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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region Ii

North American Bird Bander

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	Total days	Net- hours	Total banded	Total species	Birds/100 net-hours
1980	17	1525	187	26	12.26
1981	29	2137	512	40	23.95
1982	21	1122	203	30	18.08
1983	18	1161	196	38	16.88
1984	12	820	73	17	8.89

Once again the period was generally hot and dry with no significant westerlies, cold fronts, or rainy spells. Fog was nearly constant through mid-August.

A good warbler movement was noted between the hours of 1030 and 1300 on 2 September when wind gusted to 20 mph out of the west. Forty-five birds were netted on this date (representing almost 27 percent of the season total), making it the season's biggest day.

Spring 1984 is said to have been the wettest since record-keeping began. By mid-August wild food crops, with the exception of spruce cones, were fair at best, as continued fog and lack of sunshine appeared to retard both flowering and subsequent ripening. Elsewhere in Maine wild food crops were described as phenomenal, and some

observers felt that this largess may have caused some migrants to take a more inland route.

After only 5 years, with so small sample, it is difficult to draw any conclusions at all. Only two species, Black-and-white Warbler and Bay-breasted Warbler, have been among the top 10 species banded in each of the 5 years of operation. Nineteen species have figured in the totals for all 5 years. Four of these appear to have declined over the period, as does a fifth, Blackpoll Warbler, which was encountered in the first four years but not in the fifth. One other species, Black-capped Chickadee, may be experiencing a decline, as later field observations suggest.

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984
Black-and-white Warbler	16	72	17	13	5
Nashville Warbler	21	20	8	8	4
Bay-breasted Warbler	62	33	27	29	14
Blackpoll Warbler	21	11	6	2	0
Black-throated Green Warbler	10	8	8	2	2
Black-capped Chickadee	81	26	13	12	7

The future will show whether these declines are real, or merely part of cyclic fluctuations.

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II

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Region II lost one station in 1984 (South Vestal) and regained Hellertown, PA, after a lapse of a couple of years; the other stations participating remained the same as in recent years. All reported the 1984 banding season to be extremely poor. The combined region total catch was the lowest since 1975, and was less than half the numbers caught in the best seasons (1977, 1978, and 1982).

The poor results were reflected in every group of birds. Combined totals resulted in lowest-ever numbers of many species, including Magnolia, Yellow-rumped, and Tennessee Warblers; Ovenbird; Red-eyed Vireo; and White-throated Sparrow. Swainson's Thrush was banded in only one-eighth of the usual numbers, and a total of only 3 Bay-breasted Warblers were banded in the entire region.

If the low numbers caught reflect the results of a very poor breeding season, we would expect the catch to show smaller numbers of HY birds. For many years this report has included a table showing the percentage of HY's in our most common species. This year, however, only 6 species totaled 100 or more birds, and each showed HY's in numbers close to the average figures published in the 1983 report. If the breeding season produced very few young, perhaps we caught too small a sample to reflect that; or perhaps normal numbers of young were produced, but the birds migrated along unusual routes, or much of their migration occurred at times when they could not be caught in nets. It is interesting to note that the regional reports of bird sightings in *American Birds* and *Kingbird* show general agreement on the scarcity of songbirds this fall.

Table 1. Region II Summary, 1984.

	Hellertown, PA	Binghamton, NY	Ellenville, NY	Averill Park, NY	Vermont Institute, VT	Marshfield, VT	Ferdinand, VT
Days of operation	13	40	39	19	28	30	4
Number of nets	4	16	6-10	18	3-15	6	12
Total net-hours	92	1218	1327	708	978	291	552
Largest daily catch	31	25	26	59	48	47	63
Birds banded, 1984	132	526	383	385	454	599	130
Birds banded, 1983	—	490	426	204	722	683	220
Different species, 1984	24	53	48	47	59	56	32
Different species, 1983	—	57	56	24	61	55	38
Birds/100 n.-h., 1984	143	43	29	54	46	206	24
Birds/100 n.-h., 1983	—	47	38	104	75	93	48

Table 2. Most commonly banded species, 1984.

Hellertown, PA	Binghamton, NY	Ellenville, NY
20 Dark-eyed Junco	49 Black-capped Chickadee	67 Dark-eyed Junco
18 Ruby-crowned Kinglet	48 Common Yellowthroat	50 White-throated Sparrow
15 Song Sparrow	47 Gray Catbird	42 Gray Catbird
	27 Cape May Warbler	24 Ruby-crowned Kinglet
	26 White-throated Sparrow	21 Song Sparrow
Averill Park, NY	Vermont Institute, VT	Marshfield, VT
92 House Finch	100 Common Yellowthroat	274 Purple Finch
56 Gray Catbird	39 Song Sparrow	65 White-throated Sparrow
53 Blue Jay	32 Gray Catbird	40 Common Yellowthroat
	29 American Goldfinch	
	22 Nashville Warbler	

Hellertown, PA 403-0752

Elaine Mease

Our banding activity decreased this year, owing partly to lack of help from subpermittees. Banding was done between 11 September and 23 October, 1984. Nets were opened 2 or 3 days per week mostly for 3 or 4 hours in the mornings. The nets were located in a wooded lot along a south facing mountain. Two nets were placed in the woods and two in a lawn area which is open with a few shrubs. Our banding totals decreased as compared with past years because time did not allow us to place nets in a nearby swamp and field area as we have previously done. There were no unusual captures or returns.

Binghamton, NY 420-0755

Harriet Marsi

We set up our usual string of nets along the hillside contour early in August, hoping that the vandals who sabotaged the 1983 banding efforts had found other sources of amusement. Banding took place from dawn to 10 A.M. whenever possible. Nets were up from 11 August through 25 October. Fortunately, no vandals showed up. However, this did not guarantee good banding—our 1984 results

were extremely poor. Many, many species were low, including such regulars as Gray Catbird, Swainson's Thrush, Hermit Thrush (there were no Gray-cheeked Thrushes at all), Red-eyed Vireo, Magnolia Warbler, the total of all wood warblers, White-throated Sparrow, Song Sparrow, and the total of all Fringillidae. Birds per 100 net-hours (43) was the lowest in many years. The nets were retired earlier than usual because it just wasn't paying off to keep them in operation.

There were no really big days. The only days to break 20 were 27 August with 20 birds, 13 September with 23 birds, 17 September with 26 birds, 19 September with 23 birds and 22 September with 28 birds. On 21 days the nets caught fewer than 10 birds.

One can only speculate on an explanation for the poor banding, but a possibility involves the exceptionally mild fall we had. Except for one killing frost, what we had was an extended summer and then after the frost, an early, lengthy Indian summer. Wild food also seemed abundant. Possibly the birds just drifted southward, each at its own pace, spread out both in time and space. One hopes that explains it.

Ellenville, NY 414-0742
Valerie M. Freer

The fall of 1984 continued a long-term decline in the numbers of birds banded at this station, producing only 383 new birds banded, the lowest total since this project was begun in 1970. Up to 10 nets were opened on 39 mornings from 2 August to 11 November. The weather was very mild, with few cold fronts to trigger migration; the birds seemed to trickle through. A very warm October ended with a catch of 26 birds on the 31st, the biggest day of the season, stimulating me to continue banding for a few days in November. This later-than-usual banding produced fairly good numbers of Dark-eyed Juncos and White-throated Sparrows. The finches and sparrows combined made up 43 percent of all the birds banded for the season, whereas they usually constitute only 23 percent of the total.

Everything else was caught in below average numbers. Only 69 warblers were banded (compared with an average of 176 per season during the preceding 14 years). Other poor records (and the average number banded from 1970 to 1983) include 9 flycatchers (vs. 31); 1 Swainson's Thrush (vs. 23); 8 Red-eyed Vireos (vs. 21); and the list goes on. A very few species were caught in near average numbers (Blue Jay, Veery, Ruby-crowned Kinglet).

Vermont Institute of Natural Science 433-0723
Sarah B. Laughlin, Nancy L. Martin

Autumn 1984 was a very slow season at VINS banding locations. Banding took place on one to three mornings per week from 10 August to 30 October, plus 22 November. The use of 3 to 15 mist nets in three locations resulted in the capture and banding of only 454 birds of 59 species. Noticeable declines were observed in the number of chickadees, as well as several warblers (in particular Tennessee), and sparrows (notably White-throated). No Ovenbirds were caught for the first time in our 15-year history. Birds of interest this autumn included 2 Tufted Titmice captured in Hartford, our first Winter Wrens since 1978, and the first autumn Gray-cheeked Thrush since 1979. Older birds recaptured this fall included a Black-capped Chickadee banded as an unknown in August of 1979, and a Common Yellowthroat banded as an HY male on 21 August 1980.

Marshfield, VT 441-0722
Mrs. Marion Metcalf

Banding at Marshfield station, accomplished on 3-day weekends, was not very successful in 1984. Our greatest difficulty was a flash flood which completely destroyed two net lanes. Purple Finches made up almost half of the birds caught. The best day in August was the 17th with 47 birds, and the best in September was the 1st, with 20

birds. We had two returns, a Chestnut-sided Warbler banded in 1983 and a Common Yellowthroat banded in 1981. There were no foreign recoveries.

Ferdinand, VT 444-0714
Mrs. Marion Metcalf

We returned to Ferdinand on 12 September for three and a half days. The weather was excellent. We used one aerial net in addition to the usual nets. We caught 3 returns—a Swainson's Thrush banded in 1983, a Boreal Chickadee banded in 1982, and a White-throated Sparrow, also banded in 1982. There were no foreign recoveries this year. We did have a new experience—a bull Moose (identified by the size of the tracks) carried away a net and poles! We did recover them, but the net was ruined.

Charles H. Feltes (1894-1985)

Charles H. Feltes, a bander for more than 50 years at Modesto, California, died in his 90th year on December 14, 1985. His picture appears in the April 1964 *Western Bird Bander* (page 28). The record shows that he banded more than 50,360 birds of more than 126 species, continuing up to and including the 1982 season. Beginning in 1930 he banded especially large numbers, many thousands each, of Cedar Waxwings, White-crowned Sparrows and Pine Siskins on his large double residential lot.

Charlie Feltes was a native of San Francisco and a veteran of World War I. He was much esteemed for his knowledge of and work with birds in and around Modesto. His banding station gradually took on the aspect of a museum of kinds of traps and attracting devices for birds. In 1965 when he learned of the needs of the newly established Point Reyes Bird Observatory, he shipped to PRBO nearly a ton of much appreciated kitchen utensils, equipment and dishes from his "Feltes Trading Post and Antique Store" in Modesto. Some of these items are still in use at PRBO, twenty years later.

Those of us, like Charlie Feltes, infected with bird banding, are fortunate. The excitement of a new bird to band, a new observation to record, and the frequent news of a distant recovery, or the polished band of a seventh winter returnee, nurtures an enduring and healthy enthusiasm. We wish him well, and know that his enthusiasm and productivity will long serve as a model and inspiration for us.

W. B. (Bill) Quay, aided by L. Richard Mewaldt