from the new two-net lane; the capture dates spanned the entire banding season, one bird being netted on 27 August and the last bird recorded on 21 October.

Binghamton, NY 420-0755

Harriet Marsi

This station was set up exactly as last year. Nine long nets and two short ones were stretched along the contour of a hillside. Five of the long nets were in overgrown thornapple and the other four in thin woods. The two short ones made connections.

Nets were in operation generally from dawn to 10 A.M. The weather was generally mild and pleasant all through the fall. Nevertheless, this was the poorest season this station has ever had — .29 birds per net hour. The only comparable season was in 1976 when we recorded .46 birds per net hour. Ironically, the best season this station has ever had was in 1977 between these two low years (.63 birds per net hour).

The group this year that had the poorest showing was the wood warblers. These totaled only 72 birds representing 16 species. By comparison, 1976 had 123 birds and 1977, 305. Some species that have always been present since this station started keeping records were missing entirely: Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Wilson's Warbler. None of those species that show occasionally such as Blackburnian, Parula, Black-throated Blue, Palm, and Mourning Warblers, appeared. All species represented, except the Common Yellowthroat, were less than 10; the Yellowthroat numbered 13.

The other two groups generally watched at this station were normal. Thrushes numbered 67 individuals as against 68 in 1976 and 123 in 1977. However, for the first time no Gray-cheeked Thrushes were banded. The Fringillidae numbered 143 as against 151 in 1976 and 112 in 1977.

Of the five top species, the White-throated Sparrow, at 54, was normal. This station has had as high as 106 and as low as 25. The Red-eyed Vireo, at 38, was low, but in 1976 it was lower still — 33. However, the average during the years we have been taking part in this program is 70. The Gray Catbird was the lowest ever — 35. In 1976 this count was 36, but the average for all previous years was 74. The Black-capped Chickadee, at 34 individuals, was respectable (average 35). Dark-eyed Juncos were high for this station at 28 birds (average 9).

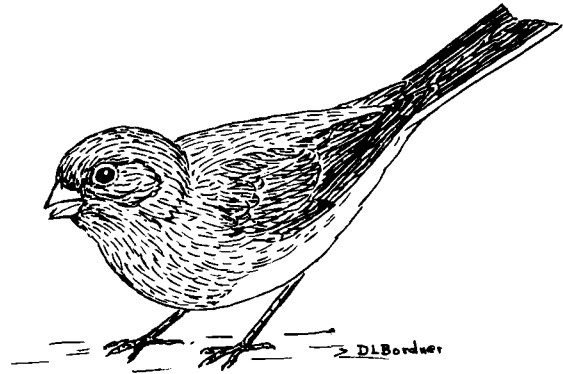
One possible explanation for the drastic decline in numbers is that the area where the nets are strung is undergoing normal succession at least in part. The thornapple section is beginning to be topped by red maple. This would not explain, however, why the four nets in the thin woods did not produce as last year.

Another possible reason for the decline might have been the generally mild weather with no marked cold fronts — especially in September when the wood warblers would have been expected to be moving through. The birds might just have been spread out and moving gradually and slowly.

As in past years HY birds predominated. In the two species watched most carefully, the following data applied: Gray Catbird, HY 83%, AHY 14%, U 3%; Red-eyed Vireo, HY 89%, AHY 11%, U 0%.

No new species for this station were banded.

All banding was done by Harriet Marsi and sub-permittee, Rick Marsi.



Ellenville, NY 414-0742

Valerie M. Freer

The total number of birds captured during the fall 1978 season was down as compared with earlier years, but this was largely due to a reduction in the number of net hours. The number of birds per net hour was above average in August, the best month, but was average in September, and well below average in October. Generally mild weather conditions apparently favored continued overhead migration, thereby reducing the catch in September and October.

The resident warbler species (especially Common Yellowthroat and Ovenbird) were caught in average to good numbers, but the migratory warblers were very poorly represented this year. Blackpolls and Yellow-rumped hit new lows, and some usual species were absent. Both kinglets remained in low numbers for the second year. The only species reaching a new station high was the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, captured as it fed on Jewel-weed, which was abundant near some of the nets.

The first fall House Finches and American Woodcock were banded, bringing the station species total to 94.

All banding was done by Valerie Freer and Frank Fish, with assistance from Barbara Belanger.

Elaine & Donald Mease

This is the second year of participation in the AFR. Our station is located on the south side of a mature forest overlooking farmland with an overgrown pasture and swamp. Most of the banding was done along the edge of the woods where we have 4 to 11 nets placed along the edges of the woods and in our lawn. One flyway was located in the woods in a cutaway area for power lines. We erected an aerial net for the first time. It was placed where we had nets previous years. We caught 41 birds in the top net during the entire migration. We also have 33 meters of net placed in the overgrown pasture area. Depending on the help, not all nets are open at the same time.

By comparison with last year, we were lacking in quantity of birds captured, even though we extended our banding into November because of the mild weather. We banded 66 species (7 more than last year). The total birds caught was 784 (1,092 last year). Our big days were: 17 October with 72 birds and 7 November with 44 birds.

Notable decreases this year were the various types of sparrows, Indigo Buntings, American Goldfinch, Hermit Thrush, Carolina Wren, and Dark-eyed Junco (298 in

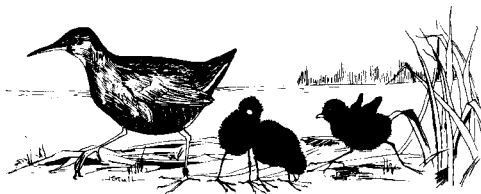
1977; only 42 in 1978). The difference could be attributed to a habitat change around our station. In 1977 we had weedy soybean fields around us. They are not harvested until late October. In 1978 we had wheat fields, which are harvested in July, then plowed and planted for winter.

We noticed an increase in Ruby- and Golden-crowned Kinglets, Am. Robins, Red-eyed Vireos, and E. Empidonax flycatchers.

We had three returns. One junco and two White-throats that were banded in the fall of 1977 returned in 1978.

Other birds of interest were a Sora, Connecticut Warbler, and Philadelphia Vireo.

The weather during mid-October to mid-November was mild and balmy. There were few good weather fronts. We had an interesting experience with a (HY-F) Tennessee Warbler. She was banded on 31 October 1978, retrapped on 1 November, and 2 times on 6 November. We observed a banded Tennessee Warbler in a nearby shrub on 12 November and are positive it was the same bird.



Auxiliary marking authorizations

Edited by Frederick S. Schaeffer

This regular feature for the eastern part of the United States and Caribbean Islands is designed to promote cooperation and information exchange among banders and other field biologists. The eastern part of the United States covered in these tabulations consists of the states found in EBBA's logo. Sightings should first be reported to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel, MD 20811, before any attempt is made to contact the bander(s) who may have applied the auxiliary marking device.

Brown Pelican: Patagial tags, plastic leg bands in SC. State of SC—Nongame, Thomas Murphy, SC Wildlife and Marine Resources Dept., Green Pond, SC 29446.

Cattle Egret: Plastic leg bands in the Tidewater areas of VA, MD, and NC. Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, 115 Copse Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

Canada Goose: 1. Plastic neck collars in FL. Stephen A. Nesbitt, FL Game and Fresh Water Fish Comm., 4005 S. Main St., Gainesville, FL 32601. 2. Plastic neck bands in WV. Richard L. Hall, WV Dept. of Natural Resources, Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241.

Mallard: Plastic leg bands in Ocean Co., NJ. Lawrence R. Pharo, 302 Lakewood Ave., Whiting, NJ 08759.

American Woodcock: Plastic leg bands in WV. Richard L. Hall, WV Dept. of Natural Resources, Box 67, Elkins, WV 26241.

Turkey Vulture: Wing tags or tail streamers in Chatham and Orange Cos., NC. Dr. Helmut C. Mueller, Dept. of Zoology, Univ. of NC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Black Vulture: (see Turkey Vulture, above).

Everglade Kite: Plastic leg bands and radio transmitters in FL. Dr. Ray C. Erickson, PWRC, Endangered Wildl. Res. Program, Laurel, MD 20811.

Sharp-shinned Hawk. Radio transmitters in Loudon and Northampton Cos., VA. James Hill, 4106 Breezewood Lane, Annandale, VA 22003.

Red-tailed Hawk: Radio transmitters and paint (see Sharp-shinned Hawk above).

Southern Bald Eagle: Plastic leg streamers and plastic wing tags in SC. State of SC—Nongame, Thomas Murphy, SC Wildlife and Marine Resources Dept., Green Pond, SC 29446.

Osprey: Plastic leg bands in VA and MD. Dr. Mitchell A. Byrd, 115 Copse Way, Williamsburg, VA 23185.

American Kestrel: Plastic leg bands in Highlands, Glades, Okeechobee, Osceola, DeSoto, Polk, and Hardee Cos., FL. Dr. James N. Layne, Archbold Expeditions, Rt. 2, Box 180, Lake Placid, FL 33852.

Great Black-backed Gull: Leg streamers and/or plastic leg bands near Ithaca, NY. Dr. Tom J. Cade, Lab. of Ornith., Cornell Univ., 159 Sapsucker Woods Rd., Ithaca, NY 14850.

Herring Gull: Wing tags and plastic leg bands in Ocean Co., NJ. Dr. Joanna Burger, Dept. of Biology, Livingston College, Rutgers Univ., New Brunswick, NJ 08903.

Laughing Gull: Wing tags, plastic leg bands and/or dye at Jamaica Bay, L.I., NY (see Herring Gull above).

Hairy Woodpecker: Plastic leg bands in Butler and Allegheny Cos., PA. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biol., Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620.

Downy Woodpecker: 1. (see Hairy Woodpecker above). 2. Plastic leg bands at State College, PA. Dr. James S. Wakeley, Penn. State Univ., University Park, PA 16802. 3. Plastic leg bands in Mercer Co., NJ. Mrs. Hannah B. Suthers, 4 View Point Dr., Hopewell, NJ 08525.

Blue Jay: Plastic leg bands in Butler and Allegheny Cos., PA. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biol. Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620.

Black-capped Chickadee: 1. Plastic leg bands and leg streamers in Swain Co., NC. Dr. Kerry N. Rabenold, Dept. of Zool., Univ. of NC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514. 2. Plastic leg bands in Mercer Co., NJ. Mrs. Hannah B. Suthers, 4 View Point Dr., Hopewell, NJ 08525.

Carolina Chickadee: (see Black-capped Chickadee #2 above).

Tufted Titmouse: 1. (see Black-capped Chickadee #2 above). 2. Plastic leg bands in Butler and Allegheny Cos., PA. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biol., Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620.

White-breasted Nuthatch: (see Black-capped Chickadee #2 above).

Red-breasted Nuthatch: Plastic leg bands and leg streamers in Swain Co., NC. Dr. Kerry N. Rabenold, Dept. of Zool., Univ. of NC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Brown Creeper: (see Black-capped Chickadee #2 above).

House Wren: Plastic leg bands at State College, PA. Dr. James S. Wakeley, Penn. State Univ., University Park, PA 16802.

Carolina Wren: 1. (see House Wren above). 2. Plastic leg bands in Butler and Allegheny Cos., PA. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biol., Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620. 3. Leg streamers in Orange Co., NC. Barbara S. Simpson, Zoology Dept., Univ. of NC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

Golden- and Ruby-crowned Kinglets: Plastic leg bands in Mercer Co., NJ. Mrs. Hannah B. Suthers, 4 View Point Dr., Hopewell, NJ 08525.

Starling: Plastic leg streamers and/or white paint on wing, near Patuxent Wildlife Research Ctr. Mr. Stanley Wiemeyer, Environmental Contaminants Evaluation Center, PWRC, Laurel, MD 20811.

Cape May Warbler: Plastic leg bands in Dominican Republic. Wayne J. Arendt, c/o James Wiley, Box 21, Palmer, PR 00721.

Prairie Warbler: (see Cape May Warbler above).

Ovenbird: (see Cape May Warbler above).

Louisiana Waterthrush: (see Cape May Warbler above).

Common Yellowthroat: (see Cape May Warbler above).

American Redstart: (see Cape May Warbler above).

Red-winged Blackbird: Plastic leg bands in Alachua and Leon Cos., FL. Dr. Frances C. James, 2113 Gibbs Dr., Tallahassee, FL 32303.

Great-tailed Grackle: Plastic leg bands in Hillsborough Co., FL. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biol., Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620.

Cardinal: 1. Plastic leg bands in Butler and Allegheny Cos., PA. G. Thomas Bancroft, Dept. of Biology, Univ. of S. Florida, Tampa, FL 33620. 2. Plastic leg bands at State College, PA. Dr. James S. Wakeley, Penn. State Univ., University Park, PA 16802.

Rufous-sided Towhee: (see Cardinal #2 above).

Dark-eyed Junco: (see Cardinal #2 above); 2. Plastic leg bands and streamers in Swain Co., NC. Dr. Kerry N. Rabenold, Dept. of Zool., Univ. of NC, Chapel Hill, NC 27514.

White-throated Sparrow: (see Cardinal #2 above).

Miscellaneous

Plastic leg bands on the following species in Charlton, Ware, and Clinch Cos., GA. and Baker Co., FL. Joseph M. Meyers, D-212 University Village, Athens, GA:

Mourning Dove, Ground Dove, Screech Owl, Barred Owl, Chimney Swift, Common Flicker, Pileated Woodpecker, Red-headed Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker, Hairy Woodpecker, Downy Woodpecker, Eastern Kingbird, Great-crested Flycatcher, Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Wood Pewee, Blue Jay, Fish Crow, Carolina Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Brown-headed Nuthatch, Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Gray Catbird, Brown Thrasher, Wood Thrush, Eastern Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Loggerhead Shrike, White-eyed Vireo, Yellow-throated Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-and-white Warbler, Prothonotary Warbler, Swainson's Warbler, Northern Parula, Yellow-throated Warbler, Pine Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Common Yellowthroat, Hooded Warbler, Eastern Meadowlark, Red-winged Blackbird, Orchard Oriole, Common Grackle, Summer Tanager, Cardinal, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Rufous-sided Towhee, Bachman's Sparrow.

(The above are listings of permit issues or renewals from January to mid-April 1979. Ed)



Bird banding groups

The Mid-Atlantic Bird Banding Group welcomes all banders and would-be banders within driving distance of the Washington-Baltimore area. Our bi-monthly meetings alternate between the two cities. We hold workshops, make trips to banding stations, and engage in co-operative projects. For further information contact: Kathy Klimkiewicz, 13117 Larchdale Rd. #2, Laurel, MD 20810.

Attention, EBBA members in southern New York, eastern Pennsylvania, and New Jersey: If you are interested in attending four to five meetings per year, to learn more about aging, sexing, and other banding techniques, we invite you to join Gateway Bird Banding Group. Contact: F.S. Schaeffer, 84-55 Daniels St., #4F, Jamaica, NY 11435, for further details.