

2005

Ellenville Station

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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

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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.