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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2011 Kiawah Island Banding Station

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**Kiawah Island
Banding Station**

326-0801

Kiawah Island, Charleston County, SC

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This was the third fall banding season on Kiawah Island, which is an 8,000-ac barrier island and residential/resort community located approximately 20 mi southeast of Charleston, SC. The banding site is situated in secondary dune scrub/shrub and high marsh with wax-myrtle, sea ox-eye, and marsh-elder being the dominant plant species. We operated 12 nets 3-5 days per week, weather permitting, from mid-August through November. Nets were generally opened 30 minutes before sunrise and closed approximately five hours later.

We operated for 56 days resulting in 2,409.8 net-hours (nh); a large increase from the 27 days of operation and 1,000.6 nh logged last fall. A total of 2,263 new individuals were banded and 289 birds were recaptured. The capture rate for new birds was 93.9 b/100nh, with an additional 12.2 b/100nh as recaptures. Sixty-six species were banded; however, three species made up 60% of the season's catch: Common Yellowthroats (27%), Myrtle Warblers (20%), and Gray Catbirds (13%). We banded ten species never before captured at the station: Acadian Flycatcher, Eastern Kingbird, Bell's Vireo, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Golden-winged Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Pine Warbler, and Scarlet Tanager. Undoubtedly, the best bird of the fall was a Bell's Vireo banded on 17 Sep. This represents the first banding record for that species in South Carolina!

We had 289 recaptures (231 repeats, 55 returns, three foreign recaptures) during the 2011 fall season. Of the 55 returns, 41 were from migrant species (27 Myrtle Warblers, 3 Swamp Sparrows, 4 Painted Buntings, 2 Gray Catbirds, 2 House Wrens, 1 White-eyed Vireo, 1 Brown Thrasher, and 1 Song Sparrow).

Nine of the migrant returns were from the 2009 fall season (our first banding season). Additionally, 11 returns were from the 2009-2010 winter season, 1 from the 2010 spring season, 12 from 2010 fall season, 5 from 2010-2011 winter season, and 4 from 2011 spring season. Several individuals (8 Myrtle Warblers, 1 House Wren, 1 Swamp Sparrow, and 1 Painted Bunting) have been captured every year since they were banded in 2009.

We express gratitude to the Kiawah Conservancy for supporting our project by providing the funding to purchase banding supplies and equipment. Additionally, we thank Kiawah Development Partners for permission to conduct our research on their property. We also thank all of the volunteers who participated during our banding season.

North Folly Island

324-0795

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The fall of 2011 was a mixed season with some pleasant surprises.

Because of site interference and logistics, a reduction in effort occurred this year—only six nets were deployed and one day a week scheduled for banding. Five of the nets used this year were the “core” nets that have been used every year since 2007 at this site. Despite the reduction in effort, a very pleasing capture rate of 139 b/100nh (Table 1) was obtained. This increase in capture rate can be accounted for by the weather—most of the mornings that we opened nets were within a day or so of a front passing through. This resulted in three banding sessions with over 70 birds (30% of mornings had 70+ birds) and one other with over 50 birds (40% of mornings had 50+ birds).