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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2011 Powdermill Nature Reserve

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Our best day proved was 14 May with 49 birds of 15 species. We saw low numbers of Gray Catbirds (59) compared to our average of  $84 \pm 28.47$ , though still in range and Northern Cardinals (4) compared to an average of  $12 \pm 5.07$ . We had a small invasion of Black-capped Chickadees on 21 Apr, which boosted our numbers for the spring season to 45, normally an average of  $23 \pm 16.01$ . Prairie Warblers were a touch high, too (13) compared to our average of  $7 \pm 4.14$ . Other than that, our numbers were in range.

An unexpected species this spring was a bird we rarely get in our nets, a Brown Thrasher captured on 6 May, only the seventh bird of this species captured in eleven years and the second in spring. We had an interesting Song Sparrow with yellow legs and feet, not the typical pink color seen. We also captured a species in severe decline on Cape Cod, a beautifully colored female Northern Bobwhite released unbanded. For the past two years we have been documenting breeding Saltmarsh Sparrows with enlarged cloacal protuberances and brood patches that seemed to coincide with marsh restoration nearby. A female Pine Warbler first banded on 3 May was recaptured on 21 May and found to have cloacal flukes not seen on the 3<sup>rd</sup>. On a happier note, a SY Common Yellowthroat first banded as a hatch year on 2 Aug 2010 and found with avian pox on his lower mandible showed up 21 May with it completely healed, so his immune system was able to get rid of the virus.

A group of students from Provincetown joined me on 3 May for a banding demonstration. They came too late to see the handsome male Northern Parula, but still enjoyed releasing other species.

I heard from the banding lab that an American Goldfinch we first banded as a SY in 2010 was found dead approximately a mile from the banding site in the backyard of a homeowner on 21 May.

Ticks were pulled this spring for the Barnstable County Cooperative Extension.

Thanks very much to Gretchen Putonen, Carolyn Kennedy, Judith Bruce, Suzanne Faith, Judy Keller, Jessica Rempel and others who helped out for a day and to the French Foundation for their monetary support.

#### **Powdermill Nature Reserve 400-0791**

Rector, Westmoreland County, PA

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Average weather conditions existed throughout the spring, with the exception of lower-than-average temperatures during the last week of March. Poor weather in the latter half of April (mostly rain) resulted in a reduced banding effort on approximately 50% of the banding days. We recorded record-early capture dates for several species, including Black-throated Blue Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Gray Catbird, and Least Flycatcher. We saw the return of most of the breeding species to our area through the first two weeks of May, and then we had a dip in numbers of birds banded during the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of May, as east winds likely pushed a lot of birds to our west.

	Species	#	%SY	%ASY	%AHY
1.	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	216	49	26	25
2.	Cedar Waxwing	215	53	47	0
3.	Magnolia Warbler	153	38	52	10
4.	Dark-eyed Junco	132	48	50	2
5.	Ruby-thr. Hummingbird	118	2	0	98
6.	American Goldfinch	106	72	23	6
7.	Gray Catbird	102	72	20	8
8.	Red-eyed Vireo	81	1	0	99
9.	Nashville Warbler	75	41	47	12
10.	American Redstart	62	55	40	5
10.	Song Sparrow	62	31	10	60

From 1 Mar through the end of May, we banded 2,340 birds of 98 unique species and processed another 1,043 banded birds. Species captured in

numbers above 2 standard deviations included Cedar Waxwing, American Redstart, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Ovenbird, Northern Parula, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Hooded Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler and Broad-winged Hawk.

Interesting captures included the Broad-winged Hawk banded on 13 May, the first banded here since 2005. A Purple Finch banded on 22 Apr was recovered on 28 Feb 2012 in Hilden, Nova Scotia.

During this period, we provided banding demonstrations to over eight groups and several individuals for a total of 157 visitors, and we held a public celebration of Powdermill's 50<sup>th</sup> year of Bird Banding on 14 May that was attended by approximately 300 people. Additionally, we hosted a Beginning and an Advanced Bander Workshop in the first and third weeks of May, respectively.

**Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way**

Patuxent Research Refuge  
Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD  
**Jo Anna Lutmerding, Head Bander**  
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This station is in a powerline right-of-way that bisects an upland deciduous forest. Twenty-six nets are arrayed along a one-half mile east-west axis. The habitat is dominated by a dense six- to eight-foot high canopy of shrubs, and is an excellent source of shelter and food for breeding and migrating birds. Nets were opened by dawn and closed about 3.5 hours later. We have operated as a spring banding station since 2010 (and a fall banding station since 1980). In spring 2011, we operated for 22 days starting on a M/W/F schedule in mid-April. We went to a M-F schedule when migration picked up from 2-18 May and ended our season on 25 May.

This being only our second spring season, any comparisons will be to spring 2010. Twelve warbler species accounted for 49% of all our bandings, up from 39% in 2010. Warblers that did well compared to 2010 were American Redstart,

Black-throated Blue, Common Yellowthroat, Myrtle Warbler, Northern Parula, Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, and Yellow-breasted Chat. The remaining bandings were comparable to 2010 except where noted: sparrows at 22%; mimids at 13%; vireos at 3%; thrushes at 2%, down from 8% in 2010; kinglets at 2%, down from 5% in 2010; flycatchers at 1%; and all others at 8%. The drop in thrushes from 2010 to 2011 were in American Robin, Swainson's Thrush, Veery and Wood Thrush.

	Species	#	%SY	%ASY	%AHY
1.	White-throated Sparrow	111	6	2	92
2.	Common Yellowthroat	105	14	0	86
3.	Gray Catbird	91	54	43	3
4.	American Redstart	47	26	62	13
5.	Magnolia Warbler	46	37	57	7
6.	Swamp Sparrow	28	4	0	96
7.	Black-throated Blue Warbler	24	54	42	4
8.	Indigo Bunting	23	78	17	4
9.	Myrtle Warbler	17	71	12	18
10.	Northern Parula	17	65	29	6

Species very uncommon to this station that were banded included three Lincoln's Sparrows and two White-crowned Sparrows.

Other notable bandings included 18 American Redstarts on 10 May alone. This is a single-day high for this species, regardless of season, since 1980. The previous single-day high was 14.

We had 121 recaptures of 93 unique birds. Eighteen were banded in previous years/seasons – the earliest being a Prairie Warbler banded in fall 2008. Over the past few years, a preliminary review including the fall migration data suggests that the number of recaptures of birds banded in previous years as a percentage of birds banded is declining and that the percentage of older recaptures is declining as well. We need to look at our data set closer in this regard.