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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2008 Rock Point

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banded 4,508 birds. Instead we caught only 2,436—not bad, but we do not consider it to be a good fall season if we do not clear 3,000.

We knew we were in trouble early when we noticed that we were not catching many American Goldfinches in September. It is hard to know why but it is possibly related to the very wet summer we experienced. In retrospect, we think they may just have been late nesting. By the time we were done we had banded 436 of them but most of these we got in October. (Last year we banded 1,280.) September is an interesting month for banding; you just never know what you are going to find in your nets, as the long-distance migrants are moving through. But toward the end of the month these birds tail off and you get an influx of the short-distance migrants, which we tend to get in large numbers. We count on having six or seven days with over 100 birds banded and have had several instances of over 200 (e.g., 271 on 10 Oct 2005 and 254 on 22 Oct 2001). But this year we had only one 100+ bird day—125 on 23 Oct.

I wish I had a clear explanation for this but I do not. However, it was not just our station; Rock Point Provincial Park had low numbers as well.

We now have 10 “solid” (i.e., comparable) years of banding data, and Jeff MacLeod (a volunteer who actually enjoys biostatistics AND oversees the blog: <http://www.ruthvenpark.ca/natureblog>) has started to go through it to look for trends. Stay tuned.

Many thanks to banders Loretta Mousseau, Brian Pomfret, Jeff MacLeod, and the many volunteers who assisted in numerous ways. Also thanks to the Lower Grand River Land Trust and the Haldimand Bird Observatory for their support.

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Table 1. AFR III Fall 2008 Summary

	Lewiston, NY	Ruthven Park, ON	Rock Point, ON	Long Point, ON	Presque Isle, PA	Powdermill, PA	Bedford Valley, PA	Mt. Nebo, MD	Allegheny Front, WV
First Day/Last Day	8/25 to 10/24	8/25 to 11/8	7/21 to 11/6	8/1 to 11/15	8/6 to 11/1	8/2 to 11/23	8/22 to 10/23	8/24 to 11/7	8/15 to 10/22
Days Operated	13	74	71	107	67	93	40	44	68
No. Nets Used	11 to 15	up to 17	2 to 16	1 to 53	6 to 13	4 to 66	1 to 12	15 to 19	17 to 30
Total Net Hours	947	5,676	4,810	13,366	4,180	20,762	762	3,746	7,824
% Caught in Traps	0%	4.0%	0%	12.1%	0%	6%	0%	0%	0%
Lrgst Daily Catch	50 on 10/15	125 on 10/23	76 on 9/16	523 on 9/16	147 on 10/7	322 on 10/28	19 on 10/17	99 on 9/10	621 on 9/14
Most Common BD	HETH & COGR 28%	CEDW 48%	GRCA 14.5%	BLPW 22.8%	-	MYWA 48%	CHSP 47%	MAWA 20%	BTBW 46.3%
Most Spec. Divrsy	13 on 10/15	21 on 9/29	25 on 9/16	64 on 9/16	15 on 10/3	43 on 9/20	10 on 10/10	29 on 9/10	34 on 10/5
No. Banded 2007	322	3,530	2,603	15,516	115	8,628	72	1,010	8,053
No. Banded 2008	288	2,436	2,220	9,708	1,604	7,279	239	1,363	5,653
No. Forms 2007	48	85	81	134	23	112	27	56	85
No. Forms 2008	43	88	84	151	72	107	45	74	81
Birds/100nh 2007	34.6	76.1	57	109	36.8	50.8	10	37	85.6
Birds/100nh 2008	30.4	41.1	46	64	37.2	35	31	37	72
% HY 2007	87%	NA	68%	75%	75%	61%	70%	64%	62%
% HY 2008	72%	NA	78%	80.2%	NA	73%	74%	78%	81.7%

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 2008.

	Lewiston, NY		Ruthven Park, ON		Rock Point, ON		Long Point, ON		Presque Isle, PA	
		%HY				%HY		%HY		%HY
1.	50 HETH (7)	84%	436 AMGO (1)	285 GRCA (2)	95%	1169 MYWA (1)	89%	515 MYWA	96%	
2.	23 GCKI (6)	52	216 MYWA (2)	250 AMGO (1)	57	621 RCKI (4)	68	148 GRCA (1)	91	
3.	21 SWTH (2)	62	155 WTSP (3)	178 WTSP (3)	94	480 WTSP (5)	84	100 WTSP (3)	86	
4.	18 MAWA (1)	83	145 SCJU (4)	139 YWAR (7)	86	468 GCKI (7)	84	63 HETH (5)	87	
5.	16 WTSP (5)	19	135 CEDW	107 RCKI (4)	73	457 SCJU (9)	85	44 SOSP	70	
6.	15 COGR	47	127 SOSP (6)	94 SOSP (8)	83	393 MAWA	87	34 GCKI	79	
7.	13 GRCA (4)	100	79 RCKI (7)	80 MAWA (5)	71	376 BLPW (6)	65	31 YWAR (2)	45	
8.	13 BCCH (3)	85	70 GRCA	77 CEDW	31	358 SWTH	80	30 COYE	87	
9.	13 RCKI	85	68 BLPW (5)	66 GCKI (9)	17	334 AMGO (2)	64	27 AMGO	43	
10.	12 AMRO	83	67 REVI	60 TRFL	10	290 NSWO (3)	18	23 SCJU	52	

Table 2 (Cont'd.) Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 2008.

	Powdermill, PA		Bedford Valley, PA		Mt. Nebo, MD		Allegheny Front, WV	
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY
1.	684 MYWA (5)	74%	39 CHSP	15%	134 WTSP (1)	67%	1400 BTBW (1)	77%
2.	424 MAWA (7)	68	22 AMGO (1)	45	121 INBU (2)	65	634 BTNW (2)	93
3.	418 WTSP (2)	54	17 SOSP	88	115 GRCA (5)	91	586 BLPW (5)	77
4.	372 SOSP (8)	60	16 GRCA (2)	81	92 SOSP (3)	80	361 TEWA (3)	69
5.	354 SCJU (3)	47	14 RCKI	57	69 BTBW	96	332 SCJU (8)	82
6.	323 RCKI	75	13 SCJU	84	68 MAWA (8)	71	273 GCKI (6)	94
7.	321 GRCA (6)	87			66 COYE (4)	77	227 MAWA (4)	89
8.	312 AMGO (1)	63			60 CEDW	86	190 SWTH (7)	91
9.	276 COYE (10)	74			58 SCJU	54	179 RCKI (10)	87
10.	261 SWSP (9)	56			56 PUFI	68	147 COYE	81

This season was the worst fall season in relation to b/100nh. Characterizing this season was the lack of any day with over a 100 birds. The species count was good, with 84 species.

Vireo species were down two thirds to a half from last year. Warblers, except for Yellow and Myrtle (Yellow-rump), were also down significantly. Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush, and Common Yellowthroat remained at the same level as last year. Gray Catbird saw the second highest levels for the nine years of banding at Rock Point. Both

kinglets were down in numbers. Since this is a comparison only with the previous year, it cannot be considered as any type of trend.

We were fortunate this season in receiving a grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation toward the purchase of a trailer to be used by volunteers and anyone else wishing to spend some time at the banding station. In addition, Niagara Trailer donated \$1,000 toward the purchase of the trailer. This, along with the earlier grant from T.D. Friends of the Environment, enabled us to do many upgrades at the station.

We had 292 returns this season, with three birds from 2001, two Yellow Warblers, and a Northern Cardinal. An American Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and White-throated Sparrow banded in 2003 were noteworthy.

Multiple catches are illustrated by Black-capped Chickadees, where 41 chickadees were processed and, of those, 20 were re-caught more than once; one individual was caught nine times.

Foreign returns were only two in number: a Yellow Warbler and a Magnolia Warbler. One band was not valid as it was probably misread and the other is still waiting for data. We had no recoveries.

I continue my interest in ageing/sexing birds by means of feathers. Some techniques learned in Ireland this October will be looked at with similar species at the banding station.

We congratulate Richard Joos on acquiring his bander and trainer level certificates with the North American Banding Council.

The daily update to our web page at <http://www.geocities.com/rockpointbanding/> is being used by up to 35 people per day.

We remain grateful to Ontario Parks for allowing us to conduct scientific studies within Rock Point Provincial Park.

Long Point Bird Observatory **423-0800**
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An early push of Warbling Vireos, Yellow Warblers, and *Empidonax* flycatchers, mostly Traill's, was evident on 8-10 Aug. The usual smattering of dispersing juvenile American Robins, Gray Catbirds, and Song and Swamp sparrows kept the banders-in-training busy and the band totals high. A welcome surprise on 2 Aug was a hatch-year female Orchard Oriole. The Tip station began

banding birds on 8 Aug and Breakwater was in commission on the 15th. Strong northeast winds starting on 20 Aug brought welcomed cool temperatures and provoked migration but also forced us to keep nets closed at our remote stations. Bald Eagles began showing up at all three stations including 16 (4 adults and 12 immature) observed on a boat trip along the south shore on 1 Sep. The first Peregrine Falcon was seen at the Tip on 3 Aug. Southward Common Nighthawks moved past Breakwater on 19 Aug, and on 25 Aug the crew there was treated to the first of three Whip-poor-wills this season to wind up in a net.

Shorebird diversity and numbers had been on the rise since early August. The first Baird's Sandpiper was at the Tip on 10 Aug and one was at Breakwater on the 24th. A "Western" Willet was observed at the Tip on 24 Aug. It was joined by a second individual on the 25th and later that day one was banded—LPBO's third-ever!

Both Yellow and Black-billed cuckoos were observed at all three stations this fall, with the majority of sightings coming from Breakwater. Warbling Vireos were in record abundance this year, with 64 being banded in the fall. A Yellow-throated Vireo at Old Cut on the 21st was the only one for the season. A big surprise was an adult Hermit Thrush caught and banded at the Tip on 15 Aug, a species not usually encountered until much later in the season.

Warbler diversity was typical; however, low numbers of most species were noted this fall. The first Bay-breasted was at the Tip on 27 Aug, while a Blackpoll was observed at Old Cut on the 28th. A Worm-eating Warbler was at Old Cut and a Prothonotary Warbler was at the Tip on 25 Aug.

The Tip was overrun by over 70 Chipping and 40 Field sparrows on 27 Aug. An anxious Eastern Towhee was heard calling on the morning of the 25th at Old Cut. A Dickcissel was found on the morning of 25 Aug at Breakwater, providing a welcome treat for the crew there.