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Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2009 Wing Island Banding Station

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Presque Isle State Park 421-0734
Erie Bluffs State Park 421-0735
 Erie County, PA

Sarah Sargent, Bander

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This spring, banding was conducted at three locations within the greater Erie area—two sites at Presque Isle State Park (PISP; Niagara boat launch and Fry's Landing), and one at Erie Bluffs State Park. In total, 1175 birds, representative of 78 different species, were processed over the course of 33 netting days (53.3 b/100nh). Of these birds, 945 were new captures and 230 were recaptures. The most numerous bird captured this season was the Yellow Warbler, known to breed here at Presque

Isle. No.	Species	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
305	Yellow Warbler	46	44	11
173	Gray Catbird	10	18	72
56	Blackpoll Warbler	27	50	23
45	White-throated Sparrow	64	2	33
35	American Redstart	31	46	23
33	American Robin	3	30	67
30	Song Sparrow	10	7	83
28	Magnolia Warbler	68	29	4
24	Western Palm Warbler	4	13	83
23	Swainson's Thrush	4	74	22

Fry's Landing proved to be the most successful banding location. The largest daily catch of birds was seen at this location on 15 May with 113 birds of 26 different species. Species diversity was also greatest at this site overall.

The original banding site for Erie Bluffs State Park was at the western end of the park. On 4 May, however, the banding site was relocated to an agricultural/edge habitat closer to the actual bluffs to promote greater captures. The Erie Bluffs State

Park banding site was the only banding location where Indigo Buntings were captured and processed this season.

Banding at Niagara Boat Launch at PISP, the long-term banding site used since the 1960s, started off slow, but finished strong with large capture numbers. Noteworthy bandings included a Grasshopper Sparrow on 2 May, and a Yellow-breasted Chat banded on 9 May. Despite the short season, this banding site drew in 25 volunteers and 127 visitors.

An active effort was made to check birds for ticks this banding season. In connection with an ongoing Yale University study, 191 ticks were collected off of the 484 birds checked (16% of bird population examined).

A special thanks goes out to the 234 visitors and 28 volunteers who assisted us in the field this banding season!

Wing Island Banding Station 414-0700

Brewster, Barnstable County, MA

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May was mostly a wash for our ninth spring season as rain prevailed the first two weeks of May and a bout with the flu during the last week prevented any banding. Nets were opened for the first time on 5 Mar and our season ended on 15 Jun, for a total of 26 days of operation. A range of two-32 nets were used. Net hours totaled 2298 (netted birds) for a capture rate of 26 b/100nh. In total 360 birds of 42 species were banded and 226 were recaptured. Of those recaptured, 46% were returns from previous years. Older birds of interest included a Black-capped Chickadee and Gray Catbirds at least nine years old; a Common Yellowthroat at least eight years old; two Common Yellowthroats, two catbirds, and a Black-capped Chickadee seven years old; and two Common Yellowthroats, a goldfinch, Gray Catbird, and Song Sparrow at least six years old. We recaptured a chickadee, with an

egg in her oviduct, that was originally a HY in 2002. We have followed her progress each year as she nests in the same spot. She feels like an old friend! Our largest daily catch was 47 birds on 19 May, and 8 May was the day with most species diversity (14).

<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>% SY</u>	<u>% ASY</u>	<u>% AHY</u>
81	Gray Catbird	86	14	0
67	American Goldfinch	70	30	0
25	Common Yellowthroat	68	32	0
20	Black-capped Chickadee	80	10	10
19	Pine Siskin	79	16	5
17	Song Sparrow	47	12	41
11	Myrtle Warbler	73	27	0
11	Northern Cardinal	54	0	45
10	Prairie Warbler	80	20	0
10	Slate-colored Junco	70	30	0

An exciting new species captured for the first time this year was a Worm-eating Warbler on 25 Apr. Surprisingly, we captured both Tree and Barn swallows this year for the first time even though they have been observed around our nets since banding began in 2000. We also captured a Scarlet Tanager this spring, previously banding them only in the fall. An irruptive year for Pine Siskins enabled us to band quite a few of them this season.

An interesting capture was that of a chickadee with a dried grapevine wrapped around its leg. I can only speculate that the vine had grown around the bird's leg as it slept. It was very difficult to remove! A Gray Catbird and Common Yellowthroat presented with avian pox and a Yellow Warbler had scaly leg.

We continue to cooperate with the Landbird Migration Monitoring Network and the Center for Tropical Research in California pulling feathers and swabbing birds for avian flu. A paper was submitted to *NABB* on our findings from larval ticks pulled from birds and this year we began relieving birds of their tick burden for Yale University. Thanks very much to banders Gretchen

Putonen and Carolyn Kennedy and assistants Antonia Stephens, Peter Brown, and Tom Burgess, along with many others for helping this spring.

Bedford Valley

395-0783

Bedford, Bedford County, PA

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Banding results for spring 2009 were pretty typical of this station. Almost half the birds encountered were repeats, from previous years, or earlier bandings. Weather was definitely a factor. I noted that on at least 15 occasions, rain prevented opening or caused early closing. Several times high winds or low temperatures were cited as problems. Thanks to Al Geis's son Dean, I was given some nets in good condition after Al passed away.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>% SY</u>	<u>% ASY</u>	<u>% AHY</u>
19	Chipping Sparrow	0	0	100
14	American Goldfinch	35	28	35
13	Gray Catbird	7	0	92
8	House Wren	0	0	100
8	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	0	0	100

Warblers banded included Myrtle, American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush, Yellow, and Mourning. A Veery banded on 12 May was the first ever for this station. A Great Crested Flycatcher was the first in many years. A pair of Wood Thrush were netted twice and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Purple Finch, and Northern Parula were banded and obviously nesting in the area. Efforts to control invasive plant species has meant the 3-ac field has not been suitable to species such as Field Sparrow, Indigo Bunting, and Common Yellowthroat.

In many cases, only one or two individuals of a particular species were banded. Chipping Sparrows usually are the most common each year. If feeders are maintained, goldfinch and House Finch may be caught frequently. Unfortunately feeders had to be brought in nightly, due to bear visits.