

higher. 73% of individuals banded were HY birds, 17.9% were adult, and 8.9% of the total were of unknown age.

The weather conditions produced a warm, sunny, and calm fall (lacking the strong winds usually experienced in this area). This fact plus the high numbers of net hours made the fall of 1974 the most productive of any.

Vischer Ferry, N.Y. - Robert P. Yunick

This year's eleventh season of fall banding at Vischer Ferry Wildlife Management Area was, on the whole, quite average and rather uneventful. After three years of above-average capture rates of approximately 100 birds per 100 net-hours (b/100 nh), we caught only 847 birds in 1420 net-hours for a yield of 60 b/100 nh. Uncooperative weather in Sept. and lesser-than-normal coverage in Oct. appeared to be the major contributors to these disappointing results. We accounted also for 33 returns and 127 repeats for a total catch of 1007 or 71 b/100 nh.

We captured 61 species and added the Carolina wren as species 111 to the composite list. Only three species set new maxima: mourning dove (5 vs. previous 1), black-throated blue warbler (11 vs. 7) and bay-breasted warbler (6 vs. 3). Because of the small numbers involved, these may not be significant differences. On the negative side, one must take into account our lesser effort (26 percent fewer net-hours than last year) and temper some of the observed differences with this thought in mind. Thus, some of the observed decreases may not be real, however, from among them the following appear to be of a sufficient magnitude to be meaningful.

Gray Catbird - a take of 113 represents the lowest capture in a six-year period of continual decline.

Thrushes - in general they were down slightly. The robin in particular, partly because of lesser October coverage, was much decreased over last year. The eight captures compares poorly to 88 last year and was the lowest take since 1965.

Cedar Waxwing - the two that were captured represent an 11-year low.

Cardinal - the six captures are much below last year's 18 and represent the lowest take in seven years.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak - the 15 captures are about half of last year's 31 and the lowest take in six years.

Purple Finch - after last year's 101 captures (second to 126 in 1971), this species crashed and we did not catch a single one. A few were heard in flight, but they were decidedly scarcer. This observation is in keeping with the very marked breeding decrease noted this past summer in the southern Adirondack Mountains.

White-throated Sparrow - the 183 captures were much decreased from last year's 623 and the 1971 record of 844. It too was the lowest in six years.

Swamp Sparrow - the catch of 17 is only one bird away from a 10-year low and is much reduced from last year's 64.

Song Sparrow - the catch of 45 is a 10-year low and is much reduced from last year's 153.

Our banding covered the eight-weekend period from Sept. 6 to Oct. 27. No banding was done Oct. 19-20. The weekend schedule and net lane usage was

the same as that of last year. On every weekend in Sept. we encountered rain and/or the threat of rain immediately before or during our attempts to band. The banding was done by Will D. Merritt, Jr., Rita and/or Robert J. Pantle, James C. Covert III and myself.

We used the same net lanes as were used last year. When all banders were present, we had 65 nets in use. The five most numerous species, white-throated sparrow (183), gray catbird (113), song sparrow (45), ruby-throated hummingbird (44) and wood thrush (37) accounted for one-half of our total.

Ellenville, N.Y. - Valerie M. Freer

The 1974 fall banding season produced only an average number of birds in spite of the fact that net hours were substantially increased over 1973. The result was that we banded only 30.5 birds per 100 net hours, our lowest yield in five years. A total of 617 birds of 59 species were banded; from 5 to 12 nets were in operation on 60 days between August 1 and October 29.

A few species were captured in substantially higher numbers than in earlier years. Both Ruby-crowned and Golden-crowned Kinglets doubled their earlier highs, as did Canada Warblers and Redstarts. (Most of the Canada Warblers were caught in one day, September 1.) Sight records of Blue Jays in the area indicated a substantial local population, and this was reflected in an increase in the number of captures. Red-eyed Vireos and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks registered modest increases over previous highs, and the numbers of both Catbirds and Swamp Sparrows rebounded following lows in 1973.

The brown thrushes (genus Hylocichla) continued their decline at this station. From a total of 78 caught in 1971, they gradually sank to only 13 caught in 1974. The lowest-ever total of Yellow-rumped Warblers and Yellowthroats was recorded. The total of warblers (175) remained unchanged from 1973, but the number of warblers per net hour decreased by half. It is interesting to note how the mix of warbler species has changed: in 1972, when the warbler catch was highest, Yellow-rumped, Blackpoll, and Yellowthroat were most abundant. In 1974, those species were at their lowest numbers, and Canada Warblers and Redstarts were most commonly caught.

The top five species were: Catbird, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Song Sparrow, Canada Warbler, and Redstart. The Catbird and Song Sparrow have been in that list every year since 1970, but this is the first year that the Kinglet and the two warblers appear there. The Yellowthroat is missing from the list for the first time since 1970.

The weather was cooler and drier than normal throughout the period. The third week in August was the only warm week in that month. A stationary front the last few days of the month brought heavy rain (4") and flooding locally. The eventual movement of that front resulted in two very good days of warbler banding on August 31 and September 1. Cold fronts on September 13 and 21 produced a small increase in the daily catch on the 15th and the first frost accompanied by good banding on the 24th. The best day of the fall was October 5, when a good catch of Kinglets and Sparrows (54 total) occurred on a fine clear day that followed several cloudy and record cold days. The number of birds caught per day dropped off sharply after October 12.