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Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2006 Long Point Bird Observatory

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There was one foreign retrap handled this spring: a Gray Catbird banded on 29 Oct 2005 at Kiptopeke Banding Station at Powhatan, VA, was retrapped 14 May 2006.

The Haldimand Bird Observatory operates three field stations separated by several miles. Occasionally there are interstation recoveries, such as a House Finch banded at Ruthven on 23 Oct 2005 and retrapped at Selkirk on 22 Mar 2006.

There were two interesting foreign recoveries: a Blue Jay banded here on 10 May 2005 was recovered 23 Sep 2005 in Amherst, NY; and a Northern Saw-whet Owl banded here on 21 Oct 2002 was recovered near Duluth, MN.

There were 89 visitor days recorded this spring at the banding site.

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 supported financially by the Ministry of Natural Resources CWIP program, the Norfolk Field Naturalists, Ontario Power Generation, and George Pond. Also, to the Observatory's friends and members whose individual donations were greatly appreciated. These donations included bird bags, three-ring, loose-leaf binders, file cabinets, materials for boardwalks, other items and timely cash donations.

Goods and services were also provided by Selkirk Provincial Park.

Finally, the volunteers without whose assistance the station's operation would have been very difficult: **2-4 weeks:** John Dickie, Brandon Logan, Stacey Logan; **1-2 weeks:** Renia Boyko, Al Thrower, Linda Thrower; **4-6 days:** Cheryl Boyd, Ric Boyd, Simone Immler, Terry Schuler; **1-3 days:** Halley Boyko, Gwen Clark, Ed Couture, Nancy Furber, Mike Kimber, Garry Logan, Steven Miles, Larrissa O'Neil, Heather Peddie, Kati Peddie, George Pond, Sadie Rissemer, Chelsey Stephen, Kevin Stephan, John Woodcock, and Maureen Woodcock.

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The Long Point Bird Observatory opened its nets at the Old Cut field station on 1 Apr, kicking off its 47th spring of migration monitoring at Long Point, ON. The Tip and Breakwater stations were opened on 15 and 24 Apr respectively. Spring came early to the Long Point area allowing many early temperate migrants to glide through during the mild days of March. April was otherwise typical. Pine Warblers had already returned by the time we got started, and we were also visited by a few Brewer's Blackbirds. On 6 Apr, an American Kestrel was banded—a first for the Old Cut field station. April was made up of a few small waves and one big push around the 19th to the 24th when 1,803 birds were banded. The highest daily banding total for the season was on the 21st, when 604 birds were banded of 30 species—409 of them at the Tip station alone. This push was dominated by Ruby-crowned Kinglets, Slate-colored Juncos, White-throated and Chipping sparrows.

	<u>%SY</u>	<u>%ASY</u>	<u>%AHY</u>
1796 Wh-thr. Sparrow	54.2	19.9	25.9
638 Red-wg. Blackbd.	50.8	45.5	3.9
606 Ruby-cr. Kinglet	55.6	28.2	16.2
585 Yellow Warbler	56.4	30.4	13.2
564 E Wh-cr Sparrow	52.5	12.9	34.8
533 Magnolia Warbler	53.5	36.6	9.9
466 Com. Grackle	24.2	1.5	74.2
459 Chipping Spar.	59.9	21.1	19.0
430 Sl-col Junco	70.2	22.8	7.0
414 Blue Jay	69.8	21.3	8.9

Population indices calculated for Chipping Sparrows using estimated total data have shown an annual increase of 4.8% (spring) and 3.6% in the fall. Banding totals are reflecting this trend, with 459 banded this spring getting its way on our spring top ten list for the first time ever. Strong westerly gales in the last half of April blew in a few great birds. A Lark Sparrow was banded at the Tip on the 26th. On the 28th, a Say's Phoebe was found and stayed until the 29th. There was a fairly

substantial movement of thrushes through the area at the end of April and beginning of May. On the 29th, 81 Hermit and over a dozen Wood Thrushes were present in just the small Old Cut woodlot. A trickle of warblers began in the last week of April and we had tallied 11 species before 1 May, 23 species before 3 May!

May started off with a bang. In the first ten days alone, 3,725 birds of 91 species were banded! White-throated and Eastern White-crowned sparrows pushed through en masse with a good movement of Myrtle Warblers, and the first shower of Neotropical migrants. The first and only Worm-eating Warbler of the season was banded at the Tip on 1 May. Also on the 1st, a Sora was banded at Old Cut, another first for the station. An amazing spectacle occurred on the morning of 11 May when over 2500 Northern Orioles and over 800 Rose-breasted Grosbeaks passed through the Tip. On 12 and 13 May, the Tip enjoyed a White-winged Dove, which was banded later that day.

All four variations of the Blue-winged/Golden-winged complex were banded this spring, including 19 Blue-winged and two Golden-winged warblers. A Brewster's Warbler was banded at Old Cut on 8 May and a Lawrence's Warbler (backcross with GWWA) at the Tip on 18 May. Also on the 18th, Long Point's third ever Arctic Tern was found at the Tip. The next day the only Cerulean Warbler of the season, an after-second-year female, was banded. Five Louisiana Waterthrushes were recorded in migration this year! On 15 May, a male Prothonotary Warbler was seen flying off the Tip on the morning census. Strong southwest and strong west winds prevailed at Long Point from the 16th to the 22nd of May, bringing in the rarity of the year: a Black Swift, which appeared briefly at the Tip on 21 May. If accepted by the Ontario Bird Records Committee, it will be the first record for Ontario and possibly eastern North America. The first Summer Tanager, a second-year male, was banded at the Tip on the 23rd, and on the 25th a Eurasian Collared-Dove was observed flying around the lighthouse. The only Acadian Flycatcher of the spring was banded at Old Cut on 29 May.

As June rolled around, things did not slow down a bit. LPBO's first ever Townsend's Solitaire, a second-year male, was banded at the Tip on 6 Jun, completing the Rocky Mountain trio for the year. That same morning, an after-second-year

male Summer Tanager was banded. Two days later, an after-second-year female Prothonotary Warbler was banded.

A heartfelt thanks goes to the 24 volunteer field biologists who logged over 3500 hours collecting migration data on 245 species and banding 12,468 birds of 131 species and forms. Twenty-one "Friends of LPBO" helped to service around 2500 visitors to the Old Cut field station, including students from pre-school to graduate level. We also thank Environment Canada, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and the Ontario Trillium Foundation for their support.

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This was the best spring in recent history! With the exception of a few weeks of bad weather, we were able to start early and have a record season in many respects. We closed on 31 May to remain within our constant-effort protocol. Daily point counts added several additional species.

	<u>%SY</u>	<u>%ASY</u>	<u>%AHY</u>
385 Amer. Goldfinch	68	32	
91 Sl-col Junco	64	36	
80 Wh-thr. Sparrow	55	45	
53 Ruby-cr Kinglet	74	26	
42 Red-wg Blackbd	60	39	01
34 Song Sparrow			100
31 Cedar Waxwing	74	26	
28 Chipping Spar.	46	54	
23 Bl-cap Chickadee	30	60	10
21 Yellow Warbler	62	38	

We banded a record 1,043 individuals of a record 65 species in 36 days of operation. We also had 165 repeats, a fantastic 138 returns, and 21 hummingbirds not banded. Our measure of efficiency was 130.7 b/100nh for newly banded birds and 171.3 b/100nh overall. Our best day was 3 May with 79 banded (71% goldfinch), and our most species diverse days were 18 Apr and 27 May with 19 species banded.