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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2007 Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park

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Tomoka Bird Banding Station **292-0810**
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The fall banding season was heavily interrupted due to many days of heavy rain and high winds, leaving a reduced number of days for banding as compared to the previous fall. The low numbers of each species reflect the weather situation. I believe a large number of birds flew above and/or around the storms. Only two migrant birds from previous seasons were recaptured: an Ovenbird first banded on 7 Sep 2006, recaptured on 3 Oct 2007, and a Gray Catbird first banded on 18 Oct 2005. This is the second recapture for this catbird, which had also returned on 5 Oct 2006; both times the bird was caught within 50 yards of the original capture site. Other recaptured species included: 4 Carolina Wrens, 1 Common Ground-Dove, 2 Ovenbirds, 3 White-eyed Vireos, 6 Northern Cardinals, 1 Common Yellowthroat, and 2 Gray Catbirds.

A total of 73 cloacal swabs and sets of feathers were collected for the Avian Flu and Stable Isotope studies. Samples were sent to California on 3 Dec 2007. Results are still pending from the samples sent in May 2007.

Bill Baggs **254-0800**
Cape Florida State Park
Key Biscayne
Miami-Dade Co., Florida
Michelle Davis, Robin Diaz, Elizabeth Golden

Cape Florida is in its sixth year as a fall migration banding station. The park is on the southern tip of a mostly developed barrier island just off the coast of Miami. We have up to 18 nets set in a restored tropical hardwood hammock that is part of a multi-million dollar effort to return native vegetation to the park following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

Banding started a bit later than usual this year, with nets opening for the first day on 27 Aug. The station was open nearly every day through 9 Nov, with several days missed here and there due to high winds or rain. These missed days were frustrating,

as many birds moved through the area then and were mostly gone by the time the weather cleared. We ran anywhere from 6 to 18 nets from first light until early afternoon on most days.

This was a much slower season in terms of overall numbers of migrants, especially when compared with the previous three years. Our 37 b/100nh is closer to the dismal 32 b/100nh from 2003, rather than the 41-50 b/100nh we have seen since then. There were no significant fronts until 25 Oct, and the only tropical weather was tropical storm Noel who shut us down from 30 Oct until 1 Nov. We had some decent days (115 banded on 17 Sep, 79 on 27 Sep, 80 on 2 Oct) surrounded by blocks of excruciatingly slow days (1 to 4 bird days around 5-8 Oct, for example). On our best day, 29 Oct, we banded 145 birds, 101 of them Black-throated Blue Warblers!

Interesting captures during the 2007 fall season included five new species for the site: Bell's Vireo, Philadelphia Vireo (2), Baltimore Oriole, Hermit Thrush, and, finally, Myrtle Warbler. We had banded a few Myrtles in winter and spring in the past year, but this was the first one captured during the fall session. We captured 22 returning birds of nine species. Five of these species had never before been captured as returns from other seasons, and several were the result of running the site through last winter and spring. One Ovenbird has been recaptured every fall since it was originally banded in 2002.

Another noteworthy bird banded this fall was a possible gynandromorphic Black-throated Blue Warbler. He/she was mostly female colored but had a black throat on the right side and a black cheek patch on the left side. The rest of the plumage was similar to some AHY females that have a bluish tinge to the green back and wings, although this bird was hatching year.

Finally, Cape May Warblers were notably abundant this fall. We banded 23 in 2007, compared to previous highs of six in 2004 and 2006.

Volunteers this fall included Nancy O'Hare, Debbie Duvall, Angel & Mariel Abreu, Elsa Alvear and Rafael Galvez. Special thanks go to Robert Yero, the park manager, for continuing to support our project.