

ALLEGHENY FRONT MIGRATION OBSERVATORY

Fall Migration 2000

Grant County, West Virginia

The forty-third year of bird-banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory was the second poorest season since we have had full time coverage. The number of bandings was only 52% of the long-term average. The weather was generally mild but unusually rainy. The station was in full operation from August 13 to October 15. On six days the operation was closed down because of rain or high winds, and on five additional days rain caused an early close of the nets. Some useful banding was carried out on 57 days.

A total of 3007 birds (average = 5722) was banded with a station effort of 5998.8 net-hours giving a capture ratio of 50.13 birds per 100 net-hours (4th poorest). In August 309 birds were banded (17 days), 1747 in September (25 days), and 951 in October (15 days). The station has now banded 184,773 birds of 119 species. No new species were captured this year.

Eleven birds banded in previous years were recaptured: four banded in 1999, five in 1998, and two (both Common Yellowthroats) banded in 1996. All seventeen were species which nest in the area. There were two interesting recoveries: an Ovenbird banded in 1999 was found dead at Warner, NH in April of 2000 and a Palm Warbler banded in October, 1995 hit the World Trade Center building in New York on April 2, 2000.

The pattern (figure on page 4) was not the typical form but was similar to the pattern of 1996, the all time poorest year. The few birds captured in August were almost all local breeders, and the first moderate migratory movement was about two weeks late on September 15. However, the days of heaviest flights were on September 18 and 23, about the normal time. The mid-October wave was caused by a good flight of juncos. The biggest day was September 18 with 247 bandings followed by September 23 with 231. No other days produced more than 200 birds and only seven days had more than 100. There were less than 50 bandings on 37 days.

The Black-throated Blue warbler continues to be the most numerous species but the 546 bandings is 21% below the ten-year average. The Dark-eyed Junco, including both migrant and resident populations, was second with 325 (40% above average) and the Black-throated Green Warbler with 275 (25% below average) was third. Of 40 species selected for analysis 33 were banded in numbers below the ten-year average but 19 of these were less than one standard deviation (S.D.) below, 12 species were less than two S.D. below and two (Veery

and Rose-breasted Grosbeak were more than two S.D. below. Five species were above the average but none were more than one S.D. above.

The warblers as a group showed a decline of 42% from the ten-year average. The “Spruce Budworm Specialists” continued their decline with the Cape May Warbler having a decline of 79%, the Bay-breasted Warbler 65%, and the Tennessee Warbler 33%. Most surprising was the 76% decline of the Blackpoll Warbler, which usually has the most or second most captures. The Blackburnian Warbler was down 71%. On the other hand, Nashville and Wilson’s warblers were in numbers slightly above average.

Swainson’s Thrush had a decline of 22%, the Gray-Cheeked Thrush declined 52% and the Veery 44%, but the Hermit Thrush continued to show increasing numbers caught but this is largely caused by an increase in captures of an increasing local breeding population. Another surprise was the 44% decline in numbers of Ruby-crowned Kinglets. The flycatchers continue to be almost absent at this station.

The visual migrant counts were continued. Only 229 Blue Jays were counted. Other seasonal counts were 305 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (10-year average,443), 1209 American Goldfinches (average 3064), and 831 Monarch Butterflies.

During the season, 1636 people signed the visitor’s book. These visitors came from 19 states, District of Columbia, Ontario and England, Germany, and Venezuela. As usual, several elementary and high school classes visited the station.

The banders who participated this year were Lynn Barnhart, Robert Dean, Walter Fye, LeJay Graffious, Ken Heselton, Sue Heselton, Steve Huy, Carol McCullough, Fred McCullough, Joan Bell Pattison, Randy Ritter, Janet Shaffer, Judy Ward, Charles Ziegenfus, and station co-leader Ralph Bell. LeJay Graffious was also responsible for the banding shelter. Randy Ritter was campground host and resident bander. JoAnn Graham made most of the Blue Jay-Hummingbird counts. Others who were present for extended periods of time were Phil Graham, Beth Ritter, and Carl and Joan Rowe. The following people aided in tending nets, carrying cages, keeping records, and in many other ways: Bill Agee, Doris Agee, Chris Broyles, Hickory Dean, Charlotte Duffield, Cindy Ellis, Ed Fauber, Lou Ann Fauber, Hal Findley, Dawn Fox, Jay Fox, Matt Fox, Tom Fox, Walter Fox, Bob Hogan, Linda Hollenberg, Jerry Howard, Pat Hurley, Tom Hurley, John Jacobs, Virginia Johnson, Jack Minear, Jolene Minear, Ben Myers, Evelyn Myers, Tim Newlin, Don Pattison, Isobel Remedios, Paul Renno, Miles Runner, Joe Schreiber, Janice Shepherd, Steve Sushinski, and Martin Wiley.

We also thank the personnel of the Monongahela National Forest, Supervisor Chuck Meyers, District Ranger Elizabeth Schuppert, and others of the Potomac District Ranger Station for their cooperation and support. Thanks also to the D.N.R. for the use of the shed for storage of the banding shelter. The Brooks Bird Club supplied some financial support.

George A. Hall
November 22, 2000

2000 Species List

	Number	First	Last	Peak No.
Sharp-shinned Hawk	3	Sept. 18	Oct. 13	
American Woodcock	2	Sept. 20	Oct. 12	
N. Saw-whet Owl	4	Aug. 21	Oct. 28	
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	3	Sept. 30	Oct. 8	
Hairy Woodpecker	1	Oct. 11		
Northern Flicker	2	Sept. 29	Oct. 11	
E. Wood Pewee	2	Sept. 4	Sept. 10	
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	1	Aug. 15		
Least Flycatcher	1	Aug. 17		
E. Phoebe	1	Oct. 4		
Blue-headed Vireo	15	Aug. 22	Oct. 15	
Philadelphia Vireo	2	Sept. 23		
Red-eyed Vireo	15	Aug. 17	Oct. 12	
Blue Jay	7	Sept. 10	Oct. 14	
Black-capped Chickadee	15	Aug. 20	Oct. 13	
Red-breasted Nuthatch	3	Oct. 13		
Brown Creeper	3	Sept. 18	Oct. 12	
Winter Wren	15	Sept. 15	Oct. 7	
Golden-crowned Kinglet	191	Aug. 17	Oct. 15	48
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	65	Sept. 22	Oct. 15	18
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	3	Aug. 26	Sept. 12	
Veery	5	Aug. 14	Sept. 8	
Gray-cheeked Thrush	6	Sept. 15	Oct. 7	
Swainson's Thrush	211	Aug. 16	Oct. 12	32
Hermit Thrush	52	Aug. 13	Oct. 13	
Wood Thrush	22	Aug. 13	Oct. 7	
American Robin	15	Aug. 16	Oct. 14	
Gray Catbird	12	Aug. 14	Oct. 13	
Cedar Waxwing	3	Aug. 15	Oct. 14	
Tennessee Warbler	190	Sept. 4	Oct. 13	37
Orange-crowned Warbler	2	Oct. 14	Oct. 15	
Nashville Warbler	65	Sept. 4	Oct. 13	14
Northern Parula	3	Aug. 26	Sept. 18	
Yellow Warbler	1	Aug. 13		
Chestnut-sided Warbler	24	Aug. 15	Sept. 29	
Magnolia Warbler	199	Aug. 15	Oct. 4	66
Cape May Warbler	50	Sept. 4	Oct. 7	
Bl.-throated Blue Warbler	546	Aug. 14	Oct. 12	63
Yellow-rumped Warbler	35	Aug. 15	Oct. 14	8
Bl.-throated Green Warbler	275	Aug. 15	Oct. 14	40
Blackburnian Warbler	45	Aug. 14	Oct. 7	11
Palm Warbler	6	Sept. 29	Oct. 11	
Bay-breasted Warbler	33	Sept. 4	Sept. 28	8
Blackpoll Warbler	162	Sept. 10	Oct. 14	29
Black & White Warbler	15	Aug. 17	Sept. 23	
American Redstart	19	Aug. 14	Sept. 28	
Worm-eating Warbler	3	Aug. 23	Sept. 15	
Ovenbird	50	Aug. 16	Oct. 8	8

Northern Waterthrush	5	Aug. 17	Sept. 22	
Kentucky Warbler	2	Aug. 23	Sept. 3	
Connecticut Warbler	5	Sept. 17	Sept. 29	
Mourning Warbler	1	Aug. 26		
Common Yellowthroat	138	Aug. 14	Oct. 8	14
Hooded Warbler	9	Aug. 22	Sept. 22	
Wilson's Warbler	14	Aug. 26	Sept. 23	
Canada Warbler	9	Aug. 14	Oct. 4	
Scarlet Tanager	4	Sept. 8	Sept. 28	
Eastern Towhee	15	Aug. 13	Oct. 8	
Chipping Sparrow	2	Aug. 17		
Field Sparrow	5	Aug. 16	Oct. 15	
Vesper Sparrow	1	Sept. 13		
Savannah Sparrow	7	Aug. 27	Sept. 29	
Fox Sparrow	2	Oct. 4	Oct. 12	
Song Sparrow	16	Aug. 13	Oct. 14	
Lincoln's Sparrow	6	Sept. 15	Oct. 12	
Swamp Sparrow	7	Sept. 22	Oct. 6	
White-throated Sparrow	13	Sept. 30	Oct. 14	
White-crowned Sparrow	2	Oct. 5	Oct. 12	
Dark-eyed Junco	325	Aug. 13	Oct. 15	53
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6	Aug. 17	Oct. 2	
Indigo Bunting	1	Sept. 23		
Purple Finch	3	Aug. 14	Oct. 4	
American Goldfinch	6	Aug. 23	Oct. 11	

