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# ATLANTIC FLYWAY REVIEW: SPRING 2009

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We welcome the addition of Raccoon Ridge Bird Observatory located in Branchville, Sussex County, NJ, to the Spring 2009 AFR report, bringing the total of reporting stations to 13. We would welcome additional reporting stations from the Atlantic Flyway. If you would like to join the spring 2010 report, please request a reporting form.

Total birds banded in spring 2009 was 34,683, up from 25,574 in spring 2008. Only Rock Point, Wing Island, and Bedford Valley reported fewer birds in 2009. Kestrel Haven called their spring "dismal" and may have been in the group with fewer birds but were saved by the incredible invasion of Pine Siskins and American Goldfinches.

Read the narratives to learn about the banding of Appledore's 100,000<sup>th</sup> bird (a Gray Catbird); Long Point's record-setting single day of banding (1,321 birds on 6 May); the Black-capped Chickadee with a grape-vine tightly wrapped around its tarsus (carefully removed by Wing Island staff); and the Traill's Flycatcher that sang in its holding cage, allowing Island Beach banders to call it a Willow Flycatcher.

Braddock Bay, Ruthven, and Rock Point each have websites for daily banding totals and blogs.

Thanks to all who participated.

(see tables next page)

**Crown Point State Historic Site**      440-0732  
Essex County, NY  
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Gordon E. Howard, Chief Assistant

The spring banding station on the 360-ac grounds of the Crown Point State Historic Site opened for the 34<sup>th</sup> consecutive season of banding between 8 and 25 May. Operated by the Crown Point Banding Association (CPBA), through an agreement with the New York's Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP), the station is located in thickets of hawthorn-juniper west of His Majesty's Fort. The modest totals of 57 species and 457 individual birds were a slight improvement over May 2008 (51 species., 384 birds), but below usual expectations. Notable for their absence were Myrtle Warblers, with no major waves and just 20 banded.

**78 American Goldfinch**  
**44 Gray Catbird**  
**38 Common Yellowthroat**  
**32 Blue Jay**  
**22 Baltimore Oriole**  
**20 Myrtle Warbler**  
**18 Yellow Warbler**  
**15 American Robin**  
• **12 Black-capped Chickadee**  
**12 Cedar Waxwing**

Despite torrential rains on 9 May (followed by a double rainbow over Vermont), strong winds and rain on 14 May, plus a morning with frost as late as 19 May, the weather was generally favorable and

**Table 1. Spring 2009 AFR Banding Summary**

	Crown Point, NY	Lewiston, NY	Braddock Bay, NY	Ruthven, ONT	Rock Point, ONT	Appledore, ME	Long Point, ONT
Inclusive Dates	5/8 to 5/25	4/30 to 5/26	4/16 to 6/8	4/1 to 5/31	4/2 to 6/7	5/4 to 6/7	4/1 to 6/10
Total Days	18	14	47	57	44	35	71
# Nets Used	10 to 16	15	1 to 34	16	1 to 16	5 to 10	0 to 44
Total Net Hours	3529	884	7607	4515	3567	3896	9100
% Caught in Traps	1.0%	1.0%	0.0%	12.3%	0.0%	0.0%	27.2%
Best Day # (date)	39 (5/15,5/16)	60 (5/15)	250 (5/8)	71 (4/28)	139 (4/27)	249 (5/31)	1094 (5/6)
Best Diversity (date)	18 (5/9,5/18)	22 (5/15)	40 (5/16)	26 (5/17)	27 (5/15)	28 (5/20)	64 (5/6)
Total Banded 2008	384	262	3876	1512	1553	2462	10,209
Total Banded 2009	457	416	4305	1677	1502	2771	17,128
Total Species 2008	51	50	95	86	84	74	126
Total Species 2009	57	46	91	88	73	76	130
Birds/100nh 2008	12	22.5	44.9	25.6	37.3	72.3	91
Birds/100nh 2009	13	40.3	56.6	32.7	42	71.1	188

**Table 1. Spring 2009 AFR Banding Summary (Continued)**

	Kestrel Haven, NY	Presque Isle, PA	Wing Island, MA	Bedford Valley, PA	Raccoon Ridge, NJ	Powdermill, PA	Island Beach, NJ
Inclusive Dates	4/14 to 5/26	4/16 to 5/30	3/5 to 6/15	4/16 to 6/6	3/9 to 6/23	3/3 to 5/31	4/13 to 6/13
Total Days	22	33	26	30	34	66	33
# Nets Used	1 to 10	8 to 12	2 to 32	1 to 10	6 to 14	6 to 66	5 to 36
Total Net Hours	538	2204	2298	453	1264	10,728	2122
% Caught in Traps	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	na	7.0%	0.0%
Best Day # (date)	107 (5/3)	113 (5/15)	47 (5/19)	15 (5/11)	33 (5/8)	128 (5/10)	318 (5/15)
Best Diversity (date)	20 (5/3)	24 (5/15,5/22)	14 (5/8)	10 (5/11)	19 (5/16)	34 (5/10)	31 (5/15)
Total Banded 2008	506	251	382	297	na	1880	2000
Total Banded 2009	779	945	360	161	363	2175	1644
Total Species 2008	53	43	46	47	na	102	71
Total Species 2009	46	78	42	48	64	103	67
Birds/100nh 2008	105	57.5	28	81.8	na	22.2	98.5
Birds/100nh 2009	145	53.3	26	35	-	20	77.49

the prevailing winds came out of the south almost daily. If anything, the weather was a bit too pleasant, with few northerly winds or showers to ground migrants. Best days for variety, with 18 species each, were stormy 9 May; 18 May, when winds shifted to northerly; and 24 May, when winds again shifted from south to north.

Four OPRHP staff members from the Albany and Saratoga/Capital District offices paid site visits and met with representatives of CPBA and Historic Site staff to view the banding area and discuss possible removal of invasive plants, especially common buckthorn. Much of what were hawthorn-juniper-cedar thickets in 1976 is now open field or reforested with white pine and green ash. We can not save the world, but we might be able to save an acre or so of thicket habitat for catbirds, thrashers, migrant warblers, and other brushy area birds.

There were returns of 30 birds of a dozen species banded at Crown Point in previous years, the oldest a Black-capped Chickadee and a Baltimore Oriole, each now at least five years, 11 months old. Warbler variety was a respectable 17 banded species, but short of the 23 species in 2007. Boreal species included Tennessee, Cape May, Blackpoll, and Wilson's, while two Prairie Warblers were near the northern edge of their range. A Pileated Woodpecker banded 17 May was the fifth netted since 1997, and three Eastern Towhees set a new station record.

Groups included Bolton, Minerva, Moriah, and Whitehall Central Schools, as well as an environmental science class from North Country Community College, but the number of visitors (200+) was down, with some expected classes unable to leave their school districts, due to budget constraints. A program for adjudicated youth, who had visited the station for the past dozen years, was a victim of state budget cuts. Starting in 1990, students and other visitors who released a bird each received a certificate, and since the inception of the program a total of 1,186 certificates have been issued. Polaroid photos of the student holding their

bird prior to release have now been replaced by digital shots. If a released bird returns in a subsequent year, or is encountered elsewhere, the student is notified, with 63 such student returns to date. Adult visitors sometimes recall "their" bird, released as a child at Crown Point a decade or more ago.

We're grateful to those who helped transport various parts of the banding station from, and back to, Elizabethtown, Inlet, and New Jersey: MaryAnne & Mike Allen, Rudy Bobka, Malinda Chapman, Stan Corneille, Judy Heintz, Gordon Howard, Dan Lee, Gary Lee, and Bob Wei. Special thanks go to Historic Site Manager Thomas Hughes, Jake Putnam, and the rest of the Crown Point staff for their continued cooperation and many kindnesses. We greatly appreciate the interest in habitat maintenance of Ray Perry and Traynor Biasioli at OPRHP in Albany, as well as that of Regional Director Alane Ball Chinian, Bob Kuhn, and Casey Holzworth of OPRHP in Saratoga Springs. Since 1976, a total of 15,439 birds of 99 species (plus five subspecies or other forms) have been banded on the grounds of Crown Point State Historic Site, and we look forward to our 35<sup>th</sup> year in 2010.

**Lewiston Banding Station**                      **431-0790**  
Niagara Co., NY  
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The 2009 spring banding season got underway on 30 Apr. Banding on this day was very slow with only a total of 12 birds of six species being captured and banded. Things started to pick up on 11 May and continued to approximately 23 May. Many warbler species were showing up during this time period, which was a welcome improvement over the spring of 2008. Birds/100 net hours (b/100nh) increased from a very dismal 22.5 in spring 2008 to a very respectful 40.3 this spring, again, reflecting the reoccurrence of many warbler species. I did not observe any troubling indicators this past spring and am in hopes the good trend continues on with fall banding.