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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2007 Jekyll Island Banding Station

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Sadly, this season was one of the worst years for warblers in recent times. Out of 28 warbler species that are caught here at Kiptopeke with a ten-year average greater than 2.0 birds/season, 14 were either at their lowest or tied for the lowest total banded and another four were at their second lowest level (over the last ten years); 26 of the 28 warbler species did not even break their 10-year average. Only two had higher-than-average numbers: Pine Warbler (six banded) and Palm Warbler (293—a new 10-year high).

On a brighter side, the Kiptopeke station is highly indebted to its many volunteers. Their help is essential to run this station. Also, thanks go out to the Kiptopeke State Park and Coastal Virginia Wildlife Observatory.

North Folly Island 324-0795
Light-house Creek Park
Banding Station
Charleston, SC
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This is the first time that banding totals for this site have been reported, but it has been operated irregularly since the early 1990s. It is located on the southern entrance to Charleston Harbor, SC, on a barrier Island with mature dune/scrub/maritime forest habitat, formerly a Loran Coast Guard Station until taken over by the Charleston County Parks system.

Banding at this site was cut short in 2006 due to access problems. In 2007 the banding operations started late and missed the early local migrants. One of the main net lanes (five nets long) was not used due to signs of increased human activity in the net lane. All days targeted for banding operations were unhampered by weather conditions.

Although the numbers were low (cf. 358 for same calendar period but twice the nets and three times the net hours in 2005) the catch rate was good. The exceptional catch on 29 Sep of 42 birds in three nets in 1/2 hr was due to an offshore storm that forced birds to seek the nearest land. The catch consisted mostly of Palm Warblers (45%) in a flock that flew over the banding station and was estimated to be more than 50 birds.

Recoveries proved to be extremely interesting this year. There has been a Painted Bunting color-banding project on going in this state and we captured a number of color-banded birds. Most had been banded at this site but two were significant recoveries of birds banded this summer: one on a nearby marsh island (~3 km), the other on another barrier island about 20 km SSW from the site. This appears to be unusual movement for a second year bird. The most significant foreign recovery has to go to the Gray Catbird (1781-71005) that was originally banded as an HY bird at Plainwell, MI, in 2002. The significance is not just the distance and age, but this is the only foreign recovery at this site of which I am aware. Other recaptures of note this year include two Carolina Wrens and a Northern Cardinal banded here in 2005.

Now, I have saved the best until last. On 2 Nov I trapped an HY male Blue-winged Warbler that caused *Bandit* to throw a fit. The South Carolina late date for this species is the first week in October. This was a relatively slow but successful fall migration.

Helpers: Christy Beck, Jesse Fagan, Billy McCord and Will Post.

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This year's session was punctuated by a surprising lack of weather fronts, which may account for a low quantity of birds banded this year. Another factor is the changing status of the flora in the banding area. There has been a major die-off of the vegetation that provided net cover, which has forced us to change our net placements.

Western Palm Warblers and Common Yellowthroats as usual accounted for a high percentage (67%) of the total for the year. Some unusual species for JIBS this year were Orange-crowned and Wilson's warblers, Winter Wren, and Yellow-throated Vireo. The most unusual species appeared during the Colonial Coast Birding Festival and created quite a bit of excitement. After consulting all of our reference materials, we came to the conclusion that we had a MacGillivray's Warbler, the second record of this species at JIBS.