

2015

Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2013- Ruthven Park

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	Species	# Banded	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
1.	Gray Catbird	21	42	-	58
2.	Magnolia Warbler	8	25	-	75
3.	Swainson's Thrush	5	40	-	60
4.	Black-and-white Warbler	4	25	-	75

As happened in previous years, the warbler species have not returned to this station, with only 23 birds of nine total species recorded this spring.

Four different people observed the mist netting with a very positive response from all.

I had a single recapture of a Blue Jay that had been banded in Oct 2011.

Ruthven Park **425-0795**
Haldimand County, ON
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The banding station was founded in the fall of 1995 as a pilot and came into full operation, for spring and fall seasons, in 1996. It is run almost entirely on a volunteer basis. The station is situated on the grounds of Ruthven Park National Historic Site, the banding lab being about 100 m from the historic mansion. The entrance to the site is located about two km north of the town of Cayuga on Highway/Regional Road 54 (latitude/longitude: 425-0795). This station is one of two banding stations that make up the Haldimand Bird Observatory; the other being Rock Point Provincial Park. The two stations are within 40 km of each other. Ruthven is an "inland" station, while the others are coastal; the mix of species and number of birds can be quite different between Ruthven and the coastal sites.

Up to 21 12-meter mist nets (30 mm mesh) were deployed in 12 net lanes. Most of these net lanes are long-standing with some being in the same place since 1995 and nine have been in place since 2000. Most of the lanes have been cut into the dogwood/scrubby edge habitat that acts as a buffer between the lawns and fields of the historic site and the surrounding forest. On some days not all the nets

were utilized – especially on days with high winds. We also deployed up to four ground traps and four Potter traps.

We banded 883 birds of 33 species in April. This is 117 over the previous high of 766 achieved in 2009. It is also more than two standard deviations above the average since 1999.

	Species	# Banded	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
1.	American Goldfinch	288	74%	16%	11%
2.	Golden-crowned Kinglet	145	67	10	12
3.	Slate-colored Junco	115	86	13	1
4.	Yellow Warbler	106	66	30	4
5.	Chipping Sparrow	99	24	4	72
6.	Song Sparrow	86	7	-	93
7.	Gray Catbird	74	51	46	3
8.	White-throated Sparrow	73	90	8	1
9.	Brown-headed Cowbird	73	22	16	62
10.	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	62	65	19	16

After such a prolific April we were poised to set an overall spring record with May's results. But then the wheels fell off; we experienced the worst May ever in terms of b/100nhs: 20.2. This is well below the average of 34.2 and marks the first time that our May rate of capture was *below* the April rate. (We have always been able to say that we will catch birds at a greater rate in May....until now.) We had a fair amount of wonderful weather (for being outdoors) – sunny and warm. But in these conditions migrants tend to "fly over" our inland site, taking advantage of the good conditions to clear not only Lake Erie but Lake Ontario as well (we sit about half way between these two Great Lakes). As described in April, bad weather often will result in a "fall-out": migrants are forced to drop down and find shelter and food when encountering inclement weather. But even during the periods of poor weather this year, we did not get large accumulations of migrants. This was especially noticeable in our warbler numbers. As everyone knows, May is

“warbler month”, the time that these long-distance Neotropical migrants pass through southern Ontario on their way to more northern breeding grounds. Usually warblers make up 21% of our overall banding total (and remember: the vast majority of these are caught in May). But this year warblers made up only 15% of the “catch”. And if you take Yellow Warblers out of the mix (as they breed at Ruthven in large numbers), warblers made up only 9.6% (versus an average of 16.2%). This is difficult to explain.

So, we banded a total of 910 birds in May for an overall spring total of 1,793, certainly respectable, but well below what we were anticipating when we moved into May.

Birds that we caught that were two standard deviations *above* the 14-yr spring average: Golden-crowned Kinglet (145), Warbling Vireo (11), Philadelphia Warbler (four), Cape May Warbler (three), Northern Cardinal (14), Chipping Sparrow (99), Song Sparrow (86). Only Least Flycatcher (four) was *below* two standard deviations.

These are birds that were banded at Ruthven in other years. We get a fairly large number of returning Neotropical migrants each year which breed at Ruthven. Most noticeable was a female Rose-breasted Grosbeak that was eight years old and a Yellow Warbler, also eight years old.

Recoveries of birds banded at Ruthven and recovered elsewhere (for which we got notification from the Banding Office this year included):

Pine Siskin: banded 25 Oct 2012; recovered 27 Dec 2012; Ann Arbor, MI

Cedar Waxwing: 26 Oct 2011/17 Mar 2012; Perry, GA

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 22 Oct 2011/16 Apr 2013; Whitefish Point Lighthouse, MI (Whitefish Point is a “jumping off” place for spring migrants moving from Michigan’s northern peninsula to northern Ontario.)

Northern Saw-whet Owl: 20 Oct 2012/11 Feb 2013; Ridgemount (QEW at Bowen Road), ON

American Goldfinch: 13 Oct 2012/1 May 2013; Harmony, NC

American Goldfinch: 8 Feb 2012/29 Mar 2013; Dunnville, ON

Tree Swallow: 5 Jun 2009/21 Mar 2013; Selkirk, ON

Brown-headed Cowbird: 1 Apr 2012/27 May 2013; Ajax, ON

Black-capped Chickadee: 15 Jan 2013/16 Apr 2013; Toronto, ON

Black-capped Chickadee: 2 Apr 2013/9 May 2013; Hilton, Monroe County, NY

I would like to 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 Marilyn Havelka (CAO), Sandy Turner (Species at risk Coordinator), and Natalie Campbell (Education Coordinator) have been especially helpful and supportive. Natalie has done a wonderful job coordinating the visitation by numerous school groups. We also thank Oliver Love and the University of Windsor for their practical support and personnel. Haldimand Bird Observatory provides a great deal of practical support.

This spring we had 1,090 visitors, made up of interested adults and students. We are able to operate at the level we do because of the input of a dedicated group of volunteers. In total, this group put in 1,263 volunteer hours.

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory 431-0774

Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station

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Monroe County, NY

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The 28th consecutive year of spring migration monitoring at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach banding station was carried out for 57 days beginning 24 Mar and ending on 5 Jun 2013. There were 5038 birds banded of 92 species. There were 86 Ruby-