

2013

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge)- Fall 2012 Long Point Bird Observatory

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Columbia, and Julia Hedges from England. Kate particularly was involved in banding Northern Saw-whet Owls, with 56 owls banded. Distance volunteers help our more local volunteers, numbering 20 individuals. We continue to be a purely volunteer organization.

We lost 12 days to weather. In some cases, interpreting the weather forecast correctly and in others, wasting a reasonably good day based on the weather forecast.

We were very surprised by the number of Ruby-crowned Kinglets we banded. They were present from September right through until the first week in November.

Other noteworthy species were:

Northern Shrike - only the fourth banded.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker - two for this season, making them the 10th and 11th since we started.

White-winged Crossbill with small flocks present at the end of the season but only one banded.

American Goldfinch, our second lowest totals.

Pine Siskin—another northern bird with numbers up this year.

American Tree Sparrow with numbers also up from most years.

Field Sparrow, Fox Sparrow, Warbling, Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, Canada Warbler, Veery, Brown Creeper and Carolina Wren, with second highest totals ever.

Northern Waterthrush, an early migrant, was in very low numbers for this season.

Marsh Wren, with one. This was our eighth banding.

Tufted Titmouse, with two caught, making them eighth and ninth.

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LPBO's 53<sup>rd</sup> fall season officially started at Old

Cut, the Tip and Breakwater on 13, 14, and 19 Aug, and ran until 15, 9 Nov and 15 Sep, respectively. Thirty-one volunteers, representing six countries, logged over 4,898 field hours collecting migration data on over 250 species and banding 21,920 birds of 123 species. There were 94 days of coverage, yielding 12,475 net hours, with a catch rate of 176 b/100nhs. Eight ground traps, four J-Traps and two Heligoland traps contributed 9.8% of the catch. Twenty-three volunteer 'friends' of LPBO helped to serve over 2,000 visitors and students of all ages who enjoyed banding demonstrations among other marvels of the fall migration through Long Point.

Sporadic migration monitoring coverage began with the Doug Tarry Young Ornithologist Workshop in late July and early August, with the first waves of migrating flycatchers and early warblers. Fall migration picked up quickly, with mass movements of swallows at the end of July and early August, reaching numbers upward of 50,000. By early August LPBO had already detected aspects of what the fall migration would bring: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Pine Siskins, and Purple Finch were on the move. Indeed, nearly every irruptive species moved through en masse this fall. Record numbers were banded for around 20 species this fall as irruptive species were accompanied by a plethora of young birds, the result of what was presumably a productive breeding season. Migration was fairly consistent throughout the fall aside from a 10-day hiatus surrounding hurricane Sandy toward the end of October. Following the storm there was one last major push of finches and temperate migrants including Evening Grosbeaks and many crossbills of both species.

A complete summary of the 2012 fall season is available in the winter 2013 edition of LPBO E-news.

Raptor banding was relatively productive with 74 diurnal raptors of five species being banded. Northern Saw-whet Owl migration monitoring began at Old Cut and the Tip on 26 and 28 Sep and ended on 17 and 9 Nov, respectively. There were 38 nights of coverage at Old Cut and 23 at the

Tip. Like many other species, Northern Saw-whet Owls irrupted this year making it the second busiest fall since consistent owl monitoring began in 1998. LPBO banded 937 owls, compared to the last major irruption in 2007 when 1,088 were banded. Our slowest year was 2011, with only 190 banded. Five Eastern Screech-Owls, LPBO's second Boreal Owl, and a record 14 Long-eared Owls were also banded.

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We only banded for a single day this fall, due to lack of funding. It was a productive day with a high capture rate and the usual concentration of Myrtle Warblers at this location.

**The Arboretum at Penn State**                      **404-0775**  
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Dr. Margaret Brittingham, Chief Assistant

The banding program is part of the Avian Education Program of The Arboretum at Penn State (main campus at University Park). Banding was first conducted on a trial basis at this location in the fall of 2010.

Notable captures, based upon past species sightings and habitat included: Black-billed Cuckoo, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Gray-checked Thrush, Black-throated Blue Warbler, and Mourning Warbler. Fifty-five American Goldfinches banded on 23 Sep fed on a large thistle patch adjacent to the banding nets. They were part of a flock of over 100 observed there the previous day.

A female AHY Northern Cardinal banded 20 Sep 2012 was recovered (apparent window strike) three miles southwest of the banding station on 9 Jan 2013. A female HY Eastern Towhee banded 27 Sep 2012 was found near Statesboro, GA on 26 Jan 2013.

Oct - Dec 2013

Thirty-three birds of ten species were repeat visitors, with three species (Tufted Titmouse, Carolina Wren and Ovenbird) all banded in Sep 2010 and recaptured in Sep 2012.

The banding site was open for public visitation during all hours of operation with organized group tours through prior arrangement. A total of 220 people visited during the period, including two Boy Scout Webelos dens, State College High School biology class and three Penn State Wildlife & Fisheries classes.

Thirty volunteers (Penn State students and others) provided 497 hours of volunteer time.

A "Banders-in-Training" program was initiated to attract additional volunteers for the banding program. The program, developed by Dr. Margaret Brittingham and assisted by other volunteers, included in-class and field training on difficult bird identification, banding procedures, equipment use and record keeping. Twenty-one volunteers attended the training and individually assisted on three or more of the banding days this fall.

The *Centre Daily Times* and PSU *Penn Stater* magazine staff blog published full length articles with photos on the banding program. A summary of each day's banding was posted online to the State College Bird Club listserv and Facebook page as well as selected entries into The Arboretum at Penn State Facebook page.

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Wind and climate had a significant effect on our capture rates at Powdermill this fall. There were many nights where (southerly) wind was not favorable for migration in our area and October was comparatively slow with only 2501 new birds (most years 3000 to 3500 are banded). Watching