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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region Iii (western Ridge) - Fall 1996

North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) - Fall 1996

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We welcome two new stations into the AFR III report this year: Big Run in western Pennsylvania and Roan Mountain, located at Carver's Gap (5512 ft elevation) on the border between Tennessee and North Carolina.

Altogether, AFR III stations banded 20,312 birds, but totals at all but one station were down from the previous year. Only Ruthven's totals were improved in 1996, and that was due to increased daily coverage. Bad weather was cited as a factor in the downward trend at Lewiston, Presque Isle, Allegheny Front, Long Point, Calmes Neck, and Lakeshore Estates. The remnants of Hurricane Fran scored a direct hit on Allegheny Front and interrupted activities at several other stations. Problems with habitat destruction by floods again hampered research at Smith Farm, and "development" took five of the best net lanes at Calmes Neck. Allegheny Front, with its changing habitat and lack of good westerly winds, had its lowest capture rate ever.

Peak days varied from 25 August (Hebron) to 2 November (Lakeshore Estates) but eight of AFR III stations' peak dates occurred in October, with four occurring during the second third of the month.

It was a good year for juncos at Allegheny Front, Calmes Neck, Hebron, Powdermill, and Roan Mountain, with this species making the "top ten" list of all but three stations. There were impressive numbers of Myrtle Warblers, including the third highest total since 1960 at Long Point.

It was an off year for Black-capped Chickadee movement. The thrush flight was poor except for fair numbers of Hermit Thrush at Long Point and Allegheny Front. Catbird numbers were markedly

reduced at six stations. There were mixed signals from some species, as usual. Ruby-throated Hummingbird numbers were near record at Powdermill but down at Allegheny Front.

Thanks to all AFR III banders and assistants for their dedication and important contributions to our understanding of avian migration.

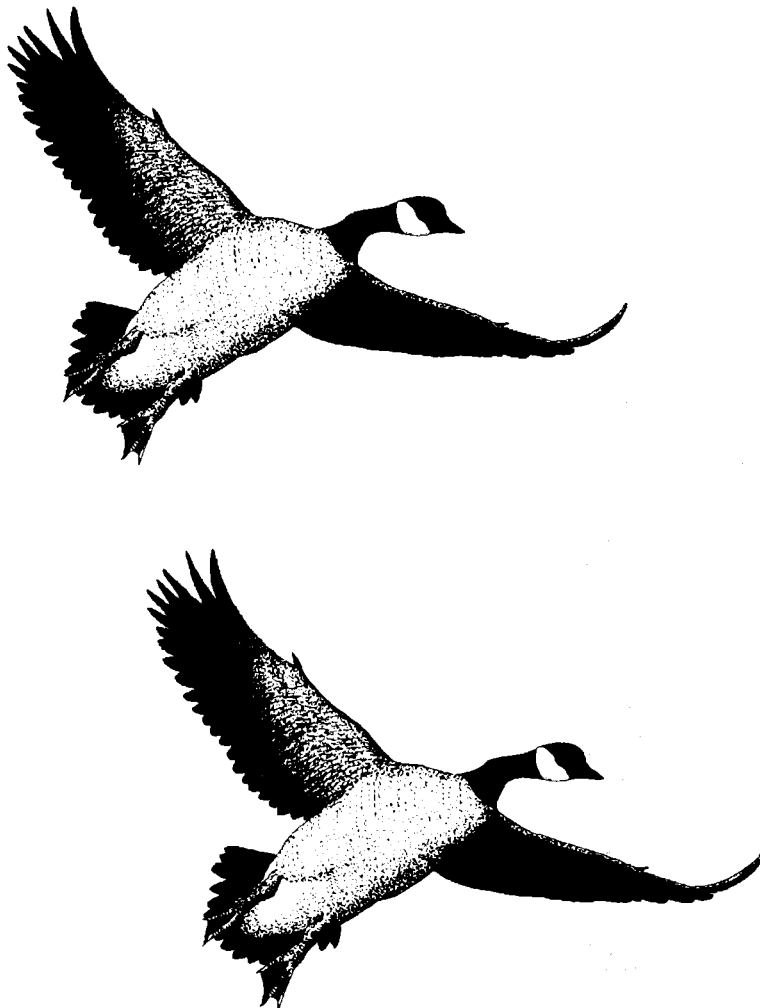


Table 1. Fall 1996 Region III Summary

	Maitland River, ON	Lewiston NY	Ruthven Park, ON	Long Pt, ON	Presque Isle, PA	Big Run, PA	Hebron PA	Powdermill, PA	Allegheny Frnt, WV	Calmes Neck, VA	Roan Mt, TN	Lakeshore Est, FL
First Day	3 Aug	18 Sep	4 Aug	3 Aug	28 Jul	1 Sep	27 Jul	1 Aug	11 Aug	13 Aug	25 Aug	15 Aug
Last Day	31 Oct	14 Oct	27 Oct	15 Nov	26 Oct	25 Oct	17 Nov	30 Nov	18 Oct	18 Nov	17 Oct	15 Nov
Days Operated	45	7	37	104	14	35	43	113	69	54	24	38
# Nets Used	up to 36*	11-20	5-8	10-35	3-13	5-11	1-12	3-55	20	4-20	1-6	3-9
Total NH	15,179	440	962	11,358	1206	1789	746	17,085	6792	9898	335	1552
Lrgst Dly Catch	34	78	65	369	53	40	71	160	191	38	55	12
Date of LDC	11 Oct	14 Oct	6 Oct	14 Oct	12 Oct	3 Oct, 9 Oct	25 Aug	26 Oct	9 Sep	25 Oct	20 Sep	5 Oct
# Banded '95	1160	518	227	10,799**	590	-	1165	9638	3181	1467	-	198
# Banded '96	530	311	632	8725	287	377	787	5381	2005	658	428	191
#Species '95	71	54	25	109	72	-	68	114	78	91	-	34
#Species '96	49	40	64	112	49	45	60	115	67	68	36	35
#/100 NH '95	5.3	57	81	99.1**	36	-	151	53	42	16	-	11
#/100 NH '96	3.4	71	66	76.8	24	21	105	31.5	29	7	128	12
% HY 1995	NA	90%	87%	77%	60%	-	70%	NA	NA	60%	-	69%
% HY 1996	84%	85%	84%	85%	NA	51%	75%	NA	80%	66%	65%	84%

* Plus some traps.

** Number corrected from 1995 report.

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 1996.

Maitland River ONT		Lewiston NY			Ruthven Park ONT			Long Point ONT			Presque Isle PA		
				% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY
54	GCKI(1)	57	RCKI	86	188	SOSP(1)	92	1188	MYWA(3)	94	40	RCKI	
52	HETH(6)	49	WTSP(2)	77	44	WTSP(2)	98	435	YWAR(7)	89	30	GRCA(2)	80
47	RCKI(2)	41	HETH(5)	85	35	GRCA	68	434	MAWA(4)	94	22	GCKI(10)	
41	SCJU(3)	27	GRCA(1)	97	32	YWAR	69	377	RCKI(2)	61	17	WIWR(4)	
30	BRCR(5)	16	BCCH(7)	75	32	MYWA(6)	100	377	WTSP	87	16	SOSP	60
30	AMRO(8)	12	SCJU	100	21	CEDW	67	353	LEFL	96	15	WTSP(1)	30
28	MYWA(4)	10	MYWA	80	19	SCJU(4)	74	340	GCKI(1)	83	14	MAWA	50
26	WTSP(10)	9	MAWA(3)	89	17	BCCH(5)	77	323	SCJU	78	11	YWAR(8)	60
24	WIWR(9)	7	GCKI	71	15	AMGO	53	312	BRCR(6)	69	10	HOWR	90
19	NAWA	7	BLJA	71	15	HOWR	91	291	HETH(5)	89	8	REVI(6)	35

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 1996 (con'd.).

Hebron PA			Big Run PA			Powdermill PA		Allegheny Front WV		
		% HY			% HY					% HY
219	SCJU(3)	79	65	SOSP	42	601	SCJU(2)	430	BTBW(1)	86
73	INBU	80	60	COYE	68	416	AMGO(4)	208	BLPW(3)	74
47	SOSP(1)	70	52	WTSP	60	295	MAWA(10)	145	SCJU	67
34	HOFI(5)	76	17	MYWA	59	272	WTSP(1)	114	GCKI(4)	
27	MOWA	85	16	MAWA	69	259	MYWA(5)	111	BTNW(2)	84
26	RBGR	77	15	GRCA	67	249	COYE(6)	109	SWTH(6)	71
25	REVI	68	13	FISP	23	222	SOSP(7)	92	CMWA(8)	71
24	BCCH(9)	67	11	NOCA	36	222	AMRE	91	COYE(10)	76
21	COYE(7)	60	10	ETTI	70	214	RTHU	83	TEWA(5)	73
21	AMRE	70	10	EATO	60	172	GRCA(8)	77	MAWA(7)	67
21	OVEN	81								

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 1996 (con'd.).

Calmes Neck VA			Smith Farm VA			Roan Mountain TN			Lakeshore Estate FL		
		% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY
111	AMGO(1)	60	129	WTSP(4)	73	145	SCJU	59	43	NOCA(2)	94
65	CACH(2)	80	94	AMGO(1)	65	71	BTBW	79	35	MYWA(1)	90
59	ETTI(7)	80	63	SCJU(2)	60	53	SWTH	53	17	WEVI(3)	69
36	CEDW	66	53	SOSP(5)	87	52	TEWA	77	11	CAWR	100
30	NOCA	66	44	NOCA	95	16	RCKI	81	9	GRCA(4)	78
29	MODO(9)	20	44	RCKI(9)		10	GCKI	20	8	BLJA	71
22	SCJU	70	42	INBU(3)	67	10	OVEN	60	8	RCKI(5)	
21	WTSP	60	33	SWSP	82	8	CSWA	75	6	HOWA(7)	50
16	HETH	60	25	PUFI	80	7	VEER	100	5	MAWA(10)	100
14	INBU	60	22	AMRO	62	5	BTNW	100	5	ACFL(9)	
14	BAWW	60							5	BRTH(8)	60

(#) Position last year.

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

In 1996, the Maitland Bird Observatory was in operation for fall banding between 3 August and 31 October. Banding was carried out during five days in August, nine days in September, and 31 days in October. A total of 530 birds of 49 species were banded which was one of the worst results for this station. The station was operated by John Miles and sons Jamie and Steven. Banding demonstrations were carried out for groups from the Stratford Field Naturalists, the Huron Fringe Field Naturalists, and the Federation of Ontario Naturalists.

The banding setup was again fairly consistent to that of previous years with up to 36 mist nets in operation as well as a ground trap and a jay trap. This year, the "bread and butter" species (kinglets, juncos, Myrtle Warblers, and chickadees) for this station in the fall were substantially down in numbers. The decrease in banding totals is attributed mainly to the lack of numbers of these species.

The peak banding days were 11 October with 34, and 30 September with 32 birds banded. No unbanded birds were trapped despite 841.5 trap hours. The trap caught only one repeat Song Sparrow all fall, a new record in futility for me. Ten birds were banded in nest boxes.

The most noteworthy species banded in 1996 was the station's second Eastern Towhee in the 22 years this station has been in operation. Towhees do not seem to move through the station's river bottom habitat. Also of note was the station's sixth Pileated Woodpecker. Of note was an extremely early Fox Sparrow banded on 30 September, and perhaps one of the latest ever fall Yellow-bellied Flycatchers to be recorded in Ontario, which was banded on 19 October.

Lewiston 431-0790
Niagara County, New York
Jerald J. Farrell

The 1996 fall banding started on 18 September, which is the latest date ever for this station. I was away banding waterfowl for the Fish & Wildlife Service in Alberta, Canada, and did not arrive home
Jul. - Sep. 1997

until early September. Plans had been to begin banding on 4 September, but the rainy weather set in along with strong winds.

This station operated until 14 October with many planned banding days lost to bad weather. There was a total of seven actual banding days, for a total of 439.5 net hours during which 311 birds were banded involving 40 different species. My birds/100 net-hour ratio (70.61) was the highest ever. Almost all of my banding hours took place between 0730 and 1200.

I had a total of 17 local retraps, but again I have to report no foreign retraps for this station.

This fall completed my 20th year of banding at this station. I have been able to record many different trends over this period of time. I was fortunate to have been able to present seven banding demonstrations over the past year. The presentations have involved school groups, birding groups, and civic organizations. Many visitors have come to the station for first-hand banding education.

Ruthven Park 425-0795
Haldimand County, Ontario
Rick Ludkin

The fall banding season started on 4 August. The first two weeks saw a good movement of what were probably locally hatched birds moving through with many young Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows. The last half of August was pretty quiet as the local birds had moved off (the last Yellow Warbler was banded on 14 August), but the more northern migrants had not arrived yet. I banded on 19 days in August (usually for four hours each day); 225 birds were banded during 457 net hours for a ratio of 49 birds/100 net hours.

September is usually an exciting month as the birds begin to trickle down from the north and you never know what you will find in the nets. Unfortunately, it is also a time when my work expectations are more rigidly structured; consequently, I was able to spend less time in the field (and, as Murphy's Law would suggest, on days that I could get out there were some pretty poor weather conditions). I banded on ten days, capturing 171 birds during

286 net hours (60 birds/100 net hours). This included 16 warbler species (making 20 species and one hybrid for the two months).

October is "sparrow month" and Ruthven, with its extensive edge habitat and fields, is an excellent spot for them. Job demands restricted my time even more during this month and I got out on only eight days. Even so, I banded 236 birds during 219 net hours, for a rate of 108 birds/100 net hours.

In total, banding was done on 37 days resulting in the banding of 632 birds of 64 species during 962 net hours, for a ratio of 108 birds/100 net hours.

I was fortunate to have the assistance of a local high school student, Laura Martin, who, as part of a science class, developed and ran a census route throughout September and October. We will continue to use this route in the future.

As this is a fairly new site, I did a fair amount of experimenting with net placement during this period. As a result, I have a good idea of where the best places to run nets will be. In the future, I will keep nets in the same places from one year to the next.

I would like to thank Marg Ludkin, Geoff Ludkin, Laura Martin, Marina Martin, and John Miles for their help on various occasions.

Long Point Bird Observatory 423-0800
Port Rowan, Haldimand-Norfolk R.M. **423-0801**
Jon McCracken and Paul Prior 423-0802

August and September 1996 were cursed with weather of the very warm and the very wet variety, respectively. Hence, banding totals during the first half of the fall were very unimpressive. This all changed at the start of October.

It had been hoped that the first big movement in October would include all of the hosts of warblers and thrushes that, until then, had (or so we thought) been biding their time waiting for the end of a record wet September. As it turned out, however, somehow all of our early fall birds had slipped through undetected (maybe on one of the few clear nights in mid-September).

October effectively pulled what otherwise would have been a poor season's banding total close to the long-term average. In fact, as many birds were banded in the first three weeks of October as had been banded in the entire previous two months, including nearly 1,000 Myrtle Warblers.

Over 100 birds were banded on 14 days. Peak dates included 30 September, 3-4 October, 8-11 October, 14 October, 20-21 October, 28 October, and 6 November.

Winter Wrens, creepers, and kinglets are late fall migrants and so it had been hoped that the kinder weather experienced in October might have allowed us some better numbers. Not so! Numbers of these species all fell far short of what we normally expect.

Thrushes tend to peak in September. Because that month was somewhat jinxed with too many rainy nights, the only thrush that showed in good numbers was the Hermit (291 banded). Numbers of both Gray-cheeked and Swainson's thrushes (56 and 199 banded, respectively) were near-record low.

As for vireos and warblers, the real story was the impressive flight of Myrtle Warblers. With 1188 banded, this was our top species; it was also our third highest banding total for this species since 1960. Yellow Warbler numbers continued to increase (435 banded). Although Magnolia Warbler was our number three species, the 434 banded was a little low for us, at least in recent years. Numbers of Bay-breasts (35 banded) were particularly low.

Sparrow numbers were rather unimpressive, with only 377 White-throats and 323 juncos being banded.

Unusual species banded included a White-rumped Sandpiper, Northern Shrike, Prothonotary Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, and LeConte's Sparrow.

Many thanks to our Warden (Graeme Gibson) and the 38 volunteers who gave so gladly of their time.

Presque Isle State Park**420-0800**

Erie, PA

Ronald F. Leberman

We were disappointed again in the fall banding results at Presque Isle State Park. A mere 287 new birds of 49 species were banded, the lowest total in 35 years of operations at this station. The station's previous low total was 333 birds banded in 1984. August was about average with 81 birds banded; September produced just 61 birds, and October's total was 122. Rain and cold winds limited banding at the station in October to just four days.

In spite of this, there were a few highlights, such as our first ever Bicknell's Thrush, a Northern Parula Warbler, and a Philadelphia Vireo. Banding took place on 14 days from 28 July to 26 October. The best one-day total was 12 October when 53 birds were banded.

A Cedar Waxwing returned in its third year. An interesting foreign recovery was a goldfinch banded on 3 September 1994 that was recovered in Pineville, LA, in January 1996.

I would like to thank everyone that helped our banding station. A very special thanks goes to Thelma Patton and Sally Senger who did the bulk of the work; their dedication is a major reason for the success of this project. And thanks for the support of the Park staff and employees.

Hebron**414-0780**

Coudersport, Potter Co., PA

David W. Hauber

Banding at Hebron for the fall of 1996 was carried out from 27 July to 17 November in the same locations using the same net lanes as in the past. No traps were used this year.

Banding conducted on 42 days resulted in 910 birds handled with 787 new birds banded of 59 species and one subspecies. There were 40 returns and 83 repeats. New taxa for the station were Brewster's Warbler and House Sparrow. Species banded regularly but missing in 1996 were Eastern Phoebe, White-crowned Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, Myrtle Warbler, White-breasted Nuthatch,

and Swainson's Thrush. We have banded 88 species and one subspecies during fall migration since 1989.

The following were banded in record high numbers: Blue Jay 10 (2.87), Dark-eyed Junco 219 (90.5), Ovenbird 21 (8.8), American Redstart 21 (6). (The number in parenthesis is the yearly average.)

The following were banded in smaller numbers than the yearly average: House Finch 34 (71), American Goldfinch 10 (34), Tennessee Warbler 1 (13), Chestnut-sided Warbler 12 (27.3), and Scarlet Tanager 3 (19.7).

We recaptured a Veery that we banded in 1990 as an unknown-age bird.

Adverse weather conditions seemed to have the most effect on available banding time and available birds.

Many thanks to Gary Witmer and family and Mike Phillippe for all their help during 1996.

Big Run**410-0801**

New Castle, Lawrence Co., PA

Robert C. Baldesberger, Jr.

This is a first-time summary for Big Run Banding Station, which is located four miles east of New Castle in Lawrence County, PA.

A general habitat description of the 7-to-8 acre area where mist nets are located would be "transitional." From a total of 11 (12-m mist nets), five nets are situated in an old (20-30 years) overgrown apple orchard where choke cherry, slippery elm, maple sp., and oak sp. are well established. Four nets are situated in an old pasture/field directly north of the orchard. An estimated 12-15 years of unaltered growth by pioneer species dominate. Goldenrod comprises about 70% of the ground cover; multi-flora rose, sumac sp., elderberry, and black raspberry complement the shrubs. Slippery elm, maple sp., oak sp., and choke cherry average 5-15 ft in height. Two nets are located on the edge of a woodlot, bordering both the old orchard and field, to the west. Oak, hickory, and maple dominate this portion of the edge of a 40-50 acre woodlot. The

south edge of the old orchard is bordered by a hay field, with other crop fields, pastures, and rural homes beyond. The northern border of the area is a very old, treed hedgerow with cow pastures and a crop field beyond.

Nets were open for a total of 35 days between 1 September and 25 October; 14 days in September and 21 days in October. I accumulated 1789 total net hours; 720 in September and 1069 in October. There were 377 birds representing 45 species banded with 58 repeats ranging from one to 35 days after banding. Twenty-one individuals were released due to the lack of the proper band size, and 46 escapes occurred.

Weather conditions were pretty much average for the area. The information below involves only the 35 days when banding occurred. Winds from the NE, N, NW, or W occurred on 12 days, and the remaining 23 had winds from the SW, S, SE, or E. Rain occurred on only nine days, forcing the nets to be closed earlier than normal. The first "good" frost occurred on 12 October. Overcast and/or mostly cloudy conditions prevailed on 22 of the 35 days.

Two birds were encountered that had toes missing and one had a right leg "alignment" deformity. The toe injuries appeared well healed and none of the birds seemed to be hampered by their injuries. No foreign bands were encountered.

I would like to express my thanks to Mr. and Mrs. George Castleberry for giving me the opportunity to establish a banding station on their property. My wife Liz, my mom Pat, my dad Bob, and my son Bobby all have my deepest thanks for all of their patience and support.

Powdermill Nature Reserve 400-0791
Rector, Westmoreland Co., PA
Robert C. Leberman and Robert S. Mulvihill

A total of 5381 birds (113 species plus two hybrid forms) was banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve this fall. While our overall banding total was statistically average compared with the previous 20 years, our fall capture rate of just 31.5 birds/100 net hours was 2 SD below the 20-year (50/100 net hours) average. In general, the August-Septem-

ber period was good to very good for hummingbirds, flycatchers, and many kinds of wood warblers; the October-November flight of thrushes, kinglets, sparrows, and finches, however, was comparatively poor. Many windy, rainy days undoubtedly contributed to our less-than-spectacular results during the second half of the season.

When looked at in our usual fashion (i.e., 1996 totals compared to the ten-year averages), out of the 65 species we analyzed, fall totals for four were more than 2 SD above the average: Winter Wren (45 banded), Chestnut-sided Warbler (97), Black-and-white Warbler (28), and American Redstart (222). Another five species were more than 1 SD above average. On the down-side, with none banded for the first time since 1971, White-eyed Vireo equaled -2 SD, and 14 other species totals were more than 1 SD below the ten-year average. Although not statistically significant, a near record 214 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds was captured (173 banded and another 41 tail-clipped after we ran out of bands). As a group, Neotropical migrants were about equally well represented in the above- and below-average categories.

Following a heavy fall flight of Black-capped Chickadees in 1995 (254 birds), we detected virtually no movement of the species in 1996; the 28 banded is our lowest total of the last 20 years. Among the more unusual birds banded this fall was a Common Snipe on 28 October, our second-ever Red-headed Woodpecker on 27 November, and a Henslow's Sparrow on 15 October. Two Brewster's Warblers were netted (6 and 13 September); a Lawrence's Warbler was banded 14 August; and a Yellow-throated Warbler, rare here in the fall, was banded on 14 August.

As usual, we gave formal banding demonstrations to several university classes, and talked about our research with nearly 200 casual visitors. On 15 October the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* ran an excellent two-page story (with color photographs) on the Powdermill banding program. The following interns and volunteers assisted with the banding this season: Jeff Bewsher, Lisa Bryon, Mary Helen Chiodo, Jim Gruber, Carroll Labarthe, Mark Mackay, Grant Milliron, Bonnie Mulvihill, Diane Prosser, Barb Rich, Matt Sarver, Carole Shanahan, Peter Spino, Mike and Evaleen Watko, and Peggy Wisner.

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

The 39th year of bird banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory was the poorest season since 1972, when we started the full-time operation of the station during the migration period. The station was in continuous operation from 11 August to 18 October. However, the station was closed because of bad weather for an unprecedented seven days, with two additional days having only minimal operation. The remains of Hurricane Fran scored an almost direct hit on the station and other areas of Grant County, causing the loss of two days. Some banding was carried out on 62 days.

A total of 2005 (lowest ever) birds of 67 species (tie for lowest) was banded with a station effort of 6792 net hours (fifth highest) giving a capture ratio of 29.48 birds/100 net hours (lowest). There were 265 birds banded in August (19 days), 1177 in September (26 days), and 560 in October (17 days). The station has now banded a total of 163,739 birds of 117 species and two hybrids. No new species were captured this year.

Two juncos and one Common Yellowthroat, which had been banded at A.F.M.O. in 1991, were recaptured this year, as well as a Magnolia Warbler banded in 1993, and a Veery and Chestnut-sided Warbler banded in 1995.

The major peak of the migration came immediately after the hurricane. The two small peaks later in September and the October peak came after pronounced frontal passages. The biggest day was 9 September with 191 birds banded, and on only three other days were more than 100 birds banded.

The most numerous species was the Black-throated Blue Warbler with 430 bandings, but this number was 40% below the 10-year average. The Blackpoll Warbler with 208 bandings (66% below average) was second and the Dark-eyed Junco with 145 bandings (34% below average) was third. Of the 44 species for which a meaningful analysis could be made, 41 were in numbers below the 10-year average. Of these, 26 were more than 1 SD

below that average, and three of these were more than 2 SD below the average. The three species which were above the average were less than 1 SD above.

The 1290 warblers banded was 57% below the 10-year average, while the number of all the Neotropical migrants was 70% below that average. Swainson's Thrushes were 66% below average, but Hermit Thrush was 35% above the average.

The 67 species caught tied the lowest total. Flycatchers, woodpeckers, and nuthatches were almost totally absent. Only two Blue Jays were banded, and the usual flight over the mountain did not occur. Twenty-two species were represented by only one or two individuals.

It is probable that no one factor is responsible for the poor count. The increase in height of vegetation at the station lowers the percentage of birds that are caught, but fewer birds seem to be flying over. In particular, the three "Budworm specialists," Tennessee (83% below average), Cape May (73% below), and Bay-breasted (93% below) warblers, continue to decline. Certainly the repeated passage of tropical storms (at least two besides the infamous *Fran*) north along the coast was a factor. Good flights at this station depend on strong westerly winds, both across the continent during the night and at the station during the morning. This seldom seemed to happen.

The visual migrant counts were continued but less time was spent on this project which ceased on 26 September. Only 299 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were counted (compared with 487 last year), only 45 Blue Jays (compared with 6459 in 1995), and 1319 American Goldfinches (compared with 4788 last year) were counted. The Monarch Butterfly count was 889, up from 343 last year.

During the season, 1617 people signed the visitors' book. These visitors came from 23 states, District of Columbia, England, and British Columbia. The educational part of our operation continued with several grade school, high school, as well as college classes visiting the station.

The banders who participated this year were Robert Dean, LeJay Graffious, Sue Heselton, Joan Bell

Pattison, Randy Ritter, Janet Shaffer, David Skinner, Judy Ward, Charles Ziegenfus, and station co-leaders Ralph Bell and George Hall. LeJay Graffious was also responsible for the banding shelter, and special thanks to Boy Scout Troop 188 of Monterey, VA, and to David and Sharon Morrison for help in dismantling the shelter. As usual, Genevieve and John Findley were in charge of the net lanes. Ivarean Pierce, who also headed up the Blue Jay-hummingbird count, Walter Fye, JoAnn and Phil Graham, Ken Heselton, Beth Ritter, and Carl Rowe were present for extended periods of time. An additional 51 individuals aided in tending nets, carrying cages, keeping records, and in many other ways.

We also thank the personnel of the Monongahela National Forest, Supervisor Chuck Meyers, District Ranger Nancy Feakes, and others of the Potomac District Ranger Station for their cooperation and support. Thanks also to Walt Lesser of the D.N.R. for the use of the Laneville cabin for housing and storage of the shelter. The Brooks Bird Club supplied some financial support.

Calmes Neck
Boyce, VA
J. William Oberman

390-0775

Totals for 1996 are influenced by the "development" out of existence of five of my more productive nets. These were placed elsewhere in somewhat inferior habitat.

This alone does not explain my abysmal totals, despite a major increment in net hours. Thrushes particularly, but also warblers, were depressed. Possible influences on totals include long spells of good weather with total absence of frontal activity (September) and the frequent rain at other times. Interestingly, totals of residents (chickadees, titmice, and cardinals) were up substantially. Depressed migrant totals may have been due to much smaller totals of goldfinches, whose activities at my feeders usually serve as an attraction to migrants.

Smith Farm
Arlington, VA
Edgar Smith

382-0781

Last year's major flood was followed by another major flood this year caused by the remnants of Hurricane Fran. Further erosion occurred along stream banks, practically denuding them of cover. September and October were warm; November colder than normal. (Madison County was a disaster area for the second straight year.)

Banding effort was about 20% less than in 1995. Results were disappointing, with many species barely represented. I banded one bird only of 22 species. Numbers of other species were much reduced. Examples included Eastern Phoebe (41 in 1995, 4 in 1996), Field Sparrow (45, 16), Chipping Sparrow (53, 11), Myrtle Warbler (84, 15), Song Sparrow (116, 53), American Goldfinch (223, 94), Ovenbird (15, 2), and Blue Jay (19, 2). There were improved numbers in four species including White-throated Sparrow (119, 129), cardinal (24, 44), and robin (2, 22).

There were no notable returns and just one foreign recovery of a goldfinch. Abnormalities included two White-throated Sparrows with foot or leg deformities, a robin with a small leg tumor, a cardinal with a distorted maxilla, an Indigo Bunting with no toes on one foot, and a Golden-crowned Kinglet, Song Sparrow, and Carolina Chickadee with hippoboscids.

My only Nashville Warbler was banded on the late date of 20 November.

Roan Mountain
Carter County, Tennessee/Mitchell County, NC
Richard L. Knight

360-8206

A new banding station was established at Carver's Gap on Roan Mountain during the autumn of 1966. Roan Mountain is higher than most surrounding ridges and Carver's Gap, at 5512 ft elevation, is the lowest crossover point along the nearly five miles of its crest. Habitat in the gap consists of shrubby thickets at the ecotone of northern hardwood forest, spruce-fir forest, and grassy balds. The dominant plants are green alder (*Alnus crispa*)

and blackberry (*Rubus* sp.), with scattered hawthorn (*Crataegus* sp.), mountain-ash (*Sorbus americana*), rhododendron (*Rhododendron catawbiense*), and conifers interspersed. The T-shaped intersection of two paved roads and parking space for about 25 cars also occupy part of the gap. The Appalachian Trail runs roughly along the crest of the mountain, as does the state line. Human visitation was moderate, but disturbance was negligible. Land ownership is National Forest.

The weather this fall was generally good. However, at this high elevation, strong winds are frequent and consequently several days were unsuitable for mist netting. Nets were set up from sunrise until shortly after noon. Four 6 m and two 9 m nets were used, with net hours adjusted accordingly.

Most, in fact probably all, of the juncos and Golden-crowned Kinglets captured were from the local resident population. Discounting juncos, only one repeat (Chestnut-sided Warbler) occurred, indicating that transients moved through rapidly. Tufted Titmouse (four banded) were unusual at this high elevation.

My thanks to the Unaka District of the Cherokee National Forest and the Appalachian District of the Pisgah National Forest for permission to band birds on lands that they administer.

Lakeshore Estates

302-0841

Tallahassee, Leon County, FL

Peter H. Homann

Threats of rain showers in August, during much of September, and in early October curtailed banding efforts in 1996, especially at the bog location 300 m from my residence. Anyway, rather few migratory birds were seen at my banding sites, i.e., my residence, in the adjacent woods, and in the temporary bog, even though it was flooded for several weeks. Transient thrushes (Veery, Swainson's, Gray-cheeked, and Wood) were as scarce as they were in 1991-1993. Only four thrushes were banded, in contrast to 18 in 1995 and 19 in 1994. A cool front around 10 October did not change things, but surprised us with an early Winter Wren on 12 October. Noteworthy for the late dates were

a Black-throated Blue Warbler on 2 November, a Nashville Warbler the next day, and a Prairie Warbler on 17 November, after the period covered by this report.

The high HY percentages reported for Carolina Wren and Northern Cardinal reflect the exclusion of captured individuals that had been banded prior to 15 August. The totals for cardinal, moreover, are compromised by the fact that about 60% were netted not far from a bird feeder, but the same had been true for the totals given in previous reports. No HY percentages were calculated for Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Acadian Flycatcher because all captured individuals except one kinglet had fully ossified skulls. This is expected for kinglets when they arrive here in October because pneumatization of the skull occurs early in this species, but the flycatchers netted between 1 September and mid-October puzzle me. In fact, a rather high percentage of Acadian Flycatchers having ossified skulls has been typical in the past. This means either than an unusually high proportion of adults pass through my banding area, or that skull pneumatization is completed quite early by certain populations of this species, the reported retention of incompletely pneumatized skulls by many SY individuals notwithstanding (see Pyle, P. et al., *Identification Guide to North American Passerines*, and the relevant comments regarding *Empidonax* flycatchers in the Bird Banding Manual (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

A report summarizing some results of my banding activities was presented at the monthly "Tallahassee Ornithological Seminar" in early 1996.

