

cheeked/Bicknell's Thrush intergrade was banded on 29 Oct. Cape May Warblers also had a slow year; whether this was a result of the lack of strong east winds or to population fluctuations cannot be determined. The four banded in 2009 is similar to the six banded in 2002-2006, but is significantly fewer than the 23 banded in 2007 and 24 from 2008. Some of the missing birds were Black-throated Blue Warblers: we banded only 365 in 2009, compared to 580 in 2008, 442 in 2007 and 558 in 2006. American Redstarts were also down, with 194 banded in 2009, compared to 264 (2008), 219 (2007) and 307 (2006). However, Ovenbird numbers remained remarkably consistent, with 253 captures in 2009 compared to 253 in 2008, 234 in 2007, and 364 in 2006. It is possible that the regrowth of the canopy since Hurricane Wilma in 2005 has affected the capture rates of certain species that are otherwise predictable migrants through south Florida. Raptor numbers were also down in 2009 at our site, both in captures and in sightings; this is probably weather-related.

We captured ten returning birds of seven species, including Black-and-white Warbler, Painted Bunting, and Gray Catbird. The oldest return was one Northern Cardinal banded in fall 2004. All returns were of either resident or wintering species. One Ovenbird banded on 1 Sep was recovered dead on 3 Sep in a Miami neighborhood approximately 16 km west of Cape Florida.

Erica Hernandez joined our crew as a regular bander this season. Many thanks to Angel and Mariel Abreu for providing the radar loops of the South Florida and Southeastern United States throughout the entire migration period. Special thanks go to Park Manager Robert Yero for continuing to support our project.

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Banding activity in the fall season of 2009 at my suburban, partially wooded location (not on a lake

shore!) covered a period that was not very different from that in 2008. Comparison of the data shows a slight improvement of netting success, but much of it has to be attributed to a doubling of the number of Northern Cardinals banded in 2009. Aside from documenting an apparently productive breeding season of cardinals, my banding records reveal that transient migrants were scarce again in 2009. In fact, fewer than 50% of the banded birds were presumed migrants. As speculated in my report for 2008, stopovers at my inland banding location may be affected by the conditions at the coast and over the Gulf of Mexico, which were quite favorable in 2009 for a quick continuation of migratory activity because of a calm hurricane season. I am afraid, however, that this does not tell the whole story.

Even though I banded just one Swainson's Thrush, thrushes as a group, with 26 individuals, made the largest contribution to the number of banded migrants. Only 12 warblers of eight species were captured, but among them was the second Yellow-breasted Chat ever banded at my station. Somewhat reassuring are the near normal rates of return of migrants that had been wintering near my home in a previous year. By the end of the period covered by this report I already had documented the third return of a Hermit Thrush and the fourth return of an Ovenbird.



Yellow -breasted Chat
by George West