

ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW:

Northeast Coastal Region I – Fall 2000

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Not only do bird populations come and go over the years, so do banding stations. There are the “old faithfuls” that return year after year to report their results — St. Andrews Banding Station, Atlantic Bird Observatory, Vermont Institute of Natural Sciences, Shoals Marine Lab, Block Island Banding Station and Island Beach State Park. Some of these Stations started reporting well before my time as coordinator. Then there are those that you thought were lost and they reappear after a few years - SW Laurentian Mountains; those that you hope will come back after a few years - Grand Manan Bird Observatory; and the brand new first year reporters — Wing Island Banding Station.

The results from stations this year were mixed. Numbers were down at both Canadian Stations, in Vermont and in New Jersey, while things could not have been better in southern Maine and in Rhode Island. The lack of Blackpoll Warblers offshore significantly affected the Atlantic Bird Observatory results. Most of the stations report good movements of late migrants, with many of the “best days” coming in October. They’re a few reports of new banding “tics” and out of range species. Steady is a good way of describing the 2000 migration.

Block Island Banding Station had a great year, banding 2800 birds, and it is interesting to read their comparison to 1980 when they banded the same number of birds in 1000 less net hours.

Table 1. Fall 2000 AFR Region I Summary.

	Laurentians PQ	St. Andrews NB	Vermont Inst VT	Bon Portage Is NS	Seal Island NS	Appledore Is ME	Block Island RI	Island Beach SP NJ
First Day	29 Jul	1 Aug	1 Aug	15 Aug	28 Sep	15 Aug	6 Sep	17 Aug
Last Day	15 Sep	27 Oct	20 Oct	26 Oct	25 Oct	1 Oct	4 Nov	12 Nov
Days Operated	48	31	56	59	21	48	53	41
No. Nets Used	4 - 9	5 - 14	12 - 21.5	10 - 15	10 - 15	5 - 10	3 - 11	4 - 30.5
Total Net Hours	2938	1077	6974.5	4756.2	1260.5	4872	4541	3242.48
Birds Banded 1999	174	513	1807	2330	444	1997	2288	4853
Birds Banded 2000	348	648	1234	1989	247	2310	2800	4286
Diff. Species 1999	27	52	78	71	43	81	82	93
Diff Species 2000	42	51	71	67	38	74	70	78
Birds/100nh 1999	10	67	25.5	49	38	39	50	134.5
Birds/100nh 2000	12	60	17.7	42	20	47.4	62	132.2
Largest Daily Catch	24	50	57	150	35	146	279	601
Date of LDC	24 Sep	4 Oct	11 Sep	15 Oct	14 Oct	29 Sep	8 Oct	20 Oct
% Hatch Year***	82%	84%	78.6%	90.4%	88.2%	95%	na	94%
% Hatch Year**								86%

** HY% calculated as number of HY/total number of known-age birds.

*** HY% calculated as number of HY/total number of captures.

Table 2. Region I Top Ten Species from Each Station, 2000.

	Laurentians PQ	St. Andrews NB	Vermont Inst VT	Bon Portage Is NS	Seal Island NS	Appledore Is ME	Block Island RI	Island Beach SP NJ
1	41 BTNW (4)	70 WTSP (1)	89 SOSP (4)	490 MYWA (1)	59 GCKI (2)	349 REVI (1)	812 MYWA (1)	1150 GCKI (1)
2	33 REVI (1)	40 MAWA (3)	89 GRCA (8)	139 COYE (4)	25 WTSP (7)	252 NOWA (3)	314 GRCA (2)	494 MYWA (6)
3	29 MAWA (3)	40 COYE (8)	88 COYE (6)	131 GCKI (3)	21 SOSP (10)	210 AMRE (6)	306 GCKI (4)	426 WTSP (2)
4	29 MYWA (6)	38 GCKI	87 WTSP (1)	83 TRFL (6)	20 MYWA (6)	182 GRCA (2)	135 REVI (6)	269 RCKI (8)
5	26 BCCH (5)	37 NAWA (4)	83 AMRO (2)	83 NOWA	17 SWSP	134 COYE (7)	131 CEDW	266 GRCA (3)
6	21 BAWW (2)	35 RCKI (7)	70 HETH (3)	78 SOSP (10)	13 SCJU (5)	100 GCKI	108 RCKI (10)	249 SOSP (9)
7	15 BTBW	33 MYWA (6)	56 OVEN	76 BAWW (9)	10 SSHA (4)	99 BAWW	96 HETH (8)	209 SCJU (5)
8	15 HETH	31 AMGO (2)	41 MYWA (9)	74 REVI (7)	8 COYE	61 MAWA	93 COYE (9)	182 COYE (7)
9	13 CAWA (7)	25 SOSP	35 RCKI	68 YWAR	8 RCKI (3)	54 BTBW	77 SOSP	122 SWSP
10	10 AMRO (10)	23 AMRE (10)	33 EAPH	65 WTSP	7 WCSP	52 NAWA	66 WTSP(3)	120 BRGR (4)

SW - Laurentian Mountains 455-0743
 Quebec, Canada
Peter Homann (bander)

Mist nets were again placed between low shrubs and young cedars at the shore of a lake and in shrubbery at edges of the adjacent mixed woods. The weather was quite variable with many rainy days. Due to my retirement in 2000, I was able to extend my banding activities into September. It would be premature to make comparisons with the data from those earlier years, but I certainly expected to capture more than a single Tennessee Warbler. Cursory analysis of this year's data revealed that I would have missed almost 90% of the captured Black-throated Green Warblers and Red-eyed Vireos if I had folded the nets on 19 Aug as I did in 1999. On the other hand, the great majority of Canada Warblers and Black-and-White Warblers were netted before 19 Aug. In the case of Red-eyed Vireos, the timing of their appearance clearly was linked to the availability of dogwood berries (*Cornus alternifolia*) which did not ripen this year until after mid-August.

As in previous years, many of the netted warblers and some Red-eyed Vireos had joined a roaming flock of noisy resident Black-capped Chickadees. However, I could not count on a good catch when I noticed an approaching flock. In fact, the chickadees learned to avoid the location of the nets, often steering the accompanying other birds away from them as well.

A noteworthy capture was that of a hatching-year Cerulean Warbler on 4 Aug, the first ever. From among the recaptures I want to mention an at least

seven-year-old Blue Jay. Finally I have to report the saddening observation of a netted Golden-crowned Kinglet being pecked to death within a minute or two by a Black-capped Chickadee entangled next to it.

St. Andrews Banding Station 450-0670
 New Brunswick, Canada
Tracey Dean (bander)

The St. Andrews Banding Station is located on the shores of the St. Croix River on land owned by the Huntsman Marine Science Centre. The nets are set in second growth vegetation, mainly along the edges of regenerating fields. During the fall season, 648 birds of 51 species were banded during the 31 mornings the nets were open. While the increase in net hours from 1999 produced more captures, the actual birds/100 nh were down.

White-throated Sparrow continues to be the most abundant species caught, followed by a variety of warblers and the two species of kinglets. The only new species added this year was Baltimore Oriole, which is uncommon in our coastal area.

Overall, flycatcher numbers were up, especially for Alder (n = 19, 1.8/100 nh), but I did not catch the variety I did last year. Goldfinch numbers seem to follow a two-year cycle and this was a down year even though I did not see a difference in the knapweed patch. Song and White-crowned sparrows were up (n = 25 and n = 3 or 2.3 and 0.3/100 nh, respectively), while there were only minor changes in the number of White-throats per 100 nh (n = 70 or 6.5/100 nh). It was a good year for Cedar Waxwings, with the highest numbers in ten years

(n = 22 or 2.0/100 nh). Vireo numbers were slightly down from last year's highs. Generally, warbler numbers were down, with the largest declines in Northern Parula (n = 21 or 1.9/100 nh, and Magnolias (n = 40 or 3.7/100 nh). Common Yellowthroat was the only warbler to show a marked increase from 1999 (n = 40 or 3.7/100 nh). Thrush numbers continue to be sporadic with Hermits up (n = 18 or 1.7/100 nh), Swainson's down (n = 1 or 0.1/100 nh) and Veerys holding steady (n = 3 or 0.3/100 nh). The first Gray-cheeked in eight years was also captured.

I was unable to open the nets as frequently as I would have liked in October and missed major chunks of the late migration. It would have been a great year for kinglets! Next year, with luck, I hope to have help during September and cover the migration more thoroughly.

Bon Portage Island 432-0654
Seal Island 432-0660

Atlantic Bird Observatory (ABO)
Nova Scotia, Canada

Trina Fitzgerald, Mike Peckford and Frances Bennet (banders)

Assistants: (Volunteers) **Over 1 month:** Susannah Lerman; **Three to four weeks:** Eric Liebgold, Tami Ransom, Fleur de Bruin, Katheryn Holgate, Monika Tan, Alex Rivard, Claudie Latendresse, Erin Karnatz; **Two weeks:** Rick Toochin, Peter Phillips, James Smith, Laura McKinnon; **One week or less:** Emily Turner, Marc Schneider, Bev Schneider, Dave Shutler, Wanda Fitzgerald, Joe Nocera, Meghan Brodie, Elsa ter Huizen, Laurel Bernard, Martin Renner, Heather Moore, Steve Gates

Fall migration monitoring began on Bon Portage Island 15 Aug. A total of 1989 birds were banded comprising 67 species. Banding on Seal Island began 28 Sep with 247 birds of 38 species. A large movement of Myrtle Warblers was seen, as in previous years on Bon Portage, with a total of 473 individuals. In past years, Blackpoll Warbler has been one of the top species banded (fall 1999: Seal Island - 177, and Bon Portage - 296); however, only 57 individuals were banded on Bon Portage and only 6 on Seal Island this fall!

An interesting raptor movement, American Kestrels in particular, occurred on Bon Portage 22 Sep. Approximately 400 individuals were observed migrating during a span of several hours. August was unusually busy with three peak days of movement. On 15 Aug, 68 birds were banded, 20 Aug produced 73; while on 29 Aug, 83 new birds were captured. September was very slow, but October saw large movement, especially of Myrtle Warblers. On 15 Oct, 150 individuals were banded, 99 of which were Myrtle Warblers. Seal Island had a similar increase in movement observed, but not to the extent as Bon Portage experienced.

Vermont Inst. of Natural Science 433-0723
Woodstock, Vermont
Brandt Ryder (bander)

Assistants: VINS biologists Chris Rimmer, Steve Faccio, Dan Lambert, and Kent McFarland.
Interns and volunteers: John Gobeille, Gabe Colbeck, Julia Feder, Libby Hillhouse, Shilo Schulte, and Willy McCumber

Our banding station is located on the Bragdon Nature Preserve at the headquarters of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS) in Woodstock, VT (Lat.-Long.: 433-0723), a non-profit, membership-based, research and educational organization. Our net lanes are located in early successional/second growth habitat, around a small (approx. 2 acres) pond. The vegetation consists of a variety of shrubs and saplings including autumn olive, blackberry, buckthorn, willows, maples, and dogwoods, with a broken overstory of sugar maple, aspen, black cherry, and white ash. Although the 2000 banding season represented our 20th consecutive year of data collection, unfortunately due to funding constraints, it is likely to be our last.

During the fall season we banded 1234 birds during 6974.5 nh (56 banding mornings) for a capture rate of 17.7 birds/100 nh, our second lowest capture rate ever and a decrease of 7.8 birds/100 nh from last year. In addition, species diversity dropped from 78 species captured in 1999 to 71 species in 2000. Our captures during September and October were well below normal with just 704 birds captured compared to 1373 in 1999, a drop of 51.3%. While fall numbers for Gray Catbird, Common Yel-

lowthroat, and Song Sparrow were relatively "normal," it was a poor year for American Goldfinch (n= 12; lowest total ever), Black-capped Chickadee (n = 26; lowest total since standardization in 1986), American Robin (n = 83; lowest total since 1986), Slate-colored Junco, and Swamp, American Tree, and White-crowned sparrows. Several species rebounded slightly from low captures in 1998, including Gray Catbird, Least Flycatcher, and Wood Thrush. House Finch captures continue to be well below average.

As a group, sparrow numbers were very low. In most years, White-throated, Song, Lincoln's, and Swamp sparrows account for more than a quarter of our total fall capture; whereas, in 2000 they made up only 16% (n = 199) of our total fall catch. Captures of White-throats, our most common species, was the second lowest since the station became standardized in 1986 with just 87 banded.

The fall warbler migration was below normal for the second straight year with a total of 319 individuals of 19 species captured, compared to 296 individuals of 21 species in 1999. Modest increases were noted for American Redstart, Common Yellowthroat, and Yellow Warbler, while the capture of 56 Ovenbirds was the highest in the station's history. Decreases were seen in Tennessee, Wilson's, Black-throated Green, and most-notably, Myrtle warbler captures.

Numbers of Hermit Thrush continued to drop from 1998's record high of 157, to just 70 in 2000. Swainson's Thrush matched last year's total of 31 birds, while Wood Thrush captures rebounded slightly from below-average numbers in 1999. Red-eyed, Blue-headed, and Philadelphia vireo captures were down from slightly above-average numbers in 1999. Among recaptures, we netted a Blue Jay that was first banded in 1992, a Gray Catbird from 1994, a Downy Woodpecker from 1995, and a Northern Cardinal banded in 1996.

In addition to presenting banding demonstrations to school groups, summer camps, and Elderhostel groups, many individuals visited the station informally to learn from our research staff and enjoy a close-up look at songbirds. We hope their experiences at the banding station were as valuable to them as they were to us.

Shoals Marine Lab
Banding Station
Appledore Island, Maine

425-0703

Sara Morris (in absentia), **Anthony Hill**, **David Holmes**, **John Munier**, and **Mary Wright** (**banders**)

Band-aides: Alex Chang, Scott Cronenweth, Dan Hayward, Rozzie Holt, Clif Horrigan, Vanessa Hunt, Megan Libby, Joe Liebezeit, Charlie Muise, Gail Page, Kathie Palfy, Martha Stauffer, Mark Suomala, Erica Turner, Joanne Weldon, and Lynn Zeltman

The Shoals Lab Banding Station enjoyed one of the steadiest seasons we have had in years. We lost NO full days to weather, our August totals were unimpressive (no days over 50 until we caught 92 birds on the 29th), we had only two "super birds" – our first ever Broad-winged Hawk and our second Dickcissel – no southern wanderers, and still we ended up with our highest number of birds banded since 1994 and '95 (when we were able to stay open a full week later in October) and the third highest total in the history of the station. Slow and steady won this race for sure.

Other punctuation points included new record high counts of Red-eyed Vireos, Magnolia, and Black-and-white warblers, the first time we've caught Golden-winged Warblers three years in a row, modest apparent comebacks by the small flycatchers and a few of the "northern" warblers, the first time ever that a Herring Gull has flown through a net (it left behind lunch though – two chunks of squished fish [probably lobster bait] and 1/3 of a commercially grilled hot dog), and the nine days the bander-in-charge was trying to navigate the island on crutches after spraining his ankle. We did lose about four hours of net time on 5 Sep to his inability to run nets and provide a smooth staffing changeover. Since we banded 98 birds that day anyway, we can only wonder if the day might have been our season's best.

Becky Suomala banded the entire season on Star Island, roughly one mile south of Appledore, for her final year of Masters Degree field work. She has found some fascinating differences in the habitats

on the two islands and in the ways birds seem to be using them. Look for a publication before too long.

As always, we are incredibly indebted to our banders and band-aides, who provide great cheer along with their many long hours of work, and to the staff of Shoals Marine Lab who support us so beautifully that we do not have to waste any time thinking about survival issues. What luxury!!

Wing Island **414-0706**
Bird Banding Station
 Brewster, MA
Susan Finnegan (bander)

Volunteers: Bill Finnegan, Dan Furbish, Jean Schwartz, Maxine Strickland, Seth Wheelock, Esther Conway, Joshia Campbell, and Estelle Odle

This was the first year for the Wing Island Bird Banding Station. The 13 days of banding began on 30 Sep and ended 19 Nov. Birds banded were 967 of 34 species during 708 nh or 138.1 birds/100 nh. The most incredible day was 14 Oct when 443 birds were captured in 11 nets. The nets were open an average of 4.7 hours. Unfortunately due to the government's lack of bands, only 276 birds were actually banded and 158 had to be released. Nine birds were also recaptured that day.

The late opening of the station caused us to miss most of the fall migration. Myrtle Warblers comprised the majority of the birds, with 678 being banded, or 70% of the year's catch.

Block Island **411-0713**
Banding Station
 Rhode Island
Scott Comings, Kim Gaffett, Elise Lapham (banders)

Assistants: Penny Anderson, Erica Anderson, Charlie Schnell, Rick Wetzell, Susan and Mark Carr

Have birds come back? Whether bird populations are on a decline, stable, or on an increase is the fundamental question that all of us observing birds ask each other and ourselves regularly. As is our custom in this report, we present some interesting comparisons between 2000 (this year), 1999 (last year) and 1980 (twenty years ago).

Some simple observations about the three years are: both 1999 and 2000 totals stand out as highs since 1976, although last year's species number was greater than this year's 70 species. Regarding effort: as indicated by net hours and days banding, it is interesting to note that this year, with roughly 1000 more net hours than in 1980, the number of birds per net hours is essentially the same. The number of species and days banded are also similar. Perhaps a more interesting comparison shows up when looking at the list of top ten species, where six species overlap between the three years (Table 3) and eight overlap between 1999 and 2000 (see Table 2).

Table 3			
Species	1980	1999	2000
Myrtle Warbler	366	492	812
(Myrtles released unbanded)	316	291	465
Gray Catbird	223	436	314
Golden-crowned Kinglet	88	130	306
Red-eyed Vireo	65	76	135
White-throated Sparrow	56	148	66
Hermit Thrush	48	66	96

We dubbed this fall as the year of the Nashville Warbler as we banded 26, our previous high was 17 back in 1976. It could also easily have been the year of the Cedar Waxwing. We spent much of our banding hours covered in waxwing "juice" as we banded 131 (previous high 94 in 1975). Winter Wren numbers were the highest since 1976, with 34 being netted; 22 were caught in 1999.

The banding crew also had their own personal favorites and highlights: Kim was gleeful about a Marsh Wren, Penny was glad to see her first Sharp-shinned Hawk in the hand, Elise was amazed to see not one, but five White-crowned Sparrows, and Scott was happy with his first Eastern Kingbird.

Banding 2800 birds kept everyone very busy. The busiest part of the season was between 4 and 15 Oct. In those twelve days, we had nine 100+ bird days – Amazing! Table 4 summarizes the best days.

Date	# Birds	# Species
4 October	198	28
8 October	279	29
12 October	219	29

To conclude this report we would like to acknowledge our huge debt of gratitude to Scott Comings, our fellow bander, without whom we would not have had such a successful and fun-filled banding year. Also great thanks to all our assistants.

Island Beach State Park **395-0740**
New Jersey

Mary Doscher, Doris McGovern, Robert McKinney, Robert Pantle, Larry Pharo, Nick Pulcinella, Robert Yunick (banders)

Assistants: Chita McKinney, Sharon Gardo

During the fall 2000 banding season, seven banders operated banding stations at six locations at Island Beach State Park, between 17 Aug and 12 Nov. One or more of those stations was in operation on 41 days during the 87-day period; there were four banding days in August, 11 in September, 24 in October, and two in November. There were five days with four of the stations in operation simultaneously, six days with three stations active, seven days with two stations active, and the remaining days with only a single station active.

In the discussion that follows, when referring to prior year's data, prior year averages are based on the thirteen-year period 1987-99.

Once again our recent history of below-average numbers of birds banded continues. Our total of 4286 birds banded was 21% below average. On a net-hour basis, this year's 1.3 birds/100 nh were also 21% below average.

The following table (Table 5) summarizes the best days of the season.

Date (# stations operating)	# Species	# Birds	# Birds/nh
22 Sep (2)	35	161	1.84
4 Oct (1)	36	210	1.53
12 Oct (1)	27	493	4.44
14 Oct (1)	14	133	2.77
19 Oct (2)	23	394	2.95
20 Oct (3)	22	601	5.44
22 Oct (4)	18	540	2.77

The species mix this year was extremely poor: 78 species (18% below average) was the lowest in recent years during which our species total ranged from 80 to 119 with an average of 95. Rather weak September totals were possibly the cause of the low diversity. The only species worth mentioning as "highlights" were an Orange-crowned Warbler and two Clay-colored Sparrows. Out of 33 species that we catch with enough frequency to make comparisons reasonable (20 or more captures per year), only seven species had above-average capture rates: Winter Wren (+29%), Ruby and Golden-crowned kinglet (+7% and +2% respectively), (Western) Palm Warbler (+29%), Northern Waterthrush (+19%), Song and Swamp sparrows (both +13%). Out of the same 33 species, 12 species had capture rates that were less than half of average. Downy Woodpecker (12%), Northern (Yellow-shafted) Flicker (23%), Eastern Phoebe (35%), Red-breasted Nuthatch (26%), Brown Creeper (45%), Veery (31%), Swainson's Thrush (43%), Northern Parula (36%), Blackpoll (37%), Black-throated Green Warbler (28%), Ovenbird (37%), Eastern Towhee (46%).



Research Awards

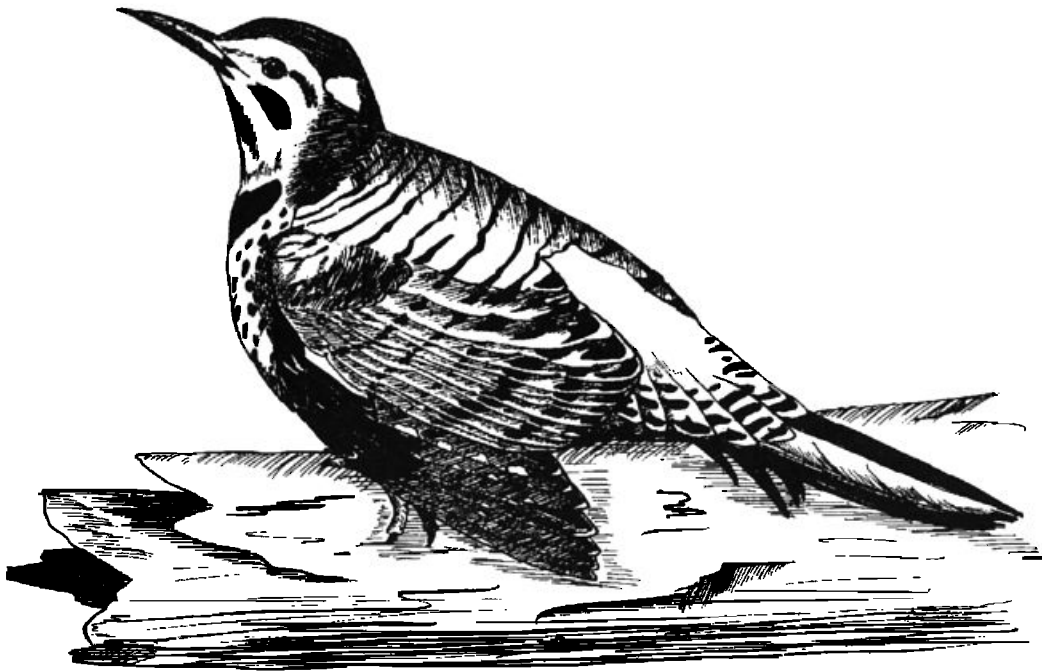
The **EASTERN BIRD BANDING ASSOCIATION (EBBA)** seeks applicants for its annual \$500 research awards in aid of research using banding techniques or bird banding data. Applicants should submit a résumé of their banding and ornithological background, the project plan including the significance of the study site, and a budget. No formal application forms are necessary; however, two copies of each application are required. Grant requests must be received by 15 March each year with award announcements 30 April.

Preference is given to but not limited to research in eastern United States, or with species that spend part of their life there. Projects that are planned for other portions of the United States, North America, or the Western hemisphere also may be considered. Research studies with conservation or management implications are particularly encouraged.

Grantees are required to submit a summary of their work at the end of the year, or present at least part of their study at the annual EBBA meeting. Travel grants for this purpose are available in addition to the Memorial Grant for the research; also, grantees are encouraged to become members of EBBA.

Send applications/inquiries to:

**Memorial Grants Chairperson
Richard N. Robert, EBBA
7212 Fiddler Bay Lane
Chincoteague, Virginia 23336-2017**



Northern Flicker by George West