
Atlantic Flyway Review: Region II (North Central) Fall 2002

John A. Gregoire, Coordinator
Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Obs.
5373 Fitzgerald Road
Burdett, NY 14818-9626
<khmo@at.net>

The common adjective at three stations was "disappointing," while Ellenville enjoyed a slightly better-than-average season in its 32nd year of AFR contribution, and Kestrel Haven reported a record high season. It certainly makes me even more thankful for all those finches! Once again it would seem that the effect of weather on the timing and routing of migrants, particularly the latter, was reflected in station totals and species distribution. With a mild El Nino creating a jet stream pattern such that steering currents kept frontal passages brief and produced blocking systems to the south of New York state, the more inland area near the central Finger Lakes became both a heavily utilized route and a heavily used stopover point.

Ellenville's analysis of peak movement speaks of the effect of weather over a long time period, while Kestrel Haven has addressed recent changes which may be reflective of the effects of global warming on species distribution. Braddock Bay continues to demonstrate the dynamics of migration around a Great Lakes concentration point and the inland stations have shown trends over many years of operation. In short, the Atlantic Flyway Review, thanks to its contributors, is one of the few avian research tools in the Americas that is reflective of decades of data. How different from all the small-sample-size-based papers we have been reading in the professional journals! Several banders in the north country of New York and Ontario are active during the fall. Please consider joining our study. Your efforts and data will see greater daylight and be of considerable use to research.

Alfred Station and Braddock Bay were involved in several educational and training exercises this season, which points to yet another value of the AFR effort. More tools have come our way as well.

Jan.-Mar. 2003

A wonderful new book by David Sibley, entitled *Sibley's Birding Basics*, is now available at a very reasonable price and is a terrific text for the beginner and professional alike. Peter Pyle has completed a second printing of his 1997 guide. We should all be submitting suggestions, changes and errata to Peter. Visit his errata web page at <<http://www.prbo.org/Pyleguide.html>> to update your manuals. The current list runs some four pages thanks to the continuing input of banders.

Kestrel Haven reports several more intergrade flickers this year. We had thought this a small regional phenomenon in the Finger Lakes area but note that flickers with some red shafting have now been reported from the Maryland Eastern Shore in AFR region four. Is anyone else capturing these birds? Do any of the collections in your area have wing or complete specimens, as does the Cornell collection? Whether this is evidence of a genetic scheme, related to diet, or some other explanation remains open for further study. I have not attempted to summarize the accomplishments of our region's stations this fall in order to encourage you to take the time to read them individually. The data, analysis, and information are illuminating.



Northern Flicker
Photo by R. Pantle

Table 1. AFR II - Summary of Operations - Fall 2002

	Braddock Bay	Alfred Station	Spring Hill	Kestrel Haven	Vestal	Ellenville
Start	13 Jul	13 Jul	4 Aug	4 Jul	29 Jul	1 Aug
Stop	13 Nov	12 Nov	15 Oct	25 Nov	14 Nov	8 Nov
Total Days	67	56	11	113	76	43
No. Nets	1 to 45	1 to 5	8 to 10.5	2 to 23	3 to 7	5.5 to 8.5
Net Hours	13,623.15	772	482.5	3542	1355	1065
No. Best Day	291	25	18	119	52	44
Best Day Date	8 Oct	28 Oct	4 Aug/15 Oct	14 Sep	30 Oct	20 Aug
Reason BD	30% WTSP	52% SCJU	NA	65% AMGO	52% SCJU	25% REVI
Best Diversity	33 on 4 Oct	7 on 29 Oct	8 on 4 Aug	23 on 14 Sep	17 on 26 Sep	15 on 20 Aug
Banded 2001	6704	159	NA	3073	1291	713
Banded 2002	4098	146	94	3630	890	565
Species 2001	97	29	NA	87	70	62
Species 2002	90	32	28	94	57	52
B/100nh 2001	58	21	NA	104	88	66
B/100nh 2002	30	19	19.5	103	70	53
% HY 2001	92%	68%	NA	85%	79%	66%
% HY 2002	82%	72%	78%	89%	78%	60%

Table 2. AFR II - Most Frequently Encountered Species - Fall 2002

Braddock Bay			Alfred Station			Spring Hill			Kestrel Haven			Vestal			Ellenville		
Species	#	% HY	Species	#	% HY	Species	#	% HY	Species	#	% HY	Species	#	% HY	Species	#	% HY
WTSP(2)*	867	87	SCJU	24	73	GRCA	13	92	AMGO(1)	992	92	AMGO(3)	166	86	SCJU(2)	109	27
RCKI(3)	330	72	BCCH	21	75	BCCH	8	62	SOSP(2)	357	97	SCJU(1)	134	78	WTSP(3)	46	50
GCKI(4)	312	92	RCKI	12	70	VEER	8	88	COYE(5)	234	87	REVI(6)	69	86	GRCA(6)	44	82
HETH(6)	238	95	AMGO	10	55	RCKI	6	83	SCJU(3)	185	84	GRCA(5)	59	90	REVI	38	63
MAWA(5)	214	72	EAPH	7	71	AMGO	6	33	RCKI	137	100	WTSP(2)	56	64	BCCH(5)	31	81
GRCA(10)	160	90	BLJA	7	71	GCKI	5	100	GRCA(4)	128	88	HOFI	43	88	HOFI	30	73
COYE(8)	144	83	GCKI(6)	50	50	REVI	5	80	WTSP(7)	118	98	CEDW(4)	39	100	RCKI(4)	25	50
SOSP	117	91	AMRO	5	60	OVEN	5	100	CEDW	102	52	BCCH(8)	28	100	OVEN	23	78
GCTH	107	81	COYE(9)	5	100	SOSP	5	60	GCKI	100	98	COYE(7)	25	76	COYE(8)	20	80
AMGO	106	56	CHSP(4)	5	100	BWWA	3	0	YWAR	96	86	MAWA(9)	25	48	MAWA(10)	19	68
						COYE	3	100				OVEN	19	84			

Top Ten % of Total Banded

68 80 71 67.5 77 --

*(#) Indicates ranking last fall.

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory 431-0774
Kaiser-Manitou Beach Station
Monroe County, NY
Elizabeth W. Brooks, Compiler
<brookser@infoblvd.net>

The seventeenth consecutive year of fall banding at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station began on 13 Jul and ended 13 Nov 2002. Banding was done by licensed banders Elizabeth Brooks, Jon Dombrowski, Kristina Hannam, Erin Karnatz, Robert McKinney, David Semple, Susan Smith, John Waud, and Martha Zettel. Banding assistants were Jessie Barry, Chara Batchelder, Kelly Dockery, Luke Donius, Charley Eiseman, Pat Lovallo, Anna Ludi, Cindy Marino, Doug Smith, and Chris Villone. Our excellent fall banding assistant was Charley Eiseman.

Banding was carried out every day between 26 Aug and 11 Oct, except for 27 Sep when the remnants of Hurricane Isidore dumped heavy rain on the area. Banding was also done on nine days prior to and 13 days after the intensive banding period, for a total of 13,623.15 net hours on 67 days. There were 4098 birds banded of 90 forms. Three male and five female Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were released unbanded. The season's capture rate was 30.1 b/100nh, nearly half what it was last fall (58.1 b/100nh). Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Yellow Palm Warbler, and Nelson's Sharp-tailed Sparrow were new species for the cumulative fall list that now stands at 120 forms.

The best day was 8 Oct, the only day with over 200 birds banded, with 291 birds banded, 75% of the total being Ruby- and Golden-crowned kinglets, Hermit Thrush, and White-throated Sparrows. Days with 150+ birds banded were 184 on 29 Sep, 184 on 6 Oct, 183 on 9 Oct, 170 on 25 Sep, 164 on 3 Oct, and 156 on 4 Oct. By contrast, there were eight days in fall 2001 when over 200 birds were banded, including one with over 300 and one with over 400 birds handled. The greatest species diversity occurred on 4 Oct when 33 species were banded.

Up to 45 12-m nets and four 6-m nets were used, most in the same locations as in previous years. Included in the twelve-meter nets were six double-high net assemblies. Nets were numbered and

identified as to their habitat site and the capture time (hour after sunrise to the nearest 0.5 hour) and net number was recorded for each bird handled.

There were over 1028 birds recaptured during fall 2002, and they were all measured, fat-scored and re-weighed. Twenty-two percent of the same-season recaptures were White-throated Sparrows. Of the 31 returns of ten species, five were over four years old. A Northern Cardinal returned at six years of age, a Song Sparrow at five years and another at four, and two Common Yellowthroats were also in their fourth year.

It was a frustrating fall with day after day of hot, sunny weather with winds from the SW—fine spring banding conditions! Nets had to be closed within 3.5 hours of sunrise on many days because of the heat and humidity. And, when a cold front came through, it was short-lived and birds seemed to move right on past the lakeshore.

Total net hours (13,623.15) was the second highest in 16 years (range 714 in 1988 to 14,518 in 1999). The b/100 nh-capture ratio in fall 2001 was 30.1 (15-year average = 64.6; range 40.0 in 1994 - 98.0 in 1988). The hatching-year percentage of all birds banded was 81.5% (eight-year average = 83.6, range 74.5 - 92).

Sixteen species were banded in record-high numbers in fall 2002. These included Brown Creeper, Gray-cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush, Gray Catbird, Western Palm Warbler, Ovenbird, Mourning Warbler, Fox Sparrow, Song Sparrow, Lincoln's Sparrow, and Baltimore Oriole. Northern Mockingbird was captured for only the second time ever in fall. On the negative side, Rusty Blackbird was missing after being captured in 15 of the past 16 years and House Finch was missing for the first time since 1989.

Avian pox lesions were found on three Hermit Thrush, an American Robin, a Magnolia Warbler, a Black-throated Blue Warbler, a Common Yellowthroat, and six White-throated Sparrows. Hypoboscid flies were found on a Hermit Thrush, a Song Sparrow, and two White-throated Sparrows. Feather lice were found on a White-throated Sparrow and ticks discovered on a Gray-cheeked Thrush and a Lincoln's Sparrow. A 12.5-mm

diameter tumor was found on an American Robin's abdomen and a pea-sized tumor on the foot of a Field Sparrow. Three White-throated Sparrows and a Gray Catbird were found with chipped mandibles and a Warbling Vireo had upper and lower mandibles that curved inward. Two White-throated Sparrows had orange lores. Five Ruby-crowned Kinglets had aberrant crown color ranging from pale orange-yellow to orange-red.

Four students from the Rochester Institute of Technology successfully completed a five-week, one-credit Bander Training Course at the Observatory. Dr. Kristi Hannam, Assistant Professor of Biology at SUNY Geneseo, and SUNY Brockport graduate student Brendan McCabe conducted pilot research projects at the banding station this fall. On 13-15 Sept, the Observatory hosted a North American Banding Council Bander Certification Evaluation Session for the Eastern Bird Banding Association. Students from Dr. Hannam's SUNY Geneseo Animal Behavior course spent a half day at the banding station as well as students from John Waud's RIT "Great Lakes" course. Girls from Girl Scout Troop #814 of Hilton, as well as many individuals, visited the banding station on an informal basis. Pat Lovallo presented a program on bird banding as part of the Preserving the Earth Through Education (PETE) workshop at Brighton's French Road School.

Thanks to Tom Muller for mowing paths and to Jim Gillette for mowing the field; and to Doug Smith for all his habitat management and for housing visiting banders. Appreciation to the following individuals who helped scribe, tend net lanes, or assist with other aspects of our educational or banding operation: Ann Adams, Virginia Duffy, Judy Engerman, Marilyn Guenther, Gretchen Hawley, Donna Hilborn, John Lehr, Carolyn Marrocco, Janice Marsden, Ed McCrea, Chita McKinney, Shirley Meston, Loretta Morrell, Dan Niven, Jeanne Skelly, Greta Stephany, Ruth Stork, Kathy Taddeo, Andy and Karen Taylor, Barb Wagner, and Laurie Zagmaster.

A special thanks to Bob and Charlene Reed for housing, and to Bill and June Kaiser and Genesee Land Trust for permission to band on their land.

Weekly banding summaries from our fall season may be found at <<http://bbbo.org>>.

Alfred Station 421-0774
Allegany County, NY
Elizabeth W. Brooks
<brookser@infoblvd.net>

The 26th year of fall banding at Alfred Station (1435 Waterwells Road in the Town of Alfred) began on 13 Jul and ended on 12 Nov. From one to five nets were used on 56 days, for a total of 772 net hours. A total of 146 birds of 32 species were banded. The peak day was 28 Oct when 25 birds were banded. There were 50 repeats and 16 returns. Three returns were greater than four years old, the eldest being a fifth year Black-capped Chickadee. Another chickadee and a Red-breasted Nuthatch returned at four years of age.

Hypoboscids were found on just one bird, an Eastern Phoebe, and mites were found on a Song Sparrow. There was no evidence of avian pox on any bird. A White-throated Sparrow had orange lores.

As in the previous five years, no banding was done at this location from 9 Sep to 12 Oct when I was banding at Braddock Bay. This makes meaningful analysis almost impossible. The number of birds banded has remained steady for the past three years.

Gray Catbird was missing after being recorded in 15 of the last 16 fall banding seasons. White-breasted Nuthatch was missing after being recorded in 14 of the past 16 fall seasons. American Redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, and House Finch were missing after being recorded in 13 of the last 16 fall seasons.

A slide presentation on bird banding was given to a group of Lions' Club women and a banding demonstration was held on 7 Sep.

Spring Hill Wildlife Sanctuary 423-0772
Steuben County, NY
Robert and Chita McKinney

This was our ninth fall season with operation from 4 Aug through 15 Oct. The station is on a north-facing slope near the top of a hill of 2000 foot elevation. We maintain the habitat as open fields, overgrown hedgerows, brushy areas, and woodlots.

We had a very cold, wet, windy spring followed by a very hot, dry summer. This may have affected the nesting season adversely. We found the banding results very disappointing.

Highlights of the season were two new species never before banded here. On 28 Aug, we captured a Yellow-throated Vireo. This is a species that, in this hill country, is normally only encountered in the deepest valleys. The other first-timer was an Orange-crowned Warbler captured on our last day of banding. We feel that early October is the best time to encounter this warbler at our site.

Another interesting capture was an immature Chestnut-sided Warbler, with some juvenile plumage and an un-pneumatized skull, and which was molting its primaries. We found it unusual for such a young bird to molt flight feathers at this time of year. We had a few interesting returns: a male Purple Finch, first banded as an SY in Aug 1995, returned for the second time at almost 8 years of age; a Blue Jay, banded in Jun 1994, returned for the fourth time in Jul and was at least 8 years old; a male Blue-winged Warbler, banded as an HY in Jun 1995, returned for the fifth time in Jun and was also at least 8 years old; and a Veery, banded as AHY in Jun 1995, returned for the fifth time, also in Jun, and was our fourth 8-year-old return!

Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory 422-0764
Burdett, Schuyler County, NY
John and Sue Gregoire
<khmo@att.net>

An abundance of goldfinch and several strong northwest fronts accompanied by blocking systems to our south combined to allow us the largest catch in our 17 years of fall AFR banding. As usual, weather precluded much banding in November as early snows, high winds and extreme cold predominated.

Two highlights of this remarkable season were our fifth Gambel's White-crowned Sparrow (also two banded in 1997, one each in 1998 and 2000) and the reported return of a junco banded during the fall 1999 chickadee and junco irruption. All five of the Gambel's were netted following strong northwest

frontal passages often referred to as "Alberta clippers." This species may be a more regular migrant through our area than previously thought. It may simply not have been netted or, more likely, not recognized among the many Eastern White-crowned Sparrows. A second enigma has been the fate of the 652 chickadees and 180 juncos that swarmed through here in but a few days of Oct 1999. None have been recovered or reencountered. (Braddock Bay did have one of its almost 1000 chickadees recaptured in southwest Ontario within a few days of banding.) One junco was found dead in Clifton, VA, a Washington, DC, suburb, in November of this year leading to the supposition that it and perhaps other irrupting birds remained in newly established territories to our south. Only more data will resolve that question, but it is supportive of the mass dispersal theory of irruption.

This year, we banded 1041 American Goldfinches, 992 of those in the fall. This may serve to illustrate the northward proliferation of species theory associated with global warming. In the first twelve years (1986-1997) we banded only 1745 goldfinches. In the six-year period since then, we have banded 3801.

Overall, we banded 3630 individuals of 94 species during 113 days of operation. We also had 1086 repeats, 96 returns and 159 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (not banded). Three other birds were released without bands: a sickly Mourning Warbler that we later found dead, a Northern Cardinal with two injured tarsi, and a poor little Yellow Warbler with such a degree of avian pox on both tarsi that the legs gauged for a size two band! The total of birds netted was 4974 making our measure of efficiency 102.5 b/100nh for newly banded birds and 140.4 b/100nh overall. Hatching-year birds showed a small increase to 88.7% of the total banded. Our total species banded count remains at 124 species and five forms.

Of the 96 returns, 30 individuals of 14 species were recaptured at ages of four years or more, the eldest of which was a 10-year-old Gray Catbird. A second catbird was 9. Others were: a Hairy Woodpecker 8+ years; two Downy Woodpeckers 6 years; an Eastern Kingbird 4+; a Blue Jay 4; five Black-capped Chickadees 4, one 5 and another 8 years of age; an Eastern Tufted Titmouse was 4; an

American Robin 4; a Warbling Vireo 4; a Yellow Warbler 7; a Common Yellowthroat 7 and two 4+ years; Song Sparrows 4, 5, and 7 years; a House Finch 4, and two American Goldfinches 5 and 6 years of age.

In addition to the junco reported above, two goldfinch recoveries were reported. A SY-M banded in May 2001 was struck by a car a few miles to the northwest in Jun 2002. A HY-F banded in Nov 2001 was trapped and released in May 2002 by Eric Marchell at Prince Edward Point NWA in Ontario.

Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers have moved in. We banded two prior to 1999 and 23 since. Traill's Flycatchers showed a 50% decrease as did Eastern Kingbirds. Winter Wrens surged to nine times our average, while both kinglets arrived in numbers three times greater than normal. We have not had a big thrush year since 1995 and, since that time, their numbers have been low but stable. We banded our first Brown Thrasher in three years and noted a 50% decrease in Warbling Vireos.

The 26 warbler species banded included our first Northern Parula since 1995 and four Cape May (6 in 17 seasons). We missed Mourning for the first time while enjoying a doubling of Wilson's numbers. Indigo Buntings were but half of last year's surge of 106 but still three times the norm. Savannah Sparrows returned to high average, while Song Sparrows continued below norm. Finally, we banded more White-throated Sparrows than ever before.

Several of the White-throated Sparrows exhibited intertarsal joint hematoma or dislocations, which we repaired, leading us to use even greater caution when handling the species. The cause is uncertain but may be a genetic weakness of that joint as we also noted several birds with what appeared to be healed joint injuries. One White-throated Sparrow presented with a very leukistic head.

We encountered very few Hypoboscid flies, although we did remove the tiniest one we have ever seen from a hummingbird. One Rusty Blackbird had but 2mm of rust edging on only a single tertial. Tumors were observed on a junco, an Ovenbird, a catbird, and a Common Yellowthroat.

We removed a tick from the orbital feathers of a Connecticut Warbler and noted feather mite damage to the crowns of a Myrtle Warbler and an Eastern Phoebe as well as the entire facial area of a Common Grackle. A Song Sparrow presented with a crossed bill while a Rose-breasted Grosbeak exhibited double the normal size upper mandible due to excessive keratin formation. A Field Sparrow had a tar ball covering one withered foot. We removed most of the tar to no avail as the bird was recaptured a month later without that foot.

Two adult flicker intergrades were banded (three this year) joining the growing number of partially red-shafted flickers in our general area. One had P5, 6 and 7 red-shafted bilaterally, while the other had red shafts on P5 and 6 right and only on P4 left. A HY Cedar Waxwing presented with many waxy tips while an AHY-M of the same species had waxy tips on six rectrices.

Our second year of identifying and marking dragonflies resulted in 25 individuals of 9 species bringing our total to 64 species of Odonates identified here.

Our catch this year was diminished by the arrival of two feral cats in mid-October, forcing us to operate the remainder of the season with only upper net panels as these two hunted the net lanes. We were unable to trap "Osama" and "Sadam" as they were well fed and most likely harboring "over the border" at a neighboring farm when not terrorizing the station. Earlier in the season we also came upon a groundhog that had taken a netted bird, reminding us that these normally herbivores can be carnivorous when presented with opportunity.

We thank Don and Doris Cohrs, A.L. Donahue, Bob and Judy Cosgriff, Good Groceries of Watkins Glen, Brace Books also of Watkins Glen, and Jay Schissell for their generous support, and several others who contributed equipment, advice, and assistance. These include Stillman's Greenhouse, Gary Herzig, Fred Sibley, Ducks Unlimited, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, *Natural New England*, Pine Tree Farms, Spidertech, and Eagle Optics. A special thanks is due Barlow Rhodes who provided and delivered the sturdy Oak and Black Locust for bridges in the net lanes - no more "walking the plank"!

The top five species banded made up 47% of the total, a typical proportion in recent years. One hundred ten warblers of 14 species made up about 20% of the total catch, lower than average. The sparrows combined made up 33% of the total, a higher-than-usual amount. Because most of the juncos banded were adult, the overall percent of HY birds was 60% this year, lower than usual. A spring and summer drought was accompanied by above-average temperatures in August. By late

September cool weather arrived, the drought was finally broken, and below-average temperatures continued though early November. Banding conditions were generally good, meaning that high winds and cats did not interfere this year. A hard frost in late May had injured flower buds in this region of New York state, resulting in a complete lack of certain fruits around the net lanes (apple, crabapple, arrowwood, and cherry), but there were moderate amounts of fruits on silky and red-osier dogwood and multiflora rose.

NABC CERTIFICATION SESSION 3-5 Oct 2003

The Eastern Bird Banding Association (EBBA) is scheduling its 5th North American Banding Certification (NABC) session at the bander level for persons seeking or already possessing U.S. or Canadian banding permits or subpermits for **3-5 Oct 2003** at Braddock Bay Bird Observatory (BBBO), near Rochester, NY. Applications may be obtained from and submitted, no later than **25 Aug**, to Elizabeth W. Brooks, 1435 Waterwells Rd., Alfred Station, NY 14803; 607-587-9571; <ebrooks@BBBO.org>

NABC manuals and further details are available from the NABC website at <www.nabanding.net/nabanding/>. Accepted candidates will be notified by no later than **5 Sep** and are encouraged to contact an NABC Trainer (see website) to proctor the written examination portion of the certification prior to coming to BBBO; however, for those not able to do so, the examination may be taken at BBBO by prior arrangement. See also the EBBA website at <www.pronetisp.net/~bpbird>

Robert P. Yunick
<anneboby@aol.com>

