

2005

Powderhouse Road Station

Gail Kirch

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and we had expected more. House Finches were the most attractive to these parasites with Song Sparrows a close second. Two Sharp-shinned Hawks carried three flies each and every one was quite large compared to the smaller versions we normally see on songbirds. As a matter of proportion, those on Black-throated Green Warblers and Yellow Warblers were quite small. We saw no conjunctivitis until a couple of wintering House Finches arrived late in the season.

Our fourth year of identifying and marking dragonflies incidentally netted, resulted in identification of 45 individuals of 12 species. The station total of odonates is now at 65 species. Incidental to banding, we netted *Anax junius*, *Aeshna umbrosa* and *tuberculifera*, *Libellula lydia*, *pulchella* and *luctuosa*, *Sympetrum internum* and *vicinum*. New and exciting were *Celithemis elisa*, *Perithemis tenera* and two unusual *Somatachloras* – *tenebrosa* and *walshii*.

We thank Susann Argetsinger, Carol Bratton, Don and Doris Cohrs, Bob and Judy Cosgriff, A.L. Donahue, Bob, Kathy and Laura Fabia, Victoria Bond Kelly, Jay Schissell, Robin Tuttle, and Ruth Young for their generous support and several others who contributed equipment, advice and assistance. These include Stillman's Greenhouse, Gary Herzig, Natural New England, Pine Tree Farms, Spidertech, and Barlow Rhodes. Special thanks to Susann who helped us make bird holding bags last winter and to Vicky who continues to do amazing things with the website.

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We started on 7 Jul and ended on 17 Oct. Weather was extreme and record setting. Normal July precipitation averages one inch or less. This year, some local areas recorded as much of 10 in of rain. Much time was spent opening and closing mist nets; however, this station managed to open nets and band on 76 days.

We accumulated 616.3 net hours banding 590 birds of 57 species with eight returns and 14 repeats. Two Gray Catbirds returned at five and six

years of age. Peak day happened on 16 Jul with 21 birds banded. In 2003 we had 44 species, in 2004, 57, an increase of approximately 23%.

The top three species are the same as last fall. We more than doubled our total number of catbirds this season, probably due to the super crop of honeysuckle berries. Also increasing slightly in numbers banded were Song Sparrow and Common Yellowthroat.

Only seven species of warbler were captured and banded at this station, as the habitat is not conducive for netting. This banding station is surrounded by large fields of multiflora rose and is ideal habitat for the top three species banded here.

Highlights this year include the first ever Orchard Oriole banded at this station and three HY Eastern Kingbirds. The three kingbirds were caught in the same net on 28 Jul. EBBA's new monograph, *Relationships Among Body Mass, Fat, Wing Length, Age, and Sex for 170 Species of Birds Banded at Powdermill Nature Reserve*, helped cinch the identification, age, and sex of the Orchard Oriole. It also was a treat to examine the plumage of the three young kingbirds.

Powderhouse Road Station
Vestal, Broome County, NY.

420-0775

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The 2004 AFR season was anything but boring. The first day of banding produced a young, female Cooper's Hawk. She, her parents, and siblings had been in my woods for several weeks. She had nailed a cardinal, so I decided I was going to brave her impressive talons with my bare hands. I carried her back to my banding site using both hands hugging her to my body. I put her in my dark laundry room and called Harriet Marsi who came and helped me band and measure her. (By now I had my leather gloves on). Her wing cord was 265 mm, the largest bird I have ever caught and banded. I caught her two more times and she was easily removed from the nets with bare hands. Fortunately, she and her family moved to the neighboring woods and shortly were gone.

The summer and fall were wet. Jul had 9.06" of rain (measured at my station), Aug 4.1", Sep 7.9" and Oct 2.27". Valerie Freer feels that when she had berries on her bushes, she had good banding. Because I always have an abundance of berries, I was not convinced. This summer's rain produced the plumpest autumn olive berries I have ever seen and I had birds.

Red-eyed Vireo again was the most abundant species. In 2003, Red-eyed Vireos did not come through until September. In 2004, there was a steady stream of them in August and September—93 were banded in August and 96 more in September. Last year's 115 Red-eyed Vireos was the only other year (since 1998 when I took over this station) in which I banded more than 100 individuals.

Gray Catbird numbers were good. Unlike 2003, when this species fledged late in the summer, 2004 fledglings were on time and I banded 14 young between 24 Jun and 25 Jul.

October produced the usual numbers of White-throated Sparrows — 137. An unusual number of American Robins defined the 2004 October. Forty-seven birds were processed and 100% of them were HY. Northern Cardinals were also abundant. They came all month, often in small groups. Twenty-three of 32 individuals were banded, 91% were young birds.

My "best" day was 29 Oct (in 2003, the best day was the 30th), 63 birds of 13 species (2003: 51 birds of 13 species). Good banding days were also 25 Sep and 18 Oct. Both days preceded a front—25 Sep had the most diversity: 45 birds of 17 species; 18 Oct had 59 birds of 14 species.

Overgrown fields of native and introduced shrubs characterize this station. I try to "stop" succession by cutting down tree saplings, trimming shrubs that grow above 5 m and bush hogging the trails to keep their width at about 2 m. The berries that attract the birds also attract black bears. They roam my property and use the net lanes. So far, they have left my nets alone. I hope they continue to ignore them.

Ellenville Station

414-0742

Ellenville, Ulster County, NY.

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My banding results for 2004 were well below average in most respects, led by the number of new birds banded which ranked 23rd in the 35 years this station has been operated. Family obligations restricted the number of net hours per day, depressing many other aspects of the results.

Black-capped Chickadees, Common Yellowthroats, juncos, and White-throated Sparrows were banded in near-average numbers, but Gray Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo and Song Sparrow numbers were well below average. The only species banded in above-average numbers were Ruby-crowned Kinglet and Magnolia Warbler. Ninety-five warblers of 17 species made up 23% of all birds banded, and 88 sparrows of six species made up 22% of the total. Ten Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were netted (but not banded); this was about half the numbers of recent years.

Temperatures were near average in August and October and warm in September. Once again the weather was wet, with over three inches above average rainfall in August and four inches above average in September, though October was quite dry. There were no fruits at all on arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*) and many fewer than usual on swamp (silky) dogwood (*Cornus amomum*), but near usual amounts on multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*).

This station continues to be characterized by modest numbers of a few species, with a great diversity of other species netted in very small numbers. The summary figures for 35 years of operation show that the top nine species (listed in paragraph two above) made up half of the 18,766 birds banded, while the top 21 species made up 75%. A total of 106 different species has been banded here, mostly in very small numbers (50 different species were banded at a rate of fewer than one per year). Catbirds led the list for 35 years, reaching a total of almost 1700 banded (9% of all birds banded). They averaged 48 banded per year, with a high of 84 and a low of 20.