

2015

## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont-Coastal Plain- Fall 2014- Tomoka Basin Banding Station

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Painted Buntings. At the time of this report, I was still waiting to hear back from the BBL on the origin of the two birds.

I would like to express gratitude to the Kiawah Conservancy and the Town of Kiawah Island for supporting our project by providing the funding to purchase banding supplies and to allow the hiring of four bird banding technicians. Mattie VandenBoom, William Oakley, Libby Natola, and Matt Zak were a great addition to the team and their hard work was greatly appreciated! Additionally, we thank Kiawah Development Partners for permission to conduct research on their property. I would also like to thank all of the volunteers that participated during our banding season.

Please check out the KIBS blog in 2015. It is updated daily with the banding totals for each day, photos, interesting anecdotes, and occasionally information of ageing and sexing certain species.

The blog can be viewed at:

[www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com](http://www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com)

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This season a total of 1,377 birds were banded, which is just 31 fewer than in 2013, despite an additional 640 net hours of operation this year. While the previous few years have shown an increase in total number of birds banded, this year's decrease could be due in part to weather patterns and other variables affecting individual species migration during the weeks when the station was open.

Our busiest day in 2014 was 4 Oct, on which we banded 185 birds, which is over 100 fewer birds than on our busiest day in 2013, when we banded 295. In fact, there were two days in 2013 with more than 200 birds, and this year we did not reach that total in a single day. However, 2014 resulted in five days with more than 100 birds banded each of those days, making for less extreme variation between daily totals than in 2013. Persistent southeastern winds present this season, especially during the last week the station was open, and the absence of any major storm systems during this time could be part of the reason for less extreme migrant peaks in 2014.

Migration seemed to be steady through the dates we banded for Common Yellowthroats, Gray Catbirds, Painted Buntings, and the majority of other species banded. The Western Palm Warblers had one large push on 4 Oct accounting for nearly 90% of birds banded that day. However, the rest of the WPWAs did not appear in

great numbers until 16 Oct, when 51 were banded, and 68 were banded on the station's last day for the season, 19 Oct. Given the increase in Western Palm capture rate toward the end of the season, it is possible that they may have been migrating through later than in some other years.

**Tomoka Basin Banding Station**

**292-0810**

Ormond Beach, Volusia Co., FL

**Meret S. Wilson**

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This was the second fall since a control burn was conducted in Aug 2013 in the south area of Tomoka State Park (GPS: 29° 20'26.4"N 81° 05'07.8" W). The undergrowth of saw palmetto has grown back considerably. One of the results was fewer flycatchers than last fall. The Gray Catbirds returned to the lower area of the net lanes, being caught in nets 5-10 as compared to last year catch in nets 1-4 where the burn did not reach. The top five catches for the fall were very different from last year. White-eyed Vireos have never been in the top ten birds, let alone the top five. Black-throated Blue Warblers are consistently falling in numbers overall each season. At least 75% of the Black-throated Blues were of the Appalachian race. Myrtle Warblers have not been on the top five for several years until this fall. This was a surprise because there are almost no wax myrtle or juniper berries available on the south side.

Of the 36 species I captured this fall, a Cooper's Hawk and a Yellow-breasted Chat were both first-time species, bringing the total number of species banded in TSP to 87. Happily, one of the park rangers just happened to be present when the hawk hit the net. He held the hawk while I banded and measured it. The chat is the first ever recorded in the park. A Northern Harrier narrowly missed getting caught because it managed to climb out just as we rounded the corner to the net. To be on the safe side I closed that net the rest of the week.

The weather was very cooperative this fall with little wind, no rain days, and only four days that no birds were caught. Many days had only two or three catches. It was a full month before a single recapture occurred.

As always, I am grateful for the support of the rangers of Tomoka State Park and the help of my volunteers, Bill Horton and Heike and Bert Charest.

**Bill Baggs Cape Florida**

**254-0800**

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