



SPRING 2013 BANDING SUMMARY (15 April - 15 June)

About 363,600 migrant landbirds have been handled at Manomet to date. The spring and fall migration banding program commenced here at the (then) Ernst House porch in the fall of 1966. We are thus in our 48th 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 spring 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, not variations in temperature or day length.



Photograph by Bob Mulvihill - Manomet Staff



Photograph by Haley Jordan - Manomet Staff

*Left: A Blackpoll Warbler male molted into this superb alternate plumage in South America – banded here on his way north to the boreal forest.
Right: Juvenile Carolina Wren – the 1st hatch-year bird banded in 2013.*

Onsite education programs based on birds in the hand have had a wide diversity of audiences this spring. Recent groups included Manomet members, the Massachusetts Cultural Council, schools, universities, bird clubs, digital photographers, and scouts. Informal presentations included those given to members, visiting scientists, visiting birders, and people who just walk in! We also tested (for the 2nd spring) a Climate Lab program in partnership with the Wildlands Trust and the Rising Tide Charter School from Plymouth, Massachusetts. Students were introduced to birds, climate and vegetation, learning to record data of long-term value while interpreting variability.

New Bandings	1,592
Repeat Captures	711
TOTAL HANDLED	2,303 birds of 78 species.



Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences

Spring 2013 followed a rather cold winter with plenty of snow, then a coolish and wet early spring through most of April and early May, as in 2011 and 2012. Migrants peaked in mid-late May, but then decreased rapidly through mid-June as the hot weather settled in. Thanks (mostly) to 7 significant migration days, we captured rather above-average numbers of birds per net hour (a measure of comparative effort), while numbers of species handled were also above average. Underlying this year’s weather effects is a significant long term decline in all migrant birds, spring and fall, since we started standardized banding in 1970. However, the trend stopped in the mid-1990s and totals for both seasons have held steady for the last 15+ years.

Our busiest days were 30th May (248 captures, 232 new bandings), 16th May (209 captures), 10th May (185) and 17th April (124). When compared with the previous 10 springs, 22 species were banded in record high or high equal numbers; 5 record lows (or low =). Unusual captures were a rare unbanded spring Red-bellied Woodpecker, 1 Kentucky and 2 Hooded Warblers. High numbers included a stunning 101 *Empidonax* flycatchers, 34 Blackpoll and 14 Mourning Warblers. The most abundant new bandings in spring 2013 were:

Gray Catbird	(368)	“Traill’s” Flycatcher	(74)
Common Yellowthroat	(120)	Common Grackle	(64)
White-throated Sparrow	(95)	Hermit Thrush	(54)
Magnolia Warbler	(89)	American Redstart	(52)

Notable recaptures this spring (98 from previous seasons) included a 9-year-old Song Sparrow who had worn down his band. We gave him a new one. He is a permanent resident year-round and breeds regularly. We also recaptured four 7-year-olds (2 catbirds, 1 white-throat and 1 goldfinch). Five recaptured 6-year-old birds, five 5-year-olds and six 4-year-olds were mostly residents or short-distance migrants. A 2-year-old Red-breasted Nuthatch wintered over on the property and was recaptured this spring.

Many, many thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the spring migration banding and education season of 2013 such a success. We are also greatly indebted for recent financial support of these programs to Manomet members and the following sources:

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Trevor Lloyd-Evans