

2012

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I (Northeast)- Fall 2011 Manomet Bird Observatory

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The Station continues to follow the Canadian data. Even though the picture changes yearly, the general number of birds/100 nh is going down.

The St. Andrews Bird Banding Station is closely tied to the Huntsman Education Department and students attending courses on campus are invited to see the birds and learn about the banding process. Many took advantage of the offer to learn about banding, mark/recapture programs and bird migration.

Thank you to volunteer Kim Pastirik, for her dedication to the banding process and commitment to the Station through a slow year. Thanks to the **New Brunswick Wildlife Trust Fund** for providing financial support which allowed the Station to complete another fall migration-monitoring season successfully. Thank you to the **Huntsman Marine Science Centre** for all the inkind support.

#### **Appledore Island Migration Station**

**425-0703**

Appledore Island, York County, ME

Coordinator: *Sara Morris*

Banders: Liz Burton, Lindsay Herlihy, David Holmes, Becky Suomala, Mary Wright Assistants: Peg Ackerson, Bill Clark, Corrie Folsom-O'Keefe, Laura Hetrick, Jan Lathrop, Jeff Ott, Andy Thiede, Kathy Whittier, Zoey Zullo

Like most recent years, fall migration on Appledore was very slow. Because the island "closes" earlier than when we began studying fall migration, our annual numbers are much lower than average. The fall 2011 season was particularly slow. The total of 983 birds was the second lowest since 1983 (only 2009 was lower with 907 birds) and was well below the average of 1,705. Likewise, the 53 species banded this fall was the lowest since 1983 and was almost twenty species below our average of 72.5 species! Part of this was a result of the lower-than-normal number of net hours (3,640 in 2011 compared to our average of 4,359). However, even our number of birds/100 nh was lower than average (26.9 in 2011 compared to the average of 40.5). We

lost only one full day to the weather (28 Aug due to Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene), although we lost part of the day before and after because we took down all the nets prior to the storm. An additional six days were also interrupted by rain showers, so weather was a bigger factor this fall than most.

Only one species of bird (American Robin) was outside the normal range of captures; the 13 captured in 2011 was much higher than the  $3.0 \pm 1.9$  average. Other birds were within their historic ranges, but several common species were lower than usual, including Red-eyed Vireo (2011: 65; average:  $171 \pm 88$ ), American Redstart (2011: 69; average:  $127 \pm 59$ ), and Black-and-white Warbler (2011: 29; average:  $51 \pm 24$ ). Gray Catbirds were a bit higher than normal (2011: 136; average:  $89 \pm 57$ ), although many of these birds are likely to be local young as there are numerous territories both on Appledore and on adjacent islands. Notable for their absence this fall were Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Swainson's Thrush, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Brown Creeper, Bay-breasted Warbler, White-throated Sparrow, and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, many of which are among the later migrants that we miss by closing early. The most exciting captures were three Yellow-billed Cuckoos, a White-eyed Vireo, two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers (often absent in the fall), two Gray-cheeked Thrushes, two Connecticut Warblers, and three red bats.

The banding station continues to benefit from the generous financial and logistic support of numerous volunteers, the Shoals Marine Lab, Canisius College, and several anonymous donors. Our efforts could not continue without their assistance and backing. We are pleased to provide banding demonstrations for groups visiting the island (or talking about banding when we do not have birds during a visit).

#### **Manomet Bird Observatory**

**415-0703**

Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences  
Manomet, MA

Banders: *Trevor Lloyd-Evans*(compiler), Nathan Marcy and Ashley Daniels

Assistants: Alan Kneidel, Megan Shave and Laura Koloski

During the fall seasons from 1966 – 2011 we have banded 158,962 landbirds. We are in our 46<sup>th</sup> year of data collection and education programs at this site. This fall, we continued to run 50 mist nets on the same dates and in the same locations as the previous years, giving us an unparalleled comparison of range expansions and contractions, yearly variation of migration, survival and long-term population change. Recent Manomet data have documented an earlier arrival of spring migrants which correlates with global warming, but this change in arrival is not detected in fall migration timing to date.

Formal education programs at Manomet were based on migration banding, local ecology and conservation biology. Visiting groups included members, scouts, schools, universities and adults from the local community. Informal presentations included those given to members, visiting scientists, visiting birders, and people who just walked in! We also remotely “test-skyped” live bird banding demonstrations to students in Brighton, MA and Chicago, IL.



*Photographs by Nathan Marcy, Manomet staff*

*Above: A spectacular Golden-winged Warbler (Vermivora chrysoptera) imm. male is the first banded since 9 Sep 1998. The species may not have bred anywhere in the Commonwealth for the last five years or more.*

*Below: Red-bellied Woodpecker (Melanerpes carolinus) imm. female, a steadily increasing resident in s.e. Massachusetts.*

*Photographs by Nathan Marcy, Manomet staff*



Three species were banded this fall, which had not been netted in the previous decade: our 21<sup>st</sup> fall Golden-winged Warbler, one Acadian Flycatcher and two Eastern Kingbirds. The latter two species have usually departed to the south by the time nets open in mid-August.

The Numbers: New Bandings	2,382
Repeat Captures	1,809
TOTAL HANDLED	4,191
of 81 species	

The last two autumns we have banded well above average numbers of birds per net hour compared with the last decade. Overall, both spring and fall numbers of birds per net hour have remained steady, a welcome relief from the ca. 2% per year declines from 1970-1995. Individual numbers banded in fall 2011 were above all the previous ten years except 2005 and 2007, while only 2005 had more species (82). A windy spring was followed by a warm and windy fall. The winds were infrequently from the NW, the direction which drifts nocturnal land bird migrants to the New England coast. Thus, September Neotropical migrants were notably few until the 30<sup>th</sup>. Peak migration was in early October and featured a mixture of short- and long-distance migrants. Local

seed and berry production seemed plentiful. Our busiest days were: 6 Oct (323 captures), 7 Oct (163), 3 Oct (155), 30 Sep (147) and 9 Sep (133). Twenty species were banded in greater or equal numbers this fall when compared with the last 10 years: these included Red-eyed Vireo, Tufted Titmouse, American Robin, Blackpoll Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Yellow-breasted Chat and Northern Cardinal. When compared with the same previous 10-year period, only Blue Jay was lowest this autumn. New bandings were led by catbirds due to a very sparse chickadee movement:

Gray Catbird	(572)
Eastern Tufted Titmouse	(268)
American Robin	(180)
Myrtle Warbler	(173)
White-throated Sparrow	(161)
Blackpoll Warbler	(127)
Red-eyed Vireo	(110)
Northern Cardinal	(80)

Three Philadelphia Vireos arrived on 9 Sep and less usual warblers this fall included a single Worm-eating and a female Hooded, plus three Connecticut Warblers, which included a very early 23 Aug record.

Notable recaptures this fall (68 from previous seasons) included: a Blue Jay first banded as a second year on 7 May 2003 (9 years old); a goldfinch at least 8 years old and a 6-year-old titmouse; four 5-year-old catbirds and a White-throated Sparrow; eight 4-year-olds; six 3-year-olds; thirteen 2-year-olds and 33 banded the previous fall or spring. An Eastern Phoebe banded this fall has already been recaptured in Maryland.

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the fall migration banding and education season of 2011 such a success. We are greatly indebted to Manomet members and those who supported the Bird-a-Thon this year. Financial support also came from the following:

*Charles Stanhope Adams Nature Research Foundation*

*Rosalie Cheney Fiske & John Fiske Educational Fund*

*William Drury Memorial Fund*

*Helen Haber Memorial Fund*

*Melita Seipp Howland Conservation Science Endowment*

*Massachusetts Cultural Council*

*Dorothy Stebbins Bowles and Chester Bowles Endowment*

*Brewster Research Endowment Fund*

*Jean K. Colvin Endowment Fund*

*Ruth Graves Ernst Memorial Fund*

*Burr Hardon Intern Fund*

*John P. Droege Scholarship Fund*

*Malcolm Oakes Memorial Fund*

*Makepeace Neighborhood Fund*

Nathan Marcy and Ashley Daniels were the lead banders this fall, assisted by Alan Kneidel, Megan Shave and Laura Koloski. We will miss this skillful, enthusiastic and hard-working team.

## **Wing Island**

**414-0700**

### **Banding Station**

Cape Cod Museum of Natural History

Brewster, MA

Banders: **Susan Finnegan** (compiler), Gretchen Putonen, Carolyn Kennedy

Assistants: Jo-Anna Ghabban, Juliet Lamb, Judith Bruce, Becca Miller, Jessica Rempel, Judy Keller and other assistants

This was our second best fall season as far as numbers of birds go with only last year slightly better. We began the season on 3 Aug and continued through 26 Nov. We banded a total of 2,364 birds of 78 species, 90% of those were HY birds. This year, Gray Catbird won out over Myrtle Warblers by one bird; however, we banded only half the number of Myrtle Warblers from last year. This may have been due to the release on 2 Oct of ~30 Northern Bobwhite who gobbled up all the bayberries, a favorite food of Myrtle Warblers. They were also very late to arrive, most coming through towards the end of October.