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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2010 Braddock Bay Bird Observatory

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Braddock Bay Bird Observatory 431-0774
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The twenty-fifth consecutive year of fall banding at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station began on 10 Jul and ended on 17 Nov 2010. Banding was done by licensed staff banders Dave Alexander, David Bonter, Elizabeth Brooks, Linda Boutwell, Greg Cunningham, Mark Deutschlander, Kelly Dockery, Jon Dombrowski, Kyle Horton, Ember Jandebeur, Erin Karnatz, Ryan Kayhart, Marian Klik, Tom Klotzbach, Cindy Marino, Robert McKinney, Sara Morris, and John Waud. Banding assistants were Virginia Duffy, Laura Evans, Greg Lawrence, Peggy Keller, Gayle Lazoration, Pat Lovallo, Andrea Patterson, Doug Smith, Leanna Twohig, Barb Wagner, and Aggie Windig

Weather permitting, banding was carried out for at least six hours beginning at dawn every day between 21 Aug and 20 Oct. Parts of seven days were lost due to rain and/or wind, or hot or cold temperature extremes. Banding was also done on nine days prior to and five days after the intensive banding period, for a total of 11,063 net hours on 73 days. There were 6,814 birds banded of 94 species, our highest total since banding began here in 1986, and our second highest species total. Twenty-five Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were released unbanded (last date, 15 Oct). Red-tailed Hawk was a new species for the fall list; the fall cumulative total is now 126 forms. The season's overall capture rate was 61.6 birds per 100 net hours (b/100nh), almost double from 34.2 b/100nh in fall 2009.

The best day was 20 Oct when 424 birds of nine species were banded. Of the 424 birds banded that day, 410 (96.7%) were Black-capped Chickadees. There were nine days during the fall when over 200 birds were banded (20, 23, 26 Sep, and 1, 2, 7, 11, 19, and 20 Oct), and 19 days when over 100 birds were banded. The greatest species diversity occurred on 15 and 21 Sep when 34 species were banded. Of the total new bandings, 89.3% were HY birds.

Up to 33 12-m nets and four 6-m nets were used, most in the same locations as in previous years. Included in the 33 12-m nets were six double-high net assemblies. Nets were numbered and identified as to their habitat site and the capture time (hour after sunrise to the nearest 0.5 hour) and net number was recorded for each bird handled.

There were 1,593 birds recaptured during fall 2010, and they were all measured, fat-scored and reweighed. Twenty-two birds banded at BBBO returned from another season. Noteworthy was a Song Sparrow in its seventh year, and a Downy Woodpecker, Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, and Baltimore Oriole in their sixth year.

Avian pox lesions were found on only 11 birds; Hippoboscids flies were found on just one bird; no ticks were noted; and feather lice or mites were found on just two birds. A partially leucistic Song Sparrow was banded and a Black-capped Chickadee and Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's thrush presented with bill deformities.

Bob McKinney received notice that a SY-F Cedar Waxwing banded at BBBO on 12 Jul 2007 was found dead during Jul 2010 from flying into an object at Peasleville, NY, which is a few miles SW of Plattsburgh, NY.

Our blog and daily banding tallies from the fall 2010 season may be found on our website at <http://www.bbbo.org>. There were record-high numbers banded of Tennessee Warbler (16), Northern Parula (8), Yellow Warbler (321), Bay-breasted Warbler (38), and American Redstart (105). The 154 Winter Wrens banded was the second highest ever banded. On the negative side, Scarlet Tanager was missing after being banded in 14 of the past 18 years; and House Finch was missing after being banded in 15 of the past 18 years.

Sara Morris, and her student Kyle Horton from Canisius College, in collaboration with the Powdermill Banding Station and the Powdermill Bioacoustics Lab, tested Blackpoll, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped warblers in the Mobile Avian

Recording Studio (MARS) parked at the banding station. Their goal was to study flight-calling behavior. Specifically, they were interested in how different cues affect calling by migrants and whether calling rate is increased in response to conspecific calls.

We collected saliva samples from Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers and Downy Woodpeckers for Meena Harribal from Cornell University, who is interested in the specific composition of saliva in sapsuckers that may allow sap to flow more easily.

Dr. Gregory Cunningham and Nidun Daniel, a senior undergraduate, from St. John Fisher College, collected blood samples from a variety of birds during the fall migration period to look at baseline and maximum corticosterone levels. The results of this experiment will help infer whether an elevated corticosterone stress response is associated with the development of migratory conditions or in response to capture and handling. They also compared stress responses of birds inside clean (unused) bags vs. dirty (used) bags to see if holding conditions affect stress.

Our fall Research Assistant was Ryan Kayhart; Cindy Marino was our Field Assistant. Special thanks to volunteers Heidi Henrichs and Jeanne Verhulst who helped with data entry, and to Amanda Burns who repaired nets.

Thanks to Tom Muller for mowing paths and to Jim Gillette for mowing the field; and to Kelly Dockery and the Garden Committee, Chris Gates, Carolyn Jacobs, Steve Maley, Doug Smith, Sue Smith, Carol Southby and Aggie Windig for their assistance with building and grounds management, and doing the plant survey in the field. Appreciation to the following individuals who helped scribe, tended net lanes, or assisted with other aspects of our educational or banding operation: Cathy Belair, John Boettcher, Nancy Bompczyk, Amanda Burns, Jane Capellupo, Marilyn Guenther, Kathy Habgood, Gary Herbert, Kathleen Holt, Joanna Klima, John Lehr, Rosemary Lillis, Dennis Lysy, Chita McKinney, Shirley Meston, Ann Nash, the Padulka

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A special thank you goes to Bill Kaiser and The Genesee Land Trust for permission to band on their land.

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The 34th year of fall banding at Alfred Station began on 1 Jul and ended on 4 Nov 2010. One to two 6-m nets and one 12-m net were used on 30 days, for a total of 235 net hours. A total of 83 birds of 20 species were banded (35.3 b/100 net hours). In addition, five Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were captured and released unbanded.

Hatching-year percentages for all birds where age could be determined was 56.6%. Hatching-year percentages for the seven most common species were Black-capped Chickadee, 60.6%; American Goldfinch, 16.7%; Song Sparrow, 55.5%; Slate-colored Junco, 14.3%; White-breasted Nuthatch, 33.3%; Gray Catbird, 25%; and Chipping Sparrow, 100%.

The peak day occurred on 4 Nov, when 48 birds were banded; 47.9% of those banded were Black-capped Chickadees. The day with the most species diversity was also 4 Nov, with seven species banded. There were six repeats during the season.

There were five returns of birds from previous seasons. Noteworthy were an American Robin in its fifth year and a Downy Woodpecker in its fourth year. No birds exhibited evidence of avian pox.

As in the previous nine years, no banding was done at this location from 13 Sep to 16 Oct, when I was banding at Braddock Bay, and no banding was done on many days in late October because of the presence of three cats.