

2009

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2008 Long Point Bird Observatory

Yousif Attia

Ross W. Wood

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

Recommended Citation

Attia, Yousif and Wood, Ross W. (2009) "Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2008 Long Point Bird Observatory," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 34 : Iss. 4 , Article 11.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol34/iss4/11>

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.

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**
Port Rowan, Norfolk County, ON **423-0801**
 423-0802

Banders: Yousif S. Attia and Ross W. Wood,
lpbo@bsc~eoc.org
Chief Assistants: Hugh McArthur, Stu Mackenzie

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.

The easily overheard "boink" of the Bobolink was a regular sound most mornings in August and September as they steadily moved south. The crossbill irruption in southern Ontario this fall reached Long Point early in the season, with a handful of sightings of White-wingeds starting 1 Aug. Though strongly outnumbered, a few Red Crossbills were noted, beginning on 27 Aug. American Goldfinches increased, taking advantage of the good cone crop as well.

The beautiful weather allowed for steady, uninterrupted migration through the area during the last week in September. The first Yellow-bellied Sapsucker of the season was observed at Old Cut on 1 Sep. Northern Flicker numbers increased, with a visible movement of upwards of 500 individuals on some days. Hummingbird numbers peaked at the beginning of September, with close to 30 individuals at the Tip on the 2nd.

There was a solid push of Magnolia Warblers and American Redstarts on 4 Sep. The first Yellow-rumped Warbler of the fall appeared at the Tip on 24 Aug, while the first Pine was seen on the 31st. Despite favorable tailwinds and cool clear nights, passerine migration remained unseasonably slow well into September. Perhaps it had something to do with unstable hurricane conditions further south. Regardless, fall migration continued slowly but steadily. Warbler diversity remained high and Breakwater banded a hybrid "Lawrence's" Warbler, the first fall Northern Parula, as well as two Connecticut Warblers on 10 Sep.

It was not until 16 Sep that staff and volunteers at LPBO were tested. Over 500 individuals of 56 species were banded among the three stations, and Old Cut observed 121 species on that day alone. Included in that total was a Loggerhead Shrike that flew past the dyke at Old Cut and was not relocated. Breakwater station was closed for the season on 22 Sep. The end of September brought cold northerly winds, and the first temperate migrants and remaining Neotrops followed suite. A Yellow-breasted Chat on 30 Sep caused a buzz among the Old Cut team.

The first Fox Sparrow arrived on 1 Oct, signaling that it was time for the temperate migrants to make their presence known at Long Point. Winter Wrens became the most evident species, outnumbering House and Marsh wrens. The high-pitched calls of Golden-crowned Kinglets and Brown Creepers filled the Old Cut woodlot. An incredible flock of about 400 Eastern Bluebirds was in the garden at the Tip for a few minutes before lifting off, gaining altitude and flying over the lake on 27 Oct. Yellow-rumped Warblers pushed through on 3 Oct, when 163 were banded at Old Cut. An absence of White-crowned Sparrows was unusually evident. A total of 26 were banded for the entire fall! That would be an average day's catch at a Long Point station any other year.

October wound down and it was evident that we would not get the record-breaking results as in recent years. What about the mega-rarities? What about the "stop you in your tracks" anomalies that give Long Point its reputation for being a vagrant hub? Well, as it turns out, it would still be a season to remember. During Northern Saw-whet Owl monitoring that carried over into the next day, Long Point's first Boreal Owl was captured and banded at the Tip. Given that, there was a massive Boreal Owl irruption throughout northern Ontario, it was not unfathomable that one would end up at Long Point. It is, however, a significant record and a highly sought after bird no matter how you slice it. Later that afternoon, barely past the afterglow of the Boreal and while conducting telemetry research, two observers found and documented Long Point's first Common Ground-Dove. The bird, likely an immature female, was located at a remote part of the point and supplies only the third record for Ontario. It is unlikely that this single calendar day's "double whammy" will ever occur at Long Point again.

Around mid-October, observers at the Tip began noticing consistent and impressive movement of Pine Siskins. The birds rarely, if ever, lingered, and travelled in tight flocks of 20 to 70 individuals as they flew down the point and, without hesitation, disappeared over the lake toward Pennsylvania. A

