

1990

## Eastern Regional News

North American Bird Bander

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# Eastern Regional News

## Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

### President's Message

The 67th annual meeting has been adjourned, new members welcomed, and the officers for 1990-1991 installed. The annual meetings have always been a high point of the year for me. As usual, the workshops and paper sessions were most informative and the speakers both enthusiastic and enjoyable. To the Genessee Ornithological Society, thank you for being a most congenial host. It is always interesting to learn some new techniques and trade ideas with other members. I have never come in contact with a more knowledgeable group of people who are willing and eager to impart that knowledge to anyone with an interest to learn. If you have not attended one of the yearly meetings, you are missing a valuable part of the banding experience. As soon as the details for next year's meeting are finalized, the dates will be published so that you can reserve the dates and mark your calendar.

Along with the normal responsibilities of the officers of any organization, there are two major concerns for the EBBA officers: the annual meeting and *NABB*. Since *NABB* was consolidated, formal documentation has been lacking in three areas: guidelines for the production coordinator, a mutually acceptable formula for billing, and a statement of editorial policy. Due to the dedication and hard work of Judy Bell, Bob Yunick, and Bob Pantle, and their counterparts in IBBA and WBBA, the bulk of the work has been accomplished. The remaining details will, hopefully, be quickly completed. So, a special thank you to Judy, Bob, and Bob for giving freely of their most valuable asset, time, both for the love of banding and to the benefit of EBBA.

Membership is not without certain responsibilities. In order to be a successful and viable organization, EBBA needs your help. For the *North American Bird Bander*, your articles and papers are needed.

Your comments and suggestions relating to any facet of EBBA are always welcomed. Also, for the annual meeting, papers are needed for the paper sessions, volunteers are needed to run the workshops, exhibitors are needed, and most important of all, EBBA needs you to be there. Please join us next year, and bring along a friend.

Gerald K. Lahr

### Report of the EBBA Memorial Grant Committee

Fourteen applications were reviewed for the 1990 EBBA memorial grants. Applications came from ten different states and provinces as well as from Argentina.

Two grants were awarded:

One grant was awarded to **Gustavo J. Iglesias**, Rio Negro, Argentina, for his project, "Birds of the Understory of Sub-tropical Rain Forest of the Iguaza National Park."

The other grant was to **Hsiao-Wei Yuan** from Cornell University for his study, "Demography, Dispersal and Population Structure of Common Terns (*Sterna hirundo*) at Oneida Lake, New York."

Committee Members,

Robert G. Sagar  
Douglas Gross  
Barbara Pectorack

# Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV

**Elizabeth W. Brooks, Coordinator**  
**1435 Waterwells Road**  
**Alfred Station, NY 14803**

As the new coordinator for Region IV, I would like to begin my tenure with a sincere vote of thanks from all of us to Donald F. Clark who served in that position for over 18 years. Don's careful and conscientious work will be a hard act to follow.

I would like to welcome two new stations to the Region IV report: William Symonds of Clarkson, Monroe County, New York and George Wallace (succeeded by Jon McCracken) of Long Point Bird Observatory in Ontario, Canada. Long Point will be a particularly valuable addition to our review. Their initial report is a long one--necessary as an introduction of this station to our readers.

Although our region is noteworthy for its diversity, banding results were down in 1988 at every station except Farmersville.

Weather was mentioned as a contributing factor in many reports--from the summer heat and drought which may have affected nesting success and the timing of migration, to the extreme wet conditions in some areas in late July and August, to the effects of wind and rain on netting. Hurricane Gilbert and perhaps even Yellowstone fire haze had a positive effect on the results at Long Point.

If a generalization could be made, it appeared to be a good year for late season migrants (kinglets, Winter Wrens, sparrows, creepers, juncos) and a poor year for early season migrants (warblers, vireos and flycatchers) but there were exceptions to this over-simplification.

All banders working in Region IV are encouraged to submit their fall station reports to me.

**Table 1. Region IV Summary**

	Maitland River Ontario	Clarkson NewYork	Braddock Bay NewYork	Beaver Meadow NewYork	Long Point Ontario	Frmrsvle Station NewYork	Kestrel Haven NewYork	Newark Valley NewYork	Alfred Station NewYork	Presque Isle Pennsylv.	Powder- Mill Pennsylv.	Allegheny Front W.Virginia
Days Operated	29	11	33	11	108	56	54	24	85	12	102	68
Number Nets Used	38	6	10	5-9	1-50	2-6	7	11	1-8	-	0-60	-
Total Net Hours	10686	60	818	255	-	727	1197	741	2852	750	14370	6087
Largest Daily Catch	86	7	106	11	203	28	77	45	32	348	260	500+
Birds Banded 1988	612	26	775	56	5433	447	897	515	549	653	6221	6344
Birds Banded 1987	771	466	2415	149	6731	225	1411	862	-	753	6866	7911
Dif. Species 1988	49	9	62	16	112	35	54	38	55	48	103	80
Dif. Species 1987	72	23	77	28	126	22	61	47	-	68	113	87
Birds/100 NHS 1988	6	43	86	22	-	23	75	70	19	87	43	104
Birds/100 NHS 1987	4	126	63	27	-	24	57	78	-	72	48	158

**Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species - 1988**

<u>Maitland River Ontario</u>		<u>Clarkson New York</u>		<u>Braddock Bay New York</u>		<u>Beaver Meadow New York</u>		<u>Long Point Ontario</u>		<u>Farmersvil Station New York</u>	
136	GCKI	9	BCCH	103	SOSP	13	GRCA	616	RCKI	267	HOFI
97	RWBL	5	MODO	68	SWSP	10	BCCH	433	MYWA	41	SCJU
50	SCJU	3	RBGR	67	RTHA	9	AMRO	288	BRCR	33	BCCH
45	BCCH	2	WBNU	47	GCKI	6	ATSP	280	HETH	15	COGR
43	MYWA	2	COYE	43	WTSP	4	VEER	279	SWTH	14	GRCA
41	RCKI	2	SOSP	36	BCCH	3	WOTH	214	MAWA	12	SOSP
18	BRCR			30	MAWA	2	DOWO	203	WTSP	6	FISP
17	SOSP			29	GRCA			149	SCJU	6	MODO
14	HETH			27	HETH			127	SSHLA	5	DOWO
				25	SWTH			124	OVEN	5	MYWA

  

<u>Kestrel Haven New York</u>		<u>Newark Valley New York</u>		<u>Alfred Station New York</u>		<u>Presque Isle Penna.</u>		<u>Powder-mill Penna.</u>		<u>Allegheny Front W. Virginia</u>	
236	SOSP	124	SOSP	156	SCJU	148	GCKI	450	SCJU	725	BTBW
144	AMGO	77	HOFI	63	BCCH	128	RCKI	395	HOFI	677	GCKI
70	HOFI	70	GRCA	31	SOSP	50	WTSP	356	WTSP	644	TEWA
55	BCCH	38	COYE	27	MAWA	39	WIWR	271	MYWA	533	SWTH
39	AMRO	37	BCCH	24	WTSLP	31	HETH	265	SOSP	481	BLPW
38	WCSP	23	WTSP	21	CHSP	30	MYWA	259	COYE	416	CMWA
32	GRCA	17	MYWA	19	BLJA	23	MAWA	243	GRCA	392	BTNW
29	MYWA	16	SWSP	17	AMRO	23	BLPW	235	AMGO	248	BLBW
27	WTSP	10	AMGO	15	BRCR	17	GRCA	222	MAWA	231	BBWA
16	COYE			14	RCKI	14	SWTH	202	RCKI	173	SCJU
16	FISP										

**Maitland River Bird Observatory** 435-0812  
Huron County, Ontario, Canada  
John B. Miles

The station was in operation during all or part of 29 days. The normal movement of warblers, vireos and flycatchers in late August and September did not materialize in the banding area in 1988. Swainson's Thrushes were also significantly down in number.

October was exceptionally good for this station with a record number of kinglets banded, especially Golden-crowned Kinglets. Reasonable numbers of Myrtle Warblers and Slate-colored Juncos were also caught.

During the Operation Recovery period, 612 birds of 49 species were banded. Usually 38 nets were used along with a ground trap and a jay trap. Net usage totalled 10,686 hours which worked out to be 5.65 birds per 100 net hours. Peak days were 15 October with 86 birds banded followed by 1 October with 58 and 29 October with 53. Nothing noteworthy was banded this fall.

**Clarkson** 431-0775  
Monroe County, NY  
William D. Symonds

Banding was conducted in Clarkson for the third consecutive fall but banding was limited to 11 days due to job commitments. Nets were placed, as usual, near a raspberry patch and in an abandoned apple orchard. However, no nets or traps were used near feeders this year, resulting in a large drop in House Finches and Mourning Doves banded.

**Braddock Bay Banding Station** 431-0774  
Monroe County, NY  
Elizabeth W. Brooks  
Kevin C. Griffith

The Braddock Bay Banding Station, located in the town of Greece in Monroe County, NY, began its fourth fall of operation on 1 August and continued for 33 days until 31 October. In addition to our usual location at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Station, we banded in two new locations in the area: Hogan Point and Beatty Point. These sites offer exciting prospects for mid- to late-season sparrow and thrush banding in the years to come. Also, raptor

banding was carried out this fall in the area just northwest of the Pear Orchard off Manitou Beach Road where spring raptor banding has been done since 1984. Banding was done by Jeff Bouton, Elizabeth W. Brooks, Kevin C. Griffith, Dan Niven, William D. Symonds and Dave Tellow with help from many volunteers.

There were 775 birds banded representing 62 species and an intergrade form. Up to ten mist nets were used for passerine banding for a total of 818 net hours. Net/trap hours for raptor banding were not calculated, so our figure of 86 birds/100 net hours only reflects passerine banding efforts.

New species for this station during fall were Cooper's Hawk, Goshawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Northern Parula, Prairie Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow and Savannah Sparrow. The station total for fall banding now stands at 94 species plus 1 intergrade form.

There were 14 repeats and 5 returns. Highlights this year included a HY-U Prairie Warbler banded on 10 September (the second Monroe County fall record), our first ever N. Parula, and another intergrade Flicker (outer primaries salmon-colored, inner primaries yellow with the same pattern on rectrices).

Many area birders visited the station and a banding demonstration was held for a field trip in connection with the annual meeting of the Federation of New York State Bird Clubs held in September in Rochester.

Our total net hours was less than a quarter of what it was in 1987 due to job and travel commitments of banders. Less coverage and experimentation with new locations made it difficult to analyze the season.

Appreciation is extended to the following who in one way or another gave us assistance this fall: Braddock Bay Raptor Research, Inc., Mike Davids, Jeff Dodge, Judy Ertel, Brian and Eileen Keelan, Larry Keenan, Tom McDonald, Mike Maibohm, Dick Mather, Ron and Gayla Miller, Bob Oswald, Ann Peterson, Marty Robinson, Rochester Hawk Banding Project, Jean and Sharon Skelly and Clay Taylor. Special thanks goes to Jay Dahlheim and Bill Kaiser for their support and permission to band on their land.

**Beaver Meadow Audubon Center** 424-0782  
North Java, New York  
David Junkin

At Beaver Meadow, we have been having a steady decline in birds per 100 net hours since 1984 (37, 36, 29, 27, 22). We have also been experiencing a decline in banders available from 1 August through 15 November. This year

our station was only in action on 11 days for a total of 255 net hours by six banders. In 1986, we worked 579 net hours; in 1987, we netted for 551 hours. It is very conceivable that our lack of netting time caused low birds-per-net-hour ratios. For instance, during the robin migration, there were many birds in the area but no one available to net them. On six of the 11 banding days, the nets were only run from 8 to 11 a.m.

Participants this year were: Jane Cole, Taddy Dann, Jane Schmieder, Ree Thayer and Emily Vaughn, coordinated and assisted by Dave Junkin. This limited pursuit of banding this year will, hopefully, trigger a positive response for the coming years in knowing that we should have done better. There were no big catch days recorded. The total of birds caught this year only equaled the largest daily catch during the 1985 season, though in intervening years the largest daily catches were 17 (1986) and 15 (1987). Perhaps all of this does point to declining bird populations, but I believe our time of banding is too scanty to justify any conclusions.

**Long Point Bird Observatory** 423-0800 to 0803  
Port Rowan, Ontario, Canada  
George E. Wallace

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first report by Long Point Bird Observatory (LPBO) in the Atlantic Flyway Review. I hope it is the first of many to follow.

For those not familiar with LPBO, we operate primarily on Long Point, Norfolk County, Ontario, where we have been consistently monitoring migration since 1960. We run a variety of stations. Our oldest site is at the extreme east end of Long Point (01) and has been run every year since 1960. Another station on Courtright Ridge, Long Point (02), has been active since 1962. A number of other locations have been used over the years, not all of which will appear in this report. Other stations used in 1988 include our field headquarters on Old Cut Boulevard (13), just outside Long Point Provincial Park, run full time since 1983; our raptor banding station at Clear Creek (04), approximately 12 km west of the base of the point, run since 1987; and South Walsingham Woods (14), 14 km northwest of the base, also initiated in 1987.

Readers will note the absence of statistics based on net hours in this report. LPBO's method for quantifying the magnitude of migration for a particular species is based on "daily estimated totals" which represent a synthesis of a daily census figure, daily banding total and other observations. Daily estimated totals are then used to calculate population indices.

For further discussion and explanation of this method, see Hussell, D.J.T. 1981, "The Use of Migration Counts for

Monitoring Bird Population Levels," *Studies in Avian Biology* No. 6:92-102. The reason for this approach lies in the impracticality of running a standardized "net set" at Long Point. The flow of migration on the point is extremely variable, ranging from very light to extremely heavy. One's ability to run nets is directly affected by this, resulting in days on which a station's complete battery of nets can be run or on which it is literally not safe to run any nets. The threat of being dangerously swamped is one which LPBO banders must always be aware of. Hence, the number of net hours is very rarely consistent from one day to another, or from station to station, which greatly reduces the significance of a birds-per-100-net-hour figure. We also commonly use a wide variety of other traps, including ground traps, jay traps and Heligolands. However, many other aspects of our banding data should be of interest to readers of the Flyway Review.

The total number of birds banded in the period 1 August to 16 November 1988 was 5,433 of 112 species, bringing the grand total for 1988 to 13,689. This was LPBO's 29th year of operation and our total number of birds banded throughout our history now equals 337,481 birds of 245 species. No new species or subspecies were banded in 1988. Data collected for each individual banded included age, sex, wing cord, weight, relative fat class, and degree of skull pneumatization. Moulting data were also collected for approximately 600 individuals.

Generally, the fall 1988 banding season ranked as only a fair one, falling substantially below the 1987 total which was also considered below average. Admittedly, coverage at 02 was very low, but this was very nearly compensated for by an intensified effort at 14. All of this minor perturbation was completely offset by a decrease of 1,413 birds at 13, our most productive station.

Weather wrought havoc with our banding efforts throughout the fall. Early in the period, the effects of drought and extreme heat were most noticeable. Apparently, a number of species migrated early, possibly in response to failed breeding attempts. Yellow Warbler was the most graphic example. We captured local breeders in full body and flight feather molt on 1 July, which is nearly three weeks earlier than usual. Most Yellow Warblers seem to have moved through in July rather than August, catching us at a time when we are not usually banding. Thus, our total of 101 was only 31% of last year's total. Another problem was wind. This fall was one of the windiest in recent memory, which certainly reduced our ability to net in exposed locations such as the tip of Long Point. There were also many nights of heavy nocturnal migration continuing into the dawn hours. On many of these days we were largely overflowed.

Weather systems that brought good trapping success

included Hurricane Gilbert and the "Yellowstone haze." The calm after the hurricane passed produced our most productive day of the fall with 203 banded. It may have been coincidence, but very still, hazy conditions caused by smoke from Yellowstone National Park's forest fires did occur on another big day of 145 birds. Other good banding days were 29 August with 185 and 5 October with 192. All of these totals are well under typical big days here.

Hawk banding also proceeded slowly compared to 1987. While this was only our second year of operation at Clear Creek, our perception of rather weak flights was supported by banders at nearby Hawk Cliff in St. Thomas. Our total of 175 was composed of 2 Northern Harriers, 115 Sharp-shinned Hawks, 9 Cooper's Hawks, 2 Red-shouldered Hawks, 30 Red-tailed Hawks, 16 American Kestrels and 1 Merlin.

Our owl banding efforts produced considerably fewer birds than in 1987 with a total of 93 N. Saw-whet Owls banded, compared to 1987's 194. Three Long-eared Owls were also banded.

A bright spot in our 1988 fall is in the South Walsingham Woods where banding was very productive. This was only our second season there, and our first with comprehensive coverage. If this was a poor year there as well, then future banding could be very interesting indeed. Our work focused mostly on Hooded Warblers and other breeders but extended into migration season. The 68 Hooded Warblers banded there, mostly nestlings (14 actually fell within the fall period), nearly doubled LPBO's cumulative total for the species. The most interesting capture of the fall was a juvenile Worm-eating Warbler banded 26 August. The possibility of this species breeding in southern Ontario's Carolinian Zone has long tantalized Ontario ornithologists but continues to elude confirmation.

To sum up, I would like to thank the Canadian Coast Guard, the Long Point Company, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, Long Point Region Conservation Authority, John Lambert, and the Canadian Wildlife Service for their continued generosity in allowing us to use their lands, and the many research assistants, volunteers and visitors who helped with the banding program.

**Farmersville Station, NY**  
Donald F. Clark

**422-0782**

The fall of 1988 was the 20th year of banding reports for Region IV of the Atlantic Flyway Review. A total of 447 birds of 35 species was banded. This is just about average for the twenty years of fall banding. Banding was conducted from 15 August to 15 November for a total of 56 days. Two to six nets were used for a total of 726 net hours;

165 netted birds were banded for a total of 23 birds banded per 100 net hours. The rest were caught in traps. There were 22 returns, 180 repeats and 1 foreign retrap.

The migration was better than the past two years. Nine species of warblers were caught in low numbers; 4 vireos of 2 species, and 6 thrushes of 4 species were banded. Only 2 White-throated Sparrows were caught. The House Finch population continues to increase with 50-100 at the feeders at one time. Our Canada Goose flock remains high with up to 200 loafing on the pond during daylight hours. Again, they were accompanied by 25-30 Mallards and American Black Ducks. Very few other species of ducks were seen in the area this year.

This year, only one foreign retrap was captured at Farmersville Station during the migration period. A House Finch (#2061-63865) banded on 9 July 1988 at Jefferson, Ohio, was recaptured on 16 August 1988. This is about 130 miles east of the point of banding.

Following a summer of extreme drought, the weather turned wet for the last week of August. In the 91 days of fall banding, there were 47 days of rain and 10 days with a trace or more of snow. The first real frost was on 29 September.

#### **Kestrel Haven**

**422-0764**

Town of Hector  
Schuyler County, NY  
John Gregoire and Sue Dorney

We banded on 54 days between 7 August and 15 November. Operations were steady except for bad weather days and an emergency absence the last week of October. Nets were deployed as they were last year and high winds were the most frequent cause of non-banding days. High days were 8 October (77), 1 September (55), and 19 October (51).

Our area experienced a prolonged drought which exacerbated the effects of a low moisture 1987. Deep water table effects began to manifest themselves in September. We believe that the harsh weather caused many first clutch failures and delayed successful nestings to very late in the season; this is particularly the case for Field and Chipping Sparrows and most warblers.

We banded on 11 days in August, netting 104 birds which included our only HY Red-tailed Hawk. Nineteen days in September yielded only 290. The first week of October brought a migratory surge boosting our numbers to 476 banded over 19 days. The gales of November limited us to 27 birds in 5 days of trying. Overall, we banded 897 of

54 species which was a decrease from last year's 1,411 of 61. We handled 1104+ repeats and picked up 29 returns during this period. Of the 897 banded, 775 (86%) were HY birds.

We added seven new species this year bringing our fall total to 68. In station perspective, we've identified 134 species and banded 88 in the past two years. Our American Kestrel nest box program produced startling results this year. The same adult pair as last year arrived very early and fledged four young, which set New York records for earliest viable egg, hatch, and fledge dates for the species.

Our fall increase to 75 birds per 100 net hours despite an overall decrease of 1260 net hours is due strictly to better net management procedures. Last year we experienced good early morning captures, few in the 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. period, and small surges at dusk. Rather than stay open all day, we concentrated on the best of the higher traffic hours, thereby increasing our productivity statistic. We could easily have added another stat for this hilltop in the number of times we opened only to immediately close as the winds arrived with the dawn.

#### **Newark Valley, NY**

**421-0761**

Judith A. Bell

The fall 1988 banding season continued a downward trend from the 1986 record high year. A total of 515 birds were banded: an all-time low in the six year history of this station. The station was in operation on 24 days from 23 August until 17 October. An average of 11 nets were used for 741 net hours resulting in 70 birds/100 net hours. There were 16 returns and 116 recaptures of previously banded birds. Peak activity came on 30 September and 4 October when 45 birds were banded on each day.

Only Gray Catbirds were captured in above-average numbers this fall. Most other species were caught in below-average numbers. Only seven species of warblers were banded, and their combined total was only 63 birds. Common Yellowthroat totals alone are usually more than 63 birds. No new species were banded, so the species total remains at 80 for fall banding.

Looking toward future falls, some net lanes will need to be moved as a group of beavers have been busy flooding one of the most productive banding areas of the station.

#### **Alfred Station, NY**

**421-0774**

Elizabeth W. Brooks

After a three-year absence, fall banding resumed in 1988 at my backyard station located in Allegany County, NY.

From one to eight nets were set up near my feeding station and along a stream and small pond near mature pine and shrubs. Banding continued on an irregular basis (I was away for two weeks in August, one week in September, and I banded at the Braddock Bay station in Rochester on six days.) until wintry weather arrived on 20 November. A total of 549 birds of 55 species were banded during 2852 net hours of operation on 85 days (19.28 birds per 100 net hours). Connecticut Warbler was a new species for this station.

Peak activity came on 21 September with 32 birds banded. There were 313 repeats, 22 returns and a foreign retrap Blue Jay (#942-08501). A noteworthy return was a Hairy Woodpecker in her 13th year.

I banded a junco with an everted inner ear (appearing as a 6 mm blood-filled protuberance) on 14 October. This is the fourth such bird (3 juncos, 1 Song Sparrow) I've caught since 1978.

Except for the record number of juncos banded and a slightly higher than normal number of chickadees, the season was uneventful.

#### **Presque Isle State Park**

**420-0800**

Erie, PA

Ronald F. Leberman

Bird banding set no records this fall. A total of 653 birds were netted in 12 days of banding from 6 September to 15 October. A total of 750 net hours resulted in less than one bird per net hour or 87 birds per 100 net hours. Only 48 species were taken in the nets this fall (the third worst total), and that was mainly due to the lack of any shore-birds banded in August and an illness in our family so that no birds were banded in August at all.

Weather for the most part was good with no real cold fronts in the area until the night of 7 October. When we arrived at Presque Isle on the 8th, the temperature was in the mid thirty's but there was a thin layer of snow on the ground. Birds were very active as the day warmed up and we ended up banding 348 birds that day.

No new species were banded, but it is always nice to get a White-eyed Vireo (the station's third in 27 years) and to see the kinglet numbers come back after the low numbers of the early eighties.

Banders this year were Jean, James G. and James A. Stull, Ronald F. Leberman, and Thelma Patton.

#### **Powdermill Nature Reserve**

**400-0791**

Rector, PA

Robert S. Mulvihill

Robert C. Leberman

During the fall 1988 season at Powdermill, more than 100 birds were banded on 19 days: highest daily totals were 249 on 24 September and 260 on 13 October. The catch on the latter date included 47 White-throated Sparrows, 42 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 30 Swamp Sparrows, 26 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 11 Dark-eyed Juncos, and 10 Hermit Thrushes, among 33 species.

The following table compares our fall 1988 banding totals for selected species with mean totals for the previous ten fall seasons. Three species were caught in record high numbers this fall: Winter Wren (1988 total ties record 1968 total), Black-throated Blue Warbler, White-crowned Sparrow, and House Finch. Golden-crowned Kinglets were caught in the best numbers in the past ten years. Black-throated Green Warblers were caught in the lowest numbers since the first year of the Powdermill banding program, and our capture of just one Prairie Warbler is the fewest since the program's second year. Fewer Bay-breasted Warblers and Scarlet Tanagers were caught than in any of the past ten years. Overall, though, just six species out of 61 analyzed had 1988 totals that were significantly above or below average (i.e., two or more standard deviations away from the mean).

It is tempting, given the prevailing drought conditions throughout the summer and fall, to look for possible effects in our fall banding data. More than the usual number of individuals of mountaintop species, such as Winter Wren, Golden-crowned Kinglet and Black-throated Blue Warbler, may have abandoned the drier high elevations during their southward migrations. Extreme drought conditions to the west of Pennsylvania may have forced White-crowned Sparrows to take a more easterly migration route than usual. Species such as the Prairie Warbler that nest in open upland habitats especially hard hit by the summer drought may have suffered poor reproductive success.

But some species that typically migrate at higher elevations in the mountains, such as Bay-breasted and Black-throated Green Warblers, were caught in very poor numbers this fall at Powdermill, militating against the trend suggested by the other "mountaintop species." Species that share the Prairie Warbler's nesting habitat, such as Yellow-breasted Chat, Golden-winged Warbler and Field Sparrow, were caught in only slightly below to above average numbers at Powdermill in the fall of 1988.

All of this is not to say that phenomena such as droughts



do not affect the nesting success and/or migration of birds. Rather, it reminds us that fall banding data given rise to more speculation than they support, and extends the caution concerning interpretation of fall banding data given in our fall 1986 summary (*N. Amer. Bird Bander* 13:80-82).

**1988 FALL BANDING TOTALS AT POWDERMILL NATURE RESERVE FOR SELECTED SPECIES, COMPARED WITH THE MEAN FALL BANDING TOTALS FOR THESE SPECIES ( $\pm$ S.D.) FOR THE YEARS 1978-1987.**

Hummingbird, Ruby-throated	129	(94.1 $\pm$ 40.3)
Wood-Pewee, Eastern	19	(38.3 $\pm$ 14.3)
Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied	88	(88.4 $\pm$ 14.3)
Acadian	21	(19.3 $\pm$ 4.6)
"Traill's"	25	(20.7 $\pm$ 8.2)
Least	76	(85.4 $\pm$ 19.0)
Phoebe, Eastern	59	(50.6 $\pm$ 12.3)
Wren, House	38	(42.3 $\pm$ 12.6)
Winter*	35	(12.6 $\pm$ 6.9)
Kinglet, Golden-crowned*	60	(35.4 $\pm$ 12.4)
Ruby-crowned	202	(198.3 $\pm$ 93.9)
Gnatcatcher, Blue-gray	13	(7.1 $\pm$ 3.9)
Veery	9	(12.1 $\pm$ 5.3)
Thrush, Gray-checked	39	(64.6 $\pm$ 34.0)
Swainson's	170	(377.6 $\pm$ 181.9)
Hermit	53	(51.7 $\pm$ 22.1)
Wood	19	(39.8 $\pm$ 15.3)
Catbird, Gray	243	(248.9 $\pm$ 49.1)
Vireo, White-eyed	15	(11.0 $\pm$ 3.8)
Solitary	28	(28.1 $\pm$ 13.0)
Philadelphia	42	(32.5 $\pm$ 17.7)
Red-eyed	126	(134.0 $\pm$ 36.6)
Warbler, Blue-winged	15	(7.3 $\pm$ 6.3)
Golden-winged	6	(2.4 $\pm$ 2.3)
Tennessee	200	(212.2 $\pm$ 73.3)
Nashville	74	(57.1 $\pm$ 17.4)
Chestnut-sided	23	(42.7 $\pm$ 17.1)
Magnolia	222	(257.3 $\pm$ 96.6)
Cape May	79	(146.5 $\pm$ 119.0)
Black-throated Blue	43	(24.0 $\pm$ 10.3)
Yellow-rumped	271	(400.2 $\pm$ 248.4)
Black-throated Green*	15	(65.8 $\pm$ 25.8)
Blackburnian	3	(12.8 $\pm$ 6.6)
Prairie*	1	(5.2 $\pm$ 2.3)
Palm	27	(21.6 $\pm$ 7.1)
Bay-Breasted	16	(64.6 $\pm$ 26.0)
Blackpoll	46	(34.2 $\pm$ 13.7)
Black-and-white	15	(16.7 $\pm$ 8.0)
Redstart, American	108	(131.1 $\pm$ 42.7)
Ovenbird	85	(79.0 $\pm$ 23.0)
Waterthrush, Northern	23	(40.5 $\pm$ 14.0)
Warbler, Kentucky	7	(7.2 $\pm$ 2.4)
Connecticut	17	(18.6 $\pm$ 7.1)
Mourning	15	(16.4 $\pm$ 6.7)
Yellowthroat, Common	259	(280.2 $\pm$ 59.0)
Warbler, Hooded	100	(85.1 $\pm$ 29.1)
Wilson's	39	(30.2 $\pm$ 9.5)
Canada	20	(40.3 $\pm$ 15.8)
Chat, Yellow-breasted	4	(2.7 $\pm$ 2.8)
Tanager, Scarlet	24	(58.2 $\pm$ 26.4)
Grosbeak, Rose-breasted	58	(86.8 $\pm$ 24.9)
Bunting, Indigo	70	(79.9 $\pm$ 22.3)

Sparrow, Field	84	(114.9 $\pm$ 25.4)
Fox	37	(47.9 $\pm$ 26.5)
Song	265	(330.8 $\pm$ 96.9)
Lincoln's	57	(54.2 $\pm$ 17.9)
Swamp	194	(155.8 $\pm$ 61.3)
White-throated	356	(430.3 $\pm$ 183.3)
White-crowned*	50	(17.4 $\pm$ 10.7)
Junco, Dark-eyed	450	(474.2 $\pm$ 206.6)
Finch, House*	395	(46.1 $\pm$ 66.6)

\*1988 total is approximately two standard deviations (or more) above or below the mean.

**Allegheny Front Migration Observatory 390-0791**  
Grant County, WV  
George A. Hall

The thirty-first year of bird banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory was noteworthy only in a negative way, as it was the poorest year in recent times. The station was in continuous operation from 15 August to 24 October. There were, thus, approximately two weeks of additional operation this year. Bad weather closed the station on four days so some banding was carried out on 68 days. Snow and high winds curtailed the proposed late October effort.

A total of 6,344 birds (12th highest number) of 80 species were banded in a station effort of 6,087 (highest) net hours, giving a capture rate of 104.2 birds per 100 net hours (second poorest record in the last 17 years). No new species were added to the station list which now stands at 115, with 129,413 birds banded. The hummingbird count stood at 122 released from the nets and 115 flying past the station.

Eight birds banded in 1985, 2 banded in 1986, and 8 banded in 1987 were recaptured this year. During the year we have been notified that a Blue Jay banded at A.F.M.O. on 23 September 1987 was recovered in Millertown, PA, on 17 May 1988.

The season was generally very slow with more than the usual number of low-count days. There was no late August flight of any magnitude. The first major wave came 11-12 September, which was somewhat late, followed by another on 14 September. The only other big wave was 23 September. The October period showed an alternation of poor and moderate days. There were only two days with captures above 500, and one other day with captures above 400.

The most numerous species was again the Black-throated Blue Warbler with 725 captures (down 40% from last year), followed by the Golden-crowned Kinglet (677, new high), Tennessee Warbler (644, down 27%), Swainson's Thrush (553, up 35% from last year) and the Blackpoll Warbler (481, down 25%). The warblers as a group were

down 25% from the average since 1972, while the Swainson's Thrush was up 36%. Of 46 species analyzed, 16 were in average numbers (within one standard deviation (SD) from the 15-year average), 13 were more than one SD below and 17 were more than 1 SD above that average. Ten species were in record high numbers. Most of these species and the ones caught in above-average numbers were species for which the number of captures is usually low, and for which the late October operation increased the number handled (i.e., the kinglets). On the other hand, the "big ticket" species, the warblers, were almost all lower than average. It is difficult to attribute any one reason for the low number of birds banded. The summer's drought may have had a part; but on the other hand, the weather patterns of the season were seldom favorable for good flights at this location.

During the season, 1,721 people signed the visitors' book. These visitors came from 14 states, the District of Columbia, as well as Canada, Africa, England and China. Several elementary and high school classes as well as groups from three colleges visited the station.

The banders who participated this year were Walter Fyc, Ephe Olliver, Jo Lane Stern, Judy Ward, Leon Wilson, Charles Ziegenfus (who manned the station for the late October period), as well as the station co-leaders Ralph Bell and George Hall. LeJay Graffious was responsible for the shelter with its new roof. Once again, Genevieve and John Findley were in charge of the net lanes. Harriett and Mel Hooker and Ivarean Pierce provided assistance throughout the season, while Kathleen and Mike Finnegan, Sue and Ken Heselton, and Janice Musser were present for extended periods of time.

The following people aided in tending nets, carrying collecting cages, keeping records, and in many other ways: Matt Ball, Lynn Barnhart, Rodney Bartgis, David Bell, Mike Berdine, Rick Blom, Kyle Bush, Mike Clack, Carolyn Conrad, Dorothy Conrad, Helen Conrad, Deanna Dawson, Dennis Dawson, Robert Dean, Kathy DeVaul, Cindy Ellis, Mark Eye, Brian Findley, Bryce Findley, Faith Findley, Hal Findley, Jeff Findley, Jenny Findley, Kristen Findley, Janet Fletche, Jay Fox, Matt Fox, Tom Fox, Annabelle Fyc, Jay Graffious, JoAnn Graham, Phil Graham, Mike Griffith, Andrew Hall, Ken Heselton, Sue Heselton, Linda Hollenberg, Charlotte Hurley, Tom Hurley, Patrick Hurley, June Huy, Jim Huy, Karen Huy, Mike Huy, Gene Hutton, Bill Lewis, Don Mackler, Carol McCullough, Fred McCullough, Jason McCullough, Anne McGrew, Jack Minear, Jolene Minear, Jonathan Minear, Jacallen Minear, Jonavieve Minear, Ben Myers, Evelyn Myers, Harry Pawelczyk, Charles Pierce, Charlotte Pryor,

Beth Ritter, Randy Ritter, Carl Rowe, Ruth Rowe, Miles Runner, John Sauer, Joe Schreiber, Julie Simpson, Robb Simpson, Bill Wentzel, Brad Wentzel, Cory Wentzel, Robert Whitmore, and Martin Wiley.

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