

1982

News, Notes, Comments

North American Bird Bander

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Request for information Color-marked Common Terns

The Canadian Wildlife Service, Ontario Region, is continuing its program of color-marking Common Terns at two colonies in the lower Great Lakes to determine post-breeding dispersal, migration routes, and winter range.

In 1981, adults were marked with orange wing-tags and chicks with pink tags. Many of the adult tagged birds returned to their colonies in 1982 still carrying their tags. The tagged birds appeared fit and nested normally. Most tags were still clearly legible and showed little wear.

In 1982, bright blue tags (with black lettering) were put on adult Common Terns and black tags (with yellow lettering) on chicks just prior to fledging. Tags were put on both wings of all birds. All tags have combinations of letters and numbers (the two tags on any bird have the same combination).

When you observe a tagged tern, would you please report the date, location, color of the tag, and, if possible, the number/letter combination to: Banding Office, Canadian Wildlife Service, Headquarters, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E7. All reports will be acknowledged.

Color marked raptors

For the first time, a cooperative study between raptor banders and observers is taking place on the Kittatinny Ridge in Pennsylvania. All Red-tailed Hawks, Sharp-shinned Hawks, and Broad-winged Hawks captured are being marked with tail tags.

The birds will be marked on one of the central or outer rectrices. The colors being used are red, blue, yellow, and orange.

If anyone should see such a marked bird, please note the date, location, color and tail position of the marker.

Letters detailing sightings should be sent to the BBL and Seth Benz, c/o Hawk Mountain Sanctuary, Route 2, Kempton, PA 19529. Sightings may also be reported by telephone to Seth Benz, 215-756-6961; David Fluri, 215-295-0223; or Paul Karner, 215-588-4491.

Distribution of the Ruby-crowned Kinglet in winter

Of the approximately 140 transient and wintering Ruby-crowned Kinglets which I captured and banded in Tallahassee since 1967, only about 25% were males. It appears that most males stay north of us, and it is possible that they become even more scarce farther south.

After learning from R.C. Leberman that female and male Ruby-crowned Kinglets are approximately equally abundant as migrants through the Powdermill Nature Reserve (Rector, PA), I have become interested in mapping the winter distribution pattern for at least the eastern U.S. . . I would appreciate receiving relevant banding records from banders who wish to contribute to this effort.

Peter H. Homann
117 Ridgeland Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32312

Significant Encounter

Black-capped Chickadee. 1440-68918. Banded at Sorrento, Maine by William Townsend on 30 September 1980. Re-encountered three miles south of Rector, PA, 11 November 1980. This was a southwest movement of 470+ km in 42 days.



Correction

In "Significant encounters with banded birds", N.A. B.B. 6(3):124, the entry for Peregrine Falcon #987-47120 should read as follows: "Peregrine Falcon. 987-47120 (replaced by 816-36701). Banded as L-M by U.S.F.W.S. Office of Endangered Species near Nulato, AK on 11 July 1980. Found on road in Skagit Co., WA. . ."

M.H.B.

News, Notes, Comments

Turkey Vulture Study Project

Edmund H. Henckel

(Reprinted with permission from the *Vulture Watcher* May 1982 — a publication of the Vulture Study Group as a supplement to *Vulture News*.)

My study project started some 15 years ago at a summer roost of Turkey Vultures (*Cathartes aura*), to determine: roost population, annual utilization by the same population, daily foraging range and extent of migration. An age study was done on captive birds.

The roost population fluctuated from 40 to over 100 and has been in use for at least 60 years. Other roosts in later studies also proved to be historic. Fidelity to an area is strong. Highway construction did not disperse the birds, although there was some readjustment. At another roost, a new housing project did cause dispersal, but for only a short distance. All areas proved to have both primary and secondary roosts. Secondary roosts, such as wooded hills, water towers and cliffs, were used for preening, socializing (?) and absorbing the last rays of sun before settling into the primary roost for the night. The latter afforded more protection from the weather and were usually some type of conifers.

A successful trap was developed, a walk-in cage with a funnel entrance, 10 ft. square x 6 ft. high, covered with 4 in. braided nylon netting. As many as 12 vultures a day were trapped. Days of rain or fog produced the most catches. Re-trapped birds showed damage to the legs caused by the aluminum U.S.F. & W.S. bands. The excrement running down the leg was entrapped by the band and the encrustation restricted circulation to the foot. Larger bands did not solve the problem and the Bird Banding Laboratory ordered leg banding of all Black and Turkey Vultures to cease. I have tested, and proved safe, a new type of band and am now awaiting approval of its use.

Wing tagging was accomplished using a red nylon flagging with black letters and numbers, wrapped around mid-humerus and secured with aluminum pop-rivets and numbered washers. Study life of the tags was at least 4 years.

Sighting reports and band returns showed a migration that ranged from 50 to 1300 miles. Daily foraging range averaged 25 miles.

A biopsy done on the facial warts has proved that they are not an age characteristic, but caused by a fungus picked up [when the birds were] feeding on decaying carrion.

A means of aging the Turkey Vulture from hatching year to after the 3rd year has been developed by the use of beak coloration.

Four nesting sites within a 200-acre area were also studied.

The study roost and study area has been designated as the first U.S. Vulture Preserve and posted as such.

(Further notes on the Vulture Study Group have appeared in *NABB* 1:126, 2:129, and 6:106.)



San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory

On 1 September 1982, the South Bay Institute for Avian Studies became the San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory. Offices are located in the San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge's historic Bayside Cannery Building in Alviso, California. A principal concern of SFBBO will be to increase our understanding of the role of greater San Francisco Bay, including its surrounding mudflats and marshes, in the survival of the millions of water-related birds which annually migrate to and through central coastal California. Plans also call for a strong landbird program adjacent to the Bay and in the surrounding mountains and valleys.

Studies and projects already in progress include: (1) long-term investigations of colonial nesting Great Blue Herons, Snowy Egrets, Black-crowned Night Herons, Caspian and Least Terns, and a newly-established colony of California Gulls — the first known colony in the coastal zone; (2) the use by birds (e.g. the colonial nesters plus American Avocets, Black-necked Stilts, Snowy Plovers, etc.) and mammals (e.g. Harbor Seals and Salt Marsh Harvest Mice) of man-made substrates (e.g. dikes and spoils islands); and (3) a study of avian botulism as it relates to treated sewage effluent in a tidal slough.

The San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory is incorporated as a non-profit membership organization which not only welcomes but depends upon volunteers from all walks of life to accomplish its short-term and long-term goals. A small salaried staff coordinates the activities of volunteers, as well as investigators and students from colleges, universities, public agencies, and industry. Mr. Michael Rigney is Executive Director and Ms. Julie Klingmann is Research Director.

Fiscally, SFBBO will depend upon dues and contributions from its memberships, grants and contracts from public and private agencies, and we hope, a growing endowment fund. Members may participate in Observatory projects as well as use Observatory facilities for projects of their own design. Members will receive the Newsletter quarterly.

Membership Classifications

Student (Senior).	\$10 annually
Regular.	\$15 annually
Family.	\$20 annually
Non-profit Organization.	\$30 annually
Contributing.	\$100 annually
Sustaining.	\$200 annually
Life Member.	\$400*
Patron.	\$2000*
Corporate.	\$500 annually

*Single payment is placed in an endowment fund.

Membership payments beyond \$10 and all other contributions are deductible from Federal and California income taxes. Memberships, contributions, and requests for further information may be mailed to San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory, Box 247, Alviso, CA 95002. The SFBBO Alviso office telephone number is (408) 946-6548.

L. Richard Mewaldt

Dark-eyed Junco X White-throated Sparrow

In January 1979 I received a call from a birder who had spotted an unusual bird at his feeders. He thought it looked like a cross between a Dark-eyed Junco and a White-throated Sparrow. The bird didn't stay long and soon was forgotten. But then in February 1980 the strange bird appeared again at the feeders. We attempted to trap it and finally, on March 26, it ventured into a Potter Trap.

Upon close examination we concluded it was a hybrid between a Dark-eyed Junco and a White-throated Sparrow. Its habit of biting our fingers and its vocalizations were identical to a White-throated Sparrow. It had a slate gray head, with two black lines — one on each side of its crown — like the dark lines on a White-throated Sparrow. It had a pinkish bill and garnet red eyes. It had a perfectly-marked white throat on a slate gray breast with white abdomen and under tail coverts. The tail was gray with the outer rectrices being 60% white coloration and the next rectrix 25% white. The wings had the exact marking and coloration of a White-throated Sparrow and contrasted with the gray back and rump. The legs were pinkish-flesh in color. Wing measurement was 78 mm, tail 73 mm, bill 11 mm, tarsus 22 mm. We applied band #1540-15478 (size 0) and released him. We had some thoughts of keeping him for a study specimen, but we decided to release him. He was appropriately named "Spunco."

Late in the afternoon on 21 April 1981, a bird with all the characteristics of Spunco appeared in the driveway. The next day he was at the feeders, wearing his Fish & Wildlife Service band. There was no doubt — Spunco had returned.

To our surprise and delight, on 3 January 1982, Spunco again returned to his winter home. He was still wearing his band which had darkened with age. He spent many weeks at the feeder and then presumably moved on to his summer home.

These hybrids are uncommon and believed to have a short lifespan. I am happy he was banded and released, because he has proved to be an interesting individual. We will be watching next year to see if Spunco returns.

Elaine Mease
R.D.#1, Box 436A
Hellertown, PA. (403-0752)



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XIX Congressus Internationalis Ornithologicus

First Announcement

At the XVIII International Ornithological Congress in Moscow, the International Ornithological Committee accepted the invitation of the National Museum of Natural Sciences of Canada and of the Canadian ornithological community to hold the XIX Congress in Canada. The Congress will be held in Ottawa, Canada, from 22-29 June 1986. It elected Dr. Prof. Klaus Immelmann (West Germany) as President of the Congress. Dr. Henri Ouellet (Canada) was designated as Secretary-General.

Details about the general and scientific programs, field excursions, and other activities during the Congress will be available later.

Those interested in participating in the Congress are urged to inform the Secretariat in order to obtain announcements and application forms. Correspondence should be addressed to The Secretary-General, Dr. Henri Ouellet, XIX Congressus Internationalis Ornithologicus, National Museum of Natural Sciences, National Museums of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0M8.

Burrowing Owl color-marking: Request for information

In 1982, Burrowing Owls were color-marked in south-central Saskatchewan during a research program investigating movements of these owls during the breeding season. Information is requested from anyone seeing a color-marked owl — to aid in determining migration routes and wintering areas, which are presently unknown. Each owl carries a Fish and Wildlife Service band and from 1 to 3 colored plastic leg jesses. Jess colors are yellow, fluorescent red, light blue, and dark green and are 1 cm wide and extend approximately 1.5 cm beyond the leg.

If you observe color-marked owls, please record the following: location, date, color and position of leg jess or jesses, leg of attachment of metal leg band and jess or jesses, and any details of the owl's situation. Send this information to: Bird Banding Office, Canadian Wildlife Service, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada K1A 0E7, plus additional copies to the BBL and to the bander: Elizabeth A.

Haug, Dept. of Veterinary Anatomy, University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7N 0W0. Thank you for your assistance.

Note: Owls were banded with colored leg jesses in Saskatchewan and with colored bands in Manitoba. Please note this difference if marked birds are seen.



New publication

Ithaca, N.Y. Cornell University's Laboratory of Ornithology has begun publication of a new magazine devoted to the study of birds, *The Living Bird Quarterly*.

Color-illustrated and directed toward everyone with an interest in birds, the quarterly will feature articles and photographs on bird behavior, habitat, conservation, art and research, and will be international in scope. The first issue, for example, contains articles on the reproductive success of songbirds, the conservation efforts of the International Crane Foundation, the restoration to the Maine coast of the Atlantic puffin population, and a direct-from-life color painting and story by artist and author George Miksch Sutton.

In addition to articles written by professional writers and ornithologists, the laboratory will encourage amateur "birders" to contribute. This is part of the larger mission and tradition of the Laboratory of Ornithology — to act as liaison between the amateur and professional ornithologist and to encourage people's interest and increase their knowledge of living birds.

The quarterly, which began publication in July, will be sent to laboratory members and will replace its annual publication, *The Living Bird*.

The Laboratory of Ornithology is the only recognized institution of its kind in the world. It was founded in 1957 by eminent ornithologist and photographer Arthur A. Allen and pioneer bird sound recordist Peter Paul Kellogg.

More information on the quarterly and other activities of the laboratory can be obtained by writing: Laboratory of Ornithology, Sapsucker Woods, Ithaca, NY 14850. Telephone (607) 256-5056.

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Earthwatch Expeditions

Earthwatch is a non-profit organization that recruits interested amateurs to join prominent scholars and fund research expeditions all over the world. Since 1971 it has arranged for more than 5,500 people to help out on expeditions in 30 states and 55 countries. More than 80 projects will be sponsored this coming year.

Each of the following ornithological expeditions has spaces for volunteers. No past experience is necessary — just a willingness to learn and to share the tax-deductible costs of the expedition. Volunteers will be working side by side with professionals, seeking solutions, exploring frontiers of knowledge — part of a team cooperating to get the job done.

SEABIRD COLONIZATION

Richard H. Podolsky

Site: Kilauea Point, Kauai, Hawaii

6-18 March 1983

27 March-8 April 1983

17-29 April 1983

Before Laysan Albatrosses return in late November volunteers will clear experimental and control sites, place albatross decoys in typical courtship postures, set up taped courtship vocalizations, and provide nesting material (Phase I). After the albatrosses arrive, teams will keep track of prospecting and settling "bachelor" males and pairs, watch nests, and conduct several island-wide censuses of their nesting success (Phase II). Teams will also work with U.S. Fish & Wildlife refuge personnel on a variety of related seabird conservation tasks.

TROPICAL BIRDS of PANAMA

Dr. James R. Karr

**Site: Parque Nacional Soberania
Panama**

11-26 March 1983

8-23 July 1983

Volunteers will tend mist-nets at the four study sites throughout the day. Teams will identify, weigh, band, and release all captured birds, monitor microclimates, and survey each study plot's bird species. Early morning hikes to the nets make the work demanding but — in its close-up view of tropical birds and their habitats — very rewarding.

TROPICAL BIRDS of SURINAM

Dr. Todd H. Keeler-Wolf &

Virginal Keeler-Wolf

Site: Brownsberg Nature Park, Surinam

15-31 July 1983

2-18 August 1983

19 August-4 September 1983

6-22 September 1983

Participants will work at four sites on a dense, high elevation (170-200 m) rain-forest plateau in and around Surinam's Brownsberg Nature Park. Work alternates among censusing, banding, and watching the feeding behavior of birds; monitoring insect populations (a seasonal dietary supplement); and sampling vegetation plots. Early rising is the rule, and teams may work into the afternoon.

BIRDS of JAMAICA

Dr. Robert C. Dalglish

Site: Jamaica, West Indies

4-14 February 1983

16-26 February 1983

Volunteers will set up and tend mist-nets until noon. Teams will examine, band, weigh, measure, and determine the sex of all birds prior to their release. Work-days will begin before dawn and will require extensive walking to check the nets. Split teams will work in several locations on the island under the leadership of Dr. Dalglish and Mr. Robert Sutton, President of the Jamaica Bird Club and noted authority on Jamaican birds and flora.

RETURNING BALD EAGLES TO THE WILD

Dr. James W. Foster

Site: San Juan Island

Puget Sound, Washington

17-30 January 1983

31 January-13 February 1983

14-27 February 1983

Volunteers will spend twelve days releasing and then tracking eagles via radio telemetry, and observing and collecting data on the wild eagle population.

For further information write to EARTHWATCH, 10 Juniper Road, Box 127, Belmont, MA 02178.