



THE MARSH WREN

BRADDOCK BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY





YOU'VE GOT THE CUTEST LITTLE BABY FACE

THE BABIES OF SUMMER . . .

Every summer, several of our BBBO volunteers turn their attention from avian migration to avian reproduction. Whether at the main banding station, at satellite MAPS (Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship) stations in New York and Vermont, or at nest boxes, these volunteers are treated to views of extremely young birds.

Passerines hatch featherless, but they quickly become covered in wispy fuzz known as *natal down*. While still in the nest, birds replace the down with their first set of contour feathers known as *juvinal plumage*. Since these juvenal feathers grow quickly and all at the same time, they are not as tightly “zipped” as fully adult feathers. Consequently, they often have a loose fluffy texture.

The bird will fledge the nest in its juvenal plumage, and then - usually some time before migration - will replace its body feathers, wing coverts, and occasionally flight feathers with more substantial plumage sometimes referred to as *formative plumage*.

One challenge of summer banding is that a young bird in juvenal plumage often looks radically different from its

parents. The young birds on these pages are all in their juvenal plumage, and several appear alongside adults for comparison.

We are all familiar with the speckled plumage of young American Robins, as we see them being tended by their vigilant parents on our lawns in the summer. The speckles on the breast and the streaks on the back and wings remind us that robins are in fact thrushes. The bird pictured above was found on the ground after a storm. Based on its stubby tail and wings and extremely small size, we surmised it wasn't yet ready to leave the nest voluntarily, so - after searching for a nest nearby and finding none - we rigged a makeshift nest in the area.

The Northern Saw-whet Owls below were both banded at BBBO. The juvenile owl on the left, captured on August 9, was clearly capable of sustained flight so we are uncertain if it hatched nearby or if it flew in from some distance away.

We weren't actually able to band the bird on the opposite lower left, because we couldn't identify it to species. Confusing fall warblers have nothing on confounding summer juvies!





Left page. Top: American Robin. Bottom: Juvenile and adult Northern-saw-whet Owls.

Right page. From top: Juvenile and adult Yellow Warblers, juvenile and adult American Redstarts, juvenile and adult Swamp Sparrows, juvenile mystery bird, and juvenile Common Grackle. Photo of adult Swamp Sparrow by Peggy Keller; all other photos by Andrea Patterson.

SPRING BANDING 2014

The twenty-ninth consecutive year of spring migration monitoring at the Kaiser-Manitou Beach Banding Station was carried out for 49 days beginning 12 Apr and ending on 2 Jun 2014. 3771 birds of 92 species were banded, falling short of Spring 2013's total by 1,283 birds. 79 Ruby-throated Hummingbirds are included in the list of banded birds, and an additional two male Ruby-throated Hummingbirds were released unbanded. There were no new species for the spring records, so the species total for all spring seasons remains at 146. A total of 8,522 net hours of banding resulted in a capture rate of 43.9 birds per 100 net hours, compared with 53.25 birds per 100 net hours in Spring 2013 and 47.0 birds per 100 net hours in Spring 2012. The net hour totals and capture rates do not include owl banding.

The busiest day was 14 May when 364 birds of 39 species were banded. On that day, 31% of the total birds banded were Magnolia Warblers. There were two additional 200+ bird days and seven additional 100+ bird days. The greatest species diversity occurred on 12 May and 14 May, when 39 species were banded on each day. 71.2% of the birds were able to be aged more specifically than AHY; of those birds, 74.9% were SY and 25.1% were ASY.

We recaptured 616 previously banded birds. Of these recaptures, 80 returned from a previous season at K-MB or the Kaiser MAPS station. The oldest of these birds were a Red-eyed Vireo and Gray Catbird, both in at least their ninth years; a Blue Jay in at least its sixth year; and a Traill's Flycatcher, American Robin, Gray Catbird, and American Goldfinch each in at least their fifth years. The 9th-year Gray Catbird was originally banded by Kelly Dockery in 2007 as an AHY, and returned in 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012 and 2013 before its most recent recapture in May of 2014.

There were record-high numbers banded of 3 species including 24 Northern Saw-whet Owl (previous record

high 2), 39 Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (28), 155 Western Palm Warbler (147), and 7 Eastern Towhee (5). Birds missing included Scarlet Tanager (recorded in 20 of the past 28 spring seasons), Red-breasted Nuthatch (recorded in 19 of the past 28 spring seasons), and House Finch (recorded in 18 of the past 28 spring seasons).

Recoveries of Banded Birds

A Red-eyed Vireo banded as a HY-U on 3 Sep 2006 was captured and released alive on 9 Aug 2012 at Long Point Bird Observatory, 6.6 miles SE of Port Rowan, Ontario, Canada. A Yellow Warbler banded as a SY-F on 12 May 2011 was found dead on 10 Jul 2014 on Sweet Acres Drive, Rochester, NY. A Gray Catbird banded as a HY-U on 29 Jul 2012 was found dead on 17 July 2014, 2.3 miles WNW of Greece, NY.

Education and Events

Dena Emmerson (San Francisco, CA), Parker Forman (Telluride, CO), Annie Harmon (Elkins, WV), Miranda Monica (Theresa, NY), Darlene Moore (Dallas, TX), Greg Reynolds (Rochester, NY) and Kit Straley (Northampton, MA) completed our Spring 2014 Bander Training Class. Claire Ashton and Shayna Hettler completed our Summer 2014 Teen Bander Training Class. Student banders from Cornell University helped run the station on two days in early May.

We welcomed Kristi Hannam's Animal Behavior class from SUNY Geneseo, Sara Morris' Vertebrate Biology Class from Canisius College, Leslie Clifford's Ornithology Class from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania, Alan Belford's Field Ornithology Class from SUNY ESF, Rodney Olsen's science class from the Hannaford Career Center in Middlebury Vermont, and Cornell University's Spring Field Ornithology class. We hosted visits from the Braddock Bay Raptor Research's Bird of Prey Days as well as from their volunteer training class, the Hawk Migration Association of North America's annual conference and from their raptor ID workshop, the Buffalo Chapter of the Niagara Frontier Regional Camera Club, the Chemung Valley Audubon Society, the Highland's Senior Living Center, the GCSC hiking group from Greece, the Genesee

County Soil & Water Conservation District Program, and the United Church of Christ in Webster. In addition, we enjoyed visits from author and birder Richard Crossley, raptor bander Frank Nicoletti, and Israeli banders Yoav Perlman and Jonathan Meyrav.

Pat Lovallo represented BBBO at the Braddock Bay Raptor Research's Bird of Prey Days and at the Cool Kid's Ecofest in Batavia.

Peggy Keller gave a brown bag lecture on the Birds of Borneo, in the EWB Center. The Genesee Land Trust also used the EWB Center to hold their annual meeting on May 29, and came for their traditional open house on May 18. On May 28, we held our annual picnic and memorial garden ceremony, this



TOP 10 SPECIES Banded DURING SPRING 2014

WITH NUMBERS CAPTURED DURING PREVIOUS 10 SPRING SEASONS

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Magnolia Warbler	395	160	298	453	290	297	335	488	466	282	379
Gray Catbird	283	192	306	303	255	253	302	190	232	282	300
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	300	409	524	564	367	567	293	253	437	446	287
American Redstart	254	112	231	212	159	284	244	344	213	267	219
Myrtle Warbler	140	96	80	152	137	179	122	80	91	90	209
Common Yellowthroat	184	130	241	201	165	171	151	193	135	181	162
White-throated Sparrow	210	148	151	144	144	172	148	94	119	209	159
Western Palm Warbler	141	84	26	30	147	83	117	68	84	89	155
Yellow Warbler	126	230	261	196	205	166	321	221	166	129	154
Wilson's Warbler	131	81	129	112	115	120	78	177	138	131	140

year remembering Gordon Reginold Britton and Joseph Verdone. In early April, the Genesee Land Trust, Allyn's Creek Garden Club and BBBO teamed up to remove invasive alder from the eastern field.

People from 13 states, Germany, Greece, and Israel signed our visitor's book this spring.

Research

We collected blood samples from thrushes for Dr. Susan Smith Pagano of R.I.T., who is using plasma indicators of fattening rates and diet to study the migration physiology and stopover site use of these birds.

Meghan Oberkircher took blood samples from Gray Catbirds, Yellow Warblers and Song Sparrows to learn how chronic stress levels, as assessed by immunological function, vary between breeding, molt, and migration.

Jenna Holzschuh and Mark Deutschlander presented their research at the 2014 AFO/WOS meeting in Newport, RI.

Appreciation

Thanks to Steve Maley for mowing and home maintenance; to Lyn Jacobs, Doug Smith, Emily Johnson and the Genesee Land Trust, and Allyn's Creek Garden Club for their help with habitat maintenance; to Allen Nash for spreading woodchips on our trails; and to Jeanne Verhulst for helping with data entry. Much appreciation goes to all our faithful volunteers: Bob Ames, John Boettcher, Erin Bruce, Jane Capellupo, Mark Catlin, Don Cowley, Marilyn Guenther, Kathy Habgood, Gary Herbert, Mindy Hettler, Brian Lazoration, John Lehr, Chita McKinney, Shirley Meston, Danica Metlay, William Norton, Terry Perry, the Podulka family, Rosemary Reilly, Jesse Roberts, Patrick Royce, Jim Saller, Lee Schofield, Dominic Sherony, Ruth Stork, Alice VandeMoere, Tom Verhulst, Bella and Cici Weber, and Willem Windig. A special thank you goes to Bill Kaiser,

Nancy Britton and The Genesee Land Trust for permission to band on their land.

Ryan Kayhart was our spring Research Assistant and Jenna Holzschuh our Field Assistant. Banding was done by licensed banders Ann Adams, David Bonter, Elizabeth Brooks, Mark Deutschlander, Kelly Dockery, Jon Dombrowski, Erin Karnatz, Ryan Kayhart, Peggy Keller, Marian Klik, Tom Klotzbach, Cindy Marino, Dave Mathiason, Susan Smith Pagano, Andrea Patterson, Emily Patterson, Doug Smith, and John Waud. Banding assistants were Claire Buck, Virginia Duffy, Charley Eiseman, Gayle Lazoration, Katie Little, Pat Lovallo, Pat Martin, Maggie MacNeil, Ann Nash, Meghan Oberkircher, Leanna Twohig, Alison Van Keuren, Karen Velas, Barb Wagner and Aggie Windig.

- Compiled by Betsy Brooks and Ryan Kayhart



Left page: Spring Bander Training Class, from left to right: Parker, Miranda, Darlene, Dena, Betsy, Kit, Andrea, Annie, and Greg. Photo by Ryan Kayhart.

Right page. Top: Common Grackle. Photo by Ryan Kayhart. Bottom: Summer Teen Bander Training Class, from left to right: Shayna and Claire. Photo by Andrea Patterson.



Birds banded during Spring 2014 include a quartet of Vireos: Blue-headed, Warbling, Philadelphia and Red-eyed. Photos by Ryan Kayhart.

*"Traill's" Flycatcher includes both Willow Flycatcher and Alder Flycatcher. These species are difficult to distinguish from one another except by their calls.

Sharp-shinned Hawk	10	Black-and-white Warbler	36
American Woodcock	1	Tennessee Warbler	16
Mourning Dove	1	Orange-crowned Warbler	4
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	1	Nashville Warbler	45
Black-billed Cuckoo	4	Mourning Warbler	17
Great Horned Owl	1	Common Yellowthroat	162
Northern Saw-whet Owl	24	Hooded Warbler	10
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	79	American Redstart	219
Red-bellied Woodpecker	1	Cape May Warbler	1
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	Northern Parula	6
Downy Woodpecker	1	Magnolia Warbler	379
Yellow-shafted Flicker	1	Bay-breasted Warbler	8
American Kestrel	1	Blackburnian Warbler	3
Eastern Wood Pewee	2	Yellow Warbler	154
Yellow-bellied Flycatcher	38	Chestnut-sided Warbler	79
Traill's Flycatcher	97	Blackpoll Warbler	14
Least Flycatcher	46	Black-throated Blue Warbler	79
Eastern Phoebe	2	Western Palm Warbler	155
Great-crested Flycatcher	1	Yellow Palm Warbler	9
Blue-headed Vireo	5	Pine Warbler	2
Warbling Vireo	6	Yellow-rumped Warbler	209
Philadelphia Vireo	3	Black-throated Green Warbler	15
Red-eyed Vireo	42	Canada Warbler	52
Blue Jay	26	Wilson's Warbler	140
Black-capped Chickadee	5	Eastern Towhee	7
Brown Creeper	64	American Tree Sparrow	3
House Wren	16	Chipping Sparrow	4
Winter Wren	19	Field Sparrow	9
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	39	Fox Sparrow	6
Golden-crowned Kinglet	88	Song Sparrow	39
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	287	Lincoln's Sparrow	39
Veery	7	Swamp Sparrow	32
Gray-cheeked Thrush	8	White-throated Sparrow	159
Gray-ch. / Bicknell's Thrush	3	White-crowned Sparrow	21
Swainson's Thrush	54	Dark-eyed Junco	16
Hermit Thrush	54	Northern Cardinal	8
Wood Thrush	15	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	5
American Robin	36	Indigo Bunting	17
Gray Catbird	300	Red-winged Blackbird	13
Brown Thrasher	12	Rusty Blackbird	3
Cedar Waxwing	18	Common Grackle	14
Ovenbird	17	Brown-headed Cowbird	1
Northern Waterthrush	47	Baltimore Oriole	14
Golden-winged Warbler	1	Purple Finch	2
Blue-winged Warbler	6	American Goldfinch	52
Brewster's Warbler	1	House Sparrow	2

Photos on right page. Top: Some of the bird bags lovingly made by Marilyn Guenther. Photo by Andrea Patterson. Center: Marilyn demonstrates net-picking during a Chickadee fallout day. Photo by Kathy Habgood. Bottom: Ruby-throated Hummingbird. Photo by Ryan Kayhart.



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT MARILYN GUENTHER

The Volunteer Spotlight shines on MARILYN GUENTHER!

Marilyn Guenther became a volunteer at K-MB in spring 2001. This fall will be her 28th season as a net-picker, tireless and patient teacher of new net-pickers, inspired creator of information boards, and ambassador of the latest information about good health – how to get it and keep it!

But wait! We haven't even mentioned the more than 1100 bird bags she has made! Do you know that BBBO is the envy of every other banding station? No other station has our supply of thoughtfully designed and beautifully made bags in two sizes, with lovingly sewn French-seams inside so there are no loose threads for birds to catch their toes in!

Marilyn started teaching in Batavia, then in the Syracuse area so she could get her Masters' degree at Syracuse University, and she finally landed in Rush-Henrietta. She taught Home Economics in middle and high schools for 35 years. She is currently the Chair of the Gardening Committee at her condo, and she does lots of quilting, making wall-hangings and quilts for friends and relatives. During the summer, she monitors bluebird boxes at Genesee Country Museum and in the winter she does cross-country skiing (she taught downhill skiing at Swain for 15+ winters).

For everything you do for BBBO, thank you Marilyn!



Have you noticed we've been banding more Ruby-throated Hummingbirds lately? It isn't because there are more of them around . . . it's because we have a new permitted hummingbird bander!

Research Assistant Ryan Kayhart recently received a sub-permit under Master Bander Ann Adams. Ryan trained in West Virginia under Bob Sargent, and then spent several seasons honing his skills under the watchful eye of Ann, Ember Jandebaur, and Erin Karnatz. Hummingbird banding differs from regular passerine banding in that the bander must actually make the bands, different measurements are taken, and - of course - the birds are smaller!

Congratulations to Ryan on this fantastic accomplishment!

Has your membership expired?

If so, this may be your last issue of *The Marsh Wren*. Please check your membership status by finding the expiration date printed on the mailing label below. Memberships expire at the end of the year printed. To join BBBO, please mail a check to:

Braddock Bay Bird Observatory
PO Box 12876
Rochester, NY 14612

Membership categories are: Student \$15, Individual \$25, Family \$30, Contributing \$100, Corporate \$250. Thank you for your support!

BRADDOCK BAY BIRD OBSERVATORY

A non-profit (501(c)(3)) organization dedicated to ornithological research, education, and conservation. The organization is operated entirely by volunteers, and financially supported by our members.

BBBO Officers and Advisers:

President David Mathiason; *Vice-President* Susan Smith Pagano; *Treasurer* Chita McKinney; *Secretary* Linda Boutwell; *Directors* Matthew Belanger, David Bonter, Elizabeth Brooks, Mark Deutschlander, Richard Marx, Andrea Patterson, and John Waud. For a complete list of committees and committee memberships, visit our web site.

Photo of Great Horned Owl (cover) and Black-billed Cuckoo (below) by Andrea Patterson. Newsletter editing by Andrea Patterson.

Keep an eye out for your membership renewal letter!



The Marsh Wren
Braddock Bay Bird Observatory
PO Box 12876
Rochester, NY 14612