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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2012 Rock Point Banding Station

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had frost patches in the middle of May) kept numbers low and would have a marked impact on our fall catch conditions, migrants were flying over. Even though we had a record number of net hours (having retired, I am upping our banding effort, but will maintain the current net hours going forward), our rate of capture per 100 net hours was one of our lowest since inception in 1996.

One plus to the increased banding effort was that surprising numbers of two species: 272 Yellow-rumped Warblers (long-term average was 28) and 43 Western Palm Warblers (average 5). But, generally, the numbers of long-distance migrants were down.

357	American Goldfinch
272	Myrtle Warbler
114	Yellow Warbler
100	Gray Catbird
93	Brown-headed Cowbird
72	Red-winged Blackbird
70	White-throated Sparrow
52	Field Sparrow
52	Mourning Dove
45	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
45	Song Sparrow
45	Slate-colored Junco

The banding program at Ruthven is becoming much better known. This spring a wide variety of people contributed 1,810 volunteer hours and we accommodated 1,336 visitors.

We would like to thank the staff of Ruthven Park National Historic Site and our colleagues in the Haldimand Bird Observatory for their ongoing support.

**Rock Point Banding Station 420-0793**

Dunnville, Haldimand/Norfolk County, ON

**James A. Smith, Bander**

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Web page: [www.rockpointbirdbanding.com](http://www.rockpointbirdbanding.com)

Chief Assistant(s): Roswitha Matuschek, Kim Christoff, Bev Stevenson, Jason Lymburner.

Oct - Dec 2013

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.

On the whole, this spring was fairly consistent with the past five years. I do, 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. (Black-billed Cuckoo, Orange-crowned Warbler, Scarlet Tanager, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker (1); Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Blue-headed Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, (2); Philadelphia Vireo, Red-breasted Nuthatch, White-breasted Nuthatch (3). 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. 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 was consistent, although an aerial net was used for a short period of time but needed design modifications and was taken down. In general, we use North Ronaldsay, Polish and Finnish nets all in 12-meter lengths. Being fat and having trouble getting down (actually getting back up), no ground traps were used.

I have a great crew of local volunteers, many having been with me for a number of years. In addition to the main helpers I have: Rick Young, Dora Young, Rob Kuret, Lorraine Feenstra, and Fraser, Owen,

	Banded	%SY	%ASY	%AHY	%HY
White-throated Sparrow	148	75	19	6	
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	123	69	29	2	
Red-winged Blackbird	94	78	21	1	
Tree Swallow	79	4	1	11	84
Gray Catbird	78	62	33	5	
Magnolia Warbler	78	76	23	1	
Yellow Warbler	76	75	24	1	
Common Yellowthroat	66	59	38	3	
Swamp Sparrow	63	73	16	11	
Dark-eyed Junco	60	63	25	12	
American Goldfinch	44	68	32	0	

and Preston Darling. Distance volunteers, this year, were all Canadian: Julien St. Amand from Quebec, Chris Davidson from Sarnia, Ontario, Charlene Edward from Dunnville Ontario, Laura Brodey from Thornhill, Ontario. Great young people all eager and full of energy and each did an excellent job in learning and helping with the whole banding experience. The things you learn these days!

This spring I put up 35 bluebird nest boxes in the park. We had 0 bluebirds nest but did have great success with Tree Swallows. We left the banding too late by at least a week and missed a great number of fledged young which we estimate by egg count to be around 96. This does not take into account any predation that may have occurred. None the less, we did band 34 Tree Swallows. Most nests had five to six young birds. House Wrens claimed/displaced six of the boxes and six boxes were empty. We had construction a short distance away from the banding station and this could be why the boxes were empty. Next year we will do better.

We did remove a few ticks but not being good at tick husbandry they had dried to nothingness by the time I was ready to send them away for analysis.

I picked up the following birds as foreign retraps: an American Goldfinch caught on 4 Apr. No information about banding at this time. A White-

throated Sparrow caught 12 May was banded in Georgia.

I had a few recoveries: A European Starling banded at Rock Point on 7 Mar 2007 recovered dead in Canfield, Ontario, on 4 Apr 2009 by Michael Pittaway, South Cayuga. Common Grackle banded at Rock Point on 17 Apr 2009 recovered dead near Dunnville on 7 Jul 2009 by Kyle Pinnegar. and a Swainson's Thrush banded at Rock Point on 1 Oct 2010 and 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 -	1 Black-capped Chickadee
2005 -	Gray Catbird - 2X White-throated Sparrow
2007 -	10
2008 -	16
2009 -	43
2010 -	105
2011 -	88
Unknown*	8

\* 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 Can will enable us to purchase nets. Individual donations and the Baillie Birdathon, where 75% of the money

collected is returned to us, helps support us. The web page at [www.rockpointbirdbanding.com](http://www.rockpointbirdbanding.com) is updated daily through the banding season.

### **Appledore Island Migration Station 425-0703**

Appledore Island, York County, ME

**Sara Morris, Compiler**

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Chief Banders: Liz Burton, Kristen Covino, Anthony Hill, David Holmes, Sara Morris, Becky Suomala, Mary Wright

Chief Assistant(s): Peg Ackerson, Marygrace Barber, Kristin Cantele, Bill Clark, Jill Fleming, Lindsay Herlihy, Tracy Holmes, Jason Jacobs, Karen Mitchell, Darlene Moore, William Nichols, Jeff Ott, Jim Reis, Martha Stauffer, Andy Thiede, Kathy Whittier, Zooey Zullo

	Banded	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
Common Yellowthroat	667	72.5	16.5	11.1
Magnolia Warbler	274	69.7	23.4	6.9
Red-eyed Vireo	132	0.0	6.8	93.2
American Redstart	125	72.8	21.6	5.6
Black-and-white Warbler	104	76.9	12.5	10.6
Gray Catbird	103	61.2	22.3	16.5
Northern Parula	83	67.5	19.3	13.3
Black-throated Blue Warbler	80	72.5	20.0	7.5
Blackpoll Warbler	72	75.0	15.3	9.7
Traill's Flycatcher	66	9.1	7.6	83.3

Spring 2012 was slightly below average on Appledore. The 2310 birds captured was slightly below our 20-year average of 2456 spring captures at the station. Likewise, the 67 species captured was slightly below our 71.2 species spring average. Weather did not seem to have a major impact on this spring's data collection. Although we were closed for one full day, most of two additional days, and several hours on four other days, our 3465 total net-hours was slightly higher than our average of 3331 net-hours in the spring.

Most species of migrants were within their normal ranges and we captured no new species this spring. Our six Summer Tanagers were a record (well above our average of  $1.8 \pm 1.1$  per spring), which was especially notable since we captured only four Scarlet Tanagers! Other species higher than normal included Black-billed Cuckoo (average:  $0.7 \pm 0.9$ ; 2012: 3), Indigo Bunting (average:  $3.1 \pm 2.7$ ; 2012: 9) and Carolina Wren (average:  $0.8 \pm 1.6$ ; 2012: 7). The Carolina Wren population appears to be on the increase on the island after several relatively mild winters.

Other exciting birds captured included a Worm-eating Warbler, a Prairie Warbler, and a Hooded Warbler. Northern Waterthrush was the only species with captures below the normal spring range (average:  $52.0 \pm 15.0$ ; 2012: 20). While within normal range, captures of several species were less than half of their average. Some of these are early migrants that we now miss because we must open later than ideal due to island logistics, e.g., Blue-headed Vireo (average:  $29.7 \pm 23.7$ ; 2012: 11), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (average:  $33.1 \pm 26.7$ ; 2012: 4), Hermit Thrush (average:  $10.6 \pm 9.2$ ; 2012: 4), Yellow-rumped Warbler (average:  $38.3 \pm 51.9$ ; 2012: 3), and White-throated Sparrows (average:  $135 \pm 86.6$ ; 2012: 18). However, several later species were also below half their average captures including Least Flycatcher (average:  $23.7 \pm 11.9$ ; 2012: 10), Cedar Waxwing (average:  $12.4 \pm 9.5$ ; 2012: 5), Scarlet Tanager (average:  $9.3 \pm 5.1$ ; 2012: 4), and Baltimore Oriole (average:  $9.8 \pm 5.6$ ; 2012: 2). Fortunately, our most common species were all close to their averages and some were even a little above average, e.g., Common Yellowthroat (average:  $522 \pm 157$ ; 2012: 667) and Black-and-white Warbler (average:  $84.2 \pm 35.8$ ; 2012: 104).

One of our banders, Kristen Covino, is now a PhD candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi and is using Appledore as one of her field sites. Kristen is working on her PhD research investigating endocrine preparation for breeding during migration. Additionally, Kristen mentored Jill Fleming, a student studying net avoidance by migrants. Kyle Horton and Sara Morris published a