

Kestrel Haven Avian Migration Observatory
Burdett, Schuyler County, NY
John and Sue Gregoire
4226-07645
Khmo@att.net

SPRING 2005 Atlantic Flyway Review Report

We were able to start early, on this our 19th spring, but weather then caused us to close until late April. The weather didn't improve much in May when we had a ten-day gap in operations. We closed on 31 May to remain within our constant effort protocol while still looking for migrants. Daily point counts added few additional species. In all, we had only five species of pass-through migrants. Of only nine warbler species banded, Wilson's was the only non-local breeder and we only had three of those. This was as close to a "silent spring" as we care to get.

We banded a record 948 individuals of 59 species in 35 days of operation. We also had 183 repeats, a fantastic 135 returns and two foreign captures and 12 hummingbirds not banded. Our measure of efficiency was 94 birds per 100 net hours for newly banded birds and 129 birds/100 NH overall. Our best day was 13 May with 86 banded and our most species diverse day was 23 May with 18 species banded. Once again, American Goldfinch was our bread and butter with 417 banded and 60 returning.

No new species were added to the cumulative station list of 130 species plus 5 forms; point count cumulative is 217 species seen at Kestrel Haven. We were excited by our second ever Orchard Oriole. This one was as a not very spectacular looking second-year male. We also banded 6 Brown Thrashers and three Black-billed Cuckoos. We often do not see either species. There were also a large number of Yellow-billed Cuckoos present on point counts portending a bad spiny caterpillar year, as the species is quite uncommon here in normal years. We continued our Dragonfly studies but netted only one in mist nets, a *Gomphus spicatus*. The cool, wet weather and lack of sun has kept Odonata emergence down and downright late this year. The real pleasure of this spring was in our returns.

We received reports of three encounters. A Purple Finch banded in fall 2003 was recovered in January 2004 in PA some 180 miles SW. An American Goldfinch banded on 29 September 2004 was found dead on 5 December 2004 in Dunedin, FL, which is some 1060 air miles to the south. Dunedin is west of Tampa. That's the third goldfinch return we have had from central Florida. Finally, our first ever re-encounter of a Wilson's Warbler (banded here on 18 September 2002 as an HY-F) was reported by Long Point Bird Observatory in Canada. At the time of release, 20 May 2004, it was three years old. For some reason, the BBL took over a year to report the Florida and Canada encounters!

This spring's foreign encounters have not yet been reported by the BBL. They were a goldfinch and a Song Sparrow.

We enjoyed 135 returning individuals of 19 species of which 32 were over four years of age. The eldest return was a 9+-year-old Chipping Sparrow! Others were:

- Hairy Woodpecker at 8+ years old
- Downy Woodpecker at 6+ years old
- Black-capped Chickadee at 6 years old
- Gray Catbirds at 4+ and 8+ years old
- European Starling at 4 years old
- Yellow Warblers at 4+ and 6 (2) years old
- Northern Cardinal at 5 years old
- Chipping Sparrow at 4 years old
- Song Sparrows at 4, 5 (2), 5+, and 6 years old
- Purple Finches at 4+ and 5 years old
- House Finch at 7 years old
- American Goldfinches at 4 (2), 4+ (2), 5 (2), 6 (5) and 7 years old.

We had one Song Sparrow return with a pox infestation of the foot. This is the same bird reported last year and it is now 6 years of age. A Chipping Sparrow also displayed a slight pox infestation of its hallux. A Mourning Dove presented with most of its talons missing and toes swollen. This was the result of frostbite. Pictures of these are available on the national pox database website. Additionally, we had a second year female goldfinch displaying fault bars near the tips of her secondaries.

In 2003 we joined in a partnership with the New Jersey Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Conservation, the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center and Derby Hill Bird Observatory (NY) in an attempt to monitor the migration flight of Red Knots from the Delaware Bay region to their James Bay nesting grounds. Analysis of that data is now complete and showed that none of the marked Red Knots flew over central NY.

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Kestrel Haven Statistical Summaries Spring 2003:

Table I: Operations

First Day 6 April: Last 31 May
 Total Days in Operation 35
 Range of No. Nets Used 2 to 14
 Total Net Hours for Season* 948
 Number of Traps in Use 0 ** % of Total caught in traps N/A
 Largest Daily Catch 86 on 13 May
 Best Species Diversity: 18 on 23 May
 Number birds banded 2004: 701; Number birds banded 2005: 892
 Total Species 2004: 55 Total Species 2005: 59
 Birds/100 net hours 2004: 160 Birds/100 net hours 2005: 94
 Species above 2 S.D. in 2005: N/A see text
 Species below 2 S.D. in 2005: N/A see text
 Weather influence ranking (+ or - or?)***: Negative

* Based on 1 4-shelf 12m net x 1 hour of netting = 1 net hour (adjusted Accordingly for shorter or longer nets)

** List number and types used

*** Were general weather conditions overall during the season a negative or Positive or inconclusive factor in banding results?

Table II: List of Ten Most Commonly Banded Species Spring 2003

	Species	Number	%SY	%ASY	%AHY
1.	AMGO	417	63	37	00
2.	SCJU	42	64	35	01
3.	WTSP	38	47	33	00
4.	SOSP	37	00	00	100
5.	RCKI	28	71	29	00
6.	RWBL	26	73	27	00
7.	YWAR	24	88	18	00
7.	EWCS	24	00	00	100
8.	BCCH	22	41	00	59
9.	COYE	21	4	00	96
10.	BLJA	20	50	50	00

Overall % SY = 50%