

**Summary of the Wehle MAPS Banding Station  
in Bullock County,  
Alabama (2006 - 2010)**

The Wehle Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship Program (MAPS) Banding Station was established on the Wehle Forever Wild Nature Preserve in Bullock County, AL, in 2006. Capture and banding procedures follow MAPS protocols (administered by the Institute for Bird Populations) and the station is operated nine days during the breeding season from 11 May to 8 Aug; one morning session for every successive 10-day sampling period. Within the 20-ha sampling area, a majority of the station's nets are located within a mature, bottomland hardwood forest along a small creek flood plain. Two nets are also established peripherally in an adjacent upland dominated by open pine forest with a diverse herbaceous ground cover.

Since station initiation in July 2006, a total of 39 banding sessions have been performed accounting for 2289 total net hours for an average of 458 net-hr/yr. For all years combined, there have been 451 total captures representing 32 species. This includes 318 newly banded individuals (31 species), 113 recaptures (12 species), and 20 unbanded birds (9 species). The average annual capture rate for newly banded birds is 1.4 b/10nh (Table 1).

The 113 recaptures consisted of 74 individuals, which represented 23% of the total number of birds banded. Of the 74 individuals, 41 (55%) were recaptured within the same year, 25 (34%) were recaptured the following year, six (8%) were recaptured the second year, and two (3%) were recaptured three years after initial banding. Species recaptured two or more subsequent years include three Carolina Wrens, one Acadian Flycatcher, one Kentucky Warbler, one Common Yellowthroat, and two Northern Cardinals. The latter species were both captured three years later.

Eighteen individuals were released unbanded (e.g., Ruby-throated Hummingbird) or escaped before processing. Two individuals died, including a Louisiana Waterthrush (2008) during processing and a Wood Thrush (2009) in a net due to an apparent predation attempt. The former specimen was deposited at the Auburn University vertebrate collection.

For all years, the top 10 banded birds included 12 species (with ties) representing 62% of all birds banded (Table 2). Although variable each year, four of the 12 species have been in the top 10 every season (complete seasons) and include Carolina Wren, Kentucky Warbler, Hooded Warbler, and Indigo Bunting. Six species were represented by only one individual. Another nine species were

**Table 1. Summary of the Wehle MAPS banding station in Bullock County, Alabama.**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Total Banded	24	63	90	66	75	318
Recaptures	6	15	23	32	37	113
Unbanded	1	4	8	4	3	20
<b>Sum</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>451</b>
Total Days	3	9	9	9	9	39
# Nets Used	10	10	10	10	10	10
Total Net Hours	180	539	540	495	535	2289
Total Species Banded	9	17	22	16	21	31
Birds/10nh	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.4

represented by more than one and fewer than five individuals. One Northern Waterthrush accounted for the only migrant banded during station operation on 15 May 2007.

species have been banded. The average number of species detected annually is 58 for complete years (2007 - 2010).

**Table 2. The top 10 banded birds for all years (2006 - 2010).**

Species	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	Total
Carolina Wren	10	12	11	10	13	56
Kentucky Warbler	2	7	4	12	18	43
Indigo Bunting	0	3	14	11	5	33
Acadian Flycatcher	4	8	1	8	3	24
<b>Northern Cardinal</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>
Hooded Warbler	2	4	4	2	6	18
Tufted Titmouse	0	4	9	0	0	13
Louisiana Waterthrush	0	2	5	0	5	12
Summer Tanager	2	1	2	2	5	12
Common Yellowthroat	1	1	7	1	1	11
Northern Parula	0	5	3	2	1	11
Wood Thrush	0	2	2	4	1	9

Age ratio percentages for the top 10 banded birds (12 species) for all years are shown in Table 3. Earlier banding sessions yielded primarily SY, ASY, AHY birds (Sessions 2 - 5) followed by an influx of Local and HY birds as the breeding season lengthened (Sessions 5 - 10). Sex ratios for all banded individuals were almost evenly distributed at 33.3% male (N = 106); 32.7% female (N = 104); and 34.0% unknown (N = 108).

**Notable Station Insights and Acknowledgments:** The Kentucky Warbler's high relative abundance suggests that the forested creek bottoms on the property are important breeding areas for this species. It is currently recognized as a Greatest Conservation Need (GCN; Priority 2) species in Alabama's State Wildlife Action Plan, primarily due to steady widespread declines over the past several decades. Our ongoing participation with

**Table 3. Age ratios for the top 10 banded birds for all years (2006-2010).**

N	Species	Local %	HY %	SY %	ASY %	AHY %	UNK %
56	Carolina Wren	2	64	5	18	9	2
43	Kentucky Warbler	9	26	12	53	0	0
33	Indigo Bunting	6	27	42	21	3	0
24	Acadian Flycatcher	0	8	21	54	17	0
22	Northern Cardinal	0	41	14	0	45	0
18	Hooded Warbler	6	44	33	17	0	0
13	Tufted Titmouse	31	31	0	38	0	0
12	Louisiana Waterthrush	0	50	17	33	0	0
12	Summer Tanager	0	17	8	67	8	0
11	Northern Parula	0	0	27	55	18	0
11	Common Yellowthroat	0	55	0	45	0	0
9	Wood Thrush	22	0	11	67	0	0

To date, a total of 71 species have been tallied within the station's sampling area during banding sessions (N = 39). Thirty-one (44%) of those

MAPS will allow for closer examination of the population dynamics and demographics for this and other species associated with these bottoms.

Another GCN species, Bachman's Sparrow (Priority 2), has been banded one time during station operation. Although open pine habitat is only peripherally covered by the station, it is locally common throughout the property and is regularly detected during banding sessions. Overall, the open pine community is the dominant habitat on the property and is managed regularly with prescribed fire to maintain the structural conditions required by Bachman's Sparrow and other wildlife dependent upon this ecosystem.

The Wehle MAPS banding station is operated by Eric Soehren and John Trent of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division. Appreciation is extended to the following volunteers for their assistance over the years: Paige Aplin, Mark Bailey, Caroline Causey, Liz Crandall, Michael Gagin, Eddie Hackett, Max Harman, Emily Horton, Carrie Johnson, Eve Kendrick, Donald Lampley,

Josh Landrum, Chris O'Brien, Ashley Peters, Billy Pope, Collin Roberts, Scott Rose, Scott Rush, Nicholas Sharp, Amy Silvano, Jennifer Soehren, Erika Taketa, Michelle Tacconelli, Karen Tenaglia, and Jennifer Wang.

This MAPS banding station would not have been possible were it not for the Forever Wild Program and the significant lands it has protected in Alabama through acquisition. Additionally, gratitude is extended to the late Robert G. Wehle for the legacy he created in the tract.

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## ***Recent Literature***

### **BANDING HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHIES**

**BSC people profile Geoff Holroyd.** Anonymous. 2010. *BirdWatch Canada* 51:2. Bird Studies Canada, Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0 (Brief biographical profile of one of earliest Long Point Bird Observatory volunteers and former board chair as well as founding co-chair of Beaverhill Bird Observatory, whose M.Sc. and Ph.D. were based on studies of banded Tree Swallows and whose current Canadian Wildlife Service studies include banded raptors.) MKM

**In the beginning: LPBO's origins and early days.** D. [J. T.] Hussell. 2010. *BirdWatch Canada* 51:4-6. 111 Decou Rd., Simcoe, ON N3Y 4K2 (Brief account of founding, founders and early years of Long Point Bird Observatory near Port Rowan, ON, after 50 years by one of its founders, who has conducted research there since the beginning, served in numerous board and committee positions and was its first Executive Director.) MKM

**In memoriam Ernie Kuyt.** Anonymous. 2010. *Nature Alberta* 40(1):11. c/o Nature Alberta, 11759 Groat Rd., Edmonton, AB T5M 3K6 (Very brief biography of Dutch-born Canadian Wildlife Service biologist who conducted population surveys of Wood Buffalo National Park Whooping Crane flock for 25 years, monitored their breeding efforts through banding and undertook much of the effort involved in collecting "spare" eggs to start breeding flocks in other areas to prevent extinction from natural disasters to a single flock. After retirement, he moved to Edmonton, where he continued to band local birds until passing away at age 81.) MKM

**LPBO wardens: where are they now? –Bob Whittam.** Anonymous. 2010. *BirdWatch Canada* 50:27. Bird Studies Canada, Box 160, Port Rowan, ON N0E 1M0 (Brief biographical note on 1968 warden, who subsequently studied in Quebec and worked in biological positions for the Royal Ontario Museum, Canadian and Ontario government agencies and a wildlife centre at Ontario's Wye Marsh.) MKM