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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2006 Mt Nebo Banding Station

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banding this fall was productive, considering only a passive effort. Seventy-three Sharp-shinned Hawks were banded, the highest total since 77 were banded in 1994. Other raptors banded include three Cooper's Hawks, five American Kestrels, three Merlins, one Red-tailed Hawk, and a spectacular hatch-year Broad-winged Hawk was banded at the Tip on 19 Sep, LPBO's 7th.

October started out with some exciting visitors. On 2 Oct, a group of 10 Glossy and one White-faced ibis were found just north of Long Point. This was the first Long Point record for White-faced Ibis. Three more *Plegadis* Ibis flew over Old Cut on the 6th and three were at the Tip on 9th. A Yellow-billed Cuckoo also surprised everyone when one was banded at the Tip that day. Two of four more cuckoos were banded at the Tip on the 13th. Blue Jays also took advantage of light north-west winds on the 9th, when over 1000 were counted at Old Cut and the Tip. The only Sedge Wren of the fall was observed at the Tip on the 10th, and the only Lapland Longspur of the season was banded there on the 12th.

Brown Creepers and both kinglet species moved en masse in two waves this fall, coinciding with the majority of temperate warblers and thrushes. The first wave was in the 2nd week of October, followed by the second in the last week of October. During this second wave, the White-crowned Sparrows began to outnumber the white-throats, and Dark-eyed Juncos inundated the area. A Le Conte's Sparrow pleased those at the Tip on the 20th, and a Grasshopper Sparrow was banded on the 25th. Hermit Thrushes started to appear in greater numbers mid-October, while the odd Swainson's and Gray-cheeked were still lingering. There were 182 and 152 Hermit Thrushes at the Tip on 23 and 25 Oct respectively, following moderated northwesterly winds. Presumably these winds also brought two notable western species into Old Cut. On 26 Oct, a second-year male Varied Thrush was banded. This was the third record for Long Point and the first ever banded! It was last seen briefly on the morning census on the 27th. The second species was a Bohemian Waxwing, which flew over the parking lot on the 26th.

Passerine movement slows at times toward the end of the season, especially at the Tip. Luckily

enough, there is often more to look at. Five thousand Bonaparte's Gulls, accompanied by six Little Gulls, passed the Tip on 23 Oct. Common Loon movement was spectacular on the 28th, when 395 were counted at the Tip, and close to 200 individuals each on the 31st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th of Nov.

The 'river of blackbirds' did not occur till the first week of November—the mixed blackbird/grackle flock numbered near one million birds. A record late Wood Thrush was found at Old Cut on 1 Nov and a late Cape May Warbler was feeding in the Old Cut garden on the 2nd, along with a Clay-colored Sparrow, which was later banded on the 6th.

North winds on the 2nd got the Red-shouldered Hawks moving, and the Tip crew was astounded when 135 streamed into the Tip from out over the depths of Lake Erie. Seventy-one more individuals followed suit on the 3rd. The next day, a flock of 200 Red-winged, 30 Rusty, and three Yellow-headed blackbirds stopped briefly at the Tip.

Very few winter finches were recorded this fall. Low numbers of Purple Finch were sporadically observed, very few Pine Siskins, four Common Redpolls were at the Tip on 2 Nov, and American Goldfinches even appeared scarce. A highlight on the finch front was a pair of Red Crossbills at Old Cut on the 6th.

Mt Nebo Banding Station 392-0792
Oakland, Garrett County, MD
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This was the sixth season of banding at the Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area, located three miles north of Oakland, MD. Seventeen nets were strung throughout hedgerows of autumn and Russian olive and honeysuckle bushes interspersed with orchard trees, mostly apple and wild cherry. We attempt to maintain net lanes in the same location from year to year, but the management clearing sometimes precludes that option.

The station was open 27 days between 9 Sep and 30 Oct. In total, 753 birds were banded of 65 species, with a station effort of 1,978 net hours. The capture rate was 38 b/100nh. Two new species were added to the list—American

Woodcock and Baltimore Oriole—and one hybrid: a Brewster's Warbler.

The top three birds this fall were White-throated Sparrows (14% of the total number banded), Gray Catbirds, and Song Sparrows. All species on the top ten list have made the list in previous years. Sparrows provided 25% of the total number banded, warblers 20%, and thrushes 11%. It was a good year for Lincoln's Sparrows. We banded 15 birds, more than the seven banded in 2004 and 2005 combined. House Wrens made a good showing with 20 individuals banded, twice the station average. Gray Catbirds (57) were present in less-than-normal numbers, the lowest number in the six years at this site.

Two birds were recaptured that had been banded in 2003: a Wood thrush and a Common Yellowthroat. We recaptured five birds banded in 2004 and seven banded in 2005.

The season was relatively uneventful, holding few surprises. One of the challenges of the season proved to be a black bear who visited the site several times as it bent poles and damaged several nets.

Eight visitors, several of whom were weekly visitors, enjoyed the birds at this station. All were grateful for the chance to increase their bird identification skills.

Allegheny Front Migration

Observatory

390-0791

Grant County, WV

AFMO Banding Leaders: *Ralph K. Bell and Joan Bell Pattison*

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Our 49th year of bird banding at Allegheny Front Migration Observatory (AFMO—founded by Ralph K. Bell on 18 Sep 1958), 10 miles southeast of Davis, WV, began on 13 Aug and ended on 15 Oct 2006. In total, 6,784 birds were banded this fall of 86 species with a station effort of 7790.3 net hours, giving a capture rate of 87.1 b/100nh. This year resulted in a much better ratio than 64.2 b/100nh last year and 55.2 in 2004. This year was the best year for total number of birds banded since 1998, when 8,585 birds were banded.

The station was open for 54 days and closed for eight days due to bad weather. In order to catch many birds in our mist nets, there needs to be a westerly wind. Of the 26 days when over 100 birds were banded, all but two days had westerly winds, and those two were calm. There were 16 days this fall when over 100 birds were captured and banded, four days over 200, three days over 300, two days over 400, and one day over 500. No doubt, 4 Oct was the best flight day, when 497 birds were banded; but due to extremely heavy westerly winds, the most exposed south nets were open for only a couple of hours, so many, many more migrating birds were seen but not caught and banded that day.

The only prolonged wet period this fall was for four days (31 Aug - 3 Sep), when Hurricane Ernesto went up the east coast of the United States. The best-extended flight period was 25 - 28 Sep, when 1,269 birds were banded. Another good flight period was 1 - 4 Oct, when 1,117 birds were banded.

The Blackpoll Warbler was the most numerous species this year with 1,390 banded, which is 141.7% above the 10-yr running average. It has been the leader for the past two out of 10 years. The Black-throated Blue Warbler, the usual leader, was the 2nd highest with 1,293 banded (64.8% above the 10-yr average), and the Black-throated Green Warbler was 3rd highest with 616 banded (43.6% above the 10-yr average). The Dark-eyed Junco was 4th highest with 410 banded (92.4% over the 10-yr average), and the Tennessee Warbler was 5th highest with 314 banded (10.1% over the 10-yr average). The total of the top five species banded was 4,023, which is 59.3% of the total birds banded this season.

The most unexpected capture this fall was a female Green-winged Teal, making it the 120th species banded at AFMO since 1958. Two teal were seen flying together, but only one was caught in a net and then banded by Fred McCullough.

Last year a bilateral gynandromorphic (male and female) Black-throated Blue Warbler was banded, and we caught and banded another one this year. The right half of the bird's body was male and the left half was female, the opposite of last year's warbler.