

2014

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2013 Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way

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Recommended Citation

Bystrak, Danny (2014) "Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain, Fall 2013 Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way," *North American Bird Bander*. Vol. 39 : Iss. 2 , Article 16.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/nabb/vol39/iss2/16>

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Education Center to banding as one element of studying wildlife. Sue Heselton joined Barbara in her endeavors, eventually taking over and continuing the program when Barbara retired in 1996. Harford Glen is a glen with gradually sloped deciduous wooded hills within a circle of encroaching suburban development at 39°29'17".12 N, 076°20'36".92 W. Banding operations are conducted on Tuesdays and Thursdays when the children are on site for training, spring and fall. Those seasons are extended into winter in order to accommodate all the fifth graders of Harford County. Additional days are used during migration periods in order to improve an understanding of the Glen as a stopover area. Up to 14 nets are set each day and are in operation for a period that typically runs from sunrise to noon. Regrettably, circumstances have periodically altered the environment at the Glen, including infill of the small reservoir by Hurricane Agnes and loss of pine woods to the bark beetle.

The constant and dramatic changes in the environment and encroachment in and around Harford Glen appear to have eased enough to provide some consistency in data. Once the data were tabulated, it became apparent that there is still considerable variation in the avian populations at Harford Glen. It has been a few years since the major disturbances (consisting of encroaching developments at the Glen's borders, lumbering of the pine woods adjacent to the banding area that were under attack by the Pine Bark Beetle, and repeated flooding of the net area), so we should be stabilizing.

I am indebted to my husband, Ken, and to Amanda Koss (the Harford Glen teacher who works with us) and our volunteers: Eileen Frey, Jane Scocca, Jean Williams, Dennis Kirkwood, Dave Larkin, and Phil Powers without whom we would not be able to keep the banding station operational.

Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way 390-0764

Patuxent Research Refuge
Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD

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This station is in a power line right-of-way that

bisects an upland deciduous forest. It has operated since 1980, except for 2004-2006. 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. Twenty-six nets are arrayed along a one-half mile east-west axis. Nets were opened by dawn and closed about 3.5 hours later. From 2007-2012, we consistently operated seven days in August and November and 14 days in September and October for a total of 42 days, generally on a M/W/F schedule. This year however, we banded on only 35 days because of the government shutdown this October. Those lost seven banding days were during a period of historically high banding rates. **Any comparisons/averaging to previous 2007-2012 activity is for the comparable 35 banding days in those years unless otherwise specified.**

Despite the truncated season, we managed to band 1,630 birds/78 species. This is the 2nd best season since 2007. For the 2nd year in a row, the most significant result of this season was our banding of 103 Tennessee Warblers. Last year we banded 165 when our 2007-2011 average was a mere seven for a full 42-day banding season!! This outfall of Tennessee Warblers is probably a continued result of the spruce budworm outbreak in southwest Quebec that started in 2006. This same outbreak may have resulted in this year's appreciable up-tic in Bay-breasted Warbler bandings as well. Ten species – eight of which are warblers – broke their end-of-season records. Particularly noteworthy increases were Chestnut-sided Warblers/51, Bay-breasted Warblers/15 and Black and White Warblers/34. The only species showing a noticeable decline was Gray Catbird. Their numbers this season were 25% below the previous (adjusted) lowest season total since 2007. Every year since 2007, Gray Catbirds have been within our top three species banded. This year they dropped to 6th place. Finally, we set two new single-day, species-specific banding records since 1980: Chestnut-sided Warbler (20 Sep/15) and Black-throated Green Warbler (27 Sep/13).

Other notable bandings included: (1) our first Orchard Oriole and Pine Warbler since 2007. While they breed here, they are typically gone when our fall season begins; (2) banding 21 Magnolia

Warblers on 25 Sep. This is the most since 2007 and ties with the 9th highest single day since 1980; and (3) a White-crowned Sparrow, only our 17th since 1980.

Historically, mimids and warblers account for 13% and 27% of our (adjusted) bandings. This year they accounted for 7% and 39%, respectively. All other families of species were within 1-3% of their historical (adjusted) norms: flycatchers (3%), kinglets (7%), sparrows (21%), thrushes (6%), vireos (8%) and all others (8%). In 2013 we had 271 recaptures of 172 individual birds of 31 species. Two of those recaptures were banded by us in 2007 – Gray Catbird and Hermit Thrush. We also recaptured – for the 19th time – a Hermit Thrush initially banded by us in 2010. He must like it here!

The station continues to be a focal point for visitors from foreign banding programs as well as serving as a training and educational site for interested staff. We have two experienced volunteers as well as employees to help with set-up, data entry, bird extraction, etc. Because the station is located in an area of the refuge that is closed to the general public, we cannot encourage outside participation. Researchers, however, wishing to visit the site are encouraged to contact Danny Bystrak at dbystrak@usgs.gov.

Greatly assisting in this effort were Sandy Teliak (who wrote this report), Mike Quinlan, Jo Anna Lutmerding and Bruce Peterjohn. A special thanks to permitted bander Karilla Barbosa from Brazil and Jasmine Rajbhandary from Nepal who both rendered highly valued assistance in the field and in the BBL this season. Extra thanks to banders-in-training Matt Rogosky, Samantha Collins and Jennifer McKay and to other staff who lent assistance.

**Foreman's Branch
Bird Observatory**

Chestertown, Queen Anne's Co., MD
Banders: **J. G. Gruber***, *M. E. Gimpel, D. M. Small*

*P.O.Box 560, Chestertown, MD 21620

This was the 16th fall banding season for Foreman's

Apr. - Jun 2014

Branch Bird Observatory. Productivity was again slightly higher than our 10-year average but down from last year. Species diversity was average. The fall weather was overall unremarkable. Banding highlights were few. Our highlights included one Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow on 21 Oct, a Brewster's Warbler on 25 Aug, 2 Orange-crowned Warblers, one each on 3 Oct and 8 Oct, and two Bicknell's Thrushes, one each on 30 Sep and 3 Oct. This banding season could be characterized as mostly uneventful. We would like to thank our Washington College intern, Christie Phoebus, for her dedication and hard work this fall. She was a great asset to our operations. In addition to the banders listed, the following people volunteered many hours helping at the station: Dr. Harry Sears, Henry Davis, Hanson Robbins, Jeannine Fleegle, Erika Koontz, Kathy Thornton, and Anne and Brennan O'Connor.

Kiawah Island Banding Station 326-0801

Kiawah Island, Charleston Co., SC

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This was the fifth fall banding season on Kiawah Island and the second in which we have banded daily. Kiawah Island is an 8,000 acre barrier island and residential/resort community located approximately 20 miles southeast of Charleston, South Carolina. The banding site is situated at the extreme western end of the island in secondary dune scrub/shrub and high marsh with wax-myrtle, sea ox-eye, and marsh-elder being the dominate plant species. We operated 20 nets daily, weather permitting, from 15 Aug through 30 Nov. Nets were generally opened 30 minutes before sunrise and closed approximately 5-6 hours later.

We operated for 98 days resulting in 9,584.2 net-hours (nh). A total of 4,529 new individuals were banded and 1,144 birds of 82 species were recaptured. The capture rate for new birds was 47.3 birds/100 nh with an additional 11.9 birds/100 nh as recaptures. Eighty-seven species were banded and two additional species were captured as recaptures. Our capture rate decreased by 24% from last fall. Consequently, we had substantially fewer 100+ bird days, which was probably attributed to the