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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

President's Message

By the time this issue reaches you, my term as President of EBBA will have ended. It has been a very interesting and educational two years for me. As has been the case for a number of my predecessors, the work involved with formalizing agreements between the three associations producing NABB, has been of the foremost importance. It is my hope that by the time you read this most, if not all, of the written agreements will have been signed by the three association presidents. This will allow the incoming president time to direct his energies toward other issues which we will face during the 1990's. Please extend to him the same cooperation and support that you have offered me these past two years.

This past year also resulted in an historic meeting of the representatives of those persons most directly involved and interested in bird banding in North America. I hope the fact that such a meeting took place portends the importance that the Bird Banding Lab puts on the ideas and feelings of those whose voluntary efforts have been significant in increasing man's ornithological knowledge.

As a new administration takes over the leadership of EBBA, I wish them luck with the challenges that will face them in the next two years. Let's all pitch in and give them a hand.

Good Banding,
Judith Bell

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I

Mickie Mutchler
RD 1, Box 210
Forestburgh, NY 12777

The 1988 reports indicate overall increased banding results with some surprises here and there. Our Whale Cover, MA, station did not function due to five more cats becoming neighbors, nor did the Mt. Desert, ME, station because of business travel. Manomet did not submit a report. One new station, Crane Beach, MA, promises to be interesting and their initial report is included.

All stations are considered to be coastal stations but the main species netted varied greatly, as did the period when they were netted. Warblers were high in Maine on 15 and 16 September, but not until 22 and 23 September in Massachusetts, and the 29th in Rhode Island and Connecticut. Gray Catbirds were

high everywhere except Lyme, CT, throughout the period. Flycatchers, in general, were high only in the early period and only on Nantucket. Thrushes were not prevalent except in Appledore, ME, and Lyme, CT. Golden-crowned Kinglets made a good showing on Block Island. Lyme's Eastern Tufted Titmouse report was spectacular as was Block Island's Brown Creeper report.

The daily weather pattern of the three complete reports was basically the same with S-SW-W-SE winds, cloudy, fog and/or rain except for 15, 16, 22, 24, 27, and 30 September. Wind and weather did not appear to have any direct relationship to the warbler, vireo, and thrush migration overall, but there did seem to be an overall increase in these captures. Gray Catbird netting was prominent at all three stations, indicating good local nestings.

Atlantic Flyway Summary - Region I

Table 1. Region I Summaries

	Lyme CT.	Block Island RI	King- ston RI.	Nan- tucket MA.	Crane Beach MA.	Appledore Island ME.
Days of Operation	50	47	76	55	14	29
Number of Nets Used	3-14	7-12	2-4	1-14	6-10	5-9
Total Net Hours	4360	4785	1052	3888	506	2655.5
Largest Daily Catch	90	148	32	183	74	194
Birds Banded, 1987	825	1058	633	1486	----	1760
Birds Banded, 1988	1018	1601	835	1666	604	2279
Different Species, 1987	60	73	58	75	----	68
Different Species, 1988	64	78	63	87	53	72
Birds/100 n.h. 1987	17	33	76	81	----	75.7
Birds/100 n.h. 1988	23	33	79	43	199	85.8

Table II. Most Common Species Banded

Lyme, Ct.

Eastern Titmouse	139
Slate-colored Junco	119
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	88
White-throated Sparrow	82
Yellow-rumped Warbler	78
Hermit Thrush	61
Wood Thrush	49
Blue Jay	37
Veery	26
Golden-crowned Kinglet	26

Block Island, RI

Gray Catbird	299
Golden-crowned Kinglet	202
Yellow-rumped Warbler	189
Brown Creeper	76
Red-eyed Vireo	67
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	47
White-throated Sparrow	43
Black-throated Blue Warbler	38
Veery	34
Common Yellowthroat	33
Rufous-sided Towhee	33

Kingston, RI

White-throated Sparrow	144
Gray Catbird	96
Common Yellowthroat	59
American Redstart	55
Black-and-White Warbler	53
Blue-winged Warbler	49
Black-capped Chickadee	33
Ovenbird	30
Yellow-rumped Warbler	26
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	22

Nantucket, MA

Yellow-rumped Warbler	371
Common Yellowthroat	191
American Redstart	100
Song Sparrow	74
Cape May Warbler	70
Bay-breasted Warbler	57
Palm Warbler	54
Red-eyed Vireo	49
Gray Catbird	47
Blackpoll Warbler	34
Black-and-White Warbler	34

Crane Beach, MA

Gray Catbird	202
White-throated Sparrow	59
Black-capped Chickadee	47
Song Sparrow	39
Yellow-rumped Warbler	34
Blackpoll Warbler	27
Red-eyed Vireo	23
Eastern Phoebe	14
Northern Mockingbird	14
Rufous-sided Towhee	14

Appledore Island, ME

Northern Waterthrush	335
American Redstart	293
Common Yellowthroat	216
Red-eyed Vireo	132
Song Sparrow	90
Black-and-White Warbler	88
Least Flycatcher	76
Cedar Waxwing	67
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	64
Cape May Warbler	59

Thrush Wood, Lyme, CT
Ginger Bladen

412-0722

What a difference a few miles make. Although Lyme appears coastal (8 miles from Long Island Sound as the titmouse flies), a migrating bird population varies considerably from other AFR stations in Region I. Thrushes speak for themselves in Table II, and the Hermit Thrush caught were considerably increased from the 32 in 1987. Yellow-rumped Warblers netting was well above any previous year, but a drop in the bucket when compared to Nantucket. The ubiquitous Gray Catbird (19) didn't even make the top 10 in 1988.

The bird of the year was the Eastern Tufted Titmouse. From 25 September to 31 October, 138 were banded and color banded. Between 6 and 16 have been netted during this typical dispersal period over the previous four years.

Overloaded nets did not occur this year with the big day being only 51 birds. It may be that the glorious autumn days of cold fronts and NW winds, which can stack up birds on the shoreline, effectively clear the woods just inland and take the migrants directly south.

This year some nets were opened at first light on 50 days. When possible, operations ran until 5 PM. Only five days were missed due to weather.

In September often nets were opened only for a few early morning hours, for personal rather than weather reasons. It was frequently necessary to close nets by late AM because of wind or sun exposure. It was noted that no big days were being missed because of these factors.

Block Island, RI
Elise Lapham

411-0713

A 12th net was added to the banding station this year but thanks to a plethora of deer, it was hard to keep the nets intact. Without the deer, our count might have been higher. The number of banding days were only six more than last year, even though the birds/100 net hours were the same. New birds banded were increased by over 500 helped by an explosion of kinglets, particularly golden-crowned. We have not banded this many since 1976.

Overall, the banding this fall was the best since 1981. The weather was warm all September with no real fronts coming through until 6 October. The migration was steady except for the first few days in October when the birds decreased dramatically all over the island. The northwest wind on 6 October brought 35 golden-crowns that morning.

The highest total for September was on the 11th with 53 birds

of 22 species; and for October, the 14th produced 148 birds also of 22 species. Most species increased over 1987, notably both kinglets, Yellow-rumped Warblers and Brown Creepers. Northern Waterthrushes increased from three in 1987 to 25 in 1988. There were six returns but no recoveries. I hoped for a while we had a rare oriole for New England, but Trevor Lloyd-Evans and Bob Fox, after looking at the pictures, convinced me it was a Baltimore (Northern) Oriole in aberrant plumage.

Kingston, RI
Douglas Kraus

412-0713

Weather permitting, from mid-August through October, the nets were open daily for four hours beginning at dawn. Intermittent netting was done in November to band wintering sparrows.

Birds banded in 1988 were 835 vs. 633 in 1987. The increase of 202 bandings was due mostly to the increase in the number of days of operation from 65 to 76 days.

Station highs were made in 1988 for the following species:

Black-and-White Warbler: 53 vs. previous high of 29 in 1976

Ovenbird: 30 vs. 25 in 1982

Hooded Warbler: 14 vs. 4 in 1986

Cold fronts passing through on 6, 7, 11, and 12 September, 12, 14, 16, 19 and 20 October produced fair numbers of migrants, but only a few found their way into the nets. The largest catch of the year was 32 on 14 October, 16 Yellow-rumped Warblers that day were largely responsible for this.

In August, the ratio of immatures to adults banded was 10 to 1, indicating a successful nesting season for local birds.

This year there were 120 repeats and 32 returns of my birds. The most interesting returns:

#1231-59071 - E. Tufted Titmouse: banded 09-27-79 as HY, return #8 on 10-13-88, at least 9 years old

#920-62036 - Worm-eating Warbler: banded 08-11-82 as AHY, return #2 on 09-06-88, at least 7 years old

Nantucket, MA
Edith Andrews

411-0700 and 411-0701

The station was operated on a daily basis from 21 August to 2 October for a total of 42 days at Mothball Pines (411-0700). From 4-14 nets were open all day, weather permitting. An additional 13 days at Ice Pond Lot (411-0701) where from 1-

5 nets were operated from 6 October to 15 November, mostly mornings. The number of birds banded this year is close to that in 1987 but the number of net hours more than doubled, which accounts for the wide discrepancy in birds/100 net hours.

Many of the wood warblers showed a considerable increase in numbers compared with last year, as well as the *Empidonax* flycatchers. The following table shows fluctuations for some of the species encountered in the last five years:

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1986</u>	<u>1985</u>	<u>1984</u>
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	18	1	5	7	13
Traill's Flycatcher	16	1	5	5	7
Least Flycatcher	14	3	4	5	7
Yellow Warbler	27	8	17	5	2
Magnolia Warbler	29	10	31	10	5
Cape May Warbler	70	42	106	42	79
Yellow-rumped Warbler	371	817	631	328*	495
Palm Warbler	54	10	21	6	18
Bay-breasted Warbler	57	9	39	35	27
American Redstart	108	37	40	31	83
Common Yellowthroat	191	105	218	72	47
*plus 218 released unbanded					

Yellow-rumps were late in arriving at the Ice Pond Lot location and showed a definite decrease; the greatest number banded in one day was 67; when in times past, it could be well over 100/day for several days running. The weather was such that there were not as many days suitable for banding at this location.

Our biggest days were 11, 12 and 16 September when 124, 183, and 126 new birds were banded. These good days were accompanied by strong NW winds; otherwise, we had fog and SW winds. Very few real cold fronts reached us.

Birds new for the Mothball location were a Carolina Wren and a Golden-winged Warbler. A female Common Yellowthroat banded as an AHY in 1983 returned on the exact same date in both 1987 and 1988. There were 341 repeats, 15 returns and no foreign recoveries.

By far, the most exciting event of the season was the capture

of a *Selasphorus* Hummingbird which died in hand and when skinned and thoroughly measured, proved to be an Allen's Hummingbird, immature male. This is believed to be the first authentic record for this species east of Louisiana. Dr. William H. Baltosser, Associate Curator of Ornithology at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, NM, confirmed the identification and recommends that banders should be on the lookout for unusual hummingbirds. They need not be collected. Simply pluck rectrix #1 and #5 from the same side of the tail before releasing the bird. The width of these rectrices is diagnostic for age and sex as well as species.

Crane Beach, Ipswich, MA
David Rimmer

424-0704

Crane Beach is part of the R.T. Crane Jr. Memorial Reservation, a 570 ha barrier island characterized by sand dunes, scrub thickets and young red maple/black cherry/pitch pine stands. Located about six miles east from Ipswich, MA, the banding station operated for a total of 14 days between 1 September and 25 October, using 6-10 nets set across the various habitats. We handled 680 birds: 604 new bandings and 76 repeats, recaptures, or unbanded birds. Gray Catbirds (202) made up 33% of our new bandings.

The station is operated by the Barrier Beach Ecology Program of the Trustees of Reservations. 1988 was a trial year but we are planning to establish permanently in 1989. We operated for partial days only, opening nets at daybreak and closing by 2 PM. Nets were open for 506 total net hours and 119 new bird/100 net hours were caught. Our largest daily catch was 74 on 25 September. We caught 53 different species.

We can not make any conclusive statements about our data after just one fall of banding. There are also many biases in our data. We were not open for full days; we tried to maximize our efforts by opening primarily on fair weather days; we shifted nets between days as we encountered problems; and we were open a relatively few number of days. We believe that this site has excellent potential for banding and we plan to refine, standardize, and increase our efforts in 1989.

Note: We have an ongoing Least Tern research and management program at Crane Beach, and in 1988, we captured and handled a total of 116 Least Terns, with 110 new bandings and six recaptures.

Appledore Island, ME
Shoals Marine Lab
David Holmes

425-0703

The Shoals Lab Banding Station enjoyed a stupendous season this fall. This year, for the first time, I had at least one

additional net person so our net hour total is the largest ever, as were our totals of species, new birds, percentage of re-traps, and days netted. Returns were low, however, only four.

Nets were open at least part of every day from 19 August to 16 September (one day later than ever before) totalling 29 days. Normally, our nets were open from around dawn until shortly after dark, but we lost 75% of 24 August and 13 September, and 50% of 29 August and 4 September due to weather. No new nets were put up and we were only able to run our full compliment of ten nets for half of one day because of the high water level in the "bog." Most days we ran 7-9 nets. With only one added net person, we ran the central core of six nets every day and alternated opening the net at the south end of the island one day and the nets at the north end the next.

Our busiest day was 31 August with 194 net birds, followed closely by 4 September with 187 (including 73 American Redstarts) and 1 September with 177. Other busy days were 27 August, 30 August to 5 September inclusive, 10-12 September, and 16 September. Including retraps, we handled over 100 birds on 14 of our 29 banding days.

New season high totals were set for 22 species with six additional species reaching record numbers as a result of our extra day. In addition, eight species tied previous highs and Ovenbirds were only one short.

3-Year Comparison of This Year's Top 5 (number - birds/100 n.h.)

	<u>1986</u>	<u>1987</u>	<u>1988</u>
Northern Waterthrush	140 - 6.1	148 - 6.4	335 - 12.6
American Redstart	195 - 8.5	171 - 7.4	293 - 11.0
Common Yellowthroat	134 - 5.9	144 - 6.2	216 - 8.1
Red-eyed Vireo	143 - 6.3	182 - 7.8	132 - 5.0
Song Sparrow	53 - 2.3	80 - 3.4	90 - 3.4

The Most Striking New Highs (number - birds/100 n.h.)

	<u>Previous High</u>	<u>1988</u>
Yellow-shafted Flicker	11 - 0.47	30 - 1.13
Blue-winged Warbler	16 - 0.69	38 - 1.43
Chestnut-sided Warbler	13 - 0.57	28 - 1.05
Blackpoll Warbler	22 - 0.96	36 - 1.36
Northern (Balt.) Oriole	33 - 1.44	46 - 1.73

There were five species new for the station this fall (total species now 101). The Merlin and Yellow-throated Warbler were simply spectacular. We do not understand why the

Mourning Dove didn't fly out of our 30 mm mesh net like the Whimbrel did; the Hermit Thrush (31 September) was an adult in all-over molt; the Golden-crowned Kinglets arrived on our "extra day." Other notable catches were 2 Worm-eating Warblers, one of which was retrapped the 10th day after initial capture, the Whip-poor-will (our first female). A single unbanded Carolina Wren sang from various spots all over the island all summer, and was singing over the nets while we pulled out the juvenile Carolina Wren. Of the species with low catch figures, all except Bay-breasted Warblers were within previous range of variability. No Purple Finches.

I suspect that our successes this year were mostly the result of wind direction. Early morning winds were from the south only on 24 and 25 August and 10 September, from SSE on 28 August, and E on 4 September. All other mornings brought north or some form of westerly air flow. This also means that our birds left the island on west winds. We hoped for bountiful numbers of bugs on Bermuda.

The station's third recovery (from 14,000 bandings) was reported this fall. Two of the three were from spring bandings. Is this fact as significant as it could seem?

As always, great thanks go to the staff of the Shoals Marine Laboratory for both physical and a bit of financial support. I also very much appreciate my regular helpers, and all the interested people the Lab attracts for us to share our treasures with. Visitors are welcome but we do need advance notice.

