



ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW
(Region V)
Edited by Chandler S. Robbins

The five Maryland and Virginia stations are all located adjacent to tidewater and they benefit to some degree from the "leading line" effect of river or bay shore as well as from the concentrating effect of nearby vast stretches of open water. Here the similarities end. The Damsite station is situated against the east shore of upper Chesapeake Bay; Bellevue is on a peninsula extending southward into the Choptank River, a broad tributary on the east side of the Chesapeake; Irish Grove is on the north shore of Pocomoke Sound, at the easternmost extremity of Chesapeake Bay, just north of the Virginia-Maryland State Line; Mason Neck is on the west shore of the Potomac River 15 miles south of Washington, D.C.; and Kiptopeke Beach is on the Chesapeake shore just north of the tip of Cape Charles at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay.

Because of the different orientation of each station with respect to shorelines, a different combination of factors controls the heavy migratory flights at each station. Nevertheless, the peak movements in 1970, with one exception, were registered by all stations that were in operation on these days: Oct. 20, Oct. 24, Oct. 17 (at Kiptopeke only), Oct. 18, Sept. 28-29, Oct. 5, Sept. 12, Sept. 20, Sept. 6-7 and Sept. 1-2. The dates are listed in order of decreasing flight magnitude.

The combination of habitats present at each station is unique, so there is a big difference in species composition between stations. In 1970 all five stations had a different species heading the list of most commonly banded birds; note, however, that in 1969 the Myrtle Warbler was the commonest species at all four stations that were in operation that year.

Netting effort varied enormously between stations--from as little as 400 net-hours at Bellevue to nearly 20,000 net-hours at Damsite. By selectively netting on only the better days, Mr. Armistead had an unusually large number (105) of birds per 100 net-hours for the season. See also Mr. Scott's explanation for the large number of birds per 100 net-hours at Kiptopeke.

As has been pointed out many times, changes in the habits of banders and vagaries of the weather and of the migration itself inject almost insurmountable biases into the banding data. It is only when the same trend is recorded at several stations many miles apart that any generalizations are warranted. Thus, we would not venture a guess as to whether the 1970 migration was better or worse than that of the previous autumn. On an individual species basis, on the other hand, there were some striking, consistent differences between the 1969 and 1970 results. Note the dramatic drop in Myrtle Warblers at all

Region V Summary

Station	Damsite Chestertown Md.	Bellevue Md.	Irish Grove Md.	Mason Neck Va.	Kiptopeke Va.
Extreme Dates	8/25- 11/9	9/6- 10/18	9/5- 10/31	7/26- 11/14	8/29- 10/18
1969 Dates	(8/5- 11/2)	(8/2- 10/27)	(9/3- 11/3)		(8/30- 10/26)
Peak Dates	10/20 10/24	9/20 9/28	10/20 10/24	9/29 9/26	10/17 9/29
1969 Peaks	(10/28 10/29)	(10/26 10/18)	(10/25 10/24)		(9/19 9/10)
Total Days	66	10	53	51	51
1969 Days	(64)	(35)	(61)		(58)
Species	82	60	76	75	97
1969 Spec.	(92)	(75)	(93)		(104)
Net-hours	19,668	400	6,416	14,093	14,178
1969 N-h	(16,233)	(2,481)	(13,839)		(18,439)
New Birds	3,385	420	2,139	1,855	13,497
1969 New	(3,910)	(1,381)	(4,109)		(10,576)
New/100 N-h	17	105	76	75	97
1969/100	(24)	(56)	(93)		(104)
Commonest Species In 1970	R.Kinglet 488 Myrtle W. 338 Wht-throat 311	Yellowthro 52 Redstart 45 Catbird 32	Myrtle W. 701 Catbird 293 Song Spar. 181	Wood Thrush 284 Com.Grack. 197 Swain.Thr. 185	Redstart 1,607 Myrtle W. 1,576 Yellowthro 1,546
Commonest Species In 1969	Myrtle W. (808) R.Kinglet (393) Wht-throat (321)	Myrtle W. (328) Wht-throat (99) Song Spar. (98)	Myrtle W. (1,619) Savannah (280) Swamp Sp. (272)		Myrtle W. (1,977) Redstart (1,764) Yellowthro (743)

stations. A study of the station records, appropriately corrected for differences in coverage between the two years, suggests that the following species also were scarcer than in 1969 in AMFO Region V: Red-breasted Nuthatch, Golden-crowned Kinglet, Blackpoll and Palm Warblers, Slate-colored Junco, and Song Sparrow. A sharp decline in thrushes was commented upon last year, and I am glad to report that all hyllocichlid thrushes showed a marked increase in 1970. Other species that were banded in substantially larger numbers in 1970 in Region V were: Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, Carolina Wren, Catbird, Red-eyed Vireo, Magnolia and Cape May Warblers, Ovenbird and Yellowthroat. It is interesting to compare the above statements with the comments of banders in other AMFO regions. Most of the above species have been referred to by one or more people to the north of us (Regions I, II, and III), and in almost every case they reported indications of a change in the same direction.

How well did Region V banders sample the passerine migration in Maryland and Virginia? Not very well if the kill of 1,965 birds at the WBAL-TV Tower in Baltimore on the night of September 27-28 is any indicator of relative abundance. The Ovenbird and Red-eyed Vireo, which together made up 46 percent of the TV tower kill that night comprised only 3 percent of the 2,290 birds banded at Kiptopeke on Sept. 28-29, 9 percent of those at Damsite, 4 percent of those at Bellevue, 3 percent of those at Irish Grove, and 14 percent of those at Mason Neck. Other species that apparently were badly under-sampled at the banding stations included the Black-and-white, Parula, and Blackpoll Warblers and, except at Kiptopeke, the American Redstart. On the other hand, the following species were much better represented at the banding stations than in the tower kill: Catbird, Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes, Magnolia and Black-throated Blue Warblers, and Yellowthroat. For further details on the weather and migration for the period September 26-30 the reader is referred to an excellent analytical paper by the late Aaron M. Bagg in the February 1971 issue of American Birds (25: 16-23).

Damsite, Chestertown, Kent Co., Md. - Mrs. Edward Mendinhall

The Mendinhall station tries to be "all things to all people," so to speak. Primarily, though, the major commitment is to cooperate with Mr. Robbins' regional program "Operation Recovery." The year 1970 was our 12th year of manning nets in the same locations from the last week in August to the first week in November. The 158 acre game and wild-life preserve is divided into four sections, each with its distinctive topography, habitat and species flight pattern. This year, except for 4 days of the 58 days of banding, there was only one licensed bander available. Therefore, nets were limited to two of the four sections most of the time.

Several bad heat waves were extremely discouraging but allowed time for the construction of a new building, The Hackman Hilton, for

use as a banding laboratory. This marvelous addition now serves not only as an efficient processing lab but also as a study area, research center, library and display area. It has all the comforts of heat, light, telephone, air conditioning, refrigerator and observation windows. From the windows we can watch Ospreys fishing, eagles flying by, titmice nesting in boxes, and squirrels in tree nests--all within arms reach.

A very small but dedicated group of assistants made our 1970 records possible. The 3,040 new birds of 84 species fell far below our previous years, due possibly to increased growth of trees, vines, bushes, etc., and lack of nets in the lespedeza fields for sparrows. As usual, all birds were fully processed including skulling. We cooperated with the AMFO Program; played host to many observers; taught six junior members of Kent Chapter to record and weigh; worried about the decrease in warblers, finches, owls (especially the Saw-whets); and regretted not having any hummingbird bands for the 45 or more we released.

We are discouraged when reading comparisons of other stations with our new birds per 100 net hours. Perhaps this difference can be accounted for in relation to our net lane layout. Our nets are set in continuous lines so many can be checked by car. Even when there is a dull, poor day we leave the nets set hoping for that "rare" find. Others would probably close nets in such a situation.

Banders at this station were Mrs. E. Mendinhal and Mr. O. P. Young. Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Hackman, and Mrs. James E. Plymire, assisted with the banding, and Mr. Edward Mendinhal assisted with the weather data and construction.

Bellevue, Talbot Co., Md. - Henry T. Armistead

The Bellevue banding station was operated on 10 days from September 6 to October 18 with ten nets from approximately 7 to 11 a.m. each day by my wife, Liz, and me. For a description of the area see Maryland Birdlife 25 (4): 122, Dec. 1969. The nets would have been manned continuously from September 19 to October 4, but a bad heat wave discouraged both the birds and banders for much of this period. Wing chord measurements, age, and sex were taken for all birds, but weights and amount of fat were not recorded. This year Screech Owl, Yellow and Prairie Warblers, and Baltimore Oriole were netted here for the first time. The most interesting day was September 20, when 84 birds of 30 species (13 of them warblers) were caught (including a Ruby-throated Hummingbird). The five most numerous birds were: Yellowthroat, 52; American Redstart, 45; Catbird, 32; White-throated Sparrow 25; Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 20. Scarcer species were 2 Connecticut Warblers, 1 Mourning Warbler, and 1 Lincoln's Sparrow.

Irish Grove Wildlife Sanctuary, Somerset Co., Md. - Gladys H. Cole

Nineteen Seventy was our second year of Fall Migration study and educational project at Irish Grove Wildlife Sanctuary, which is located on Pocomoke Sound below Marion Station, Md. The Sanctuary does not seem to be on a major flyway from our observations.

The station was opened on September 5, with a general average of ten nets per day (a few more on week-ends). During September, 613 birds were processed (banded, aged, sexed if possible, wing chord measured, fat estimated and body weight recorded). Our best days were the 12th, 29th and 30th, with 171 Catbirds and 109 Yellowthroats leading the counts.

In October, 1,526 birds were processed. The best days were the 18th, 20th and 24th. For this month 698 Myrtle Warblers led the count, followed by 172 Song Sparrows, 122 Catbirds and 91 Swamp Sparrows.

We had a dry fall. Some of the questions for which we hope to find answers are: Do we have our nets situated in the best places? To what extent are we banding birds that nest or winter on our Sanctuary or this general vicinity? We certainly are not catching large numbers of the transient species. Perhaps after three or four years of banding at this location we will move the nets to other locations on our 1,400 acres.

This is a long range study. We teach students who are really interested in the details of banding. We give talks and lead walks for college students in ornithology, schools, garden clubs, scouts and others. It gives us a chance to share with other interested persons.

This past Spring, we started our first study of Spring migration and hope to have some interesting reports to make later. This station is manned by Maryland Ornithological Society members.

Mason Neck National Wildlife Refuge, Lorton, Fairfax Co., Va. -
Kathleen Klimkiewicz

The first fall banding at Mason Neck began on July 26 and ended on November 14. An average of 30 nets were used (range 11-35), half along a tidal swampy area adjacent to the Great Marsh and half upland in an oak-beech deciduous woods. Nets were operated mostly on week ends.

All birds were fully processed, and tail measurements were taken on Wood Thrushes and all sparrows. Net number was recorded for each bird. The top species were Wood Thrush (284), Swainson's Thrush (185), Common Grackle (197), Ovenbird (109), Red-winged Blackbird (99), Gray-cheeked Thrush (91), and Black-throated Blue Warbler (69). Wood Thrushes were netted on all but 3 days from July 26 to October 16. A total of 1,855 new birds and 323 repeats were processed.

The first migrants, Northern Waterthrush and Canada Warbler, arrived on August 8, followed by Yellow-bellied Flycatcher (August 16), Veery (August 20) and Black-throated Blue Warbler (August 21).

The high days in August (14th and 30th) coincided with the movement of thousands of Red-winged Blackbirds through Mason Neck. The

last large flight day of the month was August 30. The weather was generally hot and humid.

September brought generally cooler weather and one good cold front, September 27 to 29. The high days were September 26 and 29. Both days abounded in thrushes. On the 29th, 82% of the birds were thrushes, Ovenbirds, and Black-throated Blues. Also the first Hermit Thrush and White-throated Sparrow of the season were netted on the 29th. The 26th had the most species netted on any one day--27.

October brought the migration of Common Grackles by the thousands. The acorn crop was excellent and the birds fed in the woods throughout the day, but were gone by late afternoon. The migration was essentially complete by November 1. A mild front produced a high day on October 3 with thrushes again in the lead, followed by 11 Magnolia Warblers (the only ones in October). The thrush migration (except Hermits) abruptly ended on October 16 with the passage of another cold front. The last Black-throated Blue and Ovenbird were netted on the 16th. A single Gray-cheeked Thrush was netted on the 23rd. A single Yellow-billed Cuckoo and Acadian Flycatcher were captured on the 17th and 2nd respectively.

Highlights of the season were the banding of 2 American Woodcock and a Screech Owl.

Kiptopeke Beach, Northampton Co., Va. - Frederic R. Scott

For the eighth successive year the Virginia Society of Ornithology sponsored a fall bird-banding station at Kiptopeke Beach, about 7 miles south of the town of Cape Charles, Va. Licensed banders in charge of the station were C. W. Hacker, H. B. Hawkins, Mrs. Mozelle Henkel, Mr. and Mrs. Sydney Mitchell, F. R. Scott, and W. P. Smith. Ninety-two different persons registered as banding assistants. Studies of relative abundance and migration were continued, and the station also cooperated fully with EBBA's Project AMFO.

The reduction in net-hours from 1969 was due both to the reduction of days of operation and to the reduction in the maximum number of nets from 42 to 38. As before, all nets were normally left up each day from dawn to about 4 p.m. unless bad weather or insufficient help forced earlier closure. On a couple of exceedingly dull days (i.e., 10 birds or fewer by 10 a.m.), the nets were closed early. The increase in trapping efficiency from 57.4 to 95.2 birds per 100 net-hours was due in part to the elimination of several of the more unproductive nets and in part to more adequate station help on flight days. The station had 986 repeats, 4 returns, and no foreign retraps.

Since this banding station is in operation for only a limited period of the fall migration, comparisons from year to year between overall banding totals and totals of individual species should be made

with care. It has been the experience of the Kiptopeke Beach banding station, as well as others, that banding efficiency is greater in October than earlier in the season. Since this station has normally closed in mid or late October, the seasonal totals have always been very dependent on whether or not the main migration of the winter resident species occurred before the station closed.

During the 1970 banding season, seven major flights were recorded at Kiptopeke Beach. These occurred on September 1-2, September 6-7, September 12, September 20, September 28-29, October 5, and October 17-18. But the flights of September 28-29 and October 17-18 completely overshadowed the others and resulted in many records for this station. These flights culminated in a record one-day banding total on October 17 of 2,290 birds in 165 net-hours and a two-day total (October 17-18) of 3,803 in 353 net-hours. It is interesting to note that if the station had closed on October 16 instead of two days later, the fall banding total would have been only 9,694 and the trapping efficiency 70.1 birds per 100 net-hours.

The five most numerous birds trapped were American Redstart, 1,607; Myrtle Warbler, 1,576; Yellowthroat, 1,546; Catbird, 1,088; and Veery, 1,070. The last three of these were records for this station, and the Veery total was more than twice the previous seasonal record count of 519 in 1968. The Veery is the earliest fall transient of all the thrushes, and it may be that the late fall migration in 1970 caused the large proportion of Veeries that migrate through in late August to reach their peak, instead, in early September, after the banding station had opened. Peak counts of Veeries were 158 on September 7 and 157 on September 13. Totals of Swainson's and Gray-cheeked Thrushes were 584 and 517, respectively, well above the almost disastrous 1969 counts but below the totals of 1966 and 1968. Based solely on the 1970 daily banding totals, the median fall migration dates of these thrushes were Veery, September 8; Swainson's Thrush, September 29; and Gray-cheeked Thrush, October 4. Had the banding station opened in mid August, the median date for the Veery would undoubtedly have been a few days earlier.

The three transient Empidonax flycatchers all set records in 1970, probably for the same reason advanced above for the Veery. Banding totals were Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, 29; Traill's Flycatcher, 120; and Least Flycatcher, 51. The latter two totals were approximately twice the previous record counts for these species. As would have been expected, these birds peaked early. Good numbers (34) were trapped on September 1, but the peaks occurred during the flight of September 6-7, with 42 on the 6th (plus 13 Acadian Flycatchers) and 29 on the 7th.

There are a number of species that migrate diurnally in large numbers over the banding station area that are caught in relatively insignificant numbers if at all. These include such birds as the various hawks, Yellow-shafted Flickers, Eastern Kingbirds, Blue Jays,

Bobolinks, Baltimore Orioles, and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks. Abrupt changes in yearly banding totals of this type of bird often reflect only resting or feeding concentrations rather than actual changes in migrating numbers. A good example during 1970 was the Eastern Kingbird, whose banding total of 153 compares with 33 in 1969, 23 in 1968, and none in prior years. Of these 153, 137 were trapped during the otherwise dull three-day period of September 9-11 and constituted about a third of the birds banded during these days. Visual observation clearly indicated that few kingbirds were migrating at this time, but there was a large concentration in the area, most of which seemed to be feeding on a heavy crop of ripe Sassafras berries along the net lanes. Evidence of this was also highly visible to the banders and assistants who handled the birds, a situation known to fall banders of Catbirds and thrushes as the "pokeberry syndrome," only considerably blacker.

Other interesting 1970 banding totals, compared with the previous record counts, were Red-eyed Vireo, 514 (versus 409 in 1968); Parula Warbler, 162 (versus 145 in 1969); Magnolia Warbler, 270 (versus 260 in 1968); Cape May Warbler, 49 (versus 29 in 1968); and Black-throated Green Warbler, 40 (versus 25 in 1968). Some species showed mild declines in numbers, among which were Yellow-billed Cuckoo, 8 (versus 21 in 1964 and 19 in 1969); House Wren, 199 (versus 222 in 1969); Black-throated Blue Warbler, 569 (versus 652 in 1969); Blackpoll Warbler, 44 (versus 220 in 1964 and 108 in 1969); and Palm Warbler, 189 (versus 310 in 1969). No Red-breasted Nuthatches were trapped, although in 1969 the seasonal total was 78.

The great flight of September 28-29 has already been described in some detail (American Birds 25: 20-21, 1971). It will suffice to say here that 771 birds were trapped on the 28th and 1,519 on the 29th and that the most numerous birds in the two-day flight were Yellowthroat, 535 (434 on the 29th); American Redstart, 532 (322 on the 29th); and Catbird, 310 (158 on the 28th).

The spectacular flight of October 17-18 was principally the arrival of the first of the winter resident species, although a few of the common earlier migrants were still in good numbers, such as House Wrens (38 on the 18th), Catbirds (411 in two days), Black-throated Blue Warbler (61 on the 17th), and Yellowthroat (271 in two days). As might have been expected at this date, Myrtle Warblers predominated in this flight with a two-day total of 1,211 (815 on the 17th). It was estimated conservatively that on the 17th some 16,000 Myrtle Warblers passed through the station area (80% of the flight passed over the nets, 10% passed through areas where nets were not placed, and 5% hit the nets but bounced over or slipped through or between the nets, leaving only 5% to be caught). The next most outstanding bird in this flight was the Hermit Thrush, with a remarkable two-day total of 429 (261 on the 17th). Amazingly, only 11 had been trapped prior to this flight. Similarly, there were two-day totals of 51 Golden-crowned and

203 Ruby-crowned Kinglets, although only 2 and 18, respectively, had been trapped earlier. The only other winter residents in any significant numbers in this flight were White-throated Sparrows (357 in two days) and Swamp Sparrows (202 on the 17th).

The only extralimital species trapped was a Clay-colored Sparrow on October 3 (Mitchell), the second record for the banding station. Other individual records of interest were a Warbling Vireo on September 10 (Scott--third record for station), a Louisiana Waterthrush on September 6 (Smith), a Dickcissel on October 1 (Mitchell), and a Henslow's Sparrow on October 5 (Mrs. Mitchell). The last three were all first records for this station.

I am indebted to Walter Smith, who did most of the time-consuming tabulation of daily totals for this station as well as the tabulation of species totals for the previous seven years.

--Chandler S. Robbins, Migratory Non-Game Studies Section, Migratory Bird Populations Station, Laurel, Md. 20810.

We sincerely thank Mr. Robbins for a most interesting coverage of Region Five. Further, I thank Romell Decker, Mr. Robbins's Secretary, for typing these 8 pages ready for camera, thereby saving me a considerable amount of work.
Editor.

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REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: SANDERLING

During the autumn migration of 1971, the Long Point Bird Observatory hopes to band and colormark several hundred Sanderling at Long Point, Ontario. Information on the movement of these birds away from Long Point will facilitate research presently underway on the energy requirements of their migration. We would appreciate it if everyone sighting these birds would report their observations to:

Long Point Bird Observatory, 269 Beta Street, Toronto 14, Ontario.

The following information would be appreciated:

Date and time of observation

Location, including nearest city or town

Colors: note--birds will be colored on the breast and the abdomen with two of the following colors: red, orange, pink, purple, yellow, green, blue, brown, black, and white (no color).

Leg that has been banded: this will tell if the bird is an adult or immature.

Any other information on what other birds are with the marked individuals would be very useful.