

2005

Atlantic Flyway Review - Region III (Western Ridge) - Fall 2004

North American Bird Bander

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) – Fall 2004

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Regrettably, we had no reports in 2004 from Holiday Beach, Bedford Valley, Little Gap, Hebron, and Roan Mountain. Generally, fall 2004 results were improved over the previous year at Lewiston, Ruthven, Selkirk, Powdermill, and Allegheny Front; results were down at Rock Point, Long Point, and Mt. Nebo. The best days occurred on 29-30 Sep at Powdermill and Allegheny Front, and between 23-25 Oct at Long Point, Selkirk, and Rock Point; while the remainder of the stations' best days fell somewhere between 13 and 20 Oct.

The 2004 hurricane season brought some interesting results. Hurricane Frances had the biggest impact on banding but the days after Ivan and Jeanne also brought excellent banding, especially at Allegheny Front.

Long awaited habitat management may have been directly responsible for Allegheny Front having the best fall banding since 1999. Maintaining the integrity of each of our banding locations by keeping habitat as unchanged from year to year as possible deserves more attention at all our sites.

AND, last but definitely not least, **Ralph Bell had the honor of banding the 200,000th bird banded at Allegheny Front:** a HY male Black-throated Blue Warbler! Congratulations to Ralph and AFMO.

Thanks to all the banders and assistants who make the AFR report possible!!!

Sue Finnegan has graciously volunteered to be the AFR I Coordinator beginning with the fall 2005 season. Please send Northeast reports to her at bander36@comcast.net

Lewiston **431-0790**
Niagara County, NY
Jerald J. Farrell, Bander
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The 2004 fall banding season started on 25 Aug, which was one of my earliest starts. Banding was very slow, so after closing the nets on this day they were not reopened again until 15 Sep. All nets were taken down on 29 Oct. This year completes 29 years of continuous fall banding for the Lewiston Station.

As reported in the past, total birds banded at this station have continued to decline with each passing year. This year was no exception. Many net days were recorded with total birds caught being a big disappointment. Birds/100nhs have dropped from the 50's to the 30's over the last 10 years. Total species over this period have remained fairly stable.

Scheduled banding days were lost due to wind and rain but were not a major problem.

During the banding period, I encountered five local recaptures, including four Black-capped Chickadees and one Gray Catbird.

Banding demonstrations were conducted at two garden club meetings and a hands-on demonstration was conducted at the station for a Pheasants Forever Youth Day Event.

Ruthven Park **425-0795**
Haldimand County, ON
Rick Ludkin, Loretta Mousseau, Brian Pomfret, Banders
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This was our tenth fall banding season at Ruthven Park. Our first day of fall banding was 21 Aug and we banded on 65 days until 7 Nov. We had excellent coverage—only poor weather kept us from banding. In summary, we banded 2,567 birds of 86 forms or species. In terms of numbers banded, this is our third highest fall total.

Table 1. AFR III Fall 2004 Summary

	Lewiston NY	Ruthven Park ON	Rock Point ON	Selkirk ON	Long Point ON	Presque Isle PA	Powdermill PA	Mt Nebo MD	Allegheny Front WV
First Day/Last Day	8/25 - 10/29	8/21 - 11/7	8/7 - 11/6	7/4 - 11/18	8/1 - 11/15	7/11 - 10/31	8/3 - 11/30	8/22 - 11/1	8/14 - 10/16
Days Operated	11	65	60	137	107	33	99	21	56
No. Nets Used	15	10 to 18	10 to 17	1 to 20	0 to 53	5 to 12	5 to 68	15	20 to 27
Total Net Hours	735	4742	4105	16,429	8556	696	27,670	1486	8051.5
% Caught in Traps	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	3.9%	11.0%	0	0	0	0
Lgst Daily Catch	61 (10/13)	216 (10/20)	208 (10/25)	262 (10/23)	428 (10/25)	119 (10/18)	307 (9/29)	56 (10/18)	438 (9/30)
Most Common BD	HETH 25%	RCKI 37%	RCKI 42%	GCKI 45%	GCKI 37%	n/a		RCKI 45%	BTBW 19%
Most Species Diversity	14(9/15,10/13)	25 (9/29)	27 (9/29)	26 (9/30)	40 (9/30)	16 (9/26)	43 (9/29)	14 (10/18)	30 (10/4)
No. Banded 2003	60	2098	3340	2945	10,261	305	6796	726	3452
No. Banded 2004	240	2567	3204	3850	9787	669	7798	485	4445
No. Forms 2003	25	80	87	99	107	-	196	56	69
No. Forms 2004	34	86	83	93	117	58	110	46	79
B/100nh 2003	27.8	51.2	64.8	17.1	110.5	-	35	50.9	48.8
B/100nh 2004	32.6	53.1	78.1	22.3	114.4	96.1	28.2	32.6	55.2
% HY 2003	87%	-	65%	68%	-	-	-	-	-
% HY 2004	63%	77%	70%	58%	77%	-	-	77%	79%

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 2004

	Lewiston NY		Ruthven Pk ON		Rock Point ON		Selkirk Pk ON		Long Point ON		Presque Isle PA		Powdermill PA		Mt Nebo MD		Allegheny Front WV									
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY								
1	26	GRCA	97	323	RCKI	n/a	337	WTSP	69.7	632	GCKI	n/a	1039	GCKI	83.0	102	GCKI	693	AMGO	52	129	GRCA	87	879	BTBW	72.6
2	26	MAWA	85	301	SCJU	56.2	307	RCKI	68.7	629	RCKI	n/a	984	RCKI	86.2	92	YWAR	450	WTSP	46	45	WTSP	53	791	BTNW	83.9
3	18	HETH	100	285	AMGO	83.6	266	AMGO	69.9	183	MAWA	92.3	668	WTSP	77.4	84	GRCA	359	SCJU	47	44	RCKI	55	527	BLPW	76.1
4	14	GCKI	71	198	WTSP	80.9	256	GRCA	92.5	171	SOSP	90.1	638	MYWA	85.6	63	RCKI	322	SOSP	73	35	AMRO	60	278	SCJU	87.8
5	14	RCKI	97	195	SOSP	77.9	202	GCKI	75.2	126	SCJU	65.9	623	AMGO	72.1	35	WTSP	322	MAWA	77	24	EATO	88	203	COYE	94.6
6	14	WOTH	100	150	GCKI	n/a	142	MAWA	43.7	124	YWAR	85.5	583	NSWO*	37.9	32	SCJU	304	MYWA	84	22	COYE	68	167	MAWA	86.8
7	13	SWTH	77	97	MYWA	78.2	130	SOSP	64.6	94	NAWA	93.6	411	BRCR	68.6	23	HOWR	303	REVI	90	18	BCCH	78	147	TEWA	81.0
8	13	OVEN	100	72	GRCA	98.6	125	PISI	54.4	86	GRCA	80.2	398	SCJU	63.1	18	SOSP	299	RTHU	90	18	BTBW	94	136	BLJA	76.5
9	11	WWR	48	61	PISI	45.8	94	HETH	73.4	77	MYWA	93.5	298	EWCS	63.4	17	WWR	298	RCKI	59	17	OVEN	65	130	GCKI	63.9
10	10	AMRE	97	54	BCCH	96.3	92	SCJU	76.1	77	HETH	92.2	276	HETH	78.6	16	MAWA	284	GRCA	91	13	NOCA	85	103	SWTH	81.4
	10	WTSP	80																							

This fall was one of the warmest on record. It was also quite dry. September was exceptionally wonderful weather-wise. Although we had a few mornings with frost patches, a heavy frost did not occur until early November.

Ruthven Park National Historic Site is located on the banks of the Grand River about 2 km north of the town of Cayuga and about 20 km directly north of the shore of Lake Erie. The area is a mix of agricultural fields, old fields, and forest tracts (some of which are quite large—the North Cayuga Slough Forest). The net lanes are cut into the scrub that buffers the open fields and lawns of the historic mansion and the surrounding forest.

We used the usual 10 fall net lanes (adding one to the nine we use in the spring to take advantage of a large brush pile to entice sparrows). We also ran two extra net lanes that were used in the summer MAPS program to see how migrant flow in the thicker forest compared with movement along the edges. Along with the nets, we used up to four ground traps and one Potter trap. These were moved periodically in response to bird movement on the property. Banding and measurement was carried out in the banding 'lab'—an out-building of the historic site converted for our use.

Wonderful weather at Ruthven translates into not-so-wonderful banding. We think that this is because migrants take advantage of the conditions to "fly-over," probably heading for the south side of Lake Erie and beyond. September was particularly fine. This resulted in our lowest September rate of capture: 31.35 b/100nhs. In other years, the numbers of birds banded starts to increase substantially in the last third of September into early October and it is not unusual to have "100-bird days" in the first ten days of October, but this did not happen this year. It was not until around 19 Oct that things picked up—and then they really took off. In a six-day period, we banded 933 birds which accounted for 36% of our whole fall total. Our highest day was the 20th when we banded 216. Over a quarter (250 - 27%) of the birds banded during this period were Ruby-crowned Kinglets. For the whole fall period, the rate of capture—53.12 b/100nhs—was the second lowest since 1998.

We were particularly struck by the drop in warbler numbers. We banded only 330 (12.9% of the total catch). This is the lowest number since 1998 (the year in which our net hours rose to a level that makes inter-year comparisons meaningful). We thought this might be somewhat attributable to the inclusion of Yellow Warbler numbers in other years. (We band Yellow Warblers in July and early August but this year these birds are reported in the MAPS results.) Even with this species factored out of the comparison, we had the lowest number and percentage of catch for warblers. For comparison, the next lowest total, with Yellow Warblers excluded, was 416 (in '03). Interestingly, our Red-eyed Vireo numbers were at their lowest as well (only 25 banded). It is hard to say whether this reflects a poor breeding season for these highly insectivorous birds or is just a fluke in their migration in the Ruthven area. It will be interesting to look at warbler and Red-eyed Vireo numbers from other stations.

On the other hand, our sparrow/junco numbers were higher than they've ever been: 832 (32.4% of the catch). We had a record catch of Dark-eyed Juncos (301) and White-throated Sparrows (198)

Other season-high banding totals include: 27 Brown Creepers, 24 Winter Wrens, 150 Golden-crowned Kinglets, 323 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, 10 Black-and-white Warblers, our first fall Hooded Warbler, 43 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks and 61 Pine Siskins. [As a matter of interest: migrants at Ruthven use the scrub/edge habitat during migration much more than the forest interior. The two nets from the MAPS program that we maintained in the forest corridor accounted for only 1.3% of the catch.] In terms of migration monitoring, we encountered 137 species. Highlights include: Snow Goose, Peregrine Falcon, White-rumped Sandpiper, Pileated Woodpecker, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and Connecticut Warbler.

This fall we retrapped 313 same-season birds, some many times. We also had 102 returns of birds banded in previous seasons. Most notable were a Rose-breasted Grosbeak banded in 1997 and a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher banded in 1999.

We had an interesting "foreign return": an AHY-M American Goldfinch banded by R. A. Canterbury near Spanishburg, WV, on 3 Apr 2004 and captured 4 Nov 2004 at Ruthven Park.

Enthusiastic support (financial and practical) is provided by the Lower Grand River Land Trust and the Ruthven Park staff. Special thanks to Marilyn Havelka and Linda Jackson for their timely infusions of coffee and good will. I also thank my HBO colleagues, John Miles (Selkirk) and Jim Smith (Rock Point), for their engaging ideas and support.

Rock Point Banding Station 425-0793

Dunnville, Haldimand County, ON

Jim Smith, Bander

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Roswitha Mataschek, Rick Young, Dora Young,
Gisele Mills, Chief Assistants

Net locations remained the same from last year except for an additional two nets placed in a swampy location. For a period of a few weeks, a third net was tried at this same location but found to be not worth the extra time.

Weather wise the beginning part of the season was very wet after an unusually wet summer resulting in very muddy trails. The additions of boardwalks this past spring, made possible by a grant from T.D. Friends of the Environment, were very beneficial. Only two mornings showed hard enough frost to make opening nets a little difficult. This is, again, in contrast to what has been experienced in other years where heat was generally needed in the banding shed from mid October

Some compromises were made to my overall protocol because of health concerns. Some days were missed because of appointments that were unavoidable. In addition, we started later in the season and did not do consistent banding through the summer. No active effort was made to band Yellow Warblers in late July and early August. This resulted in a reduced catch rate in an otherwise excellent fall. Based on a comparison of last year with 75 days and this year with only 60 days, we had only a reduction of 136 birds banded making it was an excellent fall. It can also be seen that we had an increased catch rate of 13.3 b/100nhs.

We remain a purely volunteer organization made possible only by the dedication of those individuals who are willing to commit at least one day a week to come out and give assistance. Being the only licensed bander remains a difficulty that does not allow for continuation of the program when I am not available. This is a limiting factor, which I do not think will be solved without volunteers willing to take on the responsibility required or a strong enough financial base to attract those who still need to make a living.

Noteworthy were the Pine Siskins which were not banded in these numbers (125) since 2001 when 93 were banded. We also experienced higher than usual numbers of birds later in the season this year. Some of our best days were at the beginning of November. Also of note were only the second Northern Mockingbird banded at Rock Point and the second Northern Shrike. Hermit Thrush and Gray-cheeked Thrush numbers were double from previous years. Some species, such as Yellow Warbler, Warbling Vireo and *Empidonax* flycatchers, were all reduced because of the lack of summer banding this year. American Goldfinches, for some reason, have shown a steady reduction from 833 in 2000 to 266 this year. Some common species, such as Red-winged Blackbird, European Starling, and Brown-headed Cowbird, were in the area but did not choose to be caught and so were not banded this season.

Only two foreign bands were recovered this season: a Song Sparrow and a Northern Waterthrush. Two Yellow Warblers were recovered from the Selkirk banding station, which is about 43 km southwest.

Visitors to the station were much reduced from previous years mainly because we were not open during the peak camping season. No banding demonstrations were given to any groups. Joe Norman from Sir Sandford Fleming College spent two weeks on a Work Placement Program and proved he was very adept at picking up the routines and skills necessary to become a valuable asset.

Again, I give sincere thanks to the regular volunteers who give one or more days a week to assist. Without permission from Ontario Parks and

Mark Custers to conduct scientific studies within the park we would not have such a good location.

Financially we are supported through grants or donations by Haldimand Bird Observatory, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, James L. Baillie Memorial Fund of Bird Studies Canada, T.D. Friends of the Environment, Ontario Power Generator and individual contributors.

Selkirk Provincial Park **424-0795**
Haldimand-Norfolk Counties, ON
John Miles, Bander
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Mike Furber, Chief Assistant

The seventh year of operating in the fall at the Selkirk Provincial Park field station of the Haldimand Bird Observatory officially commenced 4 Jul and ended 19 Nov. The station was manned daily once it opened, except for one day of inclement weather, with banding taking place 137 days. In addition to the bander-in-charge, 11 volunteers spent one or more days assisting with running the station.

Except for days of extreme adverse weather, e.g. hurricane, when banding was not carried out, the station was manned from ½ hour before sunrise for a minimum of six hours for the passerine banding. On a couple of mornings, banding commenced after the morning rain had ceased. On many mornings in October and November the nets were opened 1-2 hours before dawn to catch owls.

The summer/fall of 2004 was one of the warmest on record. Most of the fall was also fairly dry in the banding area. The hurricanes that devastated the southern US for the most part and the associated rains stayed south of Lake Erie. The edge of the cloud bank was clearly visible looking across the lake. A general killing frost did not occur until early November. There were a few mornings when there was a frost in low lying marshy areas but some frost prone plants were still green and blooming into November on the higher ground. Even some of the wild raspberry plants had a second crop that was ripening into early November.

The Selkirk field station has operated in the same location in the southwest part of the park since it

was started in 1996. The census route was shortened a bit in the spring to exclude the hardwoods at the north end of the study area, which reduced the time to a better time of approximately one hour to do the census.

Passerine banding was carried out using up to 20 mist nets, six ground traps, and a jay trap. One new net site was started in September on the east side of the banding area and proved to be a very productive location.

July was about normal with a few early stragglers filtering through with the Yellow Warbler flight peaking the late week of July. There were 522 birds of 39 species banded. August, as has been the pattern over the past few years, was very poor, although the number of species was more varied than in July when 333 birds of 51 species were banded. If it had not been for a small drop of warblers on the 30 Aug, when 65 birds were banded, August would have been very poor. September usually is the peak month for variety and number of migrants, but banding totals at Selkirk in September have never been great. This changed this year when there was a drop of warblers on 8 and 9 Sep. On both days, over 150 birds were banded of which over 90% were warblers. The rest of the month for the most part was fairly quiet but a little surge took place on 30 and 31 Sep. September ended up with a very respectable 959 birds of 68 species banded which was three times the total banded in the fall of 2003.

October started off with a 70-bird day, which is well above an average day for the station, and then quieted down until the 14th, when 85 birds were banded. The 19th of Oct saw a good drop of birds, when 210 birds were banded of which nearly 160 were kinglets. This was followed up on the 20th with a 100+ bird day. The 21st was almost a 90-bird day, which seemed a little slow. We caught our breath on the 22nd with a 25-bird day, and then the roof fell in on the 23rd. Kinglets were everywhere. When the dust finally had settled, 262 birds had been banded of which 224 were kinglets. The 24th was a cakewalk with 114 birds, of which 99 were kinglets banded. On the 25th I closed one net run too soon. The day's total was 197, with another 160 kinglets banded. From then to the end of the month the daily catch dropped off to almost nothing. All told,

1763 birds of 47 species were banded. The most productive month of banding in the nine years the station has been in operation. November started off with two 70-plus days in a row and then the number of migrants dropped off to a trickle.

There were 3850 birds of 93 species plus one form banded at Selkirk in the fall of 2004, which is the best fall at Selkirk. Most numerous birds banded in the fall of 2004 were Golden-crowned Kinglet with 632, closely followed by Ruby-crowned Kinglet 629, Magnolia Warbler 183, Song Sparrow 171, Slate-colored Junco 126 and Yellow Warbler 124. No new species were banded at Selkirk this fall for the first time.

In the fall of 2004, 119 retrapped birds were processed. Some of these birds were retrapped regularly many times.

There were 112 birds retrapped in the fall of 2004 that were returns from a prior banding season. Most of these are residents or nesting birds in the area. Noteworthy were a Yellow Warbler banded in 1999; a Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat and American Goldfinch banded in 2000; a Blue Jay, catbird, two Yellow Warblers, two Song Sparrows, a Northern Cardinal, a Red-winged Blackbird, and five goldfinches banded in 2001; and 96 individuals of 21 species banded from 2002-2004.

This fall, four foreign returns were encountered: a Northern Saw-whet Owl, retrapped at Selkirk 26 Oct (original banding data not known at this time); a Northern Saw-whet Owl banded at Cabot's Head 13 Apr 2000, retrapped at Selkirk 4 Nov 2004; a Northern Saw-whet Owl banded at Holiday Beach 3 Nov 2001, retrapped at Selkirk 12 Oct 2004; and a Northern Saw-whet Owl banded 14 Oct 2002 at Prince Edward Pt., and retrapped at Selkirk 4 Nov 2004.

The Haldimand Bird Observatory operates three field stations separated by several miles. Occasionally there are interstation recoveries, but not frequently.

A Yellow Warbler banded 15 May 2003 at Rock Point was retrapped at Selkirk 18 May. This bird apparently nested at Selkirk and was still present

11 Aug; and a Yellow Warbler banded at Rock Point 31 May 2002, retrapped at Selkirk 14 Aug 2004.

There was one foreign recovery: a Blue Jay banded at Selkirk 30 Apr 2000, recovered 10 Aug 2002, at Oakville, Ontario.

There were 54 visitor days recorded this fall at the banding site. A banding demonstration was put on for the Stewardship Junior Rangers.

I extend my appreciation to Parks Ontario, the Long Point Region Conservation Authority and the Park Contractor, Hans Lutzi, for permission to band in the Park. Hans has been very supportive in many ways. This project was financially supported by the Ministry of Natural Resources CWIP program, the Norfolk Field Naturalists, Ontario Power Generation, Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and George Pond, also the Observatory's friends and members whose individual donations were greatly appreciated. These included bird bags, 3-ring loose leaf binders, file cabinets, other items, and timely cash donations. Goods and services were also provided by Selkirk Provincial Park.

Finally, thanks to the volunteers without whose assistance the station's operation would have been very difficult: **1-2 weeks:** Bill Smith; **4-6 days:** Joan M. Ferrer, Joan O. Ferrer, Tim Furber; **1-3 days:** Allison Furber, Jamie Furber, Mike Furber, Nancy Furber, Lisa Gosse, Leanne Jennings, Bill Smith, and Alison Thomson.

Presque Isle **420-0800**
Erie, PA
Ronald F. Leberman, Bander

Despite four tropical storms to hit the southeastern coast, this area was spared except for heavy rains at times. We ran the station this fall for a record number of days (33—previous high was 31). A total of 669 birds were banded of 58 species in 696 net hours. About 20 hummingbirds were netted and released unbanded. A Carolina Chickadee banded 21 Sep was a new species for the station and Erie County. New at the station for fall bandings were a Blue-gray Gnatcatcher and House Sparrow. The number of birds banded during fall from 1960 to

2004 now totals 34,826, which includes birds banded by the Stull's and Leberman's. We had 52 birds repeat one or more times this fall, and one Ruby-crowned Kinglet with a shiny new band that had been banded elsewhere. Fourteen species repeated, some several times in the same day. The oldest return was a Hairy Woodpecker banded as an adult here on 15 Jun 1997 recaptured here on 25 Jul 2004. This bird was at least nine years old and still going.

Thanks to all those who helped with the banding at this station in any way, and the visitors also. The park staff and crew, again Barb Mitchell, Sam Stull, Larry Massey, Larry Johnson and Evelyn Anderson all did a great job. We did have fewer visitors this fall as I could not come up on Saturdays due to work.

Long Point Bird Observatory **423-0800**
Port Rowan, Norfolk County, ON **423-0801**
Stuart A. Mackenzie and **423-0802**
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Chief Assistants

The fall program officially began on 10 Aug at our Old Cut Field Station, the 14th at Breakwater and the 16th at the Tip. August and most of September were extremely slow. Very calm and hot weather through this period resulted in small concentrations of migrants. The Tip experienced a typical little influx of flycatchers at the end of August, dominated by Least, Yellow-bellied, and Traill's. After banding 85 birds on 30 Aug, the Tip would not have a 50+day until 25 Sep. This lull, however, would not go unrewarded. The first big push of migrants was evident at Breakwater on 31 Aug. In an area encompassing only about 1 km², an incredible 100 species were tallied on the morning census alone. The species total for the day was 105! These totals may seem beyond belief to those who have not birded at Breakwater. Twenty-five warbler species were recorded that day, including Blue-winged, Golden-winged, Brewster's, and the season's only Prairie Warbler.

On 5 Sep, the Tip crew caught something only dreamed of in the circles of LPBO--one of our own color-banded Loggerhead Shrikes from the

endangered central Ontario population! This bird had been reared in captivity, color banded, and then released on 4 Aug 2004 near Dyer's Bay on the Bruce Peninsula. This was the Loggerhead Shrike Recovery Team's first recovery outside of the breeding season and is proof that captive-reared birds are exhibiting normal migration behavior. The shrike was released to continue south (leaving a frog in the net as a farewell gift).

Hurricane Frances released her fury on Long Point from 7-9 Sep, leaving a wind-blown, rain-soaked crew itching for rarities. Despite our best efforts, no real rarities were discovered, but all three jaeger species were recorded between Breakwater and the Tip. After the storm passed and skies cleared mid-day on 9 Sep, over 200 raptors of 13 species were recorded! The Tip also got quite the push of shorebirds, including 12 White-rumped Sandpipers.

Coverage at Breakwater ended on 20 Sep with the start of the hunting season. Both the Tip and Old Cut experienced a good push of warblers on 25-26 Sep, banding 227 and 127, respectively. Blackpoll, Western Palm and Magnolia warblers dominated the catch. Swainson's and Gray-cheeked thrushes were also represented in good numbers. Much to our surprise, a Worm-eating Warbler was also at the Tip on the 25th and 30th of Sep. Also on the 25th, Old Cut banded the fall's only Connecticut Warbler. On 26 Sep, 122 Northern Flickers were observed migrating, and the season's second Whip-poor-will was banded. LPBO banded 370 birds of 40 species on 30 Sep, with a mixed bag of temperate migrant kinglets, creepers, nuthatches, warblers, and sparrows pushing through.

From 18-28 Oct, LPBO banded 3360 birds of 58 species, the majority of which were kinglets, Myrtle Warblers, White-throated Sparrows, Slate-colored Juncos, and Northern Saw-whet Owls. The Tip crew banded 2102 of these, including 428 on 25 Oct alone. This peak also came with its share of rarities, mostly at the Tip. A California Gull, which stayed around for most of October, was found on the 16th along with a Purple Sandpiper and the first nine, of a record 122 Atlantic Brant observed this season (78 were counted on 20 Oct). Two Cattle Egrets spent most of the day on 17 Oct hunting on the lawn at the Tip.

The 21st produced one of only a few fall records for Henslow's Sparrow, plus a Lesser-Black-backed Gull. Three Hudsonian Godwits stopped at the Tip briefly on 24 Oct, as well as 24 Rough-legged Hawks, and the first two Northern Shrikes of the year. The following day, 19 more Rough-legged Hawks appeared off the lake, accompanied by two Golden Eagles and nine Red-shouldered Hawks. Meanwhile, a Lark Sparrow hopped around the garden. A female Harlequin Duck flew by the Tip on 29 Oct. On the 30th of Oct, 79 species were observed at the Tip, including an adult Black-legged Kittiwake, Common Raven, Cattle Egret, and four Arctic Terns that were found sitting with Common Terns at the Tip. There were also a good number of Peregrine Falcons this fall, with 10 different individuals observed at the Tip on 16 and 20 Oct.

Monitoring of the Northern Saw-whet Owl migration began at Old Cut and the Tip on 25 Sep and 4 Oct, and ended on 15 and 9 Nov, respectively. There were 25 nights of coverage at Old Cut and 15 at the Tip. We banded a total of 583 Northern Saw-whet Owls, four Long-eared Owls and one Eastern Screech-Owl. The night of 24 Oct was particularly amazing at the Tip, where they banded 138 owls—the highest one-night total ever for LPBO and for any other banding site in North America! Things quickly quieted down in the first week of November, but not without a bang. Two Cave Swallows flew by the Tip on 4 Nov, and two Red Phalaropes spent most of the day swimming along the shoreline. Another Cave Swallow was found at Old Cut on 5 Nov, and a final bird was found flying at knee level around the garden at the Tip on the 9th.

Afternoon Monarch Butterfly censuses were carried out at the Tip and Breakwater for 88 and 35 days, respectively, and resulting in counts of 3164 and 204 butterflies, respectively. This total is down from 18,203 in 2003, and down 68% from the long-term average of 9919.

Despite the sluggish first half of the fall season, LPBO had an average fall, with 9787 birds banded of 117 species. In total, 251 species were recorded. This compares to 10,580 birds banded of 110 species in 2003. LPBO had 107 days of coverage, yielding 8556 net hours with a catch rate

of 114.4 b/100nh, again slightly above 110.5 last year. Twelve ground traps, four jay traps (three brand new) and two Heligoland traps contributed 11% of the catch (13 % lower than the spring). Nearly 1000 visitors enjoyed banding demonstrations, as well as the visitor center at Old Cut this fall. As is always the case, this wonderful season would not have been possible without the hard work and dedication of the 33 volunteers who spent time at LPBO this season. Thank you.

Powdermill Nature Reserve 400-0791

Rector, Westmoreland County, PA

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Powdermill Nature Reserve's Bird Banding Program, located on the 2,000-acre biological station of Carnegie Museum of Natural History in the Laurel Highlands region of southwestern Pennsylvania, completed its 43rd fall migration banding season in 2004. The station was in operation 99 out of a possible 120 days from August through November. We banded 7,798 birds with 100 or more being banded on 30 days during the season (compared to 24 days last fall). Peak banding dates were 29 Sep (307), 14 Sep (291) and 24 Oct (240). Eighteen percent of our cumulative total was caught during August, 40% in September, 32% in October, and 10% in November.

Total banding effort for the fall 2004 season was 27,670 net-hours (average 231 net/trap hr/day), the first of many record-setting highs for this fall. Far exceeding the 42-year average of 15,373 net hours, this total also exceeded our previous banding effort record of 23,655 by more than 4,000 hr and surely contributed to our above-average banding total of 7798 birds (42 year avg 6298). Importantly, the record-high banding effort this fall was not matched by a comparatively very large (albeit above-average) banding total, such that the calculated capture rate this season (28.2 b/100nh) was far below average. The large number of net hours this fall reflects both favorable weather conditions for banding throughout much of the

season and the addition of a few more nets around the banding area as well as increased assistance during two week-long bander development workshops hosted this fall.

A total of 110 species of birds were banded this fall, tying as fifth highest species total ever recorded for a fall season. However, unlike most years at Powdermill where species diversity peaks two to three weeks before banding totals, the days with the most species banded (47 and 43), also coincided with the highest daily banding totals for the season (on 14 and 29 Sep, respectively). Only nine species were added to the list in October and November, leaving August and September accountable for nearly 92% of all species banded this fall.

Our season highlight, undoubtedly, was the banding of the first-ever Black-headed Grosbeak in the 43-yr history of the program, bringing the cumulative Powdermill fall banding list to 172 species (including two hybrid forms and two recognizable subspecies).

A few other good "gets" this fall (species for which we average less than one banded per fall) included: Green Heron, Spotted Sandpiper, Pileated Woodpecker, Northern Mockingbird, Worm-eating Warbler, and Grasshopper Sparrow. Alternatively, conspicuous "misses" this fall (i.e., species for which an average of one or more has been banded during fall) included: Red-winged Blackbird, Barn Swallow, Mourning Dove, Evening Grosbeak, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Prairie Warbler, House Sparrow, and Marsh Wren.

Eight species set record high totals this fall, many surpassing the previous high totals by 50 or more birds. Black-throated Green Warbler soared above the previous record of 130 with 208 birds banded, and Hooded Warbler followed suit with 237 birds over the previous record of 189. Red-eyed Vireo surpassed the record total set just last year of 249 with 303 birds. The remaining species records are as follows with 2004 fall total/previous record high: Acadian Flycatcher 44/42, Chestnut-sided Warbler 101/98, Black-throated Blue Warbler 101/74, Scarlet Tanager 145/108, and Blue-headed Vireo 74/53. These record totals, many of locally breeding bird species, seem to be

further evidence of the very productive 2004 breeding season experienced by many birds in the Laurel Valley, as well as elsewhere.

Of 124 species analyzed, 29 were one or more standard deviations above average this fall, in terms of raw banding total, including: eleven species of wood warblers, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, "Traill's" Flycatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Wood Thrush, and Scarlet Tanager. Only two were below average: Belted Kingfisher and House Wren. Examining capture rates, however, gives a very different picture of the success of this fall's season with just eight species being above average, including: Yellow-throated Vireo, Northern Parula, Black-throated Green Warbler, and Hooded Warbler. Fifteen others were below average with respect to capture rate and included: Least Flycatcher, Nashville Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Song Sparrow, Swamp Sparrow, and Dark-eyed Junco.

We benefited greatly this season from regular assistance with banding operations from several volunteers and visiting banders. For that we thank: Mike Comley, Randi Gerrish, Annie Lindsay, Molly McDermott, Trish Miller, Felicity Newell, Matt Shumar, Tom Greg, Jim Ingold, Gary and Sandy Lockerman, Debbie and Al Sherkow, Rosemary Spreha, and Guy Ubaghs. For occasional help with the banding, we also thank Bill Diehl, Pam Ferkett, Dan Hinnebusch, Brian Jones, Carroll Labarthe, David Liebman, Cokie Lindsay, Jake Mohlmann, Kelly Perkins, Katherine Reinamen, Joe Schreiber, and Carole Shanahan.

We benefited once again from an extended visit by David Norman, our British friend and ringing colleague from the Merseyside Ringing Group, whose visit this fall coincided perfectly for adding assistance and insight during our bander workshops where discussions and instructions on species identification, ageing and sexing, and measurement techniques were main topics. We appreciate the help and patience from all those who attended the workshops, especially during the very busy days when "regular" workshop activities were put on hold: Carol and Fred McCullogh, Deb Plotts, Gretchen Putonen, Clay Corbin, Fred Bassett, Virginia Duffy, and Tom LeBlanc.

Finally, we are extremely fortunate to have David Smith as the director of Powdermill Nature Reserve and in addition to the help he has provided on more than one occasion to the general daily banding operations, we are grateful for his unfailing support of the banding program and research at the Powdermill Avian Research Center. Last, but certainly not least, we thank our highly skilled data entry operator at Carnegie Museum's Section of Birds, Marilyn Niedermeier, who painstakingly enters, checks and double checks all of our banding records, and who is responsible for generating banding schedules and filling data requests.

Mt Nebo Banding Station **392-0792**
Oakland, Garrett County, MD
Connie Skipper and **Fran Pope, Banders**
connieskipper@hohnet.com

The Mt. Nebo Banding Station was open 21 days from 22 Aug through 1 Nov. Our largest catch was 56 birds on 18 Oct. Our next highest catch was 40 birds on 19 Sep and 32 birds on 28 Aug. Our season total was 485 birds with a station effort of 1486 net hours, using 15 nets. We had 32.6 b/100nh, the lowest in our four years at this site. This was much lower than the 50.9 b/100nh that we had last year.

One notable recapture was a Black-capped Chickadee that was banded as an HY-U bird on 28 Aug 1999. This bird was recaptured in fall 2003 and on 11 and 27 Oct 2004. An Ovenbird banded on 4 Sep as an AHY-U bird weighed in at 19 g. It was recaptured eight days later weighing a whopping 25 g, a weight gain of 6 g, or more than 30% increase in its body weight.

Looking at the top ten list, we had two species make the list and one dropped off. As in the three previous years at Mt. Nebo, Gray Catbirds and White-throated Sparrows were in the top four of species banded. Gray Catbirds made up 27% of our birds banded, with 129 birds. White-throated Sparrows made up 9% of total birds banded, with 45 birds. Black-throated Blue Warblers and Common Yellowthroats are the only other species to be on the top ten list for all four years. Ovenbirds and Northern Cardinals made their debut to the list this year. Song Sparrows dropped from the list.

The mast crop at Mt. Nebo was excellent—acorns, berries, apples, and cherries. As usual, this attracted catbirds galore.

The Black-billed Cuckoo was a new species to this site. This brings the station total to 80.

The fall of 2004 was a slow one. We had more Wood Thrushes than in the past; otherwise, low counts occurred for many species. There was only one flycatcher. The sparrows made a poor showing. We captured no Tennessee Warblers, Cape May Warblers, Bay-breasted or Blackpoll warblers, which is unusual for our station.

We had 16 visitors to the station on 25 Sep for a banding demo. Two local wood carvers were regular weekly visitors. They took photos, sketched, and enjoyed close-up looks at the birds.

Allegheny Front **390-0791**
Migration Observatory
Grant County, WV
Ralph K. Bell and **Joan Bell Pattison, AFMO**
Banding Leaders
Pattison9@comcast.net

The 47th year of bird banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory was the best since 1999. There is little doubt that the long awaited cutting of the ever-growing trees near the nets by Tom Fox and the Forest Service in July of this year has helped greatly because many migrants then fly lower as they come up through the slight gap in the mountain range.

Banding began on 14 Aug 2004 when 73 birds of 18 species were caught in the mist nets and banded. A mild weather front with light rain had moved through two days earlier. At times in the past years, strong weather fronts from westerly directions would give us our biggest flight days, but these were mostly lacking this fall. Most of our best flights occurred after three major hurricanes went through our area (see next paragraph). There were seven days when over 100 birds were banded, three days with over 200 birds, one day with over 300 birds, and one day with over 400 birds banded.

The station was in operation from 14 Aug to 16 Oct 2004, when it was closed for the season due to snow. The station was closed on six days due to bad weather. Hurricane Frances arrived on the mountain 6, 7 and 8 Sep, after which we had two of our 100+ banding days; Hurricane Ivan appeared on 17 and 18 Sep, after which we had two of our 200+ banding days, and Hurricane Jeanne appeared on 28 Sep. The biggest flight day of the fall was on 30 Sep, two days after Hurricane Jeanne, when 458 birds were captured and banded. After Hurricane Jeanne, we had all in a row, five of our biggest banding days.

A total of 4445 birds were banded of 79 species with a station effort of 8051.5 net hours, giving a capture ratio of 55.2 b/100nh.

Surrounded by Fred and Carol McCullough, Ken and Sue Heselton, Matt Fox, Charlotte Duffield and Jay Fox, on 10 Oct 2004, Ralph K. Bell was honored by his fellow volunteers with the privilege of banding the 200,000th bird at AFMO, an immature male Black-throated Blue Warbler. The station total is now 200,067 birds banded of 119 species and two subspecies.

A total of 31 birds banded in previous years at AFMO were recaptured: 17 banded in 1993, five banded in 2002, five banded in 2001, and four banded in 2000. There were no foreign recaptures this year.

The Black-throated Blue Warbler was the most numerous species with 879 bandings which is 25% above the ten-year running average. It has been the leader for the past eight out of 10 years (Tennessee Warbler was highest in 2002, and Blackpoll Warbler was highest in 1998). The Black-throated Green Warbler was second highest with 791 bandings (117% above average—more were banded this year than any year for the past 10 years), and Blackpoll Warbler was third highest (3.7% above the ten-year running average). There were 147 Tennessee Warblers banded this year which is 52% below average, compared to a ten-year average of 304 birds per year. The Slate-colored Junco was fourth highest with 278 banded which is 38% above the ten-year running average, and the Common Yellowthroat was fifth highest with 203 bandings which is 63.6% above average.

An American Crow caught by Charles Ziegenfuss was a new species for the station. One Whip-poor-will was banded this year, the 18th since the station began in 1958.

Flyovers have been counted since 1990, and this creates a lot of interest among visitors and hopefully will influence more people to try to protect the environment and also birds. Don Pattison coordinated the Flyover Count with the help of Joan Rowe, JoAnn Graham, Tammy Butcher and many other interested people. The Flyover Count listed 459 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (average is 474 since we began keeping records in 1990), 5435 Blue Jays (average 6532), 3297 American Goldfinches (average 3076), and only 67 Monarch Butterflies (average 1221). Next year's fall count should tell us if the Monarchs are in serious decline. Migrants this fall included 11 Merlins, two of them were caught and banded because they were chasing a huge migrating flight of Blue Jays, and a record 29 Bald Eagles were counted.

During the 2004 AFMO fall banding season, 1128 people signed the visitors' book. These visitors came from 19 states, Washington DC, England, Germany and Spain. Only experienced net tenders are allowed on the net lanes, so for the past few years we have had a net near the entrance path so that visitors can see first hand how birds are captured and removed from the nets. As usual, several elementary, middle school and college classes, and bird clubs, including Garrett College, the Highland Adventist School from Elkins, over 100 students from the Pendleton County Middle School, West Virginia Wesleyan College, Bridgewater College, ecology students from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA, the Rockingham Bird Club, and the Richmond Audubon Society visited the station. Mike Lanzone from Powdermill Nature Reserve and Dr. David Norman, his colleague from England, also visited the AFMO banding station to photograph and research selected warblers for a book series, a *Photographic Guide to Ageing and Sexing of North American Birds*, by Bob Mulvihill and Mike Lanzone.

The volunteer banders who participated this year in many capacities were Bob Dean, Ken and Sue Heselton, Carol and Fred McCullough, Beth and

Randy Ritter, Charleest Ziegenfus, and station leaders Ralph K. Bell and Joan Bell Pattison. Bill Agee and Ken Heselton provided the computer expertise. LeJay Graffious transported, erected, and removed with the help of several volunteers, the banding shelter he built in 1980. Additional volunteers who helped in various ways at the station were: Doris Agee, Bill Beatty, Jeanine Cummings, Keven Dodge, Charlotte Duffield, Jenny Eaton, Jay, Matt, Tom and Dawn Fox, Walter Fye, Helen Anne Graffious, Phil Graham, Linda Hollenberg, John Jacobs, Mark Johnson, Bryan Jose, Gordon Knight, Jonavieve Lockhart, Jack and Joleene Minear, Jonathan Minear, Loretta Mullens, Geoff and Tim Newlin, Amo Oliverio, Carl Rowe, Todd and Kim Schnopp, Joe Schreiber, Janet Shaffer, Steve Sushinski, and Judy Ward.

We thank the personnel of the Monongahela National Forest, Supervisor Clyde Thompson, Cheat/Potomac District Ranger Jeff Hammes, Wildlife Biologist Raymond Brown, Special Use Manager Sara Schell, Dan Arling, Shane Jones, Ed Lang, Ron Polgar, Jane Rodrigue, Andy Stump, Todd Thompson, Bill Tolin, Jon Wheeler and all others for their cooperation and help. We also thank the West Virginia D.N.R. for the use of their building for storage of our banding shed, the Brooks Bird Club, the Richmond Audubon Society, and many visitors for their financial support. We want to thank again all who helped at the station this fall for their unfaltering support; everyone, including the banders, is a volunteer.



Red-shouldered Hawk
by George West