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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region 1 (Northeast) – Fall 2002

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This report is long overdue and I apologize for that. I have had to rely on old stand-bys for 2002 and did not solicit any new stations. But that I can do right now by asking new contributors to send their 2003 results directly to me at the address above or, better yet, by e-mail to tdean@huntsmanmarine.ca.

Overall, the numbers of birds banded and birds per 100 net hours (b/100nh) was down across the Northeast region. Only Laurentian reported an increase in captures from 2001 to 2002 (see Table 1).

Weather had a major influence as usual, with hot, dry conditions prevailing in some regions. "Desert-like" is what they called it on Appledore Island, where crisp, brown vegetation and wizened fruit

greeted birds and bander alike. Winds were to blame in other areas as they were from the wrong direction—the southeast—during the expected peak migration period.

It was a year of "quality, not quantity," with many stations reporting exciting new captures and one capturing a new species in its 36th year!

Chickadee numbers were down after the invasion and there were no reports of recaptures. from last year's mass movement. Kinglets and Myrtles were back on top at most stations, while Red-eyed Vireo and Gray Catbird continue to be the most commonly banded species at Appledore Island and Block Island, respectively (see Table 2).

The dates of "largest catch" spanned the season from 5 Aug to 24 Oct, and the "largest catches" varied from 338 to 14 birds. It seems the birds just did not find/stop at Seal Island this year. Hopefully, they will next year.

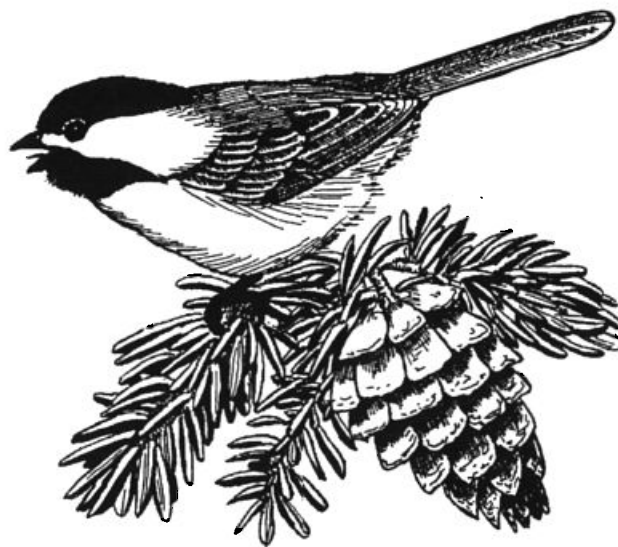


Table 1. AFR Region I - Northeast - Fall 2002 Summary

	Laurentians QC	St. Andrews NB	Bon Portage Is., NS	Seal Island NS	Appledore Is. ME	Block Island RI	Island Beach S.P., NJ
First Day	5 Aug	5 Aug	21 Aug	18 Sep	15 Aug	7 Sep	7 Aug
Last Day	26 Sep	1 Nov	25 Oct	18 Oct	1 Oct	2 Nov	15 Nov
Days Opened	49	63	54	21	48	45	45
No. Nets Used	4 - 9	5 - 14	10 - 15	10 - 15	9	3 - 11	4 - 24.5
Total Net Hours	2663	3834	4328	1217	4716	3774	3165
Birds Banded 2001	259	1214	2628	239	2565	1413	3720
Birds Banded 2002	359	1177	1597	97	1892	1104	2875
Diff Species 2001	33	58	76	44	77	66	77
Diff Species 2002	40	60	68	26	79	70	79
Birds/100nh 2001	10	57	63	22	50	52	107
Birds/100nh 2002	14	31	37	8	40	29	91
Largest Daily Catch	19	53	215	14	108	101	338
Date of Lg.Dly.Ctch.	5 Aug	25 Sep	24 Oct	30 Sep	17 Sep	21 Oct	21 Oct
% Hatch Year (***)	80%	73%	90%	83%	94%	na	93%
% Hatch Year (**)							83%

(**) HY% calculated as number of HY / total number of known-age birds.

(***) HY% calculated as number of HY / total number of captures.

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region I - Northeast, Fall 2002

	Laurentians QC	St. Andrews NB	Bon Portage Is. NS	Seal Island NS	Appledore Is. ME	Block Island RI	Island Beach St.Pk., NJ
1.	78 MYWA (5)	116 GCKI (7)	392 MYWA (1)	21 GCKI (1)	203 REVI (1)	226 GRCA (1)	545 RCKI (10)
2.	27 MAWA (4)	104 WTSP (2)	155 GCKI (6)	19 BLPW (8)	160 NOWA (3)	134 MYWA (2)	366 MYWA (1)
3.	26 REVI (7)	103 AMGO (6)	76 TRFL	14 SSHA (6)	144 AMRE (6)	121 GCKI (3)	358 GRCA (5)
4.	22 BCCH (2)	101 SOSP (9)	73 REVI (9)	9 SOSP (4)	142 GRCA (2)	68 REVI (9)	195 BRRCR (4)
5.	18 BTNW (3)	71 COYE (3)	73 SOSP (10)	5 BRRCR (10)	128 COYE (9)	44 BRRCR (10)	153 COYE (8)
6.	18 HETH (6)	65 RCKI	71 AMRE (4)	3 LISP	102 SOSP	43 WTSP (5)	126 GCKI (3)
7.	18 SWTH	49 REVI (10)	71 BAWW (3)	3 MYWA (3)	101 YWAR (10)	37 HETH	98 WTSP (2)
8.	15 BTBW (1)	47 MAWA (5)	70 BLPW (7)	2 COYE (7)	56 CEDW (7)	29 BTBW (6)	95 BTBW
9.	14 NAWA (8)	46 MYWA (4)	69 COYE (5)	2 GRCA	54 TRFL	26 AMRE	94 SCJU (6)
10.	13 VEER (10)	46 NAWA (8)	68 NOWA	2 RCKI	52 BAWW	26 COYE (4)	90 AMRE

SW-Laurentian Mountains**455-0743**

Quebec, Canada

Peter H. Homann (bander)

The netting lanes remained essentially unchanged from those of previous years. They were located between shrubs and young trees at the shore of a lake, and in the understory of mixed woods adjacent to the unpaved road leading to our cottage. The weather was even warmer than in 2001, and remained unusually warm until after mid-September. Only a few days brought any significant amounts of rain, but dogwood berries were plentiful and helped Red-eyed Vireo, Hermit Thrush, Swainson's Thrush, and Veery make the list of the ten most commonly banded species.

As can be seen from Table 1, the best day, with respect to number of birds banded, was the day the nets were opened for the first time. This appeared to be an auspicious beginning but, as it turned out, it was not. More than one half of the birds captured on the first day were Black-capped Chickadees, and all of them were netted at the lakeshore. The chickadees promptly learned from their misfortune and avoided this location in the future. Not a single chickadee was caught at that site for the next ten days, and only very few thereafter. This would not be worth mentioning were it not for the fact that the experienced and ever suspicious chickadees typically are the leaders of flocks composed of various warblers and other passerines and often keep these companions away from the vicinity of my nets.

Taking into account what appear to be normal fluctuations, the distribution of species among the banded birds did not differ significantly from that of previous years. However, this year's capture of just two Ovenbirds was a reminder again of a noticeable decline of this species over the past ten years. One remarkable aspect of 2002 was the high number of Myrtle Warblers banded. They represented 40% of all captured warblers. This can be explained by the extension of the 2002 banding period well into the second half of September. In fact, about 50% of the Myrtle Warblers were captured after 15 Sep, most of them in the evening at the lakeshore site. Already in previous years my wife and I had noticed Myrtle Warblers visiting the shrubs at the water's edge with an apparent intent

to roost for the night. The attractive feature of that particular spot perhaps is its exposure not only to the fading light of the western evening sky, but also to the rising sun in the morning. If the temperature moderating effect of the lake is an attractive feature as well, it may be a mixed blessing, however, because of the likelihood of fog formation in cool nights.

A noteworthy capture was that of a female Tennessee Warbler with molting flight and tail feathers. This suggested that it was a resident bird and probably had nested in this area that is located at the extreme southern edge of the species' breeding range.

Contrary to what past experience would have predicted, none of the 26 Black-capped Chickadees banded in 2001 was recaptured in 2002. The only repeat was that of a chickadee banded as an after-hatching-year bird in 1999. I wonder whether extensive nighttime logging with heavy equipment in the winter of 2001/2002 not far from our cottage had been so much of a disturbance that many individuals of the local population had left and settled elsewhere.

St. Andrews Banding Station**450-0670**

New Brunswick, Canada

Tracey Dean, Steve Gullage, Jeff Wright
(banders)

A total of 1177 birds representing 60 species were banded during the three-month 2002 fall season. No new species were added to the overall list, but highlights included: the station's second Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Eastern Wood-Pewee, and Baltimore Oriole; the station's fourth Yellow-bellied Sapsucker; two Orange-crowned Warblers, which are rare; and three Yellow-breasted Chats, which are well beyond their usual range.

Weather had its usual major influence on the number of birds caught. Most of August and the early part of September were warm and the wind was either calm or from the south. Migrants trickled through in small numbers, but in good variety. The best day was 25 Sep, after a couple of days of rain and fog, when 53 birds were banded. October started cool and damp, but after the skies cleared on 6 Oct, the nights were frosty. We recorded our

second highest daily catch 10 Oct, with 49 birds banded. After that, bird activity was very quiet as cool and breezy conditions prevailed. A mild spell on 25 and 26 Oct provided a last rush of migrants, and then the nets were taken down 1 Nov.

A female Yellow Warbler, band number 3500-28096, originally banded 2 Jun 1996 was recaptured 25 Aug 1998 and caught again 3 Sep 2002. Recaptures also give us information about how long birds live and this Yellow Warbler is over seven years old (well-on for a small bird of nine grams).

While the number of birds banded (1177) in 2002 is not far below the number banded in 2001 (1214), it is well above the 648 and 511 of 2000 and 1999, respectively. The actual number of b/100nh has dropped steadily. Species showing steady declines over the four-year period include Blue-headed Vireo; Northern Parula, Myrtle, Magnolia, Blackpoll, and Yellow Palm warbler; Northern Waterthrush; Common Yellowthroat; American Redstart; Gray Catbird; plus a few others species with small sample sizes. No species showed a steady increase over the same time period, though the number of goldfinches, Savannah and Song sparrows, and Golden-crowned Kinglets were up in 2002.

Many thanks to the New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund and Bird Studies Canada for helping to support the volunteers who made full daily coverage possible for the first time.

Bon Portage Island **432-0654**
Seal Island **432-0660**

Atlantic Bird Observatory (ABO)
Nova Scotia, Canada

Trina Fitzgerald and **Mike Peckford** (banders)
Volunteers : **Over one month:** Maren Gimpel, Alex Lees, Capucine Deltour, Jessica Beaubier, Angela Thibodeau; **Three to four weeks:** Wanda Fitzgerald, Betty Hayes; **Two weeks:** Sandra Hannah, Diane Clapp, Harold Clapp, Jessie Malone, Angela Bond, Becky Whitam, Kristin Powell, Alan Macleod, Janice Macleod, Temma Fecker, Meghan Rivers; **One week or less:** Joe Nocera, Jennifer Foote, Paula Dodaro, Shauna Bailey.

Overall, the fall migration-monitoring season was unexpectedly slow, resulting in fewer banded birds than previous years. In general, species-specific temporal patterns were similar to previous years. However, the expected movement during the early part of October, denoted by large numbers of Myrtle Warblers, occurred almost two weeks later. In light of this, once again, the ABO broke its "highest number of birds banded in a single-day" record on 24 Oct when 215 individuals (18 species) were banded. This broke the previous record by 35 individuals. Of these 215 individuals, 159 were Myrtle Warblers.

Shoals Lab Banding Station **425-0703**
Appledore Island, Maine

Anthony Hill, David Holmes, John Monier, Rebecca Suomala, and Mary Wright (banders)
Band-aides: David Allen, Dorothy Finch, Tiggy Gillespie, Peter Kalenda, Garth and Megan McElroy, Jen Peterson, Jessica Reilly, Martha Stauffer, Mark Suomala, and Lynn Zeltman

After the curiosity of arriving on the Appledore Island desert (no rain to speak of all summer. leaves mostly brown and shriveled, fruits shriveled, and the net lanes actually smelled like straw), the season settled into a very normal sort of average year. We ran our traditional nine nets from 15 Aug through 1 Oct (two days less than last year) and lost no full days to weather, although showers and rain events did mean partial closings on eight days and nearly full closing on one day. Wind and leaves in nets forced a shutdown in the afternoon of 11 Sep, and we lost about 2/3 of a day to helper/boat schedule problems on 18 Sep.

Species highlights included our first fall Red-bellied Woodpecker, the two White-eyed Vireos (our third and fourth fall birds—we get these more regularly in the spring), our second fall Orange-crowned Warbler and our seventh birds and sixth seasons for both Wood Thrush and Hooded Warbler. New high totals were achieved by Yellow-billed Cuckoo (13) [a surprise since our fall webworms were not particularly abundant this year], Barn Swallow (9), American Robin (4), Northern Mockingbird (4), Yellow-breasted Chat (26), and Common Grackle (9). Swainson's Thrush set a new low (2), Ovenbirds tied their low since 1984 (17), and the

irruptive species (Red-breasted Nuthatch -1 and Purple Finch - 0) were absent this year.

We were a bit surprised to have no Slate-colored Junco in the nets. But, the Carolina Wrens are coming back. We had nesting birds on the island from about 1989 through 1993, but the winter of 1993-1994 seemed to have wiped them out. Our total of four this season is the best since 1993. Our 21 returns (good total for fall) were highlighted by the color-banded Yellow Warbler which was originally banded on 30 May 1995 as an SY-M.

No foreign birds were caught, and I am not aware of any recoveries since our last report. We listed 13 days with relatively formal demonstrations in our logbook, but people drop by at odd moments any time there are classes or visitors on the island. A very important bit of exposure occurred as Sara Morris gave two presentations and a poster at the North American Ornithological Conference in New Orleans at the end of September that were based on our Appledore work.

As always, the Shoals Lab staff was superbly helpful. And our crew of banders and band-aides continued to make our little dot in the ocean a truly exceptional experience for both people and birds. We could use some more people helping us, though. We registered 9½ days on which the bander was the only bird person on the island. This has not happened since 1984!! and is worrisome for the ongoing health of the station.

Block Island Banding Station **411-0740**
Rhode Island

Scott Comings, Kim Gaffett, Elise Lapham
(banders)

Assistants - Erica Anderson, Penny Anderson,
Charlie Schnell, Rick Wetzel

It was an exciting fall banding season in a typical way. As you can see in Tables 1 & 2, our accumulation was low despite the fact that the number of net hours were about 38% higher than 2001.

As usual, the weather tells the story. The predominant weather pattern was from the southeast during the peak expected migration times. By the time the northwest winds blew, we

were late into the season and the early and mid-season migrants were probably well south by then.

The busiest period was between 15 and 22 Oct, and the 101 birds banded on 21 Oct was the highest daily total of the season.

This year the excitement came not in quantity, but in quality! Kim has been saying wistfully for years, "Oh, wouldn't it be great to get a Prothonotary Warbler!" Then on 30 Sep there it was in the driveway nets (the least likely net lane, as it borders an open grassy lawn and field). Only three other Prothonotary Warblers have been banded at this station—one in each of the years 1975, 1976, and 1979.

The thrill of the Prothonotary Warbler was rivaled the next morning (1 Oct) when the very same net snagged a new species for the station—a Virginia Rail! Elise was jubilant—a new species in the station's 36th year, proving the adage that all birders know: it takes great patience to see stealthy and secretive rails.

Other 2002 highlights include a Clay-colored Sparrow on 19 Oct, six Sharp-shinned Hawks, a Northern Saw-whet Owl, two Marsh Wrens, and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo.

In addition to the fine birds of the season, we had the usual engaging flock of visitors. We are always happy to see the return each year of old friends and birding comrades. And each year we enjoy the addition of young and/or novice visitors as well. All in all, it was another wonderful fall of bird banding.

Island Beach State Park **395-0740**
New Jersey

Mary Doscher, Glenn and Eileen Mahler, Robert McKinney, John Miller, Nick Pulcinella and Robert Yunick (banders)

Assistants - Chita McKinney and Robert Miller

During the fall 2002 banding season, seven banders operated banding stations at six locations at Island Beach State Park, between 7 Aug and 15 Nov. One or more of those stations was in operation on 45 days during that 100-day period; there were two banding days in August, 17 in September, 20 in October, and 6 in November.

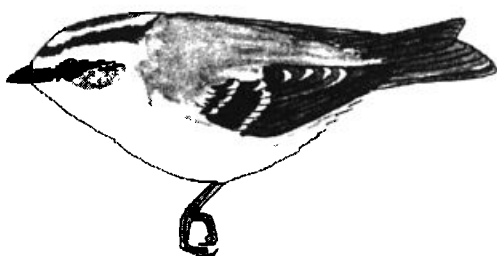
There were five days with three of the stations in operation simultaneously, 13 days with two stations active, and the remaining 27 days with only a single station active. In the discussion that follows, when referring to prior years' data, prior year averages are based on the fifteen-year period 1987-2001.

Once again, our recent history of below-average number of birds banded continues; in fact, our 2875 total birds banded (47.4% of long-term average) was the second lowest in the comparison period, and our 90.8 b/100nh (56.5% of average) was the lowest in that same period. Especially conspicuous was that the big October flights, for which Island Beach is famous, never materialized. Song and Swamp sparrows and juncos were all at about 30% of normal numbers; White-throated Sparrows were even scarcer at 22%. Myrtle Warblers were a bit better at 68% of normal. Golden-crowned Kinglets (GCKI), our long-term most numerous fall species were captured at only 12% of normal numbers. In fact, this year's season

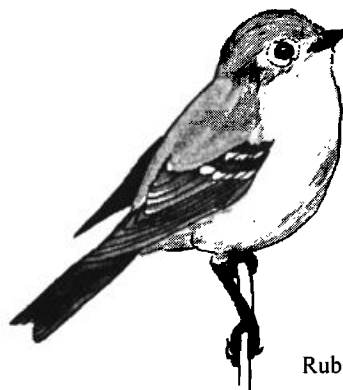
total of 126 GCKI was exceeded by single day totals in 13 of the previous 15 years! Surprisingly though, Ruby-crowned Kinglets put on a record showing with 545 individuals—229% of average and statistically significant at the 95% level.

The table below summarizes the best days of the season. Only one species was "new" for the station this year—a Clapper Rail. This species had been banded previously during the "early" years at Island Beach (before 1972), but this was its first occurrence in the recent period. Other species worth mentioning as "highlight" birds of the season were an American Woodcock, a Saltmarsh Sharp-tailed Sparrow, and three Orange-crowned Warblers. In addition to the significantly high numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets mentioned above, two other species had high numbers this season: Northern Waterthrush captures were at 184% of average, and Yellow-breasted Chat captures were 168% of average.

Date (number of stations operating)	Number of Species	Total Number of Birds Banded	Birds/net hour	Comment
13 Sep (2)	36	215	1.15	Highest species total
14 Oct (2)	23	192	4.13	Highest capture rate
21 Oct (3)	20	338	2.44	Highest banding total



Golden-crowned Kinglet
by George West



Ruby-crowned Kinglet
by George West