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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Spring 2013- Braddock Bay Bird Observatory

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“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 Co-ordinator), 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.

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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-

throated Hummingbirds included in the list of banded birds and an additional 7 male and 4 female Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were captured and released unbanded. There were two new species for the spring records – Northern Mockingbird and Yellow-throated Warbler-bringing the species total for all spring seasons to 144.

	Species	# Banded	% SY	% ASY	% AHY
1.	Black-capped Chickadee	962	63.5%	6.4%	30.1%
2.	Ruby-crowned Kinglet	446	37.0	16	46.9
3.	Gray Catbird	282	51.9	14.1	33.9
4.	Magnolia Warbler	282	71.3	29.2	14
5.	American Redstart	267	64.8	22.3	12.9
6.	White-throated Sparrow	209	44.6	6.2	54.4
7.	Common Yellowthroat	181	45.6	6.1	55.4
8.	Traill's Flycatcher	154	7.6	1.9	90.4
9.	Wilson's Warbler	131	68.2	16.3	15.5
10.	Yellow Warbler	128	61.4	21.3	17.3

There were over 1000 recaptures of birds banded at the station. These birds were all measured and weighed again as part of ongoing studies in stopover ecology. Of these recaptures, 70 were birds that returned from a previous season (shown in Table 3). The eldest of these were a Northern Cardinal (12 yr), a Gray Catbird (9 yr), two Yellow Warblers (both seven yr), and a Warbling Vireo, American Robin, Gray Catbird, two Yellow Warblers, and an American Goldfinch, all in their sixth year.

Foreign recoveries, besides the chickadee re-encounters mentioned in the introduction, included a HY Gray Catbird banded at K-MB on 27 Aug 2012, found dead on 13 May 2013 in New Braunfels, TX.

New spring species banded were Northern Mockingbird and Yellow-throated Warbler. There were record high numbers banded of American Robin (57), Field Sparrow (19), Swamp Sparrow

(39) and Northern Cardinal (49). It was the second best spring ever for Black-capped Chickadees with 962 banded. On the negative side, the number of Yellow Warblers banded (128) was the second lowest since 1988. The species total now stands at 145.

Sara Morris, in collaboration with the Powdermill Banding Station and the Powdermill Bioacoustics Lab, tested Blackpoll, Magnolia, and Yellow-rumped warblers in the Mobile Avian Recording Studio (MARS) parked at the banding station. Their goal was to study flight-calling behavior.

Mark Deutschlander and grad student Jenna Holzschuh continued their research on orientation of migrating birds.

Richard S. Bailey of WV; Claire Buck of Spencerport, NY; Cristina Contreras of Chiapas, Mexico; Kathy Dilliplane from Fordham University, NY; Mike Ellis of Pittsburgh, PA; Audrey Martin of NV; Jason Mayberry of Buffalo, NY; Grace Parikh of Duluth, MN; Lee Schofield of Rochester, NY; and Christine Zolnik of Fordham University, NY, successfully completed our Bander Training Class.

We had several hundred visitors from 10 states and four foreign countries, including two guests from the British Trust for Ornithology and gave informal banding demonstrations to 15 college and school groups.

Thanks to all our faithful volunteers: Raelena Allen; John Boettcher; Mark Caitlin; Jane Capellupo; Don Cowley; Marilyn Guenther; Kathy Habgood; Kathleen Holt; John Lehr; Chita McKinney; Shirley Meston; William Norton; Bill, Lisa, and Sandy Podulka; Rosemary Reilly; Jesse Roberts; Lee Schofield; Dominick Sherony; Ruth Stork; Alice VandeMoere; Tom Verhulst; and Cici Weber.

Special appreciation is extended to Nancy Britton, Bill Kaiser and the Board of the Genesee Land Trust for the use of their land.