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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2008 Alfred Station

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Pine Siskin and American Goldfinch. On the negative side, Great Crested Flycatcher was missing after being recorded in 10 of the past 15 years; White-breasted Nuthatch was missing after being caught in 10 of the past 15 years; and Rusty Blackbird was missing after being banded in 14 of the past 15 years.

Mark Deutschlander, of Hobart & William Smith Colleges, conducted research on nocturnal migration orientation cues of White-throated Sparrows. Susan Smith of Villanova University took blood samples from four species of birds for her research on energetic condition and ecological factors that limit passerines during long-distance migrations. Cloacal swabbings and feather samples were taken from 100 birds this fall as part of the Avian Influenza Monitoring Program being coordinated by the Landbird Migration Monitoring Network of the Americas (LaMMNA). The samples are being processed at U.C.L.A.

Seven students successfully completed our Bander Training Course offered through the Rochester Institute of Technology. We also hosted a North American Banding Council Evaluation Session. On 23 Aug, we hosted an Open House for Neighbors to present the initial plans for the renovation of the 'Boat House'. We welcomed guests for a tour of the banding station as part of Braddock Bay Raptor Research's Red-tailed Hawk Day. We enjoyed a visit from Kristi Hannam's Animal Behavior Lab students at SUNY Geneseo, and Sara Morris' Field Biology class from Canisius College. We hosted members of the Colony Garden Club for a tour of the banding station, followed by a presentation on migration by Mark Deutschlander. On 20 Sep, we dedicated the Memorial Garden Kiosk in memory of Margaret and Clarence Klingensmith. And we welcomed delegates and members of the New York State Ornithological Association who were attending their annual meeting in Rochester on 20-21 Sep. Many individuals visited the banding station on an informal basis.

Our fall research assistant was Ryan Kayhart; Emily Runnells and Karen Velas were our field assistants.

Thanks to Tom Muller for mowing paths and to Jim Gillette for mowing the field; and to Chris Gates, Steve Maley, and Doug Smith for their assistance with building and grounds management. Appreciation to the following individuals who helped scribe, tended net lanes, or assisted with other aspects of our educational or banding operation: Marilyn Guenther, Gary Herbert, Kathleen Holt, Joanna Klima, John Lehr, Chita McKinney, Shirley Meston, Terry Perry, Megan Phillips, Debbie Reed, Lee Schofield, Jeanne Skelly, Ruth Stork, Tom Verhulst, Glenn Wagner, and Kelly Wicks.

A special thanks to Bill Kaiser and The Genesee Land Trust for permission to band on their land.

#### **Alfred Station**

**421-0774**

Allegany County, NY

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The 32<sup>nd</sup> year of fall banding at Alfred Station began on 10 Jul and ended on 14 Nov 2008. From 1 to 1.5 nets were used on 54 days, for a total of 220 net hours. A total of 143 birds of 30 species were banded (65 b/100nh). In addition, four Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were captured and released unbanded.

Hatching-year (HY) percentages for all birds where age could be determined was 69.0%. HY percentages for the seven most common species were American Goldfinch (64.5%), Slate-colored Junco (40%), Black-capped Chickadee (90%), Song Sparrow (58.3%), Chipping Sparrow (66.7%), Traill's Flycatcher (75%), and Common Yellowthroat (75%). The peak day occurred on 9 Aug, when 10 birds were banded; 20% of those banded were Song Sparrows. The day with the most species was also 9 Aug, with nine species banded. There were 38 repeats during the season.

There were 15 returns of birds from previous seasons. Noteworthy were a chickadee and a cardinal in their fourth year; and a Blue Jay, three chickadees, two Chipping Sparrows, and one Song Sparrow in their third year.

A Black-capped Chickadee banded by Paul M Nealen at Bakri Estates, 4.5 miles NW of Creekside, Indiana County, PA, on 16 Mar 2008 was retrapped and released alive here, exactly one month later, on 16 Apr 2008. Alfred is approximately 132 miles ENE of Creekside.

Hypoboscids were found on five birds. No birds exhibited evidence of Avian Pox. A Chipping Sparrow was doing well with its right foot and lower tarsus missing.

As in the previous eight years, no banding was done at this location from 8 Sep to 11 Oct, when I was banding at Braddock Bay.

Several slide presentations on bird banding were given to local clubs, including the Cuba (NY) Senior Citizens Club, the Amandine Club of Alfred, NY, and the Allegany County Bird Club. A banding demonstration was held at Foster Lake on 6 Sep.

**Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory**  
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All in all it was a pretty slow season for us. Our operating days are not reflective of effort, as winds/weather forced us to close soon after opening on 30% of those days. Additionally, birds either took a more easterly route or overflowed the station, as we had no blocking weather systems to our south. American Goldfinch numbers tanked (only 493 compared to a high of 2,232 in 2003).

The high points of this season were in three unusual captures. We had never netted a Pileated Woodpecker, but this year we brought the station total banded to 132 species with the addition of not one but two Pileated! Both were young females and netted in adjacent nets at the same time. That was quite a handful for both of us. We also banded our first Cooper's Hawk since the first in 1989, and our second Eastern Screech Owl. The first screech was also a gray phase and banded in 1994.

On 16 Jul we banded a most unusual female goldfinch. While a female in most respects, including a developing brood patch and female plumage, she presented with a complete male dark crown patch. As opposed to the bilateral gynandromorphs reported at a few stations last year, this bird exhibited the single male trait completely. We lack a tag for this in ornithology; but in entomology, such a creature would be termed a mosaic gynandromorphy. The bilaterals reflect a lack of an Z chromosome on the female side that occurred very early in zygote development. When the non-disjunction in an Z chromosome in an ZZ individual occurs in later divisions within the zygote, it causes the mosaic, a very rare occurrence.

We banded 2,854 new birds of 89 species in 101 days of operation. We also had 856 repeats, 116 returns, and 192 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. The hummingbirds were not banded. The total birds netted was 4,018, making our measure of efficiency 111 birds/100 net-hours (b/100nh) for newly banded birds and 156 b/100nh overall. Hatching-year birds were at the norm of 88%.

The station banded list grew to 132 species plus five forms banded (137), and we increased the sighted list to 220 with the appearance of a Least Sandpiper at one of the ponds.

We banded our highest ever number of Hairy Woodpeckers, Gray Catbirds, Eastern Towhees, and Hooded Warblers. Also high were Blue-winged Warblers. All of the above reflect an increase in the local breeding populations of those species. Veeries were also high, while many species were far below norms and reflective of our missing the migratory flow due to routing and weather.

Returns were wonderful! The eldest was a Gray Catbird that was in excess of seven years old. Of the 116 returns, 35 of 17 species were in excess of four years of age. They shred out as follows:

- One Yellow-bellied Sapsucker at 5.
- One Eastern Kingbird at 4.
- Six Black-capped Chickadees at 4 (2), 4+ (2), 5 and 5+.