

Allegheny Front Migration Observatory - George A. Hall

For the fifteenth year a concentrated bird-banding project was carried out on the Allegheny Front Mountain in Grant-Tucker Counties, West Virginia. The station was manned on three days in August, 30 days in September and 8 days in October. On only four days was the weather bad enough to call for a shut-down of operations. This extensive coverage produced a total of 2751 (third highest) birds banded in an effort of 1880 net hours. The capture ratio was thus 1463 birds per thousand net hours.

Over 200 birds were banded on four days and over 100 on 8 additional days. The migration showed two pronounced peaks, September 14-17 and September 25-27. The day of most intense migration past the station was probably September 19 when a lone bander operating three nets banded 191 birds.

The years total brought the cumulative station totals to 21,639 birds. One new species, the Pine Warbler was added to the station list bringing that to 104 species. One other new species was captured but managed to escape before being banded - Carolina Wren.

Four species, Solitary Vireo, Tennessee Warbler, Cape May Warbler, and Bay-breasted Warbler were caught in record numbers. The Bay-breasted has shown a steady increase over the past few years, and this year's total of 366 was unprecedented. It may be that this indicates a heavy outbreak of spruce budworm in the North Country. It is well known that the Bay-breasted Warbler population sometimes increases greatly in such cases. This might provide a clue as to where in the North our birds are coming from.

Three birds banded at this station in earlier years were recaptured, all being local resident birds. We have had no reports of Recoveries of birds from the AFMO station in the past year.

A record number of banders participated this year. In addition to co-leaders Ralph Bell and George Hall, Connie Katholi, Avis Newell, Clark Miller, Frances Pope, Ann Shreve participated. Additional help was given by Greg Eddy, Tanya Hall, Bill Katholi, Harvey Shreve and Jim Surman. Very special thanks this year are due to Mr. and Mrs. John Finley (who might be classified as

permanent residents at the campground) not only for their aid to the banders but for watching the station in the absence of banders, and for their hospitality.

Mr. George Hall states that the birds caught at this station are crossing a mountain pass and are not feeding or otherwise utilizing the habitat. The elevation is 4000 feet and the net lanes are in a red spruce-scrubby northern hardwoods area with acres of blueberry plains surrounding it. This is a very different type of netting area than the other stations.

Presque Isle State Park - Ronald Leberman

This fall Mrs. Stull, Mrs. Charles J. Leberman, and Ronald Leberman withstood adverse weather conditions for most of the 16 days of operations. The weather simply did not cooperate. With higher than usual winds, much dampness, some sprinkles, one down-pour (that halted operations) and colder than usual temperatures, results might have been expected to be bad. That was not to be as we were able to band 1,426 birds (third highest total in eleven years) in 1,587 net hours (the most yet). An above average number of species (73) was taken in the mist nets (average is 64). Just three species were new for the overall list. They are Long-billed Marsh Wren, Mallard and Vesper Sparrow. The best day was October 1 when a new record was set of 470 birds banded. The previous high was 343 netted October 11, 1970. From 6 to 30 nets were in use in the same locations as in the past 11 years.

Dates of operation were 3 days in August, 7 days in September and 5 days in October. Most banding was done on weekends with no banding on Saturdays in October because of the Pennsylvania duck hunting season. (3 blinds were within the banding area and 1 just 20 feet from the main banding lane of 5 nets). Food supply was good with many gnats, flies etc. and grape poison ivy berries, poke weed etc. in good supply.

The only adverse thing about our site was the extremely high water level of Lake Erie (worst in 11 years). Most of our lanes were flooded on several occasions. Those along the bay shore had to be taken down often due to the wind and wave action. Despite the high deer population, no damage was done to the nets this year.