

**Updated Summary of the
Wehle MAPS Banding Station
in Bullock County, Alabama (2006 - 2012)**

The Wehle MAPS Banding Station was established on the Wehle Forever Wild Nature Preserve in Bullock County, AL, in 2006. This is an update of the initial report submitted in 2010 (Soehren 2010, *North American Bird Bander* 35:140-142) and incorporates 2011 - 2012 banding data into the overall station results. Capture and banding procedures follow MAPS protocols (administered by the Institute for Bird Populations) and the station is operated nine days during the breeding season from 11 May to 8 Aug; one morning session for every successive 10-d sampling period. Within the 20-ha sampling area, a majority of the station's nets are located within a mature, bottomland hardwood forest along a small creek floodplain. Two nets are also established peripherally in an adjacent upland dominated by open pine forest with a diverse herbaceous ground cover.

Since station initiation in Jul 2006, a total of 57 banding sessions have been performed accounting for 3,369 total net-hr, for an average of 481 net-hr/yr. For all years combined, there have been 687 total captures representing 38 species. This includes 467 newly banded individuals (37 species), 194 recaptures (15 species), and 26 unbanded birds (11 species). The average annual capture rate for newly banded birds is 1.4 b/10nh (Table 1).

The 194 recaptures consisted of 109 individuals, which represented 42% of the total number of birds banded. Of the 109 individuals, 52 (48%) were recaptured within the same year, 39 (36%) were recaptured the following year, 10 (9%) were recaptured the second year, 4 (4%) were recaptured the third year, 2 (2%) were recaptured the fourth year, and 2 (2%) were recaptured five years after initial banding. Species recaptured three or more subsequent years include 3 Acadian Flycatchers, 2 Hooded Warblers, 1 Tufted Titmouse, and 2 Northern Cardinals. The longest lived individuals recaptured were two Acadian Flycatchers and one Northern Cardinal. One Acadian Flycatcher was banded as ASY in 2007, the other banded as AHY in 2006. Both were recaptured in 2011 making them at least 6-yr old. The Northern Cardinal was banded in 2007 as AHY, and recaptured in 2012, making it at least 6-yr old.

Twenty-six individuals were released (e.g., Ruby-throated Hummingbird) or escaped before processing. Two individuals died, including a Louisiana Waterthrush (2008) during processing and a Wood Thrush (2009) in a net due to an apparent predation attempt. The former specimen was deposited at the Auburn University vertebrate collection.

For all years, the top 10 banded birds represent 76% of all birds banded (Table 2). One Northern Waterthrush accounted for the only migrant banded during station operation on 15 May 2007.

Table 1. Summary of the Wehle MAPS banding station in Bullock County, Alabama.

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	TOTAL
Total Banded	24	63	90	66	75	59	90	467
Recaptures	6	15	23	32	37	37	44	194
Unbanded	1	4	8	4	3	3	3	26
Sum	31	82	121	102	115	99	137	687
Total Days	3	9	9	9	9	9	9	57
# Nets Used	10	10	10	10	10	10	10	70
Total Net-Hr	180	539	540	495	535	540	540	3,369
Total Species	9	17	22	16	21	16	25	37
Birds/10nh	1.3	1.2	1.7	1.3	1.4	1.1	1.7	1.4

Table 2. The top 10 banded birds for all years (2006 - 2012).

Species	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
Carolina Wren	10	12	11	10	13	13	14	83
Kentucky Warbler	2	7	4	12	18	8	9	60
Indigo Bunting	0	3	14	11	5	6	6	45
Hooded Warbler	2	4	4	2	6	6	10	34
Northern Cardinal	1	9	8	0	4	5	6	33
Acadian Flycatcher	4	8	1	8	3	1	4	29
Louisiana Waterthrush	0	2	5	0	5	2	8	22
Tufted Titmouse	0	4	9	0	0	3	5	21
Northern Parula	0	5	3	2	1	2	2	15
Common Yellowthroat	1	1	7	1	1	0	3	14

Table 3. Age categories for the top 10 banded birds for all years (2006-2012).

N	Species	Age Code					
		L	HY	SY	ASY	AHY	U
83	Carolina Wren	0%	67%	10%	16%	7%	0%
60	Kentucky Warbler	7%	28%	12%	52%	2%	0%
45	Indigo Bunting	7%	22%	47%	22%	2%	0%
34	Hooded Warbler	6%	38%	32%	21%	3%	0%
33	Northern Cardinal	0%	36%	6%	0%	58%	0%
29	Acadian Flycatcher	0%	7%	21%	59%	14%	0%
22	Louisiana Waterthrush	0%	68%	14%	18%	0%	0%
21	Tufted Titmouse	24%	38%	10%	29%	0%	0%
15	Northern Parula	0%	0%	27%	60%	13%	0%
14	Common Yellowthroat	0%	43%	7%	50%	0%	0%

Age ratio percentages for the top 10 banded birds for all years are shown in Table 3. Earlier banding sessions yielded primarily SY, ASY, AHY birds (sessions 2 - 5) followed by an influx of Local and HY birds as the breeding season lengthened (sessions 5 - 10). Sex ratios for all banded individuals were almost evenly distributed at 34.0% male (n = 159); 34.7% female (n = 162); and 31.3% unknown (n = 146).

To date, a total of 76 species have been tallied within the station's sampling area during banding sessions (n = 57). Thirty-seven (49%) of those species have been banded. The average number of species detected annually is 60 for complete years (2007 - 2012).

The Wehle MAPS banding station is operated by Eric Soehren and John Trent of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division. Appreciation is extended to the following volunteers for their assistance over the years: Paige Aplin, Andrew Arnold, Mark Bailey, Quincy Banks, Caroline Causey, Ben Clemmett, Liz Crandall, Michael Gagin, Rick Garrett, Brian Grice, Eddie Hackett, Max Harman, Emily Horton, Heather Hughes, Eve Kendrick, Donald Lampley, Josh Landrum, Gwen Lewis, Stewart McCoy, Ericha Nix, Chris O'Brien, Ashley Peters, Billy Pope, Collin Roberts, Scott Rose, Scott Rush, Nicholas Sharp, Amy Silvano, Chris Smith, Jennifer Soehren, Michelle Tacconelli, Erika Taketa, Karen Tenaglia, Aurora Thomas, Carrie Threadgill and Jennifer Wang.

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John A. Trent and Eric C. Soehren (23423)

**Elhew Field Station
Wehle Land Conservation Center
4819 Pleasant Hill Road
Shorter, AL 36053
eric.soehren@dcnr.alabama.gov**

Sand Bluff Bird Observatory 2012 report

Located in north-central Illinois about one mile from the Wisconsin state line, we find Sand Bluff in the Sugar River Valley situated on the 303-acre Colored Sands Forest Preserve in Winnebago County. The habitat here consists of sand prairie, oak savanna, river bottoms and oxbows. The station was founded by Master Bander Lee G. Johnson in 1967 and since then he has been joined by Master Bander Richard Hamilton.

Numerous volunteers have assisted in the operations and we now have 12 people with sub-permits and 30 who contribute numerous hours to the stations operations from repairs to data work. Over the years we have netted and banded over 275,000 birds. No one has ever been paid for their work.

The year 2012 proved to be an interesting one for captures. Spring banding was as mixed up as the weather could be. Warm weather came in early, trees leafed out, then a cold snap killed a lot of buds and it was not until the early part of May before leaves came back on the surrounding trees. The winter birds, such as the Dark-eyed Junco and American Tree Sparrow, were gone early and many of the Neotropical birds came through early; we just did not catch a large number of any species. Our
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total for the spring migration was a lowly 1,619 birds covering 87 species.

Our fall season started the first week of August and went until the end of November. We caught 4,093 birds representing 99 species in the mist nets, and an additional 225 raptors at the Hawk Trapping Station. We had an unusually high 118 Black-capped Chickadees, along with 176 Hermit Thrushes and 276 Swainson's Thrushes. Warblers came through in good numbers with 106 Tennessee, 116 Magnolias and 110 Yellow-rumped Myrtles. Seventy-five Northern Saw-whet Owls graced our nets with several foreign bands. We were really excited to band a Pileated Woodpecker. The rarest bird of the year was a Sage Thrasher caught on 29 Sep 2012. The raptor station broke a record with 211 Red-tailed Hawks—5 were caught in the spring and 206 in the fall— 2 Peregrine Falcons, 1 Red-shouldered Hawk, 10 Cooper's Hawks and 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk. Three of the red-tails were foreign retraps—one ASY originally caught in Palmyra, WI, in 2011; an HY originally captured at O'Hare International Airport had wing tags as well as a leg band; and the third was an HY from Stevens Point, WI. For the year we totaled 5,937 birds representing 116 species. Some longevity records among the retraps were two Blue Jays—one was captured 11 years ago as an HY and the other, nine years ago as an AHY. Other longevity records were seven-year-old recaptures of a Baltimore Oriole, Chipping Sparrow, Hairy Woodpecker, Red-bellied Woodpecker and Field Sparrow.

We assisted graduate students from the University of Illinois on a doctoral project collecting black-legged ticks for a study on Lyme Disease. No results are back from that yet. In the past we sampled for Avian Flu and West Nile Virus but results were negative.

We welcome students of Ornithology to assist them in their studies of the avian world.

Mike Eickman
**Sand Bluff Bird Observatory
P.O. Box 2
Seward, IL 61077
hawking5055@aol.com**