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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2009 Tomoka Bird Banding Station

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represented a possible first documented record of the species for the State. This fall yielded two interesting foreign recaptures of significance. The first was a Gray Catbird banded by Danny Bystrak's group at Laurel, MD, that had been banded only eleven days previously. The second was a Ruby-crowned Kinglet trapped in November, that was originally banded a month earlier by Betsy Brooks at the Braddock Bay Bird Observatory in the Town of Greece, NY. A Gray Catbird banded at the end of September was found dead on Long Key, FL, at the beginning of Mar 2010, representing the first long-distance recovery of a bird banded at this station.

**Jekyll Island Banding Station      310-0812**

Glynn Co., GA

**Chris Pitman**, Master Bander

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The 2009 banding session was pared down from the usual three week session to two weeks, the availability of banders being the primary reason for the shortened session. Life brings changes; sometimes the changes are not preferred.

I would like to thank all of our volunteers for their generosity, patience, and fortitude. It is not easy to slog through sand, while giving blood (to mosquitoes), under the blazing sun. It takes a special and somewhat eccentric person to want to become involved with the station. Extra special thanks to Carol Schneier, Evan Pitman, Laura Steadman, Diane Laws, and Bob Williams.

The overall numbers were markedly low this year with the shortened session and only one cold front moving through during the time span in which we were banding. Common Yellowthroats and Western Palm Warblers accounted for nearly fifty percent of total captures, as usual. A rarity for us, a Yellow-throated Vireo (AHY) was an exciting species to have in the hand. Not quite as rare but infrequent, a Rose-breasted Grosbeak (HY) peeked everyone's interest.

**Tomoka Bird Banding Station**

**292-0810**

Ormond Beach, Volusia Co., FL

**Meret S. Wilson**

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The fall 2009 banding season was the best of the six years of operation for Tomoka. Fall alone surpassed three of the five total years' data. In 49 days of banding, only one day had a zero capture day. The weather was perfect (except for the record heat in October), making no days needing to be cancelled. This fall had a steady stream of visitors, finally indicating an increased interest in banding on the whole and this station in particular. Several volunteers have become regulars and for the first time I have three people who can extract birds from the nets.

The most amazing thing that happened this season was the capture and banding of an Audubon's Warbler. This may be the first Audubon's Warbler ever banded in Florida. One other was reported in 1958, but notes by the bander suggest the bird was actually a Myrtle Warbler. Both are of the species Yellow-rumped Warbler, but the two different races are generally separated by the Rocky Mountains. The 2009 bird has been documented with photographs for rare bird entry into state records with the Florida Ornithological Society.

Three brand new species, never before accounted for within the state park boundaries, were captured and banded: Acadian Flycatcher, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and Field Sparrow. Photographs have been published on the Halifax River Audubon website for documentation. Several other birds, previously never recorded as seen at the park, were seen "hanging" around the station but refusing to be caught: a female Blue Grosbeak, two adult male Eastern Towhees, a Gray Kingbird, and a close overhead flyby of a white adult Snow Goose.

Recaptures of previously banded birds at Tomoka have also been remarkable. Two Myrtle Warblers, both banded more than three years ago, were caught in nets within 50 ft of their original capture nets. Again this is quite amazing because of the huge

number of Myrtle Warblers on Helicopter Island this fall. Another recapture that was quite stunning was an adult female Painted Bunting caught in exactly the same net on the same day as one year ago. A Gray Catbird banded as a second year (code 5) bird was caught this fall, now showing the molt pattern of an adult. An adult male Common Yellowthroat caught originally in the fall of 2008 as an adult was also recaptured approximately 200 yd from the original net. All these birds are showing significant site fidelity.

The season would not have been as eventful for me without the help of the following volunteers: Bill Horton, Judy and Joe Dziak, Denise Huckaby, Laura Ostapko, and Carla Vanderbilt, a bander trainee. And, of course, I am always grateful for the help and support of all the Tomoka State Park rangers and employees.

**Bill Baggs**

**254-0800**

**Cape Florida State Park**

Key Biscayne, Miami-Dade Co., FL

**Michelle Davis**, Robin Diaz, Elizabeth Golden, Erica Hernandez

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Cape Florida is in its eighth year as a fall migration banding station. The park is on the southern tip of a mostly developed barrier island just off the coast of Miami. We have up to 19 nets set in a restored tropical hardwood hammock that is part of a multi-million dollar effort to return native vegetation to the park following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

We started banding on 15 Aug and were open on all but five days until we closed on 6 Nov. We ran anywhere from 10 to 19 nets from first light until early afternoon on most days. The weather in 2009 was very placid. There were no tropical storm threats or near passes, and rainfall was infrequent. Winds were generally very light through the entire fall. The first decent front passed around 28 Sep, with three days of SW to W winds. This front stalled over extreme southern Florida and the rainy boundary created one of the most spectacular fallouts we have had at Cape Florida, 30 Sep and 1

Oct; 193 birds were banded on 30 Sep, with 112 more banded on 1 Oct, for a two-day total of 305 birds of 33 species. This included 19 species of warblers and quite a few tanagers, vireos, and flycatchers. South Florida was engulfed by a record-breaking heat wave (90+ degrees) immediately after this fallout, which did not break until the typical mid-October front passed on 18 Oct. This front was fairly powerful, and temperatures dropped into the high 50's for the first time since spring. As often happens with strong fronts, birds were able to move through quickly on the NW winds, so most of our migration was complete by 21 Oct. Our location is too far south to get many short-distance migrants, so we wrapped up the season on 6 Nov.

This year (2009) was a good migration season for the birds themselves, as they had an easy passage south with few weather obstacles. They seemed to not need to make use of our site as a stopover and, as a consequence, our total birds banded was down quite a bit from previous years, and the birds/100 net hours was the second lowest in eight years of banding here. We banded one new species for the site, Marsh Wren, and record numbers of several other species, all because of the unusual species composition in the late September fallout. Five Blackburnian Warblers were banded in 2009; we had captured two in the previous seven years. The ten Summer Tanagers banded this season surpassed the six banded previously in all years combined, and Tennessee Warblers were also well represented, with 17 banded in 2009. Previous season highs of these were six birds. Eastern Wood-Pewees and White-eyed Vireos also were captured in record numbers: six of the former in 2009 (previous high was two in 2005) and 45 vireos banded in 2009, compared to 40 in 2006. These vireos stayed onsite an average of 5.3 days and gained considerable weight in that time.

Red-eyed Vireos, in contrast, continued a steady decline in total numbers banded since a high of 169 in 2006, with only 31 captures in 2009; the lowest number since 2003. Thrushes were not as abundant in 2009, particularly Veery; however a Gray-