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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central)- Fall 2009 Northview Sanctuary

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lowest since 1996 and our best day was the smallest since 1994. Species diversity was down to 1996 levels.

It is very hard to determine a single cause, but the constant wind made conditions unsafe for netting on many days. Beyond that, our daily point counts indicated that we were not missing all that much. Radar showed many large nighttime movements that completely overflowed us. All this was further complicated by very poor nesting conditions regionally. Many single clutch species lost their attempts and that accounts for missing or low counts in many species. Ironically, these were the only wet months in an otherwise very dry year. To top off this litany, American Goldfinch presented in extremely low numbers, way below our usual thousand plus banded. Our odonate studies revealed similarly low numbers of almost all species.

Despite that we had some memorable successes. Primary among them was the return of a Yellow-bellied Flycatcher that we banded as a breeder here in 2006. We have reported on this event in past fall reports, as it was an extraordinary nesting far south of the species' Adirondack breeding range. To have this bird return, and early in the season, was terrific. To make that even better, she set a new age record for her species at five plus years of age. That is our fourth longevity record here.

Given a shift in routing, we banded our second ever Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, a bird seldom seen at this altitude. Some species reflected the poor breeding season with higher-than-normal numbers of adults in our nets. Injuries and parasites were unremarkable.

We banded 1,735 new birds of 80 species in 77 days of operation. We also had 422 repeats, 79 returns, and 174 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. The hummingbirds were not banded. The total birds netted was 2,410, making our measure of efficiency 107 b/100nh for newly banded birds, and 149 b/100nh overall. Hatching-year birds were below the norm at 86%.

The station banded list grew to 132 species plus six forms banded (138) with the inclusion of a green morph Pine Siskin this year.

The eldest return was a Common Yellowthroat that was seven years old. Of the 79 returns, 18 (22%) of 12 species were in excess of four years of age. They shred out as follows:

**One Yellow-bellied Flycatcher  
at 5+ (species longevity record)**

One Blue Jay at 5.

One Red-winged Blackbird at 6+.

Two American Goldfinch at 5+ and 5.

One Slate-colored Junco at 3+.

One Rose-breasted Grosbeak at 4.

One Yellow Warbler at 4.

One Common Yellowthroat at 7.

One Gray Catbird at 5.

Four Black-capped Chickadee at 6, 5+, and 4(2).

One American Robin at 4+.

We thank Doris Cohrs, Bob and Judy Cosgriff, A.L. Donahue, David Guaspari, Jay Schissell, and Ruth Young for their generous support, Victoria Bond Kelly for her talent and time in maintaining and constantly improving our website, and several others who contributed advice and assistance. These include Stillman's Greenhouse, Fred Sibley and Barlow Rhodes.

**Northview Sanctuary**  
Candor, Tioga County, NY  
*Robert J. Pantle*  
(bpbird@frontiernet.net)

**421-0762**

Northview Sanctuary is a five-acre banding station located in the central southern tier of New York state, about 18 mi south of Cayuga Lake. The station sits amongst a patchwork of cultivated fields and woodlots. Much of the vegetation is multiflora rose and honeysuckle.

Banding this year started on 17 Jul and ended 25 Oct. I had a total of 318 net hours, capturing only 193 birds of 36 species. I also tallied a very poor five

returns and eight repeats. Of the returns, all were under four years of age, less a Veery that was five. My peak day was 4 Aug, when I banded 21 birds of nine species.

The above banding effort reflects the poorest season at this station ever. Little did I realize that the month of July for this year would be recorded by the National Weather Service as the "wettest on record." This month turned out to be an exercise in opening and closing mist nets. I am sure other banders know how frustrating this can be. In addition, a health problem prevented me from expending the extra banding effort that was needed.

Locally, Tree Swallow boxes were monitored for nestling output, which again turned out to be a futile effort due the weather. Out of 10 boxes, only two were taken and fledged young.

The one uncommon bird captured this season was a Warbling Vireo, which was the first ever banded at this station.

**Powderhouse Road Station**                      **420-0775**  
Vestal, Broome County, NY  
**Gail Kirch**  
(gkirch@stny.rr.com)

AFR was a 'bust' at this station in 2009. A domestic cat had discovered my net lanes. I have no proof it caught anything but I was finding dead birds around my yard. This cat is healthy, wears no collar and I see it heading in all directions. I chose to close the station on 1 Sep. I set two nets on 17 Sep, but the cat appeared within 45 min. If this cat appears in 2010, I shall try to catch it in a Havahart trap and try to find the owner.

I felt that August banding was slow, with few species and lower numbers per species. I compared this year's effort in August to averages from the period August 1994-2008. Gray Catbird was slightly above average, while Black-capped Chickadee, Ovenbird, and Song Sparrow were all below the norm. Red-eyed Vireos were significantly below average (less than 25 %). Overall effort was almost halved, yet we banded only three days less than the August average. Species were slightly lower as were birds banded.

Only birds per 100 net hours were above the average. The weather determined the number of

days I netted, which in turn affected all the other categories.

**Ellenville Station**                                      **414-0742**  
Ellenville, Ulster County, NY  
**Valerie M. Freer**  
(vfreer@hvc.rr.com)

My results for the 40<sup>th</sup> consecutive season of operation, fall 2009 were dismal! In spite of near normal number of days and net-hours, only 325 new birds were netted for a yield of only 32 b/100nh, making it the fourth poorest season since 1970. An average of only eight birds per day were caught, the second lowest in 40 years.

Local people complained that summer never came this year. Across New York state, the summer was the 11<sup>th</sup> wettest in over 100 years, leading birders to blame shortage of birds on the cool and very wet weather. Breeding birds (especially ground nesters) had to be stressed in June because of cool temperatures and 14 days of measurable rainfall totaling 10 inches, five inches above normal. July was even cooler (three degrees below normal) and almost eight inches of rain fell locally on another 10 days. Another eight inches of rain fell in August (well above normal). It was not easy to get the usual number of banding days in August because of rain, but the temperature and precipitation were not far from normal in September. October was cool again, with above-normal rainfall and many windy mornings. Some of the poorly drained net lanes became quagmires.

I presumed that the poor weather would result in fewer young birds produced and would be reflected in a lower percent of young birds banded, but I was wrong. Almost 63% of all new birds were HY, close to the long-term average for this station. The averages for this poor season were skewed by catbirds, which defied the weather and the downward trend seen in other birds, and had a very good year. Sixty-nine were banded, comprising over 21% of all new birds caught. Most (84%) were HY as compared with 82% last year and 92% the year before.