returns and eight repeats. Of the returns, all were under four years of age, less a Veery that was five. My peak day was 4 Aug, when I banded 21 birds of nine species.

The above banding effort reflects the poorest season at this station ever. Little did I realize that the month of July for this year would be recorded by the National Weather Service as the "wettest on record." This month turned out to be an exercise in opening and closing mist nets. I am sure other banders know how frustrating this can be. In addition, a health problem prevented me from expending the extra banding effort that was needed.

Locally, Tree Swallow boxes were monitored for nestling output, which again turned out to be a futile effort due the weather. Out of 10 boxes, only two were taken and fledged young.

The one uncommon bird captured this season was a Warbling Vireo, which was the first ever banded at this station.

Powderhouse Road Station **420-0775**
Vestal, Broome County, NY
Gail Kirch
(gkirch@stny.rr.com)

AFR was a 'bust' at this station in 2009. A domestic cat had discovered my net lanes. I have no proof it caught anything but I was finding dead birds around my yard. This cat is healthy, wears no collar and I see it heading in all directions. I chose to close the station on 1 Sep. I set two nets on 17 Sep, but the cat appeared within 45 min. If this cat appears in 2010, I shall try to catch it in a Havahart trap and try to find the owner.

I felt that August banding was slow, with few species and lower numbers per species. I compared this year's effort in August to averages from the period August 1994-2008. Gray Catbird was slightly above average, while Black-capped Chickadee, Ovenbird, and Song Sparrow were all below the norm. Red-eyed Vireos were significantly below average (less than 25 %). Overall effort was almost halved, yet we banded only three days less than the August average. Species were slightly lower as were birds banded.

Only birds per 100 net hours were above the average. The weather determined the number of days I netted, which in turn affected all the other categories.

Ellenville Station **414-0742**
Ellenville, Ulster County, NY
Valerie M. Freer
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My results for the 40th consecutive season of operation, fall 2009 were dismal! In spite of near normal number of days and net-hours, only 325 new birds were netted for a yield of only 32 b/100nh, making it the fourth poorest season since 1970. An average of only eight birds per day were caught, the second lowest in 40 years.

Local people complained that summer never came this year. Across New York state, the summer was the 11th wettest in over 100 years, leading birders to blame shortage of birds on the cool and very wet weather. Breeding birds (especially ground nesters) had to be stressed in June because of cool temperatures and 14 days of measurable rainfall totaling 10 inches, five inches above normal. July was even cooler (three degrees below normal) and almost eight inches of rain fell locally on another 10 days. Another eight inches of rain fell in August (well above normal). It was not easy to get the usual number of banding days in August because of rain, but the temperature and precipitation were not far from normal in September. October was cool again, with above-normal rainfall and many windy mornings. Some of the poorly drained net lanes became quagmires.

I presumed that the poor weather would result in fewer young birds produced and would be reflected in a lower percent of young birds banded, but I was wrong. Almost 63% of all new birds were HY, close to the long-term average for this station. The averages for this poor season were skewed by catbirds, which defied the weather and the downward trend seen in other birds, and had a very good year. Sixty-nine were banded, comprising over 21% of all new birds caught. Most (84%) were HY as compared with 82% last year and 92% the year before.

More typical of this banding season were Red-eyed Vireo numbers: only four were caught, as compared with an average of 25 per year for the previous 39 years. I have noticed in the past that they are often caught in the nets closest to arrowwood (*Viburnum demtatum*) shrubs, which this year bore no fruits at all.

Fruit production by other shrubs around the net lanes varied greatly, with most in low average quantities, fewer than in 2008. Silky dogwood (*Cornus amomum*) and multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*) had fair amounts of fruits. Honeysuckle (*Lonicer* sp.) had perhaps one quarter as many fruits as last year and blueberries had small amounts.

Only 49 warblers (15% of all birds banded) of 13 species were caught in 2009, reflecting drops in numbers in most warbler species. The total of only seven Common Yellowthroats, the lowest ever here, compares with an average of 27 per year for all previous years. Other major declines were found in Black-capped Chickadees (14 banded vs 30 in previous years), Ruby-crowned Kinglets (8 vs 35), and White-throated Sparrows (12 vs 39).

Once again I used three or four of the same nets and in the same locations as above, with a caller to bring in migrating Northern Saw-whet Owls, catching 52 new ones on 15 evenings between 20 Oct and late Nov. Five foreign recoveries brought additional excitement (about 10% of all captures –how different from passerine banding!). Twenty-five visitors enjoyed the owls. Data from owl banding is not included in the above AFR numbers.

McGill Bird Observatory **454-0739**
Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, QC
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McGill Bird Observatory (MBO) in Montreal is a full member of the Canadian Migration Monitoring Network, and the only station in Quebec to conduct standardized spring and fall migration banding programs. MBO is operated by the Migration Research Foundation (MRF), a non-profit organization dedicated to the study of wildlife movements, especially as they relate to population monitoring and conservation.

In 2009, MBO operated its fifth full Fall Migration Monitoring Program, covering the usual 13-week period from 1 Aug through 30 Oct. A one-hour census trail was walked daily, and nets were open for five hours daily except when limited by inclement weather; only four days of banding were completely lost to rain, snow, or wind, and the record total of 5817 net hours reflected the generally good weather throughout the season. Typically, all 16 nets were operated daily, except for one set of four sometimes closed due to wind, and occasional closures of others due to unusually high capture rates. All nets are 12-m Spidertech passerine nets, set on standard 3-m poles. Photos are taken of each net lane annually to monitor (and allow mitigation of) habitat changes over time. This fall, bander-in-charge duties were shared by Simon Duval, Marcel Gahbauer, and Gay Gruner.

In comparison to 2008, our total of 3389 birds banded this fall was roughly one-third lower, but this was almost entirely due to the number of Yellow-rumped Warblers banded dropping from 1732 to 106. Correspondingly, our rate of capture of new birds (58b/100nh) was much lower than last year (91b/100nh), but comparable to 2007 (53b/100nh).

While the drop in Yellow-rumped Warblers this fall may appear alarming, it fits perfectly with a strong two-year cycle we have observed for this species throughout our five years of operation. Others that appear to peak in "even" years include Magnolia Warbler and Baltimore Oriole, while some species are distinctly showing the reverse pattern with peaks in "odd" years, including Black-capped Chickadee, Swamp Sparrow, and Fox Sparrow. We plan to explore these patterns further in the coming years.