

WE SINCERELY REGRET.....

It is rather difficult for me to write this, but both Mabel Gillespie and I knew we would have to announce this sooner or later: The book review column on the previous pages is regrettably the final column edited by Mabel. As much as four months ago, Mabel first asked me that she felt the time had come that someone else be chosen to edit this column. At the time, I did not pay too much attention to it; when her requests to be relieved kept coming however, although I was firmly opposed to her requests, I had to finally respect her wishes.

Mabel has been editing the book reviews since 1963 more or less on a regular basis and even prior to 1963 once in a while. She's worked with three editors. She did excellent reviews in a style which was truly in keeping with the objectives of the News; a particularly readable style which few people are able to duplicate. EBBA and its members owe Mabel a lot; the number of hours lovingly given for this project are astounding! Mabel has been a great help to me too but rather than express my individual gratitude, I am positive all members share this gratitude with me. We sincerely regret losing you.

After an extensive search, Mr. Donald S. Heintzelman of 629 Green Street, Allentown, Pa. 18102 has been chosen to take over the "Books for Banders" column, starting with the next issue. Good luck, Don!

Editor

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ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW
Region II. Edited by: ROBERT P. YUNICK

Mild weather and lesser numbers of birds characterized the fall migration of 1970 at various stations in inland New England, New York and Pennsylvania. Space does not allow complete inclusion of all the details of the seven stations, however, the five reports that follow give an indication of the extent of coverage at each station. Mrs. duMont's station at Wilmington, Vt., was not operated and Mrs. Downs' station at South Londonderry, Vt., was operated intermittently.

The reasons for lesser capture rates varied. In most cases, the weather was cited as the cause. However, at Friendsville, Pa. and Salisbury, N.Y., changes in agricultural practices immediately adjacent to the banding areas influenced the capture rate.

Despite the overall decrease in numbers, there were instances of speci-

fic increases. At Marshfield, Vt., Hermit and Wood Thrushes were more abundant than in 1969. At Vischer Ferry, N.Y., Swainson's and Grey-cheeked Thrushes both exceeded in this one season the previous four year's total. Ruby-throated Hummingbird captures were about double any previous year's total, and Red-eyed Vireos were more common. Some warblers appeared to be more common at Ellenville, N.Y.

Black-capped Chickadee numbers were down substantially at Marshfield and Vischer Ferry. There were decreases also in the number of Cedar Waxwings, Purple Finches and White-throated Sparrows at Vischer Ferry. There were also instances of scattered warbler decreases.

All things considered it appeared to be a mildly disappointing season. In reviewing the reports from these stations it is apparent that comparing results from inland stations is a much different sort of endeavor than that of comparing results at coastal stations. Coastal stations have a greater similarity of habitat, whereas inland stations vary greatly in type of habitat and location, with respect to geographic features. Comparisons at coastal stations seem to depend mainly on a comparison of the massive flights produced by frontal passage. In general when one coastal station has a flood of juncos or thrushes, the same influence is felt at other coastal stations. However, at inland stations where migration is a more subtle phenomenon, not always given to the feast-or-famine extremes of the coast, each station seems to have a specific migrational spectrum which is in part dependent on local circumstances such as habitat and/or geography. Because of this, it is sometimes difficult to compare station results on any other than a very general basis.

These comparisons also prompt the question of why certain species associations occur at some stations, but not at others. At Salisbury, Stegeman captured a group of sparrows quite similar in kind and relative abundance to that found at Vischer Ferry only 55 miles away. In both places the Song Sparrow and White-throat were most abundant. However, at Salisbury, the White-crowned Sparrow was the third most abundant species this past season, whereas at Vischer Ferry it is a rare bird. The warbler associations at various stations are also very intriguing. It would appear to be a challenging problem for someone to analyze.

Marshfield, Vermont

Marshfield station is located in Washington County, Vermont at 441-0722. The banding is done on an island reached by 250 feet of boardwalk through a swamp. The island is half-acre in size. Its vegetation is quite dense; we only trim and cur for net lanes and paths to the cottage. The plant life is varied and includes Larch, Hemlock, Spruce, a few Birch and Maple. Low bush Blueberries are very abundant. The swamp contains Black Alder, Leatherleaf, Mountain Holly, Viburnums, Labrador Tea, Rhodia and many others. The nets that are the most successful are set on the edge of the boardwalk between low bushes.

Banding operations for 1970 were carried on mostly on weekends from August 1st through October 11th for a total of 32 days with 1772 net hours for the season. From 2 to 9 nets were in operation, with 59 species and 1189 birds handled. I am the only bander with two helpers. 350 repeats and 15 returns were captured also.

An HY-F Golden-winged Warbler was netted and banded as was a Warbling Vireo. A common nighthawk was netted and its capture seems interesting as we never observed any in the woods and we are 3 miles back in the forest from any civilization. Thrushes were on the increase. In 1969 I handled 17 Hermit Thrushes and we had 48 in 1970 in roughly the same amount of net hours and banding days. We banded three times the amount of Wood Thrushes as ever before. Black-capped Chickadees were way down with 52 banded in 1969 and only 7 in 1970. Returns are as follows: 1 Blue Jay, 1 Slate colored Junco, 2 Purple Finches, 2 Song Sparrow, 2 Swamp Sparrows, 2 Red-eyed Vireos, 1 Whitethroated Sparrow, 1 Canada Warbler, 1 Chestnut-sided Warbler and 2 Yellowthroats. Catbirds were also on the increase. A few of the numbers banded were: Purple Finch-232; Yellowthroat-111; Catbirds-15; American Goldfinch-58 and White-throated Sparrow-191.

--Mrs. Marion Metcalf

Vischer Ferry, New York

This year's banding effort at the Vischer Ferry Game Management Area extended over 15 weekends from July 16 to October 25 resulting in the most lengthy coverage in the seven years of operation to date. This year's 3390 net-hours of effort produced a disappointing take of 1699 birds banded of 75 species for a yield of 52.6 birds/100 net hours (B/Cn-h). This compares to last year's 2387 birds of 77 species in 3810 net-hours (62.8 B/Cn-h). For the most part, the overall decline was related to unfavorable weekend weather conditions. An additional 597 captures, including 80 returns, 468 repeats of this fall's birds and 49 repeats of last spring's bandings were tallied to give a total of 2296 recorded captures. Two new species were recorded to bring the station's fall total to 106 plus one subspecies.

Banding Yields - In July we tallied 220 birds banded for a yield of 54.5 B/Cn-h. In August we banded 302 for a poor yield of 37.2, quite comparable to last year's 38.6. All through July and August, there was little indication that we encountered any flights of any magnitude. For the most part our captures consisted of mostly resident species and a dribbling of migrants. In September, more favorable weather conditions produced some flights of moderate interest to give 642 birds or 55.6 B/Cn-h, but still below the 61.8 of last September. October was the biggest disappointment when 535 birds were banded for a yield of 62.2 compared with last year's 96.2 B/Cn-h. In part, September's decline was due to reduced capture of cedar waxwings, and October's was due to a poor take of white-throated sparrows on October 3-4 and 10-11 when the species should have been recorded in large numbers. Unaccommodating weather on those weekends lessened substantially the white-throat take.

Foreign retraps>Returns and Recoveries- No foreign banded birds were recaptured this year at VF, however, two significant returns were recorded. An AHY- Whitethroated Sparrow banded on 19 Oct 1969 was recaptured on 18 Oct 1970. Based on experience to date with this species, this appears to be a migrant return, though the less remote possibility of it being a resident return cannot be ruled out completely. More significant is the return capture on 24 Oct 1970 of a brown creeper banded as an HY on 18 Oct 1969. In the past year, four recoveries of VF banded birds have been reported. A whitethroated Sparrow banded on 11 Oct 1969 was found dead on 4 Dec 1969 in Albany, N.Y., about 10 miles south of VF, where it had been seen frequently at a feeder. A song sparrow banded 30 Aug 1969 was caught due to an injury and released 5 April 1970 at Athor, Mass. about 100 miles east of VF. Another song sparrow banded 7 Oct 1967 was found dead 1 April 1970 at Boyertown, Pa., about 220 miles SSW of VF. Lastly, a spring banded common grackle banded on 17 May 1968 was caught by a cat May 1970 about two or three miles SE of VF.

Station Location- Vischer Ferry Game Management Area is in southern Saratoga County, New York about 10 miles east of Schenectady on the Mohawk River. Coordinates 424-0734.

Banders- Robert P. Yunick (all dates); Will D. Merritt, Jr., (all dates except 7/16, 17, 24, 31; 8/1, 7, 8, 28 and 9/18; 10/24, 25.) Robert J. Pantle (on 9/4, 5, 11, 12 and 10/11, 12.)

Assistants- Peter J. Yunick, Harvey H. Spivak, James C. Covert III and Rita Pantle.

A more complete summary is available from the author for 15¢ in stamps to cover mailing.

Ellenville, New York

My banding area is near the edge of a large plateau in the southern foothills of the Catskill Mountains at 414-0742. Not far from where I band, the land begins to drop off from about 1100' elevation to the valley where Ellenville is located. My net lanes are situated in the southwest corner of a large open swampy field bordered by mature White Pines on the west and partly open fields and residences on the south. The vegetation immediately surrounding most of the nets is Gray Birch, small White Pine, Blueberry, Meadowsweet and Goldenrod, with Blue Flag abundant in the wetter areas and with scattered Quaking Aspen, Arrowwood, Black Cherry and Silky Dogwood.

An average of 10 nets were in use three mornings a week for a total of 36 mornings between August 3 and October 31. 700 birds of 65 species were banded in 1207 net hours for an overall 58 birds per 100 net-hours.

White-throated Sparrows were most abundant, followed closely by Catbirds; next most common were Song Sparrows, Towhees, Ovenbirds and Yellowthroats. Most unusual for this station were two Mourning Warblers and a Worm-eating Warbler. Most of the common warblers seemed

to be present in fairly good numbers. Fourteen Canada Warblers were banded (as compared with none in the previous five years). Both Kinglets were scarce and Redstart and Blackpoll numbers were down.

Comparisons of daily totals with data from the nearby Mohonk Weather Station showed some interesting patterns. August produced little variation in numbers of birds caught and there was also little frontal activity. The strongest front, moving through on the 23rd, did not coincide with banding operations. On September 2 and 3 we had the first small wave of warblers, just preceding the passage of a warm front (the barometer was beginning to fall on the 3rd and rain began that afternoon). The next few weeks showed little movement of birds and much unsettled weather, with rain on six days between the 9th and the 18th. Then migration began in earnest, with fairly good numbers on the 20th and the 24th. The peak day of the season was September 26th, immediately preceding rapidly falling barometric pressure and cold rain. The cold weather that moved in on the 27th remained and produced another excellent day September 30th. Migration continued into the first week of October, but on the 7th showed the last good numbers of the season. A high pressure system remained in the area for about 10 days after October 5th; when it finally moved out, most of the birds were apparently gone, and very few were caught during the remainder of the month.

I thank Dan Smiley for supplying the weather data, and Frank Fish for assisting with banding operations in August and September.

--Valerie M. Freer

Salisbury, New York

Since this is the first report on the bird banding activities at Salisbury, New York, a brief note about the area and the banding activities will help evaluate the following information.

Salisbury, New York, is located about ten miles north of Little Falls, New York on N.Y. route 29. Banding was carried on during two periods of the year, April 14 to June 1 and September 1 to November 1. These periods include the most active migratory periods for most of the seed eaters in this area.

All banding was done using traps placed on the ground and this greatly reduces the number of species captured and also the total number taken. Four types of traps were used: 1. Single cell potter traps, 2. Modified government sparrow traps, 3. figure eight traps, and 4. circular single funnel traps. The bait used consisted of a mixture of "scratch feed" (medium), wild bird seed mixture, millet and sunflower seed.

The traps were placed along tree-lined and brush-covered fence rows which separate active and abandoned agricultural fields. Part of the fence rows contain old stone fences and all were overgrown with a mixture of wild grape, raspberry, blackberry, red-stemmed dogwood, elderberry, high-bush cranberry, niteshade, goldenrod, ferns and assorted weeds as well as trees and seedlings of crabapple, pin cherry, black cherry, wild apple, maple, elm and basswood.

The banding area is somewhat higher in elevation than the surrounding country and has, in general an eastern to northern exposure. As a result snow comes somewhat earlier and leaves somewhat later than on the surrounding lower areas. As a result, birds are seen moving through the valley of Spruce Creek and other low areas before they pass through the banding area. The elevation seems to have less effect on the fall migration. There are much fewer birds in the banding area during the height of the winter than in the valleys. This distribution probably has some effect on captures during both banding periods.

The attractiveness of the banding area changes from year to year depending upon the kinds of agricultural crops adjoining the fence rows, in 1969 corn was growing adjoining one fence row and many birds were attracted to the cover and the weed seeds present. In 1970 the same field was a hay field and fewer birds were present.

1970 was a relatively poor banding year in comparison with 1969. Several factors made this so. The most noticeable ones were the following:

1. A heavy and late snow cover on the banding area. On April 6th, the ground was completely covered with an average of about 3 feet of snow. Bare ground was showing in the adjacent valleys and birds were moving through them at that time. I believe they avoided the higher snow-covered banding area.
2. There were plenty of rains throughout the summer resulting in a heavy fruit and seed crop which was well distributed. As a result there was ample food and cover late into the fall.
3. There was a prolonged period of warm weather until the last of November. As a result, many of the fall migrants had not reached the banding area by November first, when the operation was terminated.
4. The change in agricultural crop pattern made the banding area less attractive than it was in 1969.

Because of the large number of species seen in the area that were not taken in traps, I may put nets into use in the spring of 1971. During 1970, a total of 1425 birds of 34 species were banded of which 828 were banded in spring and 597 in fall. Sparrows noticeably predominated the list.

--LeRoy C. Stegeman

Friendsville, Pa.

The Friendsville, Pa. banding station is located twelve miles southwest of Binghamton, N.Y., at 415-0760. The station is a ten-acre section of our farm in an area surrounding several beaver ponds. The area was former pasture land, and is now in a second growth stage. The vegetation is mostly white pine, hemlock, speckled alder, blue beech, maple, white ash, viburnums and wild apple, with goldenrod, blackberry, jewelweed, ground pines and blueberries composing the lower growth.

The fall of 1970 was the second time this station took part in fall banding, therefore there are no significant comparisons for previous years. My main interest in this banding project is to be able to contribute some meaningful information on migration as an inland station.

Most banding was done from dawn to 11 A.M. Five or six nets were used each day with a total of 553 net hours for the 32 days during the period from August 1 to November 3 and 281 birds of 53 species were banded.

The five most numerous species and their numbers banded were Black-capped Chickadee (41), Catbird (34), Ovenbird (20), Yellowthroat (19) and Whitethroated Sparrow (18).

--Claire E. Gottschall

Atlantic Flyway Review material was collected and edited by Robert P. Yunick of 1527 Myron Street, Schenectady, New York 12309.

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TRAP SYMPOSIUM was deleted in this issue because we have an extensive article on traps by Bob Yunick and we did not want to have to do it in two parts. In order to run the paper in one issue, we'll do so in the May-June issue.

DEADLINE FOR AFR, May-June issue is 5 May 1971. Long Island, N.Y., and Connecticut/Westchester County N.Y., stations please submit your articles to the editor of that column (F.S. Schaeffer) prior to that date, if you haven't done so yet.

WE ARE SHORT on copies of the January-February 1971 issue. We have only about 33 copies left after mailing instead of the usual 50. As such, we may not be able to send this issue to members who have (or will) join during 1971 as new members.

THE MAY-JUNE ISSUE may be very late. Your editor may have to move from one apartment to another (no change in mailing address). This unhappy event is scheduled to take place probably in early May. If it does, EBBA News will be late and there isn't very much I can do about it. I will be able to offer a more definite date at the annual meeting.

Editor.