
Atlantic Flyway Review: Northeast Coastal Region I - 1997

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This year I am happy to report a slight increase in the number of stations reporting from the Northeast Coastal Region. Welcome to the Vermont Institute for Natural Science (VINS) and Overpeck Park. We hope you will stay with us for a number of years. VINS adds an inland component to the Review, and Overpeck Park seems an interesting open country habitat that is changing quickly. The Grand Manan Bird Observatory appears to have finally settled on a permanent site and Peter Homann was back at his SW-Laurentian Mountain Station in Quebec. Peter managed to band for only eight days catching 34 birds of 15 different species and we look forward to a detailed report in 1998.

"Gently average," as David Holmes puts it, sums up the 1997 season very well for most sites. There were no complaints about the lack of birds or too many birds and nothing really remarkable in the way of species present or absent. The Canadian Maritimes experienced one of the driest summer/fall seasons on record, yet farther down the coast, Appledore Island rarely saw the sun. St. Andrew's totals show a good early warbler migration but a lack of late migrant sparrows and kinglets stopping in the area. Results from the Canadian offshore islands indicate the opposite, with the highest numbers in late October. VINS was happy to see that species numbers rebounded to more normal levels in 1997, while Appledore Island showed no significant highs or lows. Block Island noted a lack of thrushes and creepers but White-throat numbers were up. Island Beach banded more birds than 1996 but fewer of their "bread-&-butter" migrants. Tables 1 & 2 present the summary results for each site.

"We're sorry to say that Elise's daughter Helen

Lapham died last spring after a courageous fight against cancer. Helen was a part of the banding on Block Island since it began in 1967 and added greatly to the pleasure of visitors with her knowledge, enthusiasm, freshness, and wonderment of the birds and their characteristics whenever she gave a demonstration. Her going is a loss for all of us." Elise Lapham & Kim Gaffett

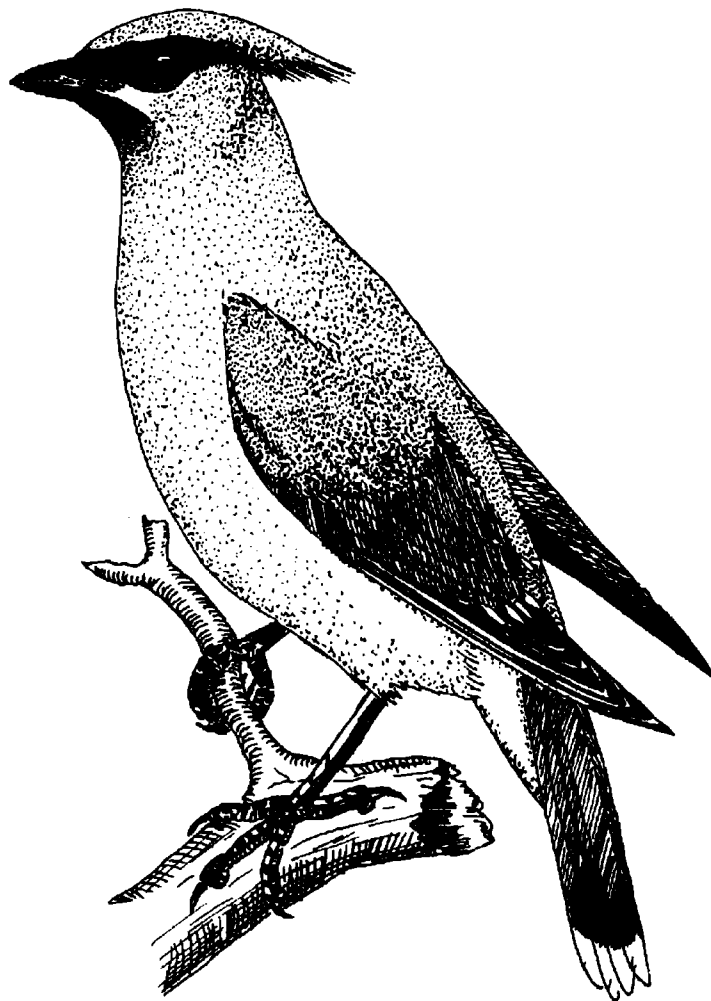


Table 1. Region I Summary. Fall 1997.										
	St Andrews NB	Grand Manan Is. NB	Vermont Institute VT	Bon Portage Is. NS	Seal Island NS	Appledore Is. ME	Block Island Bluestone RI	Overpeck Park NJ	Island Beach SP NJ	
First Day	2 Aug	24 Jul	4 Aug	12 Aug	20 Aug	15 Aug	23 Aug	11 Jul	23 Aug	
Last Day	26 Oct	7 Nov	11 Nov	1 Nov	28 Oct	24 Sep	12 Nov	5 Nov	30 Oct	
Days Oper.	26	90	70	68	58	39	65	46	41	
# Nets Used	8-13	7-17	9-19	8-16	10-21	9-10	4-10	2-10	2-24.5	
Total Net Hrs	1081	6267	7074.5	3971	3126	4695.5	7323	276	2232	
# Banded '96	358	-	1148	2266	995	2017	1431	1479	2531	
# Banded '97	856	2712	1462	1816	541	1684	1680	1905	2947	
Diff Spec '96	45	-	73	77	77	73	66	68	81	
Diff Spec '97	54	81	77	71	58	70	75	81	83	
#/100 nh '96	55	--	17	39	25	41	31	-	101	
#/100 nh '97	79	43	21	46	17	35.8	23	na	132	
LDC	126	154	73	133	37	103	106	152	330	
Date of LDC	4 Sep	30 Oct	10 Oct	12 Oct	9 Oct	11 Sep	3 Oct	12 Oct	2 Oct	
% HY **	79%	96%	69%	92%	92%	93%		83%*	83%	
% HY ***									93.2%	

LDC - Largest Daily Catch

* from top ten only

** HY% calculated as number of HY/total number of known age birds

*** HY% calculated as number of HY/total number of captures

Table 2. Region 1 Top Ten Species. Fall 1997.

	St. Andrews NB	Grand Manan NB	Vermont Institute VT	Bon Portage Is. NS	Seal Island NS
1	101 MAWA (5)	289 CORE	251 WTSP (1)	244 MYWA (2)	45 WTSP
2	76 NAWA (10)	231 SOSP	150 AMRO (2)	199 AMGO	45 NOWA (5)
3	61 MYWA (1)	171 BTNW	93 SOSP (4)	135 SOSP	40 MYWA (4)
4	59 AMRE	163 AMRE	91 SCJU	102 BLPW (3)	36 SOSP
5	54 WTSP (2)	162 COYE	81 BCCH (7)	96 COYE (5)	34 AMGO
6	50 BTNW	147 MYWA	76 HETH (6)	89 WTSP	31 SWSP
7	46 COYE (2)	136 WTSP	69 GRCA (3)	87 GCKI (10)	29 GCKI (10)
8	45 BCCH (6)	132 BCCH	68 MYWA	73 SCJU	27 SCJU
9	36 BAWW	111 SWSP	63 COYE (5)	69 FOSP (8)	21 BLPW (3)
10	34 AMGO	108 "DEJU"	55 AMGO	55 SWSP	18 RBNU
					18 SSHA

Table 2 (cont'd.) Region 1 Top Ten Species. Fall 1997.

	Appledore Is ME	Block Island RI	Overpeck Park NJ	Island Beach SP NJ
1	206 NOWA (3)	437 MYWA (1)	341 MYWA	434 GCKI (2)
2	188 REVI (1)	261 GRCA (2)	214 COYE	308 WTSP (4)
3	184 RBNU	115 COYE (5)	204 SOSP	291 MYWA (1)
4	151 COYE (2)	65 REVI (3)	173 GRCA	268 BRCR (9)
5	142 AMRE (4)	60 GCKI (6)	117 WPWA	210 SCJU (6)
6	92 YWAR (5)	55 WTSP (7)	78 SWSP	210 GRCA (3)
7	78 GRCA (6)	52 "DEJU" (10)	77 AMGO	168 COYE (5)
8	48 BAWW (7)	45 AMRE	71 YWAR	161 RCKI
9	45 SOSP (10)	39 RCKI (8)	56 SAVS	102 SWSP
10	41 MAWA	32 SWSP	45 LISP	97 SOSP (7)
	41 WIWA			

St. Andrews Banding Station 450-0670

New Brunswick, Canada

Tracey Dean (bander)

Assistant - Carolyn Murphy

The St. Andrews Banding Station is considering becoming part of the Migration Monitoring Network that is being set up across Canada but does not meet the qualification standard of daily coverage. This year the nets were open more often, which resulted in more birds being caught but another experienced bander is needed before the station can progress.

The fall weather was ideal for banding with little wind or rain and the southward migration of warblers from the beginning of August until the middle of September was steady. There were record numbers of most species banded, notably Black-and-white, Nashville, Magnolia, and Black-throated Green warblers, Ovenbird, Northern Waterthrush and American Redstart. The later migration of sparrows, kinglets and thrushes was weak with "lows" recorded in many species. Song, Lincoln's and Swamp sparrow numbers were down as well as those for Ruby-crowned Kinglet. Only a single Hermit Thrush was recorded.

Uncommon species captured included the station's second Orange-crowned Warbler, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker and Pine Grosbeak; and the station's third Yellow-breasted Chat and Sharp-shinned Hawk. The hawk was grabbed by hand from a dense patch of bushes as it sat on a screaming Blue Jay. (We captured the unhurt Blue Jay as well!)

Public education and banding demonstrations are still a priority; and this year ten groups, including high schools students from Ontario, New Brunswick, and Quebec, as well as naturalist clubs and teachers, participated in programs.

Field work is always the enjoyable part of banding, but data needs to be written up and results presented. In October, a paper, "Monitoring Bird Migration: building a database," which centred around data collected at the St. Andrews Banding Station, was given at the Quoddy EMAN (Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Network) Conference held in St. Andrews. Field work is also the expen-

sive part of banding, and I would like to thank the James L. Baillie Memorial Fund for their continued financial support. New nets are always an asset.

Long Pond Migration Station 443-0664

Grand Manan Bird Observatory

New Brunswick, Canada

Brian Dalzell & Calvin Brennan (banders)

Assistants: Wendy Jess, Kenneth MacIntosh, Jim Tietz, Dan Burton, Liba Pejchar.

After three seasons of searching, it appears the Observatory has finally found a suitable site on which to establish a long-term migration monitoring station. Pilot stations were operated at Kent Island in the fall of 1995 and Southwest Head in the fall of 1996. In the fall of 1997, monitoring took place at the Grand Manan Migratory Bird Sanctuary, adjacent to Long Pond. The area is commonly referred to as Anchorage Provincial Park, and lies between Seal Cove and Grand Harbour on the main island of Grand Manan.

The overriding theme of late summer and fall was drought, perhaps the most severe experienced in the region in more than 100 years. By the time more or less normal precipitation resumed in November, nearby Long Pond had dropped almost three feet. Despite the drought, and perhaps because of it, songbirds in the Maritime provinces appeared to have a very good breeding season. Warblers were in good supply until a mass exodus on 18 August which resulted in 98 birds banded, our second-best day of the season.

All species of flycatchers except "Traill's" appeared to be in lower-than-normal numbers, but most sparrows and finches were not hard to find. Some of the more northern breeders were in short supply, such as Dark-eyed Junco, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Pine Siskin, White-crowned Sparrow, Blackpoll Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Myrtle Warbler, Northern Waterthrush, Yellow-bellied Flycatcher, and Palm Warbler. Part of the reason may have been an unusually cool and wet June and July in parts of Newfoundland, Labrador, and northern Quebec.

There appeared to be two distinct movements of White-winged Crossbills between mid-August and early November. One from east to west, resulted in as many as 150 birds per morning migrating past

in August and September. A second from north to south in October brought lesser numbers. The first wave showed no inclination to linger, unlike the second. The October birds resulted in 11 bandings, all juveniles, and all were very lean. Many were reported at local bird feeders, a rare behaviour for these northern finches. A total failure of the spruce cone crop in the Grand Manan Archipelago may or may not have been related to the drought.

By far the highlight of the banding season was a strong movement of Common Redpolls through the Archipelago between mid-October and mid-November. The first birds captured on 13 October came as a total surprise. Our largest daily catch of the season took place on 30 October with 154 birds banded, 150 of which were redpolls, with most being caught in just two nets. The next day resulted in 110 redpolls banded. As many as 300 birds per day were estimated in the study area during the last week of October. Fully 90 per cent of the Common Redpolls banded were hatch-year birds, with about five per cent adults and the rest of unknown age.

Biting insects almost completely disappeared after early August, indicating other insect populations may have been very low in late summer. Indeed, fat levels on almost all captured migrants were unusually low. Banding mortalities were also higher than normal, with many apparently healthy birds simply expiring in the hand during processing. Fatal shock from heat stroke/dehydration are hypothesized as possible causes.

Banding highlights included single Yellow-billed Cuckoo (1 October), Marsh Wren (4 October), Brown Thrasher (19 October), Warbling Vireo (13 September), two adult White-eyed Vireo (1 & 2 October), three Orange-crowned Warbler (4, 13 & 16 October), a male Kentucky Warbler (28 August), four Prairie Warbler (24 August - 14 September), two Yellow-breasted Chat (6 & 16 October), a Blue Grosbeak (22 September) and an Indigo Bunting (28 September). A Swainson's Thrush banded 7 September was found to be suffering from a rare, and likely fatal, condition known as subcutaneous emphysema. Foreign recaptures included a HY Savannah Sparrow from nearby Kent Island, and a Northern Waterthrush captured 26 September, originally banded on 13 September by the Atlantic

Bird Observatory on Bon Portage Island, Nova Scotia, some 75 miles to the south.

Vermont Inst. of Natural Science 433-0723

Woodstock, VT

Jim Tietz, Steve Faccio, Tim Redman, Kent McFarland, Jim Goetz, Mia Sondreal, and Chris Rimmer - VINS staff banders

Fritz Gerhart, Angele Brill, Carol Cushing, Kevin Ahern, Chris Sheldon, Betty Gilbert, and Libby Hillhouse - Volunteer banders.

Our banding station is located on the Bragdon Nature Preserve at the headquarters of the Vermont Institute of Natural Science (VINS), a non-profit, membership-based, research and educational organization. Our net lanes are located in early successional/second growth habitat, primarily around a small (approx. 2 acre) pond. The vegetation consists of a variety of shrubs and saplings including autumn olive, blackberry, buckthorn, willows, maples, and dogwoods, with a broken overstory of sugar maple, aspen, black cherry, and white ash. The 1997 banding season represented our 17th consecutive year of data collection.

During the fall season (1 August - 11 November) we banded on 70 mornings for a total of 7,074.5 net hours. With a similar amount of effort, we captured 211 more birds in October 1997 (662), than in October 1996 (451). While fall numbers for American Robin, Hermit Thrush, Red-eyed Vireo, and Ovenbird were relatively "normal," it was a poor year for Eastern Phoebe, Veery, and Baltimore Oriole. As a group, sparrows were well represented this year, with junco, Song, Lincoln's, White-throated, and American Tree sparrows making up 35% of our total fall captures. The fall migration of warblers rebounded significantly over last year's low turnout, with a 209% increase in the number of Myrtle Warblers banded (68). We also captured good numbers of Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and Palm warblers. Other notable increases included Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Solitary Vireo, House Finch, and American Goldfinch. It is interesting (and encouraging) to note that most of the species that were "down" last year, rebounded this year to more "normal" levels.

All in all, it was an active, productive monitoring season.

Shoals Lab Banding Station 425-0703

Appledore Island, Maine

David Holmes, John Munier, Mary Wright (banders)

Assistants: Andre Breton, Carol Cushing, Dorothy Fitch, Aimee Fox, Terry Goodhue, Anthony Hill, Cliff Horrigan, Susan Isabel, Stephanie Parkinson, Becky & Mark Suomala.

The Shoals Lab Banding Station was open for 40 days from 15 August through 24 September. As last year, we again suffered an early closure when the Island shut down on the earliest date I can remember. We ran our core of nine nets very consistently and a 10th net on parts of at least seven days. We lost only one complete day to a storm (21 August) and fairly insignificant amounts of time on six additional days. The fronts were not timed to be wonderfully beneficial, so the season ended up feeling gently average (see Table 1). The weather peculiarity this year was fog. We've never seen so much. Our weather sheets listed sunrise for only five days between 15 August and 18 September. We couldn't see it. If it wasn't fog, it was clouds; but the birds still seemed to find us.

The season's specialty was the superflight of Red-breasted Nuthatch. Their total was 50% above any previous season's count and without them, our season would have been low average. With them, our "old time comparison period of 15 August - 21 September" was our second highest. Daily totals showed no stunning highs or lows and our ONLY day of over 100 birds was 11 September with 103. That day also brought us two public groups, our season's only Olive-sided Flycatcher, a Connecticut Warbler, our season's second Belted Kingfisher (only the third for the station), and the station's first ever Western Kingbird in hand. We were letting the birds go only in the thickest of bushes because by supper-time 17 Merlins were sitting in a single dead tree 300 yards from our office door.

Even an average season has memorable moments. The station's 50,000th bird, an HY-F Ruby-crowned Kinglet, appeared early on the morning of 21 September. The species total of 70 was about normal

even if it did include both a Cerulean and Prothonotary warbler the day before our all-day storm and a Yellow-throated Warbler the day following. We had about half our usual number of returns, no reported recoveries, and no foreign birds.

As always, we gratefully acknowledge the staff of Shoals Marine Laboratory for their helpfulness, many kindnesses, and willingness to work with the irregularities in our meal availability. We also have a fantastic corps of people who pay room and board to work with us directly.

Block Island Banding Station 411-0713

Rhode Island

Elise Lapham, Kim Gaffett (banders)

Another interesting fall of banding started on 23 August with a small flock of goldfinch, and continued to 12 November which produced a Northern Saw-whet Owl. The total banded this fall was 1680 birds compared with 1996's 1431. This year we had 75 species, up from the 66 species in 1996. A quick review of net hours and birds per 100 net hours shows an increase in effort, perhaps contributing to this year's increased totals (see Table 1).

The fall of 1997 saw a Hermit Thrush and Brown Creeper being replaced in the "Top 10" (Table 2) with American Redstart and Swamp Sparrow. Even though Red-eyed Vireo are among the top ten species banded, their numbers have been decreasing over the past years. Golden-crowned Kinglet, White-throated Sparrow and Gray Catbird numbers were up compared to 1996; none of these reached their 1995 numbers.

Other noteworthy observations include:

~Veery and Swainson's Thrush numbers stayed about the same as 1996, but this year we had no Gray-cheeked Thrush and **only 19 Hermits!**

~1996 produced no nuthatches, while in 1997 Red-breasted Nuthatches had a strong showing of 28, and we had three White-breasted Nuthatches.

~This year we had: Yellow-breasted Chat (5), Yellow-billed and Black-billed cuckoos (1 each), Saw-whet Owl (1) and American Woodcock (3), while none appeared last year.

~On 2 October we were fortunate to be in the "right place at the right time" to carefully and excitedly extract from the nets a beautiful female Northern Harrier.

The first two weeks of October were the busiest, with our only 100+ bird day being 3 October with 106 birds banded of 25 different species. The greatest diversity was seen on 2 October with 29 species out of 58 birds.

We thought that it would be interesting to compare the 1987 and 1997 years to see how things have changed in ten years (see tables below).

	1987	1997
Total Birds Banded	1085	1680
Number of Species	73	75
Total Net Hours	3355	7323
Birds/100 Net Hours	32	23

	# Banded '87	#Banded (and position)'97
Gray Catbird	298	261 (2)
Myrtle Warbler	109	437 (1)
Red-eyed Vireo	48	65 (4)
Brown Creeper	45	-
White-thr. Sparrow	45	55 (6)
Golden-cr. Kinglet	35	60 (5)
Com. Yellowthroat	35	115 (3)
Bl.-thr. Blue Warbler	30	-
American Redstart	29	45 (8)
Swainson's Thrush	29	-

Overpeck Park

405-0740

Ridgefield Park, New Jersey

W. Elrick (bander)

Overpeck Park is situated on the banks of the Overpeck Creek. The park is capped landfill and has been left to go wild. In the last few years the habitat has changed as the grasses have given way to the phragmites and small aspen. This means that it has gone from predominant sparrow habitat to a now sparrow/boreal species habitat.

I have banded at the site for three years. This year nets were open on 46 days, daybreak until 9.00am, and sometimes we continued into the early afternoon. I was very fortunate to have two experienced British banders to assist me, which allowed for more birds than normal to be caught and processed. In the past three years, I have moved the nets frequently in order to find the optimum catching paths as the birds forage around the field. This year I moved five nets into a line west to east which allowed me to cover the aspen stand better and may be the reason for the larger catch of warblers and catbirds.

Highlights included two Clay-colored Sparrows, seven Connecticut Warblers, and large numbers of Lincoln's Sparrow (45) and Traill's Flycatcher (34), as well as one catch of 27 Bobolink in the same 40-foot net.

New species included Gray-cheeked Thrush (1), Orchard Oriole, (3), Rose-breasted Grosbeak (3), Warbling Vireo (3), Purple Finch (1), Bay-breasted Warbler (1), American Woodcock (1) and Killdeer (1). This brought the three-year cumulative species total to 98. Changes of note from previous years:

Species	1995	1996	1997
Com. Yellowthroat	35	49	214
Gray Catbird	9	28	17
Myrtle Warbler	461	83	341
Lincoln's Sparrow	5	24	45
Indigo Bunting	7	5	25
Song Sparrow	217	404	204

Island Beach State Park 395-0740

New Jersey

Bruce Adams, Mary Doscher, Eileen & Glenn Mahler, John Miller, Lawrence Pharo, Robert Yunick (banders)

Assistants: Robert Pantle, Robert Miller, Raymond Miller, Marlene Miller

During the fall 1997 banding season, seven banders operated six banding stations at Island Beach State Park, between 23 August and 30 October. One or more of those stations was in operation for 41 days during that 68 day period; there were five banding days in August, 13 in September, and 23 in October. Only one day (2 October) saw four of the stations in operation simultaneously; there were three days with three stations active, seven days with two stations active and 30 days with only a single station active.

Results for the season, while not as bad as last year's dismal results, were still below average. (Note that in the following discussion, the term "recent years" refers to the period 1987-96). The 2947 birds banded this season was about half of the average for recent years (4084), but the 2232 total net hours was also well below the recent average (4084). Since the number of days of banding coverage was down only slightly, 80% of the recent average, the difference between the large drop in net hours and the smaller drop in the days of banding can be attributed, as it was last year, to two factors. First, there were relatively few days on which more than one banding station was in operation; and second, due to the lack of major flights, the banding operations were frequently terminated earlier in the day than usual. Birds per net hour was 1.32, only 77% of the recent average and the third lowest net-hour average in that period.

The following comments from Bob Yunick provide some interesting speculations on possible causes for the lack of migrants. "Birds were disappointingly few in kind and number, despite seemingly favorable weather; i.e., NW wind, high pressure, and clear night skies. Based on past experience, these conditions should have brought three to five times as many birds. My only speculation on why there were no blitz flights is as follows: almost all the high pressure systems that came during that week were

centered at about the same latitude as Island Beach (IB) or south of it. None of them swept northwest to southeast at latitudes north of IB. I think that the frontal-pressure cell sweeping northwest to southeast or north to south is essential to bring birds to IB. Past remembrances of great flights were on occasions when the jet stream and the high-pressure cells were to the north."

There were no outstanding flight days reported this season. Peak flights occurred as follows:

Date (# stations oper.)	No. of Birds	# of Birds/net hr.
2 October (4)	330	2.0
7 October (2)	297	3.1
8 October (2)	271	2.5
11 October (1)	235	5.2

The "bread-and-butter" species banded at Island Beach (those averaging over 200 individuals per year) were all down in numbers, some significantly, as shown in the following table.

Brown Creeper was the only species above average on a per-net-hour basis. Golden-crowned Kinglet, the species banded in the largest numbers, were down by almost half on a per-net-hour basis

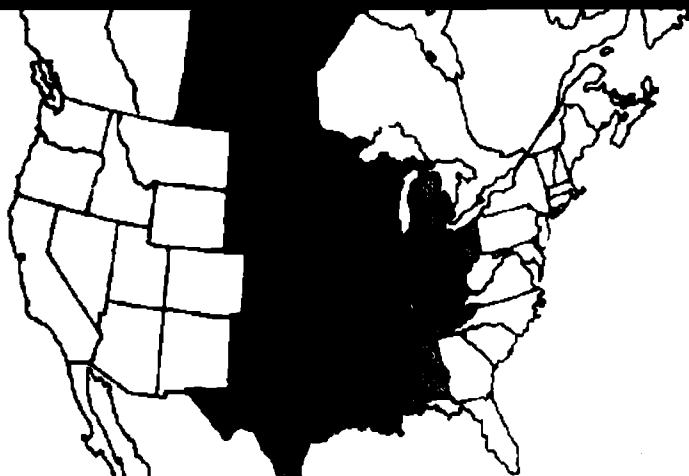
Species	# Banded in '97	"Recent" Avg.	Birds/-100 NH	"Recent" Avg.	% of Avg.
Gol.-cr. Kinglet	434	1478	19.4	36.2	54%
Myrtle Warbler	291	758	13.4	18.6	72%
White-thr. Spar.	308	615	13.8	15.1	91%
Gray Catbird	210	576	9.4	14.1	67%
Sl.-col. Junco	210	335	9.4	11.0	85%
Brown Creeper	268	335	12.0	8.0	150%
Ruby-cr. Kinglet	161	319	7.2	7.8	92%
Corn. Yellowthr.	168	318	7.5	7.8	96%
Song Spar.	97	274	4.6	7.2	64%

and in terms of raw numbers were about 30% of average!

"Highlight" of the season included a Clay-colored Sparrow on 27 September, a Black-capped Chickadee on 30 September (only our third individual of

this species in the last 11 years), a Vesper Sparrow on 26 October (the second individual in that same time span), nine Lincoln's Sparrow, five White-crowned Sparrow, a Philadelphia Vireo on 7 October, an Orange-crowned Warbler on 17 October, and three Hooded Warblers (one of which was rather late, 20 October).

Also of note is a report from Mary Doscher that a banded Gray Catbird she captured at Island Beach on 8 May 1997, had originally been banded on 31 August 1996 at Block Island by Elise Lapham, which represents a capture/recapture between two different AFR Region 1 stations!



Inland Regional News

Inland Bird Banding Association

IBBA Meets in Nebraska

The 1998 meeting of the
Inland Bird Banding Association will be held:

**9 - 11 October 1998 at the
Eppley 4-H Center
Nebraska National Forest
Halsey, NE**

The featured speaker will be James D. Rising, author of "**A Guide to Identification and Natural History of the Sparrows of the United States and Canada.**" He will present a workshop on grassland sparrows and will also be available to autograph copies of his book, which will be for sale at the meeting. Please contact the following people for more details about the annual meeting.

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