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Atlantic Flyway Review: Piedmont-coastal Plain Region Iv - Fall 1997

North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review:

Piedmont-Coastal Plain Region IV -Fall1997

H. David Leake, Coordinator

Chicahauk Station

Box 2616

Kitty Hawk, NC 27949

New address after 1 Dec 1998:

2A Ginguite Trail

Southern Shores, NC 27949

Once again Region IV continues to change. We were happy to have Chandler Robbins join our district from Laurel, MD. Ron Runkles changed the location of his station to Hollywood, MD, to find a more productive location in which to band. Fernback Forest station's report was moved to the AFR III Region because of its inland location. We are striving to have Region IV chiefly a coastal region. In addition, James Island did not report due to a lack of assistants and curatorial duties at the Charleston Museum that prevented Will Post from banding. He hopes to return next year.

This year's migration produced almost the same number of birds as last year; 12,961 this year against 13,274 in 1996. Considering that James Island did not operate this year, the numbers are fairly consistent. The weather produced few cold fronts, so some stations had poor results; but this was offset by some stations extending their banding days into November. Seven stations reported peak days in October, one each in September and November. One notable absence was the lack of Golden-crowned Kinglets; none appeared on the list of "10 most common species." The following is a list of the 10 most common species from Region IV.

- | | |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. MYWA- 3770 | 6. BTBW - 268 |
| 2. COYE - 2191 | 7. NOWA-268 |
| 3. WPWA- 1060 | 8. NOCA- 190 |
| 4. GRCA - 852 | 9. PRAW- 181 |
| 5. AMRE - 615 | 10. OVEN- 155 |

REGION IV

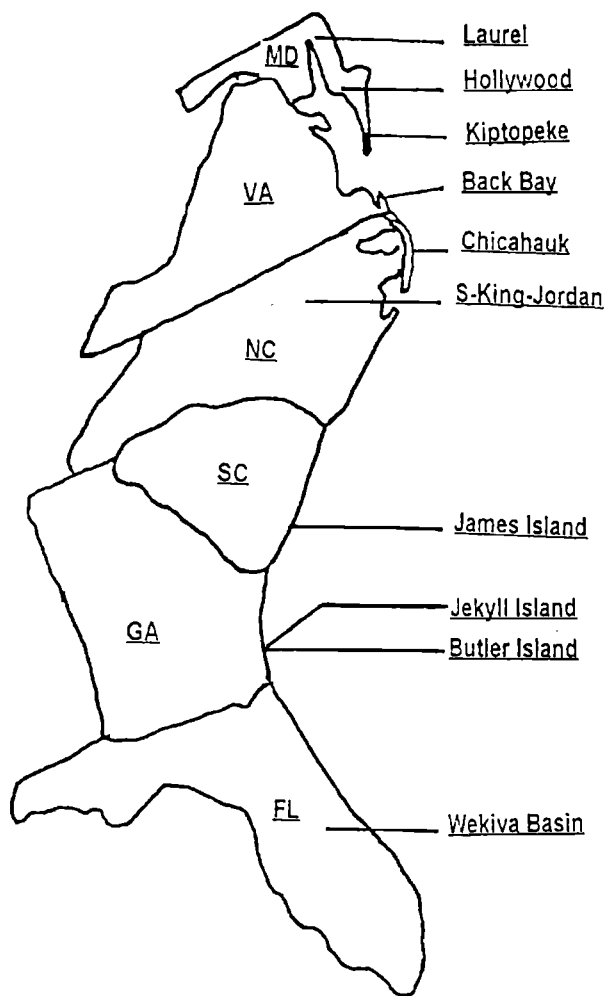


Table 1. Fall 1997. Region IV Summary.

	Laurel MD	Hollywood MD	Kiptopeke VA	Back Bay NC	Chicahauck NC
First Day/Last Day	18 Aug/29 Nov	16 Aug/26 Oct	30 Aug/6 Nov	26 Sep/9 Nov	18 Aug/9 Nov
Days Oper.	86	22	62	N/A	27
No. Nets Used	3 to 17	3 to 5	20 to 24	1 to 95	3 to 5
Total Net Hours	5214	198	9053	N/A	791
Largest Daily Catch	42	20	391	203	10
Date of Lrg. Catch	19 Oct	4 Oct	20 Oct	4 Nov	4 Oct
Birds Banded 1996	356	N/A	3360	2208	137
Birds Banded 1997	437	101	4626	1207	84
Diff. Species 1996	53	N/A	83	71	27
Diff. Species 1997	57	37	83	69	18
Date of GSD*	30 Aug	14 Sep & 4 Oct	7 Oct	2 Oct	4 Oct
No. GSD*	13	8	27	24	8
Birds/100 NH-1996	7.76	N/A	44	N/A	12
Birds/100 NH-1997	8.38	51	51	N/A	9.3
% HY Birds 1996	69%	N/A	87%	98%	89%
% HY Birds 1997	67%	44%	86%	96.60%	83%

* GSD = Greatest Species Diversity

Table 1. Fall 1997. Region IV Summary (con't).

	S-King-J NC	James Isl SC	Jekyll Isl GA	Butler Isl GA	Wekiva Basin FL
First Day/Last Day	2 Aug/16 Nov	No	21 Sep/19 Oct	31 Aug/2 Nov	9 Sep/31 Oct
Days Oper.	17	Report	29	62	60
No. Nets Used	2 to 4	For	4 to 12	3 to 11	8 to 23
Total Net Hours	217	1997	1315	2530	4355.87
Largest Daily Catch	19		385	121	126
Date of Lrg. Catch	18 Oct		29 Sep	29 Oct	3 Oct
Birds Banded 1996	101		2653	2098	686
Birds Banded 1997	154		2626	1978	1748
Diff. Species 1996	23		56	51	49
Diff. Species 1997	27		51	51	64
Date of GSD*	13 Sep		30 Sep	22 Sep	23 Sep
No. GSD*	8		21	16	20
Birds/100 NH-1996	73		195	88	25.4
Birds/100 NH-1997	71		200	78	40.1
% HY Birds 1996	87%		93%	84%	47%
% HY Birds 1997	70%		94%	87%	48%

* GSD = Greatest Species Diversity

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species - 1997.

Laurel MD			Hollywood MD			Kiptopeke VA			Back Bay NC			Chicahauk NC		
		% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY
39	WTSP (2)	52	10	NOCA	60	2648	MYWA (1)	87	745	MYWA (1)	98.4	22	NOCA (1)	68
36	CACH	69	9	GRCA	22	310	AMRE (2)	94	61	BLPW (9)	88.5	21	CACH (2)	76
34	MYWA	68	8	YBCH	62	183	COYE (3)	86	51	WPWA (5)	100	10	CARW (8)	80
34	NOCA (7)	74	8	ETTI		132	BTBW (4)	92	46	GRCA (4)	97.8	7	COGR (4)	100
32	GRCA (1)	84	7	ACFL	57	121	GRCA (5)	93	28	AMRE	100	4	BRTH (7)	50
31	ETTI	18	6	FISP	50	87	RCKI	24	27	REVI	96.3	3	MODO (9)	33
23	AMRO	23	6	CACH		82	WTSP	78	24	SWSP	100	3	BLJA (3)	66
23	MAWA (7)	23	5	WEVI	40	78	WPWA (6)	92	23	COYE (6)	95.7	2	REVI (5)	100
14	SWTH	14	4	WOTH	75	72	SOSP	83	13	SSHA	100	2	AMRE (10)	50
13	AMRE (6)	6	4	CARW	25	58	NOCA	66	13	YBCH	92.3	2	ETTI	100
13	OVEN (5)	5												

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species - 1997 (con't)

S-King-J NC			James Isl SC			Jekyll Isl GA			Butler Isl GA			Wekiva Basin FL		
		% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY			% HY
34	MYWA (2)	68		No		907	COYE (1)	99	769	COYE (2)	95	432	GRCA (2)	61
30	NOCA (1)	90		Report		897	WPWA (2)	96	309	MYWA (1)	82	309	COYE (3)	49
15	AMGO (7)	40		for		151	AMRE (3)	85	232	NOWA (3)	85	156	VEER (6)	53
12	ETTI (6)	83		1997		135	PRAW (4)	92	143	GRCA (4)	96	142	OVEN (4)	37
10	CACH (8)	90				82	BTBW (5)	77	62	PABU (5)	81	111	AMRE (1)	50
10	SCJU	60				71	GRCA (7)	96	58	INBU (6)	67	59	HOWR (9)	48
5	RBNU	40				67	REVI	99	45	SWSP (9)	76	54	BTBW (5)	44
4	DOWO	100				45	PABU (9)	93	39	NOCA	51	46	PRAW (10)	48
4	MAWA	100				36	NOWA	100	34	WPWA	91	44	WEVI (7)	25
4	MODO	100				33	WEVI	100	31	NOMO	90	43	SWTH	56

() = Rank 1996

Robbins Nest
Laurel, MD
Chandler S. Robbins

390-0765

The 25th year of fall banding at this back yard station atop the Patuxent River gorge between Laurel and the I-95 bridge netted more birds of summer and winter resident species than migrants. Myrtle Warbler was the only one of the six commonest species captured that is primarily a transient here. My 5214 net-hours, my fourth highest, were 48% above the 24-year mean of 3512, but the only species to exceed their previous high were Carolina Chickadee and Magnolia Warbler. Part of the reason for my low catch per 100 net-hours in recent years is the dieoff of dogwood from anthracnose and destruction of the shrub layer in my mature woods by an overpopulation of deer. For the first time, deer destroyed three of my nets. We also had the driest summer in decades, which killed some of the shallow-rooted vegetation this year.

The greatest declines from last year were in catbird (51 to 32), Hermit Thrush (27 to 12), and Black-and-white Warbler (11 to 3), and the greatest increases were in Myrtle Warbler (2 to 34), Carolina Chickadee (6 to 36), and Tufted Titmouse (10 to 31). The biggest changes from the mean of the first five years (1973-77) to the most recent five years (1993-97), not corrected for the 147% increase in net-hours, are increases in Ruby-throated Hummingbird (1.2 to 7.6), Black-throated Blue Warbler (1.8 to 11.6), Common Yellowthroat (5.0 to 17.6), and House Finch (0.2 to 6.0), and decreases in Swainson's Thrush (26.6 to 17.2), Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush (9.4 to 3.8), Scarlet Tanager (6.6 to 2.2), and American Goldfinch (3.0 to 0.4).

The oldest of my 39 returns were a six-year-old Gray Catbird and a five-year-old Carolina Chickadee. Two birds banded here during the fall migration of 1995 were found to the northeast of here in the summer of 1997: a Ruby-throated Hummingbird (8000-85102) in Philadelphia, PA, and a Hermit Thrush (1521-58503) at Wentworth, NH. A Savannah Sparrow was the 121st species banded on our suburban wooded hectare.

Greenwell Field Station
Hollywood, MD
Ron Runkles

392-0763

For the 1997 fall banding season, I relocated about 10 miles southeast of the Laurel Grove Banding Station to Greenwell State Park, near Hollywood, MD. This state park is comprised of an old farm on the west side of the Patuxent River. Soybeans are still harvested in some fields, while other fields remain fallow and are in early successional stages. Forested patches of deciduous and mixed deciduous-coniferous are scattered over the property.

I generally located two of my nets in old hedgerows between fallow fields. The other three nets were placed in open areas of a small pine plantation situated between two stands of large, second growth deciduous trees. This location is about a half mile west of the Patuxent River. We are still searching for the best locations for our nets. Greenwell State Park encompasses some 600 acres. We hope that a permanent banding station can be established here, that could operate spring and fall.

Banding efforts were rained on on most weekends from mid-October into November. Thus, the Myrtle Warbler, kinglet, and sparrow migrations through this area for the most part were missed. We were encouraged by the variety of flycatchers and wood warblers we captured. Thirteen flycatchers, representing four species, and twenty-three wood warblers representing thirteen species. Our most interesting capture included a Connecticut Warbler and a Winter Wren on 13 Sep and two Traill's Flycatchers, 30 Aug and 10 Sep. The Winter Wren was unusually early for this particular area, even though they breed about 200 miles west of this field station and are reported almost as early in the fall to the south at Point Lookout State Park (also in St. Mary's County, MD.)

At least fourteen different people visited our banding site during the weekends from as far away as Long Island, NY, and Texas.

Kiptopeke Banding Station**370-0755**

Townsend, VA

Donald Schwab

The season was expanded, opening one week earlier and remaining open one week later, increasing our operating days to 62. A few early migrants were captured during the first week, while the last week of the expanded season accounts in part for the increases in Myrtle Warblers and sparrows. Between 14 Sep and 21 Oct there were six days with 20 or more different species. A Cerulean Warbler was banded, the first since 1986. There were 152 recaptures of birds banded in 1997. There were also 17 returns of birds banded previously at Kiptopeke and two foreign returns. This year the station operations were supported by two full-time banding interns.

Back Bay**363-0755**

Sandbridge, VA

Rob Simpson

Our banding program at Lord Fairfax Community College offered two courses this year associated with bird banding. Field Biology 1 was the basic introductory course. This course gave students practice in net selection, net set-up, bird identification, bird handling and banding. These students also provided help for the more advanced students. The second course, entitled Special Studies in Wildlife Techniques, was for the more advanced students. This program provided instruction in aging, sexing, skulling, feather characteristics, molt, feather wear, and actual banding.

We are also developing a computer program to evaluate the large amount of data collected during our operation. We hope to be able to provide next year the data that we had to list as N/A for this year.

The number of birds banded in this year's migration was far below last year's totals. This year, 1207 birds were banded compared to 2208 last year. This was largely due to the decrease in Yellow-rumped Warblers, 745 in 1997 compared to 1538 in 1996. We did have two near misses: a Gray Kingbird and a Western Kingbird sighted at the same time on either side of one of our nets but neither went into the net; still it was a great thrill.

Ann Simpson, Gary Sargent, and many students were responsible for this year's results.

Chicahauk**360-0754**

Kitty Hawk, NC

H. David Leake

This will be the last year for this station location. Four days my nets remained empty for over seven hours. On other days I caught as few as three or four birds. As the AFR period continued, I found that I was recapturing local birds, some several times. Of the "ten most commonly caught species," only two were migrants, the rest were local year-round birds. The decline started last year but became acute this year. I suspect the reason to be caused partially by the continued housing development around my home. It also seemed to be a very late migration in this area. Several species that are normally winter residents did not show up until January 1998. I did not see an American Robin, White-throated Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco or Ruby-crowned Kinglet in my backyard during the AFR period. Next year I shall try to find another more productive banding site.

Scott King-Jordan Gameland**355-0785**

Durham, NC

Liz Pullman

For the entire year, 1997 brought a new low in birds banded. This was not particularly evident in the "Fall Summary." I really had a sparse record of summer birds, very noticeable because of the constant effort of M.A.P.S. My personal theory is that the local summer breeders that were still around early in September of 1996 were decimated by the hurricane.

The first "cold" front came through on 4 Aug, accompanied by migration/dispersal of these species—Northern Parula, Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Prothonotary Warbler and Common Yellowthroat. Another front on 19 Aug brought in Hooded Warblers and *Empidonax* flycatchers, as well as more of the above species. The next major front occurred on 4 Sep. Most of the above species were still present but several new species appeared. We banded a

Rose-breasted Grosbeak and observed a Black-throated Warbler and a Blue-headed Vireo. We were in a stagnant period until 15 Oct, then the weather shifted to cool and rainy. Nevertheless, a few good birds arrived. The first Myrtle Warbler on 11 Oct, first Slate-colored Junco on 13 Oct and the first Ruby-crowned Kinglet on 14 Oct. The weather shift on 15 Oct sparked a major flight of Myrtle Warblers, Dark-eyed Juncos, White-throated and Song sparrows and Golden-crowned Kinglets.

The first killing frost occurred on 7 Nov. By that time our winter birds had all arrived, including a Fox Sparrow on 7 Nov. The irruption of winter finches hasn't reached southern Durham County yet, but it has been a fantastic year for Red-breasted Nuthatches, seven banded this year.

Jekyll Island
Brunswick, GA
Don Cohrs

310-0812

This year (1997) marked the 20th year of banding on Jekyll Island; 40,193 birds of 110 species and 1 subspecies have been banded. That is a lot of data recording and a lot of enjoyment. With luck and good health, Don hopes to get 25 years in.

JIBS operated 12 nets for 29 days from 7:15 AM until the birds stopped moving. We lost very little time due to rain. We banded 47% of our total in four days starting 29 September and ending 2 October. This was our longest sustained large catch of birds. Our species count was average; our basic populations were in usual numbers.

Western Palm Warblers were down from our historic levels again. Due to heavy rainfall two days prior to set-up, the path to some new-growth myrtles was seriously flooded. Maybe next year we will get something set up out there.

During our four day flood of birds, we had Edith Andrews of Nantucket with us. Her help as a bander was essential; Lydia Thompson and I could not have done it without Nantucket Nan. Other assistants included: Chris Pitman, Joan Hesterberg, Roger Atchison, Paige Mulhollan, Noah Owen-Ashley, LaMont Albertson, and many other greatly appreciated band-aides.

Butler Island Altamaha Station **312-0812**
Darien, GA
Doris Cohrs

At BIAS we had an interesting year, closely comparable to 1996 in many ways. Fortunately, we had no reoccurrence of the flooding problems of last year, a few sloshy times but no over-the boot-top days this year. The number of birds were similar and the number of species was the same as in 1996. This year we did not get the flood of MYWA's during the final week or so. This was a relief. Last year's 925 "butter-butts" was a bit overwhelming. We ended with a flourish by catching an adult male SSHA. Gorgeous red eyes! This made up for falling just short of 2000 birds for the season.

The weather pattern was essentially flat. Only two weak cold fronts came through and had little effect on numbers of birds at this location. The station was closed only two days because of bad weather.

There were fewer returns than in 1996 but some of them were noteworthy. One NOWA, one MYWA, and one SOSP banded in '95 were obviously returning migrants/winter residents. One PABU, originally banded as an adult in '95, was either a migrant through Butler Island or a local breeder and at least three years old. One MYWA banded in '95 was a return in '96 as well as this year. Winter site fidelity seems fairly obvious.

I had a great deal of excellent assistance this year. Special thanks go to Mary Nevill, Keith Tassin, Steve Holzman, and Don Cohrs. Other stalwart helpers included: Beth Turner, Gordon Hight, Frank Widincamp, and several other part-time helpers. Non-human participants included our ubiquitous and almost tame marsh rabbits, a pair of river otters, a young alligator, a yellow rat snake, a twice-caught Sora, and a frequently caught Green Heron (both released unbanded.)

Wekiva Basin GEOPark **284-0812**
Apopka, FL
Parks Small / Erik Egensteiner

This year was a pleasant surprise over 1996. We opened a second array of nets approximately four

miles away from our original site and found much better netting. We ended up with 2161 total captures: 1748 banded, 293 recaptured, and 120 birds released due to a lack of bands. Several recaptures and two foreign recoveries highlighted the year. One Common Yellowthroat was banded at Fort Bragg, NC, July 1997 and a Prairie Warbler was banded near Cape May in 1991. Locally we recaptured three Ovenbirds banded in 1996 and three banded in 1995. We also had one Common Yellowthroat and one Northern Parula banded in 1994. We also caught a Bicknell's Thrush which may be the first confirmed report for the Florida peninsula.

The weather was very kind this year with only one rainy day. The deer seem to still enjoy running through our nets and have convinced the pigs to

join the game. Several black bear were sighted while netting but so far none have joined the net crashing game. Without the continued help from assistant banders Richard Poole, Shane Belson and Bob Wheeler, we would not have been able to accumulate as many hours as we did.

This year we asked all volunteers to record the mileage they traveled to visit the station and by the end of the season volunteers had driven 5028 miles, one way! That figure does not include the out-of-state visitors. Three local schools made regular visits and were featured on the local TV news. It still amazes me that while the hands of some adults shake in fear while holding birds, most children would fight to get their hands on a live bird. Everyone seemed to enjoy the season and are looking forward to the fall of 1998.

