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Atlantic Flyway Review: Regions li/iii

North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Regions II/III

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The fall 1993 season presented mixed blessings to our five stations. Steve Rice, who has been working under the tutelage of Gail Kirch, joins our ranks for the first time with his new fall station. Steve compiled a nice species diversity in not many operating hours which leads one to believe that Steve and Pierce Creek have loads of potential. Other stations experienced sub-norm migrations and a couple are documenting long-term declines in diversity. Ironically, Gail and Harriet Marsi have attempted to manage vegetative growth at their study site to present as little change as possible: Valerie Freer has done similar habitat management at her Ellenville site. Yet, both stations are seeing more locals than migrants, a situation in decline since the seventies and one that is also being reported at long-term study sites in other AFR regions. In western New York State, Don Clark has voiced many of the same observations. If not habitat at the site, is it some form of development or encroachment? Have the flyways been slowly changing? Are the migrants

themselves declining?

All, none, or more may be the answer as other sites in the general area are doing quite well. There is some evidence of a large number of both raptor and passerine species using a Finger Lakes-oriented corridor and limited observation data that suggest strong usage of the Hudson Valley. The latter speculation joins the Adirondacks to Hudson, Connecticut Valley and western Massachusetts ridge theories in the insupportable category as no stations are re-

porting from those areas.

Our coastal station is certainly a kinglet concentration point, but what of the reputed passerine activity in other parts of New Jersey and Delaware? Do more adults use the ridge route in eastern Pennsylvania? A quick look at the gaps on our regional map of stations reveals tremendous areas of opportunity for this cooperative research project. If you are a bander in the area or a researcher desiring to establish a study site, please join us in this long-term cooperative project.

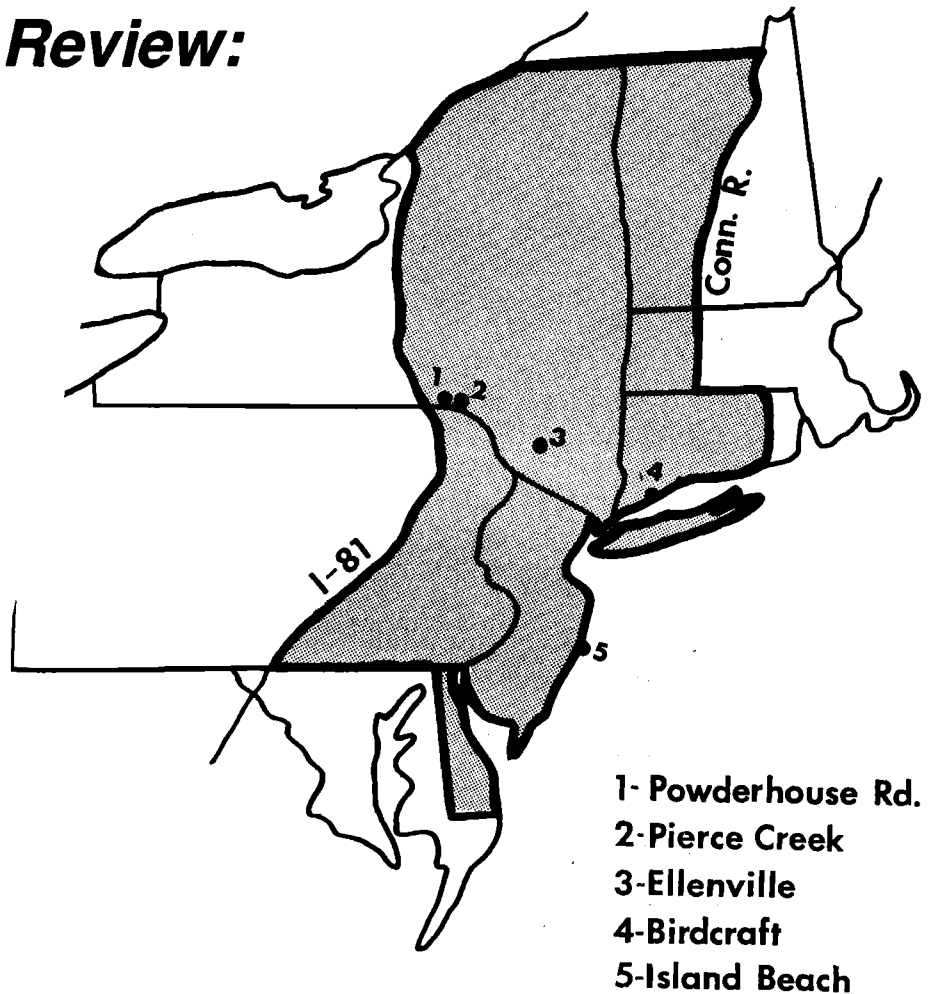


Table 1. Fall 1993 AFR II/III Summary of Operations.

	Vestal	Pierce Creek	Ellenville	Birdcraft	IBSP
Start Date	01 August	01 August	01 August	18 August	18 July
Stop Date	01 November	11 November	03 November	12 November	07 November
Total Days	50	15	35	42	48
No. Nets Used	3.5 - 10.75	3 - 6	6 - 8	8 - 14	4 - 26
Net Hours	908 +6.5T*	584	943	1941	4085
Best Day	55 on 10/24	47-8/1;10/9	34 on 9/18	51 on 10/19	803 on 10/19
Banded 1993	626	427	403	650	4837
Banded 1992	488	NA	284	732	7773
Species 1993	55	40	54	63	99
Species 1992	45	NA	43	68	95
B/100 NH 93	68**	73	45	33.5	118
B/100 NH 92	61	NA	26	36.6	195
% HY	67%	69%	60.50%	86%	85%

* Trap Hours

** Includes Trap Hours

Table 2. Most Frequently Encountered Species - 1993

Vestal			Pierce Creek			Ellenville			Birdcraft			Island Beach State Park		
Species	No.	% HY	Species	No.	% HY	Species	No.	% HY	Species	No.	% HY	Species	No.	% HY
SCJU	109	44	SOSP	89	75	SCJU	53	25	WTSP	180	86	GCKI*	1130	87
GRCA	96	92	AMGO	58	50	BCCH	45	76	GRCA	89	97	GRCA	421	93
HOFI	66	60	SCJU	44	93	GRCA	30	90	SCJU	61	90	RCKI*	394	55
BCCH	62	68	GRCA	34	94	RCKI*	27	37	HETH	54	98	BRCR	314	83
WTSP	60	86	COYE	33	81	MAWA	25	64	SOSP	30	83	SCJU	311	96
OVEN	33	87	BCCH	32	59	COYE	20	70	SAVS	25	100	MYWA	263	88
AMGO	30	53	WTSP	17	71	HOFI	18	44	RSTO	18	67	WTSP	235	82
SOSP	24	58	NOCA	15	27	WTSP	15	40	RCKI*	16	38	COYE	212	79
REVI	15	60	WCSP	10	70	REVI	11	64	WSFL	10	0	SOSP	115	87
AMRO	14	71	AMRO	9	45	HETH	11	100	AMRO	10	80	AMRE	110	94

NOTE: * Percentages for those kinglets where skulling was possible.

Powderhouse Road Station
Vestal, Broome County, NY
Gail Kirch and Harriet Marsi

420-0755

The station is located on overgrown fields bordering secondary woods. We "manage" these fields by cutting down the Red Maple and White Ash saplings which sprout among the Grey-stemmed Dogwood shrubs. The weather was uneventful—few extremes in temperatures meant very few frosty mornings—until 31 October. Our Halloween "trick" or "treat?" was 12 inches of heavy, wet snow. We switched to a maze trap on 31 October and 01 November, trapping mostly juncos.

The operation of this station is a joint project. Gail operates alone in August and on weekends in September and October. With the opening of public schools, she sets the nets and Harriet clears them and bands. This fall we were discovered by neighborhood cats. As a result, on weekends in October, Gail monitored nets and Harriet banded. This way we were able to safely net until mid-morning.

August and September were uneventful. Our wood warbler numbers, with the exception of Ovenbird, were again low. Banding was good due to large numbers of White-throated Sparrows and Slate-colored Juncos. Comparing 1992 to 1993, we note decreases in Veery from 13 to 5, in Song Sparrow from 37 to 24 with a concomitant decrease in hatching year percentage from 84 to 58%. Common Yellowthroat, Cedar Waxwing, and Veery were replaced in our most frequently banded list by House Finch, Ovenbird, and American Goldfinch. Black-capped Chickadee had a banner year, but our overall percentage of HY birds was again low (67%).

The station participated in MAPS for the fourth year. Perhaps our low percentage of HY birds is in part due to the many HY repeats of birds banded earlier in the summer. This, of course, raises the question of why the migrant species largely miss this station.

Pierce Creek Station

420-0755

Conklin, Broome County, NY
Steve Rice

In this, the first fall of operation at this station, three to six nets were employed from 01 August to 11 November. In fifteen days of operation, 584 net hours yielded 427 birds of 40 species. Song Sparrow (89) and American Goldfinch (58) were the most common species banded.

Pierce Creek is located in low shrub habitat, one to two meter tall Grey-stemmed Dogwood and Tartarian Honeysuckle, bordered on each side by two-to-five-year-old Red Maple and Black Locust saplings.

This station is also participating in our second year of MAPS. Many birds captured during the first two weeks of August could be residents and local HY's rather than species migrant to the station.

Work, wind, rain and snow combined to affect total days of operation. Most notable was an early winter storm that dumped 12 to 15 inches of very wet snow in our area. Windy weekends in November accounted for two missed days. I will be working on increasing coverage in 1994. Otherwise, I am very satisfied with the first season and am looking forward to many more.

Ellenville Station

414-0742

Ellenville, Ulster County, NY
Valerie M. Freer

The 24th consecutive season of fall banding at this station began in a dry period. The lack of rain during July and early August left the ground dusty and crunching underfoot; we had some rain in August, but normal rainfall did not return until mid-September, when a series of fronts went through. October was often windy, curtailing netting.

The total number of birds banded was about ten percent below the 23-year average but was much better than the very poor 1992 season. (*For continuity, Ellenville's 1992 report follows. ed.*) The months of August and October produced nearly average numbers of birds, but September band-

ing was slow, yielding only 25% of the season total (as compared with 40% to 50% in some seasons during the 1970's).

Most species were caught in numbers that were roughly comparable to those of the previous 23 years. Gray Catbirds usually are the most common species at this station, but their numbers were low for the second consecutive year. Magnolia Warblers, however, were on the list of most common species for only the third time since 1970, and more Black-capped Chickadees were banded than during any of the past eleven years. The top six species captured accounted for half of the season total, a reflection of the continuing decline in species diversity at this station.

A very unusual Mourning Warbler was netted on 9 September. It was a brightly colored adult with a gray head; a slight crescent below the eye; olive wings, back and tail; brilliant yellow breast and sides; and, most remarkably, a pure white throat. The wing-minus-tail measurement (8 mm) was extreme for this species. Several experts reviewed photographs and agreed that it was an aberrant Mourning Warbler. Also, on 30 October, an adult male Slate-colored Junco was captured and photographed. It had two white wing bars on each wing but appeared otherwise normal.

The fall of 1992 was wetter and cooler than normal but station coverage was average. The number of birds banded was the lowest in the station's 23-year history as was the number of species banded. Decreases were observed in both nesting species and migrants and in seed- or fruit-eating birds as well as insectivores. While the numbers of most common species decreased, their numbers continued to make up an increasingly large part of the station total (a trend noted for many years).

I continue to manage the net lane vegetation in early successional stage, retaining shrubs (such as Arrowood *Viburnum* and Multiflora Rose) and small trees (Gray Birch and apple sp.) and removing White Pine, Ash sp., and Red Maple as they get too large. The land surrounding the small (about a hectare) netting area is edged by mature

deciduous woodlands, lawn, and gardens. The shore of a large (2.5 km) shallow lake is across a narrow county road, within about fifty meters of my nets. Except for some increase in lawn and the draining of a wet section now covered with White Pines, the area has shown only moderate vegetational change during the period of the project.

Birdcraft Banding Station
Fairfield, Fairfield County, CT
Carl J. Trichka

410-0731

Birdcraft entered its 14th consecutive year of banding in 1993. Being located in the center of town between a junior high school, U.S. Route 1, and the Connecticut Turnpike, it comprises about two hectares and can modestly be called a "vest pocket park" that attracts migrant birds.

It has been long known, despite its changing habitat, as a warbler trap. Thirty-six species of warblers have been recorded here with only Cerulean Warbler evading our nets. This fall we netted our first Yellow-bellied Chat since 1988. We had no foreign retraps this fall.

Our educational banding programs continued throughout the season with large numbers of school groups visiting the sanctuary. A few years ago, we received designation on the National Register of Historic Places and this fall were recognized as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. It was an exciting event as it now allows Birdcraft to remain as the founding home of the Connecticut Audubon Society and continue on its tradition as a sanctuary for songbirds, which was originated by Anne Burr Jennings and Mabel Osgood Wright.

Thank you to the entire banding staff for a successful year.

Island Beach State Park **395-0740**
South Seaside Park, Ocean County, NJ
Eileen A. Mahler, Compiler

During fall 1993 eight banders operated stations at seven locations. The banding season started on 18 July and extended until 7 November, for a total of 48 days of coverage. A total of 4837 birds of 99 species were banded.

The banders were: Bruce Adams, Mary Doscher, Eileen and Glenn Mahler, Robert McKinney, John Miller, Lawrence Pharo, Nick Pulcinella, and Robert Yunick.

This season was a general disappointment in the numbers of birds captured. Most banders reported a decrease in the numbers of birds banded and one noted that "even when the 'good' weather came, there were fewer than expected numbers of birds. I banded only a third to a half of what I felt I should have, given the two fronts that passed and comparing them to past experience." Although total net hours were not significantly lower, total numbers were down 37.8% from the fall of 1992.

Rufous-sided Towhee numbers were down as were Myrtle Warblers. The latter significant decrease is reflected by a mere 263 banded as compared to 844 and 1285 in the two previous years at comparable times. Other lows included 1130 Golden-crowned Kinglets (2367 in 1992), 311 Slate-colored Juncos (862 in 1992), and 115 Song Sparrows (435 in 1992).

Lots of activity was apparent—many Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, Evening Grosbeak—but most were well above the nets. A lone Pine Siskin, three Purple Finch, three Orange-crowned Warblers, and a Clay-colored Sparrow were welcome banding highlights. White-crowned Sparrow (30) and Red-breasted Nuthatch (55) were among the few species reported as significantly more numerous this fall.

The fall bandings of a Kentucky Warbler and a Yellow-throated Vireo are worthy of note as these individuals represent, respectively, the third and

seventh fall individuals in the last ten years at IBSP. The season's banding treat for Bob Yunick was a Saw-whet Owl caught in broad daylight and apparently flushed from roost by a noisy group of students on a field trip to the bay.

A Veery banded by L. Pharo at IBSP in September 1992 was recovered (dead) on 14 July 1993 in Gardiner, ME. A Gray Catbird banded by G. Smith in 1985 was recovered/released on 18 July 1993 by the Mahlers.

As in previous years, banding demonstrations were given to birding groups and other visitors during the season.

