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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2007 Ellenville Station

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Ellenville Station**414-0742**

Ellenville, Ulster County, NY

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Fall banding at this location produced above-average numbers of birds banded, exceeded only four times in the 38-year history of this station. Net hours were about average, as was the number of species banded.

Weather conditions this fall were favorable for banding, with warm temperatures, and few problems from wind and frost, which can prevent one from opening nets here, first appeared very late (29 Oct). August was slightly above average in both temperature and precipitation. The mild weather allowed a new high in number of days of banding at 44.

Overall, 62% of new birds were HY, a figure just under the average for the past 16 years. Not all species showed average age ratios: almost all juncos were adult and almost all catbirds were HY.

The outstanding feature this fall was the abundance of fruits on the shrubs around the net lanes, in quantities not seen here before. arrowwood (*Viburnum dentatum*) and silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*) were loaded with fruits, as were honeysuckle (*Lonicera* sp.) early in the season and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) later. Many frugivorous birds were attracted to the bounty, led by Red-eyed Vireos, which were banded in the highest numbers ever (76). (Though insectivorous during the breeding season, these vireos eat both fruit and insects during migration.) My experience suggests that their numbers are related to the availability of arrowwood fruits.

Fall migration of young Red-eyed Vireos is said to occur over a longer period than that of adults. At this station, HY's were banded daily from 1 Aug through 10 Sep, while adults were banded during the period of 3 Aug through 30 Aug.

Other frugivores included catbirds in above-average numbers (63) and the most Hermit Thrushes (38) and Veerys (21) ever banded here. Above-average numbers of Swainson's Thrushes brought the total of thrushes banded to 85, the

largest number since fall 1976, when just over 100 were banded, including 62 Swainson's and 19 Wood Thrushes.

The good news was tempered by a continuing decline in the number of warblers here. Only 50 warblers of 12 species were banded, comprising 8% of all birds banded. Over the years, warblers have averaged about 25% of all birds banded at this station and have been as high as 39% of the total catch. Only 18 Common Yellowthroats were banded this fall versus an annual average of 27 for the previous 37 years; and only four each of Ovenbirds and Magnolia Warblers were banded versus an average of 14 each in previous years.

Two exciting predators were caught in my nets: a Cooper's Hawk and a Northern Shrike (the latter next to a dead chickadee in the net!). The accipiter was released unbanded, since I lacked a large enough band; and the shrike, the second one ever captured here, was banded and released.

McGill Bird Observatory**454-0739**

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The McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) was established in 2004 at the west end of the island of Montreal, on a 22-ha property adjacent to the Morgan Arboretum, the largest arboretum in Canada. It is the only observatory in Quebec to operate standardized spring and fall migration banding programs and is a provisional member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. Following partial spring and fall pilot seasons in 2004, full standardized monitoring began in 2005. MBO is affiliated with McGill University, but operated by the Migration Research Foundation (MRF), a non-profit organization dedicated to the study of wildlife movements, especially as they relate to population monitoring and conservation.

The fall season at MBO begins on 1 Aug and continues for 13 weeks through 30 Oct. During this period, the one-hour census trail is walked daily, and banding is carried out daily for five hours, beginning a half hour before dawn, weather