

Marsh Banding Trail

422-0853

Cooper, Kalamazoo County, MI

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Banding has been part of the Kalamazoo Nature Center since its inception in 1960. Fall migration banding has been conducted under standard protocol since 1974 including the Marsh Trail (MA). In 1990 banding began at the Pitsfield (PF) site, near Vicksburg. The MA and PF trails have always been similar in habitat and effort and in recent years we have made them as much alike as possible with two distinct trails 24 km apart. Habitat management has occurred at PF since 1995 and at MA since about 2010. Each trail follows the same protocol, runs about the same number of nets, has a component of wetland, prairie, woodland, mature forest, and each runs a similar number of feeders with nets in October. Since adding Ruby-throated Hummingbird banding in 2007, traps have been run at PF and, depending on bander availability, at MA.

Several species set new records on the Marsh Trail during the fall 2015. Ruby-throated Hummingbirds (92) were high due to increased effort. Acadian Flycatchers (17) are interesting as other trails here always captured small numbers: from 1990 - 2008, MA averaged 2.1 and then for 2009 - 2014 the average was 11. Habitat maintenance likely has had an effect on Acadian Flycatcher captures. Ruby-crowned Kinglet (293 MA captures, 109 PF captures) were well above the 25-yr averages of 123 for MA and 138 for PF. Also of note, these high numbers follow the very low numbers from 2014: 71 at MA and 49 at PF. American Robin, 106 at MA and 154 at PF, were above the 25-yr average of 31 (MA) and 122 (PF). American Robins tend to fluctuate a great deal depending on food availability. Orange-crowned Warbler was a record high on MA with 24. Common Yellowthroat, 254 at MA and 89 at PF, set records at

both MA and PF in 2015. Their 25-yr average is 107 at MA and 57 at PF. Since habitat work has begun on the Marsh Trail numbers have been above average every year. Eastern White-crowned Sparrow are seldom captured at PF, while at MA a record 88 were banded this fall. Indigo Bunting is another species normally captured in small numbers: PF has averaged just 7 per year since 1990 while MA has averaged 36. While numbers have been higher since habitat work began the 154 banded at MA this fall is nearly twice the previous high of 85 in 1998. American Goldfinches have always been abundant here. From 1990 - 2008 MA banded 8,312 (average 437) and PF banded 2,827 (average 149). From 2009 to 2014 MA averaged 595 and PF averaged 536. The 784 American Goldfinches banded on MA in 2015 was the second highest since 1990.

Pitsfield Banding Station

421-0853

Vicksburg, Kalamazoo County, MI

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I have given a description of history and habitat in the narrative with the Marsh Trail account (above). The Marsh trail account also discusses three Pitsfield (PF) species, Ruby-throated Hummingbird, Common Yellowthroat and American Goldfinch. Another species, Eastern Bluebird, at 27 was the highest number ever banded at PF. Eastern Bluebird is one of our most commonly banded species (over 25,000) due to extensive effort on bluebird trails over the years but which does not come to the nets in large numbers. Tennessee Warbler (155) made our top ten but was well below the 25-yr average of 235. Interestingly, while Tennessee Warbler numbers have trended lower at PF in recent years (1990 - 2008 average 247 and 2009 - 2014 average 201), the opposite has taken place at MA (1990 - 2008 average 103 and 2009 - 2014 average 140). I believe this is due to habitat management. Tennessee Warbler is Kalamazoo Valley Bird Observatory's (KVBO) ninth