

1996

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region 1 (northeast Coastal) - Fall 1995

North American Bird Bander

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb>

Recommended Citation

North American Bird Bander (1996) "Atlantic Flyway Review: Region 1 (northeast Coastal) - Fall 1995," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 21 : Iss. 2 , Article 7.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol21/iss2/7>

This Contents is brought to you for free and open access by the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in North American Bird Bander by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW: REGION 1 (NORTHEAST COASTAL) - FALL 1995

Tracey Dean, Region 1 Coordinator
Huntsman Marine Science Centre
Brandy Cove, St. Andrews
New Brunswick, E0G 2X0, Canada

Region 1 of the Atlantic Flyway Review has a new, more descriptive name—the Northeast Coastal Region—which covers a new, expanded area. It now includes Canada east of Montreal, the New England States, along with coastal New Jersey and Delaware (see map published in *North American Bird Bander* 21:24.) These boundary changes have moved the regular contributions of Birdcraft Station, Island Beach State Park, and the Laurentian Mountains to this section. Nine stations are now part of this region. Bon Portage Island, Nova Scotia, is a new addition, while banding on Kent Island, New Brunswick, has started again after a lengthy absence. Long-time contributor Doug Kraus of Kingston, Rhode Island, did not open his nets this year.

Most stations reported clear skies and slow banding in September as few Neotropical migrants stopped long enough to be caught. At the end of the month, a large cold front moved through the Maritimes and this is reflected at all three Canadian coastal stations which report 29 September as the best day of the fall (Table 1). This wave, which contained huge numbers of Myrtle Warblers, seems to have been felt all along the seaboard, as the date of "largest daily catch" from all areas falls within a two-week span. Myrtles were the most commonly banded species at five stations and made the top ten list in all but one area (Table 2).

Block Island was the only station to report a significantly higher number of birds banded in 1995 than in 1994, and they attribute this to the month of October. Banders at the Nantucket Station had to work harder this year as they processed 90 birds/100 nh compared to 33 birds/100 nh last year. I would like to be that busy...occasionally!

Last year I added a note at the end of my station report about deer chewing on a bird trapped in a net. Well I got a reply! Laurie Farber from Jericho, New York, has experienced similar problems with deer sniffing, licking, and tasting birds in nets at the Fire Island Research Station. Thank you for the letter, Laurie.

Thank you, also, to all the contributors to this report. Good luck in 1996.

SW-Laurentian Mountains Station 455-0743
Quebec, Canada
Peter Homann

This year, as in previous ones, the mist nets were located in areas of alder and sweet-gale shrubbery along the lake shore, as well as in openings of the adjacent cedar-spruce-fir-birch forest.

Few passerines were observed in the region during the banding period. I was particularly disappointed that, for the first time in 30 years, I did not detect any Song Sparrows near our "cottage." Usually, at least one pair nests in the area. In 1994, I banded five Hermit Thrushes but no Veerys. This year, it was the other way around; I did not catch a Hermit Thrush but banded seven Veerys. Black-and-white Warblers were scarce, I caught only one; but Chestnut-sided Warblers were back with six individuals banded after a year's absence. Least Flycatchers, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Cedar Waxwings were missing.

Seven birds were recaptured: five Black-capped Chickadees (one each from 1992 and 1993, three from 1994); one Magnolia Warbler and one Black-throated Green Warbler (both banded in 1994).

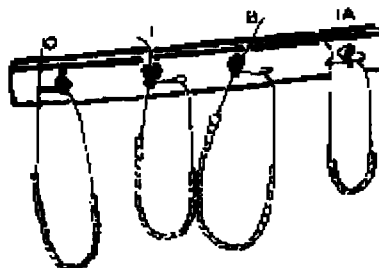


Table 1. Fall 1995 Region 1 Summary.

	Laurentian Mts. PQ	St. Andrews NB	Kent Island NB	Bon Portage Is. NS	Appledore Is. ME
First Day	5 August	7 August	1 August	11 August	15 August
Last Day	18 August	20 October	3 October	5 November	8 October
Days Operated	14	17	55	71	54
No. Nets Used	6-9	4-14	2-11	8-16	5-10
Total Net Hours	1366	568	1912	4445	5993
Birds Band '94	98	260	-	-	2672
Birds Band '95	100	253	2059	1715	2673
Diff. Spec. '94	28	42	-	-	81
Diff. Spec. '95	24	41	70	70	74
Birds/100 nh '94	7	43	-	-	46
Birds/100 nh '95	7	45	107	38	45
Lgst Dly Catch	14	44	181	125	243
Date of LDC	15 August	29 September	29 September	29 September	5 October
% Hatch Year	74%	76%	n/a	79%	96%

Table 1 (cont'd.) Fall 1995 Region 1 Summary.

	Nantucket MA	Block Is. RI	Fairfield CT	Is. Beach NJ
First Day	11 September	30 August	23 August	25 August
Last Day	5 October	20 November	9 November	11 November
Days Operated	20	65	23	47
No. Nets Used	2-6.5	4-11	10-13	2-31.5
Total Net Hours	601	5381	760	3131.2
Birds Band '94	573	1630	624	9318
Birds Band '95	543	2183	466	5470
Diff. Spec. '94	61	67	47	97
Diff. Spec. '95	64	72	45	90
Birds/100 nh '94	33	28	39	183
Birds/100 nh '95	90	41	61	175
Lgst Dly Catch	99	162	44	601
Date of LDC	3 October	9 October	9 October	13 October
% Hatch Year	95%	91%	88%	95%

Table 2. The most commonly banded species - 1995.

Laurentian Mts PQ	St. Andrews NB	Kent Island NB	Bon Portage Is. NS	Appledore Is. ME
23 BCCH (1)*	37 MYWA (1)	218 GCKI	291 MYWA	326 REVI (1)
15 MAWA (2)	27 BCCH (5)	186 YWAR	116 COYE	181 GCKI (9)
7 VEER	19 AMGO	166 REVI	106 BLPW	156 COYE (4)
6 CSWA	16 RCKI	145 AMRE	92 GCKI	141 CEDW (9)
6 BTNW (4)	14 REVI	108 NOWA	89 FOSP	133 AMRE (3)
6 OVEN (3)	14 WTSP (2)	99 RCKI	89 WTSP	121 MYWA (5)
6 CAWA	11 GCKI (7)	87 MYWA	84 REVI	119 SCJU
4 MYWA	10 MAWA (9)	86 TRFL	78 SOSP	117 GRCA
4 WTSP	8 BAWA	79 SOSP	73 AMRE	113 WTSP
3 COYE	8 BTNW	75 COYE	52 YWAR	97 RCKI (6)
3 AMRO	8 COYE (3)			97 NOWA (2)

* Only top four given for 1994. () Position last year.

Table 2 (cont'd). The most commonly banded species - 1995.

Nantucket MA	Block Is. RI	Fairfield CT	Is. Beach NJ
77 MYWA	741 MYWA (2)	156 WTSP (1)	1509 MYWA (6)
47 GRCA (6)	284 GRCA (1)	45 GRCA (2)	861 GCKI (2)
41 SOSP	122 WTSP (3)	39 HETH (5)	498 WTSP (1)
31 BLPW (8)	120 REVI (5)	31 AMRO	487 GRCA (3)
27 SCJU	117 BRGR	21 COYE (4)	393 BRGR
24 COYE (1)	107 GCKI	17 RCKI	322 SCJU (8)
23 WPWA (3)	67 HETH (10)	16 MYWA	180 SOSP
19 RBNU	67 AMRE (6)	16 SOSP (3)	163 COYE (5)
16 AMRO (8)	49 SCJU (7)	13 AMRE (7)	131 BTBW (10)
16 AMRE (7)	44 BTBW	9 BCCH	107 SWSP (9)
16 WTSP			

() Position last year.

St. Andrews Banding Station 450-0670
New Brunswick, Canada
Tracey Dean (bander)
Assistant: *Stephanie Ratelle*

The main fall banding got underway later than usual as I took a week off to help with the new Kent Island Project (see report later in this section) in early August. Rain was not a problem this year; in fact, clouds would have been rather useful to bring the migrants down. Beautiful, clear skies and light winds in August and September kept many birds moving. Beautiful, clear skies and light winds in October let flocks of chickadees, sparrows, and juncos linger.

Banding always seems to be feast or famine. The best day of the fall was 29 September when 44 birds were caught, including 19 Myrtle Warblers in the first net on the first round. After racing back for extra bags and then trotting around the other nets, the rest of the day seemed slow.

The larger-than-usual Knapweed (*Centaurea sp.*) seed crop attracted flocks of goldfinches to the open fields. I do not have any nets in these areas, but one day did manage to catch seven. This barely indicates the number that were present.

Like most stations, the majority of chickadees in the netting area are banded resident birds, but an influx of "naked" birds appeared at the end of October. Fourteen new birds on 20 October was the largest to date.

This year I did not have any difficulties with deer—no soggy birds, no ruined nets. My only problem animal was a red squirrel. Near the beginning of August I caught one red-handed beside a headless pile of feathers in a net. The culprit was running off carrying the head like a nut.

Next autumn I would like to open the nets every day or at least more often than I have been able to in the past. A goal—probably also a dream!

Kent Island Station 443-0664
New Brunswick, Canada
Brian Dalzell (bander)
Assistants: *Cara Greenlaw, Dorothy McFarlane, Tony Diamond, David Hussell, Erica Dunn, Julie Paquet, Halton Dalzell, Laura McFarlane, Falk Huttman, Tracey Dean, Alain Clavette, Megan Brodie, Ann White*

Not since 1979-80 has the untapped potential for monitoring landbird migration on Kent Island been investigated. To that end, in late July, three volunteers from the newly formed Grand Manan Bird Observatory arrived and began clearing net lanes. Eventually 11 nets were erected, similar in number to the 15 nets used by Peter Cannell and Jeff Cherry in their study 16 years ago (see *NABB* Vol. 6:31 [Jan-Mar 1981]).

From the start, it was inevitable that constant reference would be made to the previous studies to gauge the progress of the present. However, it soon became obvious that results were to be somewhat different. The most apparent difference was the weather conditions. In 1980, after mid-August, Cannell and Cherry reported almost constant flights of birds associated with clear skies and light north or westerly winds, banding an average of 227 birds per day until month's end.

In sharp contrast, conditions on Kent Island in August 1995 brought very little landbird migration until late in the month. Winds were almost continuous from the south and southwest due to a stationary "Bermuda"-type high pressure system to the south, with drought conditions prevailing well into October. The first significant fallout of migrants occurred on 26 August: after two days of northwest winds, 82 birds were banded. Contrast this with 1980 when the first significant fallout came on 16 August and 163 birds were banded.

Cannell and Cherry conducted their study just as the spruce budworm epidemic in Atlantic Canada was winding down, and their results dramatically indicate the high numbers of budworm specialists present. Numbers of Cape May, Yellow-rumped, Bay-breasted, and Tennessee warblers were nothing short of phenomenal (see table below). Of these four budworm specialists, only one—the Yellow-rumped Warbler—appeared in the top ten

species this year. The totals of 18 Cape May, four Bay-breasted, and four Tennessee for 1995 are a mere shadow of their numbers fifteen years ago and a very good indication of just how much their fortunes have shifted.

Most Commonly Banded Species

<u>1995</u>			<u>1980</u>
218	Golden-cr. Kinglet	808	Cape May W.
186	Yellow Warbler	799	Yellow-rumped W.
166	Red-eyed Vireo	326	Bay-breasted W.
145	American Redstart	239	Savannah Spar.
108	Northern Waterthrush	237	American Redstart
99	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	180	Song Sparrow
87	Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) W.	155	Traill's Flycatcher
86	Traill's (Alder) Flycatcher	154	Red-eyed Vireo
79	Song Sparrow	148	Tennessee W.
75	Common Yellowthroat	147	Yellow Warb.

September saw conditions gradually change to more normal values, but no major cold fronts occurred until late in the month. The largest daily catch took place on 29 September, when 181 birds were banded. Only one bander was present at the time and not all the nets were open. If all 11 nets had been open, perhaps as many as 400 birds could have been banded.

Without more years of data, it is not safe to speculate on whether the numbers obtained are indicative of real population change or just normal fluctuations. However, it is tempting to say that for some species, real changes have occurred in their populations since 1980. The numbers of Veery, Swainson's Thrush, Gray Catbird, Blackburnian Warbler, Ovenbird, Canada Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Baltimore Oriole all seem to have declined significantly beyond normal fluctuations.

Unusual birds caught at Kent Island during the fall of 1995 included: eight Prairie Warblers (six before 17 August; single birds 27 August and 29 September), three Yellow-breasted Chats (1, 9 and 15 September), an Indigo Bunting on 29 September, two Yellow-billed Cuckoos (22 and 23 September respectively), a Golden-winged Warbler on 23 September (possibly a hybrid "Lawrence's" Warbler), and four Northern Saw-whet Owls between 19 and 29 September.

I wish to thank Dr. Nathaniel Wheelwright and Bowdoin College for help in supporting the banding operation. It was also supported with a grant from the James M. Baillie Fund of Bird Research and Preservation, and was a joint Grand Manan Bird Observatory/Canadian Wildlife Service/Atlantic Cooperative Wildlife Ecology Research Network (ACWERN) effort.

Bon Portage
Island Station 432-0654
Nova Scotia, Canada
Andrew Davis

Bon Portage (or Outer Island) is a small offshore island approximately 3 km from Shag Harbour, Nova Scotia. The island is home to a large colony (50,000+ pairs) of Leach's Storm-Petrel and, as I found out this fall, is also a great place to catch migrants. Acadia University operates a biology field station on the island, and this was the first year that the station's mist nets were run for the entire fall migration.

Twelve nets were opened each day, except during rain, for at least five hours in the morning. All birds captured were aged, sexed, weighed, and assigned a fat score. These data will be used in my MSc thesis, which is a study of passerine migration in the Maritimes.

The same nets were also opened at night to catch storm-petrels and No. Saw-whet Owls. For over twenty years at regular intervals during the fall, crews from Acadia University have been catching and recording the passage of these small owls.

When I first opened the nets in August, the majority of the captures were breeding birds and their young. By early September, the waves of migrating warblers and flycatchers began moving through. In October, the waves consisted of a few late warbler species mixed with sparrows and thrushes. By the time most of the deciduous trees had dropped their leaves in late October, the only warbler species left was the Yellow-rumped.

Highlights of the fall included a Golden-winged, an Orange-crowned, and several Prairie war-

blers; a few Indigo Buntings; one Dickcissel; two White-eyed Vireos; three Northern Shrikes; and a Merlin.

I'm looking forward to being on the island again next year.

Appledore Island Banding Station 425-0703
Maine

Sara Morris, David Holmes, Mary Wright (banders)

Assistants: Fran Beckwith, Joey Carroll, Carol Cushing, Sean Donaghy, Dorothy Fitch, Phyllis Hatch, Antony Hill, Rozzie Holt, Mac McKenna, John Munier, Carlene Riccelli, Beck & Mark Suomala

The season on Appledore was quite fascinating and at the same time it was somewhat frustrating. Overall, we ended up with a record number of birds (barely) with an effort nearly identical to last year's. But the timing of our catches raised all kinds of questions. We ran the same nine nets as last year within the same date limits, lost less time to weather (until the end of the period), and got very few birds for the first month. Our first 100+ bird day came on 16 September with 193, our next wasn't until 29 September with 150, and then from 3 through 5 October, we banded 107, 206, and 243 respectively. Consequently, our numbers of standard Neotropical migrants, while not record-setting lows, were definitely on the low side; and high count species were all birds which move later in the season and don't go to the tropics. Do you remember that in August and early September this was the biggest hurricane season in years? Did the birds know this? Did they change their migration strategy and move south over land in short hops until a really large-scale front finally passed through on 11 September? We don't know, but we'd like to!

The single new species this season was a Rusty Blackbird. Normally these birds move after the island closes down, so this was fun. Our local returns were unexciting and, as always, we caught no foreign birds. But, we did get notice that Edith Andrews' MAPS station on Nantucket Island caught a Gray Catbird on 30 July 1995 which we had banded as an AHY-U on 22 May 1994. Our very first recovery was also a catbird that was banded in late May and found dead on Nantucket

in late July the same year (1986). Since we've had only 14 recoveries, this seems almost more than coincidence. We celebrated our 40,000th bird (a Baltimore Oriole which was most unimpressed with the proceedings), enjoyed a modest Red-breasted Nuthatch flight, and wondered why we caught five chats in October (they used to appear during the first two weeks in September). Another crazy normal year on Appledore! There may be changes in 1996 as Sara has finished her PhD field work. Could you join us, or share ideas on how to keep open beyond the time I can afford? Do get in touch.

Nantucket, Mass.

411-0700

Edith Andrews (bander)

Assistants: Ginger Bladen, Pat Fliakos, Max Leenhouts, Pat Loring, Kathy Lynch, Kathy McCarthy, Sharon McKenna, Althea Philips, Ellen Smith, Pauline Theriault, Bill Toombs, Peter & Fay Vale, Penny Wilbur

Since the woods at Mothball Pines are virtually gone, it has become harder and harder to find suitable locations for placing the nets. In some of our old net lanes, young trees are growing up, but they are not yet big enough to offer much shade or protection from the wind. However, we still use the same net lanes when possible. This year we were able to put up only half the usual number of nets, yet we banded almost as many birds as last year—amazing since we had fewer days, fewer nets, and only about one-third the number of net hours.

Our first day, 11 September, following the passage of Hurricane Luis off shore, was a surprise. The day dawned with a light-to-moderate NW wind and temperature in the 40's. We had a large wave of migrants and banded twelve species of warblers including a Connecticut. It was like the "good old days" but it didn't last.

By banding into the first week of October we added considerably to our totals, with juncos, White-throats (none last year), and lots of Myrtles. A Hairy Woodpecker was a new bird for the station, and we welcomed Red-breasted Nuthatches back after a complete absence last year.

There were 71 repeats and five returns—of these, four were Song Sparrows and one was a Common Yellowthroat.

Block Island Banding Station 411-0713
Rhode Island
Elsie Lapham (bander)
Assistants: Kim Gaffett, Helen Lapham

Banding this fall picked up again after two slow years and produced our highest total (2183) since 1976. It followed the pattern of many years: poor in September during the peak of the warbler migration (this year we had almost constant east winds) but improving in October. Our first northwest wind was the night of 8 October, and then the birds poured in keeping us all busy. The 9th and 10th were our best days, banding 294 birds of 33 species.

A few species showed unusual numbers this fall: 741 Yellow-rumped Warblers were the most banded since 1976 (also 589 were released unbanded); 117 Brown Creepers topped our previous record of 100 in 1981; while Eastern Phoebe dropped from an average of 32 over the past five years to only five. Usually we band at least one Ruby-crowned Kinglet for every two Golden-crowns, but this year we banded less than one for every three Golden-crowned. Finally for the fourth year in a row, we banded over five Yellow-breasted Chats (eight this year); before that we had caught only one or two (with a few exceptions). Is there a real increase in chats?

For the first time since 1991, we banded two new species for the station—a Yellow-throated Warbler in the spring and a Tufted Titmouse in the fall. The latter was the second record for Block Island; the first was seen on the 1994 Christmas Bird Count. Now that the titmouse has crossed the water and reached the island, we expect it to increase in years to come.

We had many visitors to the station, both groups and individuals, and, as usual, a class from the Block Island School. It is rewarding to see the wondering response of both adults and children to the warmth and quick heartbeat of a bird in the hand, and the excitement of releasing it to the wild. Happy birding!

Birdcraft Banding Station 410-0731
Connecticut
Carl Trichka (bander)
Assistants: Judy Richardson, Barbara Manicattide

This fall season was rather uneventful banding wise. The station operated for 26 days, from 23 August to 9 November. Several scheduled days were canceled due to bad weather.

Although there was a significant increase in birds/100 net hours this year, most of this could be attributed to cat problems. We often had to close nets for awhile, then reopen when the cats were driven off. We hope to have solved this problem; but with two condominium complexes across the street, there will be more.

Of the 45 species banded this year, there was nothing unusual or outstanding. Our largest catches fell on 9 October and 9 November with 44 and 38 individuals respectively.

My thanks to the entire banding crew who did the leg work and kept the felines at bay.

Island Beach State Park 395-0740
New Jersey
Bruce Adams, Mary Doscher, Eileen and Glenn Mahler, Robert McKinney, John Miller, Lawrence Pharo, Nick Pulcinella, Robert Yunick (banders)
Assistants: Robert and Raymond Miller

During the fall 1995 banding season, nine banders operated banding stations at six locations at Island Beach State Park between 21 August and 11 November. One or more of those stations was in operation on 47 days during that 79 day period; there were three banding days in August, 17 in September, 25 in October and two in November. Only one day (16 October) saw five of the stations in operation simultaneously, there were three days with four stations active, seven days with three stations active, eight days with two stations active, and 28 days with only a single station active. Total net hours for the season (3131.2) were about 70% of the average for recent years. (NOTE: in the following discussion, the term "recent years" refers to the period 1989-94.) The 5470 birds banded this season were well below the

recent average of 7384, but the birds per net hour (nh) were 1.75, just slightly above the recent average of 1.71.

Peak flights this season occurred on 3 October (208 birds; 5.8 birds/nh), 13 October (601 birds; 6.3 birds/nh), 23 October (185 birds; 4.7 birds/nh), and 26 October (520 birds; 9.5 birds/nh). Other good flights occurred on 4 September (158 birds; 1.7 birds/nh), 8 October (354 birds; 1.8 birds/nh), 10 October (372 birds; 2.0 birds/nh), 17 October (296 birds; 2.3 birds/nh), and 18 October (393 birds; 3.1 birds/nh).

One of the most noticeable features of the season was a "monster" flight of Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers occurring in mid October. The following table summarizes the best banding days for this species:

(See table at the end of this summary.)

The season banding totals for this species—1509 (0.48/nh)—were well above the recent average of 701 (0.16/nh). During the peak of this flight, Glenn Mahler visually estimated that the number of Yellow-rumped Warblers present at Island Beach State Park was well in excess of 100,000 individuals.

Other species which produced above-average banding results this year included:

White-throated Sparrow - This year's 498 birds (0.159/nh), although well below last year's exceptional numbers (1793 birds; 0.352/nh), were still above the average for other recent years (403 birds; 0.096/nh).

Brown Creeper - A strong flight (393 birds; 0.125/nh) occurred this year compared to the recent average of 337 birds (0.078/nh).

Hermit Thrush - Although other thrushes were in lower-than-average numbers, this species made a good showing—103 birds, 0.033/nh as compared to the recent average 83 birds, 0.019/nh. Most notable was the fact that 47 of the 103 individuals (46% of the season total) were banded on a single day (26 October).

In general, warbler numbers (with Myrtles removed) were down this season—0.175/nh compared to a recent average of 0.267/nh. Among the few species which had better-than-average years were Black-throated Blues (0.042/nh compared to an average of 0.027/nh) and Blackpolls (0.018/nh compared to an average of 0.011/nh). Warblers with noticeably lower-than-average rates included Black-and-white (0.008/nh down from 0.013/nh), Western Palm (0.006/nh down from 0.021/nh), Common Yellowthroat (0.052/nh down from 0.076/nh), and American Redstart (0.033/nh down from 0.045/nh).

Flycatchers as a group had a disappointing showing (0.011/nh) compared to an average of 0.028/nh, with Eastern Phoebe, the most frequently banded in this family, leading the way (0.008/nh down from 0.022/nh). Other species that showed below-average captures included Golden-crowned Kinglet (0.218/nh down from 0.323/nh), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (0.031/nh down from 0.084/nh), and Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker (0.002/nh down from 0.010/nh).

"Highlight" birds of the season included two Northern Saw-whet Owls, three Purple Finches, a Grasshopper Sparrow, and a Clay-colored Sparrow. New Jersey's second state record of Smith's Longspur was present for several days in October only a couple hundred yards from one of the banding stations but (unfortunately!) was not captured.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Individuals Banded</u>	<u>MYWA/NH</u>	<u>MYWA as % of All Birds Banded</u>
Oct. 10	149	0.8	40.1%
Oct. 16	121	0.7	57.1%
Oct. 17	129	0.8	42.6%
Oct. 18	237	1.6	60.0%
Oct. 23	168	4.3	90.1%