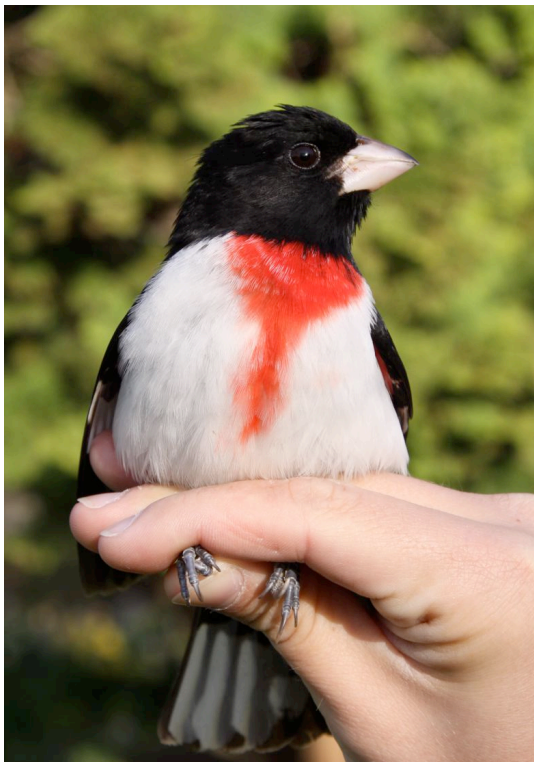


## SPRING 2009 BANDING SUMMARY (15 April - 15 June)

About 343,000 migrant landbirds have been banded at Manomet to date. The spring and fall migration banding program started here at the (then) Ernst House porch in the fall of 1966. We are thus in our 44<sup>th</sup> year of data collection and education programs at this site. This spring we continued to run 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, and long-term population change. We have also detected an earlier arrival (by 0.78 days per decade) in all migrants since 1970, a trend which correlates closely with measures of climate change. South American wintering migrants do not show this trend towards earlier arrival, perhaps indicating that they use internal “clock” cues to initiate migration in spring.



*Left: Fully adult male Rose-breasted Grosbeak – note beak marks on bander's index finger, just above the bird's foot.*

*Below: Blackburnian Warbler male in first spring breeding plumage.*



Photographs by Ian Davies – Manomet Staff

Formal education programs for 658 people were based on migration banding, local ecology and conservation biology. Onsite programs have had a wide diversity of audiences this spring. Recent groups included members, schools, universities, bird clubs, adult education, and scouts and guides. Informal presentations included those given to members, visiting scientists, the press, visiting birders, and people who just walk in!

New Bandings	857
Repeat Captures	513

TOTAL HANDLED 1,370 birds of 69 species.

As in farming, fishing and sailing, spring bird migration depends on the weather. For example, spring 2004's nine-year high numbers were attributed to unusually persistent westerly winds from mid-May onwards. These winds drifted nocturnal landbird migrants to our east coast location. This spring (2009) featured persistent onshore E and NE winds, cool temperatures and well above average rainfall. Consequently, we captured an average number of birds per net hour (a measure of comparative effort), but species and total numbers were at 10-year lows. Underlying this year's weather effect is a significant long term decline in all migrant birds, spring and fall, since we started to band in 1970.

Our busiest days were 20<sup>th</sup> May (140 captures, 124 new bandings), 1<sup>st</sup> June (87 captures) and 8<sup>th</sup> May (66). When compared with the last 10 springs, 3 species were banded in record high numbers; 7 record lows and 2 (Nashville and Pine Warblers) missed for the first time in 10+ springs. Unusual captures for Manomet included a rare spring Tennessee Warbler and a high six Indigo Buntings. However, a spring with fewer than 200 catbirds banded is a record low since we started consistent coverage in spring 1970. The most abundant new bandings in 2009 were:

Gray Catbird	(157)	Common Grackle	(45)
Magnolia Warbler	(91)	Common Yellowthroat	(41)
White-throated Sparrow	(70)	Swainson's Thrush	(24)
American Redstart	(54)	Northern Cardinal	(23)

Notable recaptures this spring (130 from previous seasons) included six 6-year-olds; one a catbird banded in Brewster, MA and one a Great Crested Flycatcher. Four 5-year-olds, four 4-year-olds and seventeen 3-year-olds were residents or short-distance migrants, but included an unusual Brown Thrasher. Ninety-nine banded birds were at least 1 or 2 years old and included 2 more thrashers and a Swamp Sparrow that overwintered at Manomet.

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the spring migration banding and education season of 2009 such a success. We are also greatly indebted for financial support of these programs to Manomet members and the following sources:

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Evan Dalton, Ian Davies and Jess Johnson were the indefatigable staff banders and teachers this spring.

Trevor Lloyd-Evans