

2012

Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2011 Rock Point Banding Station

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Here are some of the highlights of the 2011 season: The total number banded – 2,034 – exceeds the old record (1,888, set in 2007) by 146 birds. This is due to increased net hours; i.e., we had the nets open more than in any other year (5,173 “net hours”).

The 1,375 birds banded in May exceeds the old May record of 1,183, set in 2007. Our single day banding of 144 (on 12 May) greatly exceeds the old 112 bird mark. We had new spring high banding numbers for 18 species and added two new species to our banding list: Purple Martin and Clay-colored Sparrow.

1. American Goldfinch	324
2. Gray Catbird	112
3. White-throated Sparrow	111
4. Yellow Warbler	103
5. Slate-colored Junco	92
6. Brown-headed Cowbird	85
7. Chipping Sparrow	75
8. Song Sparrow	67
9. Rose-breasted Grosbeak	60
10. Common Yellowthroat	56

Rock Point Banding Station 420-0793

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Chief Assistant(s) Roswitha Matuschek, Jason Lymburner, Kim Christoff

The first part of April was cold with one day where nets could not be opened because they were frozen solid. We had, in general, wet weather making the banding area very muddy. Without the boardwalks we would have been in trouble. In spite of the amount of rain, we missed only a few days in April with May being quite consistent. Threatened showers kept us guessing.

	Species	#	%SY	%ASY	%AHY
1.	White-throated Sparrow	160	86	14	0
2.	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	107	61	38	1
3.	Yellow Warbler	79	59	41	0
4.	Gray Catbird	75	91	7	2
5.	Magnolia Warbler	57	60	39	1
6.	Myrtle Warbler	52	69	27	4
7.	American Redstart	46	70	30	0
8.	Common Yellowthroat	46	48	50	2
9.	Red-winged Blackbird	41	54	44	2
10.	American Tree Sparrow	41	39	44	17

On the whole, this spring was fairly consistent with the past five years. I did, however, notice a drop of about 200 birds from the 2007 to 2009 period. Last year was really quite low. This drop can be attributed to many variables– from fewer birds, to change in habitat, to fewer banding days. On the whole, our effort has been reasonably consistent, with this year showing a loss of about a week from previous years.

Species wise, we are about normal with 74. Last year showed an all-time high with 87. We had no really special birds show up this year and missed a number of species that might have been expected.

In general, we had 11 species that were represented by one to three individuals. An interesting day was had on 28 May when we banded 34 American Redstarts with 79% all being second-year birds and 59% were females. The next day we banded one and had only one re-trapped bird. Previously, we had never banded that many American Redstarts in one day.

Net locations and equipment used were consistent, although an aerial net was used for a short period of time but needed design modifications and was taken down. We have a great crew of local volunteers, many having been with me for a number of years. In addition to the main helpers, we have: Rick Young, Dora Young, Rob Kuret, Lorraine Feenstra, Fraser, Owen, and Preston Darling. Distance volunteers this year were all Canadian. Julien St. Amand from Quebec; Chris Davidson from Sarnia, Ontario; Charlene Edward from Dunnville; and Laura Brodey from Thornhill, Ontario. Great young people all eager and full of energy and each did an excellent job learning and helping with the whole banding experience.

The following birds were foreign retraps:

American Goldfinch (2530-42117) caught on 4 Apr. No information at this time.

White-throated Sparrow (1901-60356) caught on 12 May. Banded in Georgia, U.S.A.

We had a few recoveries: A European Starling banded at Rock Point on 7 Mar 2007 was recovered dead in Canfield, Ontario, on 4 Apr 2009 by Michael Pittaway, South Cayuga. A Common Grackle banded at Rock Point on 17 Apr 2009 was recovered dead near Dunnville on 7 Jul 2009 by Kyle Pinnegar. A Swainson's Thrush banded at Rock Point on 1 Oct, 2010 was recovered dead in Greenville County, South Carolina, on 10 Oct 2010 (1032 km in 10 days).

We had 283 recaptures with the following table showing the breakdown by year.

2000-04	2005	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Unknown
1 Black-capped Chickadee	Gray Catbird x2	10	16	43	105	88	8
	White-throated Sparrow						

The unknown birds are bands that do not show up in my inventory. It is interesting to see the White-throated Sparrow from 2005, since these birds do not breed in the area and this bird is passing through just as it did back in 2005. This seldom happens for migrants but is not unusual for birds which breed in the area.

Again, we thank Ontario Parks for allowing us to continue our scientific research within Rock Point Provincial Park. A grant from T.D. Friends of the Environment in the amount of \$1,500 will enable us to purchase nets. Individual donations and the Baillie Birdathon, where 75% of the money collected is returned to us, helps to support us.

Appledore Island

Migration Station

425-0703

Appledore Island, York County, ME

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Spring 2011 was better than 2010, but still relatively slow. Our 20-year average is 2,511 birds per season, so the 2,152 birds this season was 15% less than normal. Likewise, our 67.1 birds/100 net-hour is nine lower than our 20-year average of 76.1. In the last few years, logistical realities have meant that the station opens slightly later than normal, resulting in fewer of the early migrants (like Yellow-rumped Warblers, kinglets, and White-throated Sparrows), which seems to be reflected in these numbers. Additionally, weather did seem to be part of the reason for our statistics, because we lost several mornings to bad weather, especially early in the season.