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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I (Northeast)- Fall 2009 SW- Laurentian Mountains

Peter H. Homann

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region 1 (Northeast) – Fall 2009 Report

Sue Finnegan, Coordinator
Wing Island Banding Station
Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
896 Main St.
Brewster, MA 02631
suefinnegan@comcast.net

We had seven banding stations send in their results for the 2009 fall season. Welcome back to SW-Laurentian Mts, returning after a year hiatus. No fall banding occurred at Atlantic Bird Observatory but we have a new station reporting this year, Dam Pond Maritime Reserve in New York state.

Weather conditions seemed favorable for the most part this fall. All of our more northerly stations (SW Laurentian Mts, St. Andrews, Appledore, Manomet, and Wing) reported a drop in birds per 100 net hours (b/100nh), while the more southerly stations (Dam Pond and Island Beach) had a slight increase.

Largest daily catch dates spanned over a few months with 25 Aug being the earliest date at SW Laurentian Mts and the latest, 15 Oct at Island Beach. Appledore had to close down early during the fall season for the second year in a row.

Highlights this year included an increase in warblers at St. Laurentian Mts., above-average numbers for Swainson's and Hermit thrushes, a Northern Saw-whet Owl, and an Eastern Phoebe at St. Andrews. A Kentucky Warbler and possible hybrid of an American Redstart and Yellow Warbler excited those at Appledore. Manomet recorded infrequent banding of a Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and two Rusty Blackbirds not captured since 1994. New banded species for Wing Island were a Townsend's Warbler, Seaside Sparrow, and an Allen's Hummingbird at a home in Scituate, MA. Island Beach reported 26 Tree Swallows and a new banded species—a Purple Martin.

A big thank-you goes out to all the compilers for sending in their reports during a busy time period.

SW-LaurentianMountains **455-0743**
Wentworth-Nord, Quebec
Bander: **Peter H. Homann**

Having been unable in 2008 to visit our retreat at a lake in the Laurentians, I was glad to be back in 2009. As in previous years, I positioned nets between shrubs and young trees at the shore of the lake and along an unpaved road in the understory of mixed woods. Unfortunately, the total effort in net-hours was only about one half of what it usually has been in the past. This was due in part to conflicts with other activities and limits imposed by age-related mobility, but also to rain and/or wind that often forced furling of the nets. Moreover, dictated by the present structure of the netting lanes, I only used 6-m and 9-m nets but adhered to a definition of a 12-m net length representing one net when calculating net hours.

Already, in previous reports, I suggested that the banding activity at my location in the Laurentian Mountains may no longer contribute meaningful data to the Atlantic Flyway Review because of the small numbers of long-distance migrants I capture. It was reassuring, however, that flocks of roving warblers, albeit relatively small ones, could be observed near our cottage and elsewhere with more regularity during our stay in 2009 than in 2006 and 2007. On the other hand, sparrows were unusually scarce. I captured only two Song Sparrows and not a single White-throated Sparrow, even though these two species typically are familiar sights on our property and nearby. Similarly disappointing was the absence of a Hermit Thrush from my list of banded birds—the first time ever. Perhaps all of this was a local phenomenon of no general significance—or maybe not.