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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2010 Allegheny Front Migration Observatory

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The station had 243 recaptures of 178 birds of 17 species. Returns included one Gray Catbird banded in 2005; two Song Sparrows banded in 2006; two Common Yellowthroats banded in 2007; two Gray Catbirds, one Indigo Bunting, one Purple Finch and one Black-capped Chickadee all banded in 2008; and two Gray Catbirds, a Black-capped Chickadee and one Song Sparrow banded in 2009. One Gray Catbird, either unlucky or trap happy, that we had banded as an AHY female in 2005 was recaptured five times in 2010.

The station had 38 visitors, several of whom spent considerable time at the station enjoying the birds and the great outdoors.

We thank Mike Fazenbaker who helped clear the net lanes. We appreciate Rick Latshaw and Mike Fazenbaker for granting us the privilege of banding at Mt. Nebo WMA. Thanks to Bill Pope for his help mowing and tending the nets.

**Allegheny Front
Migration Observatory**

Grant County, WV

**Banding Leaders: Ralph K. Bell and Joan Bell
Pattison**

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Allegheny Front Migration Observatory (AFMO) conducted its 53rd year of bird banding at Dolly Sods, WV, this fall. AFMO is located 10 miles southeast of Davis, WV. Banding began on 15 Aug and ended on 8 Oct 2010. A record yearly number of 10,363 birds were banded of 82 species with a station effort of 186 b/100nh.

Common Nighthawk and Summer Tanager were new species for the station, which brings the total species banded to 123. The overall percentage of hatch-year birds (using known age birds only) was 60.01% compared with 72.15% in 2009. A total of 240,841 birds have been banded since the writer (Bell) founded AFMO in the fall of 1958. The station was open for 47 days and closed for eight days due to bad weather. There were 12 days when over 100 birds were banded, 9 days over 200, 3 days over 300, 2 days over 400, 2 days over 500, 2 days

over 600, and 2 days over 700 birds were banded. We banded from 100 to 700+ birds on 32 days out of the 47 days we were open. Perhaps the lack of hurricanes and the fact that we had 36 banding days with direct west wind, played a factor in the large numbers of birds we banded and saw flying over our nets this fall.

The Black-throated Blue Warbler was the most numerous species this year with 2,100 banded, which is 102% over the 10-year average (2000-2009). The Blackpoll Warbler was second highest with 1,478 banded, which is 134.6% over the 10-year average. It is interesting to note that since 1981 (30 years), the first Blackpoll Warblers have always arrived at AFMO between 20 Aug and 10 Sep and their peak days have occurred between 10 Sep and 6 Oct. The Black-throated Green Warbler was third highest with 1,254 banded, which is 125.98% over the 10-year average. The Magnolia Warbler was fourth highest with 1,072 banded, which is 367.1% over the 10-year average. The Swainson's Thrush was fifth highest with 526 banded, which is 140.7% over the 10-year average. The total number of birds banded of the top five species is 6430, which was 62% of the total birds banded this fall. The next highest numbers of birds banded were Tennessee Warbler (495), Ovenbird ((397), Blackburnian Warbler (353), Cape May Warbler (330), and Golden-crowned Kinglet (239).

In addition to the species stated in the previous paragraph, some of the other species whose numbers were, on average, up this year were the Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Parula, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Red-eyed Vireo, Nashville Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, American Redstart, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and Lincoln's Sparrow. Some of the birds whose numbers, on average, were down this year were the Hermit Thrush, Eastern Towhee, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warbler, Common Yellowthroat, Eastern Towhee, Slate-colored (Dark-eyed) Junco, and Blue Jay.

The Flyover Count was started in 1990 and has continued every year during the fall banding season

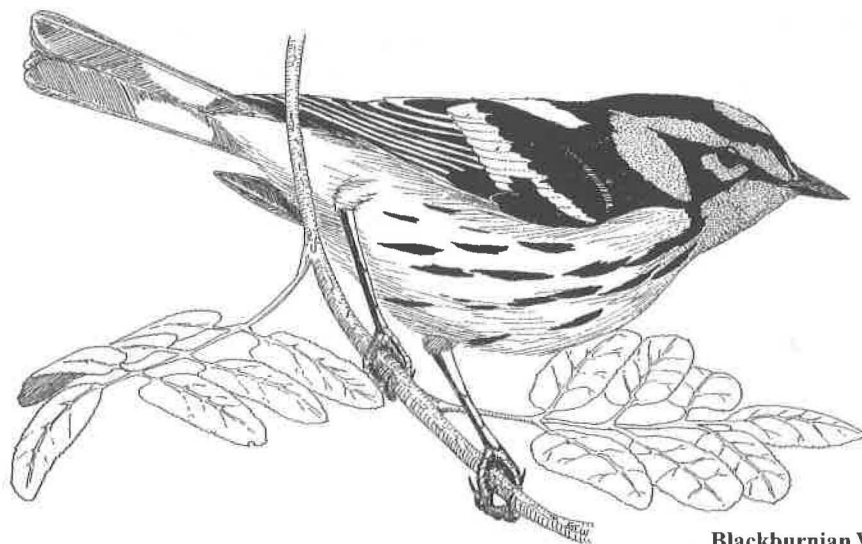
at AFMO. Results from the fall 2010 count of four selected species, which make up the majority of the count are: 149 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds, 2,062 Blue Jays, 2,268 American Goldfinches, and 406 Monarch Butterflies. All four species were below the 21-year average (1990-2010).

This fall, 1,126 people signed our visitor's book. These visitors to AFMO came from 23 states, Washington DC, and five foreign countries: Canada, France, Germany, Malaysia, and United Kingdom. Several elementary and middle schools and colleges visited AFMO, including The Highland Adventist School from Elkins, WV, Glenville State College Ecology Class, Georgetown University Freshman Group, Potomac Valley Audubon Society, Shepherdstown, WV, Canaan Valley Master Naturalists, WV Boy Scout Troups, Pendleton County, WV, Homeschool Group, and Ralph K. Bell Bird Club, Waynesburg, PA.

We thank the personnel of Monongahela National Forest Supervisor Clyde Thompson, Special Use Manager Laura Hise, Develop Recreation Manager Ed Sherman, Forestry Technician John Waggy, Program Manager Bonnie Wilson and all the others for their cooperation and help. We sincerely appreciate the hard work of Tom Fox, AFMO volunteer, and Ed Sherman from the US Forest Service, along with his men, John Waggy, Ron

Polgar, Jeff Lark, and Brandon Olinger for their help in keeping the vegetation in check at the station. We also thank the West Virginia DNR for the use of their building for storage of our banding shed. We also want to thank the Ralph K. Bell Bird Club, the Brooks Bird Club and many visitors and volunteers for their financial support, which is our only means of replacing the 30 mist nets we use in the banding operation.

The very dedicated banders who participated this year were Bob Dean, Randy & Beth Ritter (also Campground Hosts), Todd and Kim Schnopp, Charles Ziegenfus and station leaders Ralph K. Bell and Joan Bell Pattison. The scheduled volunteers, in addition to the banders, were Tom and Dawn Fox, Jay and Matt Fox, Don Pattison, Maggi Perl, Jeff and Sheila Berry, Tim Newlin, Tom and Debbie Long, Joe Schreiber, LeJay Graffious and Steve Sushinski. LeJay and Helen Ann Graffious, Todd and Kim Schnopp and others erected the shed in August and took down the shed at the end of the banding season. Since this was the busiest year we have ever had, we would like to personally thank a few people who always made sure the station was covered: Randy and Beth Ritter, Tom Fox and Todd and Kim Schnopp. We will never forget their help and dedication to us as leaders and to AFMO. We could not have done it without them and all the other loyal volunteers who gave their time and worked very hard whenever possible.



Blackburnian Warbler
by George West