through 5 Oct, a Marsh Wren on 16 Sep, and a Bicknell's Thrush on 28 Sep.

Maren again diligently collected hundreds of tick samples for a researcher at Yale University for a Lyme disease study. In addition to the banders listed above, the following people volunteered many hours helping at the station: Harry Sears, Henry Davis, Doug Gill, Victoria Cadby, Hanson Robbins, Jeannine Fleegle, Bernie Lohr, Amanda Spears, Amanda Lindsey, Rachel Field, Bill Tracket, and Anne and Brennan O'Connor.

**Chincoteague 375 – 0752**
**National Wildlife Refuge**
Assateague Island, Accomack Co., VA
***Richard N. Roberts***, Bander
bandbird@verizon.net

At least two factors caused the major decrease in birds for 2009: loss of one major banding habitat, and a large number of days of rain preventing banding. In addition, the general lack of warbler species was pronounced, a fact that was also recorded during the nesting season when this station is also operated. This is the first autumn of operation that the numbers of Myrtle Warblers have dropped below 100 individuals.

**Eastern Shore of Virginia 370-0755**
**National Wildlife Refuge**
**Songbird Banding Station**
Cape Charles, Northampton Co., VA
***Jethro Runco,*** Head Bander
jethrorunco@aol.com

The 2009 fall season marked the start of a large research project on the Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge. The overall scope of this project is to sample and assess the shrub/scrub habitat which comprises a large part of the refuge. Included in the project were vegetation assessment, fruit counts, bird surveys (area searches), foraging observations (activity budgets), and mobbing. This all followed an already set NWR protocol. Included in this project was the opening and operation of a passerine banding station. The goal of the banding station is to see if the surveying techniques (area searches) compare to what the banding station is catching, along with bird abundances and the overall condition of migrant birds.

Because this was the first year of operation, kinks had to be worked out. Because of other time-dependent projects, the banding station was opened on 15 Sep (a bit late for the early Neotropical migrants). Also, this was not meant to run as a constant-effort station. On average, this station ran five days a week, with days off mainly falling on bad weather days (which, as it turned out, were quite frequent over the Delmarva Peninsula this fall). It is not clear at this point how long this banding station will run, but it will at least run again in the 2010 fall season. It may last just two years, or maybe 20.

The banding station was in operation on 57 days between 15 Sep and 30 Nov. Because of the large number of expected captures, and a very limited number of staff (usually no more than two people running the station per day), this station was set up extremely tight and employed only 15 nets (five lines of three tandem 12-m nets). It took only two minutes to go from the banding station to the farthest net. By the end of the season, the station had banded 7,860 individuals with only 4,503 net hours (1.75 birds per net hour). In total, 83 species were banded, which is not bad considering a very large portion of the Neotropical migrants had passed through the area by the time the station opened on 15 Sep; 91.5% of the birds aged this season were in their Hatching Year, which is about normal for passerines passing down the Delmarva Peninsula.

Since this was the first year of operation, it is hard to determine what was expected and what was not. But a few species do stand out. The 122 Northern Parulas was extremely high and the 40 Northern Waterthrushes, 161 American Redstarts, and the 218 Common Yellowthroats were high considering the late start date. Gray Catbirds (625) were high, but expected, given the habitat. Thrush numbers were low, as expected, because forest was not part