

2010

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2009 Rock Point Banding Station (Haldimand Bird Observatory)

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We especially thank the Ontario Power Generation Corporation for their generous donation of funds to refurbish the banding lab. We were able to triple the space available for banding and for visitors, which is especially important as we had a record 432 visitors this spring.

We thank the Lower Grand River Land Trust for their ongoing support of the banding program at Ruthven Park. This includes the use of the grounds, use of the banding lab building, and financial support. Ruthven Park staff, Marilyn Havelka (CAO), and Robin Richardson have been great to work with (especially when they bring tea and goodies). Christine Madliger, Species-at-Risk Coordinator, has also been a great help. Haldimand Bird Observatory, of which Ruthven is one of three field stations, receives support from the Baillie Birdathon Fund, administered through Bird Studies Canada. We thank Pat Chow-Fraser from McMaster University's Biodiversity Program for her involvement (and that of her students).

Thanks to all that made this such a successful (and fun!) season:

**(28-35 days)** Brian Pomfret; **(21-27 days)** Rick Ludkin; **(14-20 days)** Christine Madliger; **(7-13 days)** Loretta Mousseau; Nancy Furber, Jeff MacLeod (this does not include the enormous amount of time Jeff has put into developing and running the blog – check out: <http://ruthvenpark.ca/natureblog>; **(4-6 days)** Faye Socholotiuk and Peter Thoem; **(1-3 days)** Mitch Beck, David MacLeod, Alexis Richardson, Phil Alaimo, Pat Mousseau, John Shoveler, Jessica Condon, Tanya Kerr, Elaine Serena, Marg Ludkin, Margaret Troy, Michelle Kenny, Mike Alkema, Peter Scholtens, Charles Smith, Tim MacLeod, Ken Perry, and John Clark.

## Rock Point Banding Station

**(Haldimand Bird Observatory) 420-0793**

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Web page: [www.rockpointbirdbanding.com](http://www.rockpointbirdbanding.com)

Chief Assistant(s) Roswitha Matuschek,

Kim Christoff, Rick Young.

On the whole, this was another cool spring with winter coat and heater on early mornings well into May. We lost a number of days at the beginning of April because of wet cold weather. We used the same equipment as in previous years, with nets in double configurations and remaining in the same position as previous year. Some net lanes had to have double decking to bring us above the water level from previous years. As was the case last year, we had 15 species represented by only one individual, plus another 19 species having more than one and fewer than five individuals. Only 16 species showed totals of greater than 20 individuals. It was interesting to note that White-throated Sparrows had a high date about five days earlier than previous years. The pattern of arrival was different from last year, with most birds coming in a typical bell curve with no earlier peeks. On the whole, it was a spring similar to the last four years.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>% SY</u>	<u>% ASY</u>	<u>% AHY</u>
186	White-throated Sparrow	70	29	1
169	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	66	32	22
95	American Goldfinch	74	14	2
93	Red-winged Blackbird	68	32	0
79	Yellow Warbler	84	16*	0
86	Gray Catbird	58	41	1
68	Golden-crowned Kinglet	65	35	0
68	Common Grackle	41	22	37
65	Magnolia Warbler	55	44	1
56	Slate-colored Junco	39	60	1
50	Common Yellowthroat	62	34	4

\* See Comment in narrative

Some returns of note were: two Blue Jays banded in 2000 and obviously still around this year, a Red-winged Blackbird first banded in 2001, Northern Cardinal and Blue Jay banded in 2002, and Gray Catbird banded in 2003. We had 309 recaptures with 121 from 2008 and 131 from 2009. We allow a day for banded birds to clear the area before re-processing. The numbers would seem to indicate that Rock Point is not being used for any long-term stops but is being used by returning breeding birds as indicated by 2008 totals.

Foreign recaptures were an American Goldfinch recaptured 11 Apr and first banded 23 Nov 2007 by Martin Wernaart, St. Williams, ON; and a Herring Gull found on the beach by Roswitha Matuschek on 10 Sep 2008 that had been banded on 8 Jun 2004 on Little Cass Island near DeTour Village, MI.

Recoveries of Rock Point birds were a Gray Catbird banded here 8 Oct 2004 and found dead 21 Jul 2008 near the Rock Point Park, and a Gray Catbird banded here 2 Oct 2005 and found dead 14 Oct 2005 in Pensacola, FL.

The only other scientific work we participated in was the color marking of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds for the Ontario Humming Bird Project. We applied pink acrylic paint to the two outer tail feathers. Other colors are being used by other Ontario banding stations. Cindy Cartwright came and taught us how to color mark the hummingbirds.

Visitors are still welcome at Rock Point and we were fortunate in having Ken Perry with us again this year for a week in May. Ken brought fellow bird bander and trainer John Clarke and, although the earlier date meant fewer species, they enjoyed themselves. Ken and John are from Ireland and hosted Gerda and myself for an unforgettable week in Ireland last October. We had double the visitors from last year and conducted a successful Migration Day on 23 May.

A grant last year from Ontario Trillium Foundation coupled with a \$1,000 from Niagara Trailer enabled us to purchase our trailer for visiting long-term volunteers.

Thanks to: Ontario Parks for continued permission to conduct scientific research in the park and for the use of washroom facilities all year; Bird Studies Canada for scientific expertise and analytical analysis; Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, T.D. Friends of the Environment, Ontario Trillium Foundation, and all the volunteers (16) who make it possible to continue at Rock Point.

#### **Appledore Island Migration Station 425-0703**

Appledore Island, York County, ME

**Sara Morris, Compiler**

**David Bonter, Kristen Covino, Anthony Hill, David Holmes, Sara Morris, Becky Suomala, Mary Wright**, Banders

morriss@canisius.edu

Peg Ackerson, Marygrace Barber, Amber Bratcher, Liz Burton, Bill Clark, Carol Cushing, Lindsay Herlihy, Tracy Holmes, Jason Jacobs, Karen Mitchell, Ren Monte, David Nally, Anna Marie Parise, Kipp Quinby, Jim Reis, Martha Stauffer, Bethany Stephan, Amanda Stockwell, Andy Theide, Stella Walsh, Chief Assistants.

Weather was not a major factor during spring 2009. We were able to open the nets every day. Although we had to close nets for part of 10 days due to rain, heavy fog, or wind, we were able to operate for more than 500 net-hours more than during any of the last five years. Despite being able to run nets more than many recent springs, the number of birds, number of species, and number of birds per 100 net-hours were all only slightly above our spring averages.

Most species captured were within the normal range of average spring captures. The few species that were outside the range were all higher than normal: Tennessee Warbler (2009: 9; average:  $2.5 \pm 1.3$ ), Black-and-white Warbler (2009: 164; average:  $81.6 \pm 30.7$ ), and Scarlet Tanager (2009: 20; average  $9.5 \pm 4.3$ ). Among our top 10 species, most were the same as last year, although in 2008 the Blackpoll Warbler and Northern Waterthrush were among the top ten, while in 2009, those species were replaced by the Ovenbird and Black-