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2023 Atlantic Flyway Review (Fall migration)

Aaron Given

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Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association

Founded 1923

2023 ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW (FALL MIGRATION)

The Atlantic Flyway Review (AFR) is divided into 4 regions: Northeast (Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York), Mid-Atlantic (Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, District of Columbia, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia), Southeast (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida), and Canada (Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland, Labrador).

We received reports from 6 banding stations from the Northeast, 6 from the Mid-Atlantic, 4 from the Southeast, and 2 from Canada. Across all regions, these 18 banding stations reported banding 51,478 birds and accumulating 148,681 net-hours this fall. Many stations across all regions reported fewer birds banded compared to last fall or lower numbers than their seasonal averages. Only a few stations reported above average totals. A couple of hurricanes/tropical storms affected several banding stations up and down the Atlantic Coast causing them to close down for multiple days due to rain, high winds, or flooding.

Some exceptional vagrant birds were banded this fall. In Massachusetts, a Western Wood-Pewee was banded at the Monomoy Refuge Banding Station and a Lark Bunting was banded at the Wing Island Banding Station. Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory in Maryland banded a Western Flycatcher. A LaSagra's Flycatcher was banded at the Cape Florida Banding Station in Miami, Florida. The Kiawah Island Banding Station in

South Carolina had had an extraordinary fall banding two Bell's Vireos, a MacGillivray's Warbler, an Ash-throated Flycatcher, and a Yellow-green Vireo.

If you would like to have your banding station featured in the fall or spring Atlantic Flyway Review, email Aaron Given at agiven@kiawahisland.org. we would be happy to include your report in the next AFR.

NORTHEAST REGION

Albany Pine Bush

Karner Barrens East (AKBE)

Albany, Albany County, New York

Neil A. Gifford, ngifford@albanypinebush.org

www.albanypinebush.org

www.facebook.com/AlbanyPineBush

twitter.com/albanypinebush

Banders: Neil Gifford, Amanda Dillon, and Steven Campbell

In 2023 we celebrated the 18th season of fall migration bird banding at the AKBE station. Banding was initiated in 2007 to evaluate the site as a migratory stopover and has continued annually as part of our long-term ecosystem restoration monitoring program.

The 1,376 ha Albany Pine Bush Preserve supports one of the best remaining global examples of an inland pitch pine-scrub oak barrens. The site is a National Natural Landmark, New York

State Unique Area, and a New York State Bird Conservation Area, as well as an Audubon Society Important Bird Area. The banding station consists of 20 nets within approximately 14 ha. Seventeen nets are within open-canopied barrens, two nets are within closed canopy pitch pine-oak forest, and one is at the transition between barrens and successional northern sandplain grassland. The vegetation in and around the banding station is actively managed with prescribed fire and other tools by the Albany Pine Bush Preserve Commission (APBPC).

We initiated the fall migration banding season 17 days early (16 August) to continue catching Eastern Towhees for a separate project. Despite the early start, the season produced the lowest capture rate (23.5 birds/100 net-hours) in 5 years. The season began with resident and migratory warblers and other insectivores, transitioning to thrushes, vireos, and more cold tolerant warblers and finishing with kinglets and sparrows. The most notable captures in 2023 were 26 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds. Because we operate MAPS stations during the breeding season and conduct other species-specific banding research projects in the preserve, returns and repeats listed are frequently “resident” birds that are recaptured during fall banding.

Funding is provided by the New York State Environmental Protection Fund with the support of The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, a Wildfire Risk Reduction grant from the USDA Forest Service, and a grant from the Friends of the Pine Bush Community.

The APBPC also thanks the many volunteers who gift their time and talent to assist with our efforts. We could not do this work without them.

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO)

Rochester, Monroe County, New York

Andrea Patterson,

braddockbaybirdobservatory@gmail.com

<https://braddockbaybirdobservatory.wordpress.com/>

Banders: Banders-in-charge Jennalee Holzschuh, Ryan Kayhart, Margaret Keller, Susan Smith Pagano, and Andrea Patterson.

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory is situated on the south shore of Lake Ontario midway between

the eastern and western ends of the lake. The early successional site is dominated by fruiting woody plants— primarily dogwood, viburnum, and honeysuckle – along with a mixed wet forest until recently dominated by ash, and a field of grasses and goldenrod.

The 38th consecutive year of fall migration monitoring at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach banding station was carried out for 69 days beginning 15 August and ending on 31 October. Seven days were entirely lost to excessively windy weather and one additional day due to a lack of a permitted bander.

We banded 3,587 birds of 81 species, falling short of fall 2022’s total by 295 birds. Note that these numbers do not include our late July banding during the Yellow Warbler migration. There were no new species this season; our fall cumulative total stands at 128 species, with two additional hybrid forms and one intergrade form.

Constant effort-mist netting was typically carried out using 32 nets; an extra five nets were added during our bander training class. Included in the total were six double-high assemblies. A total of 12,195.25 net-hours of banding resulted in a capture rate of 29.4 birds/100 net-hours, compared with 32.4 birds/100 net-hours in fall 2022 and 36.5 birds/100 net-hours in fall 2021.

We recaptured 1,063 individual birds a total of 1,801 times; 793 birds were captured after their initial banding day. Of these recaptures, 50 returned from a previous season, including one Blackpoll Warbler originally banded as an after-hatch-year bird in fall 2022. The oldest of the returning birds were two Northern Cardinals and a Yellow Warbler in their 8th year, a Warbling Vireo in its 7th year, and eight additional birds in their 5th or 6th year.

There were no foreign recaps this season, but we received reports that 3 of our banded birds were found elsewhere. A Cape May Warbler banded 9 Sep 2021 was recaptured and released alive on 30 Aug 2023 by EBBA member LeJay Graffious in Grant County, WV. A Red-tailed Hawk banded 7

Sep 2003 was trapped and released alive on 16 Sep 2023, in Cattaraugus County, NY. A second Red-tailed Hawk banded 19 Apr 2012 was found injured or dead on the roadside on 12 Dec 2023 in Erie County, NY.

Fall 2023 felt slow but given that we were so often closed due to high winds, our numbers are overall in line with expectations. There were no chickadee or finch irruptions which sometimes swell our numbers at the end of the season. There were record-high numbers banded of 3 species. Fifty-one Yellow-bellied Flycatcher bested their previous record of 49; 497 Hermit Thrush obliterated their previous high of 414; and 41 Northern Waterthrush surpassed the previous record of 34. A single Prothonotary Warbler tied the previous record of one, set in 2020. There were no major misses, and all the expected species were represented.

Many thanks to our fantastic crew of volunteers and to our partners - the Genesee Land Trust and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Joppa Flats Education Center Plum Island Bird Banding Station

Newburyport, Essex County, Massachusetts

Ben Flemer, bflemer@massaudubon.org

Banders: (More than a handful)

The station opened in 1998 and operates 19 nets during spring and fall. The banding station is sited on the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge located on Plum Island, a coastal barrier island that is between the Merrimack River and the confluence of Parker and Ipswich Rivers. The habitat consists of coastal dune shrub and forest dominated by highbush blueberry, winterberry, bayberry, Japanese honeysuckle, buckthorn, pin cherry, serviceberry, gray birch, quaking aspen, and red maple.

The fall season opened on 1 September with lots of Gray Catbirds and a few other species. Despite the exceptionally warm temperatures during the month of September, we banded 408 birds of 46 species with Gray Catbirds leading the pack

with 156 banded. Common Yellowthroats were a distant second with 30. We had two rare species, both on 13 September: Chuck-will's Widow and Yellow-throated Vireo. On the 21 September we banded a Hooded Warbler. In October, we banded a total of 809 birds of 42 species. Myrtle Warblers accounted for a little over 40% of this total. There were a number of stragglers captured near the end of the season including a Gray Catbird on 28 October and a Black-and-white Warbler on 29 October. Our oldest return was a Black-capped Chickadee that was banded on 4 April 2021.

We are grateful to the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge and Massachusetts Audubon Society for their support of the banding station. In addition, 61 volunteers donated 2,500 hours of their time to help with all aspects of running the station. THANK YOU!

Manomet Observatory (MBO)

Plymouth, Plymouth County, Massachusetts

Evan Dalton, edalton@manomet.org

www.manomet.org

Banders: Sarah Duff, Amy Hogan, Clara Darr, Trenton Voytko

This was our 58th year of banding and the 55th official fall of consistent migration monitoring at Manomet Observatory. This season we welcomed near-record numbers of visitors to the banding lab while continuing our efforts monitoring the resident and migratory species that rely upon the coastal scrub and wetlands on our property throughout the migratory season.

The weather this fall was initially quite warm and welcoming. Early season numbers peaked around mid-September, but soon thereafter the winds shifted to the North. Normally, that would be good news, as the tailwinds help blow migrating birds south and ensure consistent turnover of new birds between days. Unfortunately, these winds only intensified and led to the loss of many late season net hours. Total net hours for the season were 70% lower than the previous ten-year average.

Busy days in the lab were few and far between. We processed 85 birds on 11 September and the lab saw 60+ birds only five times this season (in comparison to 12 days over 60 birds in the fall of 2022 and 18 days in fall 2021). Overall, we banded 1,143 new birds and had 526 recaptures of 62 species. As one would expect, given the low sampling effort in the latter part of the season, we saw near record low numbers of many species, including many of the local breeders and resident species we would typically catch through the tail end of the season. Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Tufted Titmouse, Northern Cardinal, Brown Creeper, and Gray Catbird were all captured below our ten-year average. Our 10 Blackpoll Warblers were an all-time low.

Abnormally high numbers of Northern Waterthrush, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Blue-winged Warbler, Eastern Phoebe and Hooded Warbler occurred in the first half of the season and may have been driven by warmer temperatures and southerly winds “bottling up” southbound birds in our region.

Interesting captures from the season included a seven-year-old Blue Jay and a five-year-old Gray Catbird. On 19 October, we had a foreign recapture of a hatch-year, female Northern Cardinal, initially banded eight days prior at the Wing Island Banding Station in Brewster, MA. A Blackpoll Warbler with an additional central tail feather was unusual to say the least and we are in the process of writing up a note on our observations. Although they did not turn up in Manomet nets, the property hosted at least two Western Tanagers and a Townsend’s Solitaire in early November, all probable victims of the strong northwesterly winds.

Manomet hosted over 550 visiting grade-schoolers, university students, and bird club members as part of formal education programs on-site. We also officially unveiled our public nature trail named after MBO’s founding director, Kathleen “Betty” Anderson. As always, we are indebted to the many Manomet donors and volunteers as well as the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Devonshire Foundation, and the Dorr Foundation for helping ensure the continuation of our banding operation.

Monomoy Refuge Banding Station (MRBS)

Chatham, Barnstable County, Massachusetts

James Junda, james.junda@gmail.com

www.monomoybirds.com

Instagram: @monomoybirdobservatory

Banders: James Junda, Valerie Bourdeau, Sze On Ng, Evan Griffis

This year was the 10th fall of banding since the station was founded in 2011. Banding did not occur in 2014, 2015, and 2021. The site is located on a coastal island and has the only trees and thick cover within 11 km of the beach and dunes - a classic migrant trap. The habitat is a mix of 6 m tall conifers groves, coastal wetland, and willow/bayberry scrub. Nantucket Sound is 1.2 km to the west and the Atlantic Ocean is 300 m to the east. Weather, as always, has a huge impact on our banding. Three hurricanes in a row (in late September/early October) negatively affected our effort with low capture rates and forcing us to close for several days. However, between the hurricanes we saw and caught a few nice waves of diversity.

We had an incomplete season missing 20 days between 31 Aug and 19 Sep due to personnel issues. But by missing the slowest part of the fall, we had our highest capture rate ever (129.01 birds/100 net-hours) –with 2,024 newly banded and 281 recaptures for a total of 89 species. We captured two new species: Olive-sided Flycatcher and Western Wood-pewee (a first Massachusetts record). We saw an increase in a few species: Gray Catbird (181 to 228), Savannah Sparrow (24 to 61), Prairie Warbler (16 to 23), Northern Waterthrush (16 to 29). Finally, Golden-crowned Kinglets were way up again after a few migration fallout events (75 to 149). We also had a few species that were way down: Red-breasted Nuthatch (129 to 0) in a low irruption year, Northern Cardinal (30 to 3), and Slate-colored Junco (137 to 42). We had 13 returns: all were local breeders banded in 2021 or later, except a single Yellow-rumped Warbler return from 2022. We had no foreign recaptures in 2023.

We would like to acknowledge our partner Monomoy National Wildlife Refuge.

Wing Island Banding Station

Brewster, Barnstable County, Massachusetts

Sue Finnegan, suefinnegan@comcast.net

Facebook: Wing Island Bird Banding Station

Instagram: wing_banders

Banders: Sue Finnegan, Mike Babcock,

Gretchen Putonen, Andrew Single

The Wing Island Bird Banding Station is affiliated with the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History in Brewster, MA. It is located on a tidal island located behind the museum. Wing Island is 49 ha with 5 ha of Cape Cod Bay Beach, 13 ha of upland (mainly pitch pine and oak trees and 4 ha meadow), and 32 ha of tidal saltwater marshland. The banding station was opened in 2000 by Master Bander Sue Finnegan.

Nets were operated for a total 62 days between 1 August and 17 November. A range of 21-35 nets were used culminating in a total of 7,378.88 net-hours. We banded 2,707 new birds and had 1,014 recaptures of 81 species resulting in a capture rate of 53 birds/100 net-hours. Of the 1,014 recaptures, 67 of them were returns including some interesting longevity records. The oldest bird was a Gray Catbird that was banded in 2010 making it at least 14 years old. Other notable returns included a 7 year-old Gray Catbird, three 6 year-old Common Yellowthroats, a 6 year-old Gray Catbird, and a 5 year-old American Goldfinch and Chipping Sparrow.

Our best day was 20 October with 176 birds of 14 species netted. We had the most species diversity on 21 September with 22 species. We added two new species for our station this year, a Wilson's Snipe and most surprising, a Lark Bunting! Other highlights included our 1st fall Wood Thrush, second ever Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, fourth fall capture of Pine Siskin and Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and fifth fall capture of an Eastern Wood Peewee. We had more *Empidonax* flycatchers this fall than we have ever encountered in a season with 20. A very late Northern Parula showed up on 10 November and a Tennessee Warbler on 17 November. The Tennessee Warbler was actively molting primaries and had also molted the first secondary, some

greater coverts and the rectrices. One hatch-year (HY) female Rufous Hummingbird was banded this fall at a community garden in Orleans, MA on 23 October. While not included in the fall count, another HY female Rufous Hummingbird was banded on 14 December in Wellfleet, MA.

American Redstart (28: $\bar{x} = 8.22 \pm 12.56$), Bay-breasted Warbler (2: $\bar{x} = 0.35 \pm 1.29$), Black-and-white Warbler (5: $\bar{x} = 1.35 \pm 2.46$), Hermit Thrush (23: $\bar{x} = 9.30 \pm 11.75$), Least Flycatcher (2: $\bar{x} = 0.26 \pm 1.08$), Magnolia Warbler (6: $\bar{x} = 2.17 \pm 2.93$), Nashville Warbler (18: $\bar{x} = 6.74 \pm 10.09$), Orange-crowned Warbler (17: $\bar{x} = 4.91 \pm 9.63$, Swamp Sparrow (109: $\bar{x} = 56.3 \pm 48.3$), Tennessee Warbler (3: $\bar{x} = 0.48 \pm 1.89$), and Traill's Flycatcher (9: $\bar{x} = 2.22 \pm 4.63$) all were captured in greater numbers than 2 standard deviations from the mean. We also had a greater than average number of Carolina Wren (24), Common Yellowthroat (125), Golden-crowned Kinglet (49), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (80), and Yellow-breasted Chat (13). We had a lower-than-average number of Black-capped Chickadee (39, compared to our average of 85), and Eastern Towhee (8, average of 18). We have not banded any Eastern Kingbirds for the past five years, possibly due to the town not maintaining the fields. Northern Mockingbird numbers have also been shockingly low since the banding station opened with most years now not banding any. It was good to have a rebound of Yellow-rumped Warblers after very low numbers for the past 5 years. This year we banded 672 of them, which is in the normal range for our station.

We had four birds with beak deformities and eleven birds presented with pox. A Northern Cardinal that we had banded 8 days prior was recaptured 48 km away at Manomet Bird Observatory. We had one foreign recapture of a Blue Jay but have not heard back from the Bird Banding Lab on where it was banded.

Many thanks to the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History for hosting our banding station and providing monetary and all-around support. We are always appreciative of the monetary support from the French Foundation and the Cape Cod Bird

Club. A big thank-you to the many volunteers who helped the banders this fall season- Keelin Miller (who also enters all the data), Paula Pariseau, Reenie Dwyer, Gabbie DiNardi, and Michele Burnat. Congratulations to Andrew Single who received his North American Banding Council bander certification this fall too! And thanks to

MID-ATLANTIC REGION

Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory

Chestertown, Queen Anne's County, Maryland

Maren Gimpel, mgimpel2@washcoll.edu

<https://www.washcoll.edu/learn-by-doing/ces/fbbo.php>

<https://www.facebook.com/ForemansBranch>

<https://www.instagram.com/foremansbranch>

Banders: Jim Gruber, Maren Gimpel,

Meghan McHenry, Arcata Leavitt,

Rebekkah LaBlue, Axel Rutter

FBBO concluded its 26th year of banding with the fall 2023 season. The station has nets in a mix of habitats including fallow fields, second growth forests, mature woodlands and over a lake with mud flats. This habitat has remained mostly the same over the years.

This fall we banded 9,010 new birds (well below average) of 116 species. This species count and capture rate (birds/100 net-hours) were slightly below average. We captured four species in record high numbers, three of these were 2 SD above our long-term average: Least Sandpiper, Acadian Flycatcher and Yellow-breasted Chat. Seven species were caught in record low numbers, including Common Grackle, Grasshopper Sparrow, Slate-colored Junco, Blue Grosbeak, Indigo Bunting, Western Palm Warbler and Tufted Titmouse, though none were more than 2 SD below our long-term average.

The first remarkable bird of our season was an Osprey in our "bridge nets" on 7 August. These three nets run over a shallow lake with mud flats and while we are now accustomed to Green Herons and Belted Kingfishers, we were shocked to find an

adult bird caught by its talons dangling above the water. We band nestling Osprey in summer, so had the correct band size on hand, but it was the first time any of those present had seen an adult in the hand. A Killdeer on 8 September was the second ever for FBBO. A Western Flycatcher, the first for the station, was banded on 8 October bringing our station species list to 179. Another highlight of the fall happened on 16 October when we banded our 350,000th bird – a male Golden-crowned Kinglet.

Our 234 returns were comprised of 27 different species. There were fewer "old" birds compared to recent years. Only 17 were over 6 years old, but we did capture 6 birds that were older than 9 years old. The oldest bird of the season was Orchard Oriole #2581-08625 which was 10 years and 2 months old, just 8 months shy of the longevity record for this species which is 11 years.

Two recoveries of note were reported during the fall season. Gray Catbird #2731-02730 was killed by a cat in Pomfret, CT (450 km from FBBO) and White-throated Sparrow #3181-09555 was found dead in Greensboro, NC (490 km from FBBO).

Collaborations with external partners included deploying radio tags for Luke Degroote of Powdermill Avian Research Center and deploying tags on Eastern Towhees for Shelly Eshleman of the University of Delaware. We also collected Yellow-breasted Chat blood samples for Johanna Beam of Pennsylvania State University. Our collaboration with the American Bird Conservancy to test bird-friendly glass continues.

We are most grateful to Dr. Henry F. Sears for his years of support as well as to 17 volunteers who contributed 470 hours of their time.

Meadowlands Bird Banding Station

Lyndhurst/North Arlington, Bergen County,

New Jersey

Cailin O'Connor, coconnor@kean.edu

Instagram: @nj_par

Banders: Cailin O'Connor, Drew McQuade,

Erica Mueller

The Meadowlands Bird Banding Station operated under a different banding team from 2008-2015. The station was reopened in the fall of 2019 as a migratory and MAPS banding station on roughly half the footprint of the original banding site and was expanded to include most of the original site in the summer of 2021. The expanded banding site contains saltmarsh, mudflat, and mid-successional shrub/scrub habitats, as well as a capped landfill historically used for dumping industrial waste. One portion of the station follows a narrow strip of land between a tidal marsh and an impoundment, while the landfill is mid-successional habitat dominated by mugwort and *Phragmites* with sparse Eastern Cottonwood stands. The sites have undergone some ecological restoration efforts in the past; recently, the top of the landfill, which hosts three nets, was treated with targeted herbicides to remove invasive plants, and encourage the growth of natives, which changed the avian species composition somewhat.

The Meadowlands Bird Banding Station operated 23 nets in total during the fall 2023 season, usually opening 10 nets per day on a rotating basis for 23 banding days from 16 August to 27 October. In total, 1,612 individuals of 61 species were banded, bringing the total species count at the station during fall migration to 82 species.

The total number of banded birds for this season was more than twice the number of birds in fall of 2022 despite four fewer days of banding. Some of this can be attributed to the addition of three nets at the saltmarsh site. For instance, the number of Myrtle Warblers banded this season was four times our seasonal average and is due to two new nets that caught mostly this species over a couple of heavy migration days in October. There were 96 recaptures this season, about twice the average for fall, of which 81 were repeats and 12 were returns; returns consisted of mostly Gray Catbird, Song Sparrow, and Northern Mockingbird. We had four foreign recaps including a Semipalmated Sandpiper banded a couple of years ago on Delaware Bay in New Jersey, and a Myrtle Warbler banded in 2018 at Monomoy in Massachusetts. Two other foreign recaps included a Yellow

Warbler from Massachusetts and a Gray Catbird from Ontario, but the BBL did not have their data yet.

Sixty-one species for the season is our second highest season total, one behind fall 2022. Three new species for the station were banded this season: Winter Wren, Greater Yellowlegs, and Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, represented by one individual each. Other notable species banded included a Clay-colored Sparrow and a Connecticut Warbler.

Seventy-four Lotek nanotags were affixed to Gray Catbirds (n=33), Northern Waterthrush (n=29), Song Sparrows (n=11), White-throated Sparrows (n=9), and Swainson's Thrushes (n=2) to track their fall migratory movements as part of a project involving the potential effects of window strikes on fall migration. This is the third year nanotags were deployed, after thirty were deployed from in the fall seasons of 2021 and 2022 on Gray Catbirds and Song Sparrows only. Notably, a female Black-and-white Warbler banded this fall hit a window at one of our window strike survey sites about a week later. Luckily, she sustained only minor injuries and was rehabilitated and released quickly thereafter to continue her migration.

Thank you to New Jersey Sports and Exposition Authority for use of their land for the banding station and to our core team members Michael Turso, Olivia Haas, and Matthew Wolfe. Thank you to Kean University and Bergen County Audubon Society for their financial support

Mt. Nebo Wildlife Management Area (Mt. Nebo WMA)

Oakland, Garrett County, Maryland

Connie Skipper, connieskipper@hohnet.com

Bander: Connie Skipper

This was the 23rd season of banding at Mt. Nebo WMA. The site is an old field in a wildlife management area. It is overgrown with invasive shrubs, autumn olive and honeysuckle in hedgerows, alternated with small plots of planted crops that include sorghum, field corn, brown top and pearl millet. There are apple trees throughout

the site. It is surrounded by forest and adjacent to a wooded swamp.

The station operated for 29 days from 25 August to 3 November. A total of 1,033 birds were banded consisting of 65 species. The station effort was 2,491 net-hours with a capture rate of 41 birds/100 net-hours. No new species were added to the station total which remains at 101.

The largest daily catch occurred on 16 October with 67 birds of 13 species with sparrows making up 67% of the catch. The next best day was 8 September with 59 birds and a season high of 22 species with Magnolia Warblers making up 22% of that total.

On 8 September we had a big warbler day. Immediately after opening, we all scrambled for Avon Skin So Soft to ward off the mosquitos which were biting us unbearably. We watched clouds of them low in the bushes. The warblers were in a feeding frenzy, and we captured 14 species.

Several species were captured in numbers well above the average including Lincoln's Sparrow 33 (14), Mourning Warbler 6 (2), Yellow-bellied Flycatcher 7 (3.5), Ovenbird 36 (23), Connecticut Warbler 5 (2), and Swamp Sparrow 44 (19).

Alternatively, we had some species that were captured in number well below the average including Purple Finch 10 (27), Common Yellowthroat 44 (65), Red-eyed Vireo 3 (7), White-throated Sparrow 67 (86), and Dark-eyed Junco 4 (15).

The station had 256 recaptures of 23 species. We had 49 returns- two banded in 2019, six banded in 2020, 11 banded in 2021 and 19 banded in 2022. A Gray Catbird banded at this location by Fran Pope on 13 September 2018 as an after hatch-year was recaptured on 22 September, making it at least six years old.

I greatly appreciated the faithful volunteers who tended nets and helped maintain net lanes. Thanks to Beau Emerson and the Mt. Nebo WMA staff for our continued use of this site and their help in clearing and maintaining net lanes.

USGS Eastern Ecological Science Center Bird Banding Laboratory

Patuxent Research Refuge, Laurel,
Prince George's County, Maryland

Matthew Rogosky, mrogosky@usgs.gov

Banders: *Matthew Rogosky, Kyra Harvey,
Lauren Walker, Danny Bystrak,*

The 2023 fall season marked the 40th year the banding station was operated by the US Geological Survey's Bird Banding Laboratory. The station is located at the Patuxent Research Refuge within one of the power line transmission rights-of-way that transects the refuge. This particular right-of-way is managed to maintain a dense shrub canopy 2-3 m high within the surrounding American Beech dominated upland deciduous forest.

This season saw several improvements to the station. The station received a much-needed upgrade to its bird processing center, including a new pavilion with picnic tables and a shed. From the early 2000s to 2022, the team operated from a small table, with limited storage built underneath and a modest roof. The 2023 upgrades allowed birds to be processed more efficiently and visitors to observe without interrupting the banding process.

Over time, the station's dense shrub habitat had become overgrown and over-crowded. Prior to the start of 2023 banding season, the vegetation was thinned to allow access to critical areas of the powerline right-of-way. This strategic thinning resulted in an expansion of the net lanes from 1.2 m to 2.5 m wide, along with several additional cross-section cuts throughout the right-of-way where the net lanes reside. Elsewhere along the right-of-way, away from the banding station, vegetation was thinned and removed more extensively.

A total of 2,401 birds were banded of 82 species. This total represents the highest number of newly banded birds since the station was reopened with the current consistent effort protocols in 2007. We suspect the widening of the net lanes, along with other vegetation controls within the remainder of the right-of-way habitat, reduced the total

shrub habitat density in the right-of-way corridor. This may have resulted in birds moving into the station's shrubbier habitat and may explain the large number of bandings of October/November migrants.

For the following five species, we compared the 2023 new banding total with the 2007-current running average. White-throated Sparrow (346 total/198 avg.), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (268 total/184 avg.), Song Sparrow (61 total/41 avg.), Hermit Thrush (143 total/74 avg.), and Eastern Towhee (115/54 avg.) all saw notably above average banding counts. The 2023 counts for White-throated Sparrow, Hermit Thrush, and Eastern Towhee were also the highest annual capture across the 17-year period.

We also banded several uncommon species that had not been banded at the station in several years, including Yellow-throated Vireo (2016), Baltimore Oriole (2012), House Finch (2021, 1998), Eastern Bluebird (2001).

Notably, the station also recorded the 2nd largest total number of Cape May Warblers in the 40 years the station has operated. The station banded 15 Cape May Warblers this season, while only 24 individuals have been banded since 2007.

There was also a noticeable increase in recaptures (727) of birds banded at the station in previous years. The oldest recaptures were two Red-eyed Vireos, one of which was aged to be 10 years, 2 months and the other aged to at least 8 years, 2 months.

A huge thanks to our network of volunteers and continued support from the US Geological Survey Eastern Ecological Science Center and the US Fish and Wildlife Service Patuxent Research Refuge.

Powdermill Avian Research Center (PARC)

Rector, Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania

Annie Lindsay, LindsayA@carnegiemnh.org

<https://powdermillarc.org/>

Facebook: @PowdermillNatureReserve

Instagram: powdermillnaturereserve1956

Banders: Annie Lindsay, Luke DeGroot, Mallory Sarver, Mary Shidel, Grace Muench, Jordan Mouton, Lindsey Doyel, Connor O'Hea.

Apr. - Jun. 2024

Powdermill Avian Research Center (PARC) is a long-term bird monitoring station operated and supported by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Powdermill's banding station opened in June 1961, and has been running continuously year-round since then, and fall 2023 marks the 62nd fall banding season. The fall season began on 2 August and continued through 10 November.

PARC operates 67 nets during the fall migration season: 63 that are opened at the beginning of the season are supplemented by four additional nets starting on 15 September. The nets are grouped together into various net lanes and are spread across a 10-ha banding area. The habitat is mostly early successional or transitional and is quite shrubby. There are four ponds in the net lane area. One usually dries during late summer and into fall, and two are relatively shallow, but the largest remains full and is roughly 4.5 m deep. The banding area is surrounded by forest and sits at the foot of the Laurel Ridge bordering Forbes State Forest.

The season's weather was typical for southwestern Pennsylvania in fall. Warm, humid weather in August transitioned to cooler temperatures and lower humidity in September and October followed by crisp days with frosty mornings by the end of October and into November.

We banded 6,084 and recaptured 3,009 birds of 101 species and one hybrid ("Brewster's Warbler") during our fall 2023 season. Of the 3,009 recaptures, 117 were between-year returns, most of which are likely local breeding or wintering birds. The season total was slightly lower than average, but there were no species with noteworthy low captures (2 standard deviations below the mean). Several species had higher than average captures including Wilson's Snipe ($n = 2$; avg. 0.5 ± 0.66), Least Flycatcher ($n = 61$; avg. 40.5 ± 9.38), Carolina Wren ($n = 40$; avg. 16.2 ± 9.87), Bicknell's Thrush ($n = 2$; avg. 0 ± 0), Swamp Sparrow ($n = 276$; avg. 159.4 ± 34.29), Ovenbird ($n = 158$; avg. 98.2 ± 19.85), Louisiana Waterthrush ($n = 9$; avg. 1.2 ± 1.64), Western Palm Warbler ($n = 72$; avg. 27.6 ± 15.59), Yellow Palm Warbler ($n = 6$; avg. 1.4 ± 1.19), and Yellow-

throated Warbler ($n = 1$; avg. 0 ± 0). The Louisiana Waterthrush and Ovenbird totals were record fall highs for those species. Wilson's Snipe tied with three other years and Yellow-throated Warbler tied with five other years for record high numbers.

The season highlight for fall 2023 was adding a new species to Powdermill's dataset, an event that does not happen often after banding continuously for 62 years. Although a few possible "Bicknell's" subspecies were banded at Powdermill prior to its elevation to full species status in 1998, none have been definitive Bicknell's Thrush until this fall. Using the formula in "Identification and sex determination of Bicknell's Thrush using morphometric data" (Frey et al. 2008, *J. Field Ornithol.* 79:408-420), two individuals were identified, one on 14 September and one on 8 October that was recaptured 4 days later. Both were aged as hatching year (FCF).

There were many returns at Powdermill this fall, and notable, older individuals were a highlight. A Ruby-throated Hummingbird initially banded on 25 August 2021 as an after hatching year (DCB) female was recaptured exactly two years later on 25 August when she was at least three years old. A hatch year (FCF) Red-eyed Vireo that was banded on 10 August 2017 was recaptured on 23 August with a brood patch, and a hatch year (FCF) Ovenbird that was banded on 3 July 2017 was recaptured on 6 September. A hatch year (FCF) Gray Catbird that was banded on 4 August 2015 was recaptured twice this fall with a re-feathering brood patch. A second year (FCF) Black-capped Chickadee that was banded on 7 April 2016 has been recaptured many times over the past seven years, and this "frequent flier" was at least eight years old when it was recaptured several times this fall.

This fall, we received two reports of birds banded at Powdermill and encountered elsewhere. Both were Northern Saw-whet Owls: an after second year (DCB) female that was banded at Powdermill on 17 November 2022 was recaptured in Saint Ignace, Michigan on 16 October 2023, and a hatch year (FCF) of unknown sex that was banded at

Powdermill on 8 November 2022 was recaptured in Dreherstown, Pennsylvania on 8 November 2023.

PARC hosted an in-person Extraction and Banding Workshop and a North American Banding Council certification session in September. PARC facilitated several in-house research projects and collaborated with and hosted outside researchers including tracking migrating songbird movement and stopover length in the area immediately surrounding PARC, continuing our partnership with the American Bird Conservancy to test avian perception of glass, an ongoing, multi-year project, collecting primary coverts from select species to quantify feather barb density, deploying transmitters on Eastern Towhees for a project studying movement and survival of the species through the full annual cycle, collecting feathers for a UCLA project studying the impacts of wildfire smoke on birds, and collecting feathers for the Genoscape Project. We hosted 350 visitors at the banding station.

We thank our banding crew and the staff of Powdermill Nature Reserve. Our many dedicated volunteers are invaluable, and we could not do the work we do at Powdermill without their help. Powdermill's bird banding operation is funded through the generosity of the Colcom Foundation, the Laurel Foundation, and numerous private donors who have supported Powdermill Avian Research Center since its inception.

Rushton Woods Banding Station (RWBS)

Newtown Square, Chester County, Pennsylvania

Alison Fetterman, avf@wctrust.org

<https://wctrust.org/bird-banding/>

Banders: Lisa Kiziuk, Blake Goll, Michelle Eshleman, Aaron Coolman, Doris McGovern, Alison Fetterman

Fall 2023 was the 14th consecutive year of fall migration songbird banding at Rushton Woods Banding Station (RWBS), which has been in operation since 2010. We operated 16 nets, three days a week for a total of 19 days from 31 August through 26 October.

RWBS is located on a 34-ha preserve that is a matrix of mature deciduous forest, meadows, early to late successional shrub-scrub hedge rows, and six acres of organic agriculture owned and managed by Willistown Conservation Trust. Songbird migration and Northern Saw-whet Owl banding take place in the hedge rows, while a MAPS station is operated in the mature forest during the summer.

The capture rate increased this year after a thirteen-year, station low-rate last fall. Two days were lost due to rain and two more due to excess heat; we closed for three additional days due to staff availability. We banded 958 birds of 52 species with a capture rate of 74.7 birds/100 net-hours, with an additional 86 repeats, and 6 returns. The largest single-day catch was on 24 October with 118 new birds of 15 species. Orange-crowned Warbler was recorded for the first time, bringing the station cumulative total to 90 species caught during fall migration. Gray Catbird remained the top species banded with Ruby-crowned Kinglet coming in second for the first time. Common Yellowthroat did not make the top 10 most captured for the first time in station history.

We had high fall counts for Ruby-crowned Kinglet (113), Hermit Thrush (55), Swamp Sparrow (33) and Nashville Warbler (6) while Common Yellowthroat (23) was a station low count. Fox Sparrow was caught for the first time since 2017. Species notably absent included Chipping Sparrow and Slate-colored Junco. We did not band any Tufted Titmice; however, we had one return from spring 2022 and one repeat from MAPS banding.

Notable returns included a White-throated Sparrow originally banded as a hatch year in October 2019 and a seven-year-old Carolina Chickadee banded as a hatch year in 2016. We had no foreign recaptures or encounters.

We hosted more than 100 visitors to the station including classes from three universities, students from local elementary and high schools, and many members of the public. We continue to collaborate with Drexel University as a study site and University of Pennsylvania graduate research

projects. Annual songbird banding reports can be found at: <https://wctrust.org/research/>.

Thanks to all the dedicated volunteers who gave their time, in some cases for many years, in contributing to the long-term data collection at the Rushton Woods Banding Station.

SOUTHEAST REGION

Cape Florida Banding Station (CFBS)

Key Biscayne, Miami-Dade County, Florida

Michelle Davis, info@capefloridabandingstation.org

<http://capefloridabandingstation.wordpress.com/>

Banders: Miriam Avello, Elizabeth Golden, Nasim Mahomar, Steffanie Munguía, Nicole Rita

The Cape Florida Banding Station (CFBS) is in its 22nd year of fall migration banding in Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park (BBCFSP). This park is on the southern tip of a largely developed barrier island just off the coast of Miami. Mist nets are set in a restored tropical hardwood hammock that is the result of a multi-million dollar effort to return native vegetation to the park following Hurricane Andrew in 1992.

The fall banding period ran from 15 August to 2 November 2023. We used 23 regular nets and two canopy nets set in the same locations as the fall 2022 and spring 2023 seasons. Overall, 1,909 birds were captured of 49 species with Ovenbird, American Redstart, and Black-throated Blue Warblers as the top three most abundant species. Three new species were banded for the station or the season: Merlin on 30 September, Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker on 20 October, and La Sagra's Flycatcher on 2 November.

Only one day was lost to weather when the extreme outer edge of powerful Hurricane Idalia brushed by South Florida in late August. As usual, migration peaked from late September to mid-October, however this season was somewhat slow in terms of species diversity and number of individuals. We failed to break 2,000 birds this fall, and the capture rate was down from 23.0 birds/100 net-hours in 2022 to 19.0. Despite the lower

overall numbers, many of our top species such as Ovenbird, American Redstart and Worm-eating Warblers were banded in above-average numbers. Worm-eating Warblers in particular had a longer migration this fall; we usually catch the majority of this species in September but this year they were passing through in October with one banded on 1 November. Black-throated Blue Warblers continue their decline at our site, with numbers quite a bit below average. The days of 400 to 500 Black-throated Blue Warblers in one season seem to be a thing of the past. Swainson's Warbler numbers, however, remain strong, and they just missed out on the top 10 this fall. The busiest day was 3 October when a front brought a wave of migrants down and 128 birds were banded.

Twenty-six individuals banded during other seasons were recaptured this fall. Of the returning birds, 8 were wintering Ovenbirds, 4 were resident Northern Cardinals and the balance were made up of Gray Catbirds, Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, a Black-and-white Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, American Redstart, Swainson's Warbler and two White-eyed Vireos. The oldest returns were a Northern Cardinal banded in 2016 and an Ovenbird from 2018. No foreign recaptures were captured this fall.

We had 166 individuals of 20 species that were recaptured within-season, not including two resident Northern Cardinals. The average length of time between first and last capture was 3.8 days for all actively migrating individuals combined. These birds gained an average of 3.9% of their original body weight (OBW) during this time. On average, the stopover time in 2023 was slightly below the 10-year average of 4.2 days but the average weight gain was above the 10-year average of 3.1% OBW.

Fall 2023 marks a transitional season as Michelle Davis has moved out of the South Florida region and is remotely assisting Nasim Mahomar and Nicole Rita as the new co-directors of CFBS, which has also launched as its own nonprofit. This project would not be possible without the assistance of our supporters, dedicated volunteer extractors, and banders-in training for the fall season. Special thanks go to Robin Diaz, data entry master and all-

around repository of knowledge, and to Bill Baggs Cape Florida State Park for continuing to support the project.

**Kiawah Island Banding Station (KIBS),
Captain Sams Site** Kiawah Island, Charleston
County, South Carolina

Aaron Given, agiven@kiawahisland.org
www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com

Banders: Aaron Given, Kristin Attinger,
Camille Blose, Matt Hixson, Brittany Holliker,
Natalie Miller, Wentao Yang

This was the 15th consecutive year of fall migration banding at the Captain Sams site with banding occurring daily during the last 12 years. Kiawah Island is a 3250-ha barrier island and residential/resort community located approximately 32 km 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.

Overall, temperatures were seasonally normal except for August which was warmer than the historical average. This season was also drier, and we experienced less rain than normal. Cold fronts were few and far between for the first 5 weeks of the season. The first significant front didn't arrive until 19 September. We experienced good movement of migrants through October with the passage of three stronger fronts. As usual migration slowed down during November, but unlike last year, we did not experience a late season push of large numbers of Yellow-rumped Warblers.

Nets were open for a total of 104 days from 15 August - 30 November. There were only 4 days when banding did not occur because of weather: 30-31 August (Hurricane Idalia), 12 October, and 22 November.

We banded 4,621 new birds of 85 different species. The most commonly banded species were Gray Catbird (936), Common Yellowthroat (833) and Yellow-rumped Warbler (525). Those three species combined made up 49.6% of all the birds banded

this season. Gray Catbirds decreased 15.8% from last year but was still up 15.6% since 2012. After falling to the number three spot last year, Common Yellowthroats climbed back into number two despite exhibiting a 20.4 % decrease from last fall and a 23.9 % decrease over the average since 2012. After a strong 2022 fall season, Yellow-rumped Warbler numbers plummeted this year with a 48.8% decrease. Since 2012, this fall was the second worst fall for Yellow-rumped Warblers with 2020 being the lowest with 509 banded.

The overall effort increased from 15,292.6 net-hours in 2022 to 17,178.3 net-hours this year. This increase can be attributed to banding on three more days than last year, and the addition of 2 new nets (net 10 and net 35). The additional three days added on average about 496 net-hours while the two new nets added 1081 net-hours. Net 10 was used during the winter of 2009-2010 and spring 2010 and 2011 and has never been used during the fall before. Net 35 was added to make checking the set of nets along the Kiawah River more efficient to avoid unnecessary triple-checking of some nets and to eliminate back-tracking to other nets. Both nets performed well below the average in terms of capture rate.

We banded 1,088 less birds this year compared to last year, but only 45 birds less than the average for the previous 12 years. The capture rate of new birds was 26.9 birds/100 net-hours. The capture rate decreased by 10.4 birds/100 net-hours compared to last year and was 11.3 birds/100 net-hours lower than the 12-year average of 38.3 birds/100 net-hours. Our capture rate has decreased every year starting in 2012 except for 2017, 2019, and 2022 when we experienced small increases from the previous year. The capture rate of recaptures is normally very consistent from year to year, however this year the capture rate was 7.5 birds/100 net-hours which is 2.4 birds/100 net-hours lower than the average since 2012.

We had 1,292 recaptures including 1,073 repeats, 216 returns, and 3 foreign recaptures. One of the foreign recaptures was a Common Yellowthroat that we recaptured on 5 October and was banded

the previous day at the Little Bear site. It is rare to catch birds between our two sites even though they are only 14 km apart. The other two (Gray Catbird and Yellow-rumped Warbler) have been submitted to the Bird Banding Lab but neither band has been reported by the bander therefore no information is available. In addition, one bird that we banded this fall was recovered in Florida; a Gray Catbird that was banded on 2 October was hit by a car on 19 October. We also were notified that a Mourning Dove that we banded last fall on 3 November 2022 was shot by a hunter about 21 km away on John's Island on 16 September 2023.

There were 12 days this fall when over 100 birds were banded including 2 days with over 200 birds banded. Last year we had 5 days with over 200 birds and 16 days with over 100 birds. The best day of the season was on 19 September when we banded 230 birds and had 13 recaptures. Of those 230 birds, 118 of them were Common Yellowthroats! The next two busiest days occurred on 10 October and 7 October when 225 and 199 birds were banded, respectively. Forty percent of the birds banded this season (1,835) were banded on just 10 days following the passage of 3 major cold fronts between the end of September and mid-October.

Several species exhibited record high numbers this season: Northern Flicker (4), Eastern Phoebe (82), White-eyed Vireo (76*), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (179), Eastern Bluebird (2), White-crowned Sparrow (3*), Black-and-white Warbler (43*), Swainson's Warbler (3), Northern Parula (53), Bay-breasted Warbler (4), Palm Warbler (300), Pine Warbler (4), Summer Tanager (6*). Alternatively, we had a couple species that had record low numbers: Carolina Wren (2), House Wren (27), Eastern Towhee (5*), Hooded Warbler (1). The * indicates species that tied the record high or low.

Some other rare and notable species that were banded this fall include: Eastern Whip-poor-will (1; 5 previous), Virginia Rail (1; 1), Ash-throated Flycatcher (1; 2), Bell's Vireo (2; 5), Sedge Wren (1; 3), Fox Sparrow (1; 2), Lincoln's Sparrow (1; 4), MacGillivray's Warbler (1; 1).

Species notably absent this year included: Common Ground Dove (67 total, average 5.6/year), Cooper's Hawk (12, 1.0), Eastern Screech-Owl (15, 1.3), Field Sparrow (23, 1.9), Nashville Warbler (21, 1.8), Blue Grosbeak (26, 2.2). Common Ground Doves populations on Kiawah were on a steady decline since 2012 and then crashed in 2018 following a rare winter storm that blanketed the area with snow and ice for several days. There was some hope of a rebound when we banded 3 ground doves last year however none were even seen or heard this year.

Without the cooperation of many people and entities, this work would not be possible. The success of this project relies on their commitment, and I am in a debt of gratitude to everyone involved. I would like to thank my team of banding assistants (listed above). I would like to acknowledge the Town of Kiawah Island for providing funding for equipment and banding assistant stipends, the Kiawah Island Conservancy for providing funding for the housing of the banding assistants, and the Kiawah Partners for allowing access to their property for banding. I would like to thank the many volunteers that donated their time to come out and help.

Kiawah Island Banding Station (KIBS), Little Bear Site

Kiawah Island, Charleston County, South Carolina
Aaron Given, agiven@kiawahisland.org
www.kiawahislandbanding.blogspot.com

Banders: Aaron Given, Kristin Attinger, Camille Blose, Matt Hixson, Brittany Holliker, Natalie Miller, Wentao Yang

This was the 9th season for the Little Bear site which we initiated in the fall of 2015. Kiawah Island is a 3,250-ha barrier island and residential/resort community located approximately 32 km southeast of Charleston, South Carolina. The banding site is situated at the extreme eastern end of the island in secondary dune scrub/shrub and ephemeral brackish wetlands with wax-myrtle,

sea ox-eye, and marsh-elder being the dominant plant species.

Weather conditions and frontal movements were the same as reported in the Captain Sams report. Hurricane Idalia came up from Florida on 31 August bringing with it 8 cm of rain, strong winds, and 0.7 m storm surge. Tides crested at 2.8 m which was enough water to flood both banding sites. Because Captain Sams is tidal, most of the water receded quickly, leaving only 15-20 cm of water in the lower elevation areas of the station. Little Bear on the other hand is situated in a basin that collects and holds water. When the tide breached the dunes, it flooded Little Bear with 45-60 cm of water. Between a handful of rain events and other king tides, Little Bear was flooded for most of the season only drying up completely at the end of the season.

Nets were open for a total of 79 days from 23 August - 15 November. There were only 6 days cancelled due to weather or to give the banders a rest.

We banded 3,380 new birds of 86 different species. The most commonly banded species were Gray Catbird (762), Common Yellowthroat (528), and Palm Warbler (394). Those three species combined made up 50% of all the birds banded this season. Gray Catbird numbers exhibited only a 2.1% increase compared to last fall and a 15.1% increase since 2015. Common Yellowthroat increased by 18.4% compared to last year but was 10.4% lower compared to the average of the last 8 years. After a down year in 2022, Palm Warblers numbers were up 87.6% from last fall and 84.1% above the average since 2015.

We logged 9,260.1 net-hours at Little Bear this fall – a large increase from the 6,985.1 net-hours in 2022. We averaged 25.3 more net-hours per day than in 2022. We banded on three more days than last fall and added two new nets (net 24 and 25). The additional 3 days added on average 351.6 net-hours while the new nets added 684.7 net-hours. In addition, many fewer days were cut short due to excessive heat and/or wind this year compared to last. The new nets were added to mitigate some

of the loss of vegetation surrounding several of our wetland nets. Excessive flooding and saltwater intrusion have reduced the vegetation in that area severely to the point where a couple nets have very little cover nearby.

We banded 425 more birds this year compared to last year, and 408 more birds than the average since 2015. Despite this, Little Bear's capture rate decreased by 13.7% from 42.3 birds/100 net-hours in 2022 to 36.5 in 2023. Similarly, the capture rate decreased by 18.5% compared to the average over the last 8 years.

We had 729 recaptures this season which is slightly higher than the 701 recaptures from last year. The average capture rate of recaptures, however, followed a similar pattern as the new birds decreasing by 21% from 2022 and by 15% compared to the average since 2015. We had 621 repeats, 108 returns, and no foreign recaptures.

There were 10 days when over 100 birds were banded including 2 days with more than 200 birds banded. Last year, we had 8 days over 100 birds and no 200-bird days. The best day of the season was on 8 October when we banded 220 birds and had 11 recaptures. Of the 220 birds, 98 of them were Palm Warblers! The next two busiest days occurred on 15 October and 7 October when 208 and 177 birds were banded, respectively. Like Captain Sams, 42% of the birds banded this season, were banded during these 10 days following 3 strong cold fronts between the end of September and mid-October.

Several species exhibited record high numbers this season: Mourning Dove (1*), Yellow-billed Cuckoo (46), Green Heron (7), Chuck-wills-widow (2*), Downy Woodpecker (8), Acadian Flycatcher (1*), Least Flycatcher (1*), Eastern Phoebe (45), Blue Jay (3), Veery (10), Swainson's Thrush (30*), House Finch (4*), White-throated Sparrow (6), Saltmarsh Sparrow (5), Savannah Sparrow (6), Black-and-White Warbler (28), American Redstart (187), Northern Parula (27), Bay-breasted Warbler (3*), Blackburnian Warbler (3), Chestnut-sided Warbler (4*), Blackpoll Warbler (28), Palm Warbler (394), Yellow-throated Warbler (2*).

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Species that had record low numbers included: Hermit Thrush (4*). The * indicates species that tied the record high or low.

Some other rare and notable species banded included: Mourning Dove (1; 2 previous), Solitary Sandpiper (1; 1), Tricolored Heron (1; 0), Great Crested Flycatcher (1; 1), Yellow-green Vireo (1; 1), Blue-winged Warbler (1; 1), Connecticut Warbler (1; 3). KIBS's second Yellow-green Vireo was a complete surprise. Yellow-green Vireos breed in Mexico and Central America and spend the winter in northwest South America. There are only 6 records of this species on the East Coast north of Florida with two of those being birds banded on Kiawah Island.

Species notably absent include Common Ground Dove (29 total; 3.2/year), Sharp-shinned Hawk (11; 1.2), Chipping Sparrow (8; 0.9), Scarlet Tanager (8; 0.9).

Without the cooperation of many people and entities, this work would not be possible. The success of this project relies on their commitment, and I am in a debt of gratitude to everyone involved. I would like to thank my team of banding assistants (listed above). I'd like to acknowledge the Town of Kiawah Island for providing funding for equipment and banding assistant stipends, the Kiawah Island Conservancy for providing funding for the housing of the banding assistants, and the Kiawah Partners and the Bear Island Holding Trust for allowing access to their property for banding. I'd like to thank the many volunteers that donated their time to come out and help. **Sullivan's Island**

Bird Banding Station (SIBBS)

Sullivan's Island, Charleston County,
South Carolina

Sarah Harper (Diaz),

sullivanislandbirds@gmail.com

<https://www.facebook.com/sullivanislandbirds>

The Sullivan's Island Bird Banding Station (SIBBS) has been in operation since the spring of 2020. The station had additional seasons under a prior bander during the fall of 2015 and 2016.

SIBBS is located within a 60 ha conservation easement that abuts the beach dune line. Ten mist net lanes were utilized with between seven and nine 12 m mist nets opened each morning. Temperature, wind speed and wind direction dictated which nets could be opened and how long they could stay open. Flooding from rain events consistently prevented us from using several net lanes. Most of the net lanes are located in scrubland habitat with a low canopy. Dominant shrubs include wax myrtle, Carolina cherry laurel, Hercules' club, poison ivy and Eastern red cedar. Many invasive plants are also well-established at the station, including Chinese tallow tree, rattlebox, Japanese honeysuckle, and Chinese wisteria. We frequently observed small foraging flocks of warblers passing through the open dune grassland habitat dominated by spotted beebalm, broomsedge and Hercules' club. For this reason, we created a new net lane directly behind the main beach dune in the grassland habitat. The new net lane may have accounted for the substantial increase in Palm Warbler and Prairie Warbler captures this fall.

The station opened for a total of 27 days between 6 September and 19 November. Eight trained volunteers assisted on a weekly basis and five additional volunteers assisted on an irregular basis. A total of 782 new birds were banded across 45 different species. Highlights of this season's captures included: a Cape May Warbler, a Chestnut-sided Warbler, a Philadelphia Vireo, 5 Painted Buntings and a Yellow-breasted Chat. The Philadelphia Vireo and Chestnut-sided Warbler were both new species for the station. The capture rate (141 birds/100 net-hours) was slightly lower than the capture rate last fall (165 birds/100 net-hours). Surprisingly, only 53 Myrtle Warblers were banded this fall, compared to 241 last fall.

Five species (Gray Catbird, Myrtle Warbler, Orange-crowned Warbler, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and Swamp Sparrow) banded in previous years and returning to the site demonstrated site fidelity to stopover/wintering grounds. Three Myrtle Warblers were originally banded in in 2021. We had 6 returning Gray Catbirds including one banded in November of 2015, making the bird at least eight

years old. Gray Catbirds regularly overwinter at the banding station, however, many of the catbirds we banded during the peak of migration had ample fat stores and were likely only using the station as a stopover location.

SIBBS is a volunteer-based organization that relies on regular trained volunteers for setting up and taking down equipment, extracting birds and scribing data. We would like to thank all of our volunteers and donors that make this research possible! SIBBS is a program of the Carolina Avian Research Program, a nonprofit that relies on small private donations to fund educational outreach programming and materials, bird banding equipment, and liability insurance required to operate the station.

CANADIAN REGION

Tadoussac Bird Observatory (TBO)

Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area, Québec

Alexandre Terrigeol,

Direction.oot@explosnature.ca

<https://ootadoussac.ca>

<https://www.facebook.com/observatoire.oiseaux.tadoussac>

https://www.instagram.com/oot_tadoussac/

Banders: Thomas Gianoli, Sarah Delisle, Laetitia Desbordes, Mathieu Landry

Fall migration monitoring at Cap-Tourmente National Wildlife Area is led by Explos-Nature Corporation's Tadoussac Bird Observatory. This project, which began in 2015, was made possible by the financial and technical support of Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC). The research site is made up of a wide variety of habitats. The most important are agricultural fields (mainly herbaceous perennials) interspersed with shrub and tree hedges, alder stands of various densities, riparian hardwood forests and different types of wetlands. Starting in September, this project has now expanded to run from 1 August to 30 October. The nets were fully deployed on 12 of the 91 days of operation. Most net closures were due to natural conditions (bad weather, presence of predators or flooding).

It was a relatively atypical season, with few birds passing through en masse, though a daily average of 100 birds captured meant that our volunteers were easily trained. A total of 7,751 birds of 77 species were caught, of which 6,768 were newly banded birds and 983 were recaptures. The station's first Field Sparrow was captured, and a Yellow-breasted Chat and a Yellow-billed Cuckoo delighted the team this autumn. A total of 5,413 net-hours of banding resulted in a capture rate of 124 birds/100 net-hours. We had an interesting number of recaptures from previous years, including a Veery banded in 2016, but no foreign recaptures this season. Despite the forest fires raging in the boreal forest this summer, we didn't notice any effect on the number of birds captured, but White-crowned Sparrows were conspicuously absent. Finally, one of the station's main objectives is to raise public awareness, and over 2,500 people visited the station this autumn.

This year, we collaborated with Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, collecting R3 rectrices from some twenty species for isotope and contaminant analysis.

Many thanks to our fantastic crew of more than 100 volunteers and to the Cap Tourmente National Wildlife Area team for helping us in the field.

Haldimand Bird Observatory

Cayuga, Ontario

Rick Ludkin, rludkin@hotmail.com

The Haldimand Bird Observatory stopped banding at our long-term banding site at Ruthven Park in 2020. Elizabeth and Bill Hurkmans kindly offered us the use of their farm as the location of a new banding/bird study site. This has been a co-operative venture from the outset involving the Hurkmans, Cathy Blott and the Haldimand Stewardship Council, and Haldimand Bird Observatory.

“The Farm” (as it will henceforth be referred to) sits about 9.5 kilometers east of Cayuga in southern Ontario. It consists of 80 ha of land, much of which has been farmed over many years for soybeans, corn, and winter wheat. Over the past 3 years we have experimented with net numbers and placements before settling on the array of 10 that

we are using now. We have also spent a lot of time and energy cutting down buckthorn, reducing the Black Walnut numbers and planting dogwood and native trees. In the Fall of 2022, a 3-ha agricultural field was restored to prairie by planting native grasses such as Big Bluestem (*Andropogon gerardi*), Switchgrass (*Panicum virgatum*), and Indian Grass (*Sorghastrum nutans*).

Our mist net array was originally set up to intercept birds moving east-west along the shrubby edge vegetation. This usually works well for insectivores like warblers, vireos, kinglets, flycatchers, etc. However, it became apparent that this set-up was not coming close to sampling the sparrow use of this habitat. But old ways die slowly, and it wasn't until toward the end of September that I decided to re-orient some of the nets so that they ran parallel to the edge and formed a “blockade” between the field and the edge. This proved to be extremely useful in catching sparrows. The head-high prairie grasses, replete with heavy seed heads, have been a bonanza for seed-eating birds, especially sparrows.

Despite having banding coverage for just under 50% of the available days, we banded 1,791 birds of 57 species. Warbler numbers were lower than expected with 102 individuals of 12 species. Banding only occurred during 13 days in September when most of the warblers move through. Currently, the vegetation may not be conducive for catching warblers as most of the insectivore feeding area is high in the tops of the trees. On the other hand, sparrow numbers were much higher than expected with 71% of all birds captured being sparrows.

Our three busiest days occurred on 17 October, 13 October, and 22 October when 163, 160, and 100 birds were banded, respectively.

I also dabbled at Northern Saw-whet Owl banding. We had no luck early in October but ended up banding 8 birds: October 23 (2), October 31 (2), and November 1 (4).

I have banded in over 40 fall seasons, but I think that this one will stand out in my memory as the most exciting and interesting. Thanks to everyone that helped make this season such a success! We are already looking forward to the spring to see what impact this new field will have on spring migrants.

FALL 2023		NORTHEAST REGION					SOUTHEAST REGION				
Summary Statistics	Albany Pine Trail	Blackback Bay	Jaysa Flack	Muswood	Muswoy	Wing Island	Cape Florida Banding Station	Kennel Island - Cape Sable	Kennel Island - Turtle Bar	Saltwater's Island	
# of Birds Banded	477	3,587	1,117	1,143	2,024	2,707	1,883	4,021	3,388	782	
# of Requests	38	743	150	483	288	947	149	1,073	621	29	
# of Returns	24	58	15	42	13	87	26	216	188	11	
# of Returns	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	3	8	1	
# of Returns	57	81	58	62	89	81	49	85	85	45	
Effort (person-hours)	2,353	12,195	4,481	6,721	2,211	7,779	9,958	17,178	9,268	685	
Capture Rate	22.9	35.9	31	24.8	104.3	58.4	20.7	34.4	44.4	120.1	
# of Nicks	28	37	19	50	16	21.35	25	33	25	8	
Dates of Operation	8/16-18/21	8/15-18/21	9/1-10/29	8/5-11/15	8/15-18/21	8/1-11/17	8/15-11/2	8/15-11-30	8/28-11/15	9/8-11/19	
# of Days Operated	31	69	54	40	35	62	79	104	79	27	
1	SCIU (38)	WTSP (689)	MYWA (354)	GERCA (457)	MYWA (1,345)	GERCA (720)	OYVEN (312)	GERCA (954)	GERCA (702)	GERCA (353)	
2	GERCA (37)	BIRTH (497)	GERCA (190)	MYWA (105)	GERCA (288)	MYWA (872)	AMRE (280)	COYR (833)	COYR (528)	PAWA (65)	
3	RCKI (35)	SWTH (81)	GCKI (70)	WTSP (47)	GCKI (218)	SOSP (148)	BIRTH (208)	MYWA (535)	PAWA (394)	COYR (60)	
4	SOSP (32)	RCKI (291)	HERI (65)	NOCA (42)	COYR (109)	COYR (131)	GERCA (184)	PAWA (900)	MYWA (289)	MYWA (53)	
5	PAWA (26)	GERCA (203)	WTSP (58)	AMRE (32)	SOSP (91)	SWSP (109)	MYWA (148)	AMRE (297)	AMRE (187)	NOVA (34)	
6	RTHU (24)	GCHE (194)	RCKI (45)	SOSP (32)	SAVS (81)	RCKI (80)	BAWU (125)	RCKI (179)	NOVA (114)	AMRE (33)	
7	PSP (23)	MAWA (184)	COYR (41)	BAWH (38)	COYR (55)	AMGO (89)	COYR (125)	RHTV (150)	PARU (180)	WREI (37)	
8	WTSP (21)	GCKI (152)	AMRO (39)	RCKI (29)	RCKI (52)	GCKI (49)	NOVA (73)	NOVA (138)	RHTV (81)	RHTV (28)	
9	MAWA (19)	HJPU (130)	BAWU (32)	MAWA (28)	WTSP (50)	PAWA (45)	NOVA (53)	PARU (129)	RCKI (67)	PRAW (13)	
10	RCKI (15)	RHTV (88)	NOVA (24)	CARU (27)	SCIU (46)	BCKE (43)	RHTV (54)	RHTV (112)	RHTV (61)	NOCA (14)	

FALL 2023		MID-ATLANTIC					CANADIAN				
Summary Statistics	Parsons's Branch	Meacham's	JR. Nicks	Parson	Woodward	Redden Woods	Tadousac	Herons Farm			
# of Birds Banded	9,018	1,612	1,033	2,401	6,084	958	6,768	1,791			
# of Requests	2,978	81	207	606	2892	84	983	-			
# of Returns	294	11	49	83	117	6	105	-			
# of Returns	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	-			
# of Returns	116	61	85	82	101	52	77	57			
Effort (person-hours)	38,311	910	2,491	3,600	24,163	1,282	5,413	1,401			
Capture Rate	31.9	187.7	51.7	66.7	37.6	81.9	145.1	137.8			
# of Nicks	94	13	18.5	26	67	16	19	18			
Dates of Operation	8/1-11/30	8/16-10/17	8/25-1/13	8/16-11/17	8/1-11/10	8/31-10/26	8/01-10/30	8/8-1/13			
# of Days Operated	113	23	29	42	77	19	91	38			
1	WTSP (1,677)	MYWA (449)	GERCA (211)	WTSP (240)	SWTH (610)	GERCA (235)	WTSP (1356)	SOSP (479)			
2	SOSP (1,105)	GERCA (126)	SOSP (189)	RCKI (280)	RCKI (533)	RCKI (113)	RCKI (634)	SOSP (359)			
3	RCKI (833)	COYR (113)	WTSP (87)	GERCA (201)	SOSP (287)	WTSP (184)	SCIU (441)	ATSP (177)			
4	GERCA (487)	SOSP (115)	RCKI (54)	HERI (143)	WTSP (275)	AMRO (84)	MAWA (487)	WTSP (115)			
5	SOSP (424)	SAVS (110)	INRD (53)	RHTV (124)	SOSP (278)	SOSP (89)	TRVL (392)	RCKI (83)			
6	COYR (398)	SOSP (181)	MAWA (47)	RATO (115)	MAWA (273)	BIRTH (53)	AMRE (204)	LISP (84)			
7	BIRTH (313)	WTSP (85)	COYR (44)	SCIU (89)	GERCA (289)	SWTH (48)	COYR (128)	DITU (58)			
8	PSP (283)	SISA (53)	SWSP (44)	SWTH (72)	MYWA (280)	SOSP (15)	SOSP (165)	AMGO (55)			
9	OYVEN (170)	YERWA (52)	OYVEN (28)	MAWA (88)	RHTV (228)	AMRE (38)	RHTV (155)	CEDEW (53)			
10	GCKI (188)	TRVL (44)	SWTH (34)	SOSP (61)	AMRE (187)	NOCA (24)	NOVA (150)	COYR (45)			