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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I

Richard L. Ferren
Berkshire Community College
Pittsfield, MA 01201

There was no 1982 Block Island Report from Elise Lapham, which we have since discovered was lost in the mail! It is included with this 1983 report.

As in 1982, the weather was decidedly unremarkable for coastal netting stations and produced the weakest showing of northwest winds in recent memory. Despite dull and often rainy weather, several stations reported overall totals only a little lower than average and some species were remarkably well represented. In all, however, uncommonly little agreement was achieved between stations this year as to the ups and downs of various species.

Several stations had record numbers of Gray-cheeked Thrush and Purple Finch. Most warblers and sparrows were in relatively low numbers, especially Yellow-rumped

Warbler, but Cape May and Blackpoll warblers trebled previous highs at Nantucket. Several stations reported a modest flight of Red-breasted Nuthatch, while Blue Jay put on an insignificant movement. A remarkably heavy but "mercifully brief" flight of chickadees was noted at Manomet with only suggestions of this flight elsewhere.

With this year's insignificant northwest winds, the mere presence of substantial numbers of Cape May, Blackpoll, Bay-breasted and Connecticut warblers at Nantucket would suggest a direct southeastward departure over water for the tropics. And Edith Andrew's first netted hummingbird is further confirmation of the customarily low numbers of diurnally migrating landbirds at Nantucket.

Table 1. 1983 Region I Summary.

	Appledore Island, ME	Port Clyde, ME	Rockport, MA	Manomet, MA	Nantucket, MA	Kingston, RI	Block Island, RI
Days of operation	19	29	97	62	51	71	39
Number of nets used	5	15	8	50	1-14	2-4	3-10
Total net-hours	1064	2104	5190	26,691	5392	897	2933
Largest daily catch	145	45	97	455	118	43	110
Birds banded, 1983	1252	366	2316	5596	3027	506	1175
Birds banded, 1982	793		1472	4711	2789	768	1128
Different species, 1983	63	44	71	92	83	51	69
Different species, 1982	56		79	98	83	64	57
Birds/100 n.-h., 1983	118		45	21.0	56	56	40
Birds/100 n.-h., 1982	127		24	16.2	60	74	43

Table 2. Summary of most common species caught, 1983.

Appledore Island, ME	Port Clyde, ME	Rockport, MA	Manomet, MA
256 Red-eyed Vireo	50 Swainson's Thrush	343 House Finch	3114 B.-c. Chickadee
160 N. Waterthrush	42 Northern Waterthrush	236 Gray Catbird	349 Gray Catbird
100 Cedar Waxwing	29 Bay-breasted Warbler	233 Am. Robin	341 Yellow-rumped Warbler
91 Am. Redstart	23 Magnolia Warbler	204 Tree Swallow	171 Blackpoll Warbler
80 C. Yellowthroat	20 Red-breasted Nuthatch	185 White-thr. Sparrow	168 White-thr. Sparrow
44 Cape May Warbler	16 Canada Warbler	172 Yellow-rumped Warbler	148 Tufted Titmouse
41 R.-b. Nuthatch	14 Black-and-white Warbler	105 B.-c. Chickadee	113 Am. Robin
36 Purple Finch	13 Red-eyed Vireo	97 Purple Finch	107 Am. Redstart
34 Swainson's Thrush	12 Black-capped Chickadee	75 Dark-eyed Junco	70 C. Yellowthroat
32 Veery	12 Common Grackle	75 Eur. Starling	68 G.-c. Kinglet
		70 Song Sparrow	
		49 Am. Goldfinch	

Nantucket, MA	Kingston, RI	Block Island, RI
840 Yellow-rumped Warbler	86 White-thr. Sparrow	279 Gray Catbird
318 Cape May Warbler	56 B.-c. Chickadee	177 Yellow-rumped Warbler
316 Gray Catbird	53 Gray Catbird	90 Swainson's Thrush
266 Blackpoll Warbler	49 Dark-eyed Junco	70 Red-eyed Vireo
129 C. Yellowthroat	22 Am. Redstart	67 Gray-cheeked Thrush
112 Am. Redstart	20 C. Yellowthroat	65 Veery
71 R.-b. Nuthatch	16 Veery	31 Am. Redstart
66 Song Sparrow	13 Ovenbird	29 Ovenbird
60 Bay-breasted Warbler	12 Black-and-white Warbler	29 Black-and-white Warbler
44 N. Waterthrush	12 Yellow-rumped Warbler	28 C. Yellowthroat
43 Red-eyed Vireo		21 Brown Creeper
		20 White-thr. Sparrow

Port Clyde, ME Margery R. Plymire

The station at Port Clyde was open on 29 days only, from 3 August through 16 September. An unusually hot, dry period produced no significant westerlies and thus few migrants. Early wandering bands (of locals?) departed almost before any were noted, and there were no waves of migrants on this part of the coast until late September.

Up to 15 nets were placed in the same locations as in past years, and two nets were added in a swampy spot which proved quite productive. Total captures would have been meager indeed without these two nets!

In 2,104 net hours, 366 new birds were banded of 44 species. There were no "big days," with a flight of 45 on 21 August the most active day. Of these, 14 were Bay-breasted Warblers. The only other "flight" was of 13 Swainson's Thrush on 12 September. A flight appeared to pass through on 22 August, but the station was closed on that date.

Several species new to this station were banded, including 2 Eastern Pewees, 2 Wilson's Warblers, a Winter Wren and 4 Gray-cheeked Thrushes. An increase in Red-eyed Vireos was noted, with 13 banded.

Returns included an after-4th-year male Canada Warbler.

Shoals Marine Lab Banding Station 425-0703 Appledore Island, York County, ME David Holmes

The Shoals Lab Station was listed last year as Appledore Island, ME, somewhat incorrectly since the Lab uses most of the island and without Lab support banding could not have occurred. For description see NABB 8(2):67. Banding is done on the northern third of the island under a canopy height of 8-15 ft. There was virtually no rain during the summer but the cherry/berry crop was excellent.

In 1983 banding was done from 24 August to 11 September (19 days) with the usual 5 nets in the regular

locations. Two additional nets were opened 10 and 11 September for 4½ net-hours in a dry marsh at the north end of the island where they also were briefly used in 1982. In spite of the excitement of a different species mix, I did not have enough help and discontinued these in order to continue the year-to-year comparisons of the traditional net locations. Nets were normally open from dawn to dusk. Peak days: 4 September with 145 new birds; 8 September, 118; 9 September, 140; including retraps, more than 100 birds were handled on 5, 6, and 10 September as well.

Of the most common species, only the Cedar Waxwing total of 100 was unusual. There is always a waxwing flock of fluctuating numbers during my time on the island, but usually 10 or fewer are caught. The flock appeared to consist of roughly 25% adults but of our 100 birds banded only 3 were AHYs. Young birds apparently feed lower or haven't learned to go up immediately when startled, or both.

This was the first Red-breasted Nuthatch flight since 1978. The Cape May Warbler capture rate of 4.1 birds per 100 net hours is only two-thirds the rate (6.3) for 1979-81. Although Cape May, are usually among the most commonly observed birds here at this time of year, they seem to feed in more open areas than where the nets are set. Red-eyed Vireos almost equaled the 1981 high capture rate while Northern Waterthrushes were about average.

New species banded (records began in 1974): Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (2), Golden-winged Warbler (3), and Palm Warbler (1). Other birds of note: Kentucky Warbler (2nd record), Prairie Warbler (first since 1976), and Gray-cheeked Thrush (2nd fall record). Early dates were set for Brown Creeper, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Solitary Vireo, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Lincoln's Sparrow. Three Common Yellowthroats returned: two from 1982 and one (banded by Betty Phinney) from 1980. No foreign birds were handled.

Special thanks go to staff, students, and friends of Shoals Marine Lab who helped with the mundane chores and supplied lots of interest in this year's project.

Whale Cove, Rockport, MA 423-0703
Russell T. Norris

The Whale Cove Station has been in operation for eight years. In 1983, nets were opened on 97 days between 1 August and 15 November; a few traps were operated also. In addition to the 2,316 birds netted, 354 were taken in traps. We handled 120 repeats. Net-hours were down 15% from 1982, but new birds netted were up 57%. The following table shows birds netted, net-hours, and birds/100 net-hours for the fall months of the last seven years.

Table 1. Whale Cove Station summary, 1977–1983.

Year	No. Banded	Net-hours	Birds/100 net-hours
1977	1386	5028	28
1978	1861	5196	36
1979	1720	4188	41
1980	2242	5195	43
1981	2222	6276	35
1982	1472	6082	24
1983	2316	5190	45

A severe summer drought continued until mid-September, followed by much heavy rain in late September, October, and November. The fall months were unseasonably warm, with the first killing frost on 13 November. There was a strong southwest flow on many days, but northwest winds did produce small waves of migrants on 15 September and 29–30 September. Peak days were 24 August (97) and 5 September (93) as a result of large flocks of Tree Swallows.

The 12 most common species netted in the fall of 1983 are shown in the following table and compared with totals for these species in previous years.

Table 2. Most common species at Whale Cove Station, 1983, compared with preceding six years.

	1983	1982	1981	1980	1979	1978	1977
House Finch	343	117	191	175	235	182	156
Gray Catbird	236	130	196	164	237	221	114
American Robin	233	221	364	62	131	158	44
Tree Swallow	204	52	35	117	70	8	17
White-throated Sparrow	185	132	195	165	248	305	138
Yellow-rumped Warbler	172	36	162	302	111	73	239
Black-capped Chickadee	105	70	156	258	67	60	69
Purple Finch	97	8	13	19	13	19	34
Dark-eyed Junco	75	38	36	61	15	88	32
European Starling	75	53	—	—	—	—	—
Song Sparrow	70	96	111	154	96	135	110
American Goldfinch	49	21	25	51	16	77	104

Fifteen species usually banded during the fall season did not appear at all. Solitary Vireo, Wilson's Warbler, and Savannah and Field sparrows were particularly noticeable by their absence. Several species were down considerably from 1982 and from the seven-year average. Blackpoll and Bay-breasted warblers were down 80% from the fall average, while Magnolia Warbler was down 66%. Common Yellowthroat was captured at the lowest rate in six years, down 40% from the average. Both kinglets were at an all time low, down 70% from the seven-year average. Song Sparrow was down 35% at the lowest figure since the station has been in operation.

Although Black-capped Chickadee was up considerably from 1982, numbers captured were way below the good years of 1980 and 1981 and about average. Tufted Titmouse bandings were also about average, although much lower than the high years of 1981 and 1982. Both American Goldfinch and White-throated Sparrow were up from 1982, but were banded in about average numbers.

The *Empidonax* flycatchers (Yellow-bellied, Traill's and Least) were up to about double average fall bandings, while Tree Swallow bandings were much higher than ever before. This was the result of two large concentrations of these birds on utility wires just before migrating south and is not indicative of any change in abundance. Blue Jay, while down from the high year of 1981, was 50% above average. Brown Creeper, the *Catharus* thrushes, and Northern Cardinal were also captured at 50% above average. American Robin, Gray Catbird, and Mockingbird were up from the average 55, 40, and 30%, respectively. Cedar Waxwing and Red-eyed Vireo were much above average, but the vireo bandings were considerably lower than the good year of 1981. Yellow-rumped Warbler recovered from the extreme low of 1982 in Whale Cove and was taken in average numbers. Cape May Warbler was much above average but down slightly from 1982, while Northern Waterthrush had the best year of record. After a very bad spring House Finch appeared in large numbers, and Purple Finch bandings were the highest ever. Dark-eyed Junco had the best year since 1978.

One new species for the station—Winter Wren—was banded in the fall of 1983. Other highlights were a Bank Swallow and a Boreal Chickadee, both the second of each species to be captured; also, another Warbling Vireo (new to the station last year) was banded.

Manomet Bird Observatory, MA 415-0703
Trevor L. Lloyd-Evans
Christina T. Dowd (Staff Biologists)

Despite the figures, 1983 was a rather below average fall until late October, when a very strong but mercifully brief coastal movement of Black-capped Chickadees changed the whole complexion of the season. During our 62 days of operation from 1 August to 15 November, a total of 7,421 birds of 92 species were handled, including 5,596 new bandings, 1,791 repeats or returns, and 34 unbanded. We totaled a rather low 26,691 net hours, with 50 nets open in the same sites as previous years. Nets were open during all daylight hours and traps were not used during this season to avoid biasing comparative totals/n.h. There were few classical cold-front days with northwest winds, and temperatures were also well above normal. Thus we saw no days in August or September with more than 200 birds handled; totals of birds handled (including repeats) peaked at 247 on 5 October; 259 on 6 October; 365 on 26 October; 357 on 27 October; 455 (maximum) on 31 October; 429 on 1 November; and 290 on 2 November. The table below compares selected species totals for fall 1983 (1 August-15 November) with the seasonal average for the previous 5- and 10-year periods.

Species	Fall 1983 total	1983 % change from previous average	
		\bar{x} 5 yrs 1978-82	\bar{x} 10 yrs 1973-82
Black-capped Chickadee	3114	+304%	+417%
Purple Finch	48	+137%	+150%
Tufted Titmouse	148	+ 1%	+ 65%
Golden-crowned Kinglet	68	+124%	+ 12%
American Redstart	107	+ 21%	- 7%
White-throated Sparrow	168	- 10%	- 27%
Blackpoll Warbler	171	- 15%	- 32%
Red-eyed Vireo	49	- 54%	- 46%
American Robin	113	- 58%	- 46%
Yellow-rumped Warbler	341	- 53%	- 52%
Dark-eyed Junco	18	- 66%	- 73%

Increasing species: 3,114 Black-capped Chickadees is far above normal and our greatest fall catch since 1971 (4,649). The two highest daily chickadee banding totals (371 on 31 October, 352 on 1 November) far exceed any previous day in any year! Of course, this means that only 2,492 non-BCCH were banded. Purple Finch showed the highest number since 1980, 1½ times the 5- and 10-year averages. *Catharus* thrushes were 17% above the 5-year average (but see robin), and Gray-cheeked Thrushes were well above normal. Golden-crowned Kinglet totals were

back at the 10-year average, as this species has increased steadily after a major decline in the hard winter of 1974-75; it is still at only half the levels of the years 1972-74. Finally, American Redstart was the only warbler caught in good numbers to have an above-average year in 1983 (at least when compared with the last 5 years).

Decreasing species: Unlike the *Catharus* thrushes, American Robin showed the lowest fall numbers since 1967. Red-eyed Vireo numbers peaked in 1982 with 170 banded but fell to only 49 this fall—the lowest since 1966. Over the last 10 years, Blackpoll and Black-and-white warblers have continued to decline by about one third; Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler was at only half the 5- and 10-year averages, the 341 caught being the lowest fall total since 1968. Wilson's Warbler is usually fairly numerous, but almost failed to appear this fall. The 3 birds caught (over 80% decrease and the fewest since 1966) are hardly a sample but prompted us to include this species so as to stimulate comparisons by other interested banders. White-throated Sparrow and Dark-eyed Junco also had a poor migration here, well below the 5-year average, and further below the 10-year.

Northward expansions: Tufted Titmouse was caught in average numbers (148) compared with the last 5 years (+1%), but was well above the 10-year figure (+65%), reflecting the local increase. Peak movement was in fall 1981. A similar trend in Northern Mockingbird was interrupted this year, with only 14 banded.

Less frequently caught species: As is often the case, a good Black-capped Chickadee flight brought us Boreals too, 4 between 26 October and 9 November. New for MBO was a Prothonotary Warbler (HY-M) on 16 August.

Nantucket, MA 411-0700
Edith Andrews

The 1983 fall banding schedule was much the same as last year. Banding at Mothball Pines ran from 30 August to 9 October (40 days) and at Ice Pond Lot (411-0701) from 13 September to 9 November (31 days). Mrs. Erma J. Fisk, with the part-time assistance of Mrs. June Ficker, ran the Ice Pond station until 7 October.

Several species showed a marked increase in numbers over previous years. An unprecedented number of Cape May Warblers (318) were banded in 1983 compared with the previous high of 100 in 1975. Blackpoll Warbler (266) in 1983 surpassed the former high of 89 in 1981.

Other species showing substantial increases over the past five years were:

Purple Finch: 42 in 1983; 16, 1982; 11, 1981; 8, 1980; 5, 1979

Swainson's Thrush: 28 in 1983; 13, 1982; 17, 1981; 4, 1980; 3, 1979

Gray-cheeked Thrush: 22 in 1983; 1, 1982; 4, 1981; none 1979-80

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: 10 in 1983; 1, 1982; 2, 1981; none 1979-80

It was also a big year for *Oporornis* warblers, with 5 Connecticut, 5 Mourning, and 1 HY-M MacGillivray's which is the second record for Massachusetts, confirmed by measurements of wing minus tail.

On the other hand there was a noticeable decrease in the number of Yellow-rumped Warblers, with a total of 840 in 1983 compared to 1400 in 1982, and of White-throated Sparrows, with 19 in 1983 as opposed to 47 in 1982.

Some species not often encountered here were Yellow-throated Vireo, Golden-winged Warbler, and Worm-eating Warbler. Another first was a Ruby-throated Hummingbird, which was released unbanded.

Ticks were collected for Dr. Mark Wilson of the Department of Public Health and Tropical Diseases, Harvard University in connection with his study of *Babesiosis* and Lyme Disease.

There were 268 repeats and 5 returns of resident species.

Kingston, RI 412-0713

Douglas Kraus

This station was operated in a pattern similar to that of the past 11 years. Nets were opened at dawn and closed at 10 A.M. unless there was evident activity at the nets. Birds per 100 net-hours for the years 1978-83 are respectively 65, 109, 98, 74, 74, and 56; the figure for 1983 is the lowest in the 28 years of this station's operation.

The migration through this area was poor. The cold fronts were followed by NNE winds, depositing few migrants. The station was closed because of wet weather for 5 days in August, 2 in September, and 6 in October. Only in November with the arrival of the juncos and white-throats did the activity pick up—160 banded in 83 net hours.

Indication of a successful nesting season was apparent in the netting, in August, of birds breeding locally. The ratio of immatures to adults was better than 4:1.

There were 72 repeats and 23 returns. Only 9 of the latter were of nonmigratory species.

Block Island, RI 411-0713

Elise Lapham

In the fall of 1983 the Block Island station operated 36 days between 31 August and 12 October with three additional days in mid-November. Our largest catch was on 23 September when we processed 110 birds.

The migration started out well with 801 birds banded in September, 250 more than in September 1979, our second best September on record. October only added 339 new birds, 285 less than in 1982 even with four more banding days. The October weather was warm with continuous SW winds and by the time the winds did blow from the north most of the birds had gone through without being blown offshore.

The big event this fall was the explosion of thrushes—the greatest number we have ever banded—with 90 Swainson's, 67 Gray-cheeked, and 65 Veerys. Gray Catbird was also numerous, with 279 banded. On the other hand, the one Ruby-crowned and seven Golden-crowned Kinglets were some of our lowest totals for these species. Many other species were in short supply. Even the hawks seemed to be avoiding the island—only one Sharp-shinned was caught. We had no Saw-whet Owls. Every Yellow-rumped Warbler was banded this year; the total of 177 was low compared to 1979, when 352 were banded and 900 were released because of lack of assistance. There were 18 Red-breasted Nuthatches this year, suggesting a small flight, and the 8 Black-capped Chickadees (always rare here), were more than usual.

Coordinator's Note: The following paragraph is the 1982 Block Island report, which was lost in the mail.

In the fall of 1982, we operated 32 days between 29 August and 8 October, banding 1,128 birds of 57 species in 2,646 net-hours. The largest catch was 166 birds on 7 October. With few NW winds, the fall of 1982 was not a good season for migration at Block Island. We did not band after 8 October but several comparisons among various species with the previous season's totals up to 9 October 1981 will suggest a mediocre 1982 season: Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 0 in 1982, 12 in 1981; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 0, 60; Brown Creeper, 13, 72; Black-throated Blue Warbler, 17, 55; American Redstart, 23, 38; Scarlet Tanager, 2, 31; Song Sparrow, 0, 12. Veery, however, numbered 40 compared to 20 and Gray Catbird 224 compared to 137. There were no unusual species, and no fall returns or foreign recoveries.