



Manomet Bird Observatory

Reflections on a Season of Banding: Fall 2013 (15 Aug. – 15 Nov.) at Manomet

During the fall seasons from 1966 – 2013 we have banded 163,481 landbirds. We are in our 48th year of data collection and education programs at Manomet. This fall, we again ran 50 mist nets on the same dates and in the same locations as the previous years, giving us an unparalleled comparison of range expansions and contractions, yearly variation of migration, survival and long-term population change. Recent Manomet data have documented an earlier arrival of spring migrants which correlates with global warming; some fall migrants pass through earlier, some (mostly single-brooded short-distance migrants) later.



Formal education programs for 517 visitors at Manomet were based on migration banding, local ecology and conservation biology. Visiting groups included members, scouts, schools, universities and adults from the local community. Informal presentations included those given to members, visiting scientists, visiting birders, and people who just walked in!

A Golden-winged Warbler (hatching year male) 9th Oct. was our third consecutive fall banding record for this vanishingly rare species in New

*Above: hatching year male Golden-winged Warbler (Vermivora chrysoptera)
Photograph by Haley Jordan Manomet Staff.*

*Right: Yellow-throated Vireo (Vireo flavifrons)
Photograph by Patrick Roberts, Manomet Staff.*



England. For the last four autumns, we have exceeded recent numbers of birds per net hour. Overall, both spring and fall numbers have remained steady since 2000, a welcome relief from the ca. -2% /yr. declines from 1970-1995.

The Numbers: New Bandings 2,118
 Repeat Captures 1,428

TOTAL HANDLED 3,546 of 79 species



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Both individual numbers banded and species captured were above average for the previous ten years. A snowy late winter last year was followed by a wet spring and hot summer. Late summer and fall seeds and berries were unusually abundant. Traditionally, NW winds and a cold front drift more nocturnal migrants south and east to the southern New England coast. Although there were no days of overwhelming migration, migration was mostly steady from mid-August through October. Our busiest fall days were: 16 Sep. (130 total captures), 21 Oct. (123), 5 Sep. (112), 20 Sep. (101) and 15 Oct. (98). Twenty species were banded in greater or greater= numbers this fall, when compared with the last 10 years, and most unusually, no species hit the 10-year low mark. The “up” numbers included resident breeding Cooper’s and Red-shouldered Hawks, some were short distance migrants e.g. Golden-crowned Kinglet and Myrtle Warbler, but most were long distance Neotropical migrants e.g. Yellow-bellied Flycatcher and 8 species of warblers. New bandings were led by catbirds as usual:

Gray Catbird	(490)	American Robin	(81)
Myrtle Warbler	(338)	Tufted Titmouse	(75)
Red-eyed Vireo	(103)	Northern Cardinal	(74)
Blackpoll Warbler	(83)	White-throated Sparrow	(66)

Unusual birds were a Yellow-throated Vireo, uncommon on the coast and the first since 1997; also a Cape May Warbler, the first since 1999 and never frequent since the last really extensive Spruce Budworm outbreak in the northeast from 1974-1979.

Notable recaptures this fall (69 from previous seasons) included: a Gray Catbird first banded as a hatching year on 20 Sep. 2004 (9 years old); a 5- year-old Common Grackle; four 4-year-olds; six 3-year-olds; twelve 2-year-olds and 45 banded the previous fall or spring.

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the fall migration banding and education season of 2013 such a success. We are also greatly indebted to Manomet members and those who supported the Bird-a-Thon this year. Financial support also came from:

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Sam and Patrick Roberts were the lead banders this fall, assisted by Grace Alloy-Relihan and Danielle Aubé. We will greatly miss their experience and enthusiasm. “*Per ardua ad astra*” as we sometimes say in the world of bird migration.

Trevor Lloyd-Evans