

# *Inland Regional News*

***Inland Bird Banding Association***

**Founded 1922**

## **A LONG WAY FOR A DOWNY**

The summer of '93 will not soon be forgotten. The almost continual rains not only disrupted the lives of people, but have had a devastating effect on wildlife from eastern Nebraska, across Iowa, Missouri, and Illinois. Some storms in my "neck of the woods" left dead baby birds scattered everywhere. And I believe many species, especially ground nesters, gave up trying to nest. I noticed many were gone by the end of July; places where I have previously banded orioles, Indigo Buntings, vireos and others had no birds. Even now, the middle of August, most of my banding sites are ankle deep in mud and swarming with mosquitoes.

So after two months of no banding, I was able to put up nets near the south end of Fontenelle Forest on 4 August. I really did not expect to get anything more than a few chickadees, cardinals, and woodpeckers. That is exactly what I did get—except there was one very interesting and exciting banding return for me!



For years I have looked for some movement of resident birds between the two nature centers which make up the Fontenelle Forest Association property. Neale Woods is 25 miles north, across the city of Omaha, of the part known as Fontenelle Forest. I have banded hundreds of birds at the two stations but had never re-netted any that had traveled from one facility to the other. I have always carefully watched those band numbers though.

On 4 August 1993, my efforts paid off. I netted a female Downy Woodpecker at Fontenelle that had been banded 29 January 1992 at Neale Woods. When I first checked my records, I was so surprised with this recovery, I assumed I probably had made a mistake in logging the information. I double checked my field sheets, but there was no error. This is certainly not a record for woodpecker age, but for me, it is one for distance.

***Ruth C. Green***

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## **GOOD CATCH AT A CHERRY TREE**

Birds caught between 20 June and 17 July 1993 using three nets at a young cherry tree. The tree had many cherries this year but cherries did not ripen all at once. Listed below are 26 species (in the order first caught) and numbers of each, that I banded at this set:

Brown Thrasher	10
Orchard Oriole	10
Red-bellied Woodpecker	5
Song Sparrow	3
House Wren	3
Gray Catbird	18
Field Sparrow	3
American Robin	12
Blue Jay	13
Common Yellowthroat	2
House Finch	12
American Goldfinch	1
Eastern Bluebird	1
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6
Carolina Chickadee	3
Baltimore Oriole	35
Carolina Wren	1
Cedar Waxwing	2
Common Grackle	1
Eastern Phoebe	2
Downy Woodpecker	7
European Starling	7
Hairy Woodpecker	2
Northern Cardinal	1
Tufted Titmouse	1
Black-billed Cuckoo	1

**Holmes Smith**

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**REPORT FROM UNIVERSITY OF  
MICHIGAN-DEARBORN STATION**

The bird banding station at the University of Michigan-Dearborn banded 723 new birds and handled 184 returns during the spring 1993 season. Banding began 10 March and ended 4 June, with 50 days of banding averaging 81 net-hours per day. The big day was 10 May with 47 birds of 20 species.

While 67 species were banded, the 4.5 birds/net-hour was disappointing. Migration was two to three weeks late due to cold weather and prevailing north winds up until mid-May. Excellent numbers and variety of birds were noted in the area, but net

placement in old field and forest edge did not intercept them. This habitat works well for fall banding, but nets will be moved next spring.

Top five birds were American Goldfinch (88), Gray Catbird (71), Song Sparrow (45), White-throated Sparrow and Swainson's Thrush (both 25), and Slate-colored Junco (24). Eighteen warbler species were banded; top numbers were Myrtle Warbler (21), Yellow Warbler (18), Magnolia Warbler (14), and Common Yellowthroat (13). There were 60 returns from the fall season.

The outstanding highlight of the season was Michigan's first state record Virginia's Warbler, banded after strong west winds on 13 May. This species is not prone to wandering even in the vicinity of its western range, and has only been encountered 5 times east of the Mississippi. It was the first to be seen in the east in 18 years (a 1979 record for Illinois is considered hypothetical). Two other Virginia's Warblers have been banded in the east, both at Island Beach State Park in New Jersey, one in 1962 and the other in 1966. Our bird, a female, was very fat, and was released within two hours of netting after photographs were taken. The local Detroit media even covered this surprising visitor.

While paling in comparison, other notable birds included one Killdeer, a station high 12 Lincoln's Sparrows and 16 Swamp Sparrows. Thrush numbers were very low, with only two Hermit Thrushes banded.

**Julle A. Craves**

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**WHITE-THROATED SPARROWS WITH  
RETAINED JUVENAL PLUMAGE**

I am looking for data on as many AHY White-throated Sparrow with retained juvenal plumage as possible. In May, at the University of Michigan-Dearborn, I banded a female (sexed by wing chord) with a great deal of breast streaking. Pyle et al. indicate that White-throated Sparrows in juvenal plumage (June through August) have considerable streaking on upper breast and flanks, and that HY birds undergo a partial pre-basic molt. Bent describes the juvenal plumage:

"Below, dull white, washed with buff on throat and sides and thickly streaked with clove brown... The first winter plumage is acquired by a partial postjuvinal molt. ... By the end of this month [August], most of the young birds were indistinguishable from adults."

I am interested in collecting the dates, iris and head color, sex, wing chords, weights and any other information gathered by other banders on AHY White-throated Sparrows with retained juvenal plumage. Please write: **Julie Craves**, c/o Orin Gelderloos, University of Michigan-Dearborn, Department of Natural Sciences, Dearborn, MI 48124. E-mail addresses: CRAVES@delphi.com or orin.gelderloos@um.cc.umich.edu.

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### 1992 Fall Report from Sand Bluff Banding Station

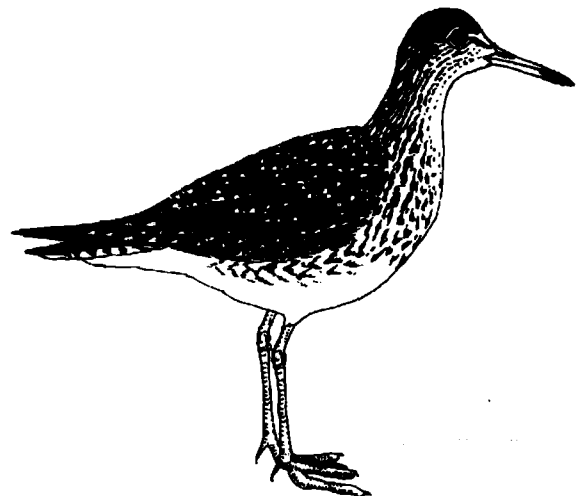
The fall banding season (at Sand Bluff Banding Station, Colored Sands Forest Preserve, Winnebago Co, Illinois) was a bit of a disappointment after our very strong spring. We anticipated large numbers of HY migrants after seed- and insect-producing habitat was rescued by late July rains, but the numbers never quite materialized. This fall was not dissatisfying, however, because it brought nearly as many birds as last year in most species, a greater than usual diversity of species, several rarities, and a foreign recovery. We banded 96 species for a total of 3187 new birds and 36 foreign retraps. This brings us to 119 species, 6027 new birds and 234 retraps for 1992. The foreign recovery was a Saw-whet Owl on 22 November.

There were increases among the insectivorous birds, with some species setting records for numbers and several 5- and 10-year highs. Among warblers, Yellow-rumped (Myrtle) Warblers posted the best numbers shown since 1984, as did Western Palm Warblers which broke its decade record with 82 individuals. Winter and House Wrens remained strictly average; most vireos showed minor increases. Thrushes remained more or less average except for Eastern Bluebirds which came in at more than 2.5 times their 10-year average. Warblers lead the declines; numbers of the follow-

ing were all less than 50% average. Local nesters Chestnut-sided Warblers and Common Yellowthroats; Tennessee and Black-and-White Warblers were low; Connecticut, Blackburnian and Blue-winged Warblers were completely missing. Sparrows, finches and flycatchers are not free of declines from 1980's averages. Purple Finches have practically disappeared from our nets, whether in response to House Finch invasion, acid rain in northern latitudes, or some other malady, we do not know. Fox, Vesper and Savanna Sparrows and Rose-breasted Grosbeaks continue at much lower numbers than in the early 1980s, and for the first time ever, we caught no Great Crested Flycatchers in the fall. Empidonax flycatchers remain down. Gray-cheeked and Swainson's Thrushes and Veeries showed declines but all are variable.

**Tom Little**

Abridged from Sand Bluff  
Banding Station  
Newsletter, April 1993



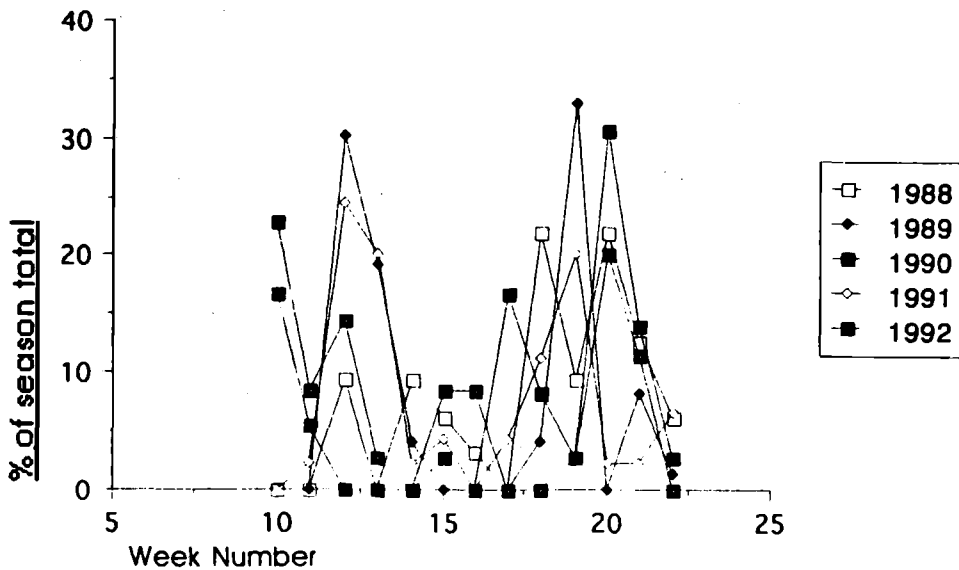
## Bluebird Migration Times

Spring and fall records of Eastern Bluebird bandings at Sand Bluff Banding Station, Colored Sands Forest Preserve, Winnebago Co, Illinois. The number of birds netted each week is expressed as a percentage of the year's total catch. Weeks are keyed to 7-day periods beginning with 1 January and ending with a 9-day period at the end of December. Of special interest, even in an "unsmoothed" graph, is how consistent movement is. We do not band weeks 1 - 9, 23 - 33 (more or less), and after week 48.

**Tom Little**

Sand Bluff Banding Station  
Newsletter, April 1993

Spring bluebird activity



Fall bluebird activity

