

Warren King  
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Lester Anderson  
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12 September 2014

Dear Lester,

Time has slipped away, and I find that I have not looked at the forest bird monitoring data since Barry and I made our two visits this June. This was the seventeenth year of monitoring birds along the old road that angles down to Route 17 from the northwest corner of the Guthrie-Bancroft fields. We monitored on 5 June and 20 June, both fine but chilly mornings without clouds or wind. We start early, between 5 and 5:15 am, to take advantage of the daily period birds are most active and vocal, and we are done by about 6:30 am.

I find that my hearing, never very good, has deteriorated to the point that Barry, who still hears quite well, has taken the lead in identifying the species we encounter for several years now. Even with hearing aids cranked up fully I miss many of the more distant songsters she still picks up. Recent studies have shown that the age of observers is a major factor in the quality of the data gathered in point count studies of the sort we are conducting. The time has come for us to start looking for a replacement set of ears to ensure that the data continue to be of value. We will, of course, continue until we have recruited someone and he or she is ready to make a multiyear commitment.

We identified 22 species during our two sessions this year, one more than last year but one less than the 17-year average. We had no new species this year. The total count for the study remains at 46 species, and the Guthrie-Bancroft property at 64 species. All six of the species that we have recorded every year, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, Eastern Wood Pewee, Veery, Red-eyed Vireo, Black-throated Blue Warbler and Ovenbird, were represented this year. Ovenbird, a vociferous ground-nesting thrush-like warbler, is the only species we have recorded every visit every year. Its loud "teacher teacher teacher" is hard to miss.

The second visit usually produces slightly fewer species than the first visit. This year we found 17 species on the first visit and 16 on the second. Eleven species, half of the total, were found on both visits.

Of the five monitoring points, 1 through 5, point 1 is closest to the Guthrie-Bancroft fields, point 5 closest to Route 17. The points yielded 8, 12, 13, 9 and 8

species respectively. This compares with the average number of species per point from the "Summary of Bird Research 1998-2009" of 13.8, 11.8, 13.1, 10.3 and 8.6, after having discounted "vagrant" species that have only appeared once or twice along the transect. The major discrepancy is with point #1, which produced significantly fewer species than the 12-year average, whereas the other four points were much closer to the average. Next year will be our 18<sup>th</sup> year, and I'll look at differences, if any, in distribution and abundance between species in the first, second and third 6-year time spans.

We recorded a Winter Wren at point #3, 14 years after the last time we had a Winter Wren there. No Winter Wrens were observed from 2009 to 2012; we had one at point #2 last year. Between 1998 and 2000 we had Winter Wrens multiple times along the transect, but since 2000 they have appeared far less frequently, only once a year or not at all. *The Vermont Breeding Bird Atlas*, second edition, notes a statewide increase in this species during the 25-year period between the first and second editions. The presumed reason for the increase, the gradual aging of Vermont's forests, doesn't seem to apply to the Bancroft Forest birds.

Several species show distinct "preferences" or "aversions" for individual points. Eastern Wood Pewee, one of the 17-year regulars, appeared at all points but #1, the point closest to the Guthrie-Bancroft fields, and the wettest of the five points. Least Flycatcher, a species that will likely no longer come to the transect as the forest ages, was still present this year at point #3, the point where it has been observed most frequently in past years. Once again, Black-throated Green Warbler was recorded at point #2, where it has occurred most consistently. Similarly, American Redstart occurred at points #3 and #4, the two points where it has occurred most frequently in past years.

As is the case most years, we identify one or more species as we walk between points or between the first point and our car. Two such species, neither of which we have recorded at a point count, were heard this year. We have heard Louisiana Waterthrush singing several years now in ideal habitat for the species near the bottom of the old road near Route 17 along the steep rocky stream that has carved the gorge that Route 17 follows or along the equally steep tributary that joins the stream where we park. A Black-and-white Warbler, which gleans insects from the trunks of mature trees like a nuthatch, was seen just below point #5. It may well be heard or seen at a point along the transect in the future. This year we also heard a Common Raven some distance away as we walked between points #1 and #2. We had heard Common Raven in 2006 and 2012, both at point #1.

I'm pleased to report that the Vermont Center for Ecostudies, which organizes the Forest Bird Monitoring Program, of which the CHEP forest bird transect has been a part for 17 years, has embarked on a major data analysis of the data from the 31 Forest Bird Monitoring Program transects across the state. The oldest transects, about half of the total, date from 1989. Ours is a relative newcomer at

17 years, but it still contributes significantly to the robust statistical strength of the body of data that has been generated. We look forward to the results of the analysis in a year or two.

Lester, Barry and I are sorry not to have attended your photography exhibit in Bristol. It's been a full, sometimes challenging summer that has prevented us from undertaking a number of things we had intended. We did see a selection of your photographs at the gathering at the Wells house earlier this year, which was quite a treat, and we will have to imagine the impact of the exhibit.

All best wishes,

*Warren*

Warren King

Cc: Mark Lapin  
David Brynn ✓  
Sandra Murphy

Site Name: Barnett Woods

Date: 06-05-2014 Series: 1

Observer: Barry King, Warren King

Initials: WBK

Start Time	Point #	Species	Time Bin	0 to 50m	> 50m
0515	5	1. BLTA	BC		C
		2. REVI	A	S	
		3. OVEN	BC		S
		4. REVI	BB	S	
		5. HETH	A	S	
		6. SCTA	A	S	
		7. CHIP	BC	I	
0535	4	8. VEER	BB	S	
		9. HETH	A	S	
		10. AMRE	BC	S	
		11. BAOR	A	S	
		12. REVI	BB	S	
		13. REVI	A	S	
		14. AMRO	BB	S	
		15. OVEN	A	S	
0552	3	16. VEER	A	S	
		17. VEER	A		S
		18. WIWR	BC		S
		19. AMRE	A	S	
		20. EAWP	A		S
		21. REVI	A	S	
		22. WOTH	A		S
		23. RBGR	BC		S
		24. AMCR	BB		C
0609	2	25. OVEN	A	S	

Start Time	Point #	Species	Time Bin	0 to 50m	> 50m
		26. REVI	A	S	
		27. AMRO	A	S	
		28. WOTH	A	S	
		29. REVI	A	S	
		30. AMRO	A		S
		31. OVEN	A	S	
		32. WBNU	B	C	
		33. RBNU	C	C	
		34. OVEN	A	S	
		35. BLTA	B	C	
		36. EAWP	B	S	
0624	1	37. REVI	A	S	
		38. WOTH	A	S	
		39. BCLH	A	C	
		40. SCTA	A	S	
		41. REVI	B		S
		42. OVEN	A	S	
		43. OVEN	A		S
		44. REVI	B		S
		45. BCLH	A	C	
		46. HAWO	A	C	
		47. OVEN	C		S
		48.			
		49.			
		50.			

**Codes used for bird occurrence** – Place the appropriate code from the list below in the appropriate distance column

Singing male = S    Calling = C    Drumming = D    Individual seen = I    Family group = F    Active nest = N

**Time Bin** – Place a “A” in the column if bird was detected during first 3 minutes

Place a “B” in the column if bird was detected during minutes 4 or 5 (a “+” on the field card)

Place a “C” in the column if bird was detected during the last 5 minutes (a “•” on the field card)

Site Name: Bancroft Woods

Date: 6-20-14

Series: 2

Observer: Barry King, Waven King

Initials: BSK

Start Time	Point #	Species	Time Bin	0 to 50m	> 50m
0623	1	1. BLTA	A	C	
		2. OVEN	A		S
		3. YBSA	B	F	
		4. CHIP	A		C
		5. WOTH	B		S
		6. OVEN	A	S	
		7. OVEN	C		S
		8. REVI	A	S	
		9. OVEN	A	S	
0608	2	10. OVEN	A	S	
		11. RBGR	A		S
		12. OVEN	A		S
		13. REVI	A		S
		14. HETH	C		S
		15. REVI	A	S	
		16. OVEN	A	S	
		17. BTBW	B		S
		18. BTGW	B	S	
		19. RBNH	A	C	
		20. WOTH	A		S
0552	3	21. RBGR	A	S	
		22. REVI	A		S
		23. OVEN	A	S	
		24. LEFL	A		S
		25. VEER	A		S

Start Time	Point #	Species	Time Bin	0 to 50m	> 50m
		26. BTBW	C	S	
		27. AMRO	C	I	
		28. YBSA	A	C	
		29. SAWP	A	S	
		30. REVI	B		S
0535	4	31. OVEN	C		S
		32. HETH	A		S
		33. AMRE	A	S	
		34. BHVI	C	S	
		35. YBSA	A	D	
		36. OVEN	B		S
		37. REVI	A	S	
		38. OVEN	A	S	
		39. YBSA	C		D
		40. REVI	A		S
		41. SCTA	A	S	
		42. HETH	A	S	
0515	5	43. REVI	A		S
		44. REVI	A		S
		45. OVEN	C	S	
		46. SAWP	C		S
		47. REVI	A	S	
		48. WOTH	A	S	
		49. WOTH	A	S	
		50. YBSA	C		D

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