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North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) - Fall 1997

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The fall 1997 report begins with an apology to Ed Smith. A glitch in my computer techniques caused the Smith Farm column to be deleted in Table 1 of the 1996 report. It is included in Table 1 of the 1997 report.

Region III is joined in 1997 by Fernbank Science Center and Atlanta Zoo, both from the Atlanta area. But although Bill Oberman, of Calmes Neck, banded 123 birds during 2224 net hours from 13 August to 13 September, he chose to omit his report because of the limited duration of his season. Bill spent six weeks in Australia during fall 1997, but promises to "do better" in 1998!

Region III also struggled with some hard decisions with regard to protocol. Ideally, no 'lures' should be used in migration monitoring. But what about stations that use baited traps or place nets near feeders? And what about luring Northern Saw-whet Owls with callers? On the subject of feeders, we decided that if nets have always been placed near feeders at a station, that probably should be continued for statistical conformity. If a station uses and/or intends to keep using baited traps, that should probably be continued also. However, on the subject of using callers to capture owls, we decided to exclude those owls and the associated net hours from the migration report. We also decided to permit the stations at the southern end of our reporting area to extend their reporting season until early December if it was felt that migrants were still moving through at that date. The 15 August to 15 November season dates are arbitrary dates; and if the most northerly stations justifiably begin their banding season on 20 July, there is probably no reason for the most southerly stations not to extend their season until 10 December. The decision is best left to the individual bander to decide when migration begins and ends at his/her location.

The narratives provide interesting details of the fall banding season, Maitland bander John Miles banded their 30,000th bird but this may be the final reporting year for Maitland as John has initiated fall banding at Selkirk Provincial Park. Ruthven's Rick Ludkin reported that he had to close early one day when soldiers decked out in c. 1812 garb fired muskets in a re-enactment of an historic military charge at the park, while in the background a dixieland band was playing in a nearby gazebo. El Niño bedeviled several stations including Presque Isle where flooded net lanes caused some problems.

Banding totals were up from 1996 numbers at all stations but Hebron and Big Run. Overall, there were 21% more birds banded in 1997 than in 1996 with only a 1% rise in total net hours. Despite the improved 1997 numbers, long-term operations like Allegheny Front and Powdermill show significant declines in many Neotropical migrants. Early season migrants (flycatchers and Neotropical warblers) were captured in moderate or low numbers at most stations, while late-season migrants (Myrtle Warblers, sparrows, kinglets, and finches) did quite well at most. Percent hatching-year figures were up at Maitland, Smith Farm, and Roan Mt.; down at Lewiston, Long Point, Big Run, and Lakeshore; and about the same as the previous year at Ruthven and Hebron.

There were improved numbers of Hermit and Swainson's thrushes, excellent Cedar Waxwing numbers at Powdermill, and a strong Blue Jay flight at Allegheny Front. Many stations were closed for the season by the time the massive winter finch flights came through, but the 429 Purple Finches banded at Powdermill, and Evening Grosbeaks and Pine Siskins were an example of some of the late-season excitement during fall 1997.

Table 1. Fall 1997 Region III Summary.

	Maitland River ONT	Lewiston NY	Ruthven Park ONT	Long Pt ONT	Presque Isle PA	Hebron PA	Big Run PA
First Day	2 Aug	9 Sep	29 Jul	9 Aug	19 Jul	26 Jul	19 Sep
Last Day	31 Oct	9 Oct	5 Nov	13 Nov	18 Oct	12 Nov	29 Oct
Days Operated	73	12	47	97**	21	45	25
No. Nets Used	up to 33*	11-20	6-13	1-38	10-12	1-12	7-14
Total Net Hours	21,107	842.5	2440	12,339	1610	772	1158.5
Lrgst Daily Catch	52	67	88	342	71	44	34
Date of LDC	21 Oct	28 Sep	8 Oct	15 Oct	2 Oct	9 Nov	11 Oct
No. Banded 1996	530	311	632	8725	287	787	377
No. Banded 1997	1065	489	1158	9108	560	591	320
No. Species 1996	49	49	64	112	49	60	45
No. Species 1997	68	47	76	119	60	70	43
Birds/100 NH 1996	3.4	70.6	66	76.8	24	105	21
Birds/100 NH 1997	3.4	58	46	64.9	35	76.5	27
% HY 1996	84%	85%	84%	85%	NA	75%	51%
% HY 1997	79%	78%	84%	82%	70%	75%	38%

Table 1. Fall 1997 Region III Summary (cont'd.)

	Powdermill PA	Allegheny Front WV	Smith Farm VA 1996	Smith Farm VA 1997	Roan Mountain TN	Fernbank Forest GA	Zoo Atlanta GA	Lakeshore Est FL
First Day	2 Aug	10 Aug	21 Aug	30 Aug	19 Aug	27 Aug	5 Sep	23 Aug
Last Day	30 Nov	24 Oct	13 Nov	8 Dec	16 Oct	20 Nov	10 Oct	15 Nov
Days Operated	109	68	52	61	31	5	6	41
No. Nets Used	2-40	18-21	8-10	10	6-8	3	5	3-9
Total Net Hours	16,130	7648	4210	4985	636	45	180	2110
Lrgst Daily Catch	225	239	57	67	103	19	17	23
Date of LDC	11 Oct	5 Oct	4 Nov	20 Nov	21 Sep	20 Nov	26 Sep	8 Nov
No. Banded 1996	5381	2002	1339 (95)	752	428	NA	100	191
No. Banded 1997	6618	3843	752 (96)	1003	727	35	172	244
No. Species 1996	115	67	68 (95)	62	36	NA	24	35
No. Species 1997	108	72	62 (96)	62	45	13	24	42
Birds/100 NH 1996	31.5	29	24 (95)	19	128	NA	NA	12
Birds/100 NH 1997	41	50	18 (96)	20	114	77	43	12
% HY 1996	NA	NA	65% (95)	68%	65%	NA	NA	84%
% HY 1997	NA	NA	68% (96)	73%	73%	9%	19%	63%

* Plus some traps.

** 233 station hours (several sites operating simultaneously)

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 1997.

Maitland River Ont	Lewiston NY		Ruthven Park Ont		Long Point Ont		Presque Isl PA		Big Run PA		Hebron PA	
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY
192 SCJU (3)	63 WTSP (2)	71	136 SOSP (1)	92	1188 MYWA (3)	94	117 WTSP (6)	73 SOSP (1)	34	98 SCJU (1)	66	
80 BCCH	46 MAWA (8)	76	78 WTSP (2)	95	435 YWAR (7)	89	77 YWAR (8)	63 WTSP (3)	41	37 AMGO	50	
77 AMRO (6)	46 SWTH	67	77 YWAR (4)	80	434 MAWA (4)	94	37 GRCA (2)	17 COVE (2)	59	35 SOSP (3)	69	
76 GCKI (1)	39 GRCA (4)	95	73 MYWA (5)	97	377 RCKI (2)	61	26 SCJU	16 SWSP	50	34 HOFI (4)	80	
69 RCKI (3)	34 HETH (3)	91	63 SCJU (7)	74	377 WTSP	87	23 SWTH	13 HETH	54	33 AMRE (10)	60	
59 SOSP	29 RCKI (1)	86	56 HETH	100	353 LEFL	96	20 SOSP (5)	12 GRCA (6)	58	29 WTSP	85	
43 HETH (2)	23 BCCH (5)	96	49 GRCA (3)	84	340 GCKI (1)	83	20 GCKI (3)	10 EATO (10)	10	24 CSWA	75	
36 WIWR (9)	20 COGR	25	47 AMGO (9)	63	323 SCJU	78	16 HETH	8 MAWA (5)	0	20 MAWA	95	
35 MYWA (7)	19 GCKI (9)	100	41 RBGR	93	312 BRGR (6)	69	15 MAWA (7)	8 SCJU	25	18 BCCH (8)	60	
35 WTSP (8)	16 AMRO	100	36 HOWR (10)	65	291 HETH (5)	89		8 ETTI (9)	86	18 GRCA	66	

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 1997 (cont'd.)

Powdermill PA	Allegheny Front WV		Roan Mountain TN		Smith Farm VA		Fernbank Frst GA		Zoo Atlanta GA		Lakeshore Ests FL	
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY
812 SCJU (1)	606 BTBW (1)	74	149 SWTH (3)	71	164 WTSP (1)	56	11 WTSP (0)	25 GRCA (40)	36 WEVI (3)	67		
548 AMGO (2)	598 BLPW (2)	77	135 BTBW (2)	70	150 SCJU (3)	63	5 WOTH (0)	24 WTSP (0)	35 NOCA (1)	80		
429 PUFI	319 BTNW (5)	85	101 TEWA (4)	87	134 AMGO (2)	62	4 MYWA (0)	12 SWTH (17)	20 MYWA (2)	55		
366 WTSP (4)	258 BLJA	80	72 SCJU (1)	64	128 SOSP (4)	86	4 SWTH (50)	10 MYWA (0)	19 RCKI (7)			
348 MYWA (5)	209 SWTH (6)	82	45 WPWA	67	63 RCKI (6)		2 CARW (0)	9 BRTH (22)	14 ACFL (10)	7*		
281 CEDW	181 MAWA (10)	68	31 GCKI (6)		32 SWSP (8)	87	2 SOSP (0)	9 AMRO (11)	13 HOWA (8)	69		
270 SOSP (7)	153 TEWA (9)	71	26 MAWA	77	23 NOCA (5)	94	1 OVEN (100)	8 NOCA (38)	11 VEER	45		
260 COYE (6)	144 RCKI		17 CSWA (8)	65	20 HETH	88	1 VEER (0)	8 OVEN (50)	10 GRCA (5)	90		
214 GRCA (10)	141 SCJU (3)	58	16 RCKI (5)		20 PUFI (9)	70	1 SCTA (0)	7 ETTI (0)	7 BLJA (6)	100		
213 RTHU (9)	138 COYE (8)	81	16 RBGR	69	19 MYWA	58	1 NOCA (0)	7 CARW (C15)	6 OVEN	100		
									6 WOTH	50		

() position last year

* see narrative

436-0812

The Maitland River Bird Observatory was in operation from 2 August to 31 October with continuous daily coverage from 28 August to 31 October. Up to 33 mist nets (18 9-meter and 15 12-meter) and three ground traps were in use, resulting in the banding of 1065 birds of 68 species, with 78.6% HY. There were three retraps from previous years — all Slate-colored Juncos.

This was the 23rd year this station has operated in the fall and this fall we banded our 30,000th bird, fittingly a junco. Best birds were the station's eighth Yellow-throated Vireo, its second Cooper's Hawk, only its fourth Chipping Sparrow, its eighth Field Sparrow, and its seventh and eighth Rusty Blackbirds. Although Chipping and Field sparrows are common birds, they do not occur in the wooded river bottom where the station is located. The Evening Grosbeak was the first banded at the station since 1983.

The station was run by John Miles and ably assisted by Jamie and Steve Miles.

431-0790

In 1997 the Lewiston Banding Station was in operation for fall banding between 9 September and 9 October — eight days in September and four days in October. A total of 489 birds of 47 species were banded with the largest catch of 67 birds taken on 28 September. There were seven local retraps of four species.

This banding station operated as in past years. There are three separate net lanes totaling 20 nets. On most days all nets are opened. Weather conditions, bird movement, and other factors dictate if the full complement of nets is to be used. This banding operation is located at the 3F Conservation Club which comprises 374 acres of hard woods and second growth along with a good mixture of pines. Many berry bushes of different kinds are available. There are also three ponds, one totaling 32 acres, on the parcel.

The most noteworthy species banded were a Hooded Warbler on 9 September and a Connecticut Warbler on 14 September. Weather was not a major factor influencing total banding days this year.

As in the past, many individuals and groups came to the station to see banding first hand. Also, there were a total of seven talks on banding given to different organizations.

425-0795

At Ruthven Park, we are trying to improve our operation a little each year with the eventual aim of being able to operate as a migration monitoring site with continuous daily coverage throughout the banding period.

This fall we banded on 47 days (ten more than in 1996) and ran more nets — 10-13 (nearly twice as many as in 1996). After two years of experimentation we have established some excellent net placements which we will continue to use in the future. We more than doubled our net hours — 2,440 (962 in '96); nearly doubled the number of birds banded — 1,158 (632 in '96); and increased the number of people involved—12 (five in '96). This year we began experimenting with ground traps (thanks to a donation by John Miles) and we are hoping they will contribute significantly to our catch once we work out the placement bugs.

Net lanes were recleared (thanks to numerous volunteers) and nets erected on 28 July; banding began on 29 July. We were fairly busy through the first 10 days of August, followed by a dramatic slow-down for the next two weeks, probably attributable to some very unsettled weather. Interesting encounters during this period were an adult male Blue-winged Warbler and adult female Lawrence's Warbler netted side by side in the same net, raising the question of whether they might have been a mated pair. Banding did not pick up until the last week of August when we began to get a variety of warblers. In August we banded 329 birds but averaged only 27.7 birds/100 net hours. We banded on 12 days during the first three weeks of September with good numbers at the beginning of the month and then again between 14&18 September. "Good"

periods are characterized by mild temperatures, cloud or partial cloud cover, and light southwest winds. We had two interesting sightings during this period: a Peregrine Falcon flew over on 14 September and an adult Connecticut Warbler was seen on the 21st. In September we banded 306 birds and averaged 46.8 birds/100 net hours.

We banded on 10 days during the first three weeks of October, with really good numbers from 2-15 October. On 8 October we banded 88 birds, a new single-day record for Ruthven. We handled 68 White-throated Sparrows and 71 Myrtle Warblers in October—both highs for us. In October we banded 391 birds and averaged 88.3/100 net hours.

We banded only twice in the first week of November — 46 birds total, about half of which were Slate-colored Juncos. The ground traps proved to be quite effective at this time.

There were no foreign returns and none of “our” birds have been recovered thus far.

I would like to thank the following participants for their support and time: Marg Ludkin, John, Jamie and Steven Miles, Don and May Bull (who kept our lanes clear), Loretta Mousseau, Jim Smith, Jane Bowles, Sharon McBurney, and Geoff Ludkin. We were able to purchase equipment for this project through a grant from Canada Trust's Friends of the Environment Fund.

**Long Pt. Bird Obs. 423-0800, 423-0801, 423-0802
Port Rowan, Haldimand-Norfolk R.M.
Paul Prior and Jul Wojnowski**

If we look at the fall migration chronologically, three fairly distinct time periods can be identified, each carrying its own suite of species. As usual, August witnessed the departure of Yellow Warblers, orioles and flycatchers. These species are traditionally late to arrive in the spring, but early to depart in the fall. Peak counts occurred on 12 August (100 Yellow Warblers) and 23 August (18 Baltimore Orioles, 20 Yellow-bellied, 85 Traill's, and 75 Least flycatchers). By the end of August, over 1800 birds were banded.

The next phase — much of September — usually sees the departure of the bulk of the remaining

Neotropical migrants. This September was just about as disappointing as the preceding spring. In the first half of September, only 1060 birds were banded, with a peak day total of 191 birds for the three stations combined. Even mediocre-day tallies were few and far between. The second half of September was slightly more active with 1170 birds banded, despite two days of 200+ birds banded. During this period, the middle station, Breakwater, was shut for the season.

Then came the third period, October, which always sees the major departures of Temperate migrants. By and large, these species tend to arrive fairly early in the spring and depart late in the fall. This year, our fall banding totals were salvaged almost exclusively by another good run of Myrtle Warblers (1542 banded) and juncos helping out, too (639 banded). We also had reasonable success with owl banding in October. A total of 50 Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded at the Tip and Old Cut stations. The fall's only foreign recovery was a saw-whet banded in the fall of 1996 in Minnesota! As in recent years, owl banding was done on a casual basis with no tape-luring. The banding results were promising, and we will initiate a standardized owl monitoring program in fall 1998.

Unusual species banded included Bonaparte's Gull, Green Heron, Dickcissel, Northern Shrike, Yellow-breasted Chat and Tufted Titmouse.

Many thanks to our Warden (Graeme Gibson) and the 52 volunteers who contributed to another successful season at LPBO.

**Presque Isle State Park 420-0800
Erie, Erie County, PA
Ronald F. Leberman**

This was our 36th year of banding operations at the Presque Isle State Park. Lake Erie's water level was about three feet above normal, eliminating the use of our short net lanes along the edge of the bay. Two additional lanes were flooded from time to time but still usable.

Generally, July, August, and September were dry but with few cold fronts. October, however, was wild, windy and wet, ending with snow. Banding started on 19 July and ended on 18 October, with a total of

560 new birds of 59 species banded in 1,610 net hours (34.7 birds/100 net hours). An additional nine Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were caught and released unbanded. There were no unusual recoveries or returns reported this fall, and — a good sign — we found no deer ticks at the station.

Hebron
Coudersport, Potter Co., PA
David W. Hauber

414-0780

Banding at Hebron for the fall of 1997 was carried out from 26 July to 12 November in the same locations using the same net lanes as in the past. No traps were used this year.

This seems to be the year of incongruities. We caught fewer (record low) birds but of more species (record high). Banding was conducted on 45 days, with 700 birds handled. There were 591 new birds banded of 70 species, 46 returns and 63 repeats. New species for the station were Pine Warbler and Red-bellied Woodpecker (and the Northern Saw-whets - see below). Species banded regularly but missing in 1997 were Eastern Phoebe, White-crowned Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, (all for the second year in a row), Field Sparrow and Northern Cardinal. We have banded 92 species and one subspecies during fall migration since 1989.

The following were banded in record high numbers: Evening Grosbeak 10 (5.6), American Redstart 33 (11.2), Magnolia Warbler 20 (13.3), and Swainson's Thrush 9 (4.5). (The number in parenthesis is the yearly average since 1989).

The following were banded in smaller numbers than the yearly average: House Finch 34 (62.6), Tennessee Warbler 2 (10.4), Song Sparrow 35 (99.2), Indigo Bunting 10 (131.5), Common Yellowthroat 12 (28.4), Scarlet Tanager 2 (15.8).

This year we also started participating in a No. Saw-whet Owl banding project. There were five stations in PA participating. The Hebron station set two to six nets on 17 nights, using tapes to call the birds. We used two sites — one where we had existing fall migration net lanes at my residence and a new site two miles away. Sixteen saw-whets were banded at the new site on nine nights (with one repeat) and nine were banded at the existing site

(with one repeat and one screech-owl) for a total of 25 saw-whet owls. We spent 180 net hours to catch the 25 saw-whets and one screech-owl. These totals are not included in the figures for my normal migration banding.

Many thanks to Gary Witmer and family and Mike Phillippe for all their help during 1997.

Big Run
New Castle, Lawrence Co., PA
Robert C. Baldesberger, Jr.

410-0801

The fall 1997 season was Big Run's second fall migration in operation. There were necessary operational changes made causing a noticeable difference between this fall and last. Nets were open for a total of 25 days between 19 September and 29 October — six in September and 19 in October. We accumulated a total of 1158.5 net hours (630.5 less than last fall). The nets available for opening increased to a maximum of 14, and this pushed the average number of nets up from 8.8 to 11.5 per day. Conversely, the hours of operation per day were lowered from an average of 5.3 to 4.2, resulting in only a slightly lower average of net hours per day (from 49.4 to 44.6).

A total of 397 birds were captured; 320 were banded. There were only 12 escapes and two released unbanded this year, down from a whopping 46 and 21 respectively last year. A total of 64 recaptures and no foreign returns were recorded. Nine of the recaptures were banded in the fall of '96, 10 were banded during spring migration or MAPS netting, and 45 were this fall's birds.

Eleven species previously banded were not banded this fall, but all but three of these were observed in and around the net lanes. We had the good fortune of adding nine new species to the fall migration list. They included Golden-crowned Kinglet, Cape May Warbler, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Yellow Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Blue-headed Vireo, White-breasted Nuthatch, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Northern Saw-whet Owl.

Thirty-four species banded in '96 were also banded this fall; 16 species decreased in number, 11 increased, and seven remained the same. Most of the decreased numbers (except for Northern Car-

dinal which was down by five) can be attributed to missing early September. There were significant increases in Swamp Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, and Ruby-crowned Kinglet.

My thanks go to Mr. and Mrs. George Casselberry, for the use of their land. And my wife Liz, mom Pat, dad Bob, and son Bobby all have my thanks for helping out and their support. Next fall's operation should be more consistent with this fall, and there should be no early September days missed.

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

A total of 6618 birds (106 species plus two additional named subspecies) was banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve during fall 1997; overall, a statistically average season. In general, the earlier migrating species of flycatchers and warblers were captured in moderate numbers; later migrants, especially some of the sparrows and finches, were netted in good numbers. The weather was generally mild, with few strong fronts.

Of 63 species banded in numbers large enough to be analyzed, four (Hermit Thrush, 61 banded; Kentucky Warbler, 22; Dark-eyed Junco, 812; and Fox Sparrow, 67) were banded in numbers that were 2 S.D. s above the average of the last ten years. Another ten species were 1 S.D. above average, and just seven were netted in numbers 1 S.D. below average. The best day was 11 October when 225 birds of 22 species were banded, including 53 White-throated and 40 Swamp sparrows

A Northern Saw-whet Owl banded on 22 October was our first in several years. A near record 213 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (+1 S.D. above average) were banded between 2 August and 28 September. Four Orange-crowned Warblers were banded between 4 and 22 October; one of these (a bird clearly representing one of the western subspecies) repeated in the nets as late as 30 October. The six Cerulean Warblers banded between 2 and 14 August represented our best fall total ever. For the second year in a row we detected virtually no fall movement of Black-capped Chickadees; the 28 banded tied 1996 as our lowest fall total ever. A well-marked Oregon Junco was banded on 19

October. We banded 429 Purple Finches, 87 Evening Grosbeaks, and five Pine Siskins, the vanguard, as it turned out, of a northern finch "superflight" throughout much of the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic region.

Among several recent recoveries of fall-banded birds at Powdermill was an HY Song Sparrow netted at the Reserve on 29 October 1995 and recovered 10 July 1996 at Presque Isle, Maine, some 1,155 km to the northeast. A Chipping Sparrow banded as an immature at Powdermill in October 1993 was found dead (610 km SSW) three years later at Fort Lawn, South Carolina, in December 1996. And, an adult male Purple Finch netted at Powdermill in October 1993 was found dead near Frankfort, Kentucky (535 km WSW) in February 1996. Formal presentations were given by the banders to 263 people in 18 groups this fall. This included field trips for a half dozen university classes, and a program on the use of banding as a teaching aid was given as part of a course for the Pennsylvania Wildlife Federation's Conservation Workshop for Educators held at Powdermill in August. There were also an additional 150+ casual visitors to the Station during the period to whom we provided informal banding demonstrations.

The following volunteers contributed greatly to the success of the banding program this season: Jeff Bewsher, Kelly Caruso, Mary Helen Chiodo, Don Connell, Don Koch, Carroll Labarthe, Grant Milliron, Bonnie Mulvihill, Barb Rich, Matt Sarver, Carole Shanahan, Bob Shaw, Mike and Evaleen Watko, and Steve Yokim.

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

The fortieth year of bird banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory was moderately successful. The number of birds banded was higher than in the last two years, but was still far below (34% below) the long-term average. The station was in continuous operation from 10 August to 13 October, as well as seven additional days in late October. The station was closed on three days because of inclement weather but some banding was carried out on 68 days.

A total of 3843 birds (fifth poorest) of 78 species (average value) was banded with a station effort of 7648 net hours (second highest) giving a capture ratio of 50.25 birds/100 net hours (fourth lowest). The station has now banded 167,480 birds of 119 species. No new species were captured this year.

Twelve birds banded at the station in past years were recaptured: a junco banded in 1991, a robin in 1994, a junco and a Common Yellowthroat from 1995, and eight birds from 1996.

The migration pattern followed a classical pattern except that the events were all later than normal. Thus, despite the passage of several frontal systems, no significant migration developed in August and the first substantial flights occurred 6-8 September, a week or so late. The first major movement, which came 14 September, was followed by two weeks of low activity. The heaviest wave of the season came in early October, 10 days to a week late. In four days, 749 birds were banded, with Blue Jays and Blackpoll Warblers especially numerous in this flight. A small flight of kinglets came a week later but from mid-October on, there was little movement and the usual big flights of juncos and kinglets did not occur. The highest count was 239 bandings on 5 October. On two other days (14 September and 11 October) the count exceeded 200 and on 12 days more than 100 were banded.

The Black-throated Blue Warbler with 606 bandings was the most numerous species. This figure is 6.5% below the 10-year average. The Blackpoll Warbler with 598 bandings (8% above average) and the Black-throated Green Warbler with 261 bandings (30% below average) were next in line. Of 42 species for which meaningful analysis could be made, 24 were in numbers below the 10-year average but only seven of these were more than 1 S.D. below that average. Thirteen species were in numbers above the 10-year average, with two more than 1 S.D. above the average, and Hermit Thrush and Purple Finch were more than 2 S.D. above average. In interpreting these data, it is important to recall that the 10-year average is decreasing as the years of high numbers recede into the past.

As a group, the Neotropical migrants were 45% below the 10-year average. The 2446 warblers banded was 18% below the average. Two of

the "budworm specialists" had stronger showings than in 1996; Tennessee Warbler, 58% below average; Bay-breasted Warbler, 74% below average; but Cape May Warbler (83% below average) was in lower numbers than last year. Hermit Thrush, which was 75% above average, continued its good showing, and the other thrushes were not as far below average as in the last two years.

Only seven flycatchers were banded, but after being absent last year, the Red-breasted Nuthatch staged a good flight with average numbers. An interesting feature of the season was the unusual number of "southern" species captured at this "boreal" station: Carolina Chickadee, Eastern Tufted Titmouse, Kentucky Warbler, and Northern Cardinal.

The visual migrant counts were continued but lack of manpower curtailed these counts after 1 October. The Blue Jay flight was very heavy with 10,200 counted for the season and 2600 logged on 30 September. Large number of jays flew by on 1-5 October but no counts were made on those days. An unusually high number of jays were banded. Other seasonal counts were 724 (highest ever) Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, 4089 American Goldfinches, and 2100 Monarch Butterflies.

During the season 1598 people from 19 states, District of Columbia, Ontario, Germany, France, and England signed the visitor's book. The educational part of our operation continued with several elementary and high school classes as well as college classes visiting the station.

The banders who participated this year were Lynn Barnhart, Robert Dean, Walter Fye, LeJay Graffious, Sue Heselton, Steve Huy, 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. Beth and Randy Ritter were campground hosts and JoAnn and Phil Graham took over this job when Randy was incapacitated. JoAnn Graham made most of the Blue Jay-hummingbird counts, and Steve Huy was the owl bander. Others who were present for extended periods of time were Ken Heselton, Carol and Fred McCullough, and Carl Rowe. Kevin Dodge and his students helped

in dismantling the shelter. An additional 44 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 Elizabeth Schuppert, 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.

Smith Farm
Madison, Madison County, VA
Edgar Smith

382-0781

The weather was generally mild with a few good fronts. The season started very slowly with 20 days and 1700 net hours required to band the first hundred birds (only 200 net hours were needed to band the eighth hundred birds). Indigo Buntings were much scarcer, only 14 this year, compared to 42 in '96. Phoebes recovered a bit to 14 from a low of four in '96. Common Yellowthroats moved up from one in '96 to 10 this year, on the list of most common species.

There were 36 returns, none of which was notable. Three birds were infected with avian pox, three with hypoboscids flies, and one with a tick.

This year, I extended the fall reporting season to 8 December, thus adding a late Blue-headed Vireo on 19 November, many more juncos, sparrows, and goldfinches. My best day of the autumn was 67 on 20 November.

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

360-8206

This was the second consecutive autumn banding season at Carver's Gap on Roan Mountain. The weather was generally good, with little rain, as most frontal systems were dry. At this high elevation (5512 ft) strong winds are frequent and several days were unsuitable because of it. Nets were set up from sunrise until shortly after noon. A combination of 6m, 9m, and 12m nets were used, with net hours adjusted accordingly. Banding seven days

more than last year and the use of two additional nets resulted in a significant increase in net hours.

Two major surges of migrants were noted, both in the wake of cold fronts. The 21 September flight (103 birds banded) consisted mostly of warblers, particularly Tennessees and Palms. Thrushes, mainly Swainson's, made up the bulk of the flight on 2-3 October (51 and 58 birds banded respectively). The juncos, Golden-crowned Kinglets, and Red-breasted Nuthatches probably were all local residents. Most transients move through this high mountain gap rapidly, as evidenced by just seven individuals repeating with a range of four to 14 days between encounters. Three juncos banded last fall were recaptured. A Carolina Chickadee was slightly unusual at this high elevation. Four hummingbirds were released unbanded.

Probably the most significant banding was of an HY Hermit Thrush on 12 September, weeks before the first likely migrant on 8 October. This bird was most likely from the small locally breeding population. In fact, this may represent the first evidence of breeding by this species in Tennessee or North Carolina other than the previously documented presence of territorial males.

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

Fernbank Science Center
Atlanta, Fulton County, GA
Georgann Schmalz

334-0842

The banding station in Fernbank Forest near Atlanta is a small operation, done primarily for educational purposes. When we net birds like Scarlet Tanagers and Veerys, students are impressed with quality rather than quantity. Fall and winter banding is also producing quite a few recaptures of White-throated Sparrows and Yellow-rumped Warblers. If El Niño had gone away and the rains let up, we would have caught even more.

Zoo Atlanta
Atlanta, Fulton County, GA
Debra Forthman
(See tables 1 and 2.)

334-0842

Lakeshore Estates
Tallahassee, Leon County, FL
Peter H. Homann

302-0841

The name of this banding station belies the fact that there is no "lakeshore" within one mile of my residence and the adjacent woods where netting is done. In the woods, my favorite site for nets is a temporary bog near a weedy clearing with a telecommunication tower. This year, surface water disappeared from this bog during the last week of August, returned for a few days early in September, and then did not accumulate again until late October when a long dry-spell had ended. Fortunately, the dry weather came late enough in the year not to have had any adverse effect on the crop of wild berries. Perhaps as a consequence, bird life and migratory activity were what I consider normal for my banding station.

Thrushes were banded again in average numbers after a hiatus in '96. Until this fall, a single Tennessee Warbler captured in '82 was the only encounter with this species during 25 years of banding. This year I netted two individuals at remarkably late dates: one on 15 November and another on 7 De-

cember, i.e. after the period covered by this report. About three times the usual number of Acadian Flycatchers were netted, but this may not have been due to a greater abundance of this species but the result of a 25m relocation of one net lane into a patch of tall understory which turned out to be a favorite haunt of the flycatchers. All except one of the 14 Acadian Flycatchers had fully ossified skulls. This observation provides further support for the suggestion made in my 1996 report that individuals from populations that pass through my banding area between late August and the middle of October cannot be aged by skulling.

On the sunny morning of 28 September, I felt as if I had been transported to my banding territory in the Canadian woods when sounds of two or three songs of a Magnolia Warbler appeared to come from high above in the trees. Never before had I heard warblers sing here on their fall migration — was I dreaming? (I netted five Magnolia Warblers between 21 September and 12 October).

One captured House Finch obviously suffered from conjunctivitis, and a rather skinny catbird lacked its left leg, apparently from an old injury because the stump was fully healed.

