

Fellow Hummer Lovers

February 4, 2019

I've had the normal January surge since my last update, and now it looks like we will have a decent winter banding season.

January 11, I zipped down to Dothan AL to band a Ruby-throated for Dennis Campbell and to Blakely GA where I was surprised to catch a fifth year return Rufous for Donna and Bobby Gilbert. I started in Mobile January 14 banding a Ruby-throated for Sandra Kerr. Across Mobile Bay in Fairhope, I banded a Rufous for Duane and Betty Miller and then headed down to Magnolia Springs to band a Ruby-throated for Charmaine and Tony Peterman. On the way down, Duane Miller called to tell me he had another Rufous at his feeder, so I went back to Fairhope to band his second Rufous. I had a great start January 15 when I banded my first Calliope of the season at Jan and Ken Taylor's home in Foley. I wish I could catch and document their nine year return Rufous, but there is a reason her name is Nemesis. In Navarre, I banded a Ruby-throated and a Rufous for Larry and Polly Bennett and finished up in Santa Rosa Beach banding a Ruby-throated for Burke Baker.

I started my annual swing through central Florida January 20. First bird of the trip was a great one when, in Alachua at Debra Werner's home, I caught a Rufous that had been banded September 1, 2018 in Covington LA by my friend Nancy Newfield. Down the road in Gainesville, I banded a Rufous and a Ruby-throated for Ron and Elaine Robinson and went across the street to band a Rufous for Tena and Art Greenburg.

I got a good start January 21 in Lakeland banding eight Ruby-throated hummers for Roy and Kat Morris. A little south in Bartow, I banded a Rufous and a Ruby-throated for Cathy and Lloyd Terry. Back in Lakeland, I caught Susan Schenk's second year return Ruby-throated and then banded a Ruby-throated for Mary Boston. I finished up at Joe and Nancy Misiaszek's banding a Ruby-throated and catching two second year return Ruby-throated.

I padded my winter numbers early January 22 at Steve Backes' home in Valrico where I banded twelve Ruby-throated and got photo proof of his fifth year return Rufous. Close by in Dover, I banded two Ruby-throated for Rein Verbeek and headed up to Brooksville to band three Ruby-throated and catch a second year return Ruby-throated for Chris and David Cock. I banded a couple of Ruby-throated for Joe Tripp in Lecanto and went back to Alachua to band two Rufous for Debra Werner.

Pensacola was my first stop January 26 where I banded a Black-chinned for Glenda and Dean Bowman and a Ruby-throated for Jan Lloyd. Across the bridge in Lillian, I banded a Rufous and a Black-chinned for Jim Dickerson and headed to the Fort Morgan Road to band a Black-chinned for Bill Blain. I finished up south of Fairhope banding my fourth Black-chinned of the day for Jamie and Jeff Marston. Last Saturday, February 2, I went back to Dothan to try to catch some hummers that I missed earlier. I was pleased to catch Leonard Gilley's fifth year return Rufous and band a Ruby-throated for Margie Bivins.

I'm not getting new reports, and the first of our western hummers are starting to head west. I'll probably just try to catch some hummers that have eluded me all winter and see if I might be lucky enough to get a few new reports. We will send out a complete report on winter banding in April.

I post pictures of hummers I band on my Face Book page, Fred Bassett, if you would like to see them. In addition, my friend Lew Scharf has posted a video about my winter banding on U Tube. Search for "Tracking Wintering Hummingbirds in the Southeastern U.S." if you would like to see it.

Thanks,  
Fred