

2017

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region I (Northeast) Fall 2016- Wing Island Banding Station

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locations as previous years, giving an unparalleled comparison of range expansions and contractions, yearly variation of migrations, survival and long-term population change. Recently, Manomet data have documented an earlier arrival of some spring migrants, which correlates with warming temperatures. In the fall, some migrants are passing through later, and others (mostly single-brooded, short-distance migrants) earlier in warmer years.

We held formal education programs (focusing on migration banding, local ecology and conservation) for 483 visitors this fall, bringing our yearly total to 1,043 students, scientists, boy scouts, girl scouts, birders and photographers from the local community and beyond!

Banding highlights included yet another Eastern Bell's Vireo for the Banding Lab. This species has been recorded less than a dozen times in the state (starting with Manomet capturing one in 2005)! This is our second fall Bell's Vireo in a row now and a rash of sightings along the east coast this fall suggests a shift in range and/or migratory pattern for this species of the US interior. We banded our 250,000th bird (a Gray Catbird, of course) on 26 Sep.

This fall followed a cold, late spring. Local trees and shrubs were hit hard by gypsy moth outbreaks and a significant drought. Although the local cuckoo populations benefitted from the first of these afflictions (due to their ability to ingest the hairy beasts), fall migrants encountered fewer berries due to the drought. As a result, we were capturing lingering late-season migrants well into November. Our 319 Blackpoll Warblers were the most since 1979. A general lack of early Neotropical migrants could also have been the result of birds leaving earlier than normal and bypassing our banding station. Our only days with 100+ birds came in October: 122 captures on the 3rd, 120 captures on the 11th, 130 captures on the 17th and 131 captures (90 new bandings) on the 18th. Fall 2016 saw a record low number of 30 Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers, the lowest total in all our years of complete fall coverage. Perhaps due to drought-induced limits on their favored coastal berry foods?

Recaptures from previous seasons (65) this fall include an 8-year-old Gray Catbird and a 7-year-old Northern Cardinal. We also recaptured a 5-year-old catbird and four 4-year-old birds (Eastern Phoebe, Black-capped Chickadee, Gray Catbird and Song Sparrow). A Gray Catbird recaptured this fall had previously been banded in fall 2015 at Cape May Point, New Jersey. A different hatch-year catbird we banded on 3 Oct this fall was recaptured on 24 Oct in Tampa, Hillsborough Co., Florida.

When compared with the previous ten falls, 10 species met or exceeded the highest totals including 34 Nashville and four Connecticut warblers. The four record low species in the same comparison were Veery, Hermit Thrush, and Myrtle and Wilson's Warblers.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the fall 2016 migration banding and education season such a success. We are also greatly indebted for recent financial support from Manomet members. Alex Bartolo and Alan Kneidel were the indefatigable staff banders and teachers this fall, with timely assistance from Emily Renaud and Sarah Groendyk.

Wing Island Banding Station 414-0700

Cape Cod Museum of Natural History
Brewster, MA

**Banders: Susan Finnegan (compiler),
Gretchen Putonen**

Assistants: Bradford Bower, Jo-Anna Ghadban, Donna Kucia (data entry), Judith Bruce, Jane Wing, Devan Blazey, Alex Cook, Corey Accardo, Eric Russell (net lane maintenance), Jetta Cook, and others who helped for a day.

The Wing Island Banding Station was opened in the fall of 2000 by Master Bander Susan Finnegan and has been a long-term spring and fall migration station as well as a once/week breeding monitoring station since that time. Wing Island is an upland nine-acre area surrounded by a huge saltmarsh on three sides and Cape Cod Bay on the northerly border.

Our season began on 3 Aug and continued through 19 Nov. Our fall season this year was even better than last and all the past 16 years of banding at

this site. A total of 2,236 birds were banded of 70 species and 91% of those were HY birds. I was fortunate to have a dedicated volunteer intern this fall so did not have to cancel days due to a lack of volunteers.

Net hours totaled 5,954 for a capture rate of 56 b/100nh. Our largest daily catch was on 27 Oct with a total of 206 birds. The best species diversity of 26 species was on 12 Oct. Vagrant hummingbirds included our first ever Calliope Hummingbird at a private home in October and one Rufous Hummingbird in December. We had no lower numbers of species compared to our average, but had higher numbers in numerous species: American Redstart (13) with an average of 5.7 ± 6.13 ; Black-capped Chickadee (248) - average of 91.7 ± 120.5 ; Eastern Towhee (40) - average 16 ± 22.5 and Ruby-crowned Kinglet (58) - average 20.3 ± 30 ;

We originally banded 106 birds in the fall that returned to us from previous years. The oldest birds included: A8Y Common Yellowthroat; 9Y Song Sparrow; 2 8Y Black-capped Chickadees; A7Y Gray Catbird; 7Y- 2 Song Sparrows, 1 of each Gray Catbird, Common Yellowthroat, Black-capped Chickadee; A6Y American Goldfinch: 6Y- 3 Song Sparrows, 2 Black-capped Chickadees, 1 Tufted Titmouse; A5Y- 2 Gray Catbird and a Song Sparrow; 5Y- 4 chickadees, 3 catbirds and 3 Song Sparrows; A4Y- 2 Common Yellowthroats and a Song Sparrow; 4Y- 4 catbirds, 3 chickadees, 2 Song Sparrow, 1 Myrtle Warbler and 1 Common Yellowthroat. All other birds were 3 years old or younger.

A House Finch we banded as a HY in Oct 2015 was killed by a cat in a nearby town in Jun 2016.

Pox was noted on six birds this fall, all HY birds: a Northern Mockingbird, a Blue Jay, 3 Gray Catbirds, and 1 Eastern Towhee. The majority of pox cases were noted on the feet/legs with one on the mandible.

As always, a big thank you to all the dedicated banders and assistants mentioned above whom graciously volunteer their time. We appreciate the monetary support from the French Foundation, the

Cape Cod Museum of Natural History for allowing us to house our banding lab at their facility, and the Town of Brewster for banding on their land.

Kingston Wildlife Research Station 413-0713

Kingston, Washington County, RI

**Banders: Julie Shieldcastle (compiler),
Peter Paton, Scott McWilliams**

Assistants: Talvi Ansel, Gina Celeste, Jackie Claver, Megan Gray, Valerie Perkins, Joanne Riccitelli, and Shelby Southworth.

Kingston Wildlife Research Station is a long-term fall migration station started by Dr. Doug Kraus in 1958. Doug operated four mist nets daily by himself during fall migration from 1958-1994. Peter Paton and Scott McWilliams, faculty at the University of Rhode Island, took over operations in 1998 and now coordinate the operation of 10 mist nets daily every fall. The station is located on 82 acres owned by the Audubon Society of Rhode Island on land that was a farm in the 1930s, but reverted to deciduous forest, with a small (0.4 ha) restored old field/grassland near five nets.

Capture rates were much higher when the station was initially opened, averaging 132.8 and 110.6 b/100nh in the 1960s and in the 1970s, respectively. The capture rates have since steadily declined over the 58 years the station has been in operation, with only an average of 26.5 b/100nh captured from 2000 - 2010. Thus, although capture rates during fall 2016 (28.0 b/100nh) were much lower than in the 1960s, they were higher than five years during the past decade. During the fall of 2016, two hurricanes, Hermine and Karl, in September affected the wind direction, producing high winds, and heavy precipitation. Earlier in the season, the winds were not favorable for a southerly migration, with 71% of days having calm winds, or a southerly or northeasterly winds, which appeared to reduce the number of migrants passing through southern Rhode Island. Later in October, the number of nights with northerly winds increased, which resulted in increased the capture rates. Twenty-three days out of 80 days had winds from the north or northwesterly direction. This is the value of having multiple banding stations to determine if the migration behavior is similar among other stations.