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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2011 Ruthven Park

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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) – Fall 2011

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We lost a long-time fall reporting station (Bedford Valley) with the passing of Janet Shaffer in July 2012. Janet had contributed to the fall AFR for many years, both in spring and fall. But we gained a new Pennsylvania station – the Arboretum on the campus of Penn State University, not all that far from Bedford Valley. Allegheny Front banders celebrated their 54th year of continuous fall migration banding, a tribute to Ralph K. Bell.

It was a unanimous decision at all reporting stations ... fall 2011 was a VERY poor banding season. The total banded was 47,373 birds but the number of birds captured at the seven stations that operated both in 2010 and 2011 was down about 30% in 2011. Weather was mentioned as a factor in the poor season at several stations. Allegheny Front was closed for 21 days during the season – for Hurricane Irene, and Tropical Storm Lee in September and 12 inches of snow on 1 Oct. Long Point had “perfect weather for migration but not for stopover.”

The season was ‘bookended’ by Purple Martin banding at Lewiston at the beginning and Northern Saw-whet Owls at Ruthven, Rock Point, Long Point, and Powdermill at the end of the season. Ruthven handled a fallout of 309 Cedar Waxwings one morning, highlighting the importance of a pre-planned protocol for handling fallout during migration.

We always welcome new reporting stations for the Fall AFR reports. If you are interested in contributing your fall banding data, please contact me.

Lewiston

Niagara County, NY

Jerald J. Farrell, Bander

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The 2011 fall banding season started on 5 Jul, when the Purple Martin nesting boxes were lowered for the banding of the young. This is the fourth year for this project and the banding of 84 young was the best total yet. In the last four years, a total of 222 Purple Martin young have been banded.

Mist netting started on 31 Aug. Nets were opened for a total of 10 days with the last day being 8 Oct. A total of 195 birds were banded of 38 different species. This was a very average fall for the birds with the weather being very good through the period.

We had two large groups of children and adults observe the Purple Martin banding, and 15 people came to the banding station to walk the net lanes and observe the banding.

There were only four retraps (two each of catbirds and chickadees) this fall, with all being a year or less of age.

Ruthven Park

Haldimand County, ON

Rick Ludkin, Loretta Mousseau, Brian Pomfret, Banders

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The station was run from 1 Sep to 7 Nov. Although fall migration is well underway in August, we did

Table 1. AFR III Fall 2011 Summary

	Lewiston, NY	Ruthven Park, ON	Rock Point, ON	Long Point, ON	Presque Isle, PA
First Day/Last Day	8/31 to 10/08	9/1 to 11/7	7/17 to 11/4	8/15 to 11/15	7/16 to 10/28
Days Operated	10	64	71	104	52
No. Nets Used	15	23	14 to 17	0 to 53	4 to 12
Total Net Hours	593	7,192	5,321	11,370	2,610
% Caught in Traps	0	3.0%	0	9.3%	0
Largest Daily Catch	26 on 9/17	309 on 10/25	147 on 9/6	673 on 10/11,17	140 on 10/10
Most Common on Best Day	19% BLPW	56% CEDW	33% MAWA	68% MYWA	79% MYWA
Most Species Diversity	16 on 9/19	25 on 10/9	30 on 9/6	28 on 10/1	18 on 9/16
No. Banded 2010	301	4,763	3,674	17,595	1,589
No. Banded 2011	279	3,963	3,215	11,594	1,151
No. Forms 2010	36	90	90	133	63
No. Forms 2011	39	87	90	128	65
Birds/100nh 2010	40.4	63.2	58.4	163.0	54.2
Birds/100nh 2011	30.4	52.7	60.4	102.0	47.7
% HY 2010	NA	NA	77%	88%	85%
% HY 2011	NA	NA	76%	86%	NA

Table 1. AFR III Fall 2011 Summary (continued)

	Powdermill, PA	Arboretum at Penn State, PA	Mt. Nebo, MD	Allegheny Front, WV
First Day/Last Day	8/4 to 11/16	9/10 to 10/18	8/27 to 11/2	8/12 to 10/15
Days Operated	80	9	31	44
No. Nets Used	15 to 65	2 to 8	15.5	10 to 30
Total Net Hours	19,588	223	2,261	4,752
% Caught in Traps	0	0	0	0
Largest Daily Catch	264 on 10/22	76 on 10/18	53 on 10/6	440 on 9/13
Most Common on Best Day	36% MYWA	28% WTSP	26% WTSP	35% BTBW
Most Species Diversity	42 on 10/4	18 on 10/18	19 on 10/4	32 on 9/11
No. Banded 2010	7,929	NA	1,159	10,363
No. Banded 2011	7,266	283	852	4,610
No. Forms 2010	96	NA	66	82
No. Forms 2011	109	41	60	69
Birds/100nh 2010	39.4	NA	38	186
Birds/100nh 2011	37.1	132.0	38	99
% HY 2010	71%	NA	79%	60%
% HY 2011	NA	63%	78%	70%

Table 2. Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 2011

	Lewiston, NY		Ruthven Park, ON	Rock Point, ON		Long Point, ON		Presque Isle, PA	
		% HY			% HY		% HY		% HY
1.	84 PUMA	100%	662 CEDW (3)	251 WTSP(1)	88%	2045 MYWA (7)	91%	390 MYWA (1)	79%
2.	22 SWTH (2)	95	556 MYWA (6)	245 RCKI (5)	78	974 GCKI (2)	82	129 GRCA (3)	96
3.	19 BCCH (6)	95	493 AMGO (1)	240 GRCA (2)	89	825 RCKI (6)	84	77 WTSP (4)	77
4.	15 HETH (1)	93	269 SCJU (4)	203 YEWA	84	599 WTSP (5)	80	61 GCKI (2)	49
5.	14 MAWA (5)	86	259 WTSP (2)	177 MAWA	62	594 BLPW (3)	90	51 YEWA (8)	94
6.	10 WTSP (4)	70	153 SOSP (9)	152 SCJU	85	526 SCJU	72	46 COYE (10)	87
7.	10 GRCA (7)	100	122 GCKI (7)	152 SOSP (7)	61	485 HETH (10)	89	34 HETH (5)	74
8.	9 BLPW	67	121 AMRO	120 AMGO (6)	60	455 BRCR	97	33 BLPW	58
9.	9 GCTH	89	108 RCKI (5)	99 CEDW (4)	55	326 MAWA	85	33 BRCR (9)	64
10.	8 WOTH	88	100 HETH (10)	99 GCKI (3)	79	262 AMRE	85	26 MAWA	81

Table 2 (cont). Most Commonly Banded Species, AFR Region III, Fall 2011

	Powdermill, PA		Arboretum at Penn State, PA		Mt Nebo, MD		Allegheny Front, WV	
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY
1.	960 MYWA	67	102 GRCA	72%	176 GRCA (1)	90%	1074 BTBW	71%
2.	487 AMGO (4)	78	34 AMGO	74	85 WTSP (3)	47	736 BLPW	54
3.	411 MAWA (1)	50	28 WTSP	76	83 SOSP (5)	83	642 BTNW	88
4.	336 RCKI (3)	66	17 SOSP	65	52 CEDW	95	362 TEWA	54
5.	321 RTHU (9)	91	16 NOCA	63	49 RCKI (4)	NA	270 CMWA	53
6.	315 GRCA (8)	78	10 HOFI	80	36 COYE (7)	64	235 BLBW	60
7.	292 WTSP (2)	39	9 MAWA	0	31 BCCH	92	233 MAWA	81
8.	270 REVI (10)	80	8 EATO	75	27 MAWA (8)	48	118 SWTH	81
9.	233 COYE	74	7 RCKI	29	23 BTBW (9)	96	99 COYE	86
10.	225 SOSP	58	6 MYWA	50	22 EATO (10)	86	86 OVEN	84

not feel we could staff it consistently without jeopardizing our ability to concentrate our efforts in September and October—you can only ask so much of volunteers. Despite periods of poor weather (especially in October), the station was in operation for 64 days this season. Further, due to the success of our attempts to band Northern Saw-whet Owls last fall, we were open for 13 nights from mid-October to early November.

The weather in September was simply wonderful—warm and sunny throughout most of it; in fact, warm temperatures and sunny skies were the order of the day during the month. At Ruthven, good weather usually translates into poor catching/banding; our sense is that migrants, especially long-distance migrants, take advantage of good flying conditions and simply fly over our site. October, on the other hand, had a lot of unsettled weather—windy, overcast, and wet with several nights with heavy frost. These are good conditions for catching passerines here, as these conditions often result in “fallouts” of migrants.

We had excellent volunteer support this season, reflecting an overall growth in the number of skilled and “learning” banders who are coming out on a consistent basis. In fact, there were 17 volunteers that participated for five or more days throughout the fall. This level of support allowed us to run safely more nets than we have in the past. Our aim is to maintain this increase (volunteers and nets) into the future.

We had a dismal September, banding only 832 birds; this is 59 birds below the 10-year average (891). The rate of capture, 28.1b/100nh was the lowest in our fall history. As noted above, this was most likely due to the great weather we experienced. But we had a great October: the 2,703 banded was almost a thousand more than the 10-year average (1,717). And November, with 428 banded, was almost double the 10-year average (210). Overall the **3,963 birds banded** was our second highest total ever.

The seven-day period, from 21 Oct to the 27th was remarkable. It was marked by mostly windy, wet weather. During that week, we banded 1,046 birds (averaging 149 per day). There was a substantial fallout on the 25th: the day started off sunny and clear but clouded over quickly with rain beginning around 1:30. Just before it did, Cedar Waxwings, which seemed to be everywhere, “hit” multiple nets—wanting to feed on the abundant wild grape crop before the inclement weather moved in. By the time we were done (“ringing and flinging”—we stopped taking morphometrics due to the volume), we had banded a new one-day record of 309 birds (old one was 271) of which 175 (56%) were waxwings! (For the season, we banded 662 Cedar Waxwings. Interestingly, since we began in 1995, we have banded 1,725 waxwings; 1,084 or 63% of them have been banded in just these last two years.)

I thank the Lower Grand River Land Trust for their ongoing support of the banding program at Ruthven Park. This includes the use of the grounds, use of the banding lab building, and financial support. Ruthven Staff, Marilynn Havelka (CAO), Sandy Turner (Species at risk Co-ordinator), and Natalie Campbell (Education Co-ordinator), have been especially helpful and supportive. Natalie has done a wonderful job co-ordinating the visitation by numerous school groups - >950 students this fall alone. We also thank Dr. Oliver Love and the University of Windsor for their practical support and personnel. The Ruthven Banding Station received support from the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources through their CFWIP grant program.

Many thanks to all who helped this season!! A lot of people contributed a lot of time (>1200 volunteer hours) plus a pile of ‘munchables’:

9+ weeks: Rick Ludkin; 6-7 weeks: Nancy Furber; 2-3 weeks: Rhiannon Leshyk, Matt Timpf; 1-2 weeks: Faye Socholotiuk, Loretta Mousseau. Peter Scholtens, Caleb Scholtens, Peter Thoem, Bev Trojnar, Carol Jones, Erich Bauer, Chris Harris, Liz Vanderwoude; 4-6 days: Christine Madliger,

Elaine Serena, Joanne Fleet, Ben Oldfield, Stephanie Oldfield, Ralph Beaumont, Rosemary Beaumont; 1-3 days: Rita Bauer, Oliver Love, Anne Klaus, Lynda Mackiewicz, Jim Mackiewicz, Ezra Campanelli, Giovanni Campanelli, Lukian Husak, Zukhar Husak, Igor Husak, Bronwenn Tregunno, Lorraine Feenstra, Daniel Gough, Doris Southwell, Christie Macdonald, Birha Zuberi, Kara-Anne Ward, Sarah Parker, Holly Hennin, Sarah Baldo, Bill McCreadie, Sue McCreadie, Rob Mueller, Angie McAloney, Gabrielle Leiher, Charlene Edwards, Bill Read, James Furber, Marg Ludkin, Lyndsay Smith, Mike Alkema, Natalie Campbell.

Rock Point Bird Banding Station 425-0793

Dunnville, Haldimand County, ON

James A. Smith, Bander

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Web Site: www.rockpointbirdbanding.com

Roswitha Matuschek, Kim Christoff, Jason Lymburner, Chief Assistants

As in former years, we continue to be a purely volunteer based station. We had 12 local volunteers and two distance volunteers. They were Pierre-Alexander Dumas from Sherbrook, Quebec, and Robin Taxier from Ohio.

We started out by banding some nestling Tree Swallows at the beginning of July. Heat and thunderstorms meant we lost some days. We ended up with 61b/100nh for July. Of 210 birds banded that month, 71 were Yellow Warblers.

During August we continued with summer banding hours from dawn until around 10 and ended up with 580 birds. We banded on only 18 out of a possible 27 days. This gave us 50 b/100nh. Days were lost to personal business.

September returned us to normal banding hours from dawn until 6 hours later. We banded 21 out of 26 days, ending up with 1,044 birds and 62 b/100nh. Tennessee, Magnolia, Nashville, Wilson's, and Bay-breasted warblers showed high numbers in comparison to other years. A Prairie Warbler and Pine Warbler were rare for our station.

September saw 21 out of 26 banding days and 1,230 birds banded, giving us 68 b/100nhs. We had quite a few showers through this month, giving us soaked and muddy net lanes. We had three days with over 100 birds.

We banded only a few days in November with 125 birds banded. Five Northern Saw-whet Owls were banded. Only one Wood Thrush and one Western Palm Warbler were banded during this season, which was unusual.

We had 610 recaptured birds with 534 being banded in 2011.

A Black-throated Green Warbler banded at Rock Point on 12 Oct was found dead in Atlanta, Georgia, by Betsy Brandes on 3 Nov. A recurring catch for James Gruber from Maryland is a Yellow-shafted Flicker, first banded at Rock Point on 16 Sep 2008.

A Mourning Dove first banded at Rock Point 28 Jul 2007 was found dead at Port Rowan, Ontario, by Rebeca Fetherly on 29 Jul 2008. We caught a Hermit Thrush from Cabot Head Bird Observatory on the Bruce Peninsula, Ontario. An American Goldfinch was caught after being banded by our Ruthven station.

We submit data to Bird Studies Canada as part of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network. This past year a trend analysis was generated with most species showing a downward trend. These trends, taken in conjunction with other Canadian Migration Monitoring Network stations, take on significance towards planned conservation effort in Canada.

We are thankful for grants given to us from TD Friends of the Environment Foundation, The Baillie Fund, and Niagara Falls Nature Club. We continue to be thankful for the ability to conduct research within Rock Point Provincial Park given to us by Ontario Parks. Individual donations given in cash, material and time are also acknowledged.