

**Robbins Nest**

**390-0765**

Laurel, MD

*Chandler S. Robbins, Jane Robbins*

crobbins@usgs.gov

This backyard station is located on the south bank of the Patuxent River gorge five miles upstream from the Patuxent Powerline station, 0.4 mile below Rocky Gorge Dam, and one-third mile downstream from the highway I-95 bridge. We operated on a Monday/Wednesday/Friday morning schedule, the same as the Patuxent station but with exactly half the number of nets. The front property is well shaded with apple, pear, cherry, and hemlock trees and a dense growth of vines and shrubs; the back portion is steep mature oak-tulip forest. Migrating Hermit Thrushes have now replaced Wood and Swainson's thrushes in the top ten species, and this season Hermits even outnumbered White-throated Sparrows. The Patuxent station caught about ten times as many birds per net-hour as we did, largely because they were in shrub habitat whereas most of our birds remained high overhead in the tall trees.

**Patuxent Powerline**

**390-0764**

**Right-of-way**

Patuxent Research Refuge

Laurel, Prince George's Co., MD

*Danny Bystrak*

dbystrak@usgs.gov

This station operates at the Patuxent Research Refuge in a powerline right-of-way that bisects an upland deciduous forest. This area has been used for this purpose since 1980, except in 2004-2006. In the 26 years of operation, over 79,700 birds have been banded. Twenty-six nets are arrayed along approximately one-half mile that runs generally on an east-west orientation. The habitat is marked by dense 4-6 foot high shrub foliage with very few trees of any

Table 1. AFR Region IV - Fall 2008 Summary

	Eden Mill	Laurel	Patuxent	Foreman's Branch	Chincoteague	Kiptopeke	Folly Is.	Jekyll Is.	Tomoka	Key Biscayne	Tallahassee
First Day	29 Aug	9 Aug	15 Aug	3 Aug	8 Aug	15 Aug	20 Sep	28 Sep	29 Sep	15 Aug	20 Aug
Last Day	7 Nov	2 Dec	17 Nov	25 Nov	14 Nov	23 Nov	26 Nov	19 Oct	30 Nov	5 Nov	15 Nov
Days Open	9	53	42	84	33	90	19	22	44	76	81
# Nets Used	11.5	13	26	10 to 99	4 to 6	22	10.5	14	2 to 10	9 to 18	4 to 6
Net Hours	397	2,345	3,851	39,588	484	11,353	878	792	1,802.50	6,728.25	2,647
No. Best Dy	56	11	95	346	72	383	102	116	22	227	7
B D Date	18 Oct	30 Oct	17 Oct	19 Oct	30 Oct	18 Oct	19 Oct	2 Oct	15 Oct	19 Oct	23 Sep
Mist Species	14	8	28	39	13	28	26	16	9	21	4
" " Date	10 Oct	4 Oct	6 Oct	8 Oct	30 Sep	16 Sep	19 Oct	16 Oct	9 Oct	2 Oct	23 Sep
Banded '07	246	255	1,700	11,003	396	5,507	203	1,122	155	1,729	108
Banded '08	225	248	1,787	9,271	538	6,726	697	1,225	221	2,179	133
Species '07	38	36	77	122	47	92	41	43	32	54	28
Species '08	34	41	75	116	41	91	63	41	35	63	28
B/100nh '07	55.9	10	48.7	31.5	58	46.4	109	145	52	37	9
B/100nh '08	70.5	10.6	46.4	23.4	111	59.2	79	115	12.2	35	5
%HY 2007	83%	57%	58%	78%	96%	90%	90%	90%	52%	50%	55%
%HY 2008	73%	65%	74%	82%	97%	90%	89%	94%	65%	46%	65%

Table 2. AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Species, Fall 2008.

		Eden Mill		Laurel		Patuxent		Foreman's Branch		Chincoteague		Kiptopeke						
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY						
1.	86	WTSP(1)	59	28	NOCA(1)	56	237	GRCA(3)	82	1123	WTSP(1)	77	370	MYWA(1)	100	2966	MYWA(1)	90
2.	32	GRCA(2)	81	27	GRCA(4)	72	233	WTSP(2)	75	894	SOSP(2)	86	32	GRCA(2)	87.4	596	GRCA(2)	96
3.	23	NOCA(3)	61	22	HETH	82	169	RCKI(1)	81	603	MYWA(9)	71	13	SWSP(6)	100	356	WTSP(10)	82
4.	23	SOSP(4)	65	20	WTSP(2)	70	101	REVI(15)	60	540	GRCA(5)	85	12	COYE(3)	90	313	HETH	87
5.	7	ETTI(5)	100	15	BTBW	50	91	COYE(4)	62	417	COYE(6)	67	9	REVI(0)	100	304	AMRE(4)	92
6.	6	COYE	50	15	OVEN	43	82	SCJU(5)	55	391	SCJU(4)	66	8	WTSP(7)	100	251	BTBW(7)	94
7.	4	HETH	100	14	MAWA	0	73	MAWA(6)	58	369	RCKI	90	7	SCJU(0)	100	164	COYE(5)	93
8.	4	CARW	100	12	CARW	70	68	HETH(10)	83	342	AMGO(3)	77	7	SOSP(4)	100	138	BAWW	91
9.	3	YBSA	100	11	ETTI	67	50	EATO(14)	80	308	FISP(8)	90	7	HETH(0)	100	135	SWSP(9)	90
10.	3	WEVI	100	8	AMRE	38	44	SOSP(7)	69	289	INBU(7)	92	6	BTBW(0)	83.3	119	SOSP(6)	83

Table 2 (continued). AFR IV. Ten Most Commonly Banded Species, Fall 2008.

		Folly Island		Jekyll Island		Tomoka		Key Biscayne		Tallahassee					
		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY		% HY					
1.	111	GRCA(1)	87	425	WPWA(1)	98	49	COYE(3)	61	580	BTBW(1)	49	27	NOCA(1)	72
2.	104	MYWA(3)	86	269	COYE(2)	97	37	MYWA(1)	51	264	AMRE(3)	42	22	WEVI(2)	50
3.	90	COYE(4)	98	138	GRCA(3)	95	33	GRCA(2)	82	253	OVEN(2)	51	10	GRCA(5)	60
4.	49	WPWA(2)	86	55	PABU(4)	93	15	WEVI(4)	67	173	BAWW(4)	39	7	HOWA(8)	71
5.	40	AMRE(5)	90	54	AMRE(8)	95	13	OVEN	54	131	WEWA(6)	39	6	CACH	80
6.	31	BTBW(7)	55	45	HOWR(9)	60	10	BTBW(8)	60	125	GRCA(7)	76	5	WOTH(4)	80
7.	19	GCKI	100	38	BTBW(6)	74	10	NOCA(7)	70	88	COYE(8)	68	5	ETTI	60
8.	19	RCKI	90	36	NOCA(10)	94	8	WPWA(6)	88	79	NOPA(10)	54	4	RCKI(10)	67
9.	19	NOCA(6)	63	21	WEVI	81	7	REVI(9)	22	49	REVI(5)	82	4	REVI	100
10.	14	HOWR(9)	71	20	NOWA	90	6	WEWA	17	43	SWTH	63	4	VEER	25

( ) Indicates placement on list in 2007.

height. Trees are purposely kept to a minimum within the right-of-way to avoid arcing with the powerlines. We operated seven days in August and November and 14 days in September and October for a total of 42 days—generally on a M/W/F schedule. Nets were opened by 25-30 minutes before sunrise, and closed about 3.5 hours later. Weather did not have a significant impact on our operations. We did have a few mornings in late October where early morning frost delayed the opening of some nets.

Comparisons to previous efforts at this station need to be tempered by the fact that from 1980 through 2003, the effort was from 1 Aug through 30 Nov with upwards of 100 banding days per season. When the effort resumed in 2007, we operated only 42 days from mid-Aug thru mid-Nov. New norms will have to be established under the new protocol.

Overall 1,787 birds of 75 species were banded compared to 2007's 1,700 birds of 77 species. Of the 1,595 birds that were aged, 74% were HY. This is a high percentage for this station (last year was 58%). One new species was added to our station species list: Cooper's Hawk (HY/F). Eighty-five percent of our bandings were from the following: sparrows at 27%, warblers at 20%, mimids at 14% (overwhelmingly Gray Catbirds), kinglets at 11%, thrushes at 7% and vireos at 6%. Our Top Ten species once again accounted for about 64% of all bandings. For the first time since 1980, Gray Catbirds were our most-banded bird. Ruby-crowned Kinglets, which frequently are the station's #1 banded species, dropped to an uncharacteristic #3.

Notable warblers banded included (all HY except one AHY/Yellow Warbler): four Nashville, two each Cape May and Yellow, and one each Kentucky, Wilson's and Tennessee. Kentucky Warblers are relatively uncommon to this station; this was the first one banded here since 2002. Tennessee Warblers were once relatively common at this station. During the 1980s, an average of 105 Tennessee Warblers were banded per year. In the 1990s, this average dropped precipitously to 22 per year (100+ days per season in those years). We also banded 11 Blackpoll Warblers (3-AHY/8-HY) this

season. We have not seen these numbers since we were banding on a near daily basis compared to our current three days per week.

Other highlights include: banding one HY/M Sharpshinned Hawk, five Purple Finches (AHY/4, U/1), and three HY/U Warbling Vireos. Warbling Vireos are very unusual for this station with fewer than 20 having been banded since 1980. On 19 Aug we banded a leucistic House Wren (AHY/U). The outer five primaries and corresponding coverts on the left wing were white. Finally, we banded an HY Gray Catbird with a 79-mm wing and an 80-mm tail (no tail molt). These are unusually small wing/tail measurements for a Gray Catbird.

We had 754 recaptures of 481 birds of 40 species. The earliest banded recapture was of a resident Blue Jay originally banded at Patuxent in 2002. We also recaptured a Red-eyed Vireo that was originally banded at Patuxent in 2003.

Our regular volunteers include Sandy Teliak (who wrote this report), Mike Quinlan, JoAnna Lutmerding, Woody Martin and Jay Pape. A special thanks to Deanna Dawson who filled in as the bander-in-charge on occasion. Our thanks also to the many others who assisted.

**Foreman's Branch  
Bird Observatory**

**391-0755**

Chino Farms, Chestertown  
Queen Anne's Co., MD

**J. G. Gruber**, P. Gruber, M. Gimpel, D. Small,  
W. Snyder

P.O. Box 560, Chestertown, MD 21620

Foreman's Branch Bird Observatory's 11<sup>th</sup> fall banding season was somewhat of a disappointment in both numbers and species totals. While habitat has remained virtually the same since 1998, the weather patterns this fall, like last year, were not the best for the area's breeding birds or for bringing in fall migrants from the north. The 2007 summer drought was repeated in 2008, but lasted longer, until mid-November this year. We experienced no strong cold fronts through the area until mid-