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Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont (Coastal Plain)- Fall 2016, Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way

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Eden Mill**394-0762**

Pylesville, MD

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Habitat is rarely static, and such is the case at Eden Mill. Most banding lanes are in what was mixed 'old field' ecotone edge near a mixed deciduous forest bordered by freshwater streams to the south and east. This 'old field' is no longer and now consists of many red cedar, oak, maple, and hickory species. Although Prairie Warblers still breed there, Blue-winged Warblers, Yellow-breasted Chats, once numerous in the spring and summer, are no more. Many invasive species such as honeysuckle, tear thumb, and multiflora rose are common and appear to provide food for migrating fall songbirds.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the fall of 2016; the number of birds captured per net hour and number banded was fairly consistent with previous years. No unexpected captures though PUFIs were banded; an unreliable migrant.

Some species seem to be occurring later while winter migrants appear to be occurring earlier. Empidonax species were captured into October (YBFL) while WTSP were captured 8 October. Some sparrow species typically banded were elusive this year (e.g., LISP, FOSP).

We captured eleven warbler species which is higher than expected. We had higher numbers of TEWA and BPLW, the last banded on 29 October.

Best days tended to be later with the best in terms of diversity and number being 29 October. This suggests a benefit for banding later into the year.

We continue to benefit from new Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math students that show interest. Thanks to their enthusiasm, we continue to develop new research questions and strive to develop the next generation of prospective wildlife biologists as much as we can. This year, Cole Ettenhofer is our new student and Call McClellan-O'Brien has graduated to subpermittee status

As always, many thanks go out to our regular volunteers: Suzanne Procell, Jerry Strickroth, Callum McClellan-O'Brien, Drs. Bob Werrlein and Dennis Kirkwood and the staff at Eden Mill Nature Center.

**Foreman's Branch
Bird Observatory****391-0760**

Kingstown, Queen Anne's Co., MD

**J. G. Gruber*, M. E. Gimpel, A. C. Spears,
D.M. Small**

Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory has been a part of the Center for Environment and Society at Washington College since 2011. The year 2016 was FBBO's 19th fall banding season. The numbers of new birds banded and days of operation were down slightly from 2015, but overall production was up 13%. Weather fronts from the northwest were, for the most part, weak and did not produce many heavy migration days. We started collaborating with researchers, Dr. Jeff Buler and graduate student Sergio Cabrera, at the University of Delaware on the effects of light pollution and bird migration.

Notable catches for the season were Red-tailed Hawk on 13th Nov, highest ever Purple Finch catch of 245 and our first catch for the station of a Lark Sparrow on 3rd Nov.

We would like to thank the following people for their support and aid to FBBO: Dr. Harry Sears, Dr. John Seidel, Michael Hardesty, Patricia Gruber, Greg Cole, Hanson Robbins, Jeannine Fleagle, Dr. Jennie Carr, Janet Christensen, Anne and Brennan O'Connor, Daniel and Jonathan Irons, Carly and Vincent Fumo and Jessica Majors who volunteered many weeks in October and November to help us during our busiest time. We also extend special thanks to our two Washington College fall interns, Laura King and Mike Hudson.

**Patuxent Powerline Right-of-Way 390-0764
Patuxent Research Refuge**

Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD

Danny Bystrak

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This station is in a power line right-of-way that bisects an upland deciduous forest. It has operated since 1980, except for 2004-2006. The habitat

is dominated by a dense six-to eight-foot high canopy of shrubs, and is an excellent source of shelter and food for breeding and migrating birds. Twenty-six nets are arrayed along a one-half mile east-west axis. Nets were opened by dawn and closed about 3.5 hours later. From 2007-2016, we have consistently operated seven days in August and November and 14 days in September and October for a total of 42 days, generally on a M/W/F schedule. In 2013, however, due to the government shutdown, we banded only 35 days. Any comparisons to previous levels of activity refers to the years 2007-2012, since our 2013 season was incomplete.

This was our 34th year, and was by far our worst since 2007 with 1,360 bandings however we were up two species from last year, at 75.

The only highlight was banding our first Clay-colored Sparrow since 1980. This is the 125th species on this station's Fall banding list. We had no days over 100 birds, our best day being only 80. Nine species set or tied high counts, with none being particularly noteworthy. By contrast, 15 species set or tied low counts.

Our 256 warbler bandings of 24 species accounted for 19% of all of our bandings, below their historical norm. Mimids (notably Gray Catbirds) were at 8.5%, down from a norm of 12%; sparrows at 35% up from their norm of 25.

The station continues to be a focal point for visitors from foreign banding programs as well as serving as a training and educational site for interested staff. We have two experienced volunteers as well as employees to help with set-up, data entry, bird extraction, etc. Because the station is located in an area of the refuge that is closed to the general public, we cannot encourage outside participation, however, researchers wishing to visit the site are encouraged to contact Danny Bystrak at dbystrak@usgs.gov.

Greatly assisting in this effort were: Jo Anna Lutmerding, Mike Quinlan, Claire Nemes, Ikumi Kayama and Bruce Peterjohn. Thanks to banders-in-training Matt Rogosky and Jennifer McKay and to other staff who lent assistance.

Kiawah Island Banding Station 326-0801 Captain Sam's Site

Kiawah Island, Charleston County, SC

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This was the 8th fall banding season on Kiawah Island at the Captain Sam's site and the 5th in which banding has occurred daily. Kiawah Island is an 8,000 acre barrier island and residential/resort community located approximately 20 miles southeast of Charleston, South Carolina. The banding site is situated at the extreme western end of the island in secondary dune scrub/shrub and high marsh with wax-myrtle, sea ox-eye, and marsh-elder being the dominant plant species. We operated 25 nets daily, weather permitting, from the 15 August through 30 November. Nets were generally opened 30 minutes before sunrise and closed approximately 5-6 hours later.

We operated for 98 days resulting in 12,582.5 net-hours (nh). A total of 3,872 new individuals were banded and 1,183 birds were recaptured of 84 different species. The capture rate for new birds was 30.8 birds/100 nh with an additional 9.4 birds/100 nh as recaptures. Our capture rate decreased by 8.6 birds/100 nh compared to last fall. Three species made up 56% of the season's catch: Common Yellowthroats (25.4%), Yellow-rumped Warblers (19.1%), and Gray Catbirds (11.5%). We banded 4 species never before captured at the station – Red-shouldered Hawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Mourning Warbler, and Red-winged Blackbird.

It was an active season for tropical weather. The station was closed from 2-3 September for Tropical Storm Hermine and 5-11 October for Hurricane Matthew. This is the first year that a hurricane has affected our banding and it couldn't have come at a worse time – right at the peak of migration for us. We had to remove all equipment from the banding site, and because of a mandatory evacuation, there were several good days of banding pre-and post-storm that we missed.