

Table 2. Original banding year of Ruby-throated Hummingbirds re-encountered from 2001 through 2011. Columns show original banding year; rows show re-encounter year.

Encounter Year	Year of Banding										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
2001	86										
2002	139	129									
2003	26	87	83								
2004	22	35	103	148							
2005	12	13	43	70	188						
2006	3	2	10	30	105	145					
2007			2	2	35	59	184				
2008			4	6	27	54	143	194			
2009			1	2	8	10	41	78	197		
2010			1		12	8	34	68	88	211	
2011					3	6	13	32	73	89	412

caught in September than in July. At some sites, in the first month of the banding season, about half of the birds caught during a banding session were re-encounters. This indicates that many of the site's breeders have been banded. It was also apparent that more females were re-encountered in subsequent years than males, and it was about twice as likely to re-encounter a bird originally banded as an adult rather than as an HY bird. This indicates that if a bird makes it through the first year of life, it is likely to

survive many years. The oldest bird I have recaptured was about nine years old: it was banded as an adult in 2002 and re-encountered in 2009 (see Table 2). Most of the birds re-encountered are between four and five years old.

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Margery Adams Bird Banding Station - Spring 2012 Report Adams Wildlife Sanctuary, Springfield, IL

The Margery Adams Bird Banding Station's (MABBS; coordinates: 394-0983) spring banding season for 2012 ran from 27 Mar through 24 May at the 40-ac Adams Wildlife Sanctuary (an urban site in Springfield, IL). From 11 to 26 nets were used on 44 mornings (weekdays and some Saturdays) producing 4,195 net-hours of operation. [One net-hour is the use of one standard, 12-m net for one hour during daylight hours.] The final tally was 810 birds of 76 species banded with an average of 0.19 birds per net-hour. Another 180 birds (plus one more species) were captured as returns and repeats.

With the intentional and intense removal of the invasive understory (winter creeper, bush honeysuckle and other exotics) in the front portion of the banding area, the nets previously used in this "now-cleared" woodland were relocated temporarily in what was thought to be a similar wooded area in the back portion of the sanctuary; however, the number of captures in these newly located nets was extremely poor. The six nets in the "prairie" portion of the sanctuary were most productive for species associated with non-woody vegetation, including several sparrows (especially Field, Song and

Swamp), Indigo Buntings, American Goldfinches, Common Yellowthroats and the *Empidonax* flycatchers. It was in one of these nets that the sanctuary's first Blue Grosbeak and Henslow's Sparrow were captured, bringing the four-year MABBS total (including both spring and fall seasons) to 118 species.

The number of birds banded, especially migrant songbirds, was extremely low this year (Table 1 provides an overall comparison). There were no "fallout" days and 16 Apr (the 17th banding day) was the first day in which more than 12 birds were banded; 50 or more were banded on only two days: 16 Apr (75 birds) and 1 May (55 birds). The 810 banded is only 53% to 68% of the number banded in the three previous years; and the number of birds per net-hour, 0.19, is less than 2/3 that of any of the three previous years. The season would have ended with just 72 species if four new species had not been caught on the last two days (Black-billed Cuckoo, two Connecticut Warblers, the Henslow's Sparrow and a Baltimore Oriole) Even then, the final tally of 76 is much lower than the 81 and 82 of the previous springs.

Table 1. Overall summary of spring banding at MABBS for past four years.

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Number of birds banded	1,194	1,530	1,356	810
Number of species banded	81	82	81	76
Number of banding days	43	46	38	44
Number of net hours	3,565	5,194	4,549	4,195
Number of new birds/nh	0.42	0.29	0.30	0.19

Potential reasons for the scarcity of birds this spring included 1) a very early and prolonged warm spell in March (causing trees to leaf out and insects to appear well ahead of normal and wintering birds to depart early), 2) a lengthy April cool spell setting back the early advances of March's warm spell, 3) a paucity of weather patterns featuring warm southerly winds that would have been favorable for strong migrations, 4) the total removal of the exotic understory where the majority of woodland species had been captured in past years, and 5) the birds simply flew over Springfield and the MABBS site during this year's northward journey.

Table 2. Total captures for 10 most common species.

Species	Number Banded			
	2009	2010	2011	2012
White-throated Sparrow	201	136	177	87
American Robin	109	172	86	66
Gray Catbird	83	94	63	58
Swamp Sparrow	18	19	84	39
Indigo Bunting	47	31	45	39
Tennessee Warbler	46	21	7	32
Common Grackle	24	29	23	32
Hermit Thrush	32	33	15	31
American Goldfinch	57	32	68	28
Nashville Warbler	57	26	40	25

Table 3. Comparison of 2012 captures with average numbers captures for 2009-2011

Migrant Species	Number Banded	
	2012	Prior Average
Eastern Phoebe	1	36
Brown Creeper	3	40
Golden-crowned Kinglet	0	8
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	12	46
Veery	6	10
Gray-checked Thrush	8	18
Swainson's Thrush	22	61
Nashville Warbler	25	41
Chestnut-sided Warbler	1	13
Magnolia Warbler	5	59
Yellow-rumped Warbler	4	22
Palm Warbler	6	16
Black-and-white Warbler	0	12
American Redstart	4	28
Ovenbird	22	48
Northern Waterthrush	4	55
Kentucky Warbler	0	6
Canada Warbler	4	16
Fox Sparrow	1	8
Song Sparrow	7	18
White-throated Sparrow	87	171
Dark-eyed Junco	0	27

Table 2 identifies the 10 most common species banded this year and compares the 2012 numbers with those of the past three years. Table 3 provides an indicator of the scarcity of several spring migrants compared with the average of the three previous springs. In addition to the four species noted in Table 3 with zero captures, other anticipated species not captured this spring were Red-bellied Woodpecker, Northern Flicker, Great Crested Flycatcher, Yellow-throated and Red-eyed vireos, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, and several migrant warblers including Northern Parula and Yellow; Scarlet Tanager, Eastern Towhee and House Finch.

As usual, many thanks to all who donated both time and dollars for the MABBS project. Special thanks to

the Illinois Audubon Society (site owners) for coordinating activities that included several visits by school groups, senior citizen groups, and many walk-ins, seven regular assistants (Billie Costales, Joe Gardner, Mike Kennedy, Jacques Nuzzo, Danny Rosenkranz, Tony Rothering and Susan Shaw), and Jo Fessett (Illinois Audubon office) for keeping the MABBS daily tally current on Audubon's website: <http://www.illinoisaudubon.org>. The MABBS fall season is scheduled for late August through mid-November.

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Western Regional News and Comments

Recovering from recoveries: bird banding soon to be obsolete?

In a beautifully written piece in the March-April 2012 *Audubon Magazine*, Scott Weidensaul* told of the fantastic insights into bird migration coming as a direct result of new transmitter and data logger technologies. Recent advances in device technology and data visualization are giving researchers and the public the ability to track individual birds throughout the year.

On an off-key note in the article, Scott quotes Steve Kress, the well-known puffin expert and Audubon scientist, stating that the new technologies "could be far more important than bird bands, and future ornithologists may someday think of placing metal rings on bird legs as being as primitive as we might

think of John James Audubon's method of tying a silver thread to a phoebe leg."

Although I would defend his right to hyperbole and setting up a "band-recovery" straw man, these are unfortunate turns of phrases. As we are all aware, banding is under increasing scrutiny, and that recoveries have become a very small part of why we band landbirds. In a follow-up note that I sent to Scott he replied: "I think we're on a technological trajectory that will someday bring a time when we can track - inexpensively, with precision and in real time - every bird we mark, at which point Steve's prediction will come true. When that happens, using leg bands and playing a recovery lottery probably