Eastern Regional News

Eastern Bird Banding Association — *Founded 1923*

Atlantic Flyway Review: Region IV Piedmont

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Banders have been watching the temperatures and the precipitation as the season progressed. A warm May, especially in the northeastern states, may have encouraged some of the Neotropical migrants to continue spreading their nesting range northward. It was a wet nesting season, twice the normal precipitation, all the way from South Carolina to the Canadian boundary. Temperatures were 2 to 5 degrees above normal in the southeast in September, then close to normal throughout October. Precipitation did not cause a problem except in South Carolina where 11.6 inches of rain fell on 3 Oct. November temperatures were two to four degrees below normal at the banding stations and rainfall at most stations was normal. Jim Gruber, in his report for Foreman's Branch, explains very clearly why we had a scarcity of heavy migration dates in the southeastern coastal states this fall.

Netting effort at most stations that operated both years was similar to autumn of 2014 but was nearly doubled at Harford Glen, increased by 21 percent at Foreman's Branch, and dropped by 28 percent at Jekyll Island. The number of birds banded declined at all stations except Jekyll Island (Table 1). The scarcity of cold fronts this season resulted in no two stations reporting the same day as their most active one.

The chief weather event of the season was the historic flood that engulfed South Carolina at the beginning of October. This was caused by a stalled low pressure area over Alabama and the west side of a strong nor'easter offshore that together forced an atmospheric "river" of moist tropical air to continue flowing over South Carolina. The effect was exaggerated by the presence of Hurricane Joaquin. Read about the effects of the flooding in the report from Kiawah Island in Charleston, SC.

I thank the editors of *Weatherwise* for continuing to send me a free subscription as a "retired" life member of the American Meteorological Society. I thank all the station operators and their bandaides for the hundreds of hours setting up and operating their banding stations. I thank my daughter Jane Robbins and my son, Stuart for assembling the various fragments of this report while I was hospitalized, and I thank bander Michael Lutmerding for reviewing an earlier draft of this report.

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Hurricane Irene and wet weather that we endured afterward in October affected days in which we could operate and we suspect it affected survivorship of local avian residents. Anecdotal local reports of reductions in American Goldfinch sightings in the field, at feeders, and at our nets suggested that long periods of wet weather were unusually hard on their reproductive efforts. Again, numbers were slightly down from previous years, predominantly because of early closures and cancellations, though numbers captured per 100 net-hours reached normal levels. Best days had fewer birds and species than in previous years and our typical busy sparrow day in October came and went with little notice

Again, this year's results were consistent in the decreasing numbers of many species previously more common. Numbers of local residents were down: *e.g.* Northern Cardinal, Tufted Titmouse, and Carolina Chickadee. Fortunately, Lincoln's Sparrows were captured this year – a species often missed in previous years. Welcomed birds included Gray-cheeked Thrush, Tennessee Warbler, and Black-throated Blue Warbler. Typically, Fox Sparrows are captured as they begin their southward migration. This year was the first when none were captured or observed.

Recently, building-related mortalities have been investigated by volunteers with Lights Out Baltimore and Lights Out DC. Starting before dawn, volunteers drive or walk the same route in both cities and collect dead birds found. Jay Rubinoff, Les Eastman, Bob Werlein and I were warmly received by Wendy Olsson (Baltimore) and Anne Lewis where we aged the birds collected. Though our statistical analyses are yet outstanding, we hope to learn if mortalities follow the same age-related trends as our banding data – stay tuned.

Many thanks go out to our regular volunteers: Suzanne Procell, Jerry Strickroth, Les Eastman, Jay Rubinoff, Dr. Bob Werlein and the staff at Eden Mill Nature Center.

Table 1. AFR Region IV - Fall 2015 Summary

	Eden Mill	Harford Glen	Patuxent Powerline	Foreman's Branch	Captain Sam's	Little Bear	Jekyll Island
First Day	30 Aug	28 Sep	18 Aug	1 Aug	15 Aug	7 Sep	27 Sep
Last Day	24 Oct	15 Dec	16 Nov	30 Nov	30 Nov	17 Nov	18 Oct
Days Open	8	16	42	105	98	57	22
No. Nets Used	13	6 to 14	26	9 to 92	25	10 to 16	17
Net Hours	373	2,071	3,461	32,709	12,116	3,552	1,223
No. Best Day	51	59	72	340	435	118	278
Best Day Date	Oct 17	Nov 5	Oct 26	Oct 18	Oct 6	Oct 13	Oct 12
Most Species	15	16	22	35	28	23	23
" " Date	Oct 13	Nov 5	Oct 6	Sep 12	5 & 7 Oct	15 Oct	12 Oct
Banded 2014	220	970	2,210	10,402	5,086		1,377
Banded 2015		551	1,426	8,807	4,770	2,370	1,497
Species 2014	37	63	73	123	80	0	46
Species 2015		39	73	115	83	70	49
B/100nh 2014	61.1	82.8	63.5	38.5	55.6		81.35
B/100nh 2015		26.6	41.2	26.9	49	78.2	122.4
% HY 2014	85%	51%	70%	82%	81!	0	88%
% HY 2015	82%	58%	67%	84%	84%	85%	80%

Table 2. AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Birds, Fall 2015

Eden Mill	% HY	Harford Glen	% HY	Patuxent Powerline	% HY	Foreman's Branch	% HY	Captain Sam's	% HY	Little Bear	% HY	Jekyll Island	% HY
51 WTSP (1)	73	120 WTSP (2)	58	175 WTSP (2)	53	1179 SOSP (1)	86	1266 COYE (1)	92.3	563 GRCA	96	691 COYE (2)	76
23 GRCA (2)	97	69 SCIU (2)	29	173 RCKI (1)	74	1161 WTSP (2)	78	643 GRCA (2)	97	424 COYE	93	196 WPWA (2)	92
23 NOCA (5)	74	59 NOCA (7)	29	152 GRCA (4)	83	697 COYE (4)	84	595 YRWA (3)	71.3	423 MYWA	69	194 GRCA (3)	95
19 SOSP (6)	95	56 SOSP (5)	33	100 COYE (5)	57	523 RCKI (3)	68	241 AMRE (7)	79.7	78 PABU	74	51 AMRE (5)	84
13 COYE (3)	85	29 SWSP (6)	65	80 SCIU (2)	49	437 GRCA (7)	75	189 REVI (6)	89.4	72 AMRO	85	51 PABU (4)	82
8 MYWA (10)	100	24 INBU (12)	42	61 EATO (0)	85	338 SWSP (9)	93	147 PABU (4)	89.1	69 NOCA	62	43 BTBW (7)	58
7 SWSP	86	19 AMGO (1)	17	55 SOSP (9)	65	295 SCIU (5)	85	145 BTBW	57.2	68 REVI	90	35 NOCA (8)	46
6 TUTI	100	19 GRCA (4)	33	50 REVI (10)	70	277INBU (6)	87	142 RCKI (10)	72.5	68 WPWA	99	28 WEVI	75
4 CARW (7)	75	17 RCKI (10)	50	42 MAWA (6)	69	247 FISP (8)	77	138 PRAW (5)	81.2	66 SWSP	71	24 BAWW	83
4 WEVI (10)	100	13 RWBL (39)	15	40 HETH (7)	84	244 AMGO (10)	56	101 NOWA (9)	63.3	45 RCKI	78	22 INBU (10)	100