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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region III (Western Ridge) Fall 2015- Allegheny Front, Dolly Sods Migration Observatory Banding Station

Joan Bell Pattison

Todd Schnopp

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years we have banded at Mt. Nebo WMA, seven of those years had less than this year's number of 127.

There was one foreign recapture of a Gray Catbird that ConnieSkipper banded on 25 Aug 2014. The bird was captured by a bander at Fry's Landing, Presque Isle State Park in Erie, PA on 10 May 2015. This is approximately 225 miles from Mt. Nebo WMA.

The station had 122 recaptures of 100 individuals of 19 species. Fourteen birds banded in prior years were recaptured in 2015.

2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Species/ #	Species/ #	Species/#	Species/#	Species/#
SOSP 1		SOSP 2	SOSP 1	GRCA 2
		GRCA 1	AMRO 1	COYE 2
		BCCH 1		BCCH 1
		COYE 1		PUFI 1
1		5	2	6

Summary of bird species and number of individuals banded in prior years at Mt. Nebo WMA, that were recaptured in 2015.

The station had 35 visitors. This included a fifth grade class and three chaperones from Crellin Elementary School.

We thank Mike Fazenbaker who helped clear the net lanes. We appreciate Rick Latshaw and Mike Fazenbaker granting us the privilege of banding at Mt. Nebo WMA.

Allegheny Front,
Dolly Sods, Grant Co, WV,
Migration Observatory
Banding Station and Project Leaders
Joan Bell Pattison and Todd Schnopp
Ralph K. Bell, Founder
pattison914@gmail.com

390-0791

Ralph K. Bell founded AFMO and banded his first bird on 18 Sep 1958. The total species banded since 1958 is 125. The overall percentage of hatch-year birds in 2015 (using known age birds only) was 83.06% compared with 75.84% in 2014 and 78.65% in 2013. There were seven days this fall with over 100 birds

banded, one day over 200 were banded, and one day over 300 were banded.

Allegheny Front Migration Observatory (AFMO) is located at Dolly Sods, Grant County, WV. The station was opened on 15 Aug and closed on 25 Sep 2015. AFMO is the oldest, continuous bird banding station in North America. This was our 58th consecutive year of Bird Banding at AFMO. A total of 2924 birds were banded of 66 species with a Station effort of 66 b/100 nhs. A total of 261,336 birds have been banded since the station was founded.

The station was open for 37 days and closed for five days due to bad weather. Just as in 2014 and 2013, there were very few fronts and over half of the days we were open for banding, the winds were from the east. We had a west wind on all of the days we banded 100+ birds. It is known that we do not often catch many birds on days with east winds. East winds, however, can produce good hawk migrations flying over AFMO. We closed a few days early for the fall 2015 season due to the threat of Hurricane Joaquin, which was coming up the east coast of the US.

Black-throated Blue Warbler was the most numerous species this year with 619 birds banded (52.9% under the 10-year average from 2005 to 2014). Black-throated Green Warbler was 2nd with 519 birds banded (25% under the 10-yr. Avg.). Blackburnian Warbler was 3rd highest with 318 birds banded (70% over the 10-yr. Avg.). Blackpoll Warbler was 4th highest with 280 birds banded (66% under the 10-yr. Avg.). Magnolia Warbler was 5th highest with 194 birds banded (43% under the 10-yr Avg.). The total number of these top five species is 1930 which is 66% of the birds banded this fall.

The next highest numbers of birds banded were Cape May Warbler (155), Common Yellowthroat (156), Tennessee Warbler (85), Bay-breasted Warbler (70), Ovenbird (64), Swainson's Thrush (59) and Chestnut-sided Warbler (54).

One recovery was reported this year. Carol McCullough banded a HY Ovenbird at AFMO this fall on 15 Aug 2015. It was reported to the Banding Lab. as being found dead at a home three blocks from the beach at North Myrtle Beach, SC on 2 Sep 2015.

A White-throated Sparrow was recorded feeding at Dolly Sods Campground site #12 on 10 Aug and it was there for many weeks. There were fewer junco's noted in the campground this fall, possibly because of nest predation due to an increase in chipmunks.

The Fall Flyover Count at AFMO was started by Ralph K. Bell in 1990. Results from the fall 2015 count of selected species, which make up the majority of the Count are as follows:

- 158 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (203 in 2014)
- 159 Blue Jays (60 in 2014)
- 294 American Goldfinches (643 in 2014)
- 145 monarch butterflies (128 in 2014)
- 18 dragonflies (22 in 2014)
- 1650 Broad-winged Hawks (1162 in 2014)

This fall, 776 people signed our AFMO Visitor's book. These visitors came from 10 different states. Several school groups visited AFMO to learn about birds and nature from our experienced banders and volunteers. Some groups that visited were the Ralph K. Bell Bird Club, Waynesburg, PA; Canaan Valley Resort Nature Trip; Highland Adventist School, Elkins, WV; Camden HS Science Class, Camden, WV; John Marshall HS, Glen Dale, WV; EMU Conservation Bio Class, Harrisonburg, VA.

On 11 Sep, Alina with WDTV, Bridgeport, WV aired an interesting and informative interview she did with Co-Leader Todd Schnopp and his crew at the AFMO Banding Station this fall. The TV story and interview was entitled "Wild and Wonderful with Alina: Dolly Sods Bird Banding".

Thanks to the personnel of the Monongahela National Forest: Forest Supervisor, Clyde Thompson; Realty Specialist/ Special Use Manager, Todd Hess; Develop Recreation Manager, Zach Adkins; Forest Technician John Waggy and all others that gave their cooperation and help. Thanks to the West Virginia DNR for the use of their building for storage of the bird banding shed. Thanks to the Ralph K. Bell Bird Club and other groups, visitors and volunteers for their financial support, which is our only means of replacing the 30 mist nets we use at AFMO.

The banders who participated were Beth Ritter (Campground Host with Randy Ritter), Todd Schnopp (AFMO Co-Leader), Fred & Carol McCullough, Charles Ziegenfus, Bob Dean, LeJay Graffious, and Jeff & Sheila Berry (AFMO Resident Managers). The scheduled volunteers who tended nets, kept records, and helped in many ways were Tom and Dawn Fox, Maggi Perl, Jose Martins, Tom & Debbie Long, Bill Beatty, Jan Runyan, Jackie Burns and Tim Newlin. Thanks to Tom Fox and his crew for the big job of clearing the net lanes so we could begin banding; LeJay Graffious, Todd Schnopp and their helpers for erecting the banding shed in August and taking it down at the end of the season; and Luke Pattison for contributing his computer expertise to his grandfather's AFMO Research Project.

Thanks to all of the dedicated volunteers who gave their time and expertise in many ways and in most cases for many years to help continue the research Ralph K. Bell envisioned for AFMO.



Blackburnian Warbler by George West