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Lester and Monique Anderson
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Dear Lester and Monique,

Barry and I were touched that you recalled my comment at our latest CHEP gathering at the Wells barn about your gorgeous Allium flowers. We have now planted the bulbs you've given us. Fortuitously, we just expanded our flower beds slightly. Your bulbs will make a splendid addition in the new site and elsewhere. Many thanks.

Here are the CHEP bird monitoring data for 2007. I provided Steve Faccio of VINS with a copy of the raw data for their files and analysis shortly after Barry and I did the transects in June, but I wanted to do some of my own analysis of the first ten years of CHEP bird data, and so I'm afraid I've put off getting this letter to you until now.

We monitor five points twice annually in June along the old road that Monique reclaimed some years ago, running from the lower end of the Guthrie-Bancroft fields down to Route 17. The points are roughly 250 meters apart and at least that distance from the forest edge. As you recall, the intent of the VINS Forest Bird Monitoring Program, of which the CHEP transect is one of 25 or so across the state, is to provide long-term data on forest interior bird species, a group not well covered by other long-term surveys, such as the Breeding Bird Survey, which is largely road-based and doesn't get into forest interiors.

The old road from Guthrie-Bancroft fields to Route 17 passes through some wet woods with saturated soils, occasional standing water, relatively small trees due to frequent wind throw, and a relatively thick understory. Point 1 is just northeast of this wet area. Usually we record a species or two that utilizes this wet habitat but does not occur elsewhere along the transect. Canada Warbler and White-throated Sparrow fit this pattern. They have each been recorded on 70 percent of our point counts, but only at point 1.

We have recorded several species only once or twice. These include Pileated Woodpecker, Tufted Titmouse, Brown-headed Cowbird, Purple Finch, Mourning Dove, Ruffed Grouse, Black-billed Cuckoo, Common Raven, Yellow-throated Vireo, Warbling Vireo, Common Yellowthroat, American Goldfinch. The first four

we recorded on the transect for the first time this year. Of these, the only one likely to be seen regularly in the future is Tufted Titmouse, a forest breeder that has moved up from farther south and is now increasingly well established in Addison County forests and yards.

We might add to this list several birds we have seen quite irregularly (4-7 times). These include Great Crested Flycatcher, Baltimore Oriole, Blackburnian Warbler and Magnolia Warbler. These are forest birds that prefer a different habitat than Guthrie-Bancroft offers. These birds may best be considered exploratory, looking for new sites in different areas than they usually occupy, and they usually don't return.

There are differences between the five observation points in the number of species recorded. Thusfar, out of the 41 species found on the transect we have identified 29 species at point 1, 27 at point 2, 26 at point 3, 24 at point 4, and 17 at point 5. Why species diversity decreases as elevation decreases is not at all clear, but the marked difference suggests that more than chance is responsible for this pattern.

I looked at the occurrence of species over time by comparing species composition during 1998-2002 with composition during 2003-2007. Either no pattern exists or, if it does, it is too subtle for my eye. The one possible exception is Rose-breasted Grosbeak, seen at 13 points during the first five years and 20 during the second five years. This strikes me as a greater difference than chance would allow, and this is a species that is increasing its population in the East, so it is not too surprising it appears to be becoming more plentiful at Guthrie-Bancroft. As time progresses more differences in species composition may become apparent.

I looked at the likelihood of occurrence of various species at the five sampling points. Some species show a distinct preference for some sites; others don't. Here is a summary of species' preferences.

Yellow-bellied Sapsucker: Occurrence ranges from 50 percent to 90 percent of point counts at all points.

Eastern Wood Pewee: Not seen at point 1, increasing gradually to 90 percent occurrence at point 5. This is the only species that is most abundant at point 5.

Least Flycatcher: Occurrence ranges from 50 to 90 percent of all point counts.

Blue Jay: 70 percent occurrence at point 1 down to 0 percent at point 4 and 10 percent at point 5.

Black-capped Chickadee: 70 percent at point 1, occurs least at points 3 and 4 (10 percent each).

Brown Creeper: 40 percent at point 1, 20 percent at point 2, none elsewhere.

Winter Wren: 30-50 percent at each of 1-4, 0 at point 5.

Veery: 50-80 percent at each point.

Hermit Thrush: 70 percent at point 1, decreasing to 20 percent at point 5.

Wood Thrush: 30 percent at Point 1, then 50-80 percent at others, reaching peak at point 4.

American Robin: Observed uniformly at all points 70-90 percent.

Red-eyed Vireo: Observed uniformly at all points 80-90 percent.

Black-throated Green Warbler: fewest at point 1 (20 percent), otherwise 50-60 percent.

American Redstart: 0 at points 1 and 5, 80 percent at point 3.

Ovenbird: 100 percent at all points. The most frequently recorded species.

Scarlet Tanager: 40-60 percent at all points.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: 40-80 percent at all points.

These data suggest fairly pronounced distributional preferences at one or two points for Eastern Wood Pewee, Blue Jay, Black-capped Chickadee, Brown Creeper, Hermit Thrush, American Redstart, Canada Warbler and White-throated Sparrow. By contrast, Least Flycatcher and Winter Wren avoided one point but were seen equally frequently at the other four. Veery, Wood Thrush, American Robin, Blue-headed Vireo, Red-eyed Vireo, Ovenbird, Scarlet Tanager and Rose-breasted Grosbeak showed no pattern of distribution preference, occurring at one point as frequently as another. The cause of these patterns is elusive. It will be instructive to see if they persist over time, or if some of them are artifacts of a relatively small sample size.

Attached is a set of the 2007 data for your files.

All best wishes,


Warren King

Cc: Susannah McCandless ✓
Marc Lapin

2007 CHEP Bird Monitoring Data

<u>Point</u>	<u>Species</u>	<u>06-07-07</u>	<u>06-18-07</u>
1	Downy Woodpecker		1
	Blue Jay		1
	American Crow	1	
	Black-capped Chickadee	1	2
	Red-breasted Nuthatch	1	1
	American Robin		1
	Red-eyed Vireo	2	1
	Black-throated Blue Warbler	1	1
	Black-throated green Warbler		1
	Ovenbird	3	3
	Canada Warbler	1	
	Scarlet Tanager	1	1
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak		1
	White-throated Sparrow		1
	Brown-headed Cowbird		1
Purple Finch	1		
2	Mourning Dove	1	
	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	2
	Downy Woodpecker	2	
	Eastern Wood Pewee	1	
	Least Flycatcher		1
	Blue Jay		1
	White-breasted Nuthatch		1
	Veery	1	
	Hermit Thrush	1	
	Wood Thrush	1	2
	American Robin	1	1
	Red-eyed Vireo	2	2
	Ovenbird	2	4
	Scarlet Tanager		1
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak		1
3	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	1
	Hairy Woodpecker	1	1
	Pileated Woodpecker		1
	Eastern Wood Pewee	1	
	Blue Jay	1	
	American Crow	1	
	Veery		2
	Wood Thrush	1	

	American Robin	1	
	Red-eyed Vireo	2	
	Black-throated Green Warbler		1
	American Redstart	2	2
	Ovenbird	2	1
	Scarlet Tanager	1	
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	1
4	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1
	Eastern Wood Pewee	1	1
	American Crow		1
	Tufted Titmouse	1	
	Veery	1	2
	Hermit Thrush		1
	Wood Thrush		1
	American Robin	1	2
	Blue-headed Vireo	1	
	Red-eyed Vireo	2	
	Black-throated Green Warbler		1
	Ovenbird	1	3
	Rose-breasted Grosbeak	1	
5	Yellow-bellied Sapsucker	1	3
	Downy Woodpecker		1
	Eastern Wood Pewee	1	1
	Least Flycatcher	1	
	Blue Jay	1	
	American Crow		1
	American Robin	2	3
	Red-eyed Vireo	1	
	Black-throated Green Warbler	1	
	Ovenbird		1
	Scarlet Tanager	1	1