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- I will be focusing on COASTAL buffer zones, b/c I do not believe that habitat functions from riparian (freshwater) systems are necessarily applicable to coastal habitats.
- Traditionally, these are the major habitat functions of buffers for birds:
 1. Breeding
 2. Foraging
 3. Cover
- I think coastal buffer zones provide marginal habitat for wildlife if you took a traditional view...but I don't think that we should take that traditional view on this issue.
- If I had to come up with a primary value for coastal buffer zones, I would argue that this is it: a "gathering of angels", the importance of coastal buffer zones for migratory birds.
- We are in the "staging area", where blackpoll warblers congregate prior to migrating.
- There is a well-known phenomenon called "fall-out" of migrants. This is a key feature of coastal buffer zones for these birds, as they fall-out into coastal buffers.
- On the east coast, it is mostly Hatch Year birds (birds that hatched in the past summer) that are migrating through. HY birds are found along coastal areas, but you don't see as many older birds. These birds live only 2-4 years. Many songbirds especially in the east rely on insects and fruits, so I recommend that you use fruit-bearing plants in buffers. They're also trying to maximize energy, so they need high quality food.
- "Edge" habitat: much work shows that migratory songbirds prefer edge habitat, not mature forest, and not grassland.
- Need to consider quality of the habitat as much as the quantity of habitat.
- Consider also long-term perspective for success in buffer policy.
- See Parrish (2000) reference for a list of important species in this region.