

1978

News, Notes, Comments

North American Bird Bander

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More on cowbirds

John H. Kennard

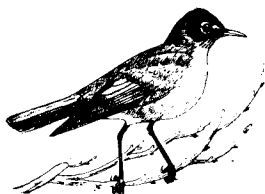
Following my writing of the article, "A method of local limitation of brood parasitism by the Brown-headed Cowbird" (NABB 3:3), I applied for, and received, a permit to color-band Brown-headed Cowbirds. My plan was to color those males, obviously paired and of which I had destroyed the mate, in order to determine — by sight identification — whether such males took on a new mate, either in the same season or later. This bit of research has, so far, been a complete failure.

On 29 April 1978 I had one pair arrive in my feeders, color-banded the male and destroyed the female; I never saw the male again. I later banded two additional single males and retrapped two from last year. I destroyed a total of seven females, all entering my traps singly; six of these had active ovaries.

During the entire season, I did not once observe a male actively pursuing a female, as was common in preceding years.

On 22 June 1978, I observed five cowbirds — all male — in my feeding area. I have noted no evidence of parasitism on my property this year.

I cannot say whether this drop in cowbird population is the result of my previous activity or part of a generalized drop in concentration over a much wider area.



Robins

Rev. Charles R. Long, a Research Associate with the Department of Ornithology of the Ontario Museum wishes cooperators who can take part in a three-year survey of Robins (*Turdus migratorius*) across North America. Further information may be obtained by writing him at 71 Meadowlilly Road, London, Ontario N5W 1B7.

Tern and gull banding

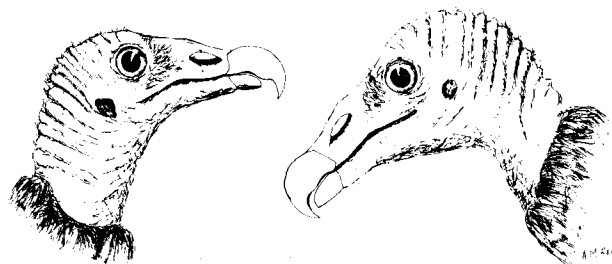
John H. Buckalew

In NABB 3:3 there is a short note on "Techniques for tern and gull banding" by Fred Hosea. Mr. Hosea recommends banding young terns and gulls about the second to third day of the main colony hatch. I have never banded Caspian Terns or Western Gulls, but I have banded thousands of Royal Terns and Laughing Gulls.

In my experience I have found that the best time to band these birds is just before they are capable of flight. This eliminates the loss of 30-40% of the bands used, because the natural loss of young birds is at least equal to this percentage.

To eliminate the running of young Royal Terns, we use a wire pen into which all young of the colony are driven. This method also does away with chasing down each individual bird and is therefore much easier on the legs.

Wallops Island, VA



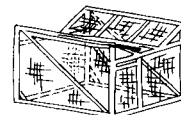
International Symposium of Vultures

Sponsored by the Western Foundation of Vertebrate Zoology, the International Symposium on Vultures will be held 23 to 26 March 1979 at the Santa Barbara (California) Museum of Natural History.

For further information, contact the Museum or Sanford R. Wilbur, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1199 E. Ojai Ave., Ojai, CA 93023 (Tel: 805-646-5455).

Information exchange

Information wanted: Folding traps



I would like to obtain folding bird traps — for space-saving while travelling in field conditions. I would prefer traps of a “frost-free” material, such

as a vinyl-coated wire. Does anyone know of a source for this item? If so, please contact: Janet Hall, Elgin Cove, Alaska 99825.

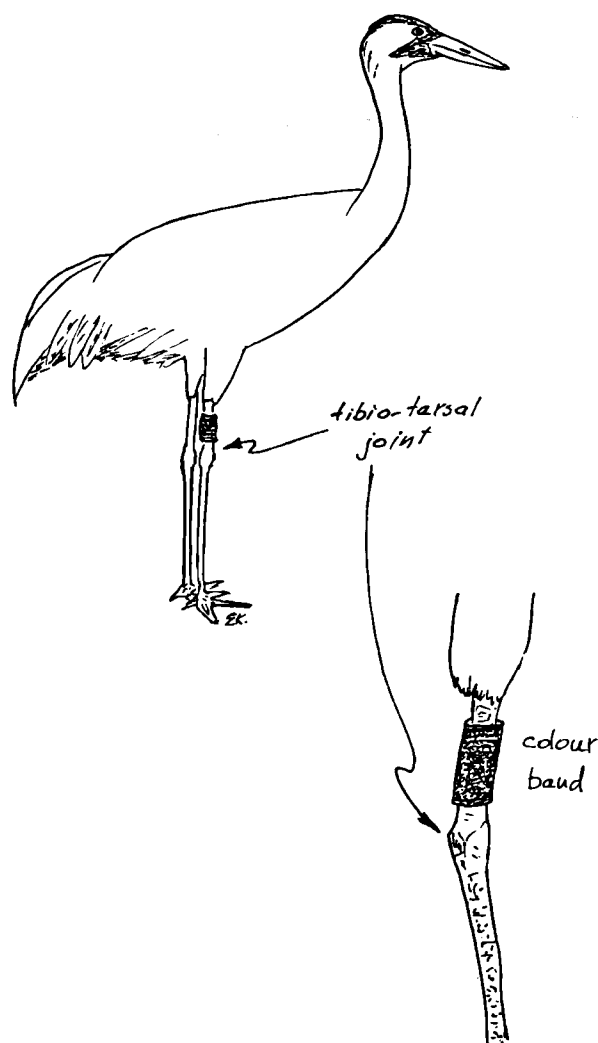
Whooping Crane colour-marking

In 1977, nine juvenile Whooping Cranes were banded with metal leg bands and 75 mm (3 inch) long plastic coloured leg bands. This marks the first time that Whooping Cranes were banded in Canada. In 1978, eight young whoopers were similarly banded.

The purpose of the banding is to learn the age of birds at sexual maturity, fidelity of paired birds to each other and to their nesting territory, age of non-breeding birds observed on or near the breeding range, longevity of wild birds and other information.

Metal bands may be located immediately above the birds' feet or above the tibio-tarsal joint. Colour bands are located above the tibio-tarsal joint and birds may have one or two bands (one band per leg). All cranes banded in 1977 have at least one red band; the second band, if present, may be red, white, blue, or green. All of the 1978 year class birds have one red band (75 mm long) with white horizontal stripe. If a second band is present on the opposite leg, it will be white, blue, or dull orange. Family groups containing banded young can be expected in the northern states during the second half of October. Non-breeding birds, including the yearlings banded in 1977 may move south from one to two weeks earlier.

Observers are asked to look for and report any banded Whooping Crane. Please record place, date of sighting, and location (left or right leg) and colour of bands as well as location of metal band. Please send all reports to: E. Kuyt, Canadian Wildlife Service, #1000, 9942 - 108 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada T5K 2J5, and to the Bird Banding Laboratory, Laurel MD.



Color-banded Snowy Plovers

During the 1978 breeding season at Mono Lake and at Monterey Bay, California, several hundred Snowy Plovers were color-banded by Point Reyes Bird Observatory personnel and volunteers.

Birds were marked with aluminum bands wrapped with colored tape. Each bird has one or two color bands on either the upper or lower leg and each band has two colors. The number of bands, the position of the band(s) on the leg and the position of the colors on each band identify the banding location, the bird's age and its specific identity.

It is hoped that the migratory routes and wintering areas of these birds can be determined. Please help by looking for color bands on any Snowy Plovers you may see.

Please report all sightings to the Bird Banding Laboratory with a copy to Gary W. Page, Point Reyes Bird Observatory, 4990 Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach, CA 94970.

Important: Specify which color(s) are on the top and bottom of each band, on which leg a pair of colors occurs, and the date and location of sighting.

Color-banded herons and egrets

Approximately 300 Black-crowned Night Herons and Snowy Egrets and 50 Great Blue Herons have been color-banded in an effort to insure their survival in the south San Francisco Bay. If you see any of these birds, would you please note: (1) species seen, and location; (2) number of tag (if visible) and color; (3) date and time of observation; (4) behavior of bird (feeding, roosting, flying).

Please send observations to the Bird Banding Laboratory with a copy to Michael Rigney, Avian Biology Laboratory, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA 95192.

