

1981

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region Iii

North American Bird Bander

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North American Bird Bander (1981) "Atlantic Flyway Review: Region Iii," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 6 : Iss. 2 , Article 9.

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III

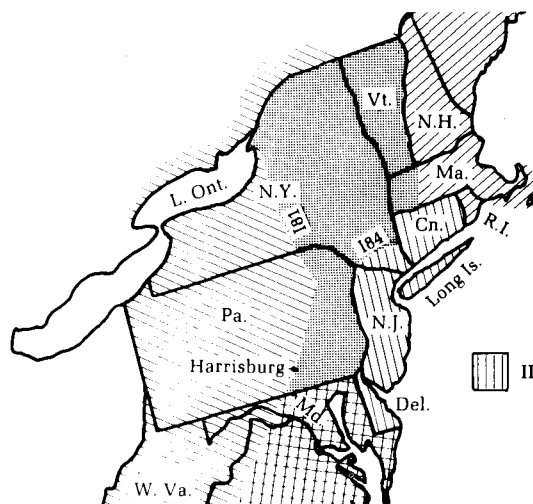
Robert C. Dewire, Coordinator
9 Canary St., Pawcatuck, CT 06379

In the fall of 1980, six stations reported for Region III. The Fort Tilden station at the Gateway NRA in Queens County, NY did not operate this past fall but a new station in Pawcatuck, CT at the southeastern corner of Connecticut did.

The season was considered poor, in general, for many of the insect-eating migrants — the warblers, vireos, and flycatchers. Numbers were noticeably down in most cases and one must wonder if this was simply an off-year or a reflection of the growing problem of habitat destruction on the tropical wintering grounds of many of these species. Sparrows and finches were reported in good numbers from most stations, and Black-capped Chickadees staged a coastal flight along Connecticut. Thrushes seemed to be average to slightly above average in numbers this year. Both kinglets also seemed to be showing signs of recovery from the winter of 1978 when they suffered a very high winter mortality.

The third week in October brought good numbers of sparrows, kinglets, and Yellow-rumped Warblers along the Connecticut shore and at Island Beach in New Jersey.

While northern parts of Region III are better covered now than in past years, there are still no station reports, except for Island Beach, in the southern part of the region encompassing New Jersey and Delaware. We request that any stations



active during the fall in Region III send their results and comments to me at the above address, after the fall season is completed. It would be nice to fill in the gap near the coast from Island Beach to the Maryland border with a few stations.

Table 1. Region III summary

	Anguilla Brook Pawcatuck, CT	Lighthouse Pt. East Haven, CT	Birdcraft Sanct. Fairfield, CT	Manorville Long Is., NY	Lake Success Long Is., NY	Island Beach Seaside Park, NJ
Days of operation	43	14	32	65	19	48
Number of nets (max)	5	38	8	10	10	29
Birds banded 1980	984	1395	633	485	473	7116
Birds banded 1979	—	2700	540	467	282	7854
Species 1980	70	65	58	39	51	98
Species 1979	—	88	56	48	45	111
Largest daily catch	89	310	—	37	66	1421
Total net-hours 1980	1376	1640	1395	1280	620	3435
Total net-hours 1979	—	2085	1345	790	264	4098
Birds per 100 n.h. 1980	71.5	85.1	43.9	36.0	76.3	207.2
Birds per 100 n.h. 1979	—	129.5	39.1	59.0	10.7	191.6

Table II. Summary of most common species caught

Anguilla Brook Pawcatuck, CT	Lighthouse Pt. East Haven, CT	Birdcraft Sanct Fairfield, CT	Manorville Long Is., NY	Lake Success Long Is., NY	Island Beach Seaside Park, NJ
141 Gray Catbird	480 B-c Chickadee	154 W-thr Sparrow	167 Gray Catbird	103 W-thr Sparrow	1806 Yel-rump Warb
106 W-thr Sparrow	187 Yel-rump Warb	60 Gray Catbird	53 R-s Towhee	36 Purple Finch	1312 W-thr Sparrow
84 Yel-rump Warb	120 Blue Jay	33 Sw Thrush	52 W-thr Sparrow	33 Gray Catbird	464 G-c Kinglet
82 Swamp Sparrow	118 Am Goldfinch	32 Am Redstart	48 Veery	30 Am Redstart	437 D-e Junco
58 Song Sparrow	71 Tuft Titmouse	22 Cedar Waxwing	23 Wood Thrush	25 Sw Thrush	380 Gray Catbird

Anguilla Brook
Pawcatuck, CT 412-0715
Robert C. Dewire

This is a new station begun in 1980. It is located in a swamp habitat bordering an area of homes separated by a brook called Anguilla Brook. It is about 1.5 miles (2.5 km) from the coast. The dominant trees are Red Maple, with a few Swamp White Oak. Under these are stands of Spicebush, while in more open areas the shrub layer consists of Gray Dogwood, Swamp Rose, and Black Alder. Dense stands of Jewelweed, Royal and Sensitive Fern are also present. In spring, much of the area is under water but by late summer has dried enough to allow a line of nets to be placed through a portion of it. This year 4 nets were strung through the swamp and 5th bordered the brook across from the marsh.

Banding began on 25 August and concluded on 3 November. Banding was done from sunrise to about 0900 and then again from 1600 to dusk. On 8 days the nets were open all day.

Because this was the first year, there is no comparable data from the area, but results seem to follow the pattern of other stations. Warblers were poor, in general, with the exception of the Yellow-rumped Warbler. I netted a total of 84 of these and actually missed the week of the biggest flights through this area — 18-23 October — when I was away. Twenty species of warblers were taken, but with the exception of good numbers of Northern Waterthrush (22), Common Yellowthroat (47), and American Redstart (41), the remaining 16 species accounted for a total of only 35 birds.

Black-capped Chickadees were in good numbers with 54 banded here, reflecting a generally good coastal flight along the Connecticut shore. Sparrow counts seemed very good here, especially Swamp Sparrow with 82 banded. Other sparrows were in good numbers and, again, not being able to band during the 3rd week in October probably resulted in missing a good part of that flight.

Toward the end of the banding period, a good number of Purple Finches and a few Pine Siskins were netted, in addition to many observed in migration — indicating a good flight year for both.

Interesting catches included 3 Woodcocks (each caught at dusk in the net bordering the brook), a Saw-whet Owl on 30 October, Connecticut Warbler on 11 September, Philadelphia Vireo on 12 September, and a surprising Green-winged Teal on 14 September.

Assisting at the banding station this year were Michael Dewire and John Williams.

Lighthouse Point Park
East Haven, New Haven Co., CT 411-0725
Jeffrey A. Spindel

During the fall of 1980 we banded migrants at the LPP station on 14 days, mostly on weekends, from 6 September to 1 November. About 85% of our work, both in net-hours logged and birds banded, was done during the last third of September and the first half of October. Relative to last year, we used more nets (up to 38) and left them open longer (an

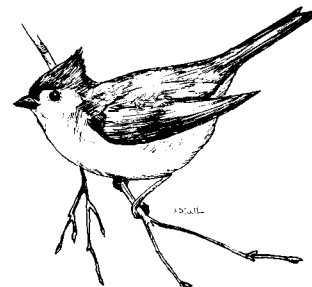
average of 6 hours) on the days the station was in operation. Therefore, while we banded on less than half the number of days, the number of net-hours logged was about 75% of the 1979 total. However, only about half as many birds were caught in 1980 (1395) as in 1979 (2700). Although other factors also were involved, the lower overall capture rate for 1980 resulted mostly from the fact that we banded on fewer peak days and missed most of the best days in September.

Most of the banding this year was done at the second site described in the 1979 report. This shift was made in an attempt to capture more hawks as they hunted in or flew over this small section of woods before heading out over New Haven Harbor. Netting was done at both sites on 12 October when 310 birds were caught. The capture rates at the two sites that day were almost identical, but the species composition differed with the harbor-side nets catching more jays, kinglets, vireos, and warblers, and relatively fewer finches and sparrows.

The largest daily catch occurred on 19 October when, starting a little before 1000 (10 a.m.), huge flocks of Black-capped Chickadees moved into the area. The nets were soon loaded and we stopped banding so as to concentrate on removing and releasing birds. I estimated that between 500 to 750 or more birds were caught within a one-hour period in the 15 nets we had in use that day. For the purpose of analysis, however, we have used the data based on only the number of birds actually recorded by 1000, the time when we stopped banding. Yellow-rumped Warblers accounted for half of the 150 birds banded on 24 September, the top day of that month.

The 10 most common species this year differed considerably from last year's list. The most dramatic increase came in the number of chickadees banded: 480 in 1980 and, as a result, relative to 1979 the numbers and capture rates of most of the other common species decreased. In association with the chickadees, there was a noticeable movement of Red-breasted Nuthatches; only 1 was caught last year. Goldfinch numbers (62, 118) also increased considerably. Last year most goldfinches were adults and recent fledglings caught as they fed in the fields in August and early September; this year most were young migrants caught in early October.

The great decreases in the numbers of Savannah Sparrow (146, 1), Song Sparrows (140, 7), Bobolinks (85, 0), House Finches (84, 5), and Gray Catbirds (76, 11) banded all reflect the habitat differences in the two sites. The relative proportions and rankings of Yellow-rumped Warblers, Blue Jays, Tufted Titmice, Ruby-crowned Kinglets, and Blackpoll Warblers did not seem to be as greatly affected by the shift in banding sites.



Fewer Sharp-shinned Hawks were banded this year, but of interest is that 3 of the 50 (a rather high recovery rate) we banded in the last two seasons (2 of 35, 1 of 15) have been caught 1-2 weeks later at Cape May, NJ by Bill Clark. Yellow-shafted Flickers (47, 3) were also less abundant this year. A Philadelphia Vireo netted on 1 November represented a rather late date for this species.

I would like to thank the more than 30 volunteers who helped out, especially during the chickadee invasion, this year. Special thanks go to this season's regulars: Tony Bledsoe, Steve and Teri Bennett, Anna Haynes, Pat Lynch, Lee Schlesinger, and Linda Spendelow. Howard and Ruth Spendelow (the latter having been accidentally omitted from last year's report) also provided their records for use in preparing this report.



Birdcraft Banding Station
Conn. Audubon Society
Fairfield, CT 410-0731
Carl Trichka

This report covers the second year of operations at the station, which was described in the 1979 report.

The weather patterns in the fall of 1980 in this area did not produce typical wave patterns normally found during migration. Warm, humid weather, lack of rain, and the absence of strong cold fronts from Canada produced a steady stream of birds but not in large numbers. It was not until mid-October that the pattern changed. This produced large flights of White-throated Sparrows.

Our operations for the period 26 August to 29 October spanned 32 days of banding, using an average of 8 12-meter mist nets. Potter traps were used infrequently at one feeding station very late in the period.

It was interesting to compare this report with that of 1979. There were 12 species banded in 1979 which were not banded in 1980. On the plus side, we banded 13 species that did not appear in 1979, with a net increase in species of one over the fall of 1979. Total species banded in 1980 was 58.

The increase in total number of birds over 1979 is attributed

to the large number of White-throated Sparrows banded. The total number of birds banded was 633 — an increase of 93 over that same period in 1979.

We accumulated a total of 1395 net-hours and 151 trap-hours, producing 43.9 birds per 100 net-hours and 13.2 birds per 100 trap-hours.

Peak days did not materialize until mid-October when days of 60 to 80 birds were banded.

Our most abundant species were Blue Jay, Gray Catbird, American Redstart, and White-throated Sparrow. There appeared to be a decline in Swainson's Thrush but an increase in Hermit Thrush; Ruby-crowned Kinglet was down considerably from 1979, but American Goldfinch increased. The most substantial increase was in White-throated Sparrows — almost three times the number for 1979. There were no foreign recoveries this fall. We banded 17 species of warblers and 6 species of flycatchers. Yellow-breasted Chat, Tennessee Warbler, and Cedar Waxwing were our best species.

My thanks goes to our apprentice banders who contributed many hours to run the station, not only this fall but throughout the year.

Manorville, Long Island
New York 405-0724
Gilbert S. Raynor

Because of the dry weather I was able to band on a greater number of days than usual between 17 August and 26 October, but usually for only short periods — mostly in the evenings. Net-hours were higher than in any year since 1971. Days of no banding were mainly the result of absences on trips.

During August and most of September, we had an excellent and long-lasting Black Cherry crop plus other wild fruits, which kept fruit-eating species present longer and in greater numbers than usual. When the cherries finally disappeared in late September, so did the birds. However, migration of warblers and other species in late August and most of September seemed fairly good. October was extremely poor with very few birds. Almost no Song or Swamp Sparrows came through, juncos were few and late, and even White-throated Sparrows were much below normal numbers. Not a single Yellow-rumped Warbler was caught and only two Blackpoll Warblers were captured.

In 22 years of fall banding (netting), August of 1980 was the 7th best, September the 8th best, and October the worst in terms of birds per net-hour. The total number of species has only been so low once before. Best days were 30 August — 37 individuals; 7 September — 33; and 11 September — 31. Usually, the high catches are made in October and are commonly 60 or more individuals on several days each year. The only uncommon species captured were single Worm-eating and Mourning Warblers and a Yellow-breasted Chat. Most numerous species — Gray Catbird, Wood Thrush, Veery, Rufous-sided Towhee, and White-throated Sparrow — show the predominance of fruit-eating species. Without the

cherries, the season would have been a disaster. Note that the Veery total (48) was the highest ever.

Lake Success

Long Island, NY 404-0734

M. James Pion

The station at Lake Success was in operation a longer period of time this year, operating for 620 net-hours compared with 264 in 1979. The 1980 season saw increases in Purple Finches, Cardinals, Hermit Thrushes, and Fox Sparrows. One species not banded for many years appeared in 1980 — a Great Crested Flycatcher, banded on 9 November.

Of special interest was a return of a male Downy Woodpecker, retrapped on 29 November and originally banded by my predecessor, Mr. Orville Dunning, at the same station on 5 September 1971. It repeated on 7 December 1980.

Of particular concern was a decrease (literally no individuals) for the following species: Bay-breasted Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Empidonax flycatchers, Wilson's Warbler, Red-winged Blackbird, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak.

We always try to rationalize why there is a "drop" in certain species. From conversations with other active field birders, as well as my own active birding, I would conclude that part of the reason lay in the fact that the real "wave" days occurred mid-week. Because I do most of my banding on weekends and school-related holidays, this could account for some of my losses.

Island Beach State Park

Seaside Park, NJ 395-0740

Herman W. "Bud" Cooper

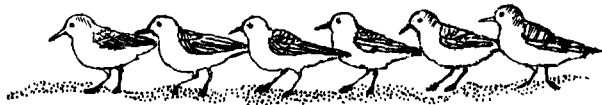
At Island Beach there was a decrease in birds banded in 1980 compared with 1979, although the birds-per-net-hour totals were up slightly. Flycatchers, vireos, and warblers were noticeably down in numbers. Some decreases from 1979 are as follows: Eastern Phoebe — 66 in 1979, 23 in 1980; Red-eyed Vireo — 82, 38; Tennessee Warbler — 27, 6; Cape May Warbler — 115, 21; Blackpoll Warbler — 148, 74; Northern Waterthrush — 57, 23; Common Yellowthroat — 492, 266; and American Redstart — 291, 148.

The station overall showed decreases in numbers of most species caught. Of the 126 species banded in 1979 and 1980, 27 increased in 1980, 96 decreased, and 3 remained the same.

The Yellow-rumped Warbler was a warbler species that increased, as it has continued to do since the poor flight of 1978 when only 351 were banded. In 1979 the number was up to 1244 and in 1980 it reached 1806.

The sparrow flights in late fall, particularly junco, White-throated and White-crowned Sparrows, were impressive. Juncos increased from 261 in 1979 to 437; White-crowned Sparrows from 22 to 80; and White-throated Sparrows from 966 to 1312.

Hawk banding at the station produced high counts of Northern Harriers (42) and Merlins (34). Twelve Peregrine Falcons were banded compared with 23 in 1979.



Atlantic Flyway Review Region I: Addendum

Back Shore

Port Clyde, Maine 435-6915

Margery Plymire

In August of 1980, banding was begun at a 10-acre (4 ha) coastal location near Port Clyde in the town of St. George, Knox Co., Maine. Predominantly low-lying spruce-fir woodland, the property is located some 800 m NE of Marshall Point, on what is locally known as the "back shore."

The property was acquired late in 1979 and therefore much work remains to be done to complete permanent net lanes. A maximum of 14 nets were operated intermittently for a total of 44 days — 17 in August, 19 in September, and 8 in October. Several net lanes that were productive early in the season had to be abandoned later as a result of fresh onshore winds. In 3315 net-hours, 456 birds were banded of 40 species, for an average of 12.26 birds per 100 net-hours. Of these, 55% (248)

were warblers, while Black-capped Chickadees comprised nearly 18% of the total birds banded.

Species most commonly banded were: Black-capped Chickadee, 81; Bay-breasted Warbler, 62; Yellow-rumped Warbler, 39; Am. Robin, 24; Magnolia Warbler, 22; Nashville Warbler, 21; Blackpoll Warbler, 21; White-throated Sparrow, 18; Black-and-white Warbler, 16; Canada Warbler, 15.

The biggest day was 25 August, with a total of 57 birds banded.

The labors of Jim Plymire and Jim Sherman in clearing and bridge building are gratefully acknowledged.