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Site tenacity in wintering migrants in Florida

Erma J. Fisk

My banding station at Homestead, Florida operated only sporadically after fall migrations, but enough data accumulated from 1969 to 1978 to make a study of wintering migrants seem worthwhile, if admittedly incomplete.

Seventeen species were taken in at least one winter season after the original banding. Winter is arbitrarily set as 1 December to 15 February to ensure no overlap by late fall migrants or the early February movements which occur with Gray Catbirds (*Dumetalla carolinensis*) and buntings. Birds taken outside these arbitrary dates could be either migrant or wintering, and are listed separately. Indigo Buntings (*Passerina cyanea*) and Gray Catbirds made multiple repeats; Ovenbirds (*Seiurus aurocapillus*) some, and careful records were not kept on these. Painted Buntings (*Passerina ciris*), often recaptured daily, were similarly often not recorded, so the totals of these as "present in the same season" are lower than actual.

Age. Of the three most abundant wintering species: when originally banded, 206 Painted

Buntings (63%) were identified as HY-SY by plumage and/or skull ossification; 90 Indigo Buntings (85%) were similarly classified; 36 Gray Catbirds (70%) were so judged by skull ossification and/or eye and mouth color.

A study of the three most abundant species that repeated in the same winter shows:

Gray Catbirds. Of 37 (6 AHY, 31 SY) birds banded on 3 days from 4-11 January 1976, 31 (30 SY) repeated up to 12 March; 1 bird was taken 8 times.

Indigo Buntings. Of 17 (6 AHY, 11 SY) birds banded on 11 days, 1-18 February 1974, 12 (10 SY) repeated up to 6 March; 1 bird was taken 5 times.

Painted Buntings. Of 35 (2 AHY, 33 SY) banded on 11 days from 11 November to 6 December 1972, 14 (14 SY) repeated to 19 April; 1 bird was taken 5 times.

These records are incomplete.

17101 SW 284 St., Homestead, FL 33030

Table 1. Recaptures

Species	Retaken same season only	Retaken after (in years)									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Sharp-sh Hawk*	4										
Whip-poor-will	1	1		1							
E Phoebe (W)			1								
(M/W)	1										
Least Flycatcher	4										
House Wren (W)	3										
(M/W)		3	4								
G Catbird* (I-W)	9	17	14	6	1		2	2			
(M/W)	9	19	10	3			1				
Herm. Thrush (W)	3	1									
(M/W)		1									
Y-rump Warb*	43	20	7	2	1						
Palm Warbler		1									
Ovenbird* (W)	2	4	5	2							
(M/W)	8	5	1	2		1					
Y-br Chat					1						
N Oriole (Bull)	1	1									
R-b Grosbeak (W)	1	1	1								
(M/W)		1	1	1							
In Buntg* (I-W)	20	35	13	12	5	6	5	2	2		
(M/W)	18	38	13	5	2						
Pd Buntg* (I-W)	26	104	66	46	31	33	1	9	6	1	3
(M/W)*		35	18	5							
Am Goldfinch*		4	4		1						

*See notes

I—Incomplete W—Wintering M/W—Migratory or Wintering

Notes:

Sharp-shinned Hawk: One retaken in 14 days from release 8 miles north; one retaken in 41 days from release 15 miles north; one retaken in 10 days from release 15 miles south; one retaken in 10 days from release 25 miles south.

Gray Catbird: Multiple recaptures to 12 March. Of 10 birds released 2 or more miles distant, 5 (2 adult, 3 immature) were retaken: One in 5 days from 2 miles distant; one in 68 days from 17 miles distant; one 1 year later from 2 miles distant; one 3 years later from 2 miles distant; one 4 years later from 2 miles distant.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Recaptures to 15 March.

Ovenbird: Recaptures to 13 April.

Indigo Bunting: Multiple recaptures, especially in spring, to 14 April.

Painted Bunting: Multiple recaptures to 22 April.

American Goldfinch: Winter season is set as January — March, as winter flocks arrive sporadically, and vary in dates with the years.