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## A Summary of Bird Banding in Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park Area: 1961-1976

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**Family Planning:** Now one happily produced a brain child leads to another, so you need to think about family planning. At the Annual Meeting, ideas were given on how to start various projects. The time to start writing is at the beginning of your new project. Outline your project, and write up your purpose, materials and methods, and background literature before you begin your field work. This way, you are not likely to overlook some detail, or important data that you should be taking to achieve your purpose. Darn! If I had only known to take down the bill color! This won't happen to with planning ahead.

Happy banding! Happy writing!

### **Style manuals & writers' aids**

Army, M.T. & C.R. Reaske. *Ecology: A Writer's Handbook*, with a full glossary of Ecological terms. Random House, New York, 1972.

Committee on Form and Style of the Conference of Biological Editors. *Style Manual for Biological Journals*, 1st Edition. American Institute of Biological Sciences, Washington, D.C., 1960. 2nd Edition 1964.

Committee of Form and Style of the Council of Biology Editors. *CBE Style Manual*, 3rd Edition. American Institute of Biological Sciences, Washington, D.C., 1972

Gunning, Robert. *The Technique of Clear Writing*. McGraw Hill, New York, 1952.

Leggett, G., C.D. Mead and W. Charvat. *Prentice Hall Handbook for Writers*, 5th Edition. Prentice-Hall Inc., Englewood Cliffs, NJ 1970.

Perrin, P.G. *Writer's Guide and Index to English*. Scott, Foresman and Co., Chicago, Ill. 1942.

Woodford, F.P., Editor. *Scientific Writing for Graduate Students, A CBE Manual*. The Rockefeller U. Press, New York, 1968.

### **Graph & figure-making aids**

Chartpak, pressure sensitive graphic tape. Glossy or matte finish. Width 1/32" on sample graph. Avery Products Corp., 1 River Road, Leeds, Mass. 01053. Phone (413) 584-5446.

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E.Z. Letter Quik Stik, pressure lettering, P.O. Box 829, Westminster, MD 21157.

Look in the Yellow Pages under Artist's Supplies or Drafting Supplies for local dealers. Some stationery stores carry these lines. ♦

4 View Point Drive, Hopewell, NJ 08525

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## **A summary of bird banding in Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park area: 1961-1976**

*Allegra Collister*

In the course of a 16-year study of bird life in the Rocky Mountains, a somewhat irregular program of banding has been pursued. Irregular, because my home is in Longmont, Colo., about 35 miles distant from Rocky Mountain National Park. This mountain project was only a small part of a much larger banding program carried on in the Long-

mont area. To facilitate research in the Park I was granted an appointment as a Park Service Collaborator, renewed on an annual basis.

The Park ranges in altitude from approximately 7,500 feet to 14,256 feet at the summit of Longs Peak. Most of the banding reported here was done

in the lower reaches of the Park, where birds are more plentiful. Up to 10 mist nets were used, with only small use made of two-cell and four-cell automatic traps. Except in the traps, there was almost no use of bait to attract birds to banding areas.

Nets were placed in a variety of habitats, including treeless tundra, aspen and ponderosa forests, streamside thickets, and — in early years of banding — near old deserted ranch buildings and corals. Results of banding indicate the presence of an interesting variety of bird species, and show to some extent their abundance or scarcity. Diminishing numbers in later years do not mean that total numbers of the bird population have decreased, but rather reflect less banding activity, with fewer hours devoted to the project.

An important factor affecting the concentration of spring and fall migrants, in the mid-1960's and thereafter, was removal of old ranch buildings that had provided extensive shelter. Birds were probably just as numerous in succeeding years, but were more widely dispersed and hence less available for netting.

Since this was a population study, with interest centered on composition of the Park's avifauna, no attempt was made to weigh and measure each bird — an activity that would have contributed nothing to this particular study.

Of the 263 bird species so far recorded in the region, 98 species were banded during the program. Carefully identified and banded were such rarities in Colorado as Tennessee, Nashville, Magnolia, Black-throated Green, and Palm Warblers, as well as a number of Plains species seldom found at mountain elevations.

It came as no surprise that resident Clark's Nutcrackers provided the greatest numbers of recoveries. It was not uncommon to recover nutcrackers banded 5 and 6 years previously. Of more interest was recovery of a nesting female MacGillivray's Warbler, a species that winters south to Guatemala, 3 years after it was banded in the same area.

Many birds were taken one year after the original banding. Still, it was a pleasant surprise to find that at least three Broad-tailed Hummingbirds returned over hundreds of migratory miles to almost the exact spot where they were banded one year earlier. One of them even made a small contribution to science!

This individual (X6908) had a rosy-red dot on the throat, which might have indicated an immature

male. One year later the red dot was still quite evident, together with typical female plumage, a brood patch, and no doubt as to sex. Roger Tory Peterson commented, "This proves what we have long suspected, that female Broadtails occasionally display a small amount of red on the throat" (commonly noted in plumage of female Anna's).

Following is a list of species and numbers of birds banded in Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park area, 1961 to 1976 inclusive:

4 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Am. Kestrel, 11 White-tailed Ptarmigan, 2 Common Snipe, 3 Spotted Sandpiper, 1 Mourning Dove, 2 Saw-whet Owl, 135 Broad-tailed Hummingbird, 27 Rufous Hummingbird, 41 Common (R-s) Flicker, 1 Lewis' Woodpecker, 96 Yellow-bellied Sapsucker, 16 Hairy Woodpecker, 9 Downy Woodpecker, 15 Willow Flycatcher, 10 Hammond's Flycatcher, 3 Dusky Flycatcher, 20 Western Flycatcher, 3 Empidonax Sp., 25 Western Wood Pewee, 1 Olive-sided Flycatcher, 76 Violet-green Swallow, 47 Tree Swallow, 1 Rough-winged Swallow, 1 Barn Swallow, 11 Cliff Swallow, 9 Gray Jay, 122 Steller's Jay, 26 Black-billed Magpie, 172 Clark's Nutcracker, 9 Black-capped Chickadee, 61 Mountain Chickadee, 15 White-breasted Nuthatch, 19 Red-breasted Nuthatch, 44 Pygmy Nuthatch, 5 Brown Creeper, 35 House Wren, 1 Mockingbird, 1 Gray Catbird, 1 Brown Thrasher, 146 Am. Robin, 8 Hermit Thrush, 6 Swainson's Thrush, 1 Veery, 36 Mountain Bluebird, 3 Townsend's Solitaire, 1 Golden-crowned Kinglet, 29 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 8 Water Pipit, 3 Cedar Waxwing, 4 Solitary Vireo, 1 Red-eyed Vireo, 30 Warbling Vireo, 1 Tennessee Warbler, 83 Orange-crowned Warbler, 3 Nashville Warbler, 11 Virginia's Warbler, 21 Yellow Warbler, 1 Magnolia Warbler, 285 Yellow-rumped Warbler (2 Myrtle, 283 Audubon's), 4 Townsend's Warbler, 1 Black-throated Green Warbler, 1 Palm Warbler, 56 MacGillivray's Warbler, 1 Common Yellowthroat, 250 Wilson's Warbler, 1 Am. Redstart, 10 Red-winged Blackbird, 1 Northern Oriole, 12 Brewer's Blackbird, 39 Western Tanager, 1 Brown-headed Cowbird, 1 Black-headed Grosbeak, 2 Lazuli Bunting, 50 Evening Grosbeak, 32 Cassin's Finch, 2 House Finch, 86 Gray-crowned Rosy Finch, 1 Black-crowned Rosy Finch, 239 Pine Siskin, 1 Am. Goldfinch, 1 Lawrence's Goldfinch, 27 Red Crossbill, 73 Green-tailed Towhee, 44 Savannah Sparrow, 74 Vesper Sparrow, 21 Dark-eyed Junco (1 Slate-colored, 20 Oregon), 328 Gray-headed Junco, 1 Tree Sparrow, 681 Chipping Sparrow, 2 Clay-colored Sparrow, 6 Brewer's Sparrow, 95 White-crowned Sparrow, 2 Fox Sparrow, 170 Lincoln's Sparrow, 35 Song Sparrow. Total: 4,139 individuals of 98 species.

The cooperation of the Park's Interpretive Division, of Dwight Hamilton, Chief Naturalist, and David R. Stevens, Research Biologist, is gratefully acknowledged. ♦

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