

2011

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2010 Spring Hill Wildlife Sanctuary

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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!

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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.

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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