

2009

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2008 Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

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October. Earlier ones from later August through mid-October were weak in nature and stalled just south of Maryland forming low-pressure systems that lingered for days just off the Atlantic coastline. This produced more easterly winds rather than the hoped for northwest winds that bring migrants to our nets. The past two summer droughts seemed to have little effect on most of our primary breeding species like Indigo Bunting, Field and Chipping sparrows, Blue Grosbeak, and Common Yellowthroat; however, this year all these species were down significantly in numbers.

One new species was banded for the station: a Great Egret, on 2 Oct. Two northern irruptives, Purple Finch (33) and Pine Siskin (8) staged good flights through the area again this year, with many lingering into winter. Record highs for the fall included two Red-tailed Hawks and nine Warbling Vireos. Other interesting bandings were a Clay-colored Sparrow on 19 Oct, a Dickcissel on 10 Nov, and two Brewster's Warblers, one each on 29 Aug and 1 Sep. We again collected hundreds of tick samples for a researcher at Yale University. In addition to the banders already listed, the following volunteered many hours helping at the station: Harry Sears, Henry Davis, Doug Gill, Victoria Cadby, Hanson Robbins, and Jeannine Fleegle.

**Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge**

**375-0752**

Assateague Island, Accomack Co., VA

**Richard N. Roberts**

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Ten years ago, when this project was started on Assateague Island, many more birds were captured in August and September. This table lists b/100nh for the months and years noted:

	1999	2000	2002	2003	2008
August		27	23	27	10
September	93	40	34	24	6.7

These data indicate a large change in fall migrants during a rather short period of time. The 2008 October data (159 b/100nh) are difficult to interpret since 83% of these birds were Yellow-rumped Warblers, as is common most years.

The data from May, June, and July (not shown here) indicate that some of this decrease may be a result of a decreased breeding population on Assateague Island.

**Kiptopeke**

**371-0755**

**Songbird Banding Station**

Cape Charles, Northhampton Co., VA

**Jethro Runco**, head bander

jethrorunco@aol.com

The Kiptopeke banding station was in operation for the 46<sup>th</sup> consecutive year, starting back in 1963. The 2008 season started on 15 Aug and ran through 23 Nov. The station operated for 90 of those days, capturing a total of 91 species. A total of 6,726 individuals were banded this season, making it the third lowest season total since 2000. Average capture rate was 59.2 b/100nh.

During 2004 and 2005, much habitat improvement took place in and around the banding station. Areas were replanted with native trees and shrubs in hopes of creating a more diversified forest and food supply for migrating birds. With the help of recruiting plants and shrubs, those areas are filling in and are now producing fruit and seeds.

The weather basically broke this season into two parts. The first month was very dry, but mild, with average high temperatures lower than normal. Rainfall was also lower than normal and wind speed was not much of a problem. Only a few minor cool fronts passed through the area; therefore, migrant numbers stayed a bit lower than normal. We did not band on 6 Sep when Tropical Storm Hanna passed by. Starting on 16 Sep, wind and rain settled into the area for the next ten days, dropping net hours and causing the station to miss three days during that span. After that storm system passed, the station