

Allegheny Front Migration Observatory: Fall Migration, 2005

Ralph K. Bell and Joan Bell Pattison

The 48th year of bird banding at the Allegheny Front Migration Observatory (AFMO) in Grant County, 10 miles southeast of Davis, West Virginia, began on August 13, and ended on October 16. Banded this season were 5,493 birds of 78 species with a station effort of 8,549.75 hours giving a capture rate of 64.2 birds per 100 net hours. This was the best year for number of birds banded since 1999 when 5,562 birds were banded.

The station was open for 59 days, and closed for a total of six days due to bad weather. There were 10 days this fall when over 100 birds were banded, five days with over 200, one day with over 300, one day over 400, and one day over 500. The edge of Hurricane Katrina passed through on August 31. Then good westerly winds began, and 439 birds were banded on September 2 and 207 birds were banded on September 3. A weather front passed through the area on September 15 and provided westerly winds on September 16 and 17. September 17 was the best day of the fall season when 510 birds were banded. Westerly winds on September 18, 20, 21, 22, and 23 also produced good flight days, and even a slight easterly wind on September 19 was a good flight day. Following passage of another front on September 29, 195 birds were banded on October 1, and 153 were banded October 2. Then there was a stalled weather front with rain from October 6–14 over the northeastern United States, and this probably contributed to the lower number of migrants going southwestward through the banding station area early in October.

Migrating White-crowned Sparrows and their first capture date would be a good example of how weather affected the migration. Most, if not all, White-crowned Sparrows nesting in eastern Canada and Labrador would have been going southwestward, as many spend their winters in Texas. This year, the first of this species were banded on October 15, after the rains had, for the most part, moved out of New York State. The first bandings of this species were on October 6 in 2004 and on October 7 in 2003.

The Black-throated Blue Warbler was the most numerous species with 1,057 banded, which is 45.6% above the 10-year running average. It has been the leader for the past 8 out of 10 years. Blackpoll Warbler was 2nd highest with 1,036 banded (108.1% above the 10-year average), Black-throated Green Warbler was 3rd highest with 568 banded (42.5% above the 10-year average), Magnolia Warbler was 4th highest with 327 banded (39.7% above the 10-year average), and Cape May Warbler was 5th highest with 280 banded (148.9% above the 10-year average). The total of the top five species banded was 3,268, which is 59.4% of the total birds banded this fall. See Table 1 for the record of all 2005 bandings.

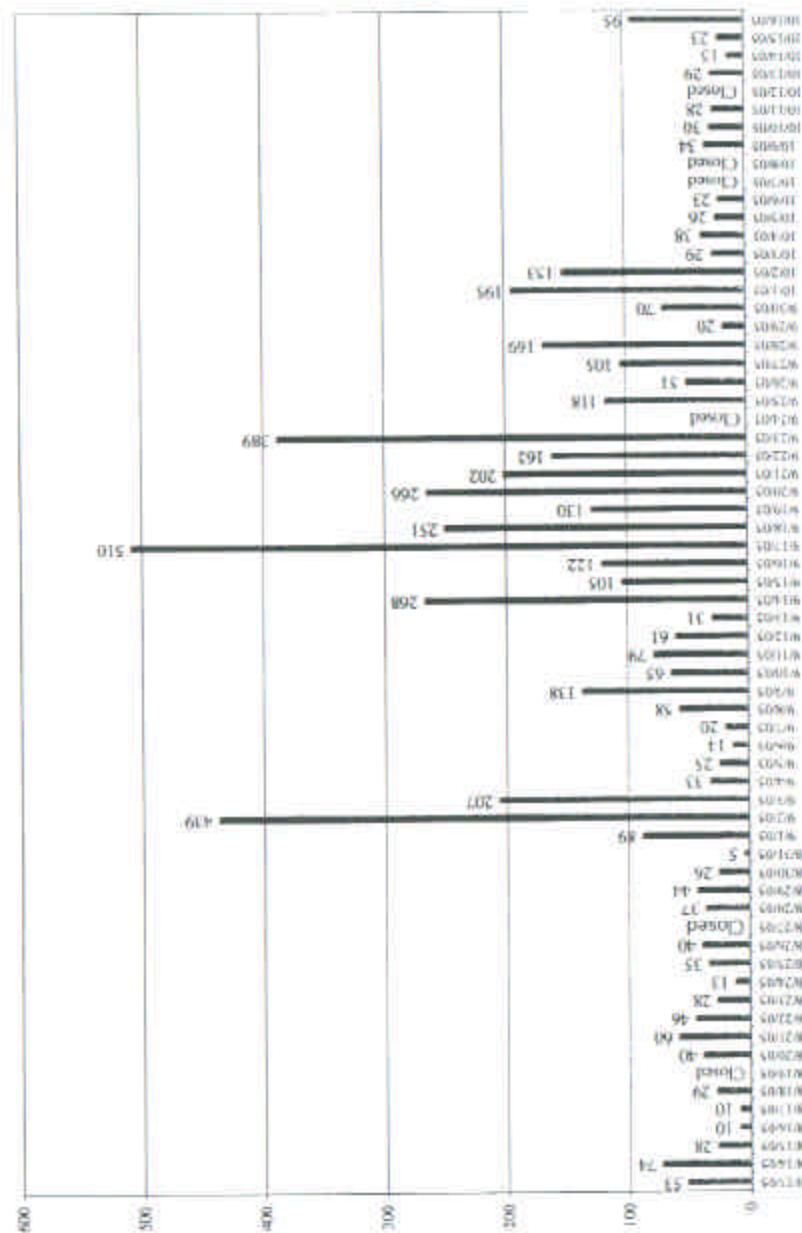


Table 1
AFMO 2005 Banding Summary

Species	Total Captures	First Date	Last Date	Peak Number	Peak Dates
American Woodcock	2	Sep-7	Sep-25		
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	Oct-4			
Northern Saw-whet Owl	4	Sep-23	Oct-14		
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Sep-27			
Downy Woodpecker	6	Sep-6	Oct-16	2	Oct-9
Hairy Woodpecker	1	Sep-28			
Northern Flicker	2	Sep-18	Oct-15		
Eastern Wood-Pewee	1	Aug-16			
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	2	Aug-26	Sep-2		
Eastern Phoebe	3	Sep-18	Sep-20		
Blue-headed Vireo	21	Aug-15	Oct-11	3	Oct-11
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	Sep-14			
Philadelphia Vireo	12	Sep-11	Sep-23	2	Sep-12, Sep-15, Sep-19
Red-eyed Vireo	66	Aug-13	Oct-1	14	Sep-2
Blue Jay	33	Sep-5	Oct-13	8	Oct-13
Black-capped Chickadee	34	Aug-13	Oct-14	5	Oct-1
Tufted Titmouse	2	Oct-1	Oct-14		
Red-breasted Nuthatch	6	Aug-13	Oct-16	2	Oct-1
Brown Creeper	2	Oct-1	Oct-2		
Carolina Wren	2	Aug-15			
House Wren	5	Aug-21	Sep-28		
Winter Wren	12	Aug-14	Oct-13	2	Aug-14

Species	Total Captures	First Date	Last Date	Peak Number	Peak Dates
Golden-crowned Kinglet	92	Aug-23	Oct-16	34	Oct-16
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	90	Sep-14	Oct-16	18	Sep-30
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	4	Aug-15	Sep-1	3	Sep-1
Veery	15	Aug-21	Sep-18	2	Sep-3, Sep-16
Gray-cheeked Thrush	10	Sep-22	Oct-11	2	Sep-22, Sep-25
Swainson's Thrush	231	Aug-14	Oct-16	48	Sep-20
Hermit Thrush	65	Aug-13	Oct-14	6	Oct-2, Oct-10
Wood Thrush	13	Aug-16	Sep-17	2	Sep-10, Sep-12
American Robin	17	Aug-15	Oct-15	3	Oct-15
Gray Catbird	7	Aug-13	Sep-29		
Brown Thrasher	3	Sep-12	Oct-2		
Cedar Waxwing	10	Aug-13	Oct-2	2	Aug-14, Aug-18, Aug-20
Blue-winged Warbler	1	Sep-2			
Tennessee Warbler	191	Aug-15	Oct-9	40	Sep-2
Orange-crowned Warbler	1	Oct-16			
Nashville Warbler	28	Aug-25	Oct-6	5	Sep-2
Northern Parula	11	Sep-9	Oct-2	4	Sep-20
Yellow Warbler	1	Sep-3			
Chestnut-sided Warbler	62	Aug-13	Sep-25	9	Sep-2
Magnolia Warbler	327	Aug-13	Oct-4	30	Sep-14
Cape May Warbler	280	Aug-20	Oct-11	28	Sep-2
Black-throated Blue Warbler	1057	Aug-13	Oct-11	143	Sep-2
Yellow-rumped Warbler	49	Aug-13	Oct-16	9	Sep-28
Black-throated Green Warbler	568	Aug-13	Oct-16	52	Sep-14
Blackburnian Warbler	178	Aug-13	Oct-4	55	Sep-2

Species	Total Captures	First Date	Last Date	Peak Number	Peak Dates
Prairie Warbler	3	Aug-13	Sep-1		
Palm Warbler	9	Sep-18	Oct-15	2	Sep-18
Bay-breasted Warbler	72	Aug-26	Oct-2	11	Sep-23
Blackpoll Warbler	1,036	Sep-1	Oct-16	219	Sep-17
Black-and-white Warbler	39	Aug-13	Sep-23	5	Sep-2
American Redstart	58	Aug-13	Oct-6	16	Sep-2
Worm-eating Warbler	12	Aug-13	Sep-14	3	Sep-2
Ovenbird	100	Aug-13	Oct-5	9	Sep-17, Sep-22
Northern Waterthrush	3	Aug-18	Sep-2	2	Sep-2
Connecticut Warbler	11	Sep-8	Sep-21	2	Sep-10, Sep-17, Sep-18
Common Yellowthroat	193	Aug-13	Oct-1	12	Aug-13
Hooded Warbler	11	Aug-14	Sep-23	4	Sep-2
Wilson's Warbler	15	Aug-29	Sep-26	2	Sep-2, Sep-3, Sep-18, Sep-22, Sep-26
Canada Warbler	15	Aug-13	Sep-23	5	Aug-14
Scarlet Tanager	16	Aug-14	Oct-3	3	Sep-10, Oct-2
Eastern Towhee	33	Aug-14	Oct-14	4	Oct-4
Chipping Sparrow	2	Sep-8	Sep-10		
Field Sparrow	10	Aug-14	Oct-16	5	Oct-16
Savannah Sparrow	10	Aug-18	Sep-25	2	Sep-3
Fox Sparrow	1	Oct-16			
Song Sparrow	16	Aug-13	Oct-16	3	Oct-2
Lincoln's Sparrow	14	Sep-18	Oct-1	3	Sep-20
Swamp Sparrow	17	Aug-14	Oct-16	4	Oct-16
White-throated Sparrow	5	Sep-28	Oct-16		

THE REDSTART—JULY, 2006

Species	Total Captures	First Date	Last Date	Peak Number	Peak Dates
White-crowned Sparrow	17	Oct-15	Oct-16	12	Oct-16
Dark-eyed Junco	205	Aug-13	Oct-16	18	Oct-1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	19	Aug-21	Oct-2	4	Sep-18
Indigo Bunting	7	Aug-25	Sep-28	2	Aug-25, Sep-28
Baltimore Oriole	1	Aug-14			
Purple Finch	3	Aug-14	Sep-17	2	Aug-14
American Goldfinch	10	Aug-15	Oct-15	3	Sep-2
Total	5,493				

THE REDSTART—JULY, 2006