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## Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) Fall 2015- The Arboretum at Penn State

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56th fall season ran from 15 Aug to 15 Nov at Old Cut, Aug 10 to Sept 15 at Breakwater, and Aug 15 to Nov 11 at the Tip. Thirty volunteers, representing five countries, logged over 13,000 hours collecting migration data on over 250 species and banded 10,967 birds of 124 species. Twenty-four volunteer 'Friends' of LPBO helped to serve over 900 visitors and an additional 400 students of all ages who enjoyed banding demonstrations.

**Birding Highlights:** The fall season was slower than average, with very few big days. Nonetheless, there were some interesting highlights: Long Point's second ever Neotropic Cormorant was photographed off the Tip on 26 Aug. Two Eared Grebes were seen in the Outer Bay on 2 Nov. A Northern Gannet flew past the Tip 16 Oct. There were two Cattle Egrets seen 17 Oct; one flew over Old Cut, and another was seen from Concession Road 1. An American Avocet was seen briefly at the Tip 20 Aug. A Franklin's Gull, part of large irruption into eastern North America, was seen flying off Hastings Drive 14 Nov. Three Sabine's Gulls were seen from the Tip 29 Sep, 12 and 13 Oct. A White-winged Dove was seen by multiple observers at the Tip on 22-23 Oct. A Western Kingbird was at Breakwater 6 Sep. Single Common Ravens were seen at the Tip on 21-28 Sep and 14 Oct. One Loggerhead Shrike was detected in the area by the Motus Wildlife Tracking System at the BSC Headquarters 10 Sep. A Townsend's Solitaire was seen at the Tip 23 Oct. A flock of 10 Bohemian Waxwings flew over Old Cut 14 Nov. A Dickcissel was at the Tip 5 Oct. A Nelson's Sparrow was found at the Tip 18-19 Oct. A Yellow-headed Blackbird flew over Old Cut 5 Sep, while another flew over the Tip 26 Oct.

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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.

Weather conditions were generally favorable with just one day cancelled due to rain. There were a total of 39  
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local recaptures this season, but no foreign recaptures. The five "best captures" (based upon past presence and existing habitat) were Sharp-shinned Hawk, Gray-cheeked Thrush, Mourning Warbler, Tennessee Warbler, and Worm-eating Warbler.

The banding site was open for public visitation during all hours of operation, with organized group tours through prior arrangement. A total of 103 people visited during the period.

A "Bander-in-Training" class was conducted on 10 Sep to acquire new volunteers to help with banding operations. Fourteen people attended, most of whom volunteered time on additional days with hands-on training and assistance to the banding operations.

*"Bird Banding at the Arboretum at Penn State – Volunteer Guide,"* a 33-page guide (prepared by Jill Koren, Elora Grahame, Jackson Martini, Nick Kerlin and Margaret Brittingham) was published by Penn State Extension and made available to banding volunteers. The booklet covers banding program objectives, protocol and procedures.

Seven community volunteers and 21 Penn State students (most from the Wildlife and Fisheries major) contributed 454 hours of time to banding operations and public outreach activities during the season. Major assistance was provided by Dr. Margaret Brittingham (Arboretum Avian Education Program coordinator, Professor of Wildlife Resources), Shari Edelson (Director of Horticulture/Curator of The Arboretum at Penn State), Penn State Operation and Physical Plant employees (trail maintenance/support).

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This Fall we banded 6,024 new birds, which turned out to be the second-lowest capture rate in the last ten years. The pace at the lab did not seem that much slower though, as we made up for it in recaptured birds. Our total of 2,949 recaps made it the *best* season for recaps in those same ten years, bringing the total number of birds caught in our nets to just under 9,000. Although the  
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