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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2010 Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park

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on 4 Oct 2010, was originally banded by me on 13 Oct 2009. The first bird to be captured and banded on the south side was a hatch-year Ovenbird. Over the course of the fall it was recaptured three more times. It also was the last bird to be captured for the fall season. A Black-throated Blue Warbler banded on 17 Oct 2010 was re-caught on 24 Oct; I have recaptured them a day or two after banding but never as long as a full week later.

For the first time, I banded on a regular basis on the south side of the park to get an idea of how the species' counts vary. The habitat, across from a restored marsh, is quite different and includes more hardwoods and pine trees. The only Kentucky Warbler of the fall was caught there. Two of the three Swainson's Thrushes were also caught there. Four days a week are dedicated to Helicopter Island and one day a week is now dedicated to the south area. Females continue to outnumber the males captured and, in general, the number of hatching-year birds predominates in the fall as well.

Forty-five visitors came to the banding station, including a class from a college in Tennessee and a local Audubon birding class. Four regular volunteers, whose help has been invaluable, were: Joe and Judie Dziak, Bill Horton, and Carla Vanderbilt. And, as always, the park employees continue to be extremely supportive.

**Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park 254-0800**

Key Biscayne, Miami-Dade Co., FL

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Cape Florida is in its ninth 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 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 12 Aug 2010 and were open on all but six days until we closed on 8 Nov. We ran

anywhere from 10 to 19 nets from first light until early afternoon on most days. The weather in 2010 was quite active, especially when compared to the previous fall season. Two weak tropical storms passed through the region, one in mid-August and the other in late September. Fronts were fairly frequent and there were many nights with rainfall, but none of the ingredients lined up perfectly to give us a fallout of migrants. We never captured more than 40 birds in a day until 3 Oct when 73 were banded; and our only other big day was 15 Oct, with 103 birds captured. The fall cooldown was early this year, with humidity levels becoming comfortable in early October, about two to three weeks ahead of schedule. Our location is too far south to get many short-distance migrants, so we wrapped up the season on 8 Nov.

We did capture some interesting individuals in spite of the low overall numbers. The only tanager banded in 2010 was a Western Tanager on 4 Nov, a first for the station. An aberrant-plumaged Bicknell's Thrush was also banded on that day, and we banded yet another gynandromorphic Black-throated Blue Warbler, the third individual in nine seasons. We captured two foreign recoveries: a Painted Bunting banded in July in Georgia, and an Ovenbird banded three weeks earlier in Pennsylvania. An adult male Cerulean Warbler was a treat in late August, and a Connecticut Warbler banded on 30 Sep is rare in fall.

The trends seen in 2008 and 2009 were continued in 2010, with greatly reduced birds/100 net-hours. Local weather seemed to be promising for bringing down birds on our site, but perhaps the large-scale weather patterns were causing the majority of migrants to bypass the region completely. Observations of overnight radar loops for the Southeastern region suggested that this was probably the case. The 19 b/100nh was the lowest ever in nine years of banding here; 27 b/100nh in 2009 and 20 in 2002 were the previous lows. Black-throated Blue Warbler numbers were low in 2010, despite their continued hold on the top species spot; 233 were banded this fall, compared to an eight-year average of 348 and a high of 580 in 2008. Most

of the other species in the top ten were banded in lower-than-average numbers, too, with the exception of Worm-eating Warbler and Northern Parula. Flycatchers and vireos were also poorly represented in 2010, with Red-eyed Vireos continuing their decline in captures; 27 were banded in 2010 as compared to an average of 66 per year and a peak of 169 in 2006. Prairie Warblers were almost nonexistent in transit; only seven were banded in 2010 (average 29). On a brighter note, the two Cerulean Warblers banded in 2010 bring our total up to five, with four of those banded since 2008. Two Black-throated Green Warblers banded this fall triple our overall total for this species; although it is a frequently observed wintering bird in hardwoods in south Florida, it is rare on Key Biscayne.

We captured 11 returning birds of seven species, including Western Palm Warbler, Painted Bunting, and Blue-gray Gnatcatcher. The oldest return was a female American Redstart banded in fall 2004, which was also recaptured in spring 2009 and 2010. A Gray Catbird also returned from 2004; this bird was also recaptured only in spring 2010. All returns were of either resident or potentially wintering species.

Erica Hernandez joined our crew as a regular bander this season. Many thanks to Angel and Mariel Abreu for providing the radar loops of south Florida and southeastern United States throughout the entire migration period, as well as assistance at the station. Anna Scharnagl also provided a lot of assistance, as she trained to become a bander. Special thanks to Robert Yero, the Park manager, for continuing to support our project, and we wish him luck in his new position.

#### **Lakeshore Estates**

Tallahassee, Leon Co., FL

**Peter H. Homann**

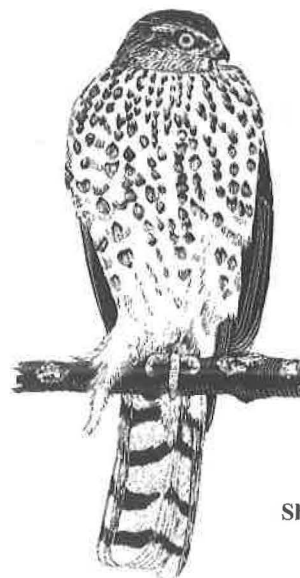
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A wet and hot August in 2010 was followed by an almost uninterrupted dry spell and continued hot weather through October. None of the hurricanes of the season came close to the Tallahassee area. This

was fortunate for us residents and conducive to uninterrupted migratory activity of transient passerines. I would conclude that the rather poor netting success at my location in suburban Tallahassee can be attributed to these conditions, if my experience in recent years had not been equally disappointing. However, the unusually small number of thrushes encountered by me may indeed have been due to the very dry conditions of the high grounds where I operate my nets. Not a single Swainson's Thrush was captured, and none of the other thrushes made my list of the ten most commonly banded species.

Of course, there also were surprises. The Red-eyed Vireo, for example, appears on my list of the ten most commonly banded species for the first time, and I netted two Eastern Wood-Pewees within an hour, after having banded only two pewees previously since 1975. To keep my spirit high, my "seed addicted" wintering Ovenbird I had written about in this journal three years ago returned for its sixth winter.

One day I had a Sharp-shinned Hawk struggling in my net but, fortunately, feasting on a hapless bird in the net had *not* been on its mind. In fact, in the past only one Sharp-shinned Hawk, of which I capture on the average of one per year, had been lured into the net by an entangled bird. Did the hawk aim at a prey not in, but behind the net, or was flying at the low altitude of the net purely by chance?



**Sharp-shinned Hawk**  
by George West