
ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW: Region IV

Piedmont—Coastal Plain, Fall 2008

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Banders from Maryland to Florida who were operating on 19 Oct will long remember that day. A cold front had passed offshore on the 18th with lingering rain in the Carolinas and Georgia that day, followed by a large area of high pressure that covered the eastern third of the United States and triggered the greatest songbird migration day of that season. Banders at inland Eden Mill and coastal Kiptopeke had a preview of the flight on the 18th, and on the 19th Foreman's Branch banded 346 birds, Folly Island banded 102, and Key Biscayne banded 227. Patuxent had had their best day on the 17th with 95 birds. Stations that missed out on that flight had another chance on 30 Oct after another cold front cleared the coast and was followed by an extensive high centered over Kentucky.

In sharp contrast to October, there was general consensus that the migration in August and September was disappointing. Kiptopeke banders had their third lowest season since 2000, and Tallahassee hit a new low birds per 100 net hours (b/100nh). Nevertheless, most stations had a few surprises to offer in the way of new species or high numbers. Key Biscayne had some of both, including the first Florida Bananaquit to be banded, 31 Chuck-will's-widows, and 131 Worm-eating Warblers.



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Overall, numbers were slightly down from previous years (see tables). Numbers of Indigo Bunting were largely absent this year, possibly because of missing key weather events that assisted in migration. Song Sparrow numbers increased, but numbers for other species, particularly warblers, were down. Best days were in mid October, and species diversity was lower than in previous years. Although the growth of red cedars continues to cause an increase in height, other species of mixed shrubs appear largely unchanged. This suggests that factors other than conspicuous changes in habitat are contributing to lower capture rates of individuals and species. Number of b/100nh, however, did increase over last year.

Our results were largely consistent with those reported from other nearby stations. Nighttime attempts to capture Northern Saw-whet Owls in mid November were unsuccessful.

New species for Eden Mill included three HY Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. Minimal feather growth of remiges and rectrices suggests that they may have hatched in the area.

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