

2008

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2007 Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

Richard N. Roberts

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb>

Recommended Citation

Roberts, Richard N. (2008) "Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2007 Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 33 : Iss. 3 , Article 16. Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol33/iss3/16>

This Eastern News is brought to you for free and open access by the Searchable Ornithological Research Archive at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in North American Bird Bander by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact digitalcommons@usf.edu.

Resources and a graduate student at Yale University. One notable recapture was a Field Sparrow originally banded as an ASY on 5 Apr 1999 and last recaptured in Oct 2007 when it was approximately 10 yr 4 mo old, a new age record. Other highlights included 2 Summer Tanagers (20 and 22 Aug), 1 Northern Shrike (12 Nov), 15 Connecticut Warblers (12 Sep through 8 Oct, our second-highest year), and 2 Bicknell's Thrushes (24 Sep and 2 Oct).

In addition to the banders listed above, the following people volunteered many hours helping at the station: Harry Sears, Patricia Gruber, William Snyder, Henry Davis, Helga Horrick, Doug Gill, Victoria Cadby, Hanson Robbins, Jeannine Fleegle, and Hillary Stayer.

Chincoteague
National Wildlife Refuge
Assateague Island
Accomack Co., VA
Richard N. Roberts

375-0752

This was a year for new species: Gray-cheeked Thrush, Pine Siskin, Wood Thrush and Lincoln's Sparrow. There was also an invasion of Red-breasted Nuthatches that was not observed in the previous nine years, and the numbers of Myrtle Warblers were down considerably. Prairie Warbler, Yellow Warbler, and Swainson's Thrush were completely absent. Perhaps the long term eastern seaboard drought had a negative effect on the success of the nesting season.

Kiptopeke
Songbird Banding Station
Cape Charles
Northhampton Co., VA
Jethro Runco

371-0755

The Kiptopeke banding station was in operation for the 45th consecutive year, starting back in 1963. The 2007 season started on 15 Aug and ran through 22 Nov. The station operated for 92 of those days, capturing 92 species. A total of 5,507 individuals were banded this season, making it the lowest season total since 1997. Average capture rate was only 0.464 b/nh. During the years 2004 and 2005, a lot of habitat management took place in and around the banding station. Since then, those areas were

replanted with native trees and shrubs in hopes of creating a more diversified forest and food supply for migrating birds. With the help of recruiting plants and shrubs, those areas are starting to fill in and produce fruit and seeds.

The 2007 fall season saw its lowest total in over a decade. Migrant birds, especially Neotropical migrants, just did not pass through the Kiptopeke area this season. Capture rates were extremely low from 15 Aug to 11 Oct. During that 58-day span, 1,376 individuals were banded with 6,800 net hours for a capture rate of 0.202 b/nh. Remove the four biggest days during that span (1, 13, 24, 29 Sep) and the remaining 54 days netted only 770 birds in 6,239 net hrs, for a capture rate of 0.123 b/nhr, or an average of 14 birds per day: highly unusual for the Kiptopeke station. The large storm system that passed over the eastern part of the US in mid-September packed five days of strong northeast winds that I believe affected the entire eastern seaboard by pushing a large segment of migrants (mainly Neotropicals) toward the west, away from the coast. Of course this is just a hypothesis. By mid-October, the first waves of temperate migrants started showing up, but the normally large wave of Myrtle Warblers just did not hit; their migration appeared to be more drawn out, occurring later than normal. Unusual for Kiptopeke, more Myrtles were banded in November than October. Peak date came on 14 Nov when 489 were banded.

Few unusual species were captured this season, but did include Common Grackles, Prothonotary Warbler, Louisiana Waterthrush, Pine Siskin, Purple Finch, seven Lincoln's Sparrows, and Clay-colored Sparrow. The most unusual species banded were two Eastern Bluebirds, only the 4th and 5th historically, and six Rusty Blackbirds (4th-9th historically). We did band some extremely late migrants, including a Worm-eating Warbler on 22 Oct, a Yellow-billed Cuckoo on 7 Nov and a Gray-cheeked Thrush on 8 Nov. All three are new extreme late dates, or close to it, for the state of Virginia.

This season was good for catching Palm Warblers (293 banded), Red-breasted Nuthatches (17 plus one foreign recapture!), and Northern Saw-whet Owls (2) plus four recaptures (all from the nearby NSWO banding project). We had two huge misses this season—no Nashville Warblers or Blue Jays!