

2011

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2010 Alfred Station

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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

family, Emily Patterson, Terry Perry, Patti Pirz, Debbie Reed, Sonya Rooney, Linda Rossi, Lee Schofield, Ruth Stork, Alice VandeMoere, Lona Van Orden, Tom Verhulst, and Monika Wood.

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

Alfred Station

421-0774

Allegany County, NY

Elizabeth W. Brooks

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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.

The annual banding demonstration at Foster Lake did not take place this year, but a banding demonstration was held for Alfred University Environmental Science students on 4 Nov at the home of their professor, Dr. Fred Beaudry. This location proved to be excellent and the 1.5-hr demo using no more than one or two nets at a time, resulted in my best day of the fall!

Spring Hill Wildlife Sanctuary 423-0772
Prattsburgh, Steuben County, NY

Bob McKinney
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After a lapse of too many years, I finally got back to AFR banding at our Spring Hill Wildlife Sanctuary in the Town of Prattsburgh, Steuben County, NY. Unfortunately, the banding was on a much reduced scale because of so much rain during the summer and my reduced ability to operate mist nets due to nerve damage in both legs. Because of all the rain, several trips to our sanctuary were aborted. We just turned around and went back home. We did manage to band on a total of six dates in July, August and September using six mist nets. We did have one nice highlight. As Chita was making a round of the nets on 1 Sep, she came across one net with four Hooded Warblers (HOWA) in it at one time, three males and a female. This was in addition to another male in a nearby net on 26 Jul. I also banded one HOWA at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory this summer. I do not band a HOWA every year and I certainly never banded four in one year. Looking forward to a better 2011.

Kestrel Haven Avian 422-0764
Migration Observatory
Burdett, Schuyler County, NY
John and Sue Gregoire
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This was our 25th fall AFR season and the most dismal. For the last four seasons we have been the victims of climate change in that we have had to deal with winds too unsafe for netting on most days. We are unable to make any meaningful comparisons or engage in statistical analysis as the

data are simply not there. This despite our daily point counts that were also degraded by wind and rain. We were a far cry from the days of 6,000 banded!

Our highlights are usually with our returns. This year that number was also greatly decreased. One fantastic recovery bears relating. We heard from a birder living on an island off the coast of British Columbia. While birding, he discovered a wing and a single leg of what appeared to have been a Pine Siskin. The leg had a band attached! We had banded that siskin during last year's invasion and just about one year prior to its recovery some 2,900 miles away. That is our longest distance return in almost 40 years of banding.

Injuries and parasites were unremarkable. We operated with fewer nets this year and weather caused us to depart from our years of constant-effort protocol.

We banded 1,622 new birds of 83 species in 67 days of operation. We also had 347 repeats, 70 returns, and 70 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. The hummingbirds were not banded. The total birds netted was 2,153 making our measure of efficiency 135 b/100nh for newly banded birds and 179 b/100nh overall. Hatching-year birds were way above the norm at 96%.

The station banded list grew to 133 species plus seven forms banded (140) with the inclusion of Northern Saw-whet Owl this year. Saw-whets were our salvation. On many of the non-banding passerine days, winds subsided to safe levels with darkness. We set for and lured saw-whets throughout October and November. We had never attempted this before as conventional wisdom hereabouts said that the species did not migrate through the Finger Lakes in meaningful numbers. By December, we had banded 77, had three birds banded this year and last in Ontario at Prince Edward Point, and had one of our saw-whets recaptured in southeastern Pennsylvania. That was certainly meaningful to us! None of the saw-whet data are included in the AFR totals, as we used an