

ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW

REGION I

EDITED BY Richard L. Ferren

This year all six stations which reported last year were in operation plus Mabel Gillespie's station at East Chop, Martha's Vineyard. In all, 9,466 birds were banded. All station operators were in substantial agreement that this was one of the poorest fall migrations in recent years. Every station reported fewer birds than usual in the same or more net hours, this being perhaps the result of lower numbers of adults nesting last summer due to relatively poor production of young in the summer of 1972. Weather, however, seemed to be the most important factor in lower banding totals at most stations, all of which are close to the coast. Very few days had sufficient northwesterly winds to produce a good flight, and this had its effect felt most noticeably at locations farthest southeast in southern New England. Actual numbers of birds caught this year compared to last year at Manomet, Nantucket, Kingston and Block Island were lower by 20%, 43%, 0%, and 1% respectively, in approximately the same number of net hours as last year. The fact that Nantucket and Block Island differed so remarkably seems to support the general impression that the latter is less dependent on cold fronts and north-west winds for its birds than the former because it lies closer to the southwesterly flow of undrifted transients flowing through mainland New England.

Contributing to an overall sense of mediocrity of the fall season at all stations was the lack of any flights of periodically abundant species. There were almost no Red-breasted Nuthatches. The Black-capped Chickadee population had recovered from its irruption of 1971 and the resultant slump of 1972. (see Manomet) No Boreal Chickadees were banded in southern New England.

I wish to thank all contributing station operators for their information. Their reports follow:

Somesville, Mount Desert, Maine - Barbara Patterson

In 1973 the Mount Desert Banding Station was in operation for 24 days between 14 August and 2 October. A total of 404 net-hours produced 589 new birds of 46 species. Approximately 70% were warblers.

Since 1963, with the exception of 1966 when no banding was done, the same net lanes have been used, with netting done generally from 08:00 til 14:00. The peak flight day was 16 September when 101 new birds of 30 species were banded in 36 net-hours. This is a high for the past 11 years at this station.

The most frequently netted birds were Parula Warbler (60), Bay-breasted Warbler (50), Blackpoll Warbler (49), American Redstart (33) and Nashville Warbler (21). There were 6 returns, no foreigners, and, to date, no recoveries.

Again there was an increase in the number of Bay-breasted Warblers (50) topping the 1972 high of 45. The ratio of the Bay-breast:Blackpoll does not give a true picture for my station. The last two years, and occasionally before that, I have been away in mid-September for a week, more or less, at the time Blackpolls go through in greatest numbers. Bay-breasted Warblers arrive earlier and have generally peaked by 15 September. In those years I undoubtedly missed a fair number. Swainson's Thrushes were more numerous (32) than in 1972 - (17) and 1971 - (8). Rose-breasted Grosbeaks (9) were more than in any year since 1965 when 10 were banded. Yellow-throats were down from 20 in 1972 to 2 this year. Ovenbirds were also sharply down - 15 in 1972 to 3 this year - a 10 year low.

All birds were skulled and wing chord measurements taken.

The following chart shows the fluctuation in the numbers of individuals of the warbler species common at this station.

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