

ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW: Region IV Piedmont—Coastal Plain, Fall 2005

Chandler S. Robbins
Region IV Coordinator
USGS Patuxent Wildlife Research Center
Laurel, MD 20708-4039

Weather patterns always play an important role in day-to-day banding operations. July was hot and wet in the Southeast, but dry along the Florida coast. Both August and September were hot and dry. Persistent east and south winds kept migration to a trickle during the latter half of September and the opening days of October. Jekyll Island banders were caught in this stagnant period and did not get a single heavy flight of migrants during their 21 days of operation. The best flights occurred during 14-19 Oct. October continued warmer than usual except in Florida, and the warm trend continued through November.

Two inland Maryland stations were not in operation this year. Comparisons with the previous year include only those stations that were in operation both years. Based on the top ten species reported from each station, Myrtle Warbler (4611) was by far the most common species banded in Region IV in the autumn migration of 2005, followed by Gray Catbird (2156), White-throated Sparrow (1329), and Common Yellowthroat (1245). Comparable figures for 2004 had Myrtle (3063) in the lead, followed by four close runners-up: white-throated (1286), yellowthroat (1257), catbird (1240), and Song Sparrow (1234). No correction is made here for the 5.8% decline in net hours from 2004 to 2005. Myrtle Warbler numbers are recovering nicely from the crash in 2003, catbirds and Song Sparrows had substantial increases from 2004, and White-throats and Yellow-throats were stable.

Note (Table 1) that Eden Mill, which is west of Chesapeake Bay, gets about 75% HY birds, while Chino Farms, east of the Bay, gets about 85%. Chincoteague, Kiptopeke and Jekyll Island, all on the ocean, range in the nineties, while both Key Biscayne, which is on the ocean just south of Miami, and Tallahassee, which is inland, get close

to 60%. What is happening between Jekyll Island and Miami that would drop the percent of HY birds from 93 to 60? Are the immatures taking off on over-water flights? Or are inland adults arriving via the Appalachians? We still have much to learn about the migration of North American birds.

If you think Florida is vacationland, consider the plight of Michelle Davis and her crew. They lost close to half their canopy during Hurricane Katrina (category 1), then Hurricane Wilma (category 2) toppled many of the remaining trees and stripped all of them of their leaves and fruit. Not to be discouraged, Michelle cleared or relocated 8 to 11 net lanes and resumed banding for another three weeks. Her efforts were well repaid with a record 27 species of warblers, including Townsend's and Golden-winged, a Thick-billed Vireo (probably the first ever banded in the continental U.S.A.), and a Sulphur-bellied Flycatcher.

Many thanks to all the banders and trainees whose dedicated efforts resulted in more than 40,000 net hours of net checking and the patience to band, age, and record more than 20,000 migratory birds in Region IV in 2005.



Table 1. AFR Region IV, Fall 2005 Summary.

	Eden Mill	Chino Farms	Chincoteague	Kiptopeke	Jekyll Island	Key Biscayne	Tallahassee
First Day	2 Sep	8 Aug	5 Aug	15 Aug	25 Sep	29 Aug	27 Aug
Last Day	5 Nov	28 Nov	11 Nov	27 Nov	15 Oct	14 Nov	15 Nov
Days Open	9	79	50	94	21	60	69
Nets Used	4 to 10.5	4 to 70	4 to 10	21	15	12 to 16	4 to 9
Net Hours	435	19,844	1300	11,426	765	3437	3097
No. Best Day	64	354	101	739	151	85	11
B. D. Date	28 Oct	24 Oct	3 Nov	21 Oct	14 Oct	23 Sep	10 Oct
Most Species	18	34	13	34	17	19	5
" " Date	28 Oct	18 Sep	19 Oct	19 Oct	14 Oct	16 Oct	2Sep, 1-2 Oct
Banded 2004	329	8049	587	7003	2492	1445	381
Banded 2005	210	7421	662	9567	1173	1374	192
Species 2004	47	114	55	108	53	50.5	39
Species 2005	36	117	54	102	46	59	32
B/100nh 2004	82.8	39.9	41.5	55.7	213	41	12
B/100nh 2005	48.3	37.4	50	83.7	153	45	6
% HY 2004	74	83	96.7	93	91.2	58.9	61
% HY 2005	75	84	95.7	91	93.4	60.5	58

Table 2. AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Species, Fall 2005

Eden Mill	Chino Farms	Chincoteague	Kiptopeke	Jekyll Island	Key Biscayne	Tallahassee
% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY	% HY
41 WTSP (1) 66	957 WTSP (1) 76	287 MYWA (1) 100	4324 MYWA (1) 92.9	426 COYE (2) 99.8	246 OVEN (2) 50.4	31 WEVI (2) 55
36 GRCA (2) 95	673 SOSP (2) 78	86 GRCA (3) 100	1289 GRCA (4) 91.9	267 WPWA (1) 99.7	207 BTBW (1) 63.3	29 NOCA(1) 48
20 NOCA (3) 80	486 INBU (3) 93	28 COYE (6) 82	388 AMRE (2) 91.5	125 GRCA (3) 95.0	185 AMRE (3) 58.4	17 HOWA(6) 29
13 SOSP (4) 85	465 GRCA (6) 86	22 WTSP (4) 96	309 WTSP (8) 73.6	78 TRES 69.0	143 GRCA (5) 77.6	15 CARW(7) 60
10 INBU (5) 90	453 COYE (5) 70	22 GCKI (2) 100	287 BTBW (7) 89.2	61 PABU (4) 88.0	95 COYE (9) 72.6	12 GRCA(8) 67
10 FISP 60	334 FISP (8) 94	15 SCJU 100	257 HETH 86.8	37 AMRE (7) 86.0	75 BAWW(4) 53.3	8 CACH 63
8 CACH 100	324 RCKI (7) 86	15 SWSP (8) 100	243 SOSP (3) 84.4	31 NOCA 61.0	72 REVI (7) 76.4	8 NOMO 88
7 COYE 57	319 CHSP 95	15 HETH 100	236 COYE (6) 85.2	26 PRAW (5) 92.0	70 NOWA (8) 52.9	7 ACFL 86
6 ETTI 83	265 SCJU (9) 76	11 RCKI (5) 100	229 SWSP 87.3	16 REVI (10) 100	69 WEWA (6) 33.3	7 SWTH 71
6 SCJU 67	216 AMGO (4) 80	11 REVI 100	178 WPWA 97.8	11 BTBW (8) 72.0	21 BGGN 47.6	6 OVEN 50

() Indicates placement on list in 2004.