

"Damsite," Chestertown, Md. - Dorothy A. Mendinhall

The "Damsite" Banding Station is located within a one hundred fifty acre private sanctuary. It has a mile of Chesapeake Bay frontage, a sixteen-acre fresh-water lake, and a small man-made wildfowl resting pond surrounded by fields of lespedeza for small game and birds. Almost every native tree, vine, bush, weed, flower, etc. flourishes throughout the area.

Ever since 1959 the same net lanes have been in use in selected locations. NEBBA has supplied nets of Types ATX, HTX and FTX (mesh sizes 24 mm, 30 mm, 36 mm); the number in use varies from 8 to 50.

We banded more birds in 1972 than 1971 but fewer species; we had a comparable number of days in operation: same lanes, same nets and pretty much the same people assisting.

Month	No. of days	New birds	Re- turns	Re- peats	Spe- cies	Net- hours	Birds/100 net-hrs.		
							New	Returns	Repeats
August	10	151	10	20	37	1,236	12	0.8	1.6
Sept.	29	1,254	13	187	88	12,785	10	0.1	1.5
Oct.	22	3,317	7	259	75	10,464	32	0.1	2.5
Total	61	4,722	30	466	104	24,485	19	0.1	1.9

As usual the station served as a teaching and demonstration center for Junior Nature Clubs, Scouts, Schools, Garden Clubs, former banders, etc. The September 5 demonstration topped them all, as we were fortunate to net 29 species including 13 species of warblers. What more could you ask for! And who can claim a Broad-winged Hawk flushed into a net by accident, or a net laden to the ground with grackles just as your assistants were leaving for a business engagement. And in addition, a Western Wood Pewee added to the Damsite roster.

As for the "old timers," a Cardinal banded in 1966 returned for the third time; a White-throated Sparrow banded in 1969 also returned for the third time, and a Tufted Titmouse was netted for the twelfth time since he was banded in 1968.

We missed our previous high counts of Myrtle Warblers and Purple Finches. The peak day count was down from 546 on October 28, 1969 to 370 on October 26th. However, this allowed us to do

more detailed studies on eye, mouth and gape colors; molts, plumage condition; tail patterns; wing shapes of flycatchers-- all this in addition to weighing all birds and skulling when indicated.

Weatherwise we had too many hot days and I can recall only one cold morning. We had our usual problems with predators-- caught a turtle "red handed" so to speak and closed nets twice because of Sharp-shins and a Pigeon Hawk. Thus ends our 14th year of Operation Recovery and related studies at Damsite.

Irish Grove Sanctuary, Marion Station, Md. - Mrs. Richard D. Cole

Banding was limited to 10 days in September and 21 days in October, with a 60 percent decrease in net-hours from the autumn of 1971. We used an average of 11 nets per day. All birds including repeats and returns were routinely skulled, measured, and weighed. In comparing banding totals with the previous year, no important change was noted that could not be explained by the reduction in netting effort and changes in placement of the nets.

Month	No. of days	New birds	species	Net- hours	New birds per 100 net-hours
Sept.	10	156	33	558	28
Oct.	21	1,419	49	1,706	83
Total	31	1,575	61	2,264	70

Three species, the Catbird, Yellowthroat, and American Goldfinch, made up half of the birds banded at this station in September. No major influx of migrants occurred on any of the September days the station was in operation.

Myrtle Warblers first arrived on October 8 and literally took over the station on October 14 and dominated the catch for the rest of the month. Myrtles constituted 72 percent of the total October catch. On October 14, the day most birds were banded, the nets had to be closed at 9:30 a.m. because a banding demonstration had been planned and no other help was available.

Perhaps the most unusual occurrence was an influx of Tufted Titmice during the period October 12-15, with 9 individuals banded on October 13. Tufted Titmice normally are not found along the edge of the marsh and no more than 2 per year have been captured in any prior season. A House Finch on October 22 was only the second banded on this Sanctuary; the other was on October 24, 1970.

Kiptopeke Beach, Northampton Co., Va. - Frederic R. Scott

The Virginia Society of Ornithology sponsored the tenth consecutive year of its fall banding station at Kiptopeke Beach during 1972. As shown in the accompanying tabular summary, most measurements of the operation declined from 1971, including species totals, net birds trapped, total net-hours, and trapping efficiency. The last item dropping from 72 to 62 new birds per 100 net-hours. There were 546 repeats, 14 returns, and 2 foreign recoveries.

Two things obviously contributed to the decline in banding results. First, the station was in operation only 44 days versus the 51 days or more of recent years, and the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel was knocked out of commission on September 20 for about two weeks, thereby depriving the banders-in-charge of assistants from nearby Norfolk and Hampton areas. As a result, net-hours had to be reduced to a level manageable by a smaller work force. At this station peak trapping efficiency is attained by the ability to take full advantage of the big flights that might occur on the average of once every week or so. This means having enough assistance on hand so that a maximum number of nets can be kept open.

The weather was probably as reasonable as one could expect. Rainfall was above average for the period, forcing frequent closing of nets, but nets were closed all day only once (Oct. 6). Compensating for this, there was more than the normal frontal activity, with nine cold fronts moving through during the six weeks. High winds were frequently a problem, forcing closure of exposed nets or rendering them totally ineffective. On September 21, for example, nearby Norfolk recorded sustained winds of 45 m.p.h. as a low-pressure area moved northward up the coast.

Most species totals were lower than in 1971. This was particularly true of the winter residents, such as the Hermit Thrush, kinglets, and the various winter fringillids, since the station closed 9 days earlier in 1972 than in 1971. Myrtle Warbler totals, in fact, dropped from 3,236 in 1971 to 1,637 this year. Some other decreases included Swainson's Thrush, from 140 (1971) down to 108 (1972); Gray-cheeked Thrush, 218 to 149; Red-eyed Vireo, 158 to 118; and Blackpoll Warbler, 97 to 34. Note that for the second year in a row the Gray-cheeked outnumbered the Swainson's Thrush. It will be interesting to observe whether or not this seeming aberration develops into a long-term trend. Increases in species totals included Sharp-shinned Hawk, 22 (1971) to 45 (1972), a record high; Traill's Flycatcher, 27 to 36; Least Flycatcher, 7 to 18; Red-breasted Nuthatch, 6 to 34; Black-and-white Warbler, 139 to 176; Tennessee Warbler, 15 to 28; Nashville Warbler, 17 to 34, another record high; and American Redstart, 1,226 to 1,706. Note that the hawks were caught without benefit of special net sizes or net sets, and only a small fraction of those that hit the nets were actually caught and banded.

Peak flight days occurred on September 10 (325 birds trapped) and 23 (468) and October 1 (367), 9 (904), and 14 (754). Forced closing of the nets, because of weather conditions or inadequate help, occurred on several other flight days, notably September 5, 15, and 20. All of these flights were associated with the passages of cold fronts. On the flights of October 9 and 14, Myrtle Warblers made up the bulk of the birds trapped and comprised 53% and 75%, respectively, of the totals. The only other time one species made up such a large proportion of a big flight was on September 10 when the 170 American Redstarts trapped comprised 52% of the day's total. Unusual birds for this station included a Bewick's Wren on October 9 (third station record), a Warbling Vireo on September 22 (fourth station record), a Prothonotary Warbler on September 6 (fourth station record), and a Lark Sparrow on September 13 (second station record). The only species not previously trapped here was a Marsh Hawk on October 3. The two foreign recoveries were an American Redstart (1270-63620) banded at Amityville, N.Y., September 23, 1972, by A. J. Lauro and retrapped here October 4 by Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, and a Sharp-shinned Hawk (762-53645) banded at Cape May, N. J., October 8, 1972 by W. S. Clark and retrapped here October 10 by W. P. Smith.