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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central)- Fall 2013 Kestrel Haven

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Hypoboscids were found on two birds; no birds showed evidence of Avian Pox.

As in previous years, no birds were banded at this location between 13 Sep and 11 Oct when I was banding at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory. There were no late-season big days, as often has been the case in previous years. It is unusual to have the best day of the fall come in mid-August here.

Banding summaries were sent to regional compilers for the Allegany County Bird Club and the Buffalo Ornithological Society. A banding demo was held at Foster Lake on 7 Sep. A program on bird banding was presented to Senior Citizens in the town of Whitesville, NY on 13 Aug. Fred Beaudry and I held a banding demo for Alfred University students on 21 Nov. Bird of the fall was an AHY-M American Robin banded by Del Brooks, my 12-year old grandson!

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This will be our final AFR report after 28 years of contributing to the effort. We can no longer sustain a constant-effort station and will transition to our long-term passerine and raptor projects.

We did not band in spring thanks to a trap-shy feral cat that kept its distance and a personal injury that made it unsafe for me to handle small birds. The latter part continues and was a factor in our not banding this fall for the first time since 1986.

We started Kestrel Haven as a vision for multiple habitat types converting it from barren corn fields to its current 60 acres of diversity. We are an island of sanity surrounded by an ever increasing buffer of thousands of acres of mono-cropped corn and alfalfa. Along the way we have documented the local extirpation of many field and hedgerow nesting species due to the transition from pasture and fields enriched by conventional manure to a bulldozing of all hedgerows, elimination of pasture and rotational grazing, near constant addition of anaerobic liquid manure slurry and modern harvest methods in

support of industrial level (CAFO) dairy farming that all but eliminate the value of thousands of surrounding acres to migrating and locally nesting birds. It is a very sad state of affairs. Our deepest thanks to those who have supported us over the decades.

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Northview Sanctuary is a five-acre banding station located in the central southern tier of New York state, about 18 miles south of Cayuga Lake. The five acres sit among a patchwork of cultivated fields and woodlots. Much of the vegetation consists of multiflora rose and honeysuckle. Almost all of the small dairy farms that dotted the landscape are gone, and where there were many cultivated fields, shrubs and saplings are now growing. The current progression of these fields provide optimum habitat for the two species I band the most: Gray Catbirds and Song Sparrows.

I started banding on 31 Jul and finished on 14 Oct 2013. Weather for the late summer and early autumn were average for temperature and rain fall; however, there were few cold fronts.

I had exactly the same number of species (33) for 2013 and 2012. This station continues to be a Gray Catbird (82) and Song Sparrow (61) station. The number of warbler species banded continue to decline with only eleven species banded this past year.

There were only seven recaptures of four species: NOCA, GRCA, SOSP and WTSP, four of which were true repeats and three were returns: Northern Cardinal five years old, one two-year-old Gray Catbird and a one-year-old Catbird.

One of the highlights was the capture and banding of a hatch-year male Cooper's Hawk. This bird was captured the first week in July, indicating to me that the bird was hatched locally. The habitat has changed locally and the woodlands that are growing back in central New York state are providing nesting sites for these birds.