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NABC Certification Session Report

EBBA's sixth North American Banding Council (NABC) certification session was held on 1-3 Oct 2004 at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. Participating Trainers were Tom Bartlett, Betsy Brooks, Mary Doscher, David Holmes, Sara Morris, and Bob Yunick.

Two people successfully passed the Bander-level Certification: Christian Friis and Stuart Mackenzie, both of Port Rowan, Ontario.

For the first time, a Trainer-level Certification was held and two individuals passed their evaluations: David Cimprich of Fort Hood, Texas, and Erin Karnatz of Albion, New York.

Congratulations to all the successful participants!

Betsy Brooks



Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV - Fall 2003

**Chandler S. Robbins,
Region IV Coordinator
USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
Laurel, MD 20708-4000**

We welcome the Eden Mill station in northeastern Maryland to Region IV this year. With three stations reporting their worst year ever, we really need to be refreshed. After a cool and wet July, August was hot and wet in the east. Temperatures in September remained close to normal, but thanks to tropical storms Henri (6-8 Sep) and Isabel (18 Sep), rainfall was excessive in the Chesapeake Bay states. The entire Northeast had cool weather in October, starting with an early freeze on 3 Oct that triggered some good banding days in our region. Precipitation was unusually spotty in October, but plentiful at most of the Region IV stations. November temperatures were consistently well above the norm, starting with a record-breaking 81° in Baltimore on the 1st.

Four of the five Maryland stations had their best day on 19 or 20 Oct. One might expect some of the Virginia coastal stations, Chincoteague, Kiptopeke, and Back Bay, to share the same best day, but they did not. Three stations reported an increase in birds per net hour this year, while seven had a decline. Summarizing the changes in rank in Table 2, Gray Catbird was the species with the most (5) increases in rank (in excess of decreases), followed by junco (4) and Myrtle Warbler and Swamp Sparrow (3 each). Yellowthroat had the most decreases (5), followed by redstart (3).

Myrtle Warbler (4572) was once again the most commonly banded species in Region IV, followed by White-throated Sparrow (1723), Gray Catbird (1349), and Western Palm Warbler (1090). Michelle Davis' station on Key Biscayne is the envy of the rest of us. Her top eight species were *all* warblers and there was not a Myrtle among them. Imagine having Parula, Prairie, and Worm-eating warblers fighting for sixth place!

Not showing among the top ten, however, are other surprises. Several banders commented on Saw-whet Owls and Bicknell's Thrushes. Deanna Dawson banded a Cerulean Warbler at Patuxent. Danny Bystrak caught 138 Swamp Sparrows at Jug Bay. In addition to two Clay-colored Sparrows and two Gambel's White-crowns, Jim Gruber at Chino Farms had his first Le Conte's Sparrow and a state high of 39 Lincoln's Sparrows. Dick Roberts' new species at Chincoteague included Yellow-throated and Mourning warblers, while Jethro Runco's best birds at Kiptopeke included Sedge Wren and Golden-winged Warbler. The Simpsons at Back Bay finally identified a Western Wood-Pewee after many years of trying. Unusual for Michelle Davis' warbler station on Key Biscayne were Tennessee, Chestnut-sided, and Bay-breasted warblers.

Table 1. AFR Region IV, Fall 2003 Summary.

	Eden Mill	Laurel	Patuxent	Jug Bay	Chino Farms	Chincoteague	Kiptopeke	Back Bay	Jekyll Island	Key Biscayne	Tallahassee
First Day	5 Sep	15 Aug	3 Aug	15 Aug	1 Aug	1 Aug	15 Aug	2 Oct	21 Sep	16 Aug	6 Aug
Last Day	9 Nov	30 Nov	24 Nov	18 Nov	30 Nov	21 Nov	22 Nov	19 Oct	12 Oct	30 Oct	15 Nov
Days Open	65	87	90	42	81	54	93	18	22	66	38
Nets Used	4 to 10	5 to 16	26	26	10 to 70	3 to 19	21	28 to 155	15	11	4 to 9
Net Hours	277	5642	7676	3604	23,584	1054	11,369	8958	950	2915	1579
Best Day	53	34	106	80	282	137	494	202	227	67	9
Best Day Date	19 Oct	31 Aug	19 Oct	20 Oct	20 Oct	13 Oct	30 Oct	4 Oct	29 Sep	1 Oct	15 Oct
Most Species	12	13	23	21	33	15	31	43	15	17	7
" " Date	19 Oct	21 Sep	4&9 Oct	20 Oct	6 Oct	13 Oct	29 Sep	13 Oct	27 Sep	15 Oct	15 Oct
Banded 2002	49	286	3104	2316	5619	579	6218	2591	1715	359	251
Banded 2003	220	346	2464	1484	7535	669	6783	1595	1710	847	97
Species 2002	19	38	85	91	104	53	88	82	41	36	33
Species 2003	30	51	82	87	110	57	96	92	39	44	28
B/100nh 2002	29.3	7.7	35.7	64	48.8	45	66.9	13.5	187	20	19
B/100nh 2003	79.4	6.1	32.1	41	31.9	63	59.7	17.8	180	32	6
% HY 2002	73%	71%	66%	68%	82%	-	96%	92.1%	90.6%	56.3%	63%
% HY 2003	60%	68%	59%	69%	85%	-	91%	83.3%	97.6%	60.7%	61%

Table 2. AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Species, Fall 2003

Eden Mill	Laurel	Patuxent	Jug Bay	Chino Farms	Chincoteague
% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY
64 WTSP(1) 60	26 WTSP(2) 72	338 RCKI(2) N/A	175 WTSP(2) 65	1078 WTSP(1) 82	303 MYWA(1) 88
29 INBU 76	31 NOCA(1) 61	284 GRCA(3) 80	157 SOSP(6) 76	738 SOSP(6) 86	84 GRCA(3) 88
24 GRCA(2) 96	29 AMRO(9) 79	234 WTSP(1) 49	138 SWSP(9) 63	569 RCKI(3) 88	24 COYE(2) 96
19 NOCA 74	25 GRCA(3) 68	170 SCJU(6) 66	115 COYE(5) 51	561 SCJU(4) 77	24 WTSP 96
14 FISP 79	18 MAWA(14) 78	127 MAWA(8) 58	91 INBU(4) 66	439 MYWA(8) 72	16 REV(7) 100
14 SOSP(3) 86	16 OVEN(8) 56	102 REV(4) 55	81 EATO 86	401 CHSP(2) 86	15 SCJU(6) 100
9 MYWA 100	13 MYWA 85	93 COYE(5) 67	67 GRCA 79	332 GRCA(9) 77	15 SWSP 100
5 ETT(4) 100	12 WOTH(10) 58	90 HETH(7) 79	51 NOCA 55	288 INBU(5) 90	13 HOWR(4) 100
5 SCJU 80	12 SCJU 67	57 GCKI(10) 65	50 CHSP(1) 72	270 COYE(7) 60	13 WPWA(5) 100
4 SWSP 100	10 GCTH(23) 40	56 OVEN(9) 75	39 SCJU(10) 69	236 FISP(10) 90	11 NOCA 96

() Indicates placement on list in 2002.

Table 2. AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Species, Fall 2003 (cont'd.)

Kiptopeke	Back Bay	Jekyll Island	Key Biscayne	Tallahassee
% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY
3496 MYWA(1) 90	312 MYWA(1) 92	1074 WPWA(2)	179 OVEN(5) 70	16 NOCA(1) 50
292 AMRE(2) 92	214 GRCA(2) 89	354 COYE(1)	119 BTBW(1) 58	12 CARW(8) 50
278 GRCA(8) 93	81 BLJA 85	65 PABU(5)	98 AMRE(2) 51	11 GRCA(4) 82
217 BTBW(3) 93	68 COYE(4) 96	44 PRAW(4)	66 BAWW(8) 39	8 WEVI(2) 50
176 HETH(7) 88	48 BLPW 90	30 GRCA(8)	56 NOWA(9) 48	5 HETH 60
173 COYE(5) 95	45 BTBW 100	28 AMRE(3)	37 WEWA 43	5 ETT(6) 60
154 GCKI(4)	38 GCKI(7) 68	16 REV(10)	36 PRAW 58	5 CACH 40
151 RCKI(6)	27 INBU 89	16 WEVI	36 NOPA(10) 67	4 HOFI 75
147 SCJU 82	19 AMRE(6) 95	12 BTBW	30 REV 93	3 SWTH(5) 67
112 WTSP(9) 63	16 BRTH 62	10 HOWR	38 COYE(4) 68	3 WPWA 67

() Indicates placement on list in 2002.

Eden Mill**394-0762**

Pylesville, Harford Co., MD

Mark S. Johnson

Mark.S.Johnson@us.army.mil

Banding operations started at Eden Mill in the spring of 2000. Our goal was to evaluate the usefulness of this habitat in a fragmented landscape to migrants and resident birds. The study site is located in the piedmont region of northeastern Maryland along the Deer Creek valley. The habitat is a riparian area where a small delta transitions from marsh to old field and then to deciduous forest. Primary tree species include black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), red cedar (*Juniperus virginianus*), red maple (*Acer rubrum*), and American beech (*Fagus grandifolia*). Exotic plants (e.g., multiflora rose [*Rosa multiflora*] and Japanese honeysuckle [*Lonicera japonica*]) in transitional areas are common.

This year was our fourth autumn banding season at Eden Mill. Given our weekly schedule, overall numbers were greater than last year. Birds captured/100nh were more than double those captured the year before, potentially an indicator of more moderate moisture conditions in the region. Two days in particular exceeded average expectations (19 and 26 Oct) where record numbers of White-throated Sparrows were banded. Occasionally, >12 birds/net were encountered, causing a temporary closing of nets. Additionally, explosions of Indigo Buntings occurred the last week of September when 28 were captured and released. Individual Swamp Sparrows captured increased with the addition of a mist net along a marsh/forest transition.

Given the differences in total net hours recorded for the fall of 2002, it is difficult to make species comparisons. However, no Myrtle Warblers were captured in 2002, and markedly fewer Northern Cardinals and Carolina Chickadees were banded that fall also.

Many thanks go out to our volunteers, especially Suzanne Procell, Jerry Strickroth, and Brian Moyer.

Robbins Nest**390-0765**

Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD

Chandler S. Robbins

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The most notable finding at this station in 2003 was the sharp decline in recaptures of previously banded birds and most especially a crash in the chickadee and titmouse populations. In the autumn of 2001, I recaptured 36 birds banded in previous autumns, but I caught only 24 returns in 2002 and 17 in 2003, a 33% drop each year. In 2002, Tufted Titmouse was my fourth most common species (19 caught) and Carolina Chickadee (15) was in seventh place. This year, I had only four titmice and six chickadees, declines of 79% and 60%. Until now, only the migratory species have been of concern. We suspect West Nile virus is responsible. However, the oldest bird we recaptured this year was Blue Jay 723-42798, banded as HY in 1993, a species known to be especially vulnerable to West Nile. Half of this year's returns were cardinals, the oldest of which was only four years of age. My birds/100nh continues to drop each year without any noticeable change in surrounding habitat.

The only banded migrant known to have remained here for more than a week was a Swainson's Thrush that weighed 31.9 g on 4 Oct and 41.6 g nine days later, an increase of 30%.

Patuxent Powerline Right-of-way**390-0764**

Patuxent Research Refuge

Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD

Deanna K. Dawson

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The station was operated on fewer days than usual in 2003, opening a bit later, closing a week early, and missing several good days in September through mid-October, when the manager/lead bander was conducting research on migrating birds in Lower Delmarva. As a result, capture totals for many species are not comparable to other years, and totals for several species, including House

Wren, Northern Parula, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, American Redstart, Connecticut Warbler, and Common Yellowthroat, set record lows. Fifty-three birds banded in previous years were captured, all of species that either nest or winter here. Included were a record high 16 Gray Catbirds, nine of which were hatching-year (HY) birds when banded. Six return Red-eyed Vireos were captured, again far fewer than during the station's first 20 years of operation; the oldest, an adult when banded in Aug 1998, was last captured in Aug 2000. Other highlights were captures of a Cerulean Warbler (HY male), a Marsh Wren, an American Tree Sparrow, and a Northern Saw-whet Owl with a meadow jumping mouse (*Zapus hudsonius*) in its talons.

Special thanks to Danny Bystrak, who operated the station on many mornings during my absence. Thanks also to Marty Barron, Murray Efford, Cecilia Leumas, Woody Martin, Diann Prosser, Mike Quinlan, Gemma Radko, Jack Saba, and John Sauer, who provided regular or occasional assistance. Sara Campbell, assistant of Dr. Peter Marra at the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center, collected blood samples from over 500 birds to test for exposure to West Nile Virus. Results are not yet available.

Jug Bay Wetlands Sanctuary **384-0764**
Bristol, Anne Arundel Co., MD
Danny Bystrak
dbystrak@netzero.com

Jug Bay Bird Observatory's seventh autumn of netting continued the wet trend started last year. We were forced to reschedule our mornings of operation often again this year. We operated 26 nets for three and one-half hours starting at dawn from 15 Aug to 18 Nov on a Monday, Wednesday, Friday schedule. Our catch of 87 species was slightly below average, and 1484 individuals were disastrously below average. Highlights of the year were: N. Saw-whet Owl (new), Black-billed Cuckoo, Blue-headed Vireo, 2 Marsh Wrens (new), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Bay-breasted Warbler (new), Cape May Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Bobolink and Grasshopper Sparrow. These high-

lights did little to counter the disappointment of our worst year ever. The most notable decrease in our catch was in our Ashrub Island, where our most productive nets declined by an average of 48% and one as much as 80%.

The most stunning decline was probably in Myrtle Warblers, with 20 individuals compared to a six-year average of 255. Other declines include: American Goldfinch 19:149, House Finch 1:39, American Redstart 2:16, Tufted Titmouse 2:17, Blue Grosbeak 24:82, Chipping Sparrow 50:119, Field Sparrow 18:42, Eastern Bluebird 0:15, Yellow Warbler 1:10, and too many more to enumerate. There were also some surprising increases: Eastern Towhee 81:38, Gray Catbird 67:49, Swamp Sparrow 138:121, American Robin 13:2, Ovenbird 28:20, White-crowned Sparrow 7:3, and Swainson's Thrush 6:4, among others.

Along with serving as a migration monitoring station, we also continue to track differences in bird occurrence by habitat, as well as offering public educational demonstrations. We had the help of (and thank) our many volunteers, most notably Mike Quinlan, Lloyd Lewis, June Bourdat, Arlene Ripley and Sandy Curry. Special thanks also to our intern Katy Goodwin and to the Friends of Jug Bay for funding help.

Chino Farms **391-0755**
Chestertown, Queen Anne's Co., MD
J. M. Gruber

Chino Farms was in its sixth year of operation in 2003. Habitat around the station changed this year as the three agricultural fields (40% of total habitat) were taken out of production and put into CRP or CREP programs and either left to go fallow or planted in warm season grasses. This may account for the increase in both Savannah and Lincoln's sparrows banded this year. Weather was mild and wet for the most part, but we did experience an earlier-than-normal frost on 3 Oct. Interesting birds caught this fall were our first Le Conte's Sparrow on 19 Oct; 2 Clay-colored Sparrows, 1 each on 28 Oct and 2 Nov; 2 Gambel's White-

crowned Sparrows, 1 each on 26 Oct and 5 Nov; 1 *Zonotrichia* hybrid (White-crown X White-throated Sparrow) on 9 Nov; a flicker intergrade on 31 Oct; a station (and state) high of 39 Lincoln's Sparrows from 17 Sep through 18 Nov, and 2 Bicknell's Thrushes, 1 each on 22 and 29 Sep. In addition to the banders listed in previous years, the following people assisted in this fall's banding operations: Dr Harry Sears, Henry Davis, Lanny Parks, Matt Hafner, Zach Baer, and Sarah Potter.

Chincoteague Natl. Wildl. Ref. 375-0752

Chincoteague Island, Accomac Co., VA

Richard N. Roberts

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There were fewer warblers than in previous years but more species. For instance, warbler totals for 2003 were 73 birds compared to 123 in 2002. Warbler species totals were 18 in 2003 compared to 12 in 2002. However, ten of the warbler species banded in 2003 were represented by only one bird each, while only one of the species in 2002 was represented by a single bird.

Comparing again the most recent two years, Common Yellowthroats dropped from 52 in 2002 to 24 in 2003, Black-and-white Warblers dropped from 8 to 3, Prairie Warblers from 6 to 0, Black-throated Blues from 14 to 5, and Magnolia Warblers from 9 to 4. I banded as many White-throated Sparrows in the fall of 2003 as I did Common Yellowthroats. White-throated Sparrows were not even on the top ten list in 2002. Again, 2003 produced more Swamp Sparrows than Western Palm Warblers. In 2002 Western Palm Warbler was No. 5 on the top ten list whereas the Swamp Sparrow was not even present on the list.

Species banded this fall that had never been banded here previously included the Yellow-throated Warbler, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Boat-tailed Grackle, Belted Kingfisher, and Mourning Warbler. This banding station is operated year around. Total species for our five years has now reached 100.

Kiptopeke Songbird Banding Sta. 371-0755

Cape Charles, Northhampton Co., VA

Jethro Runco, head bander

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The 2003 banding season on the southern end of the Delmarva Peninsula, started off very slowly this year, but picked up as the season progressed. After a very rainy spring and summer, the clouds parted and the fall was actually quite dry. Hurricane Isabel passed through the area, but the station missed the brunt of the storm. The station missed four days due to Isabel mainly because the Kiptopeke State Park was closed for three of those days. The total effect of the hurricane is yet to be evaluated. I can say that the area lost a lot of late season/winter berries. Food resources were very low after the storm and continued low through the end of the season.

This year, our array of 21 nets produced a total of 11,369 net hours and captured a total of 96 species. Our biggest day came on 30 Oct, when 494 birds were captured, while 29 Sep produced the most species at 31. Thirty species set or tied ten-year highs. The thrush complex set either ten-year highs (Swainson's, Gray-cheeked, Wood, and American Robin) or second highest in ten years (Bicknell's, Veery, and Hermit). Highlights include the capture of Golden-winged and Kentucky warblers, Louisiana Waterthrush, American Kestrel, 3 Cooper's Hawks, Eastern Screech and Northern Saw-whet owls, 3 Purple Finches, 2 Bicknell's Thrushes, a flicker intergrade, and a Black-billed Cuckoo that was caught on the same net run as a Yellow-billed. The best two birds of the season, when based on total historic number ever caught at Kiptopeke, are Sedge Wren and Red-winged Blackbird. The Sedge Wren was only the fourth to be banded in the 41 years of Kiptopeke's history. And just as stunning was the capture of the third (!?) ever Red-winged Blackbird. Curiously, all of the top ten species had lower % HY this season compared to last season, some as much as 20% lower.

Once again, the Kiptopeke banding station is highly indebted to its many volunteers. Their help is es-

sential to run this station. Also, a thanks goes to the Kiptopeke State Park and Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory.

Back Bay

363-0755

Sandbridge, Virginia Beach Co., VA

Rob and Ann Simpson

snphotos@adelphia.net

This is an educational station run by Lord Fairfax Community College. Students are instructed in net setup, bird capture, bird handling, identification, sexing, aging and other banding techniques. In cooperation with Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge we are doing a study on habitat selection by Neotropical migrants on their staging grounds. Normally we have two sessions of 11 days each. One session is in early fall and one is in late fall. This year, due to unavoidable circumstances, we had only one session of 18 days. This accounts for the much lower number of individual birds caught in 2003 (1595) compared to our normal fall totals (2600 to 3500). We did no late fall banding which would have netted about 1000 more Myrtle Warblers.

We caught three new species for the station. Although we have had several Peregrines bounce out of nets in the past, the four we banded this session were our first ever. We also caught our first Tri-colored Heron. Our most interesting capture was a Western Wood-Pewee (accepted by VARCOM, VA Rare Birds Committee). We teach our students to assume every bird we catch is an extreme rarity and the game is to prove why it is or is not. We try to make every pewee a Western. We finally caught one where the critical measurements, plumage and bill criteria all indicated Western Wood-Pewee. The bird actually looked different enough that Ann was suspicious of its identity while it was still in the bucket. We have detailed photos for anyone to examine. We caught another Bicknell's Thrush, which seems to be an infrequent but regular migrant through his station. The 18 Red-bellied Woodpeckers, which are migrants at this coastal strand station, were also a high total, which eclipsed last year's all-time high of four. Other spe-

cies that occurred in record high numbers included Lincoln's Sparrow (4), Marsh Wren (8), Tree Swallow (93), Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (15), Yellow-shafted Flicker (102), and Blue Jay (81).

Forty-five students participated in the various classes. For logistical reasons no more than 15 students are at the station at any one time and all go through a rather rigorous mentor/mentee training session before coming to the field station.

Many thanks go to my lab assistants, Thomas McHale, Megan Moore, and Jennifer Davis, for coordinating much of the data. We also thank John Gallegos, Wildlife Biologist at Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and the staff at Little Island Park, Virginia Beach, for help in many ways. A special note of thanks goes to Gary Sargent, a long-time associate who is responsible for our computer operations and data analysis. The instructors and students appreciate Gary's wizardry with the computer and help in the field.

Jekyll Island Banding Station

310-0812

Jekyll Island, Glynn Co., GA

Chris and Jan Pitman

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Years of data gathered at JIBS confirm Jekyll Island as a migration stopover point for thousands of migratory songbirds. This year a hatch-year White-eyed Vireo provided the data to prove how it benefited from a seven-day period on Jekyll Island. When banded on 2 Oct it weighed 11.4 g with a fat class of 1. On subsequent days its weight (and fat class) increased to 12.1 (2), 13.5 (2), 13.5 (3), and 14.5 (3), and when last captured on 8 Oct it weighed 15.5 g (4).

Charles Ratliff recaptured on 9 Oct 2003 an Ovenbird he had banded here on 21 Sep 1999.

This year we were blessed once again by special people who gave time, sweat, brains, finances, and even blood to make JIBS a reality. An anonymous benefactor and Lamont Albertson made JIBS' new laptop computer and printer-copier possible. Carol

Schneider made a comprehensive list of the plants, Mark McAnaw and his father, John, donated funds for a new mist net, and Lydia Thompson donated the artwork for our beautiful tee shirts. Special friends from Ocoee River Audubon, the CDC, Atlanta Audubon Audubon, and St. Mary's Middle and Camden High School are just some of the wonderful people who migrate to JIBS along with the birds. Thanks to all.

Bill Baggs Cape Florida St. Pk. 254-0800
Key Biscayne, Miami—Dade Co., FL
Michelle Davis
vireoojorojo@hotmail.com

This was the second year of mist-netting at BBCFSP during fall migration, and the first complete season. Eleven nets were placed in a restored hardwood hammock, part of a multi-million dollar project to return native vegetation to the park. The goal of this banding project is to determine whether the restored habitats are suitable for fall migrant landbirds, and also to describe migration in South Florida.

We started banding on 16 Aug, and the first several weeks were plagued by early morning thunderstorms that cut short the mist-netting time on several mornings. This August was the rainiest in seven years at the site. There was a steady flow of migrants through Florida in mid-August, and this stream picked up in the second week of September with drier air and N-NE winds prevailing. Migration nearly stopped mid-month, as Hurricane Isabel passed well offshore of Florida, giving us no immediate effects and strengthening E winds all week. A front finally worked its way down the state in late September, and our biggest day of the season, 67 banded, was on 1 Oct after the front had passed. The most interesting day of the season was 15 Oct, with 62 banded of 17 species. A low crossed Florida from the Gulf and shifted the wind around to the W all night, delivering some less common migrants to the site such as Chestnut-sided, Bay-breasted and Tennessee warblers. The birds did not start appearing until after noon, which led us to believe that these birds were blown

out over the Atlantic and were coming back to shore and falling out later in the day. Curiously, migration came to a grinding halt after this event, and the last two weeks of banding were very slow, in spite of the increasing frequency of fronts. The numbers of late-season birds such as Western Palm Warbler and Painted Bunting were down from last year, and only 258 birds were banded between 5 and 31 Oct 2003, compared to 346 for that period in 2002.

There were four returns from 2002, two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers and two Ovenbirds, all probably wintering birds. A dozen of the newly banded Ovenbirds also appeared to be wintering on site. No rare birds were captured this season, with a Yellow-breasted Chat being the most unusual. A Mangrove Cuckoo struggled with a lubber grasshopper for 15 minutes within 10 ft of a net one day and had the nerve not to be captured. Birds seemed to be in excellent migration condition this year, with very few emaciated birds marooned onsite. Most birds moved through quickly, but 55 individuals of 17 species were recaptured at least once, with the majority gaining substantial weight during their average stopover time of 3.5 days. Hatching-year birds made up less than 50% of total captures for several warbler species, most notably Black-and-white Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, and Northern Waterthrush. Ovenbirds were about 70% hatching year.

Special thanks go to Liz Golden and Robin Diaz for their assistance during the field season.

Lakeshore Estates 302-0841
Tallahassee, Leon Co., FL
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Regrettably, the period covered by this year's report is even shorter than that for 2002. Whereas an unexpectedly high netting success, by my standards, prompted me last year to submit a report in spite of an abbreviated netting activity, this year's report is noteworthy for the opposite reason. As it turned out, unfurling the nets was almost an exer-

cise in futility. Only six birds were captured per 100 net-hours, an all-time low, and only about 40% of the captured birds can be classified as definite or probable migrants. Conspicuously absent from my list of the 10 most commonly banded species is the Myrtle Warbler. Indeed, I did not capture a single individual. Similarly, only one Ruby-crowned Kinglet was netted, a rather early arriving bird on 17 Oct. The first Myrtle Warbler eventually was captured on 29 Nov, i.e., after the cut-off date for this report, and around the same time I netted the second and third Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Remark-

ably, both were returns from the previous winter. This was to set a trend. Of the mere 12 Ruby-crowned Kinglets netted by mid-Feb 2004, seven have been returns from previous winters. While the survival of adults obviously was good, reproductive success must have been poor this year for Ruby-crowned Kinglets. Perhaps a quite generally unsuccessful breeding season in the north was the reason for the unusually small number of migratory birds at my Florida banding location this fall.

THE MEMORIAL GRANT FUND

Over 40 years ago, EBBA established a Memorial Grant Fund to recognize departed members and friends. Income from that endowment has been used annually to make student awards for ornithological research projects which use bird banding as part of the study. Income has grown so that up to \$500 has been designated by council for distribution by the Memorial Grant Committee.

If you want to remember a departed bander or birder friend, or simply contribute to the support of student research in ornithology, send your tax-deductible check to EBBA's Treasurer, Donald Mease. Added income from the Fund will be used in the future to increase the number or amount of these competitive awards.

APPLYING FOR RESEARCH AWARDS

The Eastern Bird Banding Association seeks applicants for its annual \$500 research awards in aid of research using banding techniques or bird banding data. Applicants should submit a resume of their banding and ornithological background, the project plan including the significance of the study site, and a budget. No formal application forms are necessary; however, two copies of each application are required. Grant requests must be received by 15 Mar each year with award announcements 30 Apr.

Preference is given but not limited to research in eastern United States, or with species that spend part of their life there. Projects that are planned for other portions of the United States, North America, or the Western Hemisphere also may be considered. Research studies with conservation or management implications are particularly encouraged.

Grantees are encouraged to present at least part of their study results at an annual EBBA meeting. Travel grants for this purpose are available, in addition to the Memorial Grant for the research. Also, grantees are encouraged to become members of EBBA.

Send applications/inquiries to:

EBBA Memorial Grants Chairperson
Elizabeth W. Brooks
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